

French radical-left party fined over use of street art

France's radical-left party LFI has been fined 40,000 euros in compensation and legal costs for using a work by street artist Combo's depiction of Marianne, the female symbol of the French republic, as a bare-breasted Asian woman, for its campaign videos without asking his permission.

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The radical anti-capitalist who leads France's left-wing opposition alliance has been fined for the unauthorised use of a street artist's depiction of Marianne, the national symbol, as a bare-breasted Asian woman, reports *The Times*.

The court of appeal ordered Jean-Luc Mélenchon and his hard-left party, France Unbowed, to pay 40,000 euros in compensation and legal costs for using the work by the street artist Combo in campaign videos without permission. It is the first time a French court has ruled that street art is copyright protected. The decision overturned a lower court ruling that his Marianne mural, painted in 2017 on a building in the Marais district of Paris, was not covered by copyright.

The figure of Marianne has personified the republican values of liberty, equality and fraternity since the Revolution and her image occupies a place of honour in town halls and law courts.

Combo portrayed her as an Asian woman wearing jeans, with her right breast bare, carrying a tricolour bearing the slogan Liberty, Equality, Humanity alongside the caption "We want justice".

He objected to his art being associated with the hard left. The court of appeal upheld his claim for moral and proprietary damages, but awarded far less than the 900,000 euros he had sought. "His main complaints were the political exploitation of his work and damage to his reputation," according to Nicolas Le Pays du Teilleul, his lawyer.

[Read more of this report from The Times.](#)

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