

Sprayed

This play is free to download and perform. The only condition is that you must **email Alex at abroun@bigpond.net.au** and let him know **where and when you produced his script**, listing the **director, cast and theatre**. If you have any production photos send them along as well and they may just end up on this website.

a short play

By

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Characters

CLIVE

GREG

Time

Day.

Setting

An upmarket gallery in a large city.

Sprayed

Gallery. Morning.

Around the wall are a number of brightly coloured graffiti tags.

CLIVE stands in front of one of them, photographing it. He snaps it from a number of angles.

GREG enters. He watches **CLIVE**.

CLIVE moves on to another tag. He starts to photograph it.

GREG: Enjoying the work.

CLIVE: Absolutely.

CLIVE CONTINUES TO PHOTOGRAPH. **GREG** MOVES CLOSER.

CLIVE: You don't mind ? If I take a few snaps.

GREG: Of course not.

CLIVE: It is public work isn't it ? Tags. They are meant to be seen by everybody. As many people as possible. That's the general idea.

GREG: Yes they are public works. Although ...

CLIVE: Go on.

GREG: This is a private space. So strictly speaking you should ask permission to photograph works displayed in a private space.

CLIVE: Even if the works are public ?

GREG: Strictly speaking.

CLIVE MOVES ON TO THE NEXT TAG.

GREG: Are you going to take a lot of photographs?

CLIVE: I'm a big fan.

GREG: And the photos are for ?

- CLIVE: Private use.
- GREG: Because of course if you were going to use them commercially – publish them in a magazine say or a website – we would need to clear that with the artists.
- CLIVE: Even though that's what they want ? For their work to be seen.
- GREG: If you were planning to use the work commercially.
- CLIVE: By publishing it in a magazine.
- GREG: Or on a website.
- CLIVE: But I'm not.
- GREG: Well, if you were ...

BEAT.

- CLIVE: What if it was on the wall outside ?
- GREG: Outside ?
- CLIVE: If this tag – that's its proper name isn't it ? A tag ? - was on the wall outside the gallery.
- GREG: The gallery's wall ?
- CLIVE: Any wall. My wall. Your wall. It would be in the public domain then – wouldn't it ? I could do what I wanted with it.
- GREG: Possibly. I'm not sure of the legal implications.
- CLIVE: It wouldn't be in your gallery then. You wouldn't have any claim on the work.
- GREG: Of course. But it would still be great to let the artist know what you wanted to do. Just as a courtesy.
- CLIVE: Of course. That is if I knew where to find them.

CLIVE MOVES ON TO THE NEXT TAG.

- GREG: Look, I'm not the owner of the gallery. And I'm not sure

GREG: (CONT) he would feel completely comfortable with what you're doing.

CLIVE: I'm taking photos.

GREG: Yes, but you won't tell me what they're for.

CLIVE: Private use.

GREG: Yes, but I don't know what that is.

CLIVE CONTINUES TO TAKE PHOTOS. SUDDENLY **GREG** MOVES IN FRONT OF HIM.

GREG: I'm going to ask you to stop – until I can discuss this with the owner of the gallery.

CLIVE CONTINUES TO SNAP AWAY.

GREG: I'm sorry sir. I must insist.

CLIVE CONTINUES TO SNAP AWAY. **GREG** LUNGES AT THE CAMERA.

GREG: Stop taking photos!

CLIVE: Lighten up Greg.

BEAT.

GREG: You know my name?

CLIVE: It's on your website. Gallery Owner, Stephen Allington, and Gallery Manager, Gregory Madigan. You're not the Gallery Owner so you must be the Gallery Manager.

GREG: What is this about?

CLIVE: You don't remember me? I'm hurt.

GREG: We've met?

CLIVE: I run a gallery. I'm a Gallery Manager too. And Gallery Owner. Across town.

GREG: Rich ... Richard ...

- CLIVE: I know I'm not that memorable but we shook hands.
- GREG: Ian ... Michael ...
- CLIVE: Starts with a C ... C ... I
- GREG: Clive. Clive Hughes.
- CLIVE: Now you got it. From the Hughes Gallery. Crosstown. Not as upmarket as your little establishment - of course - but I like it. You came to one of my exhibitions last year. You and Stephen. You remember? It was an exhibition of tags. Just like this one.
- GREG: So that's what this is about? You think we've stolen your idea.
- CLIVE: And you didn't? Come on Greg.
- GREG: It may have inspired us. A little. Introduced us to the work. You weren't the first -
- CLIVE: To put on an exhibition of "street art"? No - but I was the first in this city. And more than a little inspired I would say. Look at the title of the exhibition - "Graffed", mine was "Tagged". The poster artwork is even similar.
- GREG: Completely co-incidental.
- CLIVE: Lighten up Gregory. I don't care. If anything I'm flattered. Some big posh gallery from uptown would steal my idea.
- GREG: *Develop* your idea.
- CLIVE: Whatever. You selling any?
- GREG: There has been considerable interest.
- CLIVE: Not seeing too many red dots.
- GREG: We don't like to advertise which works have been purchased and which haven't. It's unproductive to the artists.
- CLIVE: You did last time I was here.

GREG: There's been a policy change.

CLIVE: Fess up Greg. It was the same for me. Our clientele don't want it. They hate it on their front wall just as much as they hate it on a gallery wall – no matter how much artistic merit we try to attach to it.

BEAT.

GREG: Okay. You got me. Our cover is blown. We were strongly inspired to produce this exhibition by your exhibition and yes, we haven't as yet sold one single work. Now it's your turn. Fess up. Why do you keep taking photos?

CLIVE: I'm looking for somebody.

GREG: One of the artists.

CLIVE: Drop the bullshit.

GREG: Taggers.

CLIVE: Yes.

GREG: Can I ask why?

CLIVE: I'm looking for the one who painted a twenty foot tag on the front of my gallery last night.

GREG: The front?

CLIVE: Right across the front wall. Kerb to roof. Even covered the name of the gallery.

GREG: He wasn't one of yours?

CLIVE: This guy is new. Didn't recognise the tag.

GREG: And you're hoping – that we've got something of his on display.

CLIVE: Now you're getting it.

BEAT.

- GREG: But even if you did match the tag. You'd still have to rely on us giving you his contact details.
- CLIVE: 15 grand.
- GREG: What's that?
- CLIVE: The price.
- GREG: These works are considerably more expensive than that. For now.
- CLIVE: The price to clean and re-paint the front of my gallery.
- GREG: And you're hoping to get compensation from the artist? You know as well as I do - these kids don't have any money.
- CLIVE: He will if you sell his tag.
- GREG: I don't think that's likely.
- CLIVE: I don't want money. Just like I didn't want money when I put my exhibition on. I wanted to help these kids. Show them their work had value. That they weren't vandals - no matter what society might label them -
- GREG: Unless of course they acted like vandals by defacing private property.
- CLIVE: It was about teaching them respect. If they respect themselves they can begin to respect other people and they won't just put their tags anywhere. They'll put them where they're -
- GREG: Wanted?
- CLIVE: Less inconvenient.
- BEAT.
- GREG: But you struck up a great rapport with the boys. It was in all the papers. "Madigan - the Tagger's saviour."
- CLIVE: "Champ." And then I get tagged. Tagged good and f-ing proper.

- GREG: I can understand you might find that slightly disrespectful.
- CLIVE: Slightly. And I need to do something quickly. If the media sees it – “The tagger’s champ” having his gallery tagged – I’m going to have to say I asked them to do it. And keep the bloody thing.
- GREG: Good publicity.
- CLIVE: Don’t see you doing it.
- GREG: But surely you have the same contacts we do? They would know who it was.
- CLIVE: All my crew has moved on. I got them all to respect themselves so much they respected themselves right out of tagging.
- GREG: Some would call that a success.
- CLIVE: Only if they’re still painting.
- BEAT.
- GREG: Look Clive, I’m sorry this has happened. My professional sympathies are with you. But even if you do find the tagger amongst our artists I don’t think Stephen will be comfortable with passing on his contact details.
- CLIVE: I’ve been asking myself – why he did it ?
- GREG: The tagger?
- CLIVE: That specific wall. It’s not a great wall – as tagging goes. The surface is uneven – the gallery name is in relief for instance - and the base colour is very dark. Also my street is quiet well lit. It would have been very dangerous – especially to execute a tag so big.
- GREG: You don’t think it was random?
- CLIVE: The tagger would know – would have to know – that mine was the gallery that did the exhibition last year.
- GREG: You did get excellent coverage.

- CLIVE: And the whole 'tagging' community came along to check it out.
- GREG: We've had a few as well. But then wouldn't they be supportive of your space. "Here is someone who's supported us. We should support them."
- CLIVE: That's how you and I would think. But these are taggers. It's all about territory, claiming space, saying this is mine.
- GREG: But the gallery is theirs. It belongs to them – so to speak.
- CLIVE: Them not I. "This is mine. It belongs to me." A tagger tags somewhere because they want to claim the space from other taggers.
- GREG: (REALISING) You didn't display that particular tagger.
- CLIVE: Exactly. So my gallery becomes an even bigger target. He needs to say – this space doesn't belong to those taggers anymore. It belongs to me. In 'tagging' terms I've just become the biggest moose in the woods – and hunting season just opened. As soon as I clean off this tag – the next tagger will be lining up.
- GREG: As will be any other tagger you didn't display.
- CLIVE: And after they've finished with me any tagger you didn't display will be lining up –
- GREG: To do the same to us. (BEAT) Shit.
- CLIVE: Unless ...
- GREG: Unless ...
- CLIVE: Unless we find the tagger who tagged me and hit him as hard as the law will allow us.
- GREG: Scare them off.
- CLIVE: And let all the other taggers know that if they fuck with us we will come after them – and unlike everyone else in this city –

GREG: We know who they are.

BEAT.

GREG: (QUICKLY) Right, which ones haven't you photographed? Make sure you get all of them. Also I'll take you out the back. There's some more out there we didn't hang.

THE LIGHTS HAVE BEGUN TO FADE.

GREG: Have you got a photograph of the tag on your gallery ? Maybe I can recognise it. I'll get the book with the contact details. Don't worry. We'll soon catch the little prick.

GREG EXITS. **CLIVE** CONTINUES TO TAKE PHOTOS.

BLACKOUT.