



BIG BIDS FOR PAINTINGS BY ARTIST... AGED TWO!

BIDS are pouring in from around the world for paintings by a talented two-year-old from Germany.

The best that most kids can hope for when they do a picture is a spot on the kitchen fridge, but Laurent Schwarz's colourful creations are drawing a bit more attention than that.

It's simple; little Laurent squirts paint onto a canvas, spreads it around with a roller or other tools, his mum posts his latest masterpiece on Instagram, then admirers of his work offer big bucks for them – very big bucks.

One painting, called *The Fingers*, received an offer of almost £120,000.

His mum, Lisa, told *The Times* newspaper: "I thought I'd set up an Instagram channel

because what he was painting looked so nice." She sold eight of Laurent's paintings before it caught the attention of the German media. Now, he's gone viral. "Everyone's going nuts," she said.

Laurent has been invited onto TV talk shows, while a gallery in New York has asked to display his work.

He has also painted elephants, horses, dinosaurs and more, after he began painting on holiday in Italy last year. Lisa says that she never pressures him to paint, but it seems that he can't get enough of it.

"It's very important to him that it's bright and colourful. Brown and other boring colours don't interest him," she added.

Are you a fan of Laurent's work?



The Clown by Laurent



The Elephant by Laurent



The Dinosaur by Laurent

Israel's plan to end Gaza war

SEVEN months since the war broke out, Israel has planned a deal to bring the fighting in Gaza to an end.

On 7 October last year, Hamas, the group that controls Gaza, invaded neighbouring Israel, killed some 1,200 people and took 252 back to Gaza as prisoners.

Since then, Israel has bombarded Gaza with rockets and sent its army into the territory to hunt down Hamas leaders. More than 36,000 people there are said to have been killed.

Israel's army says that it now controls the entire land border that surrounds Gaza, and that it has found 20 tunnels that Hamas fighters were using to smuggle in weapons.

Rallies and protests have been held in the UK and across the world demanding a ceasefire (a pause in the fighting) to allow food and medicine in to help people living in Gaza.

Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, insists that

there will be no permanent ceasefire until Hamas' military is destroyed and all Israeli prisoners have been freed.

Israel's three-point plan

Last Friday (31 May), US President Joe Biden announced that Israel had sent a proposal to Hamas to reach a permanent ceasefire and an end to the conflict.

It involves three stages. First, there would be a six-week ceasefire. During this, Israel's army would withdraw from busy areas, 600 trucks each day would be allowed in to deliver aid to the people in Gaza, and the two sides would exchange some of their prisoners.

Then, all living Israeli prisoners, including soldiers, would be returned to Israel. Finally, Israeli prisoners who had been killed would be returned to Israel, and a major rebuilding plan for Gaza would begin, with help from countries around the world to repair homes, schools and hospitals.

Mr Biden said: "This is truly a decisive moment. Hamas says it wants a ceasefire. This deal is an opportunity to prove whether they really mean it."

Some politicians in Israel don't want to do any deals until Hamas is destroyed. The country (along with the UK, US, EU and others) classes Hamas as a terrorist organisation. However, Hamas has said it felt "positive" about the deal, and the US believes that, if Hamas officially accepts it, then Israel will, too.

If that happens, the fighting will begin to draw to a close. Find out more at first.news/IsraelGaza.



Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu



All eyes on this viral social media post

HAVE you seen this image?

If so, you're certainly not alone. In days, it had been shared on Instagram nearly 50 million times, including by celebrities like Dua Lipa and Lewis Hamilton.

It depicts a vast sea of tents for residents of Gaza who have been forced from their homes because of the war. Some tents form the words "All eyes on Rafah" – a town in Gaza that has seen intense fighting in recent weeks.

But it's not a real photo and was generated by artificial intelligence (AI). The BBC says it was shared first by a man from Malaysia, and it spread so well because it doesn't show any graphic images, and it's easy to repost.

The words "All eyes on Rafah" were first spoken by a World Health Organization representative in February.

While it's not a real photo, 1.7 million people in Gaza have been forced to flee their homes and many are living in large camps of tents.

Hungry children in Sudan facing "emergency"

THE United Nations (UN) has warned that the lives of an entire generation of children in Sudan are at risk due to hunger and starvation.

In April 2023, a civil war broke out in the African country between its military and fighters from a group called the Rapid Support Forces.

Three UN agencies – UNICEF, the World Health Organization and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) – have warned that the conflict has put Sudan at risk of a famine that will have "catastrophic consequences" for children.

They say that children have been left unable to get healthy food or safe drinking water, and that the violence in the country is making it difficult for charities to deliver it to them.

The three agencies report that "child malnutrition is at emergency levels". In the ZamZam camp, where hundreds of thousands of people are sheltering from the war, nearly 30% of children are malnourished.

This month, the rainy season will begin in Sudan. It's feared that this will make things even worse, as communities are cut off from one another.



It's worth over £3.2 million!

THE rarest music album in the world is about to go on display in Australia.

Just one CD exists of *Once Upon A Time In Shaolin*, by American hip-hop group Wu-Tang Clan. It was designed as a piece of art and comes in a posh silver box.

For ten days, small groups of lucky visitors to the Mona gallery in Tasmania will get to listen to a 30-minute sample of it.