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CHAPTER ONE

INK, BRUSH & ROCK POSTERS

GNARLY MAXIMALISM

In our current digital age, when a person spends most of their life staring at a little computer in their hand, living in a virtual Candy Land panopticon, it becomes more and more important to make things that are real.

Making marks on paper has never been a more revolutionary act than it is now. Dirty Donny is a member of an ever-dwindling club, the Brotherhood of the Brush. (The velvet fez is in the mail, honest.) No Cintiq screens with infinite do-overs—our man Donny is in the trenches every day, dipping a brush into indelible ink and making marks on paper, the (very) old-fashioned way. It's on the verge of being a lost art. When you get the hang of doing it, though, it can be a delight. Making those lines sing, thick to thin, tapering to a perfect point right at the apex—it's the sweetest satisfaction.

It's the art of the comic book page, the flamed and pinstriped hot rod, water slide decals, skateboard decks, the lurid sideshow banner. You gotta do it with a brush. All of that bubbling stew of lurid "lowbrow" art is at the core of Donny's work. When catching someone's eye is the name of the game, you learn from all these masters.

It's not just the drawings. You also have to learn to letter by hand, making letter forms that are not just legible, but GNARLY. Chrome effects, dripping blood, three-dimensional effects, almost throbbing with fluorescent colors, feathered shading, even pustules and slime—it's all about capturing the attention of the onlooker, like a gory accident at the side of the road.

Putting it all together, bold and sensuous lines, sweat-popping cartoon anarchy, compelling hand-lettered typography, all in service of creating something with maximum impact, with maximum GNARL, something that grabs eyeballs like fishhooks and screams. "LOOK AT THIS, DUDE!"

Screen printing is a very labor-intensive process. Drawing line art, making the separations for each color to be printed, coating screens with photo emulsion, exposing them to light to make the stencil, infinite adjustments of the press to ensure everything stays in registration, sizing the paper, printing each color, one at a time, filling the drying racks with the just-printed color, then . . . it starts all over again, for the next color, one after another, until the last (usually) black key line ties it all together into a (hopefully) eye-popping print.

I imagine most people not in the business even suspect how much labor is involved and just assume that someone pushes a button on the Art Machine, and a bright and jolly poster is spat out at the other end, holy and inviolate. Isn't that how everything happens now?

Nope, it's a LOT of work.

It can be so satisfying, though. Sublime, even. Within the limitations of the medium is where the challenge, and the joy, exists. When every additional pass on the press costs more time, money, and materials, making the most of the least becomes all-important. If you can only print three colors, picking complementary colors that can be overlaid to create secondary and tertiary colors gives you more bang for your buck. Layering colors, using halftones to stretch your palette even further, split fountains (mixing two or more colors to create a gradient on one pass)—all kinds of sweet little secrets to be discovered and exploited. Mastering screen printing requires years of work and experience, learning all the tricks of the trade. I've been doing it for almost 40 years, both as a printer and an artist, and I'm still learning new tricks.

Donny has it all figured out.

COOP
Austin Texas 2026

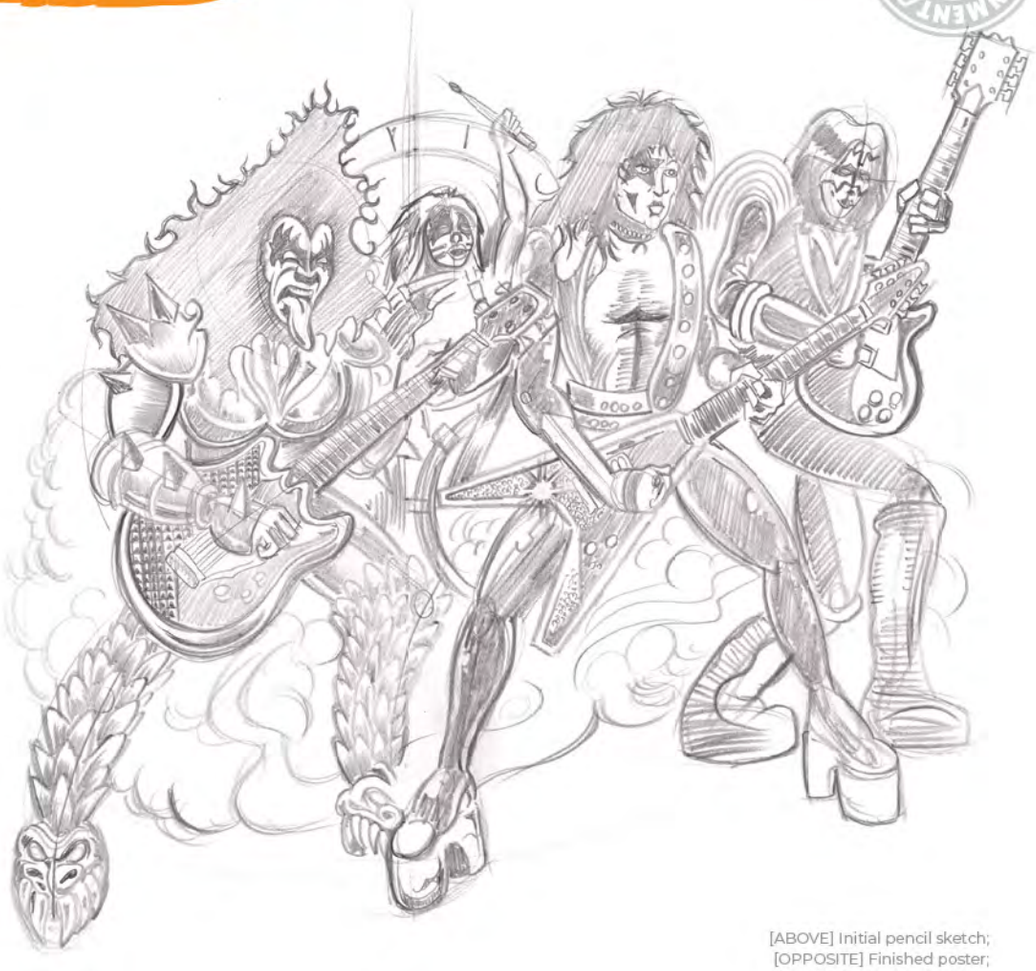
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ROCK AND ROLL OVER

I remember seeing KISS dolls, bubblegum trading cards, and the LP covers in record stores and on TV when I was a kid. I was hooked and hooked early. I was only three years old when the show referenced in this poster took place, but it never had its own poster.

As an adult, I was given the official green light to create my dream art for the show to make something for the fans. Having the opportunity to officially draw one of my OG favorite rock bands was something I had only dreamed of when I was growing up! I could not say no. I was asked to pick a date and research a show that had no art. I immediately wanted to do a poster based on *Rock and Roll Over* because it's one of my favorite KISS albums and features cover art by the great Michael Doret.

I contacted my old buddy Frank Munoz, who I knew from the days working at Metallica HQ. Frank is the biggest KISS fan I know so it was a no brainer to reach out to him because he knows everything there is to know about KISS tours and costumes. I said I needed his help to find a show on the *Rock and Roll Over* tour that didn't have a poster and that I also needed to get their costumes show correct, which was very important to keep this piece period correct.



[ABOVE] Initial pencil sketch;
[OPPOSITE] Finished poster;
[BELOW] Inking in progress



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[ABOVE] Inked band member face details; [BELOW] The original KISS record sleeve

I pulled out all my old KISS records and played them, and only them, while drawing and designing this art. I was very excited when I got the word that Gene Simmons had signed off on it.

Screen printing was done by Lady Lazarus in Houston, Texas in 2001. They did a beautiful job with this limited edition as well as all the metallic foil variants. My favorite is the artist edition on a heavy white rag stock made just for me. The white really jumps out and gives it that true KISS vibe.



Sparkle foil variant



Lava foil variant



Gallery white stock variant



Gold foil variant

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LET THERE BE ROCK

I've been an AC/DC fan since I was a young teen. Making art for AC/DC was my ultimate dream gig, so I was super stoked to get the chance to do art for an AC/DC poster.

In 1989, my friend Trev and I took the bus to Toronto to see them on The Razors Edge World Tour. Trev caught one of the dollar bills they dropped during "Moneytalks," and I was so envious. We bought a pile of merch at that show, which I wish I still had.

But back to the poster. I asked the company Echo Print Gallery if Angus would see this and they assured me he would. I didn't believe it, so I asked my old friend Bernadette, who used to work for AC/DC in Australia, if she thought Angus would, in fact, see this. She said, "Yes, sir! He signs off on everything!" That made me extra stoked and legitimized this art in my AC/DC brain.



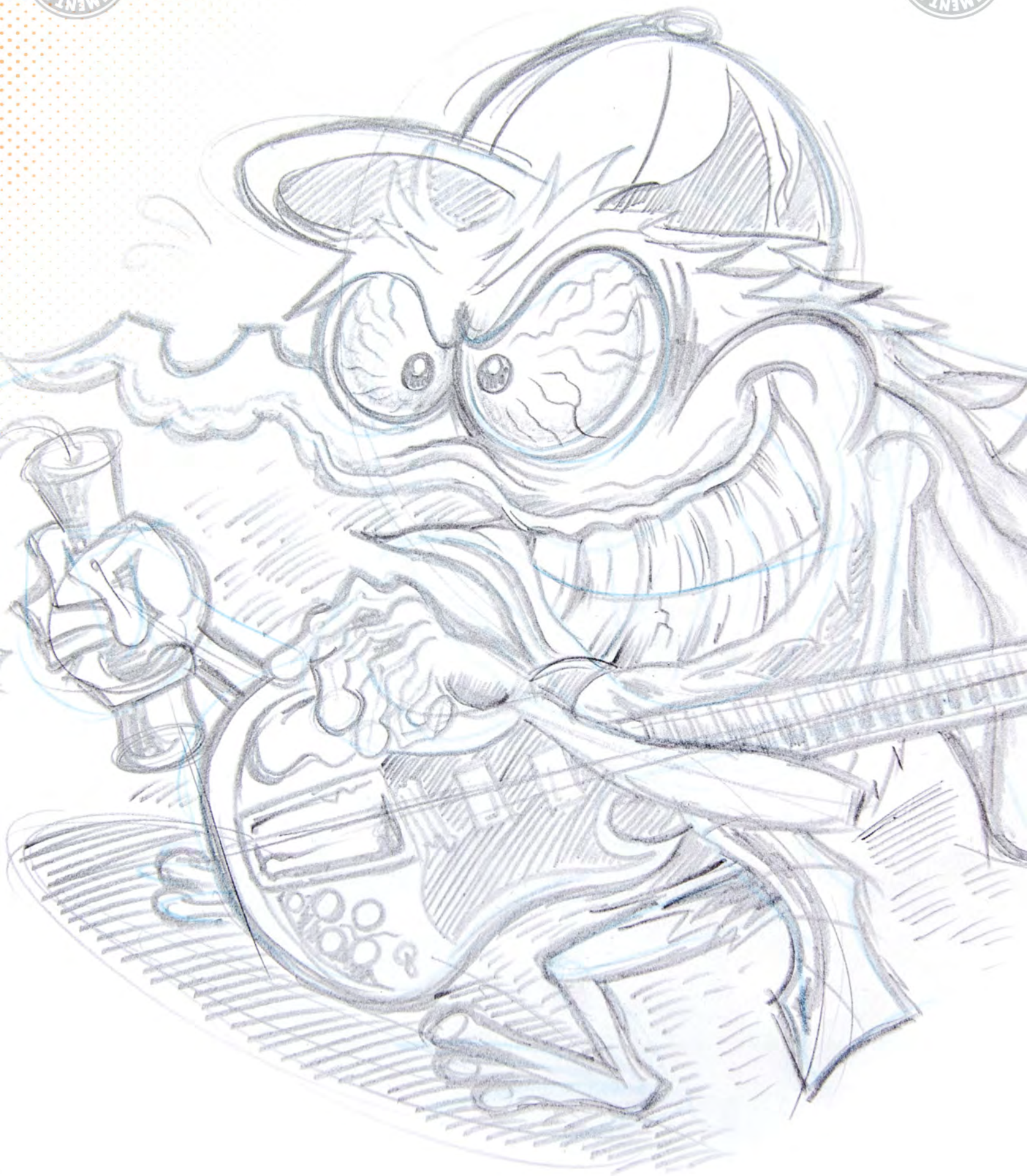
[LEFT] Some of Donny's AC/DC record collection; [FAR LEFT] Inking in progress; [OPPOSITE] Finished poster

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[BELOW] Initial sketch of monster detail. [OPPOSITE] Finished poster.



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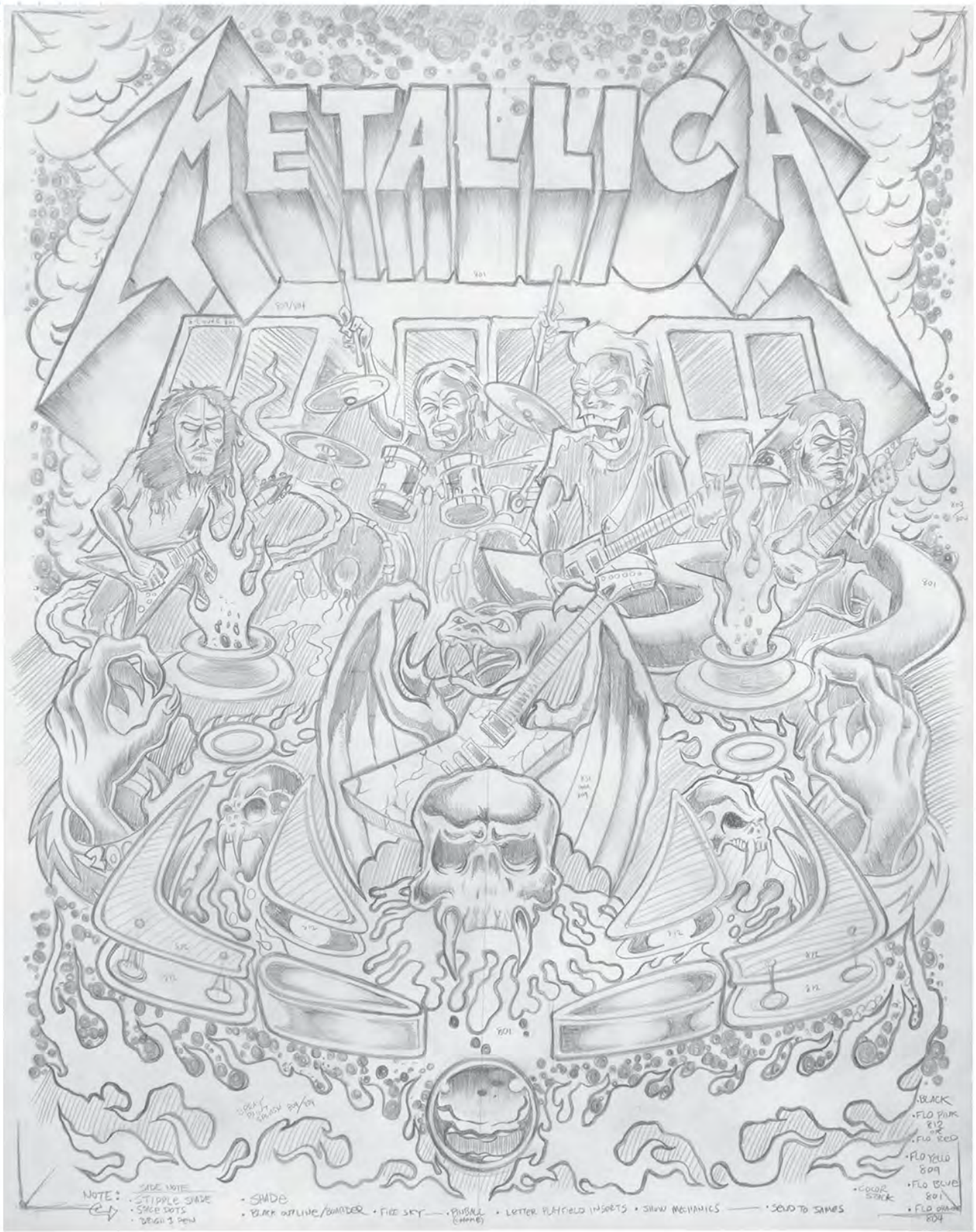
THE FUEL THAT FIRES

I did this with the Metallica fan club, also knows as the Met Club. It was their first screen print poster before the series of screen-printed concert posters and has become quite rare.

A few years prior, I had done the art for the Metallica pinball series and wanted to elaborate on what I actually would and could have done a few years later if given a chance. Pinball-themed, I consider it a family member to the Stern machines.

This poster was almost a blessing and a curse as it caused fan pandemonium, mostly due to the rarity, title, and overall art. The positive messages flooded in. While most were beyond stoked, some were downright enraged that they didn't get one and refused to pay eBay prices from flippers.

Nonetheless, it has become a classic and my best-selling poster to date.



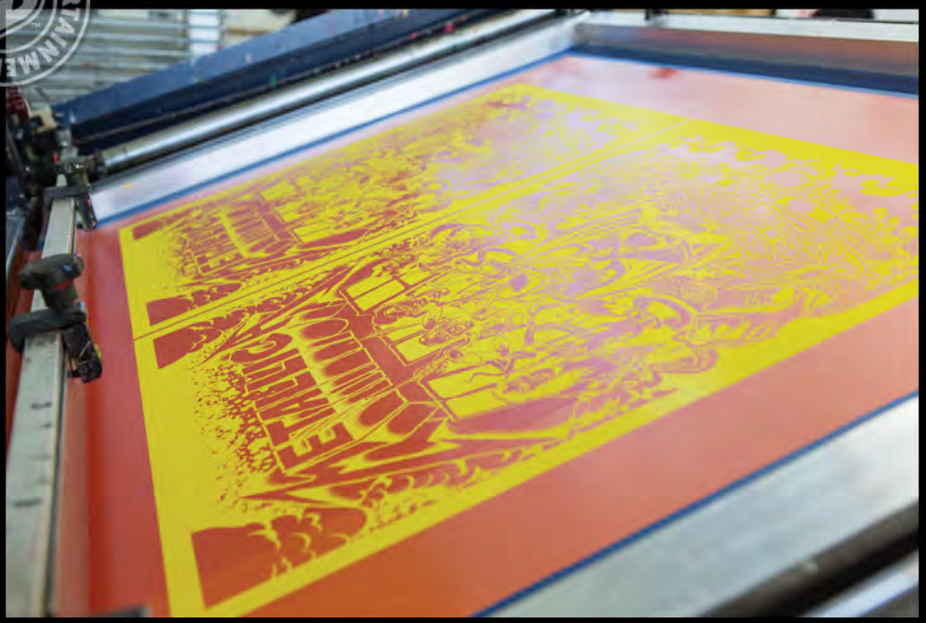
[LEFT] Initial pencil sketch; [OPPOSITE] Finished poster

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[THESE PAGES] Screen printing in progress at Monolith Press; [OPPOSITE] Ross Sewage performing quality control





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I love Metallica's song "The Call of Ktulu" and really wanted bring some of that to this poster. I was at the video shoot for "Atlas, Rise!" and they asked to borrow my Satellite and Firebird in the video. Even though they ended up ditching the video, it was a fun day and "Atlas, Rise!" remains a great song.

Another limited poster for the Metallica fan club and another fan hit.





[OPPOSITE] Finished poster; [TOP LEFT] Original inked drawing, framed; [TOP RIGHT] Initial sketch for Ktulu creature; [BELOW] Band member character studies



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[ABOVE] Inking in progress

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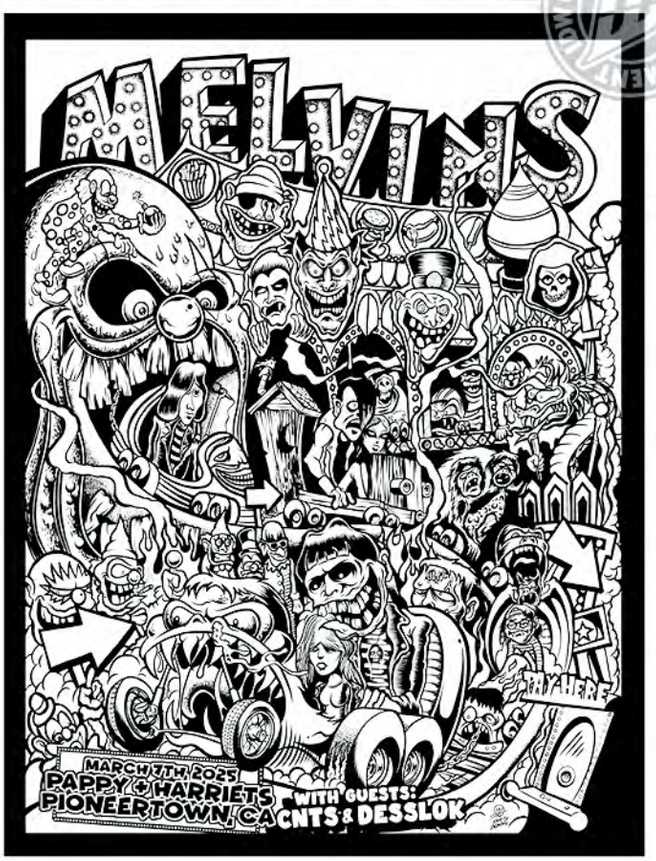
Something in the works. This piece unfortunately got shelved. I'm hoping it eventually sees the light of day. I sometimes get asked by clients if I have anything laying around. The answer is almost always no. In this case, it is literally just laying around. I felt it important to show this unfinished drawing, as it is one of my favorite pieces I have done for Metallica. I did, however, borrow elements for my *Mars Attacks* poster. Aside from the beast and destroyed city, I feel they are similar yet totally different.

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This is theme park dark ride design, but this time I wanted to go in the direction of a funhouse inspired by old traveling theme parks. Growing up in Ottawa, we had one traveling theme park simply called the EX which would visit each year. Then, later, it became called the Super EX (in the '80s everything got SUPER added to it—Super Big Gulp, Super hot dogs, *Superman 2*, and yes, Super EX)!

This poster art also doubles as the cover art for my original Fanzine, which was to be named *Funhouse Fanzine* but that name was taken. So then how about *Content Fanzine*? Nope, that name was taken, too. So, we made a huge list and sure enough, every name on our list was taken! Finally I said, "Let's just call it *Every Name Was Taken Fanzine*!" My partner Jennie's eyes lit up as we both broke out laughing and we realized, yup, we had it!

I figure we'll just change the name each issue until I'm sick of making this and let it die on the vine or sell it to some big company. Hey, any rich people out there want to buy the rights to a fanzine? So, this little labor of love features a bunch of my creative friends and their works. It was a lot of fun to do, and it was nice to make some readable printed matter in 2025.



[ABOVE] Lineart for finished poster; [BELOW] *Every Name Was Taken Fanzine* with Paint Fumes vinyl insert; [OPPOSITE] Final poster



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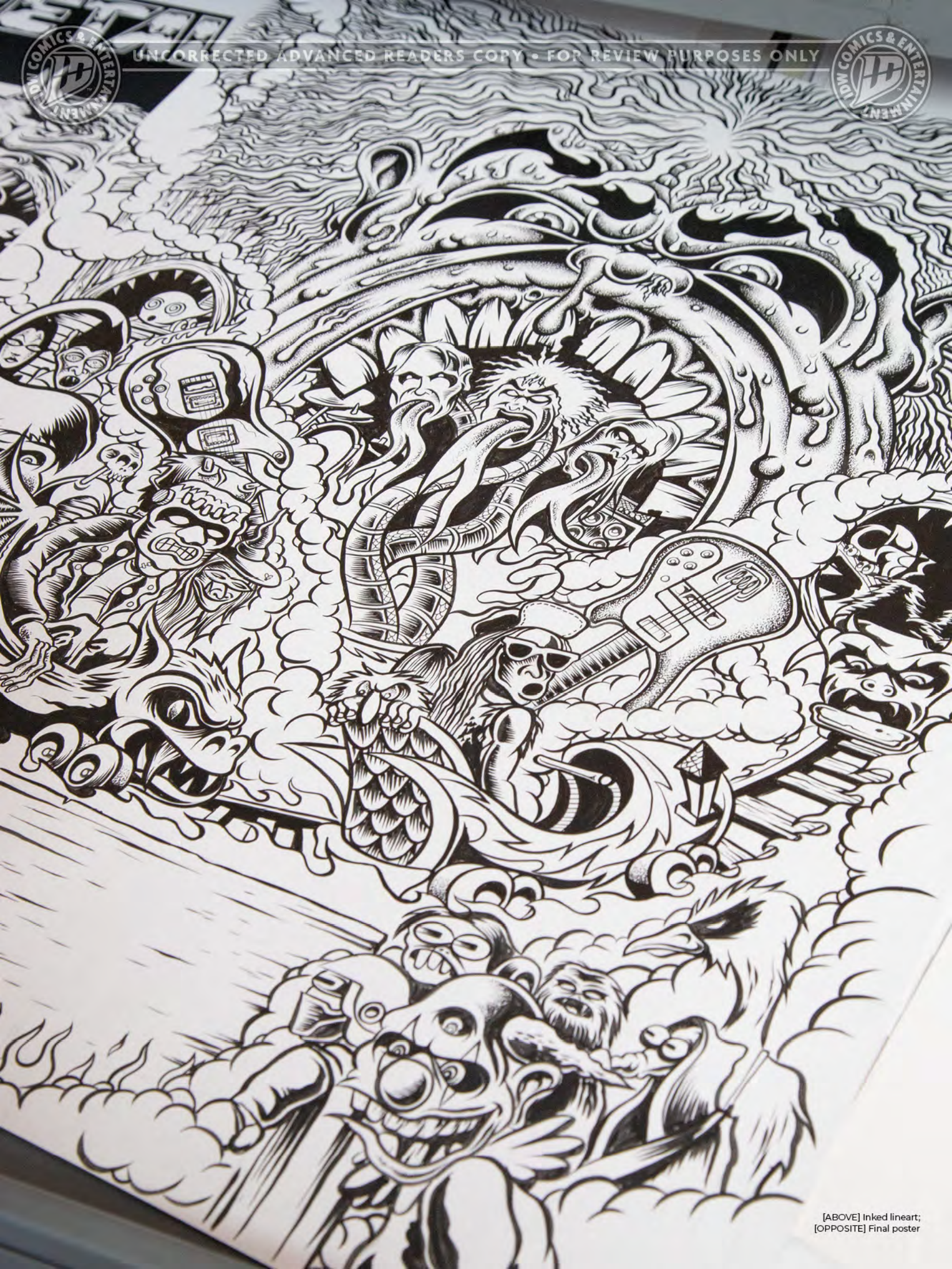


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I love doing these spooky dark ride themes, and I think this is my favorite one! It's a poster for my old friends Secret Serpents. It's now local to me, with Pappy & Harriet's being just 5 minutes up the hill. I'd love to create a real-life version of this.

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[ABOVE] Inked lineart;
[OPPOSITE] Final poster

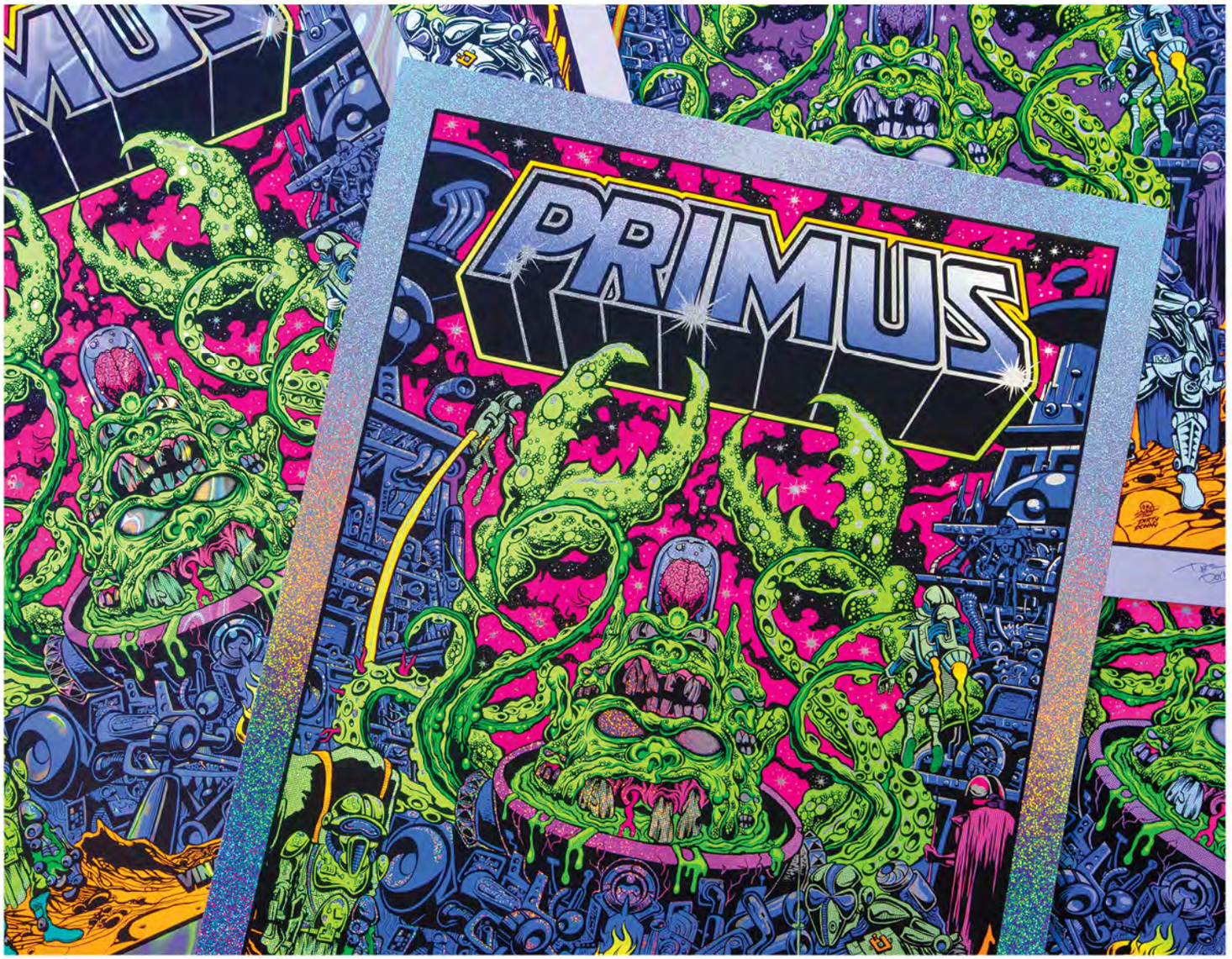
WELCOME TO THIS WORLD

This was a really fun poster to design.

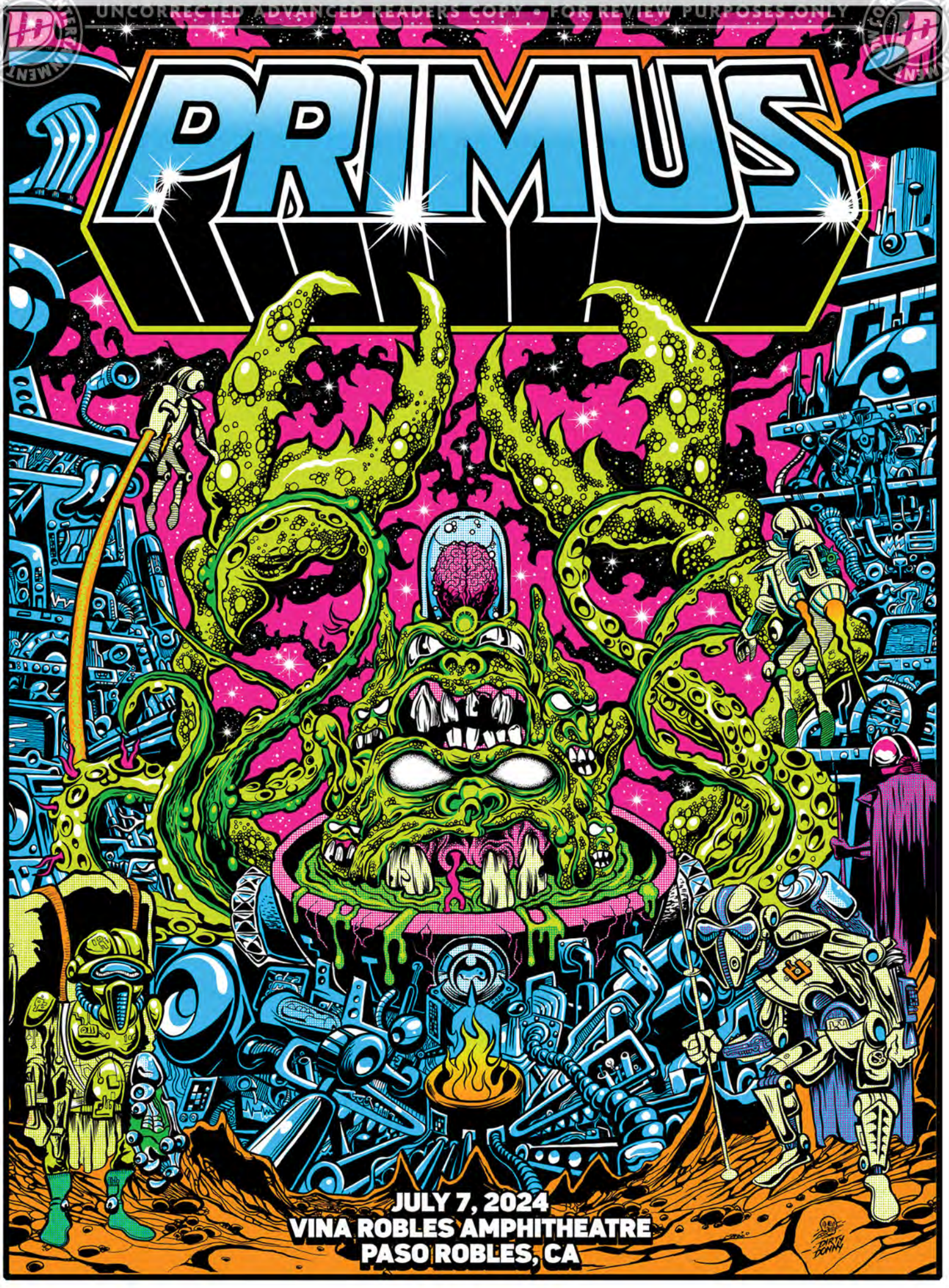
I wanted to further explore and do something retro sci-fi. Something in the vein of Moebius meets Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles meets Masters of the Universe. Something you might see in an old issue of *Heavy Metal*. We were just moving out of our former house and into the current one when this gig landed on my plate. I had the makeshift studio set up and had a few weeks of downtime before all the paperwork went through and we could, in fact, move into the new place. A little stressed but finding myself with a free window, I managed to pencil out all the rough in one morning. Then I set out to ink, color, and finalize the design. It's one of my favorite posters to date.



[ABOVE] Shot of Donny's workspace that is in part inspiration for this piece; [BELOW] Foil and other variant prints; [OPPOSITE] Final poster



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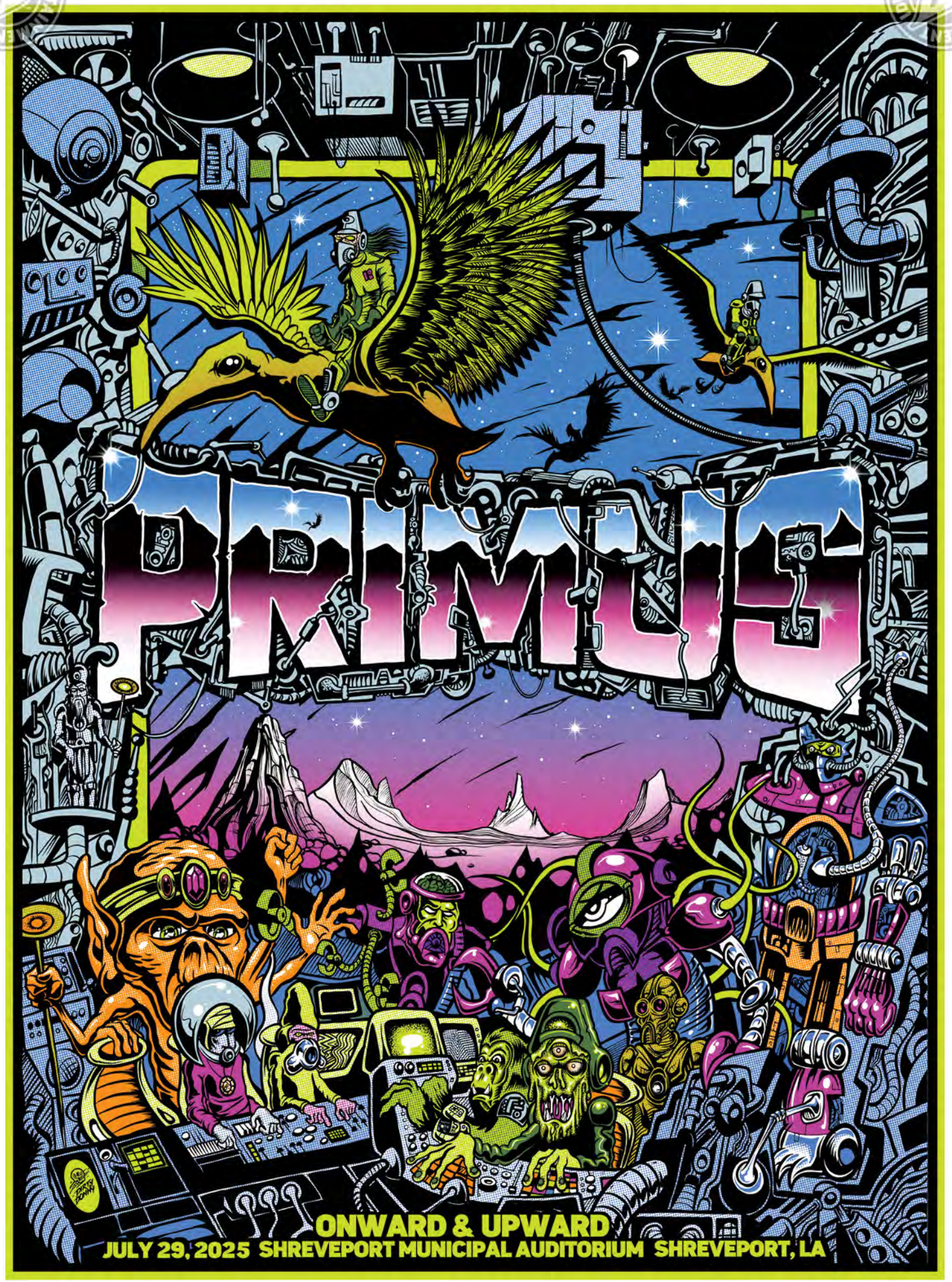


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This one was a nod to artist Moebius and my further journeys into retro sci-fi. The background was something I copped from Vision Skateboards retro deck art, the Hippie Stick. I had been staring at that board on my wall for years and finally I was like, "I'm going to squeeze a little retro skating art in there." Vision Skateboards has their own style of art that really resonated with me as a kid. My first deck was the Vision Lobster Fantail. I like it because it has so many dayglo colors and a pile of fishbones, as I was listening to a lot of Fishbone at the time. The last piece in this retro-inspired piece was the logo/ring from the '80s film *Beastmaster*. That was just begging to be reused.

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[OPPOSITE] Completed Bellvue, CO. show poster;
[ABOVE] Finished poster for *Onward & Upward* tour.

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P317 ©DIRTY DONNY GILLIES PRINTED BY MONOLITH PRESS, OAKLAND CALIFORNIA

JULY 2, 2018 SALTAIR PAVILION SALT LAKE CITY, UT

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If Jerry was in fact a racecar driver, I envision him as a Weird-oh/RF/Basil Wolverton kinda fella that drives a 1969 Plymouth Satellite. Ahh, that's too easy, and so was this poster, but that's why it's so much fun! Sue me for not being original but I was totally just messing around and foresaw a lot of gooeyness, bubble gum, cheese, and a good old fashioned monster driving a wacky car. (My 1969 Plymouth Satellite was almost orange until we decided on black.



BREATHE IN THE AIR



Whether you are a fan of Pink Floyd or not, *The Dark Side of the Moon* is all around a great record. So naturally, that was the theme I chose when asked to do this poster for another show that took place back in the day that had no event artwork. This was also a dedication to my late dog Tuesday. I used to call her Little Rabbit (from the song "Breathe (In The Air)"), and I miss her every day. I chose a show in Montreal, Canada as a dedication to the early days of my art career. I used to see this first gen Ford van driving around San Francisco with the *Dark Side* triangle logo painted on the side—it was striking. For this reason, I decided to feature a 1973 Ford in the art (also because I think they look cooler and I wanted the year to match the show date).

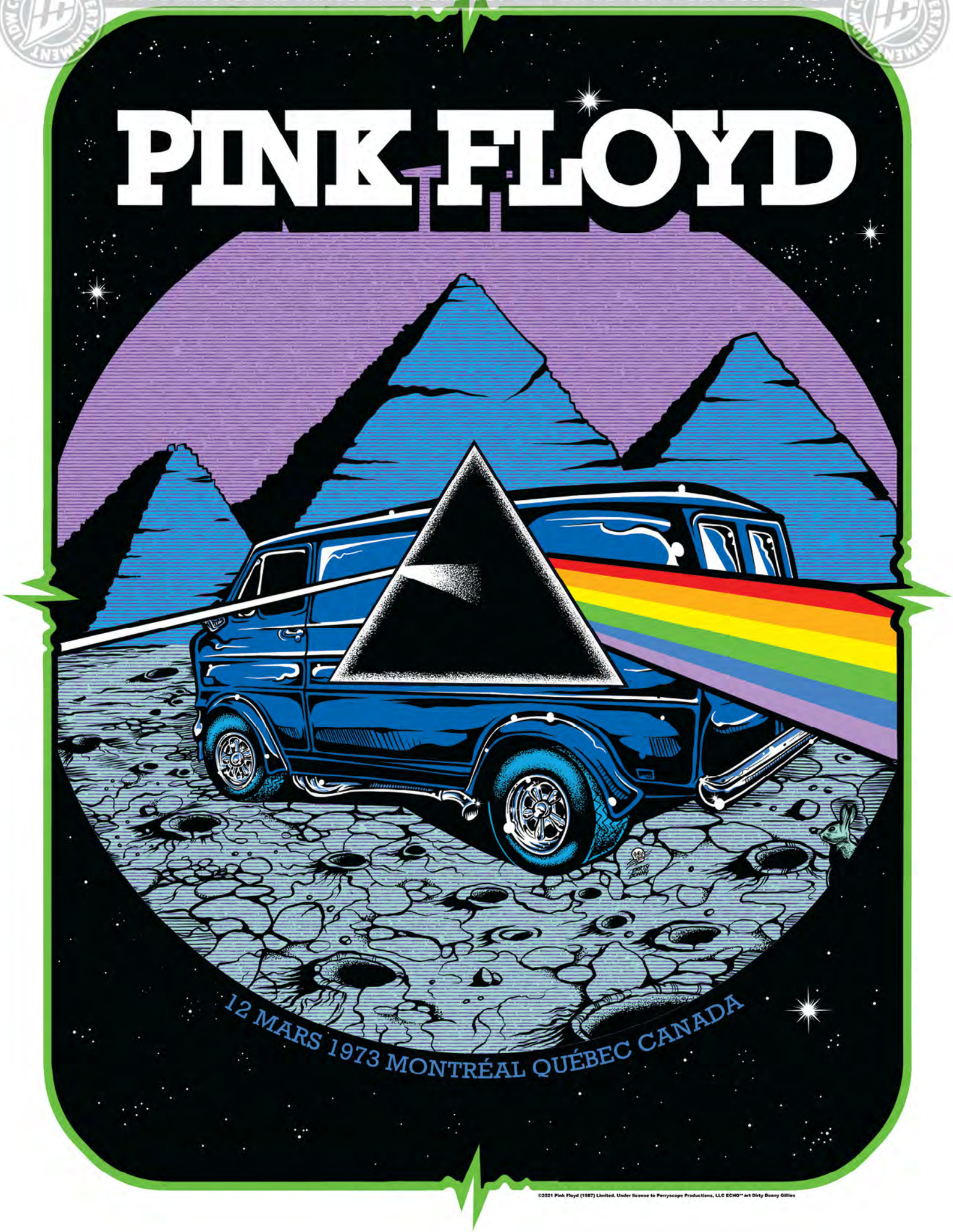
The publisher told me I could use as many colors as I wanted for this screen print. But when it clocked in at sixteen colors and he got the quote, he lost it! But no problem; with just a few adjustments, we got it down to seven so the cost of printing it made sense. I'm used to working with five colors (including black) so most of my posters are thought out this way. I was also fun to do something not in fluorescent inks for a change. The four primary fluorescents are my official color palette but working outside of that is sometimes nice.

RIP, Tuesday. We miss you.

[ABOVE] Tuesday;
[BELOW] Inked lineart;
[OPPOSITE] Final poster



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GOIN' DOWN TO THE DRUG STORE

Rock posters have always been cool, which is why you rarely see them anymore. Like cars and guitars and just about everything else, the modern world makes ugly, uninspiring art and design that benefit the few and edify no one. But some artists still swim against the current, creating work that is as organic as it is disturbing, art that rests on the shoulders of giants, but pisses in the face of the predictable. Dirty Donny is one such artist, a maverick among mavericks.

Leaving his native land of back bacon and humility, he came to America with a dream and just a few loonies in his pocket. In the decades since, he has conquered the rock poster world, revolutionized the pinball design industry, and emptied more glasses than Doug Ford on a crack binge. Wherever rock stars congregate, he's spoken of in hushed whispers. Donny sightings at expensive restaurants and low rate skateparks alike engender internet mob scenes where throngs of adoring fans trample each other just for a gander at the man who made Aerosmith and Metallica tolerable again.

I started a legendary punk band called The Dwarves. Dirty Donny rescued us from obscurity through his record covers and posters, vaulting us to the status of rock deities and ensuring my wealth for generations to come. While I personally owe him a great deal, all Americans are indeed fortunate that this transplant from the land of April Wine and Avril Whiney has graced us with his genius. His work stands like a shining beacon to those who would oppose the mundane and herald the coming vanguard, a living, breathing inspiration to innovators everywhere. Where will Donny's instincts guide him next? No one knows. But in the words of another great Canadian, "It's time I take off, eh?"

Blag Dhalia
The Dwarves









[ABOVE] Photo of Donny with the band by Oly Kaz Photography; [BELOW] Blacklight 7-inch vinyl record by Donny's label Why Me? Records; [OPPOSITE] Final poster

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[ABOVE] Inked character studies and inked Dwarves band members; [OPPOSITE] Final poster

The Dwarves destroy all bands. Young and good looking, dirt you cannot clean, lean and mean, blood and speed, Dirty Donny's blacklight magic art, the children of the night, and the music we create goes hand-in-hand psychic magic cosmic dirt rock gear head wrenching on hot rods greasy stoner punk rock I've been up all night on PCP and LSD, THE DWARVES and DIRTY DONNY are what you need . . .

Nick Oliveri
The Dwarves, Stöner, Mondo Generator

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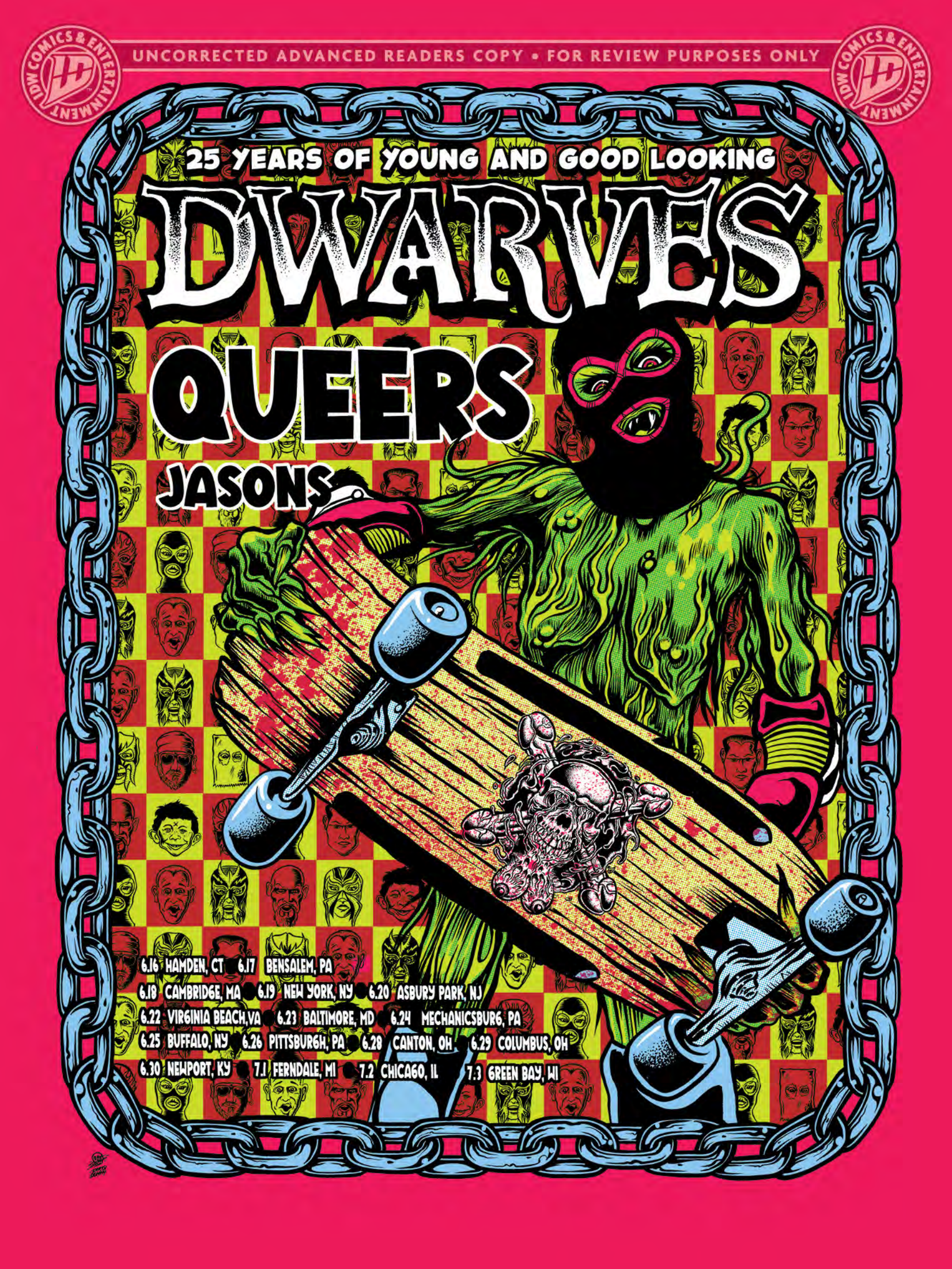
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25 YEARS OF YOUNG AND GOOD LOOKING

DWARVES

QUEERS

JASONS



6.16 HAMDEN, CT 6.17 BENSALEM, PA
6.18 CAMBRIDGE, MA 6.19 NEW YORK, NY 6.20 ASBURY PARK, NJ
6.22 VIRGINIA BEACH,VA 6.23 BALTIMORE, MD 6.24 MECHANICSBURG, PA
6.25 BUFFALO, NY 6.26 PITTSBURGH, PA 6.28 CANTON, OH 6.29 COLUMBUS, OH
6.30 NEWPORT, KY 7.1 FERNDALE, MI 7.2 CHICAGO, IL 7.3 GREEN BAY, WI

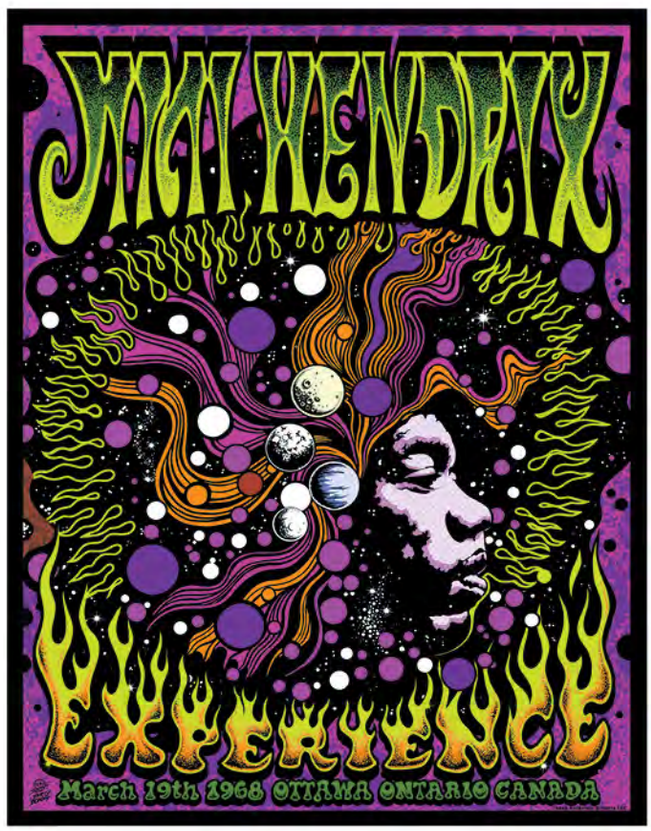
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This set of works started with the first oil painting I did at Frank Kozik's studio back in 2009.

Frank taught me how to use oil paints, and this is what I created. Echo Print, an online art poster retailer, licensed this famous photo with the Hendrix estate and that became the official poster you see here. It's also another in the series where I was asked to choose a date from the past that had no poster artwork. As a nod to my past, I chose a show from my hometown of Ottawa, Canada.

The poster style has been a hoot over the years and led to more official merch with my old friends at Dunlop.





[LEFT] Ink in progress; [ABOVE and BELOW] Alternate concept posters; [OPPOSITE] Final poster



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[ABOVE] Original oil painting
[OPPOSITE] Painting in progress



JEERS OF A CLOWN

Deciding to swing something close to a "tour" that New Bomb Turks hadn't tried in a while, we thought it might be cool to get a tour poster going. So, of course, we automatically thought of DIRTY DONNY! We first met him in Ottawa, circa 1996, where the lil' blast-eyed bastard interviewed us for his zine, Dirty Magazine. His admirable, inherent sense of excitedly fuckin' around was evident. I kept in touch with him a bit over the years, as he focused on his art vision of a blazing world of neon monsters, anthropomorphic motor oil, and apocalyptic horizons. It was a gas/honor to get all his stinky-ink talents together for our summer 2025 tour poster, one of the top five posters we ever had. Thanks, Donny!

Eric Davidson,
New Bomb Turks



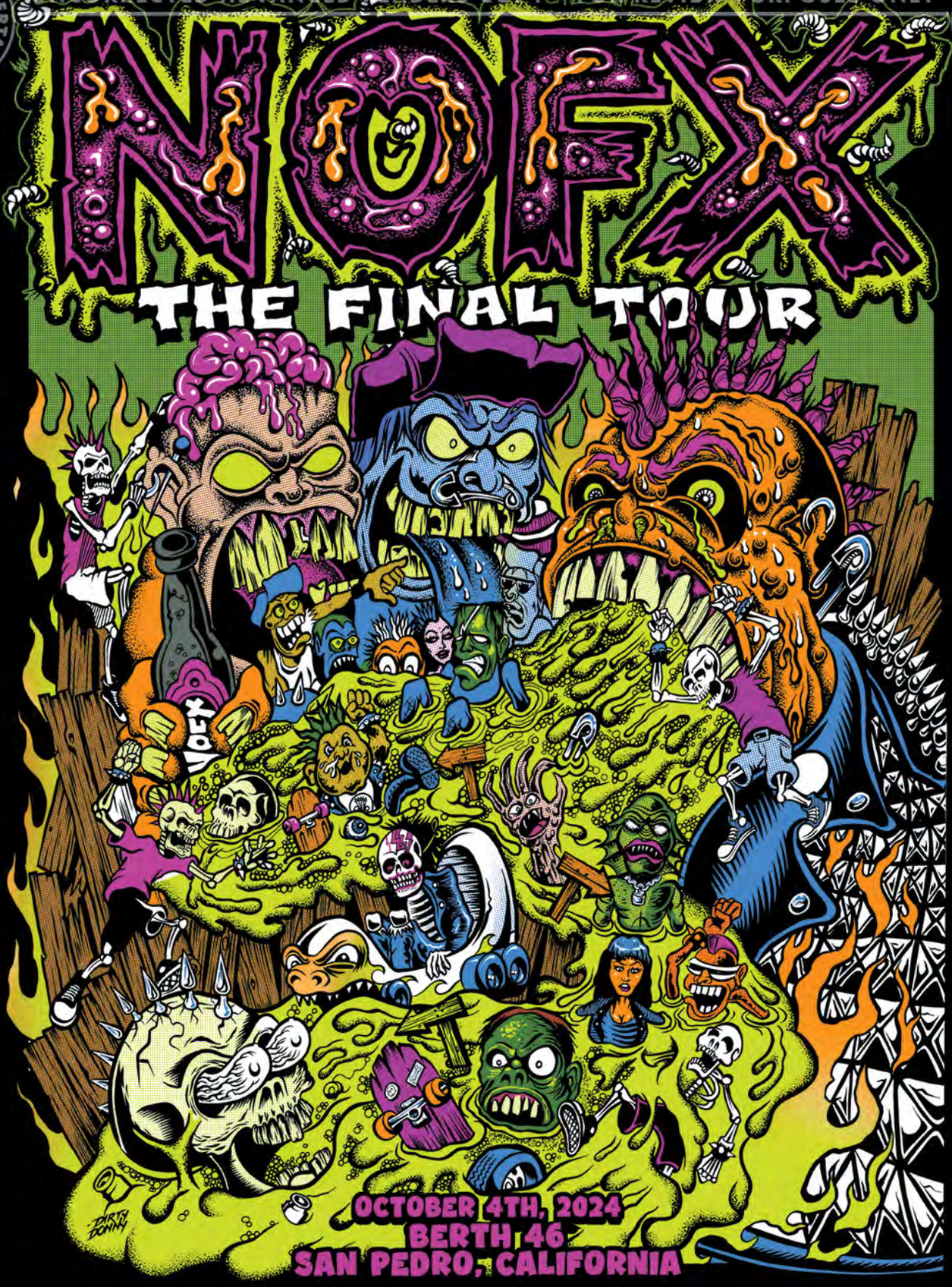
[ABOVE] Donny and the New Bomb Turks hanging at Alex's Bar in Long Beach, California— Photography by Rainer Ziehm; [BELOW] Inking in progress; [OPPOSITE] Final poster



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Rock 'n' roll and art have always gone hand-in-hand. Music pleases the ears and the soul and art pleases the eyes. When I was a kid, I used to stare at all the flyers on the wall and album covers that I had, and I would soak that in just as much as I soaked in the music. It took something you couldn't see . . . and made it visible.

Look at the black flag logos and Van Halen's first album. They are synonymous with the band—just as important as the music. Donny's art has always captured that . . . and with a DIY punk rock ethic!

When I look at all the art that he's done, and see that my band is in that pile, I am honored and beyond appreciative! Thank you, Donny!

Smelly
NOFX

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STRIKES LIKE LIGHTNING

It was a great honor to be asked to do a poster for The Hellacopters's last show. Turns out the band would re-form a few years later and I would get asked to do another poster for a new tour! The Hellacopters are one of the finest bands in rock and roll and have been part of the soundtrack to my art over the years. It's always a blast to get to do work with them!



[ABOVE] CD Packaging and book; [RIGHT] VIP all access passes; [BELOW] Donny with Nicke Anderson; [FAR RIGHT] Official t-shirts; [BELOW CENTER] Guitar picks; [OPPOSITE] Official tour poster

Dirty Donny - a true master of art.

Having the opportunity to collaborate with Donny for a number of our releases - be it album covers, screen printed posters, t-shirts, guitar picks or even a pinball machine (!) - has been nothing short of amazing. We Salute You!

Robert Eriksson
The Hellacopters





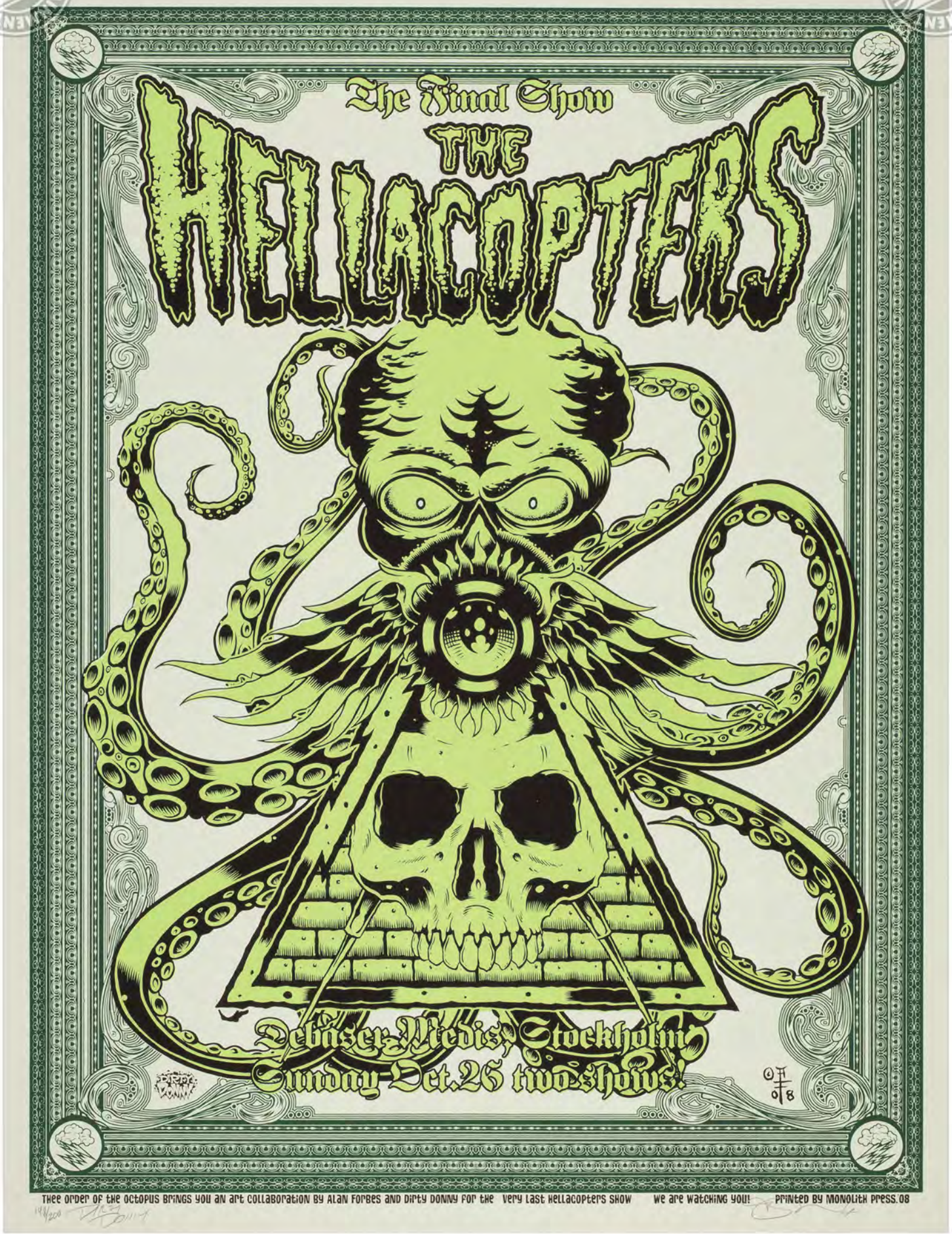




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[ABOVE] Glow in the dark poster collaboration between Donny and Alan Forbes; [OPPOSITE] Official tour poster

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THE HELLACOPTERS 1994/2008 DIRTY DONNY ART POSTER AND FAREWELL TRIBUTE TO THE GREATEST BAND TO WALK THE PLANET. YOU WILL BE MISSED! LIMITED SERIES SET OF 4 PRINTED BY MONOLITH PRESS

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[ABOVE] Unpolished ink drawing; [LEFT] photo of The Chats on stage taken by Donny, [OPPOSITE] Official tour poster

I was blown away by the poster Donny drew for us. It's probably the coolest art anyone's ever done for us. Friends and fans were telling me how much they loved it as well!

Eamon Sandwith
The Chats

PRESENTED BY PALADIN ARTISTS, BARGAIN BIN RECORDS AND TBC MANAGEMENT
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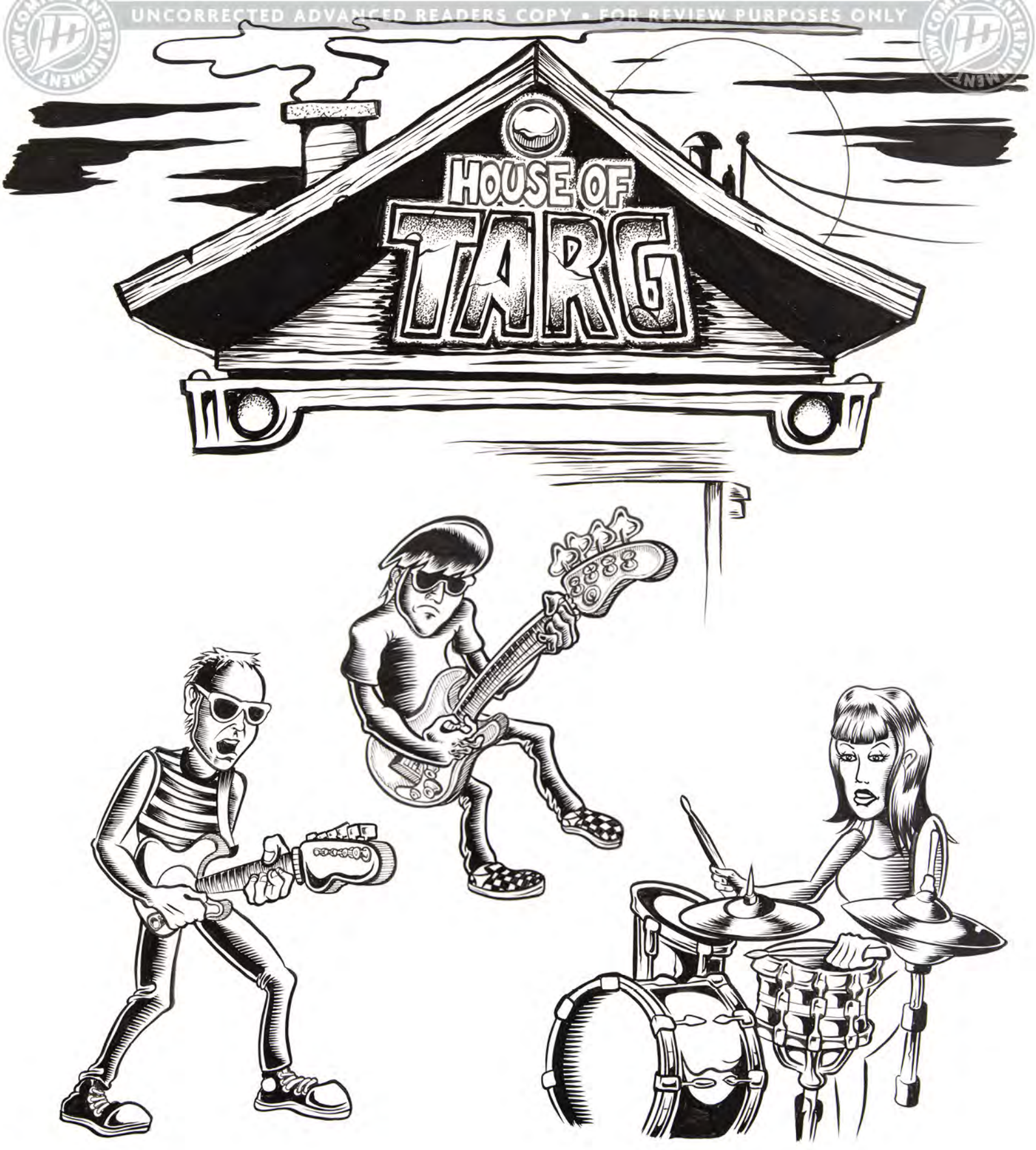
THE CHATS

COSMIC PSYCHOS
SCHIZOPHONICS
GYMSHORTS

NORTH AMERICA 2023

DIRTY DONNY

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It was my birthday show back in my hometown of Ottawa. My old friend Luke Martin (White Wires/Million Dollar Marxists/Dirty Magazine/Cruds) put together the show with assist from Jennie and I, Luke did all the heavy lifting including a total surprise set from The Million Dollar Marxists, I was shocked! This was one of the funnest shows ever! My old friend, record slinger/rocker John Westhaver DJ's the night. Atari Matt came out all the way from Texas, Fubar Terry came from Calgary and Johnathan Cummins and his Low Sixes from Montreal! Lots of family and old friends came out and I even hired myself to do my own poster! I was having so much fun I forgot to put the posters out till later in the night but peeps were stoked.

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The first time I met Donny was in 2007 at a pinball show at the fairgrounds in Dixon, California. He was showing a pinball machine featuring his art for The Hellacopters, who are one of my favorite bands. I still have the signed print of the back glass art that I bought from him that day.

After that first meeting, I continued to follow Donny's art and career and our paths crossed many times around San Francisco or when we both found ourselves at San Diego Comic-Con. Then, in 2018, things came full circle when a documentary film based on the book I co-authored, *Murder in the Front Row*, was nearing its theatrical release.

The film's director, Adam Dubin, asked my thoughts about an artist who could create a poster for the film. I immediately thought of Donny. His art perfectly captures the vibe and mayhem of the film's subject, the early '80s Bay Area thrash metal scene!

Brian Lew
Co-author of *Murder in the Front Row*

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Meeting Donny, I knew we had so much in common. I loved his illustration and his design work, our shared love of muscle cars, dune buggies, hot rods. Groovy culture fun zone beatnik . . . that's Donny. From my deep dives into low brow art and poster collecting.

It was a journey I started in the '80s with punk rock and the hand-in-hand role that art played in that scene. My collecting continued to the great Kustom Kulture artists like Ed Roth and Robert Williams, Pizz, Coop, Lindsey Kuhn, and Frank Kozik.

Donny mastered the vibe of the band Stöner (Brant Bjork, Nick Oliveri, Ryan Güt) in his designs for show art and merch. The

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firebird flamed in Stoney roach clip goodness . . . badass and perfect. Another great addition of Donny art to our events was the Joshua Tree boogie van groove of the Heavy Psych Sounds festival poster—black light magic and in limited glitter stock and reflective stock. Donny's vibe was all over that band, with him even helping us make a promo video with his beautiful black Mopar making a cameo and Donny playing the pizza delivery punk . . . perfect performance. Thanks for all the radness Don . . . you rule.

Mario "Boomer" Lalli
Fatso Jetson, Yawning Man, Brant Bjork Trio,
The Rubber Snake Charmers

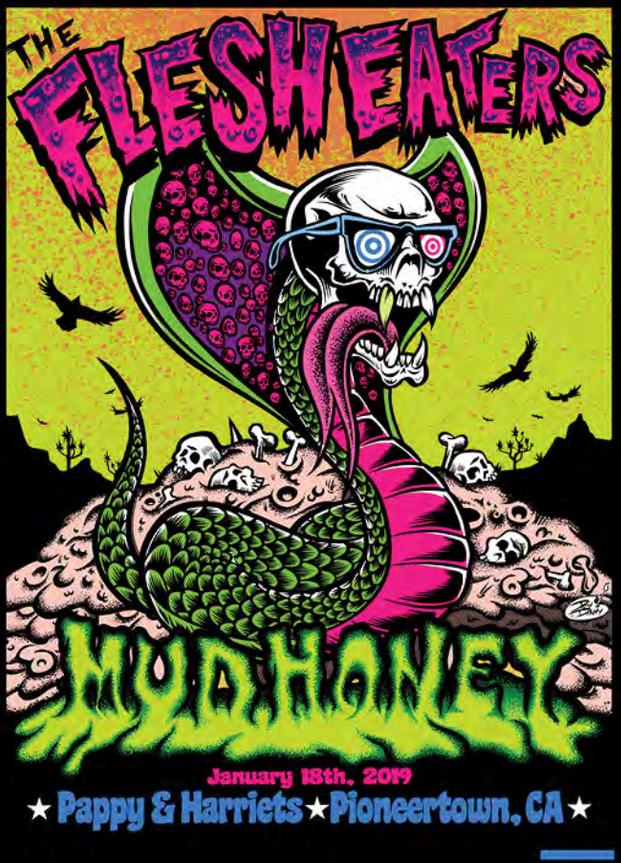
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In the spirit of Ed Roth, Von Dutch, Mad magazine, Evel Knievel and hot rods, Donny's art comes straight out of counter-culture—loud, fast, and unapologetic hand-drawn on purpose, It's dangerous, funny, and pissed off just like the music, loud, no-rules, beer soaked art.

I love this poster for so many reasons, I grew up with hot rod counter culture and this style of art, Donny keeps this art alive and in my opinion he's the best at it right now. I also Love the Cosmic Psychos and now forever inked to paper a piece of rock n roll history.

Donny Paycheck
ZEKE

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Fri. Oct 10, 2014 Slim's San Francisco with Danva

OLD DAYS REVISITED

This is a spread of early flyers and posters ranging from the early '90s to mid '00s. In my early years of doing gig posters, I had no computer so I would mix my drawings and letters with photocopy layout jobs. I would take the bus to the Bayshore Mall in Ottawa and hog the copy machine at the office supply store. The clerks knew me by name and gave me the freedom to just do my thing.









Most of my band, Zine, and sticker printing was done here. I knew Randy O'Grady, the promoter for an upcoming Bad Brains show. We lived in the same part of town, and he asked me if I wanted to do the poster. He still had one of the XL copies and gave it to me for this shoot. It was mostly done with sharpies and the photocopy machine. I did, however, make a logo for a band that didn't have one and hand lettered all the record stores. The Montreal ones I did with art pens and paper and a little resizing at the copy place. Later, when I moved to San Francisco, I fell in with the Firehouse rock poster company, run by two dudes, Ron Donovan (RIP) and Chuck Sperry, who did their own printing and art but loved to collaborate with new artists. I really enjoy looking back at the posters we made together, and I learned a lot collaborating with them. We had a good little run together and I even lived at Chuck's place while I was settling into San Francisco. I was getting a lot of work, so I branched off and started hiring other printers. I did a few with Black Cat Press in Sacramento, then moved to Monolith Press in Oakland/Alameda, with whom I still print to this day and who are featured in this book.

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CHAPTER TWO

ULTRAVIOLET INFERNO

My allure to blacklight posters started at a young age, but it wasn't just the neon bright dayglow coming to life under a blacklight with soft velvet flocking and insane outsider artwork with Grim reapers riding choppers, wizards and warriors fighting dragons, and magic ice castles punctuated by a sky full of lightning. The headshop and department stores that carried these posters were just part of what the Pinecrest Mall had to offer. There were burgers at the food court, t-shirt transfer pressing islands, hobby stores, and then the main event—the arcade!

Electronic Encounters was our neighborhood's Saturday meet up spot. This was the first place I played *Centipede*, *Donkey Kong Jr.*, *Star Wars*, *Star Trek* and a new game called *Rampage*. I would daydream of trips to EE, so much so that I would draw out video game characters and scenarios in my notebooks. Desperate for cash to fuel our video addiction, my friend Trevor and I made our own carnival "Toss a Coin, Win a Prize" game in his backyard where kids would stand at the fence and flip coins into cups and jars that we placed on his family picnic table. Behind the cups and jars were toys—Transformers to be precise. It wasn't rigged but it might as well have been. It was next to impossible to get a coin in; we were true carnies. We walked away with $15 and blew it all at the arcade on the new game, *Rampage*.

Years later at my home in San Francisco, I had been collecting my secret obsession, vintage blacklight posters. I had my first solo art show in 2010 at CoproGallery in Santa Monica, California. It was to be a retro sci-fi themed show, but I had two rooms to fill and not enough retro sci-fi paintings to do it. Then I thought this might be the perfect time to try to create a set of blacklight poster paintings in my own style. They ended up being the hit of the show which set off a lightbulb: Maybe I should apply this to a poster and see what happens? So, again, I mixed my style with this reverse engineered blacklight recipe and what I ended up with was a sold-out poster. This new mix turned into what was to be my new art style and also something nobody was doing at the time.

From 2010 until 2020, I was touring the pinball/retro gaming convention circuit. As a guest artist at these shows, I would walk the floor after setting up and couldn't help but notice that there was no retro arcade art for sale. This is when I set out to make an arcade mashup blacklight poster and again, it sold out. The series I started back in 2011 inevitably fired up a collaboration with Scorpio Posters/Black Ball Corp. They are one of the largest and oldest blacklight poster companies in the world. I still make my own limited works, but Scorpio handles some of the hits, keeping them in the public eye and further embedding the Dirty Donny name into pop culture history.

In this chapter we focus on my early blacklight poster prints right through to my arcade inspired mash ups, official *Stranger Things* set and collaborations with New Wave Toys and my late friend Ricky Powell.

Be sure to turn on your blacklight, open your third eye, and let the art do the rest. It was made for you.

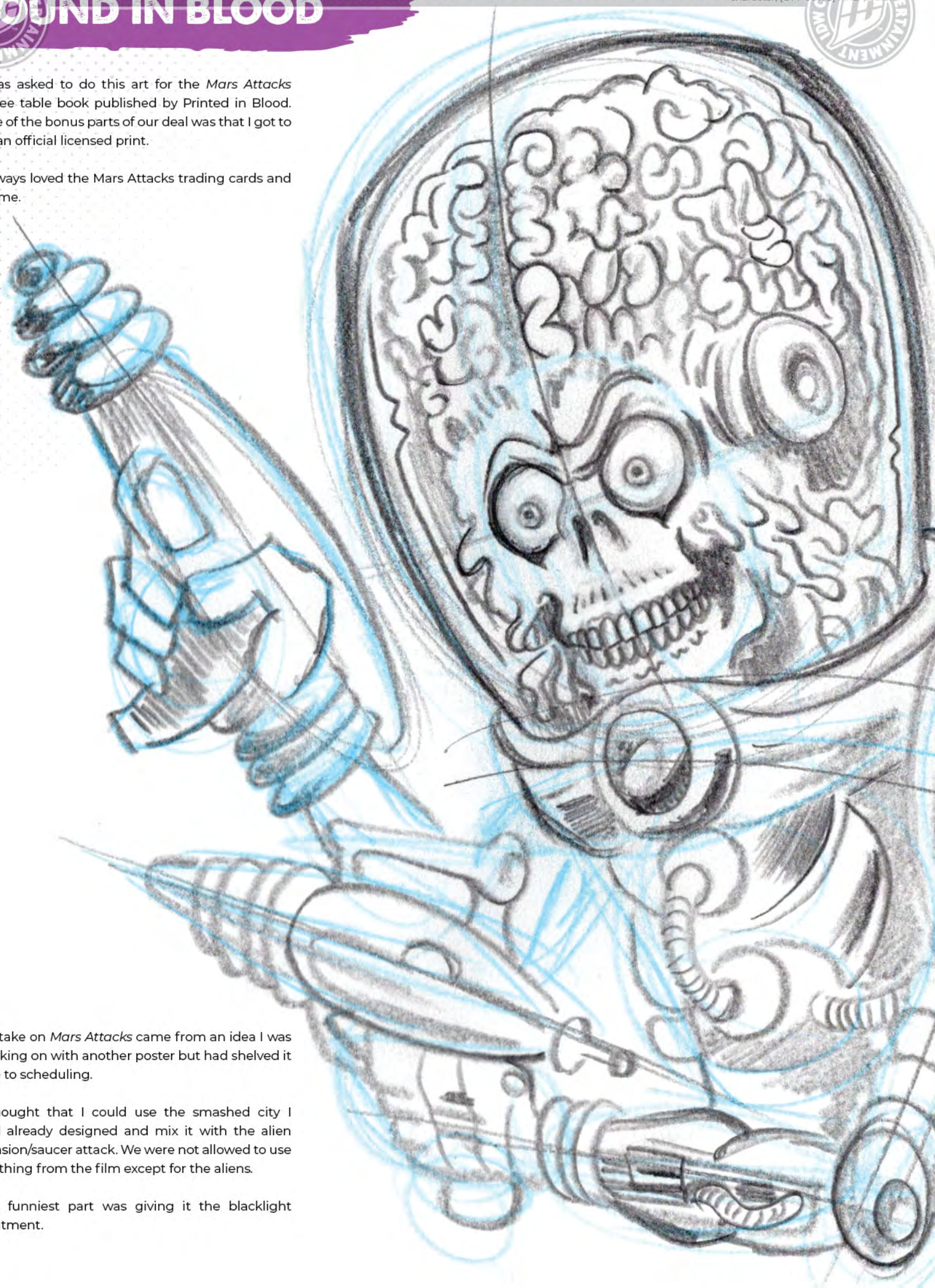
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BOUND IN BLOOD

[BELOW] Initial sketch of alien character. [OPPOSITE] Final poster.

I was asked to do this art for the *Mars Attacks* coffee table book published by Printed in Blood. One of the bonus parts of our deal was that I got to do an official licensed print.

I always loved the Mars Attacks trading cards and theme.



My take on *Mars Attacks* came from an idea I was working on with another poster but had shelved it due to scheduling.

I thought that I could use the smashed city I had already designed and mix it with the alien invasion/saucer attack. We were not allowed to use anything from the film except for the aliens.

The funniest part was giving it the blacklight treatment.

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MARS ATTACKS TM 2025 ATOMIC TOYBOX ENTERTAINMENT INC. 2025 DIRTY DONNY GILLIES PRINTED AT MONOLITH PRESS

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BURNING CHROME

This was a real fun poster to create for one of my all-time favorite magazines, *Heavy Metal*! I'd had the theme in mind for a while and been really into collecting post-apocalyptic themed movies on VHS—you know, the *Mad Max* rip-off films of the '80s?

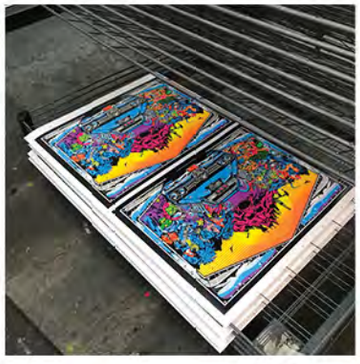
I'd see a lot of these on the video rental store wall as a kid. I thought, *How cool would it be to do a print based on a post-apocalyptic B-film that could have been turned into a pinball machine.* My own pinball that never existed! The car is based on my 1969 Plymouth Satellite but *Max*-ed out with wasteland armor. The creatures and goons are loosely influenced from comic books and toys I had when I was a kid as well as the films I had been collecting.











[TOP] Final inks for car detail; [ABOVE] The printing process at Monolith Printing; [BELOW] Final inks for skull mountain detail; [OPPOSITE] Final poster



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MONSTER MAIL ORDER

MAIL THIS EASY-TO-ORDER COUPON TODAY!

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____

NO C.O.D.'s PLEASE. Print name & address clearly on all orders.

DIRTY DONNY

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[THIS PAGE] Jigsaw puzzle; [OPPOSITE] Final poster

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[LEFT] Tropical Gothic LP record sleeve; [BELOW] Final inked art; [OPPOSITE] Final colored art.



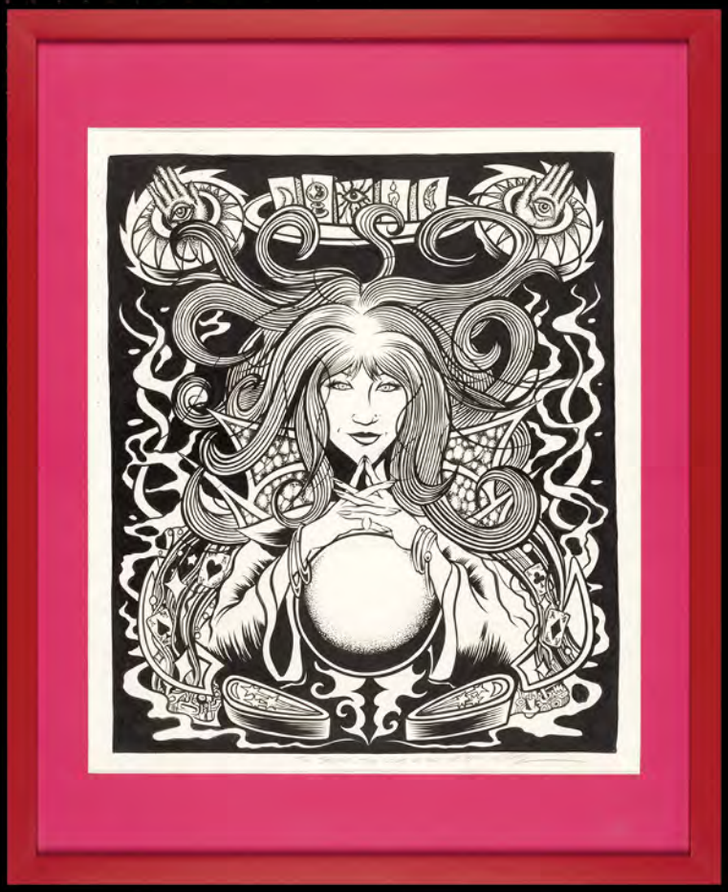
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LADY OF FORTUNE

I did this one for Jennie back when we were dating. We would hit up a lot of antique malls and come across a bunch of fortune teller imagery. So, I did this based on the stuff we had found. It ended up being a hit at the shows and people always ask her to sign them! It has had its own 18 x 24-inch version as well as mini and micro versions. We see it all over the place—someone even did mural on the side of their barcade!





[ABOVE] Final inked poster gifted to Jennie; [BELOW] Mark Bolan portrait gifted to Jennie by Donny; [RIGHT] Jennie with the dune buggy; [OPPOSITE] Final poster



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HAVE YOU PLAYED ATARI TODAY?

This was a New Wave Toys/Atari team up.

I had already done the Crystal Castles/Q-Bert mashup for my friend Shon Dolcini as a sort of collaboration for his San Francisco Pinball business and everyone loved it, so this was a perfect project to get asked to do and was super fun to illustrate. The arcade machine is so pretty and colorful and the game itself is pretty insane. Plus, I'm a big fan of Atari. Another dream gig.







[TOP RIGHT] Donny receiving an Atari console for Christmas; [THIS PAGE] Inked details; [OPPOSITE] Final poster







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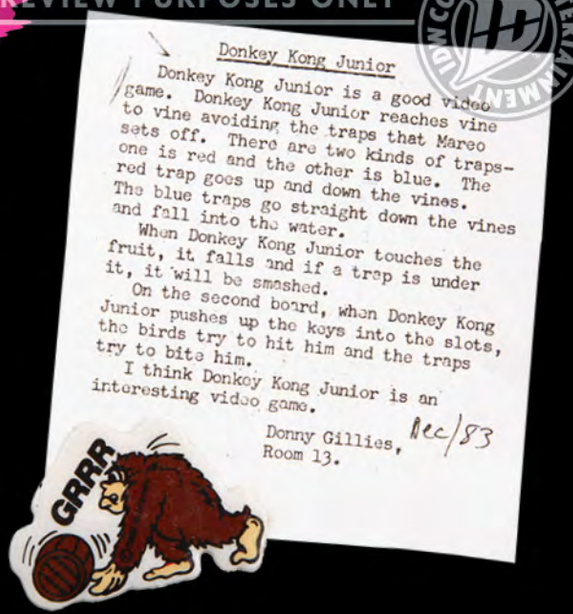


ELECTRONIC ENCOUNTERS

After creating my first arcade mashup, I was asked to do posters for various events like the Midwest Gaming Classic and Stern Pro Circuit championships. I was even asked to do one for DesignerCon! My favorite part of these events was walking the retro game flea markets during setup and getting first picks of all the amazing consoles and cartridges. My golden rule is "in box only" because we are collectors or, as we like to call it, organized hoarders.

After all these event posters, I started collaborating with New Wave Toys. It started with micro blacklight posters, then grew into accessories and even full posters for their Atari collaboration and New Wave Toys themselves. Not only did I have my own home arcade but a micro one for my studio as well. Inspiration was everywhere.

We had a lot of fun plans, but these were put on hold due to the untimely death of Shilo Prychak (RIP), the owner and head creator. He was one awesome guy, and I miss working with him.



Donkey Kong Junior

Donkey Kong Junior is a good video game. Donkey Kong Junior reaches vine to vine avoiding the traps that Mareo sets off. There are two kinds of traps- one is red and the other is blue. The red trap goes up and down the vines. The blue traps go straight down the vines and fall into the water.

When Donkey Kong Junior touches the fruit, it falls and if a trap is under it, it will be smashed.

On the second board, when Donkey Kong Junior pushes up the keys into the slots, the birds try to hit him and the traps try to bite him.

I think Donkey Kong Junior is an interesting video game.

Donny Gillies, Dec/83
Room 13.

[ABOVE] Donny's original review of *Donkey Kong*, publishing in a school zine; [BELOW] Donny in his home arcade; [OPPOSITE] Final DesignerCon poster



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[ABOVE] Arcade Monsters Barcade in San Diego

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[LEFT] Final posters; [BELOW] Arcade Monsters Barcade in San Diego; [OPPOSITE] Final poster.













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APRIL 13, 14 AND 15

WISCONSIN CENTER

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MICRO ARCADE EXPERIENCE

The team at New Wave Toys first met Donny back in 2022. Honestly, it was kind of a weird chance meeting really, almost as if it was always meant to be!

Donny reached out to us via email, letting us know that he already had some of our RepliCades in his toy collection, and to inform us that some of our customers had shared with him that they were using his mini prints to display their 1/6 scale RepliCade dioramas!

That email led to a phone meeting, and once our CEO Shilo Prychak and Dirty Donny both revealed to each other they were Canadian, you'd have thought two long-lost brothers had just found each other—Haha!

Shilo being a huge fan of all things Hot Rod culture, BMX racing, punk rock music, and of course, arcades, immediately added Donny's art into the mix here at New Wave.

I, myself, knew who Dirty Donny was because I had seen his art years prior, featured on the Metallica pinball machine, and I was also a fan of his retro-inspired DIRTY DONNY TV YouTube videos. Now having him on our team as a creative contributor was the coolest!

In addition to several mini prints, in the coming years Donny designed a custom UV Base Pad for us, mini stools, and even the artwork for our New Wave Toys 18 x 24-inch poster and limited merch run! We're also excited to reveal his Crystal Castles poster artwork later this year, once the RepliCade is finally released!

Donny and Shilo were known to spend hours on the phone together, having creative brainstorming sessions. Every few weeks, we'd have a company meeting, and Shilo would share ideas his with us, many from his conversations with Donny. My plan was to eventually get these two guys talking on camera together—either at a in-person live event, or on the *Arcade Life* podcast that I had started together with Shilo.

Sadly, Shilo Prychak passed away unexpectedly this past December, 2025, which was a shock for everyone involved with New Wave.

While the future of New Wave Toys might feel a little uncertain in this moment, I'm glad for the creative time we did share together, and I am looking forward to what the future may hold for us!

Eduardo Salomón
New Wave Toys



[ABOVE], Donny with the special Dirty Donny Cigarette Machine by New Wave Toys, [OPPOSITE] Final poster

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[ABOVE] The Dirty Donny Special Edition cigarette machine by New Wave Toys, displayed as part of Donny's collection of miniature arcade machines.

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[THIS PAGE] Prototype Master Blaster, hand painted by Donny.
[OPPOSITE] Final bust.



He's roughly 25 inches tall, lights up and houses the M90 Bluetooth Boombox. I airbrushed him to show the factory what he was supposed to look like.

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I was going through old footage from Ricky's trip to San Francisco for my last book launch in 2016. We had a fun day driving around Haight St. in my old van as my friend Brett Stillo filmed us. This was the day I showed him the Boom Box collab. Ricky was thrilled and signed them all. In the beginning of this project, Ricky trustingly granted me access to his photo archive because I had the idea to use the speakers as picture frames. My old friend and collaborating partner Wade Krause made the boxes on his CNC router then screen printed them up and they couldn't have come out better. Wade is a master of all things unique,

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and he played a key part in this collaboration. A few years later, Ricky had passed away and his documentary, *The Individualist*, was released. It was hard to sit down and watch but was also like a visit with a friend. The film was so well done. I was overwhelmed with emotions as our collaboration was in the first few minutes of the film. It was shocking— it wasn't on my mind at all and then slam! There it was, in the film. I had to pause for a minute before returning to it. I don't know why he liked me, some weirdo Canadian transplant, but I guess he saw something in me. I miss him a lot. He was probably the coolest dude I knew. Rest in Paradise, Rickster.





[TOP LEFT] Final inks; [LEFT] Final piece, mounted on wood with photos inset; [RIGHT] Donny with Ricky in San Francisco.

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JOURNEY INTO THE UPSIDE DOWN

I originally did the first design for a *Stranger Things* art book published by Printed in Blood. Netflix chose it out of the book to be used on merchandise. When season 4 was coming out, they reached out and asked if I would be interested in doing not only one but a set of designs. This was a lot of fun because I enjoyed the series and was familiar with the characters and storyline. I immediately got to work on their request list. Sometimes it can be challenging to work with such large companies but the art department at Netflix was friendly and easy to work with, so we banged it out. All four designs have been made into countless merchandise items including posters, T-Shirts, and lunchboxes. The images have even been spotted at Stranger Things: The Experience.



[ABOVE] Initial pencil sketch; [BELOW] Donny working on the poster; [OPPOSITE] Final poster



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[THIS PAGE] Inked details;
[OPPOSITE] Final poster



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[THIS PAGE: Inked detail]
[OPPOSITE: Final poster]



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STRANGER THINGS



@dirtydonnyart

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I was recently at Walmart with my family and had wandered off on my own. While looking around, I scanned a shelf of *Stranger Things* goodies only to see my art on a lunch box! Imagine that, out in the wild seeing my drawings being sold in a department store.









[THIS PAGE] Lunchbox details;
[OPPOSITE] Final poster

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CHAPTER THREE



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Dirty Donny Gillies came screaming into the world in the year of our Gord 1974 (Downie, Lightfoot, and Howe... You Choose!!) Under the wide winter skies of Ottawa, Ontario—a capital city with a Parliamentary heartbeat, and a Pond-Hockey soul. Canada breeds a certain kind of observer. The kind who can stare down a February blizzard and still see the neon glow through the cacophonous snow. In Canada, you learn early that warmth isn't given—it's made.

The righteous Canadian thunder of Rush, the radio-polished swagger of Bryan Adams, the Purple Prophecy of Prince (Not TECHNICALLY Canadian), the rebel snarl of The Clash (Not Remotely Canadian!!), and the raw voltage ACDC (Short enough to be Canadian, but technically Australian). The soundtrack blasted out of boom-boxes and basement bars (and the backs of cars!) That music didn't politely ask for attention—it grabbed you by the collar and shoved you against the plywood wall!... But you enjoyed THAT sort of Bullying!

Pinball did the same.

Step into any arcade from that era and you could feel it in your bones. The chrome glare of Black Knight, promising Multiball mayhem. The hypnotic pulse of Firepower, all flashing inserts and unapologetic speed. Eight Ball Deluxe leaning cool and confident in the corner like a pool hall shark. By the mid-'80s, High Speed was pure pedal-to-the-metal adrenaline, sirens wailing as you raced the clock. Then came Pin-Bot, robotic eyes scanning the cosmos, and Black Knight 2000 at the tail end of the decade, turning the volume knob to eleven with synthesized bravado. The front of the arcades were now expanding their Video Game lineups, and more and more quarters were being dropped in those machines, but the COOL kids knew that Pinball was where the magic was.

This was the cathedral Dirty Donny worshipped in—Churches of tempered glass and cabinet art that punched as hard as any museum piece. Pinball machines weren't just games; they were kinetic murals. Airbrushed warriors, chrome-plated vixens, muscle cars, alien queens—fantasy worlds compressed into a playfield no bigger than a coffee table. They were interactive canvases, and somewhere in that Super-Graphic backdrop of bumpers and drop targets, a young artist from Ottawa was taking notes.

You can see it now in his work—the way colour doesn't sit still, the way characters look like they're about to leap off the surface and start a hockey fight with common sense! His lines are as steady as great guitar riffs. His colour palette bolder than stage lights cutting through a Radio Shack Fog Machine! There's no apology in it, no muted restraint. It's loud on purpose. It's bold because it has to be. That's the language Donny learned, somewhere between the Bang of the Free Play Solonoid knocker and the opening bars of Rush's epic Tom Sawyer.

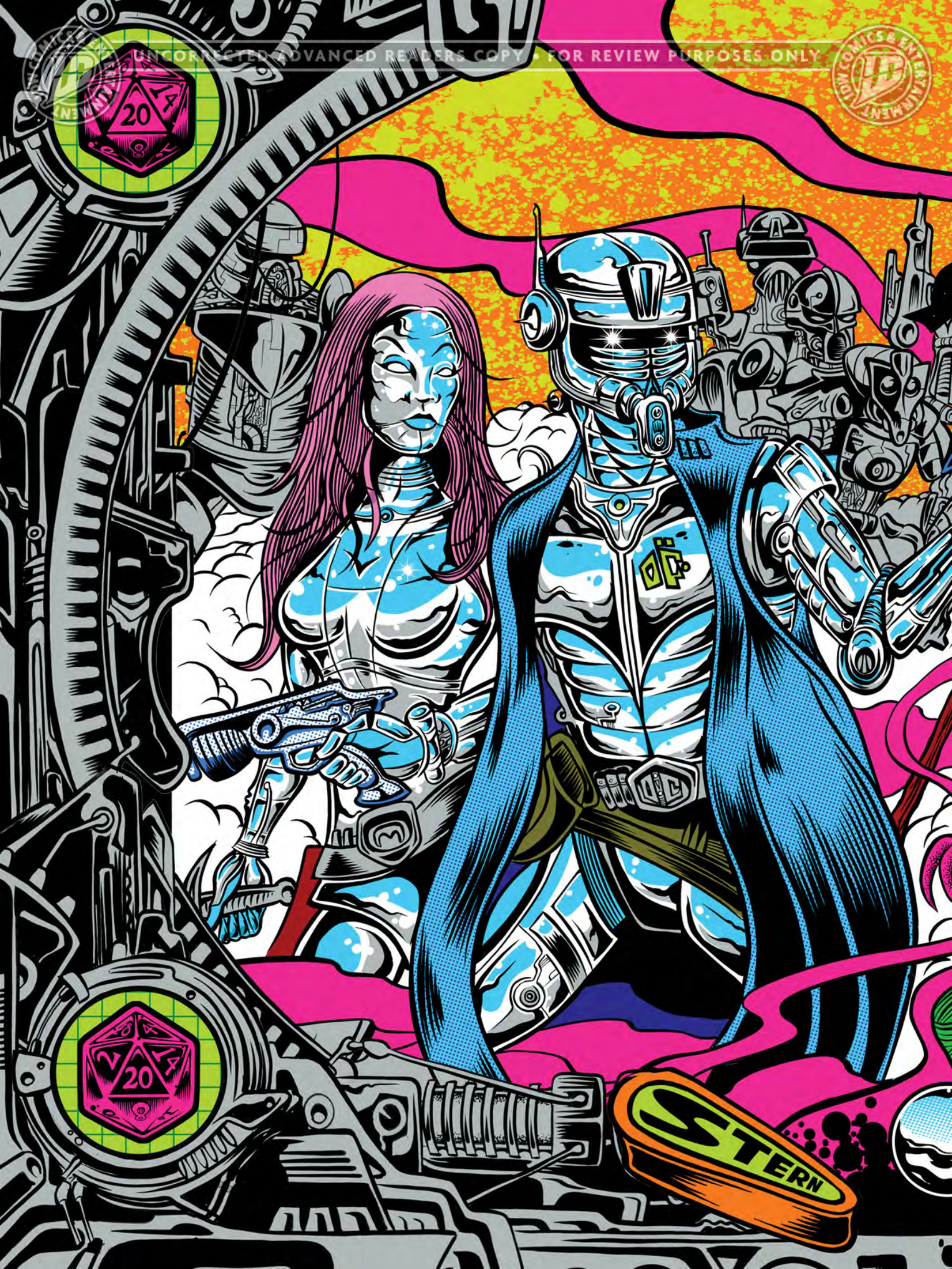
Ottawa might be known for politics and protocol, but every city has an underground current. Dirty Donnie tapped into that current and wired it straight into his heart, and his Art. The pinball playfield became both blueprint and battleground—a place where composition had to guide the eye like a ball in motion, where every inch mattered, where spectacle ruled but skill decided the outcome.

What started as a Home-Brew conversion project for one of his favourite bands, led to a multi-project art collaboration with the Biggest Pinball Manufacturer in the world, Stern Pinball. Donnie went from admiring the artwork from the dingy Ottawa Arcades, to influencing the art style of the entire Pinball Industry. When Dirty Donnie arrived on the Pinball Scene, everything changed.

From the arcades glowing against the Canadian cold, to the music that rattled the windows, to the machines that taught a kid from Ottawa how to turn Chaos into Calligraphy. Flip the switch. Let it ring. The Silverball is in play, and Dirty Donny is one of the reasons we still care about this anachronistic box of lights, plastic and metal!!

Ed Robertson
Bare Naked Ladies

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I first met Dirty Donny over 20 years ago when I was working with a large group of artists on a project called Circus Punks, a modern interpretation of old carnival knock down dolls. Donny was one of the first to contact me by phone about the project. He was enthusiastic and easy to talk with. We went over the design for his Circus Punk and he was open to my suggestions. The call shifted to his background and influences. We shared many common interests such as Weird-ohs monsters, Ed Roth type of hot rods, underground garage bands, skateboards, tikis, old sci-fi and fantasy art. For me, what stood out was our mutual love of pinball. Donny owned a pinball machine and was a fan of Dave Christensen, a pinball artist during the 70's. As a pinball nerd and already involved in pinball reproduction parts, I was well aware of Dave's work for Bally but, I was surprised that someone outside of the pinball world would even know his name. At that moment, I knew Donny had a deeper level of appreciation for the game.

After we completed a few cool projects together, the topic of making a custom pinball machine came up. I had been wanting to do this for years after I saw some customized games in the mid 90's at a pinball show. Even though a couple were rather crude, those re-themed, modified games left a big impression on me and I wanted to make one. With my backglass experience, I felt I could take it to another level. Years later, I finally found someone who was able to help me achieve this goal, Dirty Donny.



[THIS PAGE] Final custom machine, [OPPOSITE TOP] Donny with Wade Krause and Tanio Klyce; [OPPOSITE LEFT BOTTOM and RIGHT] Work in progress shots and details of final machine

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This would be a huge project for both of us. The glass and plastics would be screen printed one color at a time, not inkjet or uv printed. A custom lamp panel would be cut out to properly light up the backbox and isolate key features of the backglass art. The cabinet would be spray stenciled and screen printed for additional details, and extra features would be added to the game. Unlike a factory produced machine, we would not have limitations.

Like many pinball collectors, I owned several very rough games that were not worth restoring, machines that I occasionally used for parts. These beater games
were ideal for use as the blank canvas. We agreed on Gottlieb's King Pin because of the drop target bank and open lower playfield that allowed plenty of room for Donny's work. Next, we exchanged ideas for the theme.

Donny had worked with some really cool bands and he showed me his cover painting for The Hellacopters' Air Raid Serenades album and I immediately felt it would be perfect. It featured a group of big eyed and big toothed monsters creating rock & roll mayhem in front of a flaming background. Their guitars were cracking and so was the earth beneath them. This image would be used for the backglass and it's theme would carry into the entire machine. Because it was based on a painting, the artwork had to be reworked into a line drawing by hand. Donny used a brush and ink for this. I had always wanted to see this style of monster art on a pinball machine and it was about to happen.

For the first step, a set of plastics was screen-printed and tested for fit on a non working King Pin. They looked amazing. The deep color saturation from solid, screened on inks is unmatched once they are lit from below, almost like miniature stained glass panels.
The next step would be the backglass. For many years, I had screen-printed licensed, reproduction backglasses for vintage pinball and arcade games. This one would be slightly different with some metallic powders and fluorescent pigments added to make the colors jump









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[OPPOSITE] Work in progress on the Beatnicks Pinball machine; [THIS PAGE] Concept art and test back glass painting for "Spooky House" pinball machine



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out. After designing the final masking layer (an opaque area for light up match numbers, ball count, game over and tilt), a custom lamp panel was created for isolated, flashing bulbs, and general backglass illumination. Numerous lamp sockets and the score reels had to be moved after the backglass and lamp panel were finished.

The original playfield was stripped down and redrawn in a computer so a new playfield could be cut by a CNC router with some modifications. This new playfield blank was shipped to Donny and he sprayed and hand painted it and Rolfe Britain added clear coating. While this was happening, I was busy repairing and painting the old cabinet.

An impromptu change to the playfield was the addition of five large, smokey inserts. Donny's shrunken head toys were fastened below, part of the modification to the King Pin rules. Once all five heads were lit, they would turn red, the air raid siren lamp on the backbox would light up and the game would award an extra ball. This was achieved by adding an additional relay bank inside of the game, no circuit boards.



[LEFT] Final custom machine, [ABOVE] Wade Krause applying stencil to pinball cabinet; [OPPOSITE] details of final machine

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With the game complete, the art package shows the Hellacopters' bombs flying from the top of the backglass, into the score window area, onto the playfield arch, off of the cabinet and down towards the monster at the bottom of the game who flips the middle finger at you as your ball drains between the flippers. The art grabs your attention and there is a flow directly from the backbox to the front of the game that makes you want to play it.

As far as I know, Donny's use of metal flake paint and pinstriping was a first on the Hellacopters. The playfield resembled the hot rods of 60's and 70's and combined with his monsters, flames, lettering, use of color, cabinet design, and his shrunken heads, an incredible machine was built.

The illuminated backglass is a standout feature of the game. Eyeballs are glowing, stars twinkle off and on in the sky, TILT appears in the helmet of a monster, the moon shines over the score window. The backglass shines random light on the deep blue, metal-flaked playfield, creating sparkles that add a magical touch when the game is being played. The finished game was beautiful and we wanted to share it with as many people as possible, especially non pinball people. The Hellacopters has been played and enjoyed by thousands of people at numerous shows, pop up events, art galleries, a film festival, and was featured in several magazines. This was the start of our custom pinball series.

One of the events that we brought the Hellacopters to was a car show in Antioc, CA. As always, the game was set up for free play and we encouraged people to play it. The sound of the mechanical chimes drew people over to Donny's art booth and it started up many conversations that day. Everyone loved it!
One of the car clubs featured at the show was The Beatniks and one of their members was James Hetfield. James and Donny already knew each other because of Donny's previous work with Metallica. When he saw Donny and the pinball machine, he came over to check things out and catch up with Donny's new work. James played the machine and he really liked what he saw. So much so that a few days later, he asked us to create a Metallica machine. We were honored! Because of Metallica's enormous, worldwide fanbase, this would become our most recognized custom pinball and a true game changer for the pinball hobby.

We wanted to make something faster and with more features than the Hellacopters. We decided on using Earthshaker pinball by Williams. There was a big obstacle. We had to find somebody capable of modifying the original game code. Back then, this was no easy task. I found a video game programmer who was willing to take on the challenge named Tanio Klyce. Tanio owned some pinball machines and was really into our ideas for the project. We wanted score display changes, lighting effects, crowd roars for the Earthshaker effect, and voiced call outs supplied by James and Metallica's music for a soundtrack.

Donny started by designing another fantastic backglass featuring the band standing in front of big flaming guitar cabinets. He and Rolfe made another metal flaked playfield with Donny's hand painted shrunken heads resembling the band members plus lettering, pinstriping, flames and other playfield details. Graphics for the cabinet and plastics were designed and I began working on color separations.

My processes on the game were similar to The Hellacopters; screened plastics, a screened backglass with even more fluorescent and metallic powders, a custom light box panel for special backglass effects, a stenciled and screenprinted cabinet. With all of this work







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[ABOVE and OPPOSITE] Donny and Wade Krause working on and testing the Metallica custom pinball machine.

ahead of me, I hired a long time pinball tech friend named Dan Kramer to tackle the playfield swap and meticulous rebuilding so I could focus the printing and making the necessary custom pieces.

Once everything came together in my shop, the game was moved to Tanio's bay area workspace for the final programming modifications. In order to add all of the music and voice commands, a separate computer was needed and integrated into the Williams system. Seeing, hearing and playing the finished machine after many months of work from the team was extremely rewarding. We all knew we had made something very special.

The final game was delivered to the Metallica Headquarters during a full rehearsal. It was an instant hit with everyone and James was very happy with it. Maybe only a week or two after the delivery, he let us borrow the game for a pinball show. For the first time ever, Metallica pinball would be enjoyed by the public. During the show, it was placed next to The Hellacopters and a regular Earthshaker for comparison. The pinball fans loved it and there was a continuous line to play the game throughout the event.

Soon after the Metallica pinball delivery, James asked us to build another game for his car club, a Beatniks themed game.

Before long, the same team was at it again and The Beatniks Koolsville would be our ultimate collaboration.

After our games were completed, Donny, Tanio and myself were involved in presentation panels at several pinball shows. At one discussion about pinball's future, Tanio and I talked specifically about pinball art. I said that I felt drawn toward certain machines because of the backglasses. My statement was if the backglass art pulled people in closer, they would want to spend money playing the machine just based on how that art affected them. For me, many games at that time had lost that appeal. The photos of our Metallica game proved my opinion. It sat next to an Earthshaker during the pinball show, the same game, and Metallica was played non stop with people standing in line waiting. My main point was that pinball companies needed an artist boost and talent was out there if the companies would do the hiring. The extra money spent would be well worth it. Gary Stern was sitting in the front row listening and taking notes. Eventually, Donny and Tanio did work for Stern and more music themed games were produced including Metallica and Aerosmith with Dirty Donny. Tanio is still there today programming current games.

Before Donny and Tanio were hired by Stern, we began project called Spooky House. This was going to be another custom game but with a new, unique playfield layout. Our idea was that this would be a limited, boutique pinball, what are now called "home brews". Some early stages were completed, including an amazing backglass designed for blacklights, but the project was shelved after Tanio and Donny started working for Stern. It is one of my favorite backglasses.

Working with Donny is always fun, an honor and I love elevating his artwork.

Wade Krause
Pinball Artist

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[OPPOSITE] Detail of playfield, [ABOVE] final backglass art,
[BELOW] Donny with James Hetfield and the final machine



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I was asked to create this art package for a concept machine titled Cosmic Carnival, a Sci-Fi themed circus event. I immediately thought of "So beautiful and so dangerous" a graphic novel that was later rethemed into the short for the 1981 animated film Heavy Metal.Drawing vibe and inspiration I set to work with my own take and style for this world. Budget was plenty and the deadline was wide so I was really able to stretch out and sink into this world. Many Playlists, podcasts and coffees later, this is what I came up with. Unfortunately there were only a few machines produced, 20 give or take, but it remains some of my favorite artwork and a fun project to be involved in. I was especially proud of the animation I collaborated on with Chad Sikora.



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[THIS PAGE] Final pinball machine cabinet, [OPPOSITE] the final production art

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[THIS PAGE and OPPOSITE] Inked details and final colored art, [RIGHT] Screenshots from the game screen animation







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METALLICA - STERN

In 2012 Stern Pinball worked out a licensing deal with Metallica. I started the project's playfield layout and mechanisms and was told I'd be working with an artist named Dirty Donny, who was employed by Metallica and had created a custom game for them from an older pinball machine. I had planned an electric chair for Ride the Lightning. A ball eating Snake for the Black Album. A Grave Marker for Master of Puppets and a Gavel from And Justice for All and a moat under the playfield where pinballs could be stored and seen through a *Death Magnetic*-casket-shaped window. Donny sent me sketches of a crazy, cool looking character in an electric chair and I named him Sparky. I sent the sketch to Evolution Studios and Dave Link carved Sparky out of foam. We molded his arms



[ABOVE and RIGHT] Threee different versions of the final production pinball machines; [OPPOSITE] Detail of the playfield

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and legs into the chair and the torso and head were separate, movable pieces. Sparky's neck is a spring, allowing the head to bounce around like a bobble head. We then cast several parts for the prototypes. Donny decorated one for us as a production sample. The Snake, Grave Marker and Gavel were all modeled from Donny's sketches. The game cabinet art and backglass art are stunning on all three models we produced. We marketed the Master of Puppets- Limited Edition model totalling 500 units. The 2nd model was the Monsters Premium and the 3rd version was the Metallica Pro which game operators purchase most often It was a pleasure to have the band record custom voice tracks for this beautiful machine.

John Borg
Stern Pinball

[ABOVE and RIGHT] Details of the final machine playfield; [BELOW] Donny with John Borg and Wade Krause????





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Metallica playfield inks - Once John Borg had the playfield mapped out, he sent me a lifesize print out of what he had so I could trace over and around it all.

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Metallica Ride the lightning backglass - This was set to be a package but got scrapped at the last minute. I had more elaborate plans for this one but due to time constraints I handed it in as is with the hopes to take it further.



Metallica Premium backglass - Swapped out last minute, This was actually supposed to be the pro. It's my favorite out of the bunch and is full of Easter eggs.

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Metallica Limted Edition glass - with mirror finish



Metallica Pro glass - Based on the custom home brew game, this is the first piece of art I designed for this project.

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[LEFT] final interactive version of Sparky. [OPPOSITE TOP] Prototype sculpt of... [OPPOSITE BOTTOM] final production model. [OPPOSITE RIGHT] custom made hand-painted Sparky.

The phenomenon that is Sparky! I had a meeting with James Hetfield at Metallica's Headquarters to discuss some art project, while I was waiting for him I wandered over to the chalkboard in the kitchen and drew out this monster kid flipping the bird. When James came in he literally laughed out loud and asked me to make an inked up version they could use on merch, but to have it say "Tallica Sux" on his shirt. A few years later John Bord was designing the Metallica Pinball at Stern and asked me what I thought of an electric chair with a possible character in it. I said John, you know I think I have just the character. So I gave the Monster kid a rebirth into this electric chair guy. John showed me the rough sculpt and said he's been calling him Sparky. I said Sparky! That's great man! And Sparky was born.Since then, I have gotten more attention from this character than anything else I have done. He's become my Beavis and Butthead, Rat fink, Mickey Mouse. As the Metallica pinball came out I was granted access to purchase Sparky from the parts department at Stern. I started with 10 and hand painted one. I put the word out that I would be hand painting Sparky figures "Custom style" and that if anyone wanted, they could get one painted by the artist. I wasn't sure if I would sell any, not to mention all 10. Let's just say these hand painted Sparky's paid for the downpayment of our home.

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SWEET EMOTIONS

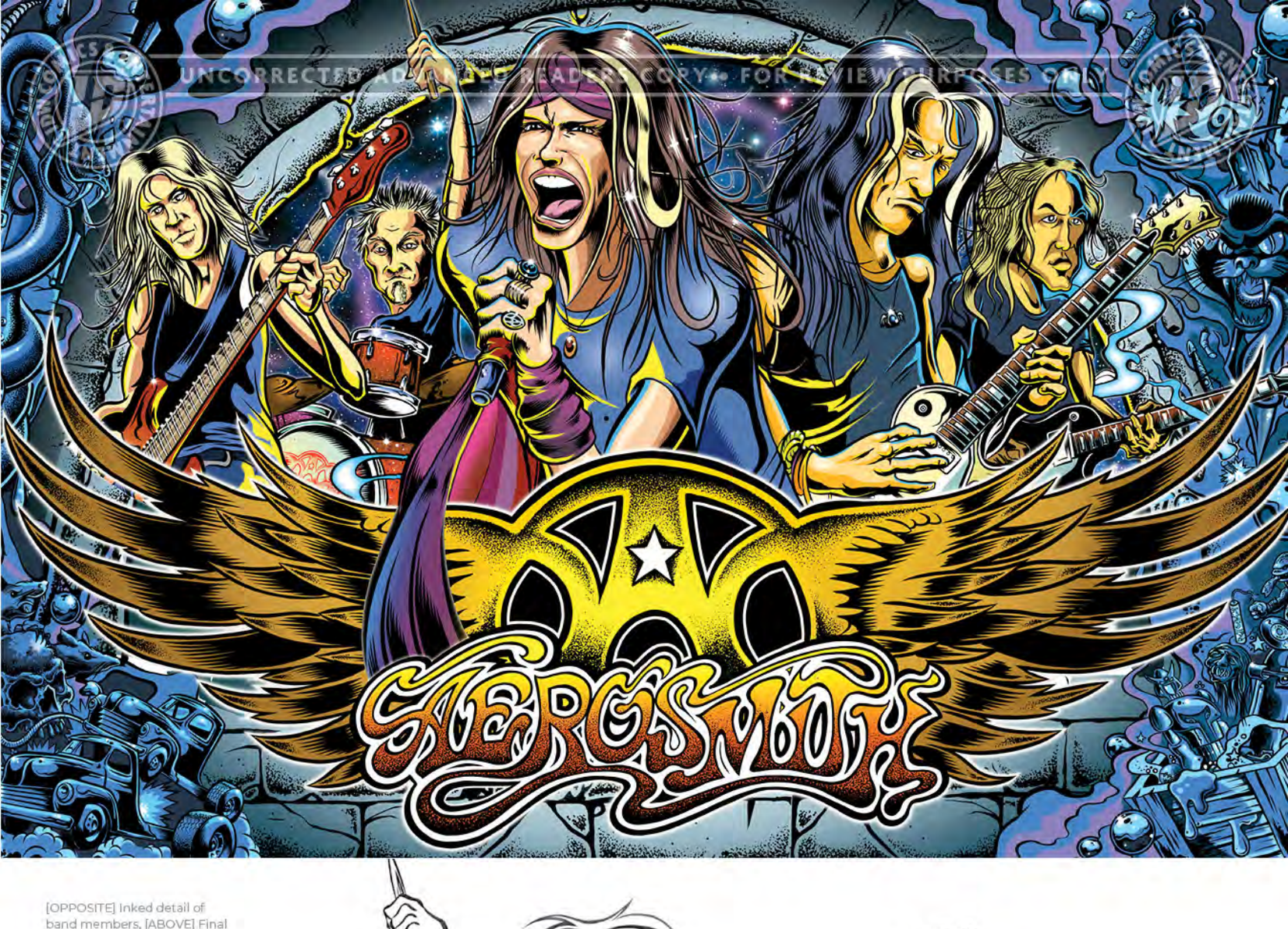
Once again I am assigned another legendary rock band, pinball license—Aerosmith.

I started designing the mechanical layout and we asked Dirty Donny if he'd like to make another pinball machine with us. He gladly accepted and is also a big Aerosmith fan. This game featured one large mechanical device. I set out to make a Toy Box for Toys in the attic. I wanted a character on top ot the toybox that appeared to be busting out of the box lid. I pictured a jester or a clown like figure. I went to Donny with the idea and he sent me a sketch of the toy box, including surface detail and the character on top of the box. We named the character Jacky. The player shoots the ball into a hole. The toy box opens, the ball shoots out of the hole, flies across the game and lands inside the toy box. When the toy box is full the lid vibrates and Jacky shakes on top of the box. The box opens and the balls all spill out into play. We also created this game using three art packages. Limited Edition, Premium and Pro, for which Donny provided artwork. The Limited Edition backglass art is printed on glass, with mirror highlighting the band members' images and other details. We even created a custom powder coating color to decorate the metal trim on the Limited Edition model cabinet, ensuring it matched the art perfectly. Aerosmith is a beautiful game to look at and play.

John Borg
Stern Pinball



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[OPPOSITE] Inked detail of band members, [ABOVE] Final production backglass art, [BELOW] Inked final art.



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[ABOVE] Donny playing pinball in his home arcade.

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Originally another title, Aerosmith was swapped out at the last minute but I was still excited to get down to business, another music title! I had also been here before with Metallica and eager to correct a few things I wasn't happy with while at the same time try and one up myself. With Metallica there was originally supposed to be 4 art packages but Ride the Lightning was dropped. Nonetheless, expectations were high, deadlines were tight and the pressure was on. With Aerosmith I had the option to do one glass and swap out the colors for the variant packages. I could have taken the extra payment and done 3 separate backglasses but felt I would rather have extra time to focus on the glass and playfield. You also have to keep in mind that this is all hand inked, then colored in photoshop/layers. It's not a photoshop collage or tablet drawn and loaded with brushes and special effects with endless options.

[THIS PAGE] FInal production machine, [OPPOSITE FOLDOUT] Final production playfield.





Once complete, only changes that were requested was that the drummer wanted to be upfront. It's not the way I envisioned it, but here are both examples of the original and production art so you be the judge. The final additions came from Stephen Tyler who wanted more "sins" on the playfield. Cigarette butts and dice. Done! Once the game came out I was informed that we had taken a potential B title and made it an A title. Also to my surprise I was given the Twippy award for best artwork of 2017.



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[THIS PAGE] FInal production cabinet art, [OPPOSITE FOLDOUT] Final playfield art.





CAN CRUSHER

The success of Metallica turned Dirty Donny into a household name, and a selling point, in the pinball world. The crossover between the Metallica crowd and Donny's fans was real. It brought fresh blood into pinball and pulled new eyes onto the artists.

So in 2016, Stern teamed up with Pabst Blue Ribbon for a low-production-run boutique oddball and brought Donny back for round two.

The result, debuted at Comic-Con 2016, was The Pabst Can Crusher, a re-theme of Stern's first boutique title, Whoa Nellie! Big Juicy Melons, released under the WhizBang Pinball label. Donny's art was the genre-bridging hub again, tying together Dennis Nordman's design (built on Wayne Neyens' original 1957 layout), Red Fang's music, and emerging Pinball Sound master Jerry Thompson's effects.

Paul Mandeltort
Marco Specialties Inc





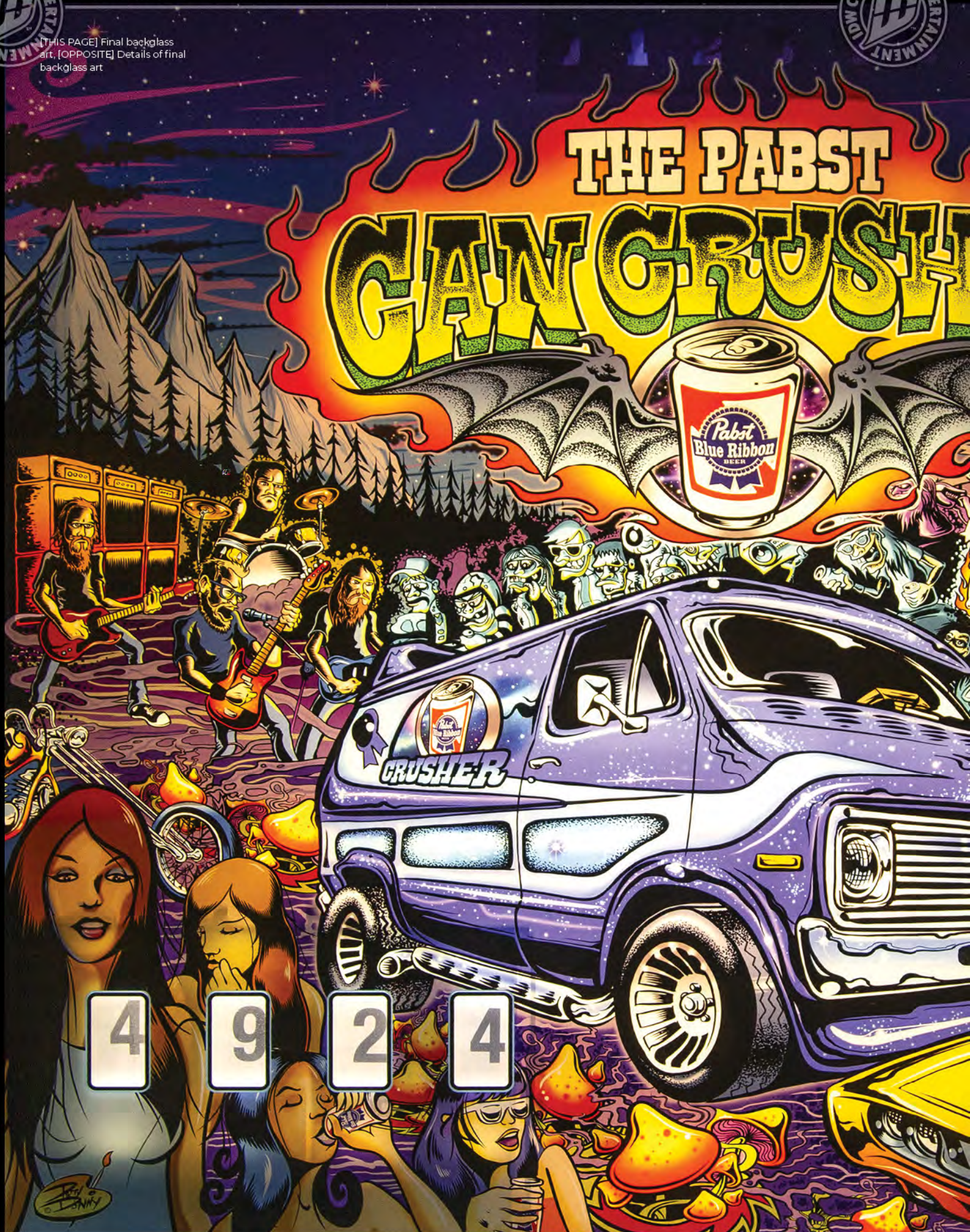
[LEFT and ABOVE] Details of playfield art, [BELOW RIGHT] Final production pinball machine



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[THIS PAGE] Final backglass art, [OPPOSITE] Details of final backglass art







[THIS PAGE and OPPOSITE] Final production machine back glass and close-up details.



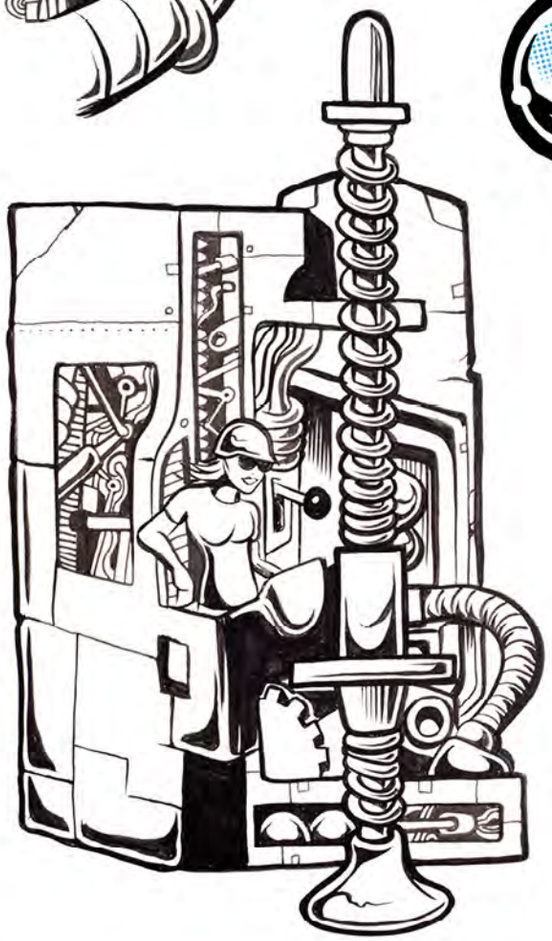
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[THIS PAGE] Inked details,
[OPPOSITE] final art.











The Marco Pinchantress (2024) - Marc Mandeltort, my father, passed away unexpectedly in 2021. After spending a few years putting the pieces back together, we tapped Donny again for the next in the Marco Series. We wanted to keep building the series and give a nod to the growing women's segment that was becoming a driving force in the community, so we asked for a female character on this next design.

The Pinchantress is a daily staple for many Marco employees and customers alike.

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On the road, Donny and I quickly became friends. We were aligned that the old-school pinball scene could be a little stuffy, and we wanted to shake things up. At the time, Marco was a tiny company, and we would never have thought we'd get to work with an artist like Donny. Once Metallica was out in the market and things settled down, we started talking about what the next projects might look like.

The Marco Pinball Wizard (2020) [LEFT] - While Donny was pursuing other projects, we stayed in touch. We reconnected during the pandemic when we found the next slot of available project time. The only note this time was that we wanted a character of some sort, and the Marco Wizard was born.

Marco Gobble Hole Inferno (2014) [BELOW] - Eventually, the idea of commissioning a Marco shirt was born. The brief was simple: it should say Marco and probably include a few pinball-inspired themes. Other than that, we had no idea what to expect.



As usual, Donny was ahead of his time. The piece captured the spirit of the shift, with pinball parts and the soul of the machine erupting out of a shoot-again sewer channel as the industry entered another rebirth.

Marco Cobra Sunrise (2018) [OPPOSITE] - Like with the previous Stern releases, we found ourselves touring the country again in 2017 promoting Aerosmith, and I got to spend more time with Donny. With the Gobble Hole Inferno shirt a common sight at pinball gatherings, fans started demanding a sequel. As usual, the creative juices started flowing, and the next Marco shirt was born. Like last time, we gave Donny free rein on the design. The shirt just needed to say Marco somewhere.
The resulting design featured a large cobra swallowing a pinball machine against a synthwave-inspired background. It became another staple for the Marco team and the community.

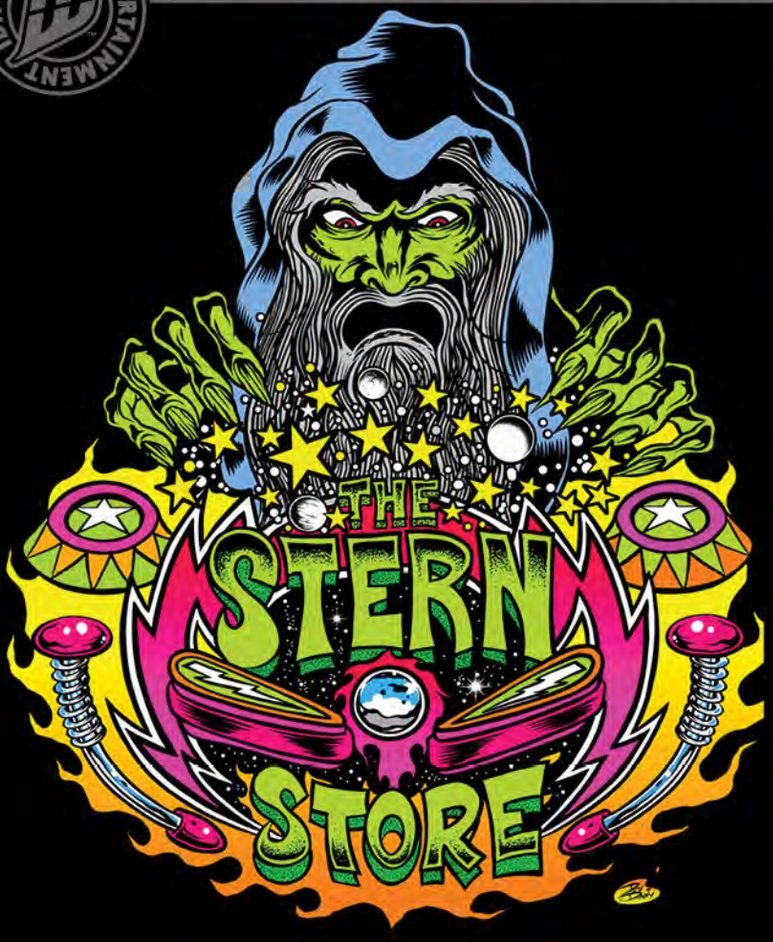
The launch of Metallica in 2014 marked a key inflection point in Post-Pandemic Pinball Renaissance. Since then, over 70 new games across 12 manufacturers have been brought to the market, a high water mark not seen in decades. It's hard to understate the impact Dirty Donny has had on both Marco Specialties and the Pinball Industry at large. It's been a honor working with Donny and being part of his amazing journey.

Paul Mandeltort
Marco Specialties Inc

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Guardians of the galaxy was a concept piece for Stern/Marvel. Stern loved it but I was told Marvel, even though they liked it, wanted to go with their style guide.

It's unfortunate but I understand. It was fun to do and now I get to show it to you in this book.

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I did manage to do a little save and revise it into a whole new sci-Fi theme poster collaboration with Stern. We even screen printed a small set of black glasses with Wade Krause. That poster is featured at the start of this chapter.

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CHAPTER FOUR



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Countless hours lettering chalkboards and store windows, followed by endless clouds of airbrush spray. Open a fresh can of sign painters 1-Shot, mixing House of Kolor candies with clear and laying miles of vinyl tape around tight corners. It's not something that happens overnight. Many failed projects lay to waste to create these jewels. Then we have the illustrated graphics, the monsters driving extreme cartoon'd out vehicles. Inspiration from a long passed but not forgotten pop culture movement. The days of Ed "Newt" Newton, Robert Williams, Stanley Mouse, Bill Cambell, Basil Wolverton to name a few. And who can forget the king of them all, Ed "Big Daddy" Roth. My obsession with this style spilled over in early gig posters and only grew over the years. As I got better at "this style" it became one of my go to's for the automotive industry who can't seem to get enough of it. Monster driving hot rods were around long before I was born. I just love it and am proud too, in my own small humble way, to mix my style into it and to be one of the artists to carry a torch.

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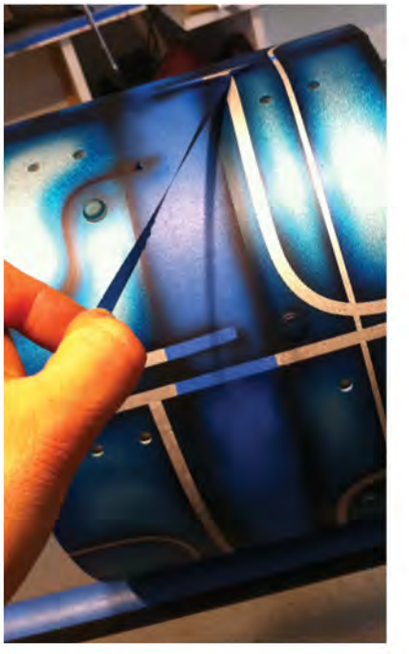
BRANN DAILOR'S DRUM KITS

[THIS PAGE] In progress and finished drums. [OPPOSITE] Brann with his drum kit.

I have done a total of three drum kits for Brann Dailor.The first was a series of colors and patterns. Brann wanted me to go wild and make something crazy. I did these at my late friend Frank Kozik's art studio in San Francisco. Frank had offered me space in the workshop to do my airbrush gigs. We had a great time those few years, building and working on our cars, collaborating on art projects and doing the occasional field trip to pick up a motor or do a Club BBQ. The next was the Blue kit. Unfortunately, I never took any photos of this and really wish I had.The final was the Blacklight kit. The first time Blacklight art has ever been placed over metal flake. Initially I had the drums flaked, cleared and sanded. Then I applied the candy graphics. After that I taped off everything exposing the panels for the blacklight treatment. The result was fantastic and Brann would go on to tour with them for almost a decade.











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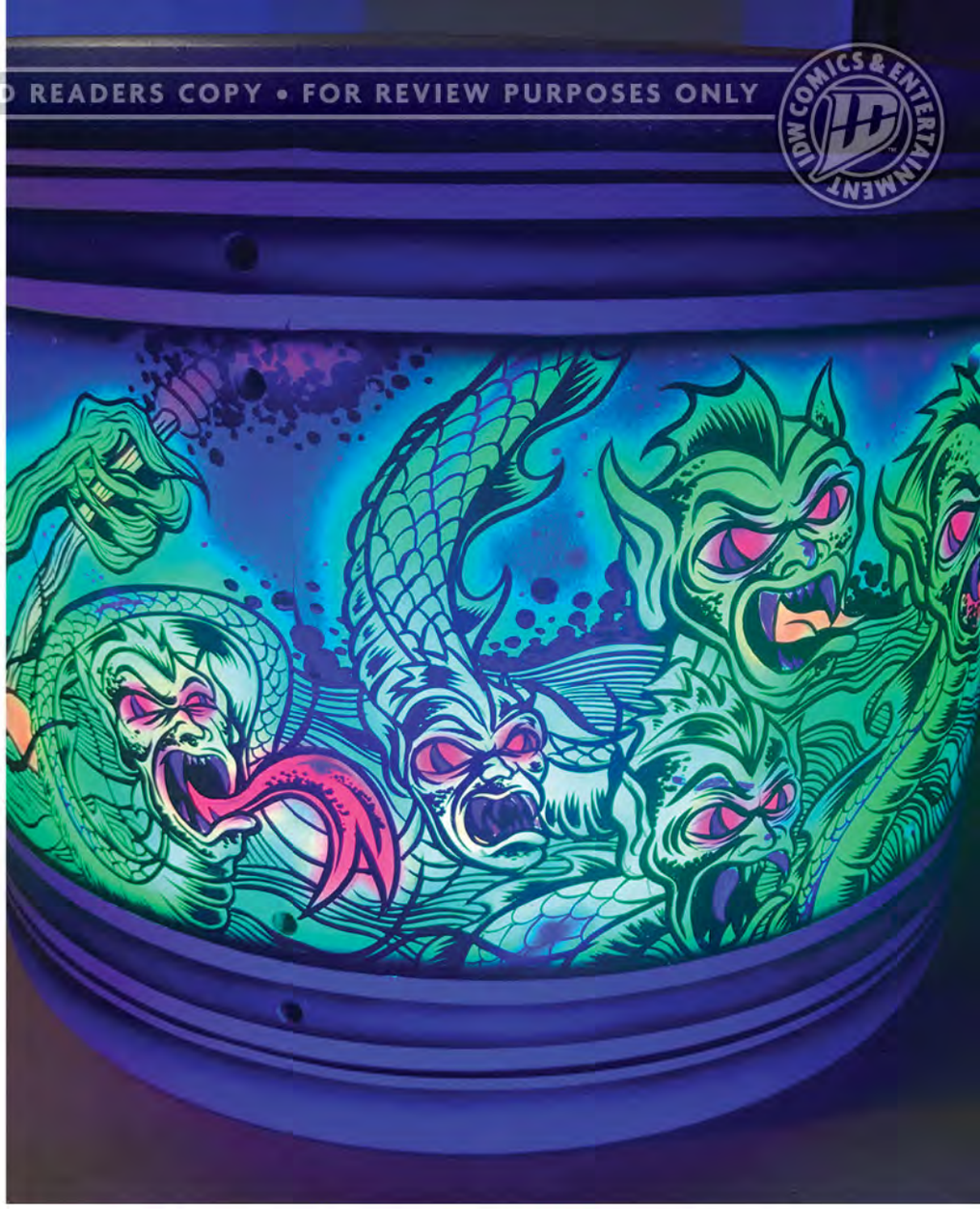




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[THIS PAGE and OPPOSITE] Details and work in progress photos of the drum kit; [BELOW] Brann with his drum kit



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TRACTION FACTORY

From time to time I collaborate with the design firm Traction Factory. They came to me back in 2012 to do a series of monsters driving cars for a Snap-on power tool campaign. Since then we have done multiple sets of characters amongst other projects including a graphics wrap for Cruz Pedregon's top fuel funny car, an ice rink zamboni, promotional posters and more.

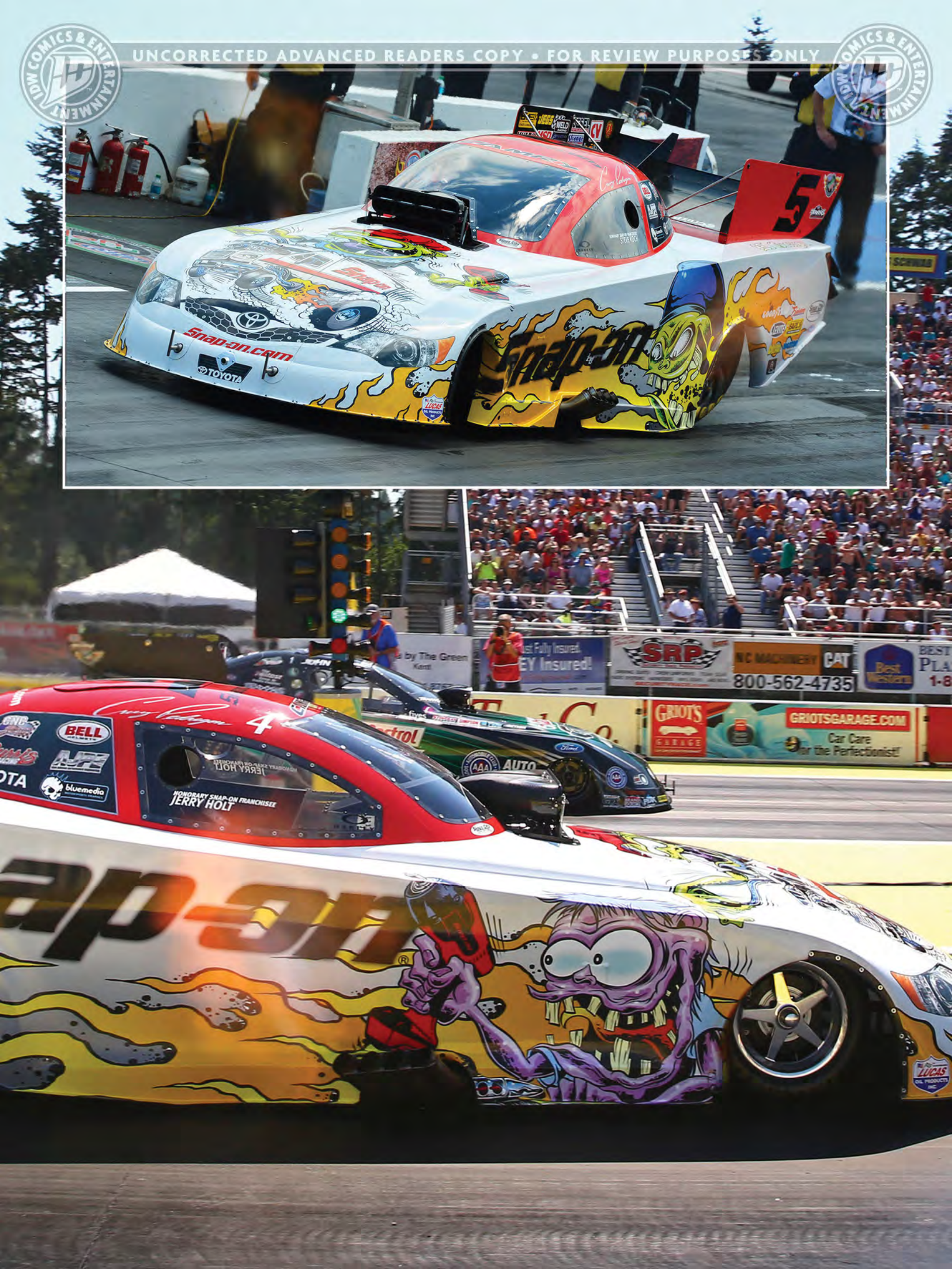


[ABOVE] Donny helps push Cruz Pedregon's drag car out to the starting line; [BELOW] final art for passenger side of the drag car; [OPPOSITE] Drag car on the starting line with livery including Donny's art





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[THIS PAGE and OPPOSITE] Varied use of Donny's work across multiple Snap-On marketing assets.



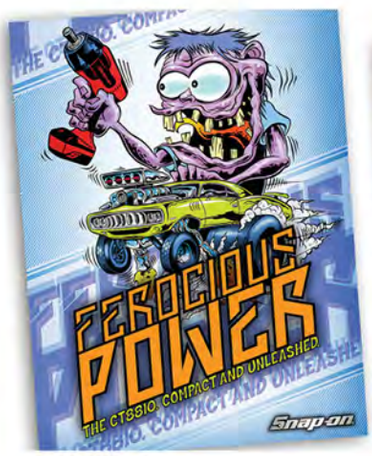
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What started as a single project to introduce our client Snap-on's new line of MonsterLithium 18V power tools has turned into a 12-years-and-counting relationship with Dirty Donny. He was the perfect dude for the gig – an old school gearhead who could bring our vision of Weirdo-inspired monsters to life to showcase the ferocious power of the new tools. The posters, print ads, brochures and other sales materials were such a smash with Snap-on and its customers, the campaign quickly extended into all kinds of cool stuff, from stickers and temp tattoos to technicians' creepers. (For maximum creepiness!) Donny was also invited to Snap-on's annual franchisee conference to feel the love and award some custom swag he hand-painted. He even behaved himself. Mostly. Next, as part of Snap-on's sponsorship of drag racer Cruz Pedregon, we took the monsters to the track by wrapping his NHRA Funny Car. Somehow Donny and nitro seem like a natural fit.

Tom Dixon
Creative Director, Traction Factory















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[THIS PAGE and OPPOSITE] Varied use of Donny's work across multiple Snap-On marketing assets. [OPPOSITE TOP] Donny sign's posters and paint custom miniature vans that became prizes.



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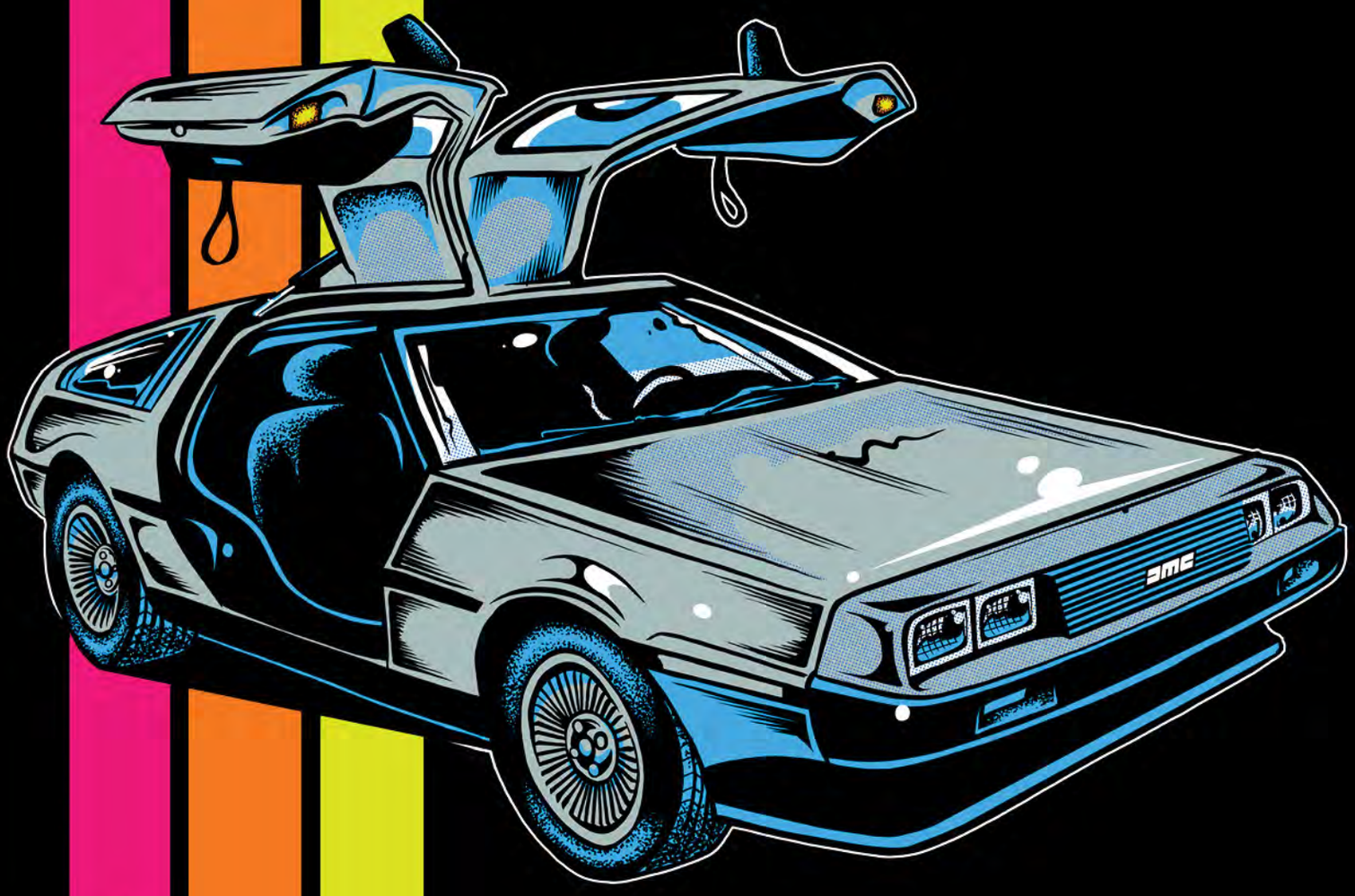




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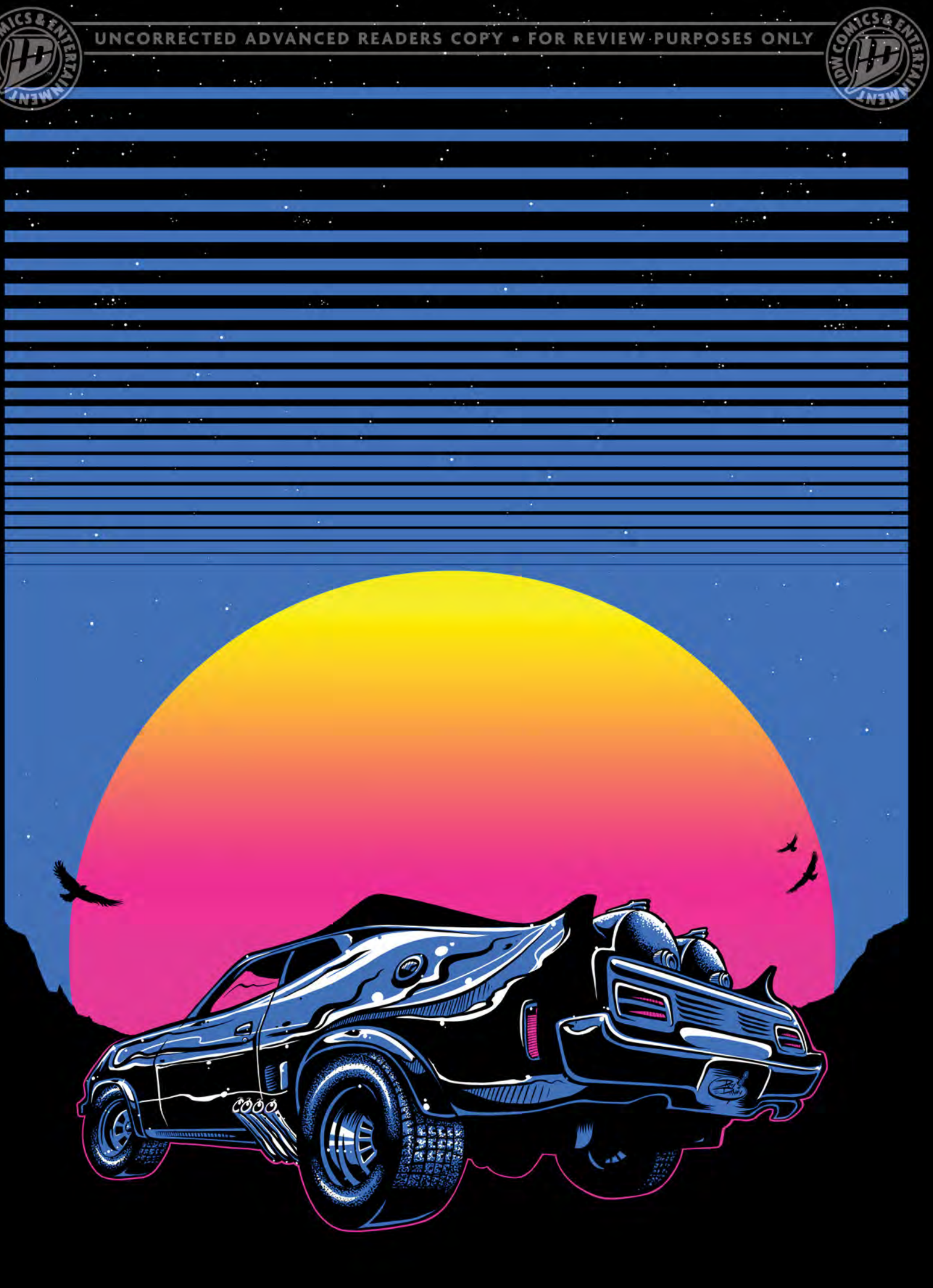
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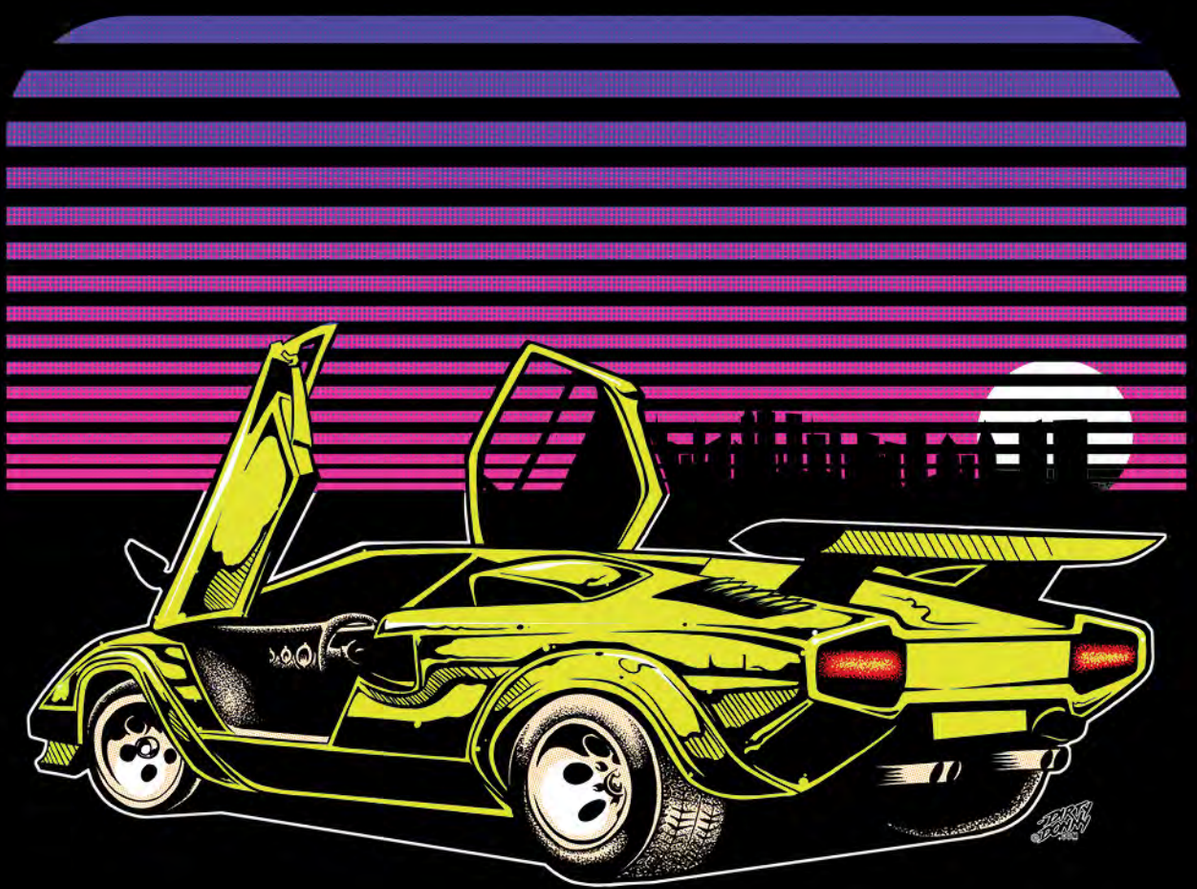


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BELL HELMETS

These are the original hand painted helmets for Bell. Two of these made it into production and have become hard to find.





[ABOVE] Helmet on Donny's workbench;
[TOP RIGHT] Donny's final design;
[OPPOSITE] examples of Bell helmets that Donny has painted.



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GAME DANGER

I grew up in a neighborhood with a lot of dead horses, not the animal kind. Broken dreams and flat tires were sunken into the cement at the sides of half double houses in the West End of Ottawa, Canada. "One day I'll get it back on the road" "She'll fly again" "I'll never get rid of it" I would hear these from my local neighborhood hopefuls.

When I started the Satellite it wasn't my first old car, but it was my first car project. I purchased it back in 2026 from a girl that worked in San Francisco at a German restaurant we used to frequent. She loved it but felt it was time to move it along. It was pretty beat up, no interior and it leaked in the rain but had almost no rust and it was just what I was looking for, a late 1960's B Body.

My friend Rolfe Brittain had previously worked as a painter for Roy Brizio, a bay area car builder/legend. Rolfe does incredible restoration work and was doing the flake for my helmets and guitars. We had been talking about collaborating on a car project for a while, something I could do with him. Digging in, sanding, paint, body work, I wanted to do it all. So the day finally came when I purchased the satellite and immediately called to let him know that I had found my car.

As an artist in the automotive industry, I felt it was important that I do a project like this and see it through from start to finish. Not just a guy that had bought and drove an old car, but someone that actually restored one too. And I was hell bent that this car, this project, this vision, was not going to be another dead horse.

We started tearing the car down, labeling and bagging everything. After that, it was decided we would take it down to bare metal and build it back up. Rolfe pounded out what dents he could and we started applying the sealant, primer and skim coat. Then began the sanding. That year I had $500 in Bay Bridge toll receipts because I was there a lot. Standing, sanding, and as anyone that has done body work will tell you, sanding is hell. Other friends would jump in and help sand, we





[LEFT TOP] Donny and Frank Kozick work on the Satellite; [LEFT BOTTOM] Rolfe Brittain HERE supervising the removal of the engine; [RIGHT TOP] The Satellite in its original apperance and being stripped down; [BELOW] The Satellite as it looks today.



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were all in hell together. Eventually the day came that the sanding was complete and the paint was finished.

I loaded up all the parts and pieces and had the rest towed to my friend, Frank Kozik's, shop in San Francisco. We spent the next few months assembling the car. With the help of Dan Stoner and MoBill we got the freshly rebuilt 440 motor in the car. I remember driving around the block with Bill and Frank, no windshield, open headers and loud as hell. Eventually, we got everything buttoned up and on the road. Later Rolfe would paint Frank's Charger and I got to repay the favor and help with the reassembly. I even helped him put the rear stripe/decal on. I've never seen Frank so stressed. I think he smoked a whole pack of cigarettes that afternoon at Rolfe's.

I still have it to this day and it's never leaving. They say everything has a price, but with my Satellite, this is not the case.





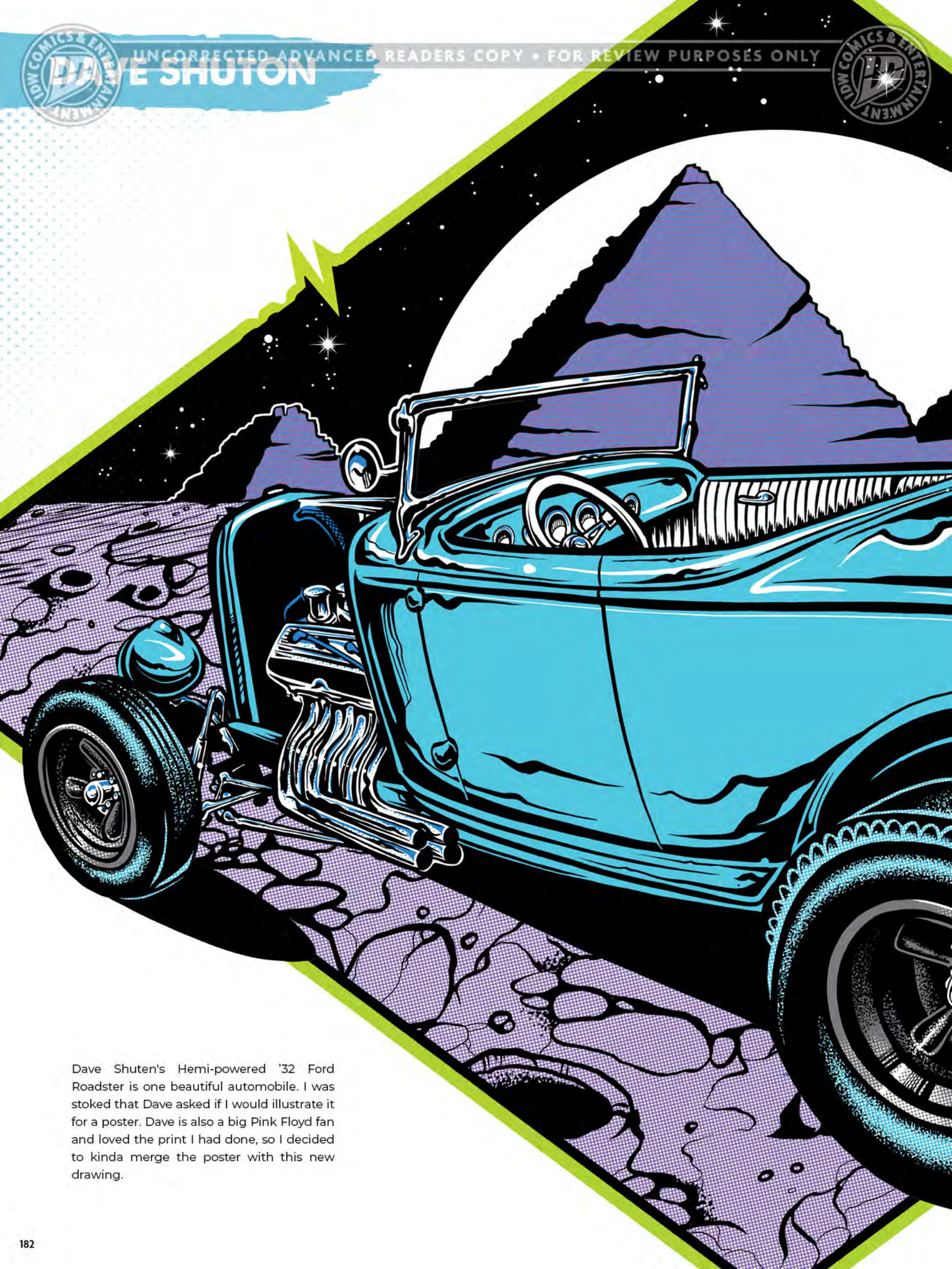
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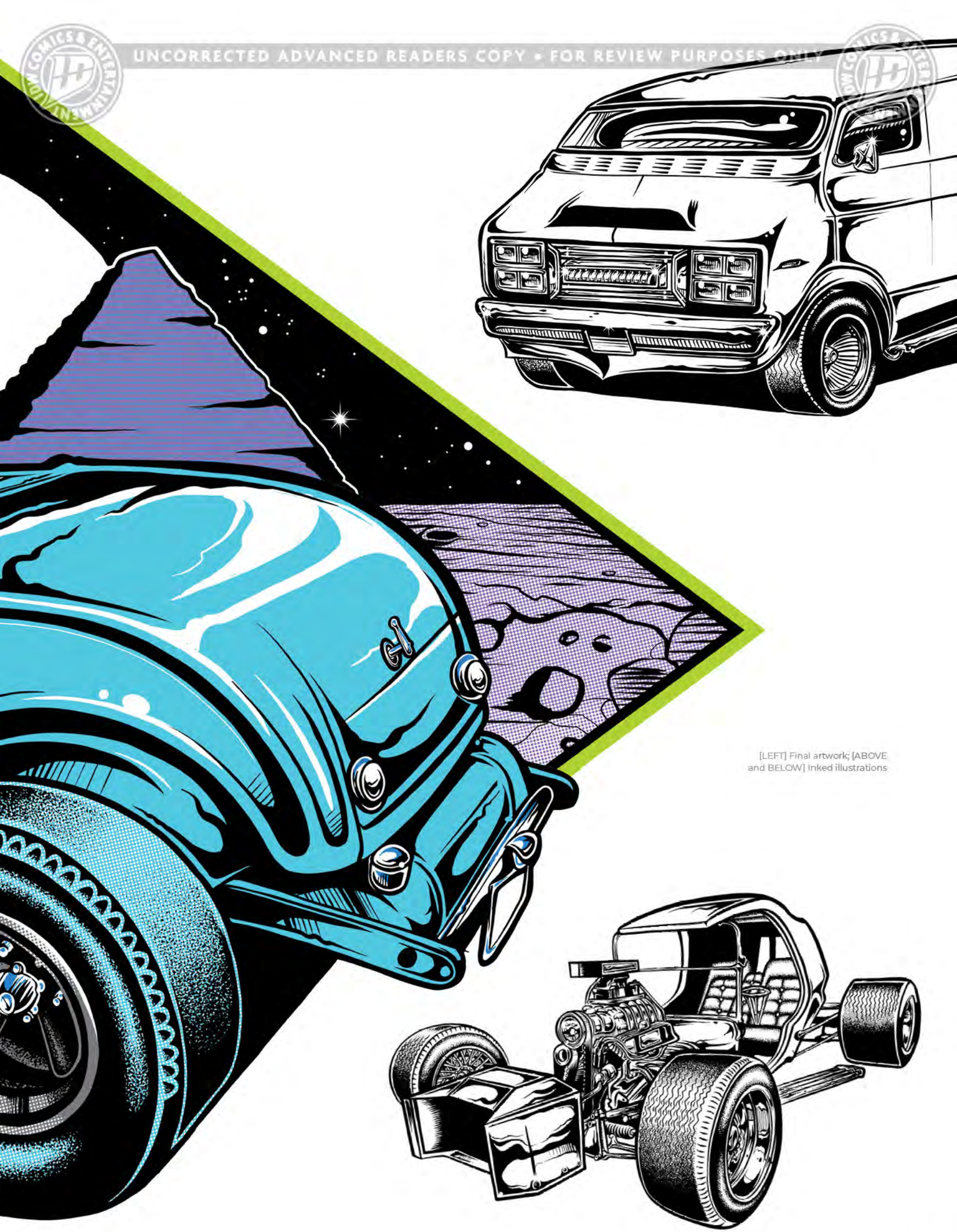


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Dave Shuten's Hemi-powered '32 Ford Roadster is one beautiful automobile. I was stoked that Dave asked if I would illustrate it for a poster. Dave is also a big Pink Floyd fan and loved the print I had done, so I decided to kinda merge the poster with this new drawing.

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[LEFT] Final artwork; [ABOVE and BELOW] Inked illustrations

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VANDALF

Purchased this 1973 Dodge van for $900 from my friend Bill back in 2011. It needed work but nothing too extreme as it was a pretty solid runner. My plan was to do a 70's custom van like my dad and uncle had in the 70's but to do as much of the interior and whatever else I could with junkyard finds. I had been collecting and going to the yards on a weekly basis and had already scored a lot of what I needed. Next was creating a stance and getting it ready for paint. I had the front dropped, raised the rear and then traded some art for a set of rims from Detroit Vintage Wheels. I had it painted in a nice metallic blue and then did all the graphics at my friend Dan Stoner's shop in South San Francisco. It was a great ride but I decided to sell it in 2017 as Jennie and I were moving to the desert and basically I had nowhere to store it. I knew that a combination of time and the elements would take its toll so I decided to move it along.







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[OPPOSUTE] Interior details of Vandalf; [ABOVE] Vandalf against the San Francisco skyline

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HOT WHEELS/MOBIL 1

This screen printed poster series premiered at the Hot Wheels Legends tour in 2025 and was a hit with what seemed to be an endless autograph line. My old friend and bodyguard, Chris Kiska, even came and helped with security. As a kid growing up, I would have never believed it if you told me I'd be doing art with Hot Wheels. Got to hang out with the design team and was stoked to hear they were hanging the prints in their office. They had to cut the line short when we ran out of prints. We had a fun day, got to hang out with and meet a lot of really nice people.





[BELOW] Danny and Jennie at Hot Wheels Legends event [THIS PAGE BOTTOM and OPPOSITE TOP LEFT] Final posters; [OPPOSITE TOP RIGHT] Mobil 1 Chris Kiska poster



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NEPTUNE'S WRATH

Robert phoned me up one day and said he had seen the flaked out, lowrider style, root beer guitar that I had left at HQ and really dug it.He asked me if I could do one for him but in blue. I had it flaked and cleared then did my thing to it. It was awesome to see both guitars I had painted being played live at the same time! I remember doing stage banners and amp flags for small indie bands back in the 90's and thinking that was pretty cool but to see my art in front of a huge Metallica audience was pretty mind blowing.I later was asked to name the bass for Guitar Hero Metallica.





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OPPOSITE: Robert on stage with his bass guitar. BELOW: details of Roberts bass guitar.

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Buck Rogers ESP LTD - When I did the Papa Het guitar, I mentioned to James that it would be really cool to try and flake one of these LTD's. So he got this for me to just do my thing on.I remember he gave it to me in the Tech Room at HQ. I had my friend, Rolfe Brittain, flake and clear it. Then I laid down the root beer candy graphics and pinstriping. On my next visit to HQ I brought it with me and left it in the tech room. A few days later Robert Trujillo called.



Maya Ford (The Donnas) Sparkle Motion - Maya loved all the guitars I had been doing and asked if I could do her one in black and pink but have it resemble The Scorpions, one of her favorite bands. Flaked and cleared by Rolfe Brittain, I set out to do some pink candy hearts and black scorpion stripes. Another really cool piece to see being played live.



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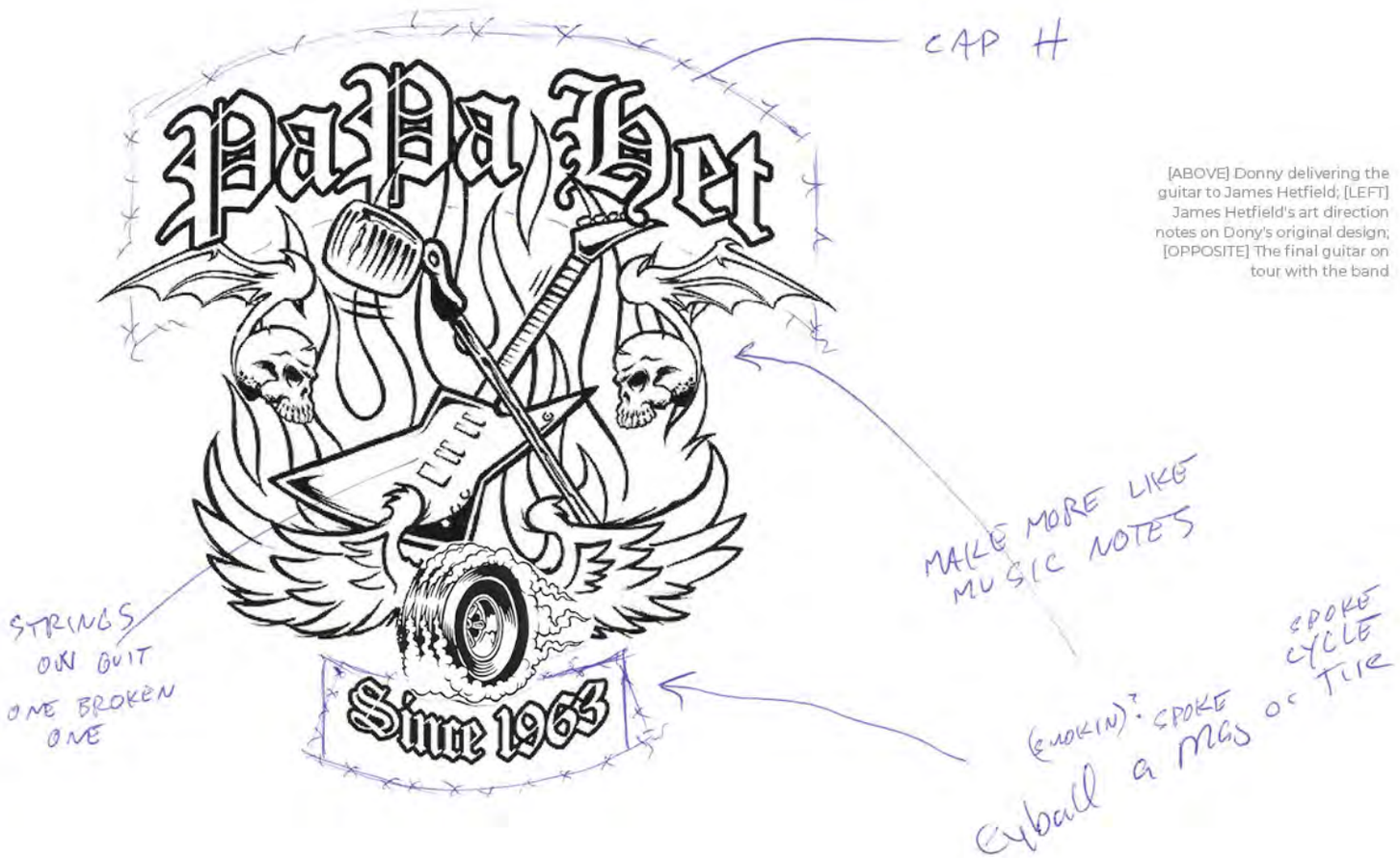
Brendon Small's Guild Navigator Dune guitar. I had met Brendon through Brann Dailor and later we were at a mutual friend's wedding where he asked me if I would be interested in painting a Dune guitar for him.When I was done he came to pick in up at my house in San Francisco and was really happy with the final result. He even did my voicemail greeting as Nathan Explosion.



PAPA HET

Originally, I was doing a series of murals in Kirk Hammett's room at HQ in San Rafael, California. I was only supposed to do these 3 murals but the guys kept coming in the room to give me more art projects. One of the coolest projects was the Papa Het logo. We talked about ideas and I made a small list of what he wanted, including the 1963. Then I drew it up and after a few back and forths we had it. When his new guitar came in he asked me if I could paint the logo on it but in black and white and maybe do a little subtle pinstriping and spider webs with stippling on it. I said yeah no prob. I actually didn't think a whole lot of it other than, hey that's cool, he digs the logo enough he wants to put it on a guitar. He owns so many guitars so I figured it's gonna go up on a wall somewhere. I really didn't think too hard about it. I just made it as clean as possible and the whole job probably took me an afternoon.





[ABOVE] Donny delivering the guitar to James Hetfield; [LEFT] James Hetfield's art direction notes on Dony's original design; [OPPOSITE] The final guitar on tour with the band

It was later in the year, when they started playing shows again, that it appeared on stage. I was like, "No shit, he's actually playing it!"

After that I started to see all kinds of photos online, not to mention people trying to clone it. I think they even made a mini toy out of it? I get asked all the time about it and am really honored that I got to do this and that it has become such an iconic piece in my career. Aside from the Stern Pinball machine, it's the most famous piece of work I have done.

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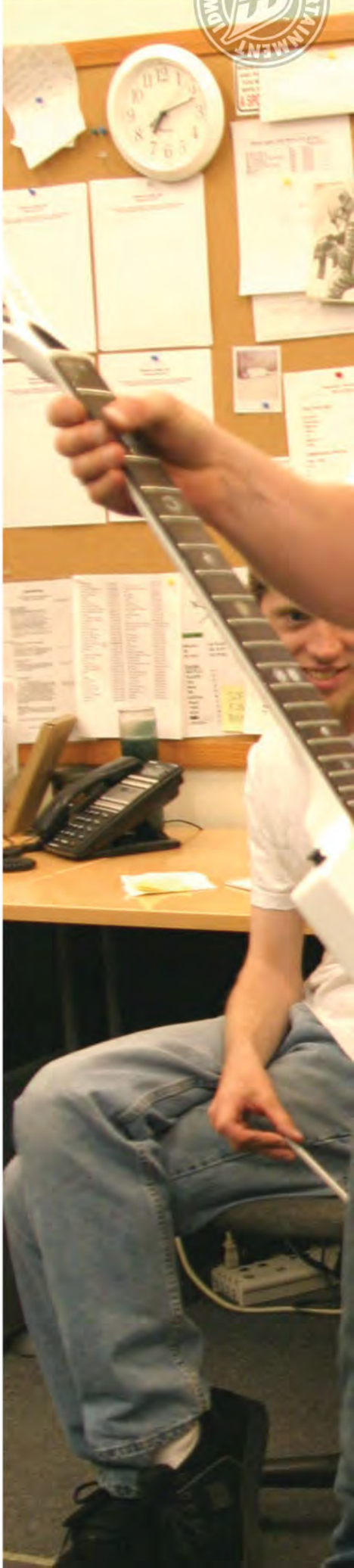
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[OPPOSITE TOP] Hetfield on stage with the guitar; [OPPOSITE BOTTOM] Hetfield's office door also painted by Donny and guitar picks based on the same design; [BELOW] DiOrio talks Hetfield through the final designs

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DRAW, MAKE, PAINT & CREATE

It's all here in this eye-blistering, memoir-style coffee table book that celebrates the renegade spirit and art of Donny Gillies, AKA Dirty Donny. Known for his distinct style on concert poster art, Stern pinball machines, cars, guitars, and more product design than you can shake a paint brush at, Donny's iconic images have graced some of music's biggest acts including Metallica, AC/DC, Kiss, Aerosmith, Primus, and NOFX, as well as his stunning black light poster art for the Netflix hit series *Stranger Things*. Donny's visceral, blacklight-charged style has earned him collaborations with major brands and bands, and a reputation as a go-to artist for anything that needs attitude and heat. What you are holding in your hands is a treasure trove of Donny's best work from the very beginning all the way up to the present day.

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