Mail Online News

Don't call 911! The terrifying life-like sculptures bringing panic to the streets

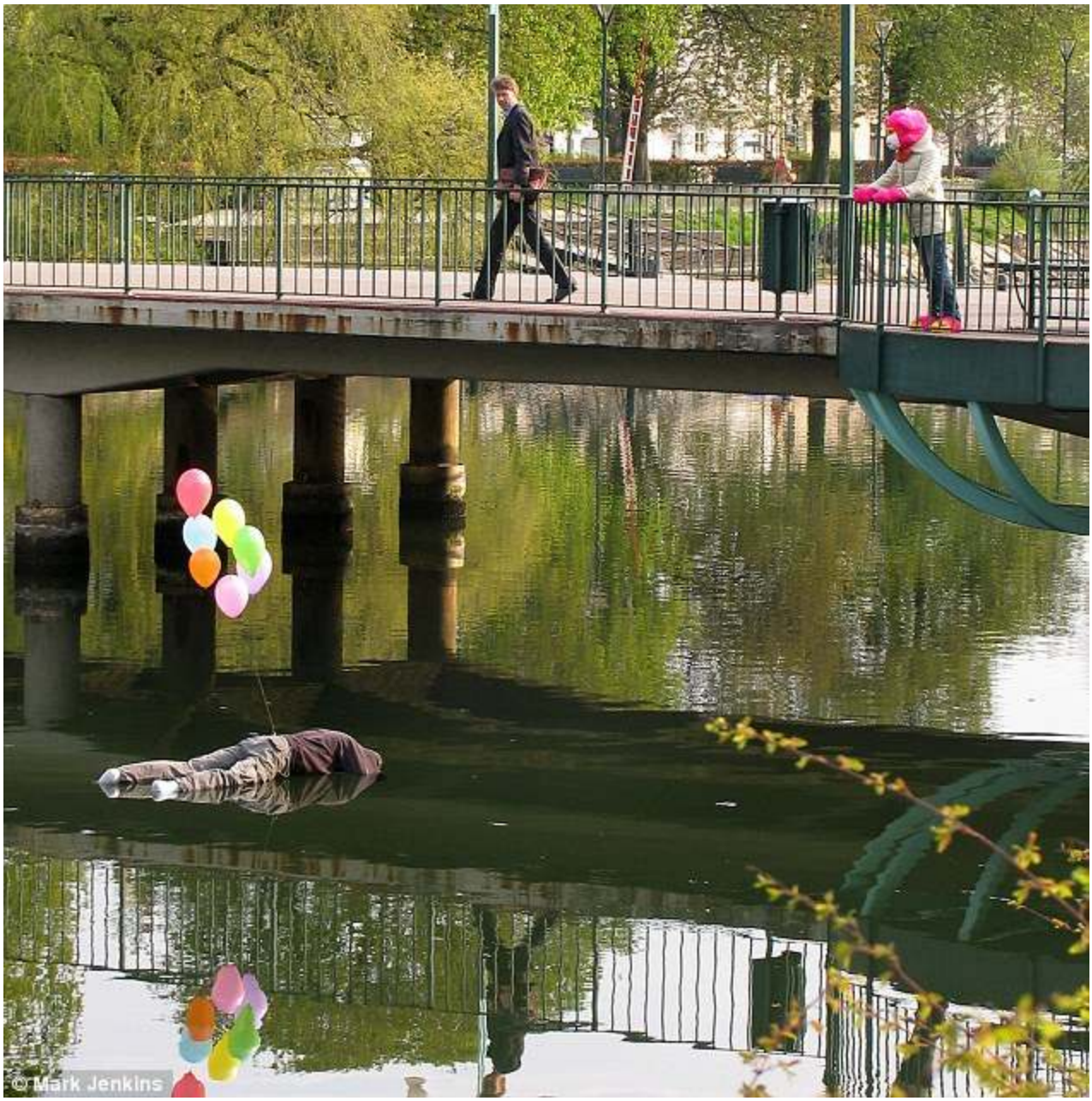
By Daily Mail Reporter

Last updated at 1:10 PM on 2nd February 2012

These incredible street sculptures of people stuck in the most uncompromising positions are proving so convincing worried pedestrians have been reporting them to the ambulance service and police.

Innovative American artist Mark Jenkins, 41, travels the world placing his unusual temporary artworks in busy urban areas.

Jenkins, who worked as a saxophonist and web designer before switching to street art, said his aim is to get people to look up from their mobile phones for a split second and engage with the world around them.



Disconcerting: This eerie sculpture in Malmö, Sweden, by American artist Mark Jenkins, shows a man face down in the water while a curious figure looks on from above

He started his career by placing a figure in a refuse dump in Rio de Janeiro to draw attention to children living in the streets.

Unusually he uses box-sealing tape to create the figures before sometimes adding clothes for interaction on the street.

He said: 'I started off making balls in tape and soon I made a cast of my whole arm in tape. I decided to wrap my whole body in tape, but I wrapped the tape around my torso too tight, the hairs got caught, so I started cutting myself out which was really bloody - and thought I was going to die!



Stranded: The figure of a woman is perched on a dilapidated billboard in Winston-Salem, North Carolina



Victim: A figure of a stabbing victim lies prostate on a the pavement. Some of the work has proved so alarming, concerned pedestrians have been reporting it to the police

'From then on I used a mannequin torso, still using my own body for the legs.

'I like getting people to question their surroundings, what is real and what isn't. These days, people are so buried in their mobile phones and I just wanted to get them to look up.

'So at the beginning, I was collecting social data about people's reactions. But six years later, these images are more about poetry, of capturing a magical moment.



No way! A Mark Jenkins sculpture takes takes over a sign post in Royan, France



Stuck in a rut: Two sculptures bonk heads in Puerto del Rosario, Fuerteventura



On the edge: A sculpture balances precariously on a Dublin rooftop



Menacing: A balaclava-wearing figure lurks in an art gallery



Lost her head: Another spooky sculpture causes confusion on a London street



A man buries his head in a wall in Washington, DC

'They often tend to be marginalized individuals, sometimes in lonely states, so it's poetic but also dark. For example, the guy in the river is holding a bunch of colored balloons that are almost trying to magically lift him out. There's always an undercurrent of hope.

A recent series of sculptures involved castings of baby dolls placed in cheeky situations such as one on an underwear billboard which appears to be suckling a woman's breast. Others could be found climbing trees.



Another sculpture in Royan, France. The innovative artist uses box-packaging tape to create the life-like works



Malmö, Sweden



A woman is assaulted by a giant teddy bear in Fairfax, Virginia



Artist Mark says he aims to get people to look up from the mobile phones and engage with the world around them



A sculpture is seen balancing on a ledge in Washington DC



Bordeaux, France



Bin Lady: Barcelona, Spain

He added: 'I was trying to start a campaign, like a graffiti artist would with a tag -- apart from I did it with an invasion of babies.

'I felt I had introduced a new medium and the baby was symbolic of that, as well as being symbolic of not being cared for like insects that have to care for themselves. Also it was a way to experiment, an exercise in space.

'We always try to put some up whenever we go to a new city as part of my project. Here in Berlin we've put the babies up pretty high using a ladder, but people tend to get them down anyway, like an adoption process.'

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Kinda reminds me of the spooky scenes from Dexter where serial killers leave behind their victims in artistic, symbolic poses. Stupid, dangerous idea.

- Nina, USA, 02/2/2012 14:46

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Whats up with the pink bear man in the first photo?

- bob, usa, 02/2/2012 14:44

Click to rate _ _ Rating 1

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WOW,these are brilliant,always get jealous,wish i could come up with something as creative as this,well done.

- lee, yorkshire,UL, 02/2/2012 14:39

Click to rate _ _ Rating 1

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Whoa! I wonder where he got the idea to do this. This is something you only see in movies, never have there been such an artist to take his creativities to this extent. This would have surely freaked me out walking pass some of these real life figures. You got to admit though, the guy is good. He should set up a Holloween showcase in a mansion or better yet, a castle. I bet people from all around would flock in to see his handywork.

- K.I.R, Somewhere, USA, 02/2/2012 14:12

Click to rate _ _ Rating 22

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I like it

- jo, grimsby, 02/2/2012 14:11

Click to rate _ _ Rating 24

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I think this is really freaky. If I saw some of these I think I'd have a heart attack. What if a small child sees one and has nightmares for weeks afterwards? Stupid idea if you ask me, and if people are actually calling the emergency services over them then he should be made to stop it - it's a waste of time and resources.

- Natalie, Barnsley, UK, 02/2/2012 13:56

Click to rate _ _ Rating 27

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The guy's a public nuisance.

- Doug, Dover, Delaware, 02/2/2012 13:47

Click to rate _ _ Rating 22

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....the person responsible for sanctioning the siting of these objects should be held accountable for this lunacy.

- just a thought, Dorset, 02/2/2012 13:35

Click to rate _ _ Rating 2

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I don't know which is weirder! The man with his head buried in the wall, or the guy nonchalantly walking along with a standard lamp in his hand!! lol

- Deckard B26354, London, UK, 02/2/2012 13:34

Click to rate _ _ Rating 47

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Art needs beauty to be at its very essence. It can be provactive sure, but it needs beauty of thought or form. This IS NOT beauty. The artist has created something very unpleasant, I hope he can move on and leave this stuff behind. I wonder if the artist would be happy to walk through a town with his children or relatives and try to intellectualise and explain away their utter shock and revulsion? Probably not. So why do it to others?

- AC, Poole, Dorset, 02/2/2012 13:28

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