

D. DOMINICK LOMBARDI

THE POST APOCALYPTIC TATTOO: A TEN YEAR SURVEY

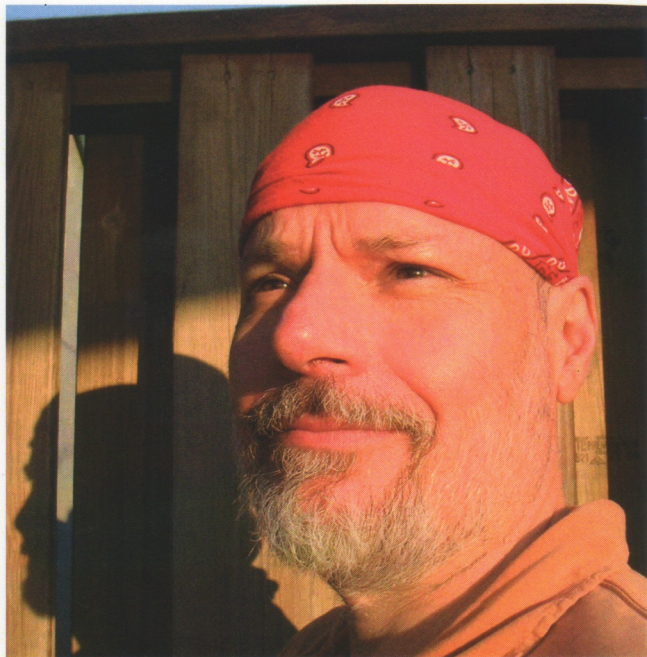


Photo courtesy of Lora Lombardi

"500 years from now, if you take into account the amount of pollutants we absorb in the air, food and in our drinking water, our transgenic foods, the radioactivity in our environment and the stresses of a modern age that we are exposed to on a daily basis you can imagine how much more profoundly the reproductive/mutation process of all living things will change and distort.

In my art, I take a humorous, albeit dark type of cartoon or comic book style to represent the human and animal condition after this slowly forming apocalyptic period ends. All of the characters in the paintings, drawings, sculptures and prints are meant to be seen as tattoo flash designs for possible tattoos within an overall narrative. The origins of the design source are thousands of reactive-automatic drawings that I make while accessing my subconscious. A source that I believe, to be part of a collective continuum that can be fed into and extracted from any time in the past, present or future. My suspicion is, that the final designs, which take into account the extreme mutations possible in the distant future, are filtered through the mind of one particular, future tattoo artist. The later Graffoos are tattoo designs applied on top of my existing or newly painted backgrounds like the way a graffiti artist paints over a wall, a bus or a train a simultaneous act of creation and destruction."

D. Dominick Lombardi

For the last ten years, Dominick Lombardi has been working obsessively on the series "Post Apocalyptic Tattoos." It began in 1998 as many artists' projects do—with doodles in a sketchbook.

Quickly, those doodles came to resemble characters—and as Lombardi fleshed them out, they soon demanded their own world. Over the next ten years, his project mushroomed to encompass reverse Plexiglas paintings; drawings in charcoal and India ink; silkscreen and woodcut prints; sculptures and bas reliefs assembled from junkyard detritus and covered with pigment and papier mache; plus countless working drawings made with ballpoint and felt-tip pen on scraps of paper, or graphite on newsprint. Lately, Lombardi has been focusing more intensively on the creatures' environment, which he has explored and articulated in the series-within-a-series he calls "Graffoos" graffiti paintings made on new and old canvases.

Creatively, the project was born as Lombardi was worrying about the fate of the universe. Its mutant creatures embody his fears and hopes for a future world, distorted by pollution, transgenic mutation, and apocalyptic events. They include Blue Boy, whose innards spill down his legs; his sweetheart, Twister, who has rubbery bones and turquoise lips; Big Foot, who perambulates on a single massive foot; and Clown, who dies early on from an enlarged hair follicle on his tongue. Central to the tale is the unseen Tattoo Artist, a character who chronicles his world by producing all these drawings, paintings, and sculptures. (Is Lombardi the Tattoo Artist? "No," he says. "I'm the vehicle for the Tattoo Artist who's sending these images to me.")

Yet despite all this impending gloom and doom, the characters pursue their distorted lives with such spirit and joie de vivre that their universe never seems bleak. And Lombardi in turn has recorded their world with a zeal, intensity, and joy in craftsmanship that suggests life is truly worth living.

This will be the first time the project has been shown in its entirety.

Carol Kino

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