

Journey **Erró Errór** Planet

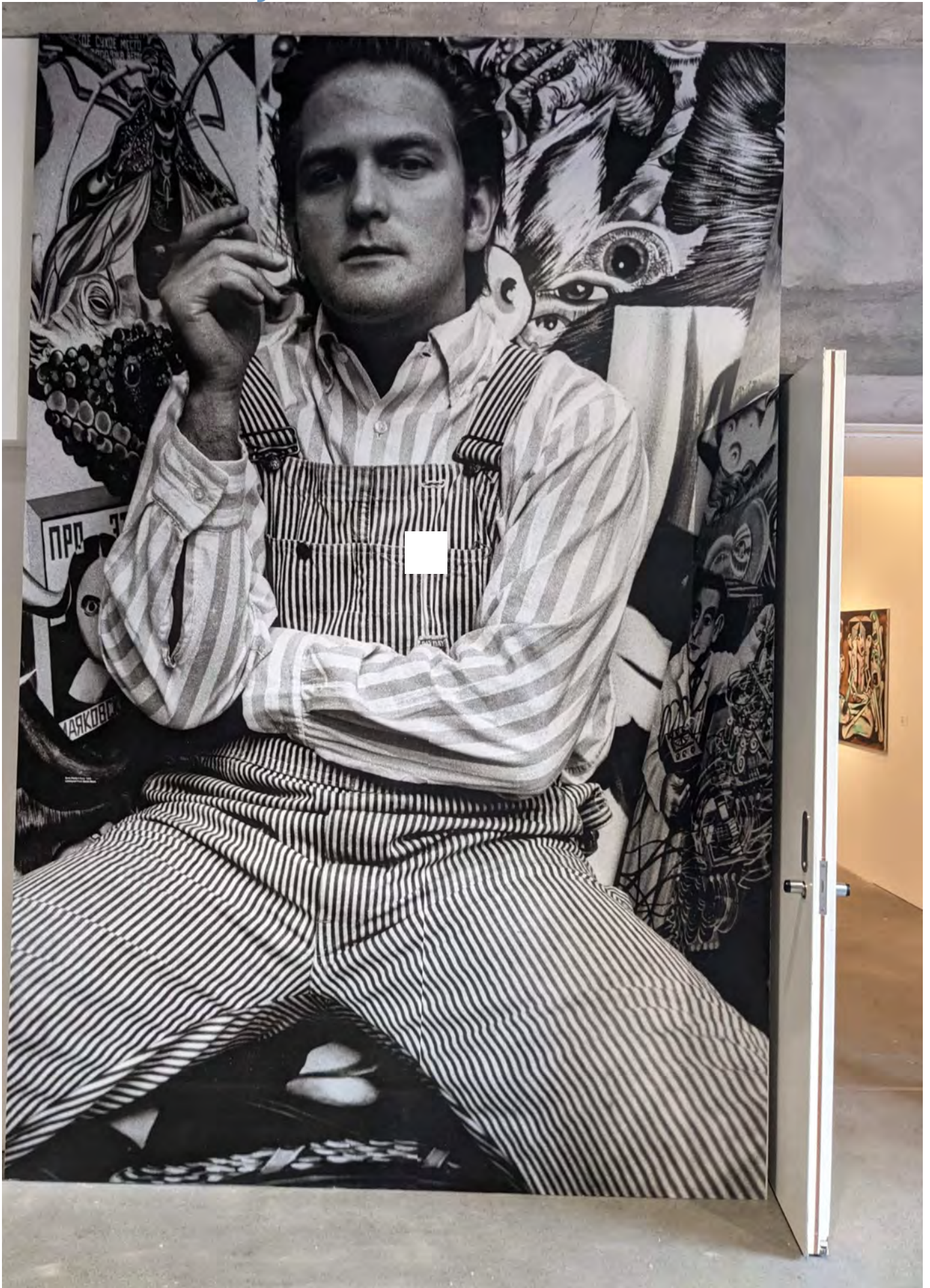


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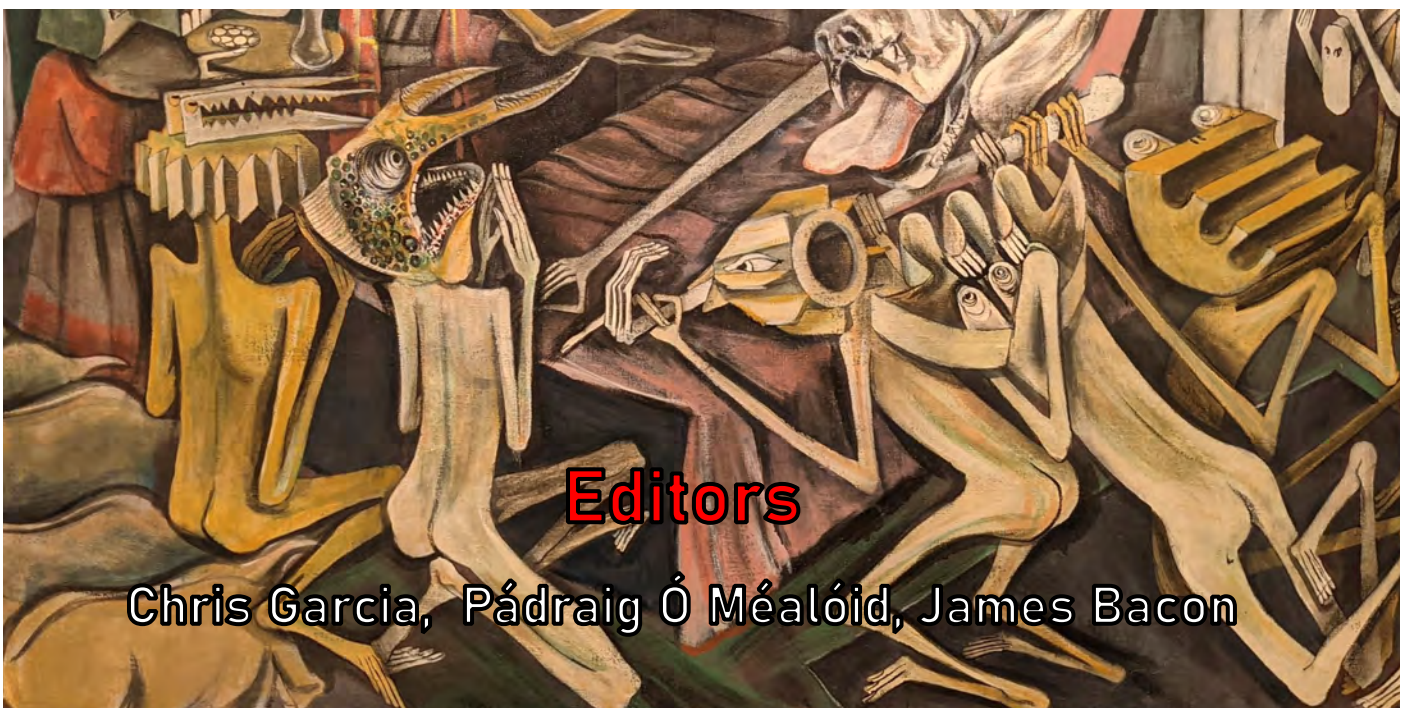
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Editors

Chris Garcia, Pádraig Ó Méalóid, James Bacon

Chris Garcia *has this to say by way of introduction, on July 27, 2022*

James—“Yes. So. I'm thinking of a JP on Erró”

This message arrived about twenty minutes after Vanessa found out that she had COVID,

It was also about an hour after I found out they were declaring my car totalled after being hit while parked in front of my house by a hit-and-run driver, then being jerked around by the insurance for a month before having it at the shop for another two weeks while they came up with the estimate, which ended up triggering the declaration of totalization.

And less than a couple of hours before I submitted my first draft of my first True Crime book, *Food & Crime*, to Pen-&-Sword, a UK publisher who somehow reached out to me to write a book after they listened to my podcast that had about 200 listens total at that point.

It was a busy time around GarciaGate Manor.

MY response to James— “What’s that?”

James forwarded a bunch of images. Amazing images. Paintings of superheroes, arranged in fascinating ways, jammed next to one another, sometimes feeling random, other times clearly densely layered with denser meanings.

I was in love.

More on that later.

I came down with COVID while I worked on the article I wrote, and while taking care of my little ones and wife, I handled the layout of an issue we started three days prior with a release date of a few days away.

Welcome to *Journey Planet*.

Anyhoo, it's been crazy, as usual. I've been writing my book, researching photos for it. I've put together an exhibit for work, *The Painted Word*, featuring the paintings of William Saroyan. It's a good show. I can't wait to see it hung, but that's still a couple of days away.

As of right now, we're going to WorldCon. Vanessa's got her first nomination, and she's gonna be in the art show! Plus, she's taking the train to see her cousin in Ann Arbor. I'll be going to the Art Institute. All the times I've been to Chi-ville and I've never made it there.

One thing this issue brings up is an idea of copyright and trademark, both legal and moral, and all sorts of issues those concepts bring up. I've got one take, and it's informed by my general distaste for making money, I guess. In fact, it's more based on being too broke most of my life to afford access to the things that would have made it possible to make my art the way I saw it in my head, or to know the things I'd like to be able to research. It's all meant to limit access, and while I hate the idea of information wanting to be free, I can't stand the idea that those without the ability to pay can only experience a limited amount of what's out there, and making use of much material costs so much that there's another limit. *Just make something else* is what a lot of people say, but really, if it were that easy, well, it'd be that easy.

This issue also brings up collage, which is something I really wanna talk about at some point, but you'll easily be able to find the collage pieces I did in here.

So, as this is an art issue, I thought I'd include some of my art, because yeah... ART.





Copyright is a Tricky Business—An Editorial

By Pádraig Ó Méalóid

A few days ago my old friend James Bacon asked me to cast my stern copy-editorial eye over a few pieces he'd written about Icelandic artist Guðmundur Guðmundsson, aka Erró, all of which you'll find in this issue. Now, whilst I can just about remember reading about Brian Bolland's run-in with him over the Tank Girl prints, I really didn't know anything about him otherwise, until I read these.

What I do know a fair bit about, though, is copyright. A few years ago I wrote and published a book called *Poisoned Chalice: The Extremely Long and Incredibly Complex Story of Marvelman (and Miracleman)* in which I teased out at least some of the complicated relationship linking Superman, Captain Marvel (the original Fawcett Comics one), Marvelman, and eventually Miracleman, and which involves people like Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman, and Todd McFarlane, as well as comics companies DC Comics, Marvel Comics, and Image in several different kinds of copyright violations, on both sides of the Atlantic. Once upon a time I imagined that copyright was a simple matter: if you created something you owned it, right? You'd think, but no, it just isn't as straightforward as that. And this particularly applies to the field of comics.

The history of it all goes back quite a bit, though. Back to sixth century Ireland, when St Colmcille and St Finian got into a fight because the former had secretly copied a book belonging to the latter – and this was in a time when the only way to copy something was to write it out longhand – and Finian claimed that he should also own the copy. Eventually the case went before King Diarmait mac Cerbhiail, the High King of Ireland, who pronounced that 'Le gach bó a buinín agus le gach leachar a chóip,' – 'to every cow belongs its calf; to every book its copy.' Colmcille didn't agree, and this eventually led to the Battle of Cúl Dreimhne, also known as the Battle of the Book, where legend has it that 3,000 people died on one side, and only one on the other, because we take our books seriously. It is not for nothing that Ireland is known as the Land of Saints and Scholars!

The real trouble starts, of course, with the advent of printing and photography, and with relatively cheap reproduction of images. Collage – cutting out images and reassembling them with other images to



form a new work – started with Victorians sticking pictures onto screens (sometimes removing them from valuable books to do so), and continued on from there. Photography not only tolled the death knell for portraiture and realistic representation in art, it also provided a whole new source of images that could be cut out and combined, with scant regard for the rights of the creators. It only got worse when comics appeared, filled with pages of images which could be repurposed. It was bad enough when they were being cut out and assembled together, but when a single image was copied, what then? James addresses some of this in his pieces here.

Then there's the whole thing of taking a single comic panel, and reproducing it on a much larger scale, and selling it as fine art. Lichtenstein is the obvious culprit here, although he's hardly alone. There has always been a tension between commercial art and 'fine art,' and the latter has sometimes been seen as an excuse to steal from the former. Sometimes it's very hard to see where the line should be drawn.

Comics companies have a poor track record of looking after the rights of the creators of their product, a situation that still exists. Once upon a time creators were forced to sign disclaimer clauses on the backs of their cheques in order to even get paid for their work. Things have improved a little, but not that much, either. Sometimes, though, creators are not necessarily their own best friends. Anyone who is aware of the fact that Alan Moore hates the films based on his comics work, whilst Neil Gaiman is actively involved in helping Netflix make a TV series of one of his, can probably see that different people, perhaps with different temperaments, might be able to work things out with a little diplomacy. Or, of course, you could believe, as I do, that the creator should own the rights to their work unless they specifically and consciously sign it away, rather than having corporate lawyers swindle them out of the right to have a say in what happens to their greatest work. But maybe that's just me...

Anyway, I made a list of issues that copyright affects, and specifically things that relate to things I'm

personally interested in, and I'm going to run through them quickly here, because Deadline Doom is upon me. So...

I went to see a play about Jack the Ripper several years ago, only to find it had been ripped, word for word, from Alan Moore's *From Hell*. The guy who 'wrote' it even had previous, having written a previous one taken directly from Robert Rankin's first two Brentford books. And I know he didn't have permission, because in both cases I spoke to the original creators about it.

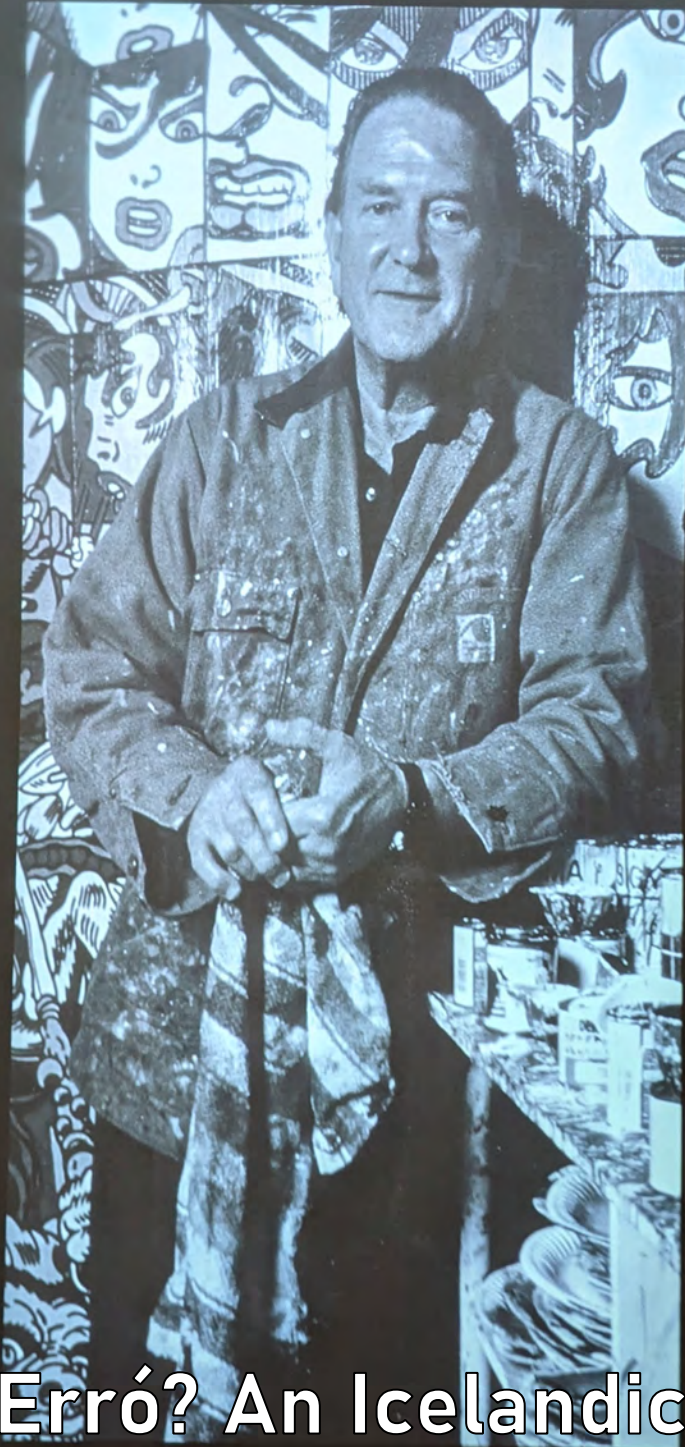
I'm been looking into Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*, the store-bought porcelain urinal that he presented as a piece of art in 1917, and which is the most famous and well-known of his readymade works. In the case I think of all those readymades, all the originals, if that word even really applies, have been lost, or quite possibly just thrown out as having no worth, so he produced copies of them.

I am, as many people know, a big fan of Flann O'Brien. Under his other most well-known pseudonym, Myles na gCopaleen, he wrote over 4,000 Cruiskeen Lawn columns for the *Irish Times*. The vast majority of these are not readily available to the curious reader, but are hidden behind a paywall of the *IT's* truly awful online archive. He died in 1966, so they won't be out of copyright and into the public domain until 2037.

Here's a few other things: what the fuck does fungible mean, and why do people care about NFTs, anyway? There are a few AI art-creating apps cropping up these days which create some really very good images. I know at least some artists are taking this seriously, and it has the possibility to change art as much as photography did. All those people in your average Artists' Alley at cons, who are selling prints of their drawing of superheroes which are the corporate property of big scary comic companies, where do they stand? Is it OK that Anish Kapoor was able to create Vantablack, the supposed blackest black, and not let anyone else use it?

All of these things are aspects of the use or abuse, or downright violation, of copyright. It, and the things it either protects, or hinders our being allowed to utilise, surround us. I bet that you, reading this now, have at least one or two things you've read, or watched, or scanned for a friend, which maybe you shouldn't. I know I do. Do you?

(This editorial is copyright to Pádraig Ó Méalóid, and don't you forget it!)



**Who is Erró? An Icelandic Youth
by James Bacon**

Guðmundur Guðmundsson was born in 1932 in Ólafsvík, a tiny place with a small harbour and a few dozen buildings, well organised, about 200 clicks northwest of Reykjavík. Iceland was a sovereign kingdom in personal union with Denmark when he was born.

He would have been eight when Denmark was invaded and occupied by Nazi Germany on 9 April 1940. Two days after the invasion, the Icelandic cabinet was invested with the power of Head of State and declared that Iceland would accept full responsibility for both foreign policy and coastal surveillance, and declared itself neutral. Iceland set up a legation in New York.

Britain was not at all happy with Iceland being neutral, and so just over a month later, after at least attempting by diplomatic means to coerce Iceland to become a co-belligerent against the Axis, they invaded. On 10 May 1940 British Royal Marines invaded Iceland.

Now this was a rather relaxed affair, although the invasion itself, Operation Fork, had been planned carefully and was meant to be secret, it failed in the later, regardless it was a surprise to a postman who first saw the Invasion fleet, and reported it up the chain of command. A heavy cruiser, *Berwick*, a Light Cruiser, *Glasgow*, and two destroyers, *Fearless* and *Fortune*. There was anxiety amongst the British to do it all well but it all ran late, and eventually when the invaders came to the harbour, the British Consul had arrived and asked the senior police officer on hand to keep the crowd back, to which he complied. There were German seamen from a freighter, thought to be 'spare submarine crews,' and the consulate to secure, which they did without incident. Allegedly when the German Consul noted that Iceland was neutral, he was told, so was Denmark.

Canadian forces arrived later in May to relieve the British, and garrisoned until the spring of 1941. On 7 July 1941, President Roosevelt announced to the Congress of the United States that the United States had landed forces in Iceland as a means of preventing German forces from taking control of the country's vital shipping and airways. 1st Marine Brigade, consisting of approximately 4,100 troops, garrisoned Iceland until early 1942, when they were replaced by US Army troops. Iceland cooperated but officially remained neutral throughout the war.

In 1944 Erró would have been 12 when the country declared independence, and he may have gone to see that occur at Þingvellir, the site of the Alþing, or Althing.

The Althing was the annual parliament of Iceland from the year 930 until the last session held at Þingvellir in 1798 but also where the Act of Union with Denmark was repealed and the Republic of Iceland established, at a huge event at the Althing held at Þingvellir on 17 June 1944, although still occupied by Allied forces.

There were odd difficulties after the invasion. There were nearly as many Allied soldiers in Iceland as there were Icelandic men, and this created a tension, as the soldiers courted, dated, and indeed married Icelandic women. Children born of from such relationships were called 'ástandsbörn'.

Iceland was a peaceful nation, indeed today they don't have an army or air force, although they have a small Coast Guard. At the time of the Second World War they had an unarmed police force.

After the War, the troops left.

In 1949 the seventeen year old would have seen his country decide to join NATO. A unique situation as Iceland has no military, but in some regards perhaps quick thinking on their part, to avoid any further invasions. On 30 March 1949, the anti-NATO riot took place, this was quelled eventually by police and political volunteers, and teargas was used. This level of unrest was unheard of, and nothing like it occurred until the 2009 financial crisis.

In 1951 the USA stationed troops and developed Keflavík airfield, which had been a Second World War aerodrome, and troops were restricted to the base. The airfield had two 10,000 foot runways, and annual protests against NATO took place, and although there were changes of government, Iceland never left NATO, and the US decided to leave Iceland in 2006.

So as a youth, Guðmundur Guðmundsson, who would become Erró lived through interesting times. He Studied Art in Norway and then Italy. He did the *Carcasses* series in Florence in 1955, some of which are quite extraordinary, such as *The Devil of Pompeii* and *Big Horses*. It is fair to expect he moved away from Iceland sometime after 1950 to study.



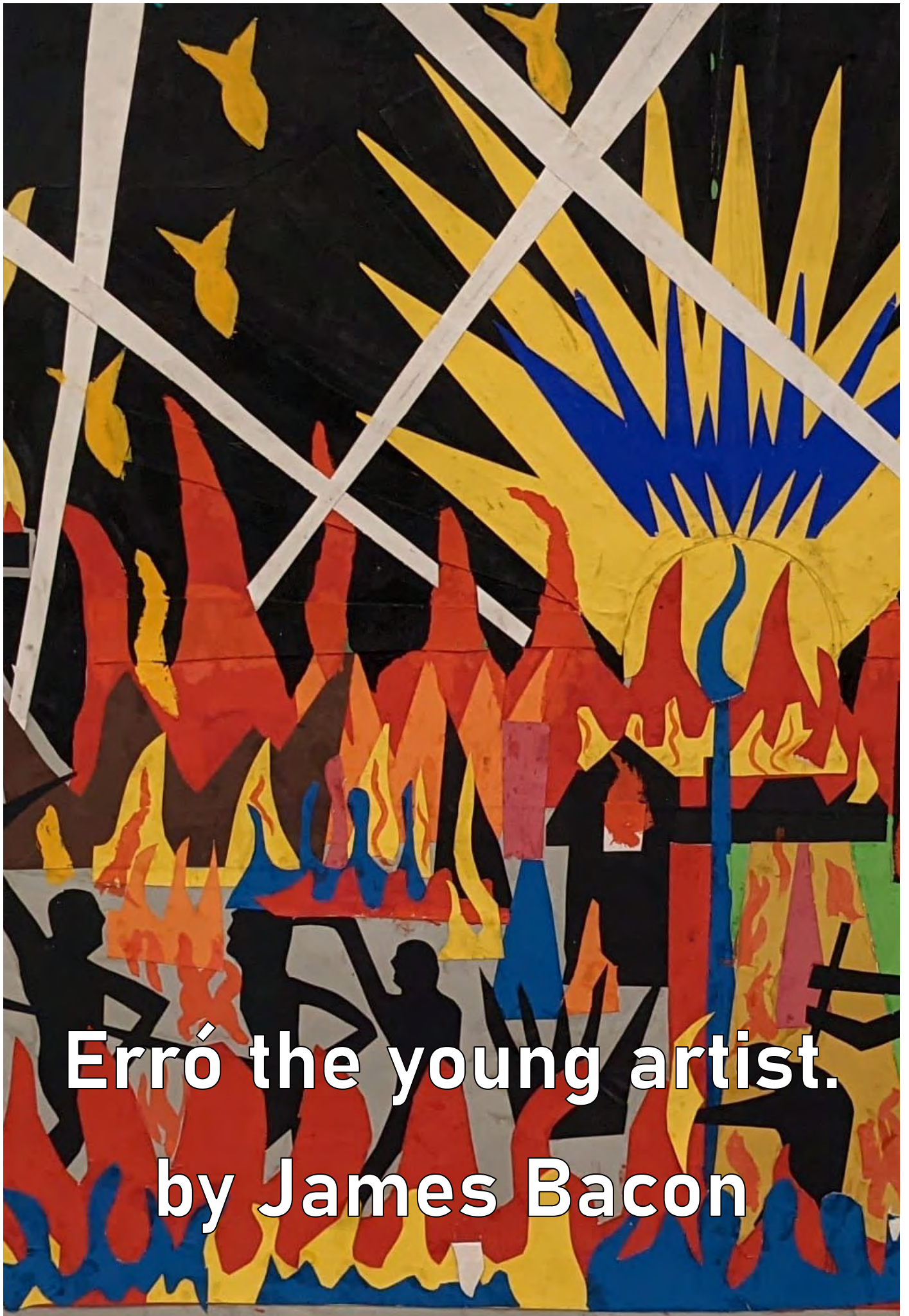
Salvador Dalí, *The Skull of the Dead*, 1945.



Salvador Dalí, *The Skull of the Dead*, 1945.



Les Femmes d'Alger (O Version)
Pablo Picasso
1888-1973
Oil on canvas
146 x 114 cm
1935



**Erró the young artist.
by James Bacon**

The first piece of art on display is 'Image of War' from 1950. A strongly colourful piece brightly depicting firestorm and reigning bomb death, and silhouettes of people and searchlights seeking upwards. This is a layered work, the materials used can be seen to sit on one another, and while youthful, there is something to it.

Erró studied Art in Norway and then Italy. By 1955 he was developing considerably, and he did the Carcasses series in Florence. These are quite extraordinary, such as the *The Devil of Pompeii* and *Big Horses*, which I was greatly taken with. The Devil of Pompeii was inspired by seeing the ruins of the city. There is a fusion of appropriation, he takes influence of Rufino Tamayo's *El Atormentado* (1949) and Edvard Munch's *The Scream* (1893). We also learn something of it, as he wrote to his family:

The painting... has this colour in the foreground representing the fire of the mountain and the Pompeii colour. The form of the volcano is in the background along with a picture of a dog found there. The dog is in the throes of death and symbolises all the dead things there. In the foreground there is the devil in the shape of a monster, representing the one who destroyed everything. Far away is his shadow, to add a sense of depth to the picture.

It is a huge piece.

Carcasses contains armoured knights, human skeletons, and skeletal creatures, and is another massive piece, and makes one think about the futility of knighthood as seen in battle. I of course contemplated Richard the III, from King to Car Park attendant, so easily.

Erró studied under Ottone Rosai in Florence. This seems to have been an interesting education with time spent with Rosai and less in the college. Three pieces, very colourful on display, entitled *Dance Macabre*, colourfully portray renditions of skeletons. Again we get an epistolary explanation:

A month ago I started studying Leonardo da Vinci's drawing of the human body. I made a lot of drawings of bones and muscles, which is very important and useful. That led me to paint a picture of skeletons dancing and singing...

In 1957 Erró had his first solo exhibition in Iceland, at the Reykjavík Artists' House, which must have been something, and he was offered a studio at the Reykjavík Technical College, where he produced the turbulent *Sur Atom* series. The Cold War and the threat of nuclear war, and the very recent devastation by nuclear weapons of Nagasaki and Hiroshima were an influence here.

Erró moved to Paris in late 1958, and it would become a home and at this stage there is a certain science fictional element to his work and he combine human faces and machinery for his *Meca Makeup* pieces, which led to more three dimensional physical items sculpted from various materials.

Fucky Strike Bureau of Propaganda from 1959 is a very striking picture formed of two large pieces, at 90 degrees, filling a corner. One senses the commentary here in its title, and we see a chimpanzee and suited smoker surrounded by fantastical mechanical creatures. The museum had a serious of black and white pieces, which may have been the preliminary work.

There is something amusing to the *Death of an Art Collector*. It is unclear to me if the creatures surrounding the bed are mourning the death, or lamenting the loss of income. Likewise I felt *School of New-Par-Yorkis* is another statement on art and artists. Different styles are captured on the canvas, again creatures creating art, and it is unclear if one is an image itself. An unexpected consideration of the art at the time. *School Days*, also from 1959, has a machine as the teacher, and a class full of screaming children, the colour, yellow and green works well, and there is a hint of Munch to the children, but a very interesting commentary on schools.





Small informational text block on the right side of the wall, likely providing details about the artworks or the exhibition.

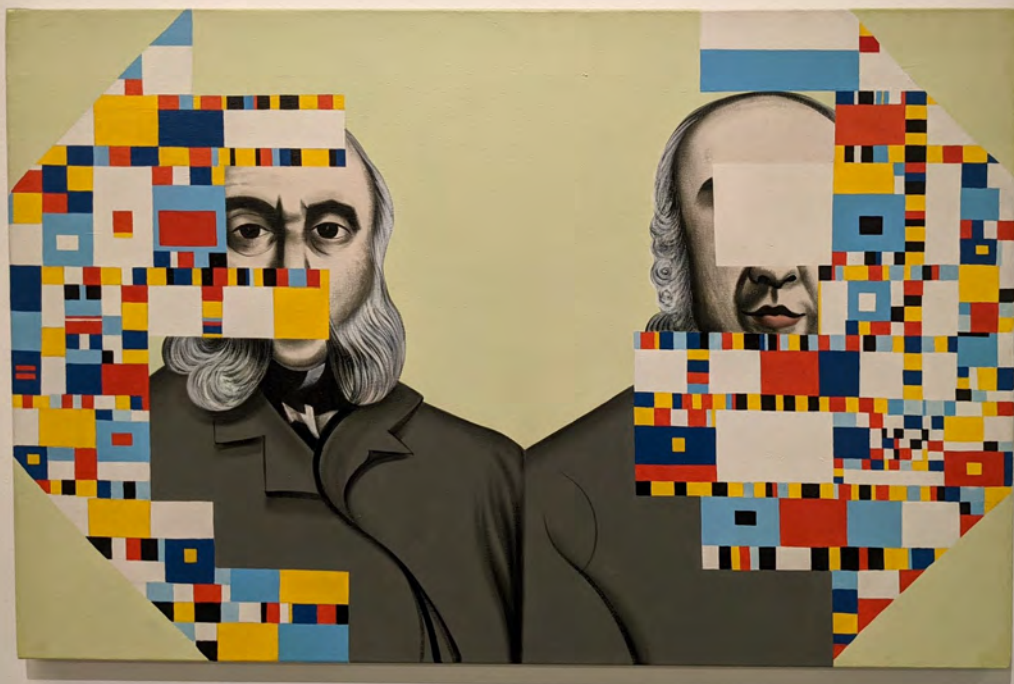


As Pop Art occurred he started to look at that direction but he was also a film maker, and instigated a 'Happening,' which was also filmed.

He said, 'My style, Pop Art, no, we have a group in Paris, Narrative figuration' he continues to say that Pop art is 3 letters, and like the art, a hand, a face it takes only a few moments to take it in, while the Narrative Figuration, with its seventeen letters, takes seventeen minutes to see fully, and one can see that this is a clever thing to say, or note.

He was considered a prominent figures in the European avant-garde of the 1960s. His cinema was experimental but soon he would go to New York.





Francis Bacon
Portrait of the Artist
1965

Contesting the Comics

by James Bacon





From what I can find, Erró's first sojourns into utilising comic or cartoon imagery took place in 1964. A Christmas series, featured a number of characters such as Donald Duck in *Christmas Joy*, Pluto and Snagglepuss in *Inside Christmas* and *Our Vincent* which juxtaposes Vincent van Gogh with *Cracked* comics.

The Big Fox from 1964 features Sir Ector and the owl Archimedes from Walt Disney's cartoon film *The Sword in the Stone* from 1963. He said to his family by letter on 25 January 1964 that "My paintings have changed a lot since I have been here; they contain a lot of American references."

He acknowledges pop art himself, in his painting *Pop History* in 1967, challenging the Soviet assertion that they invented basketball, by lampooning that they invented pop art. Which is very ironic, and unfortunately, he borrows heavily for this, yet the renditions of the 'pop art' are very poor, his rendition of Marilyn being especially badly painted.

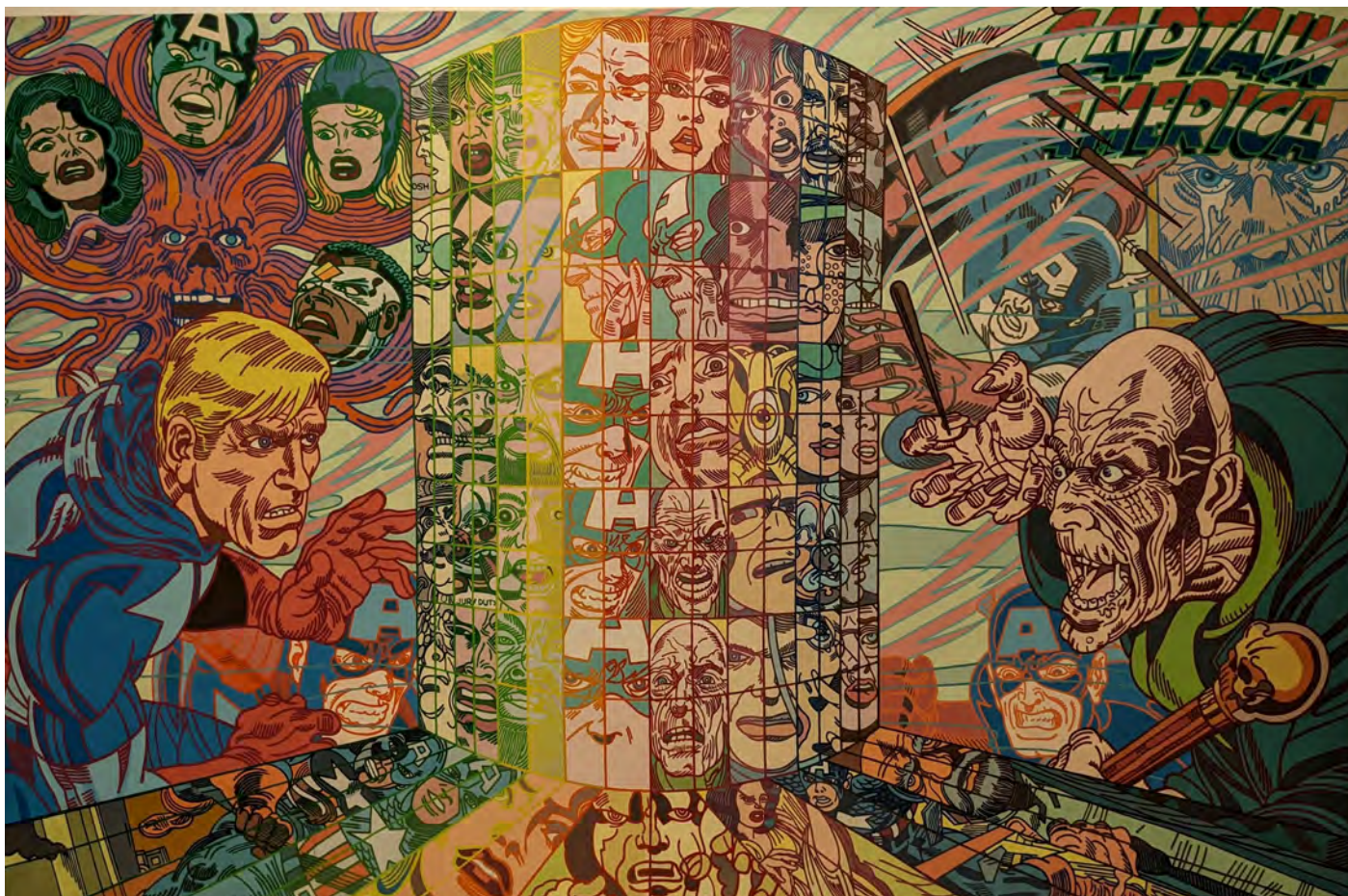


The Battle of Kyoto from 1974 juxtaposes a copy of an erotic Japanese print with a copy of a 1950s war comic. This was from a series entitled 'Made in Japan' and here we see a real comic scene lifted. While there had been a series of works that collaged magazine images, including US soldiers attacking a train, here we get the full lift of a comic image.

There were other phases, some incredibly realistic imagery, again taken from other sources, but so well painted and impressive in their own right, that they lead one to consider what is occurring with comic work, which while in some cases is brilliantly done in others does not match the skill of the original.

Comics became the main subject of choice, or rather the medium to be exploited, from the 1980s onwards. He evolved his work by utilising computer generated 3D grids which one can see. Whether this benefits pieces such as *Ghost Rider* from 1985 and *Captain America* from 1988 has to be considered by the

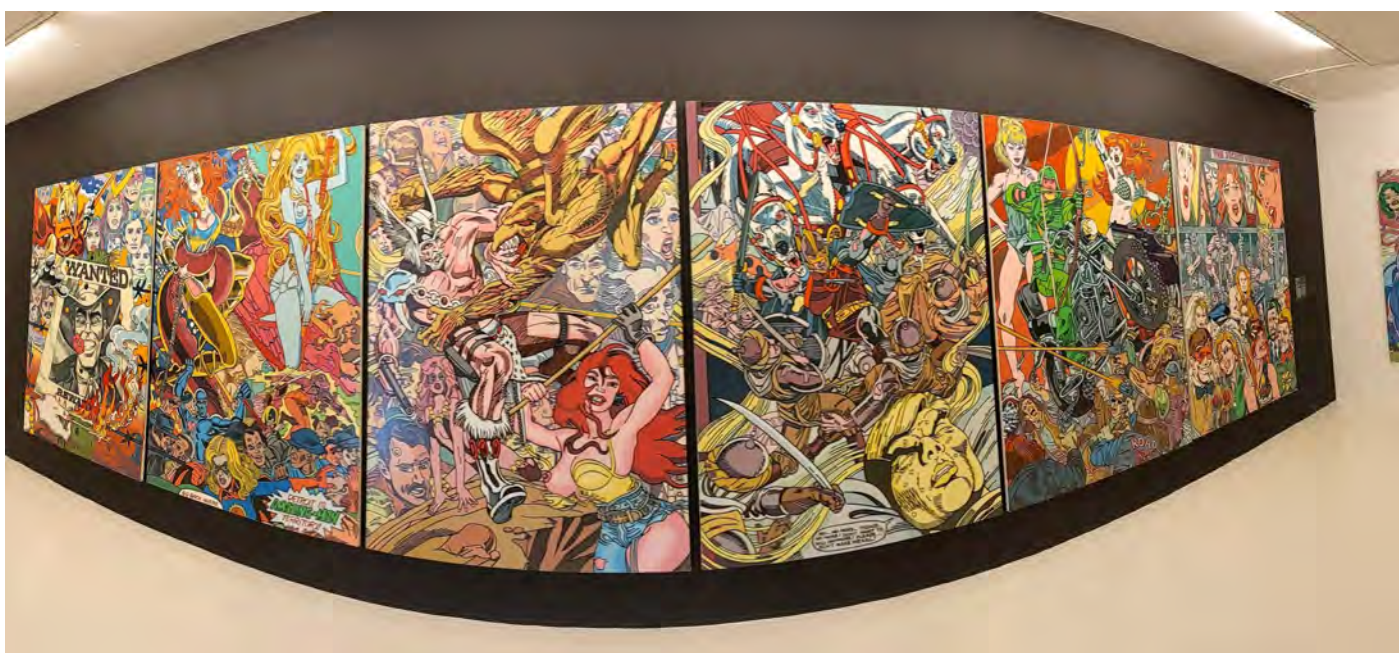




viewer. In one sense it does adjust the original away from what was done, but it is still very derivative, yet looking at Captain America in its grand scale, is something to behold.

Secret Revealed from 1988 is a six panel set which is incredibly impressive to see, that is for sure, but rather than a buffet of brilliance, and there is some excitement to see such a large amount of comics referenced, there is no detail beyond the titles: *The Medusa*, *The Aggression*, *The Dream*, *Full Moon*, *Video Prison*, and *Wedding*. It becomes the task for the viewer to take in and find all the characters, and although this could also be a nice sport, or challenge, apart from a cursory mention of some of the characters, there is little to reference the original work and artists.

That secret is never told.

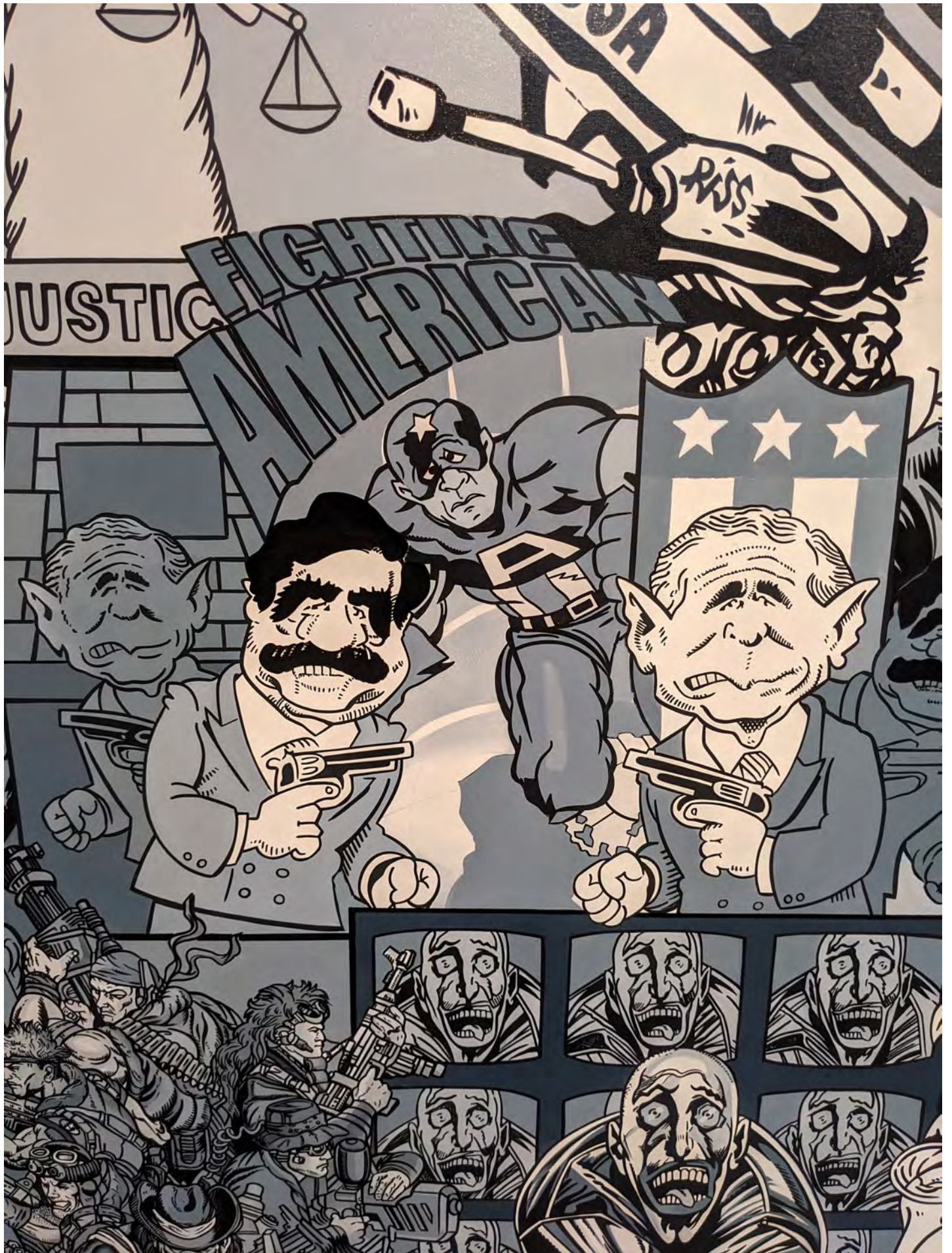


Desert Storm from 1991 might be a fascinating reflection on the first Gulf War in 1991 in Kuwait and Iraq, if the satirist and politically observant Erró had only been using comics for this piece, rather than all his work. His caricatures are good in places, and one can see where he is using his own imagination, such as cans of Raid or moments of humour like 'Ground to Air Jordan' cruise missiles in the shape of trainers. The Sergeant Rock he uses is not one I would have chosen, but then there are a lot of Sgt Rock comics, but I spend a long time looking at the three GIs in the foreground wondering which Vietnam comic I recalled them from.



God Bless Baghdad, which is obviously a satirical take on *God Bless America*, we get some insight from Erró on this piece as well as the whole process that he follows – it is refreshing to hear the artist speak. Erró said,

Any historical event or armed conflict, as is well known, is accompanied by a war of images. This truth, which was manifest during the Cold War, was in very intensive evidence during the 1990-91 Gulf War, and later during the Iraq conflict. For an artist like me, who uses media images to make collages, the starting points for my paintings, there was no shortage of material, and I made a large-scale collage (of 138.5 x 224.5 cm) . From that collage I had two digital proofs made in almost the same dimensions – one in color, the other in black and white . The second version was the model for the painting. As was the case with *For Pol Pot*, the choice of black and white was for the sake of dramatization. It was also a way of giving unity to the composition. *God Bless Baghdad* is composed of more than 50 elements that can basically be divided into two groups: political caricatures from the foreign and French Press (*Courrier International*, *Charlie Hebdo*, *Le Monde*, *Libération*, etc) and the Soviet satirical magazine *Krokodil*. There were also comic-strip characters from Marvel Comics, DC Comics, and *Wildstorm* . This explains the presence of all these monsters, clones and evil or simply ridiculous characters like the Joker, Hulk, Thanos, or Howard the Duck alongside George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, Saddam Hussein, and Bin Laden. All these elements are organized around the diagonal central axis formed by the figures from the Marvel universe - a kind of mutating totem pole or a very vertical tornado. As soon as I saw that image in the Spanish press, I knew it would be the backbone of a painting and would enable me to divide the picture area into two parts according to the golden mean. The visual material in *God Bless Baghdad* refers to the Iraq conflict and the projected death of Saddam Hussein, whose portrait figures on the ace of spades (the death card) in the card castle on the right of the painting. But it also references the antecedents to the conflict. In the top left corner, the American eagle is delivering missiles to the Afghan rebels to support their fight against the Russians (the First Afghan War). Those same weapons would later be turned against the Taliban Regime by the American administration in reprisal for the attacks of 11 September 2001, which haunts the memory of George W. Bush at the bottom of the picture (The Second Afghan War). The proclaimed objectives of that war were to capture Bin Laden and overturn the Taliban, whose regime were great oppressors of women and also responsible for the destruction the Buddhas of Bamiyan, symbols of the Afghan cultural heritage (see the upper right area of the painting). These astonishing monumental statues stood in a niche in the sandstone cliff. I had visited them on my 1971-72 world tour.





(From the exhibition catalogue of the Erró retrospective, Museum of Contemporary Art, Lyon, and Somogy Art Editions, Paris, 2014)

This also gives another game away. I had initially thought that the caricatures were his own work, and I realised then that this was not so, that EVERYTHING was a copy, and that at all times one must assume that the images, from military hardware to caricatures of politicians were lifted, indeed while Desert Storm did have Red Sonja and Bart, I was not aware that the work of Rick Meyerowitz “Operation Desert Sale” was also lifted from a copy of *National Lampoon*, but the museum stated it, and as one of the few credits or references indicated, I was awakened to this. I spent a lot of time looking at this piece. Transformers, Vietnam-era soldiers, Hulk, lots of pre-Bisley Lobo, soldiers drawn in the 90s, there is a lot to take in. As the years roll by, Manga is incorporated to the art, or becomes the feature. Negative Beauty of 2012 features it, and 50th Anniversary of 2018 juxtaposes a traditional Chinese propaganda image with Manga

In 2010, *Car Race* seems to have left a signature on one of the pieces. A woman holding open her jacket has the signature U.WY on it. I may be misreading that, but it is there. Then in 2016 we have *Street Fighters no 2*, with Power Puff Girls. This piece stopped me. In the middle of it was the artist signature, RF Bachs 2014. Roman Bachs, who has drawn some incredible comics, and I was like, this is just a whole lift. Now the piece is incredibly vivid, it is large and strong, but I had found the signature copied. Had something changed?

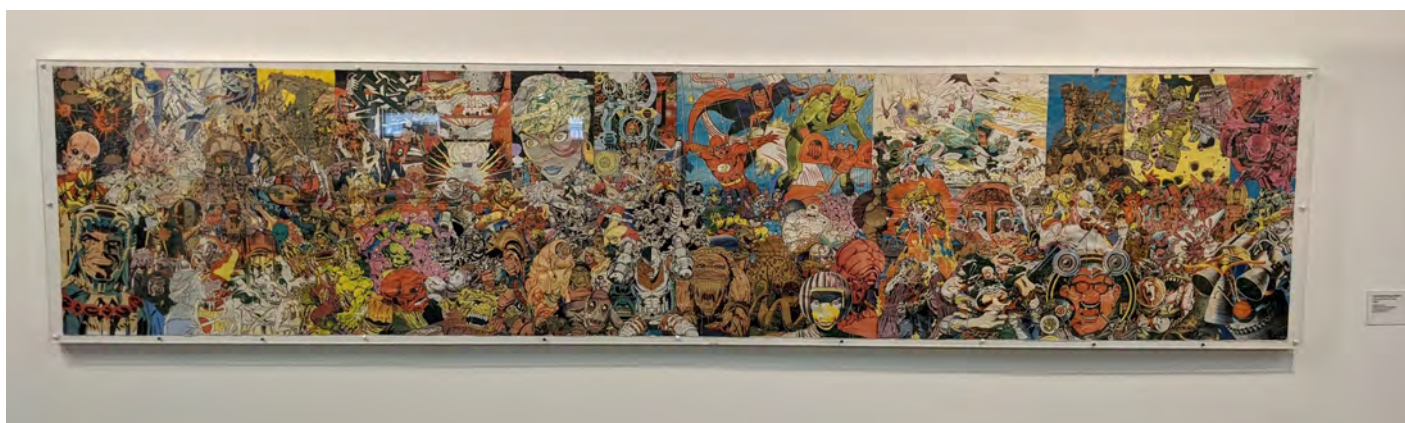
As I came around, I could barely mistake *Tank Girl the Odyssey No 1*, the 1995 comic with a cover by Brian Bolland. It was juxtaposed with workers, where the title might have been. This was painted in 2000, and where Bolland’s signature was, next to the TV, was blank. There is no mention anywhere of the original, now comic framed neatly beside it just indicative of the process or original source. No one there knew any better.





Science-Fiction Scape is presented in both forms, the actual collage cut and paste as well as the large painted series of canvases that link together to create an imposing wall of comics and science fiction. This comes from a 1986 request to decorate walls at the Library of La Villette, Paris, the City of Science and Industry, but was deemed as not suitable. He returned to it in 1992 and created a piece for the museum in Reykjavik. We are told that 'Erró borrowed from American graphic artists such as Jack Kirby' and that 'The painting is an assemblage of all the cartoon characters the artist had encountered since he first used comic-book characters for his works in 1964 when he was in New York,' which is quite a thing to admit to, although I spent a long time, and wondered who had done a spreadsheet to crosscheck, I suppressed the super fan geek power and decided that it was probably an artistic 'all'.

Like when had he used the ABC Warriors, or Red Skull from the cover of *Tales of Suspense* #90 by Gil Kane or the full cover of *Iceman* #1 by Mike Zeck and John Beatty, or the *DC Presents* #2 from 1978 with a Dan Adkin and José Luis García-López image of Superman and the Flash. This was becoming fun, working out the originals, but why was this not presented to the viewer.

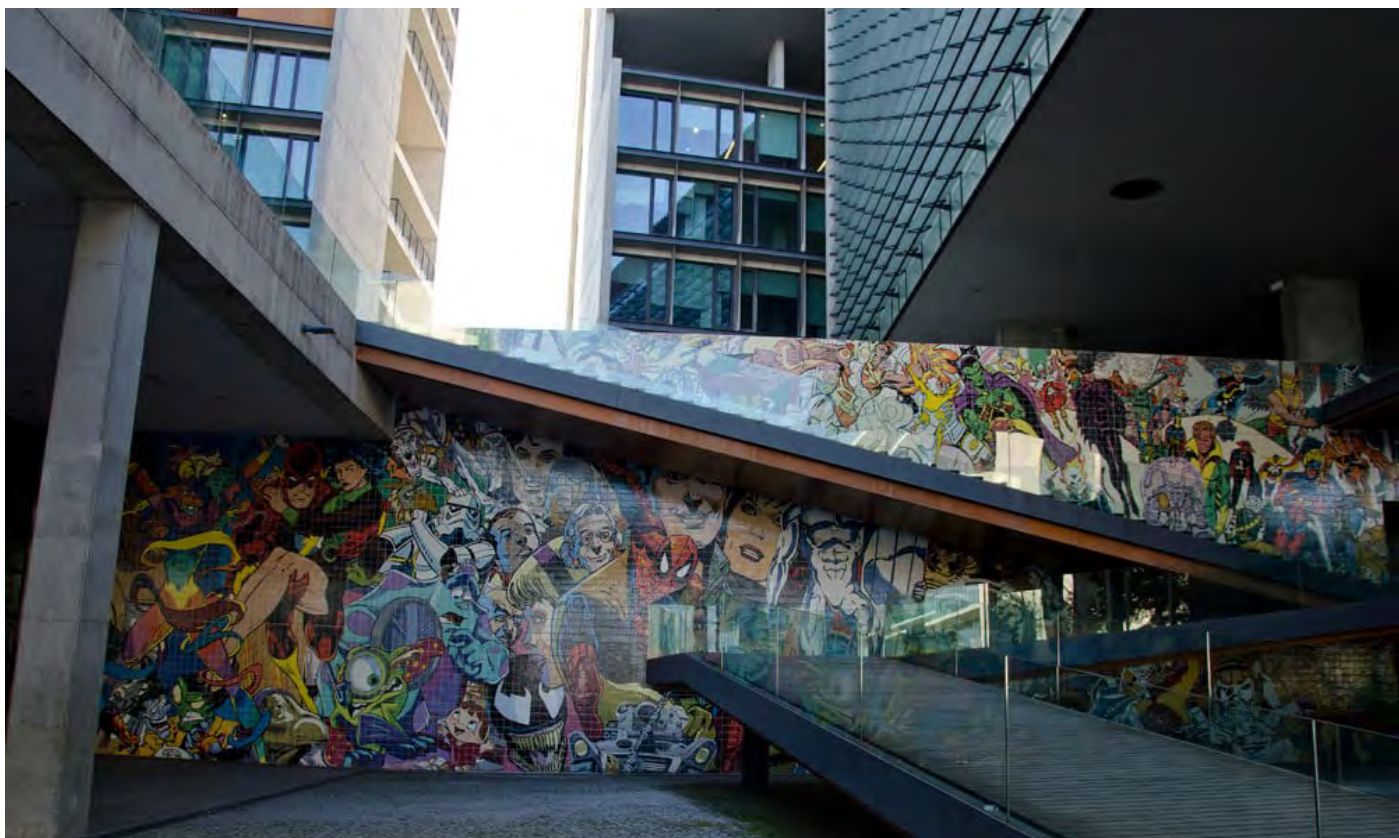


Other images use comic imagery, there is a whole squad of Sgt Fury with Dum Dum Duggan parachuting onto fish, in *Fishscape*, and *Facescape* as well as a number of other characters, clearly taken from Mark Bagely. I was astounded though. There is an Angoulême wall by Erró 'Hommage á lá Bandee Desinée,' which is an incredible acrylic 185 square metre mural, in Angoulême. Likewise in Portugal there is an amazing ceramic mural of super heroes, although like Angoulême, they are not too cluttered and close, allowing the fan to take in fairly good renditions of supes.



Dream of Eva Braun from 1992. To anyone who knows comics, Hansi, “the girl who loved the swastika” from Spire Christian comics is recognisable. Here the 1973 American strip by Hal Hartley is fully credited, noted as being based on the life of Maria Anne Hirschmann. Yet even more so, other figures are noted as being ‘borrowed’ from *Starman* #29 issue by Dave Hoover and Grant Miehm ‘while the American GIs in the boxes in the right half of the painting came from the comic book *Sgt. Rock* (DC Comics), drawn by Joe Kubert.’ This was the way to do it. This was what was needed. Here was language that pointed to the truth, that set out the sources, that was honest - borrowed – is a fine word.





As a comic fan, it cannot be too hard to at least expect a credit, to say – yup – this was taken from this comic. This is the failing that continually blights the curators who put up images by Lichtenstein and deny any reference to the likes Irv Novick and the original sources, the original comics. These curators are meant to be professionals, they do not do a bad job at a cursory glance, but they need to be honest about the source and influence. It really isn't hard.





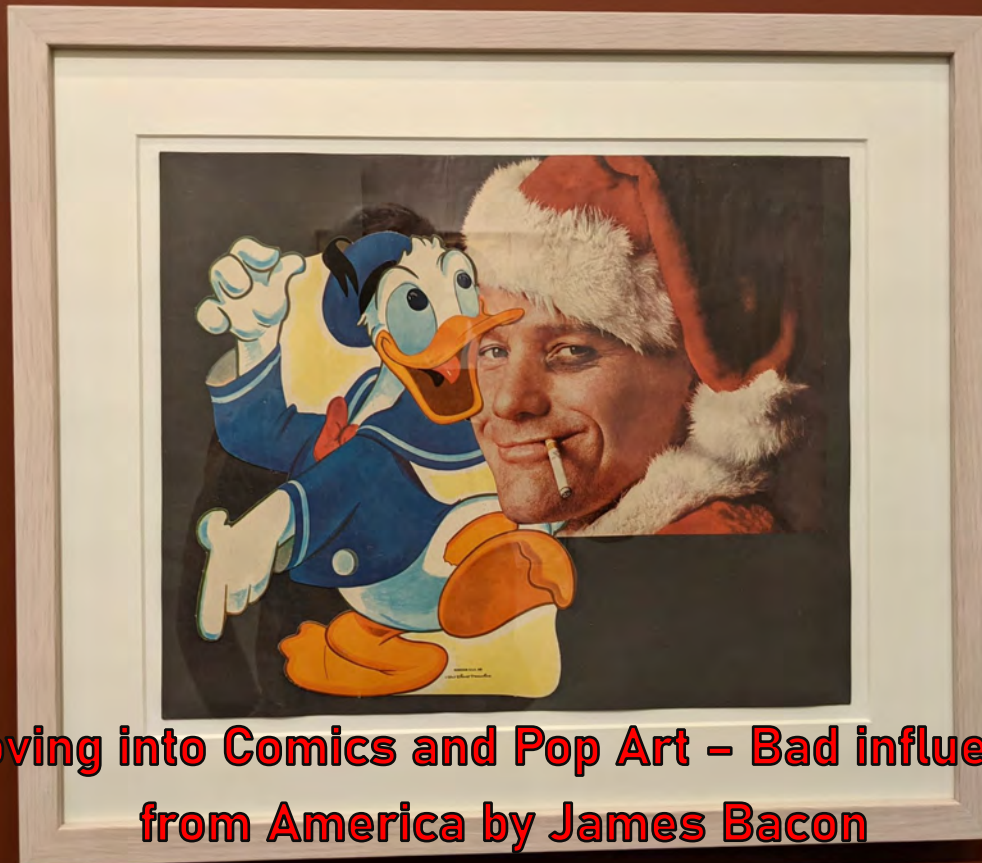
I noted that some signatures had been retained, but even a simple 'after' on the work, would at least give the fan the indication, and the source the credit that it deserves.







Shepard Fairey
Goldwater's Sweepers
2008
Oil on canvas
100 x 150 cm
Edition 1/100
www.shepardfairey.com



Moving into Comics and Pop Art – Bad influenza from America by James Bacon

When did Erró move into pop imagery? Well, he himself made it clear. On the 27th of November 1963, he said to Icelandic newspaper *Morgunblaðið* -

" I feel that in art one should start one's own "wave" one's own movement . [...] The days of figurative and abstract art are over . Everything has been said , everything has been done , and those kinds of painting have become academic . They ought to disappear , and that is precisely what they are in the process of doing . "

This was 3 weeks before his first visit to the United States, but also before pieces that included what one might consider Pop imagery.

Elsa Couteau for the Tate Modern says "During several trips to New York in 1963-4 and between 1966 and 1971, Erró met American pop artists Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Rauschenberg and Jim Dine, among others."

Erró spoke of New York "There was a party every two nights. All the doors were open, and people were so friendly, so marvelous. Nobody had money. We lived on a few hundred dollars a month—it was unbelievable. Life was difficult for many people, but we all survived. There was no competition, really—it was \$200 to \$300 for a piece of Pop Art."

It is important we look at this as a timeline. First to **Andy Warhol**.

There is some lack of clarity at exactly what time Warhol created his comic-based artworks. The pictures are noted as being work of 1960, but I have read that in the end of 1960 Andy Warhol was possibly too busy to do them. They are dated, so we will have to assume they were from 1960 and 1961. Regardless, by 1961 he had a selection of artworks and they were publicly displayed in the windows of Bonwitt Teller in April.

The images vary, some just take the shapes of the comic character from a panel, others are clearly total reproductions of a panel from a comic. In 1960, he painted Popeye, Superman and Dick Tracy.

The Popeye was an outline in Blue, 108.5 x 98.7 cm, so quite a big piece, later cited as 1961. The original Popeye comic book panel cut out was also put onto a canvas, and there is graphite and watercolour paint drops on the canvas, a second piece of art, or indeed third from the one item of comic art, which was by Bud Sagendorf.



Erró, Comics, Pop Art, and My COVID days by Chris Garcia

Admittedly, I'm the art nerd on Team Journey Planet. I'm the guy who loves fine art, who goes to museums every time he can, and I even do a podcast called *Three Minute Modernist*. So when James brought a new name to my attention, I dug in, fast, and hard. Erró. I started looking and I could tell several things all at once.

James sent me a set of photos on the day Vanessa got hit with a case of the COVID, which I then caught, along with the kids. So, having nowhere to go, I did a dive into Erró and found so much good stuff.

First, Erró and Robert Rauschenberg have a lot in common.

Second, there's a history of comic art in Pop Art that goes back a long way.

Third, I really like this Erró fellow.

Let me start with the second part.

Pop Art came about in the 1950s. UK Pop started as Neo-Dada in the work of artists like Richard Hamilton. Hamilton's most important piece, *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* Is one of the most important images in the history of art, not just because it's super cool, but because right there, in the middle, framed like a painting, is a comic book cover. *Young Romance*. From the very beginning, it's been comics as a signifier of what Pop was trying to do – to make commercial art equal to fine art... sorta.

You see, as I said in a previous article in these pages, [here](#) in fact, that comic art was not a part of the fine art world until the Pop artists, like Lichtenstein, brought it into the fold. They did this much to their betterment, and with little to no benefit to the original artists, but they did it nonetheless. Lichtenstein did a bunch of comic panels turned into full-scale paintings that have sold for massive amounts of money. The debate about whether or not that was OK will never be settled, but one of the reasons that comic art is taken seriously today is because of the 50+ years of debate about those works.

You could argue Mel Ramos being the one who made the most of comic book hero images. His Superman, hanging at the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco, is fantastic, and it's one of the first Superman images that comes to mind.

Warhol had a few exceptional comics pieces, most importantly, Dick Tracy. There's also *The Nancy Comic Strip*, which is a wonderful piece from an artist who wasn't known for his painterly work.

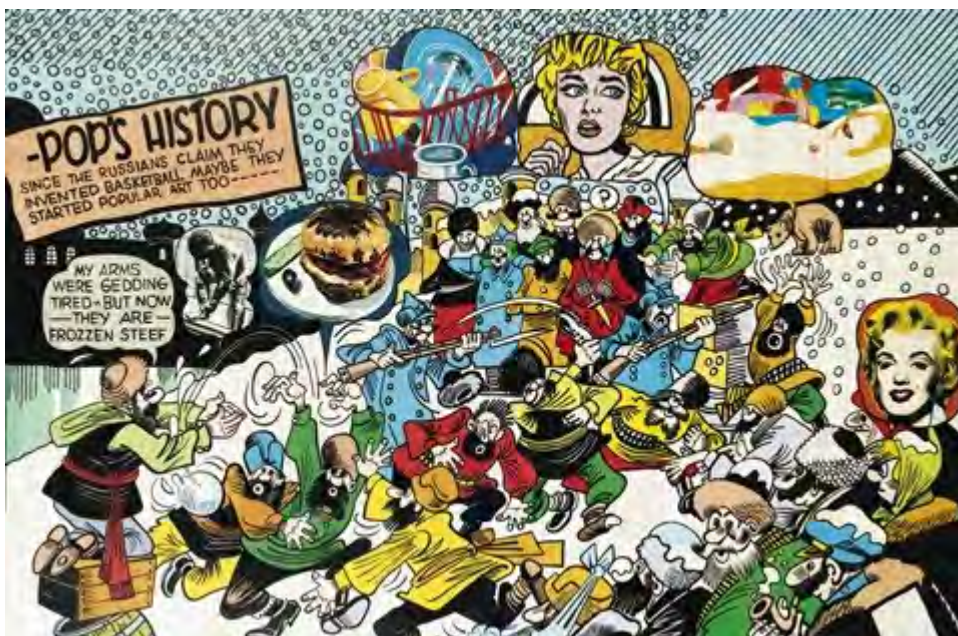
The name that might get lost in this thought is the legend, Sigmar Polke. A major figure in German post-War art, he did several pieces using comic theme, including *Super Market*, which is silly fun.

And this brings us to Erró, and to talk about him, I need to talk about Robert Rauschenberg.

Robert Rauschenberg did a lot of stuff from the late 40s through the early 60s, but he hit on something about 1961 that really shows. He began creating silk screens of images that were sorta slapped together with only the merest hint of context. Some, like *Buffalo II*, combine silkscreen with painting. There are masterpieces in these works, including *Scanning* from 1963. These works were shown at the SFMoMA Rauschenberg show a few years ago, and I instantly flashed back on them when I saw Erró's work.

The first one I caught on to was *Wonder Woman Scape* from 1999. It's a striking image of several versions of DC Comics' Wonder Woman, some of which seem so familiar, but it's also looking at the character through a different lens. There's a shot of Diana all tied up in her own lasso, looking like she's facing down a foe who has managed to get the upperhand briefly. There's what appears to be a close-up image of a very similar face, but reflected in a bloody knife. There's a naked woman, who I kinda recognize and kinda don't. It's weird. All of these images thrust together make it clear that Erró is trying to tie in ideas of sexuality, women in peril, and anti-female violence into a single image of the most powerful of all DC's woman heroes. It's an incredibly effective image.





cartoon Russians cavorting about, with a speech balloon talking about how Russians invented Basketball and probably Pop Art too. The Pop Art he reproduces isn't supposed to be good reproduction; it's supposed to be representative. There's no question as to what any of them represent, and what they represent in the world of Pop. I will say that Rosenquist image is pretty darn spot-on. This is a phenomenal image, and one that speaks to both the humor and the history.

Looking at the many MANY photos that James sent me, I was blown away by the use of comics, but more importantly, by the ability not recontextualize them. His image collages can be overwhelming, and there's little that speaks of Pop Art more than the idea that we are overwhelmed by images at all



times. Erró's work hits that, and incredibly hard. Even when the images seem to bound into uncontrolled placement, there's still this idea of saturation that just works. Some of his images are deeply layered with incredible multi-dimensional meaning. *The Battle of Kyoto* is one that deserves massive praise for looking at Post-War views of Japan by Americans. It's a combination of two fantastic images, one from a war comic, at the top, looming, and the bottom an erotic image, a *shunga*, that shows a man trying to satisfy seven women at once. Looking at the piece, it's fantastic in every dimension, and it's saying something incredible as far as the concept. These two images are what we in America have come to experience of Japan. There's the sexy-times, and that one time we went to war. The composition seems to make the war imagery into a dream, a memory, but the bottom, more rooted image of a guy banging a bunch of sex workers all at once, that's the present, the reality. This says a lot about how we erode visions into one or two simple concepts, and this is how we, or at least the we that Erró is a part of, see an entire countries mark upon the collective unconsciousness.





The Anti-War Art Warrior By James Bacon

The first image one gets to see, as an early work, is about war, and while part of me does love that comics feature, the anti-war message is clearly made and at times, politicians and situations clearly satirised.

The first image I saw, 'Image of War' from 1950, was colourful and vivid, and death permeated some of his early work, but by 1959 we had Fucky-Strike Bureau of Propaganda and it leaves a lot to the viewer to consider what is being said here, Lucky Strike being as American as Marlboro at the time, and the allusion to a US bureau, and the chimpanzee, well not at a typewriter.

There are four interpretations of propaganda or nationalist posters of both the USA and USSR, showing the commonality and similarity in style and art. This came about after a visit to Moscow and then subsequently New York and Erró said "that these canvases could be buried in cement coffins to be rediscovered several hundreds of years later by archaeologists as a testimony to the similarity between the two arts, two popular kinds of spirit."

Holiday in Israel from 1967 was for a 1968 exhibition at the Blumenthal-Mommator Gallery in Paris where "Fifteen painters have agreed to misrepresent the same photograph" of holiday makers taken by Marc Riboud. There is a collage of imagery, that is without doubt unsettling and violent, including Lyndon B. Johnson and Lenin as well as comic character Little Annie Fanny created by Harvey Kurtzman and Will Elder which appeared in *Playboy* magazine. At this time the Six Day War had occurred, and I understand the conflict was for Erró a proxy of the Cold War.

Collages at this time are full of military elements, military hardware from Vulcan Bombers to Russian soldiers strangling a woman feature.



Battle of Kyoto from 1974 presents classic-looking comic book soldiers with some laser weapon fighting against Yanks, above classic Japanese erotica. This was a 'Made in Japan' series. I was interested in the interpretation of this, that the West was infatuated with blood lust and death by technological means bright and vivid while the East was more in touch with its humanity, "sex without guilt, playful and sophisticated... painted in muted colors." An interesting interpretation. "Make love, not war" is perhaps the message, although Vietnam was still ongoing and there may be a simplification of the experience for those under the Japanese.

The fate of Salvador Allende, a socialist president, is made clear in *Allende*. This was a clear recognition of the military coup, backed by the USA and led by General Pinochet. The image of Allende is one that appeared in *Time* magazine, and there is clever use of uniform and an axe clearly has the swastika on it. That Erró had time for a socialist government is clear, but he was right to be appalled by Pinochet, a murderous dictator who was also a corrupt thief, and who oversaw horrendous crimes against his people,

torturing thousands, the 1200 disappeared and all the time supported and propped up by those trumpeting democracy and freedom.



Rebirth of Nazism was originally done in 1977 but the version here was from 1990, here we have some insight from Erró "Every time military forces intervene in the life of a country they play out a farce ever more odious



and ever more grotesque. Their ferocity lacks all dignity. They are indecent, ludicrous butchers.”

Here imagery, the caricatures are used from the Soviet Magazine *Krokodil* juxtaposed with the portrait to the left, in a more propagandist style, classic satirical portrayals of the Western powers nurturing Hitler and of course the savagery of his atrocities, the Holocaust, the death sees him eating the bones of humans, reproduced from a British War Propaganda poster from 1941. Lockheed money in the bot-

tom left and a sales person to the right, modern selling images of Hitler says a lot about where the West went, but all the time this embodies an ‘Eastern’ view of the West.

The Helsinki conference took place in 1975, culminating in the Helsinki Accords among 35 states which had taken two years to work out. Respect for boundaries, cooperation between countries, environmental concerns, and respect for civil liberties and human rights were the key outcomes. Erró had a series fully focused on the conference.

CIA-KGB from 1974 with Kirbyesque imagery pits the Soviets against the USA and we see the brutality of gaining ‘intelligence’ through torturous means and what is Superman up to, missing from the scene as this occurs but alluded to, perhaps as a potential metaphor for the conference, or maybe just missing in action.

More Production from 1974 sees the entitled bomb aimed at a Swastika in a Rising Sun, while the caricatures at the bottom represents Lyndon B. Johnson, his Secretary of State, Dean Rush, and his Defence Secretary, Robert McNamara, all the main movers in the Vietnam War, all tempered with a lift from the magazine *Nous Deux* of a couple. There may be more to this image than one sees, I am certain that I interpret it differently than others, as the importance of War Production to the USA is huge and the couple, the American way.

A series of pieces, entitled *Battles at Sea*, drift somewhere between historical narrative and a touch of the unexpected, sea battles are placed with those who are not in charge, historical misplacements and pieces of the unexpected thrown in, diving gulls, goods boxes instead of stretchers. Perhaps seeking to identify for the viewer that there is a futility to war.

Later the war message is reinforced, with *God Bless Baghdad*, and we get to see early work, one entitled ‘*The War*’ from 1950, which Erró subsequently dated and signed as 1946. This piece returns us to his place, it is an ink and watercolour drawing, which he drew during



a holiday to Kirkjubæjarklaustur. He had just finished, at 17 years of age, his first year at The Icelandic College of Art and Crafts. He described it “a line-up of soldiers and war” in his diary.

It draws us to Iceland, to what has occurred, and of course that war is over for Iceland. Noting for ourselves that the aggressor against Iceland per se was not Nazi Germany but Britain and the USA, and yet the horrors of what had occurred in Europe were well known.

His perspective is quite unique, one can appreciate how he may have had a very different view of the Cold War, but his art does make one think and of course within that realise that there are no winners or losers in war, just death and the murder of humans, and how corrupt and reprehensible all leaders can be in the pursuit of their own goals, no matter how much they speak of liberty and democracy. selves that te aggressor against Iceland per se was not Nazi Germany but Britain and the USA, and yet the horrors of what had occurred in Europe were well known.

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Copy as Art. Art copied. 'After' please.

by James Bacon

In 2002 the Glenn Brown painting, *Ornamental Despair (Painting for Ian Curtis)* sold for £3,554,500. It is a copy of Chris Foss's *Nemo's Castle*. There are a few minor additions, and for sure there are adjustments, but it is not freshly imagined, indeed, there is no improvement, and they are somewhat lessened in my view, yet it is the view of the artists which ensures as a fan, that their art is considered as plagiarism and viewed as just that.

"Foss paintings never look like my versions of them." says Glenn Brown. Well, that is not correct, at all, they look incredibly similar, and not only that, the adjustments are to my eye very minor. Yet what this says is that Brown is defensive, instead of saying, noting, thanking or acknowledging Foss, he works to diminish the original artist and embellish his own 'work'.

Mine are always played around with. The colours are altered, the cities were redrawn and I was always inventing things to increase their intensity right from the start. Even 16 years ago I was playing with the images to increase that sense of the Gothic. It was partially there in Chris Foss's work, but not in quite the same way. All the while I was sort of learning what you can do, learning different techniques from other people. But I never want to lose that notion of appropriation—people say to me, sooner or later you'll stop copying other artists and you'll make work of your own, but it's never been my point to try to do that, because I never thought you ever could. The work is always going to be based on something, and I wanted to make the relationship with art history as obvious as possible. Again, I think it increases the intensity of the way that people look at things.

Really?

This is appalling stuff, working hard to defend the suddenly indefensible.

While it is lovely, absolutely lovely to see science fictional work, and comic work, on large canvas and in galleries, and as a fan, one gets carried away with that, it is also important that we consider the original artist, and this leads to disappointment. Diminishing the original is not only dishonourable, but it unnecessary, it soils the next step. Comic artists so often pay homage to a previous piece, and just note 'after' when they sign it, although often with new characters, and sometimes redoing a piece they did previously, that is fun, it is nice to see, and fans love that, but artists need to do more than say 'it's art' when its blatantly a copy, otherwise, it is a copy.

<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/symbiartic/how-plagiarized-art-sells-for-millions/>





Bryan Bolland Speaks to Erró

In 2010, Brian Boland wrote the following open letter to Erró, which is self-explanatory:

Dear Erró (or Mr. Gudmundur if you prefer.)

My name will mean very little to you unless you remember deleting it from your version of my “Tank Girl Odyssey” cover from 1995.

I first saw your work in a gallery in Reykjavik. I was impressed by the wild exuberance of it while enjoying spotting the artists you'd swiped, most of whose names I knew.

I was at the Pompidou Centre in Paris recently and I walked onto the floor showing your work and there, featuring prominently in the window of the gift shop, was a large poster of MY “Tank Girl” signed by you and on sale for 600 Eu. It consisted of a badly copied version of my work and, where the original logo had been, a group of figures presumably taken from Maoist Social Realism. My wife Rachel was with me. She'd worked with me on the original artwork. She painted Booga (that's the kangaroo!) She said out loud what I was thinking: “That's just NOT RIGHT!”

I spent five years in British art schools and I'm pretty liberal minded about the fine art world. I respect collage as a medium – from Max Ernst on. Warhol's soup cans. Lichtenstein's huge copies of Russ Heath and Jack Kirby's work. I found your earlier work with its radical juxtapositions very amusing, the sheer mass of detail created an almost migraine inducing new whole. Collage is all about the juxtaposition of incongruous elements. Where the number of elements you're collaging becomes so few and one of those elements is the thing that attracts the eye the whole experience is no longer about the juxtaposition. The element dominating your “Tank Girl” print is my Tank Girl cover. You look at Tank Girl and Booga first and then at your additional figures. It is they (and my efforts) that are attracting your eye when you see the poster for sale in the gift shop.

I was interested to see that you'd copied almost every detail from my original Tank Girl cover but with a couple of telling exceptions. My original was itself part collage. You may not know this but the pillow on the right (which you did include) has on it my copy of the cover of the first LP by the American band Ween. “God, Ween, Satan, the Oneness”. The butt of the rifle had on it some photos that were stuck onto the artwork. You'd left those out. Most significantly you'd removed my name which was running along the left-hand side of the TV.



I have in front of me your reply to fellow artist Chris Weston's email to you. You consider yourself “a kind of columnist or reporter”. Reporters quote their sources all the time in order to get at a greater understanding of events. Their reports, like your work, are made up almost entirely of quotes. The difference between reporters and you, Erró, is that they name the source of their quotes and an honest reporter would be careful not to misrepresent his sources or take their quotes out of context. If he did he'd be deliberately setting out to discredit them. In your “Tank Girl” print you “quote” a whole piece of work by me. At a particular moment you consciously deleted my name – the artist's name. In so doing you are claiming that this wasn't done by an artist – it wasn't done by anybody in fact – therefore it's not “art” it's just “stuff.” Just raw material for your “Synthesising” process. There's something particularly furtive and grubby about the moment when you removed the artist's name, when you thought no one was looking, from a whole piece of his work. It's the moment

when you admitted that you knew you were taking his work, discarding him, and selling it as your own.

You compare yourself to Rubens? He was surrounded by “an incredible number of assistants”? Well I'm delighted that you consider me to be one of your assistants, albeit one of your unnamed, unpaid and unwitting assistants. I have a feeling Rubens' assistants would have known they were his assistants and consented to be his assistants and he would have paid them.

What this is is a kind of colonialism. You, Erró, have found a place for yourself in the land of the Fine Art Elite, in “Gallery-land”, and you have gone out and discovered a dark continent inhabited by pygmies – barely more than savages really – people with a colourful but primitive culture. Like the Victorian explorers you find what they do ghastly but somehow alluring so you steal from them, give them nothing in return and dismiss them. You display bits of their infantile and garish nonsense in what you call a “synthesis” on a gallery wall in the civilised world, something which has nothing whatsoever to do with giving a full and accurate “report” on the stuff you steal or the people you steal it from. It's more to do with the titillation of your peers. You'd like them to be shocked by the vulgarity of the artefacts you're bringing back from whatever nasty place you've been to but appreciate them (and you, of course) in that post-modern kind of way. One reviewer of your work said “I don't know where Erró finds all that stuff”. Luckily for you she and other inhabitants of the galleries don't know the names of the people you steal from and you're not in a hurry to list them. You're exploiting people like me, not because you're a “witness to our time” but because you want to turn the base metal of comics into art gold – and you'd like to have a lucrative career in Gallery-land.

Back in the early '70s, when I started doing what I do, comic artists were treated pretty badly. They had to turn out many pages very quickly and had to accept whatever terms their publishers dictated. They signed away any right to be repaid if their work was used again. Their artwork was not returned and they were not allowed to sign their name or have their readers know who they were. In 1977, for the first time, we were given credits. The names of the writers and artists were listed on the title pages. I and a huge population of people who know about comics, BD, manga or whatever you'd like to call it, know the names of the artists. All of them work hard. Many of them are technically brilliant and/or display a unique form of self-expression. They are Artists in every sense. Artists in my field have achieved a high degree of control over what their work looks like, how and where it's printed and published. I, personally, don't like another person to ink over my pencils or colour my work. I'm a control freak! So, in the light of all this, it's particularly infuriating for me to see an image I created coloured and inked in a line that is not mine, with my name removed, in a place that is not of my choosing, signed by someone else – and that's all before we get onto to the matter of the 600 Eu price tag. We're used to being shafted by publishers – but by a fellow artist?

I always did my work with a clear conscience. It pleases me (and it seems ideologically sound to me) that if anyone wanted to see my work they could do so for the price of \$1 – or at least at a price they could afford. I could never be comfortable with the idea of producing a piece of art merely to sell it to one wealthy person who then had the exclusive right to view it. My only reason for working – and the thing that gives me as much pleasure as being paid for it – is when the work is printed and distributed and the printed version is in my hands. I know that I and anyone else who wants to see my work is holding the very same thing. “Gallery-land” is not for me.

So – Let me sum up. I've very much liked your earlier collages. The many elements have created a new whole, but I think your “Tank Girl” print is not about Erró's choice of image juxtaposition. It's



dominated by my work. I think the selling point of your poster is my work. The way that promotional photo of you with the “Tank Girl” poster behind you is cropped proves the point. You've moved well away from “fair use” into plagiarism. By removing my name from the image you show you don't really care about the artists whose work you steal. Your work sneers at and perpetuates old stereotypes about the kind of work done by me and people I respect – and does it no good whatsoever. Your work is about “Recontextualizing,” i.e. taking something out of one place and putting it somewhere else, thereby showing it in a different (possibly ironic) light. In view of the fact that your poster of my Tank Girl is selling for 600 Eu I suggest you stop selling it and I invite you to recontextualize the money you got from the sale of it out of your bank account into mine.

This letter was reported on *Bleeding Cool* as was the agent for Erró responded thusly:

Sir

Following your email, we have decided to no longer sell this edition “Tank”. We have made 20 copies, we sold three copies, we have given 5 copies to Mr. ERRO. We'll give him the 12 remaining copies.

This informs the comic reader of where there is a line, between comic art, art, and copying. This is an ongoing challenge and one that must be hard for artists. Have NFTs and other digital renditions made this an even murkier field? Modern art may be a multi-billion dollar industry, but comics are now a billion dollar industry themselves, yet what seems to have occurred is that in all cases, the original artists are just not properly recognised, they are disrespected and not given fair consideration of their importance and place in what we enjoy.

I would give anything to see Brian Bolland given the time, space, and money to create such large works. He is such a phenomenal artist, such a clean line and amazing paintwork, that it would be beyond belief to see such work brought large. I can continue to dream.

Tom Wolfe has a pretty healthy sceptical viewpoint, that it is all about a select group of curators, who get to decide what is great and not, and that it utterly lacks any democracy at all, and reviewers, buyers, and the media follow like a pack, as he says ‘The notion that the public accepts or rejects anything in modern art is merely romantic fiction. The game is completed and the trophies distributed long before the public knows what has happened.’ I adore Wolfe's take on modern art, I also have to contend with the problem that I really like a variety of artistic things that no one else really likes, until it's turned into a film or TV series and then becomes incredibly expensive.

The importance of this letter when we consider the works of Erró needs to inform the fan. We are fans of comic art, and while we can appreciate derivative work, and of course works that borrow from previous ones, we do need to question hard the joy at seeing imagery we love in a large and bright format, In a wonderful setting, such as a dedicated art museum, we need to ask for it to be the works by our own, and go out and see and support them.

Appropriation Art ~or~ It's Easy When It's a Toilet.

By Chris Garcia

The Foss-Brown situation is one of the most fascinating in the history of art. This is not typical Garcianesque hyperbole, but unquestionable fact, like how French wines are entirely inferior to California wines. The issues that are involved go into several areas—appropriation art as practice, art market as art arbiter, the idea of ‘after’, the idea of when a piece is historical, the role of copyright and trade mark (and somewhere, Anish Kapoor’s ears just pricked up), and personality as art practice. All these things that need to be considered— plus Charles fucking Saatchi.

Buckle up, this is gonna be a long ride.

Appropriation art, simply, is taking a thing that exists, putting it in a show and saying, ‘this is art. Deal with it.’ The name that usually come up first is Marcel Duchamp (and there’s a great article that Pandraig did [here](#) that rules and is peopled by these same thoughts!) and folks like Dali, Warhol, and my buddy Cory Arcangel have all played in those fields. Warhol’s take was cool. He’d take a box of something like Brillo pads, paint it white, then paint the exact image of the logos and such exactly where they had been on the box. That’s plagiarism, right? It’s the exact same imagery, only he painted it on the box. Did he re-contextualize it? No. Did he make any alterations? You can argue that if you look closely you can tell they’re not originals, and as close as I’ve been to one, that’s true, but also kinda besides the point. The point is that by re-painting it, Warhol turned it into a work of Art. The image, or more broadly the art object, is not the art: the context of the encounter is the art. It is not about the object, but the concept.

Hence, conceptual art.

The early phase of this was fairly easy. Duchamp bought a space in an art show, signed a toilet “R. Mutt” and titled it *Fountain*. Easy enough. Looking back, we can say that’s art. He took a decidedly non-art object and turned it into an art object, that’s easy. It gets a little harder when Duchamp took a poster of the *Mona Lisa*, drew a mustache on it, titled it *L.H.O.O.Q.* and got it showed. This is a slightly messier affair. Did he transform it? Yes, slightly. Did he re-contextualize it? Well, yeah. *La Joconda* is not only an artwork accepted by the Academy, it is THE ARTWORK. When he gave it a different title, one that roughly translates to *she’s got a hot ass*, he did give a new set of concepts to hang on the work. In fact, I would say he had only put the new title on it, it would have been a more transformed work.



But that’s just me.

Dali, never one to let someone else be a genius without throwing in his two pesetas-worth, did a work with Philippe Halsman that was a self-portrait superimposed on the *Mona Lisa*. Transformative? Absolutely. Cheap? Yeah, a little, but the bigger concept here is Dali tying himself, and he considered himself to be the greatest artist who had ever lived, to the most famous painting of all-time. It’s a kinda important, and really creepy-lookin’ work.

So, we have come through the early days, and now we are smack-dab in the middle of the 1960s. Poetry finally gets all appropriative, including the tiny poems of Aram Saroyan which play with tiny snippets of language to the point where they can not be considered without being seen as a part of everyday language. His work *Beatles* runs 4 pages, with 4 words—*John, Paul, George, Ringo*. This minimalism is simple, but more importantly, it’s not his words. He’s making no commentary, simply allowing the reader to experience something they’ve experienced so often and then place context on it for the situation they’ve encountered it in. More thorough appropriation poetry has been created over the years, including by yours truly, who submitted this piece to many journals and never found publication.



**Written on the Wall of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in the 14th Century,
But Still Relevant Today**

1350 Miserable,
wild, distracted

The dregs of the mob
alone

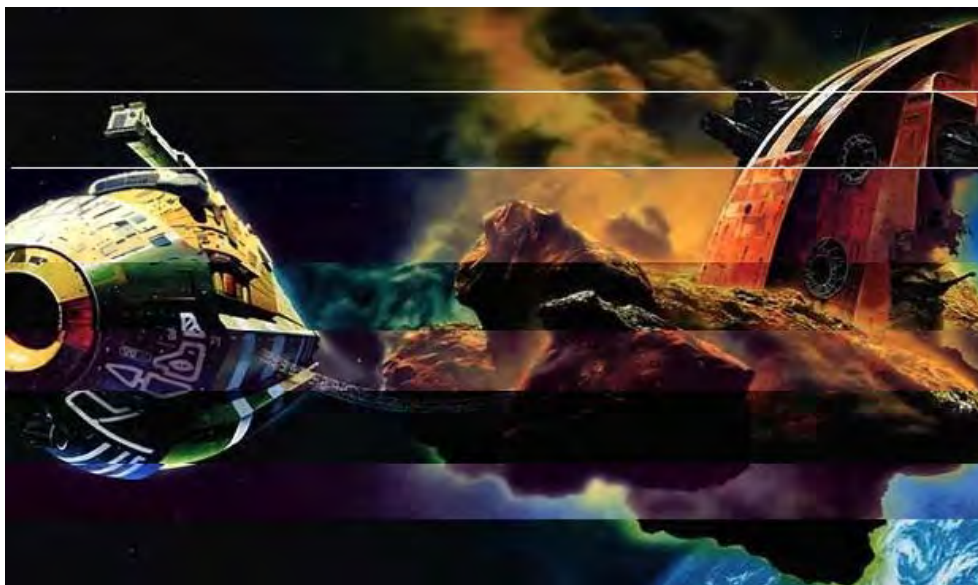
survive
to witness.

Literally, all I did was find a line of graffiti and turn it into a poem by giving it line breaks and a title. Does that re-contextualize it? Sure. Is it gimmicky as fuck? Also, sure. The big thing is it's someone playing with something that exists. It took 0 creativity to write this; it did take something to make it presentable as a poem.

All this, of course, brings us to the 1990s, and if you're talking about artists in the 90s, and you're talking about Britain in the 90s, you're gonna have to talk about the Young British Artists, or YBA. And that also means talking about Charles Saatchi.

There was a massive group of incredibly innovative artists coming out of Goldsmith's College in London. These folks were doing some really great work, including Damian Hirst, Tracey Emin, Gillian Wearing, Sam Taylor-Johnson, and, of course, Glenn Brown. They were seen as an exciting line of graduates, and like the *La Nouvelle Vague* had its Goddard, the YBA has a no-longer young Damian Hirst.

Hirst's version of appropriation is fascinating. His most famous, and certainly his best, is a preserved shark in a tank called *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*. It's a great title, and as a contemplative piece, it's fantastic. I've seen it, at The Met, and in much the same way that *Michael and Bubbles* somehow forces you to look beyond the object in front of you, it forces you to look through the object. It's clearly out of place, but at the same time, it's also in its place. A preserved shark is at home in a museum, just not an art museum. There's all the stuff that attaches to sharks in general, but really, it's about Hirst feeling like he should put a shark in a tank as an artwork. He did nothing to create



the shark, but he recontextualized it. There's a major essay to be written about how it makes museums look at their own universality.

Tracey Emin's *My Bed* is probably the one I like the most as a work of appropriation, and she took her actual bed (or what she claims was her actual bed) and recreated it in the galley. This work is about what we expect from the artist, and how we see art as an extension of the artist, and probably even

moreso, how the artist infects the gallery no matter how much everyone claims it's about the work. I love this one, and other than the tent she made called *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963–1995*, I consider it her masterpiece. Sadly, that one was destroyed in a fire.

The YBA was basically turned into a monster faction by Charles Saatchi. The man's super-rich, an absolute asshole who abused Nigela Lawson when his life took an ever-so-slightly-downward turn. He started buying up many works by the group, and basically controlled the flow of it out into the world. His connections with major museums, and the fact that he owned a major gallery enterprise that could pump them up. He made a LOT of money on the YBA, and made a lot of enemies. There's some question that it may have been a Push-me/Pull-you scenario at work—he was buying works that pushed the boundaries, which only made the YBA members more likely to push them harder. A work like *Myra* by Marcus Harvey, a painting made based on the mugshot of Myra Hindley, one of the Moors Murderers, would have certainly only been possible with someone like Saatchi paying those artists who push the boundaries.

OK, so Glenn Brown comes out of this tradition, and he's a different brand of appropriation artist. He takes art historical subjects and repaints them in a way that usually transforms them. He's got a bunch of Renaissance paintings where the subjects look like they're made of spaghetti. These are undoubtedly cool, and transformative. Even if they weren't, few would bat an eye at Glenn repainting Old Masters works for today, even if he didn't play with the perspective or whatever. He started doing these works while at Goldsmith's, but he also started copying works by SF artists like Chris Foss and Anthony Roberts.

This is where it gets harder.

The piece *Ornamental Despair (Painting for Ian Curtis)* is the closest thing to a shot-for-shot remake we've seen in painting for a few decades. It's not an imitation, it's the same painting. Technically, it wouldn't have been any different if he'd printed it on an inkjet and taped it to the wall. There is no difference of any importance, and that also does not matter. It's exactly the same as Duchamp doing *L.H.O.O.Q.*,

"That's it – the titles are often trying to be embarrassingly direct, and vulgar in their directness. I don't think that the painting is less direct, but I don't want the paintings to be illustrative," Brown has said.

OK, the title has everything to do with a tribute to Ian Curtis, but the painting does not. This is exactly what Duchamp did with the *Mona Lisa*, we



can't pretend that Da Vinci had meant that to be the idea of the painting, and thus, it's a recontextualization, true. The idea that Brown is playing with is the divorce of title from work; the painting's title is nothing more than a short-hand for how to talk about it, and vice-versa. That's an interesting take.

Yes, it's 100% appropriation, 0% different from what Duchamp and all the others have been doing, but there's another thing—it's bad appropriation.

I have often defended the work of Lichtenstein, and I will always do so. There's also no question that the works he presented aren't meant to be as good as the original, not because they are more or less talented, but because they're being created for a different use. I actually kinda like Brown's version, though compared to Foss', I see why Foss' works better as an illustration. Brown himself says he is not doing an illustration—he's making a painting. He's bringing illustration into the Gallery and he's not even bothering to hide it like Lichtenstein did by removing it wholly from its context by simply presenting a single frame at a time, blown up massive. This is whole-sale theft, of course, and that's the point. The work should be saying 'This is a thing that exists in the world, I've re-created it for the Gallery and because I am an ARTIST you must address it as Art while rejecting the illustration.' That would be something, and I think that's what Saatchi was counting on. He included it in the most important art show of the 1990s—*Sensation*, the show that broke through most of the YBA. By saying 'Well, my thing is actually different' he's completely weakened what is the reality of the situation. Yes, copying a painting and putting it on the wall of a gallery or a museum can be Art, but that's a harder sell, and you have to do more to make it work.

Now, the fact that he's using an image of a living artist as the basis is where most of the problems live, but at the same time this is exactly what Brown would be commenting on if he knew what he was doing.

Now, when we look at Erró's work, there is no question that these are works that are being transformed. Yes, he copies the images, but he places them in relation to one another in new ways, sometimes making a deeper meaning through them, sometimes simply presenting the idea of the overpowering image. His works dig deep, at the same time as allowing the original to play. He's making commentary with each piece, and never denying that he does. When he's been called on it, he cops to it. In fact, his art practice is nullified if he doesn't copy from the zeitgeist. Some would say that's OK; I think it diminishes us because we wouldn't have these magnificent pieces of commentary on the imagery of the modern world. Erró's works are equivalent to Warhol's Brillo boxes.

All of this, of course, only matters in a society where we have disparity of market. Illustration is being taken seriously by art museums and publications these days, but the market is nowhere near the level of the current contemporary market. There are many dimensions to this, and one that should be taken into account is that Erró's working at the tip of a spear. If Erró was a Twitter artist doing mash-up imagery of popular characters, they'd only really get hit when they start making real money. The image the contemporary art market has had is the one Jeff Koons helped build in the 1980s - Art = market, and nowadays at the I I-figure range. The entire contemporary art world is now weighed by the financials that are attached, and that ties it to the unclean taint of commerce. Let's also not labor under the assumption that Bolland is hurting either. He's near the pointy end of the spear too.

We should remember that all art was illustrative for centuries, but now that has changed, and we're still early days in that. These issues will bubble up. Fine Art has moved away from perfection of image as a *raison d'être* and that has allowed for some amazing stuff to come forward. When you look at



something like the later works of Phil Guston, who had walked through the valley of the abstract and returned to representationalism (and the concerning use of a KKK-style hooded figure in many of his works) you see that the possibilities of illustrative abstraction held not the precision or coherence of the representation, but the interplay between the paint and the concept. When Richard Diebenkorn did the same in the opposite direction, going from representational to abstract, he illustrated that you can never go fully away from representation because the mind is a representational machine. These both happen because the image is not the concept, but means to deliver the concept in their works.

There have always been gatekeepers, and they are different for illustrative and non-illustrative artists. In the Middle Ages, it was the Church and aristocracy that made the calls, deciding what would be painted, for what price, and back then who could see it. When we saw the split between the two concepts, the illustrative arts picked up new gatekeepers: editors. Well, editors and publishers, and a bit further down the line, advertisers. I tend to forget them. They were rooted in commerce; they were the ones that were selling to the mass audience, which the Fine Artists weren't necessarily doing. The illustrators, and graphic designers, were much more secure financially than those that were in the Gallery and

Museum world. They had a steady and reliable income. All you have to do to see that is to compare the lifestyles of the biggest illustrators to the Museum darlings of the time. Fine Artists, you rolled the dice. Van Gogh's slightly exaggerated tale of poverty was true for a number of painters, but as the market evolved, it became less the Curators and Critics who determined what was 'good' and 'bad' but the market itself, and usually the top twenty or so collectors. Today, Saatchi, Gagosian, David Zwirner, Pace Gallery, they control what is seen as



valuable, because it is financial value that determines what is and isn't good Fine Art these days. They use the curators, museums, and journalist to make the art they've invested in 'better.' That's about as cynical an assessment you can get. It was the move away from Curators (and connoisseurship in general) and to collectors and galleries as the arbiters that greatly increased the monetary value of Fine Art (and really, it's Contemporary Art that is driving the market, and has for a few decades) into levels that are unattainable by illustrative art, which has relied on the old ways for a long time. This, though, also discounts that many of those same collectors and galleries that helped drive the Contemporary Art Market up to insane prices are now investing greatly in the world of illustrative art. The amounts being paid for original comics and book cover paintings have greatly increased. Gagosian is leading that.

There is, of course, the matter of credit. I'm of two minds on this one. A traditional "After _____" certainly has a place in things like those Lichtenstein comic panels, but in things like what Erró does, it doesn't make sense; he isn't recreating an image. The whole point of his work isn't the imagery; it's the connections between the images. Taken as elements, they're one thing; taken as a whole they are quite another thing. Erró is a conceptual artist, and just like Cezanne, he is not trying to render the images exactly, or well, but to simply impart the concept. That is the practice, and he does amazingly well at it.

The fundamental disconnect is the goal of each pursuit. Well, the goal outside of making a living. In illustration, it's about providing an image that fits a story or brings something to life. The image is the goal, and the concept is formed alongside the image. In conceptual art, the idea is the goal and the imagery is the tool to make that visible. This is why Duchamp's *Fountain* can be copied a million times, still have the same impact, and still be a Duchamp. Sol LeWitt played with that idea massively in his career, to the point where he often never touches the actual art object that gets presented, especially now that he's

dead. To illustrators, as a whole, it is about the quality of the image, which has little impact on many Conceptual artists. I can not tell you how many times I've heard well-known illustrators sneer at abstract works, saying it requires no talent to scribble on a canvas. To them, it is the precision, or at least the visual quality, of the image that matters. That's not at all so for most conceptual art.

When looking at the Foss-Bolland situation, it's slightly different. The concept there seems to only alter the setting of encounter and the title. That's not working with significant context change, and so, huh. There are a few points, though, that differentiate the Foss-Brown situation from the Erró-Bolland. No reasonable viewer would ever think that Erró created *Tank Girl*, and the painting by Erró is clearly an image created using existing imagery. This is true of nearly every piece of his I've seen. Anyone who would buy that (admittedly over-priced) print would not be buying it because of the imagery; they'd buy it because it was a work composed by Erró. There is no misrepresentation. The Foss image that Brown re-created? You can make an argument it is on that one, and I'd probably agree.

Now, neither of these are forgeries. My very first work of conceptual art was when I was in college and I bought an incredibly cheap poster of *Nighthawks* and copied a Dali signature on to it. Is that forgery? Kinda. Is it legitimate conceptual art? Yes. Was it easy? No doubt. Does that make it any less valid? Nope. Tell this to many illustrators and they'll laugh at you (and, in fact, this kinda happened when it showed in the common area of the Student Union at Emerson) because to them, if it isn't well-crafted, if it doesn't take incredible talent and training, if it doesn't present something of graphical quality, it is worthless. My act of forgery was art, but it also demonstrated the point—no one was going to think that Dali had painted *Nighthawks*. I created no confusion in the marketplace, and there was a lot more going on there, since at the time, there had been a discovery of hundreds of blank pieces of paper with Dali signatures on them, which easily could have been used to make fakes.

Ultimately, it comes down to this - and can two separate art systems interact with different rules? We completely hamstring the idea of conceptual art if we say there is no usage of existing imagery, but if we openly allow for all recontextualized use, then situations of exact copying can certainly lead to the confusion in the marketplace. Neither is the right answer. Then where the line is to be drawn becomes the battle, and in my eyes, you do that by considering whether the work is actually creating confusion or if a reasonable viewer would see the difference.

Now, to approach this as a Curator, my job title for a full 20 years in a time called the Past. A curator is tailored to their arena. A curator for illustrative works and one for contemporary art would be looking for completely different things. A curator putting together an exhibition of conceptual art will look at a work and then dig into the background. They'll be aware of the connection inside and outside of the



work, and will weigh those against goals for an exhibit or collection. Each work will have a brief, usually dozens of pages, which will be refined (and often photocopied) from dozens of sources. A work that enters a collection will be thoroughly researched, deeply understood, and then put into context. An appropriation work will have been thoroughly vetted, and then ties to the thing it is using will be investigated, measured, and the critical role it plays in reference to the work presented. It's a balancing act, and I've personally worked on exhibits where in the research phase, pieces had to be pulled for lack of proper ethical provenance. The curator's job is to serve as the intellectual engine of the exhibit/gallery/museum. The idea that they are required to acknowledge everything outside of the work is as ridiculous as requiring them to only acknowledge the work. It's one of those 'find the line' things that I hate. Lichtenstein probably should have named his blown-up comic panels "After _____" but honestly, it wouldn't have mattered. The material was a thing that existed in the world that was an art product, but one that existed outside the gallery world. That made it 'lesser' in the eyes of those who were in the gallery world. Lichtenstein was making the point that they're the same trade. The fact that they were quickly becoming entirely different price points should be, but has never really fully been, besides the point. Lichtenstein 100% recontextualized the material, but really he dealt in concept, not content. The original artists that he based those images on were dealing in content; the concept came from what was being illustrated. This was another part of what the enlarged works were doing, and the enlargement is a part of the separation and recontextualization of the image.

The Curator is the defender, and sadly, they're being pushed out of the equation more than a little, especially in spaces like Instagram and Twitter where much art interaction happens these days. A curator would have massive issues with putting the Brown version of Foss' illustration in an exhibit. They would have far less with the Erró work including the Bolland image. The fact that Saatchi included the Brown piece in a gallery setting, a gallery setting that made a lot of money for the owner, who put it together, and only after that notoriety did it get a major museum showing, that says something. The fact that it was

with works curated as a part of Saatchi's collections amplifies that even a little bit more. While a curator certainly had to do the heavy lifting of putting together the intellectual framework for an existing profitable pig-in-a-poke show like *Sensation*, the decisions were clearly made with Saatchi at the helm. That is happening far more often these days.

Appropriation is actually incredibly hard to pull off. It's easy to do; it's hard to do well. All Tracey Emin did was take some pictures and move her bed into a gallery. All Damien Hirst did was pay to get a tiger shark and vitrine put together and have it shown. All Glenn Brown did was take an image and re-paint it. The difference is Hirst's work has a presence and makes you think about roles. Emin's work ties into ideas of art and identity and mental health. These are transformative. *Ornamental Despair (Painting for Ian Curtis)* really isn't, and when the idea behind an appropriation work is to transform the work's identity within the Art World, that's the greatest sin.





Chinese Phase
by James Bacon

During a phase from 1968 onwards, Erró used images of Mao Zedong, the Chinese communist leader and presented them in works. Erró composed a 'Four Cities' series featuring Washington, Paris, Venice, and Moscow, in a light-hearted way, placing Mao and his followers in other cities. Following on from this, between 1974 and 1980, was a phase of his work which looked at and focussed on China.

What were these about, I wondered? Was Erró a fan of Mao, and how was Mao interpreted nearly fifty years ago? So I asked a Chinese fan and friend for their view. They said,

You want to hear the truth? It looks similar to the propaganda arts to me. We always took summer school students to a propaganda arts museum and they are always excited about them. But for Chinese citizens, it's kind of linked to an out-dated and problematic era. I can see the artists draw inspirations from the propaganda arts, and add in modern elements, but very stereotype and problematic.

Excellent I reckoned, it is important to consider and learn and this perspective was helpful. I thought that he possibly was impressed with what China had done as a form of rebellion against Western hypocrisy, often people see the positives about communism focusing on the social responsibility and socialism that helps everyone without seeing the inherent corruption that occurs with all human systems. There also could be some satire within the art where he's depicting a propaganda image of Chinese people around the world where they don't fit, as in workers are propaganda looking while the cities behind are modern. Or it may be that she felt that they were the embodiment of a happy people working in a system which appreciated them. It could be that he was just a fan of China at that time, which is nearly 50 years ago.





My pal continued to discuss the art:

I totally understand why the artists love the style, and have no problem of them doing so, but don't think it can be good representation of China. Chinese people are quite sensitive about the modern history, when China has gone through a hard time.

When Chinese people shows nostalgia in front of the world, they'd prefer to show the golden ancient times like Tang Dynasty instead of the modern age, or they prefer the future. In the similar vein of communism but facing towards the future, this China 2098 series is popular in China: <https://weibo.com/1887344341/LqH4svggG>

Chinese people welcome this because first, it's created by Chinese for Chinese; and second, it portrays a powerful China in the future.

It's really interesting because now that the work could be seen as problematic - I can understand how the propaganda look is too forced as opposed to modern day propaganda which is more nuanced and subtle and maybe fake news (everywhere, not just China).

The 1976 series includes some interesting settings, *La Gare* sees an incredible background of a streamlined train in a rather fantastical industrial setting, two women armed with a rifle in front of the Taj Mahal are stunning in their composition and clarity, construction workers in Times Square are another wonderful meeting of two worlds, while the Lin Piao composition moves back to a comic book style. There are dozens of images in these series. In 1981 Erró delved back into Imperial Chinese history, and had a sequence of portrayals, including a number of families.

Erró took a lot from Chinese posters, postcards, travel brochures and the social realism of Chinese art, yet his sharp work is nicely presented skilfully with a vibrancy to the colours, but never overpowering and an artistic skill that feels adept, but one must appreciate and understand the sentiments towards the art, and while I understand art may be left to the viewer to interpret, sometimes we need more than that. Sometimes.

I personally did like the look of the trains in '*Chicago*' and the juxtaposition in the 50th anniversary image. Yet we do need to consider when and why these images were being drawn, and that is unclear to me, while it is great to have a view from China, contributing here and with which we end this phase:

Chinese people at the time when these arts were created may not have any problem with them, or even love them. But nowadays, the public discourse has changed and is intense, so foreign artists using such style today may be suspicious for "scandalizing China". It's deeply bound with the era.





Enditorial by James Bacon

What a crazy week. I said to Chris only a week ago, that an issue on Erró might be interesting. As he explained, it was a busy time for him. Yet we cranked it out. Promptly. Focus. Determination.

Yet, am I a fan of Erró?

What a difficult question. I do not know.

As a comic book fan, as someone who stood in line to meet, thank, and get signatures from Brian Bolland, one is placed in a conflicted position, I owe loyalty to Brian, he has entertained me hugely, over decades, and is brilliant, and for his work to be misappropriated and used, is not cool.

Likewise, I know and appreciate so much of the comic art. Is the failing the artist, perhaps? I often think it is curators who fail, fail to recognise the source.

Andy Warhol – paid – \$50 for the idea of using Soup Cans, just the idea, in 1961, after allegedly saying, “The cartoon paintings...it’s too late, I’ve got to do something that really will have a lot of impact, that will be different enough from Lichtenstein.” No mention of Kurt Schaffenberger who was the artist on *Superman’s Girl Friend Lois Lane* #24, dated April 1961, and whose image was lifted, from page 7. Now suddenly not good enough.

With Lichtenstein, well Art Spiegelman said “Lichtenstein did no more or less for comics than Andy Warhol did for soup,” which is in one sense fair, but Campbell’s loved and do love what Warhol did, they worked with him in the 1980s and commissioned him and indeed, today they dedicate space on their websites to him. That relationship, somewhat different. Campbell’s are happy to talk about it and where the original design came from.

In 1897 Dr. John T. Dorrance created the first condensed soups for the Campbell Soup Company. Original labels were orange and blue, then in 1898 Herberton L. Williams, a company man who went on to be the assistant general manager, watched a University football game. University of Pennsylvania versus Cornell in red and white kit. The striking colours were then proposed. Jonathon Thorn, the Campbell's ar-

chivist told the New York Post that: "We do not have specific information on who designed the label, mostly because our records indicate that it was a cooperative effort."

Comic art, the art I love, the art that I adorn nearly all my living spaces with, which I have loved for over forty years, has a legacy of being put down, put upon. In school comics were confiscated, in society it was met with 'like the *Beano*' and even today there is oddness about the art. Ground-breaking academic work on comics is the work of the 21st Century, the stuff I love has become, well, popular.

Not accepted. It would be wrong to say valuable, when I know what artists get paid, sometimes the same amount for years and years, and how some get messed about and fucked over, and never recognised for their brilliance.

Of course one is then drawn to Brian Bolland, producing his own fanzines at college where he was studying art and art history, he wrote a 15,000 word dissertation on Neal Adams in 1973, an artist that his teachers "had never heard of". Now that would be an interesting read.

The Smithsonian is paying attention, although a museum, and of course one that encompasses both art and culture, where comics would fall nicely, does make mention of sources when they discuss Warhol or Liechtenstein and in fairness to the Reykjavik gallery, they did have sources for later works.

Did Brian have an impact? You would hope so, but there is evidence that the curators, and I should note about them, that Danielle Kvaran and Gunnar B. Kvaran do a wonderful job. There is real love for the work, pride in an Icelander and of course Erró gave the museum some 4,000 pieces of which 300 were available to view in the Hafnarhús Reykjavík Art Museum.

Their view, opinions and skilful interpretation informed me, in one way, in that I could see what they were saying, albeit see the art differently, or see how they saw the art, and they had a very skilful and adept approach to adding depth to a piece, that maybe was interpretation, but I hoped might be the view of the artist. There must be a special curator school for words and books to utilise to give one gravitas. 'It's fucking brilliant' was not amongst the interpretations.

Erró comes across as a nice fellow, well on the little video of him that exists. Just like Brian, so that is not so good. Erró should be a villain. Damn it. And he hates war.

I should save my ire for true villains.

I can hope that the Cartoon Museum will do a Bolland exhibition, allowing me to write fully about it, probably not do a fanzine, as that might be seen as too much appropriation, whereas here with Erró, we must freely admit, the work that is photographed, is his work.


He does like the public stuff, and in fairness, I do love public large scale murals and art, and Reykjavik is full of street art, literally they have a 'Rainbow Street' but I wish it could be done with the great comic artists of our era, like Bolland.

The Brian Bolland art that I have enjoyed goes back to Judge Dredd, his renditions of Judge Anderson are fabulous, his covers have always been amazing, and I look now inside and be it The Actress and the Bishop to The Elite of the Fleet, I have a lot of amazing Boland work, and one day, when I grow up, might be able to get a sketch or piece of art, although it is so rightly expensive to be unlikely the latter. Getting three comics signed and thanking him, was really brilliant. Made my day.

Yet we do a Fanzine about Erró, probably because an issue about Brian, would need to be so much more, I do not know him, as a person, and one would want to understand and learn and show true appreciation for a comic artist. Maybe someday, but illustrators did such a good job, there is no need, indeed, many amazing interviews have occurred, and much good work done on Bolland.

Meanwhile, we will leave Erró in this issue and I will return to chair, where I am surrounded by comics, and can enjoy them, I can dream of another massive Comic Book exhibition, like we have seen in the British Library, what a show that was, or smaller ones in the fabulous Cartoon Museum.

I will go and spend my hard-earned money on comics, and love them and share them, and appreciate them.



Erró Errór

Journey Planet