

Exclusive: Converge's Jacob Bannon paints Frankenstein's Monster for the Mondo Gallery

Written by Samuel Zimmerman
Saturday, 20 October 2012 17:15



Currently underway, Mondo (the collectible art boutique arm of the Alamo Drafthouse) is celebrating October with a monument to the most iconic creatures of the night, the Universal Monsters. Across the board, the show is a towering, impressive slate of poster art, portraits and more from lauded Mondo collaborators like Martin Ansín, Ken Taylor and Phantom City Creative and screen legends Rick Baker and Drew Struzan. Within its roster of creatives is another, unexpected legend, however.

The front man of one of the most revered, integral contemporary heavy bands going, Jacob Bannon continues to lead Converge with an evolving fury and urgency; not to mention working as a respected illustrator in his own right. FANGORIA spoke with Bannon about his art and the enduring legacy of the Universal Monsters. We're also proud to exclusively premiere his portrait of Frankenstein's Monster below.



FANGORIA: Your name was a pleasant surprise in the announcement. How did you get involved with Mondo and approached for the show?

JACOB BANNON: I've been dealing with Mitch over at Mondo for a while now, here and there. He extended an invite after being a fan of the art and visuals that I've been doing for the last bunch of years. I'm very grateful to be asked to be part of it.

FANG: As an artist who works in multiple mediums, I can only imagine you're inspired by a great deal more. What do you find inspiring and invigorating about film and the Universal

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Monsters?

BANNON: I enjoy all forms of art and expression, and film is one of those amazing things; a fantastic sensory overload, especially extreme films or heavy films, whether they be visually intense or the characters are heady and weighty. That definitely stems from the Universal Monsters world. All those characters are not only stimulating visually, but they're all amazing stories that I think all human beings can relate to at some point, whether they've felt like Frankenstein's Monster or the conflicted scientist or a Wolf Man. As a person who deals with expressing themselves musically, through writing, it's nice to be able to adapt those approaches and throw them in there, towards something like this.

FANG: Was this your first film-related piece?

BANNON: Probably publicly, yea. More often than not, my pieces are personal works that are just explosive and kinetic and I don't really assign a specific character or anything like that, to them; just vague human forms.

FANG: The reason I ask is the [JANE DOE artwork](#) always felt, to me, like Marlene Dietrich in SHANGHAI EXPRESS was a touchstone.

BANNON: No, I actually have seen that recently. All the previous work when I started working in high contrast stuff was just inspired by early punk rock art; high contrast images, playing with Xerox machines, playing with mixed media pieces, Samhain, Danzig. If anything, it's more of an homage to The Misfits as far as having a really iconic, stoic figure that represents the whole of the story, in a way. So yea, that wasn't something I had any knowledge about. At the end of the day, nothing 's original in the world. Maybe I was somehow channeling something I saw when I was ten years-old. Who knows?

FANG: FRANKENSTEIN is a tale of playing god and creating something in an image you've designed. That feels appropriate as the story is so adaptable, and your portrait is so telling of your personal style.

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BANNON: For me, not only does the character hold that place, but the character is also the sad character. It's a monster created in somebody's own image that essentially, gets torn down and banished. It's a really powerful story and you can add a lot of different kind of narrative voices to it and interpret it in a whole lot of different ways. All great stories are that way. It's something that's always appealed to me. It's always been one of my favorites of the Monsters.

FANG: About the piece itself, the obscuring of the mouth feels connected to the Frankenstein Monster's limited speech.

BANNON: Exactly, I think we all have issues of communicating and I like the idea of making those things more literal, at times. Some of my work in the past has always been distorted sort of figures and what not, that have a variety of challenges for whatever story I'm attempting to tell. That just worked well for this story, specifically. And the head shape, and the things that stick out to people, there are only certain aspects of the image you can play with to give it a different kind of voice.

The Mondo Gallery's Universal Monsters show is currently underway at 4115 Guadalupe St. Austin, TX. 78751

*For more on Jacob Bannon, visit both his [official site](#) and [Converge Cult](#). Converge released their latest album, *ALL WE LOVE WE LEAVE BEHIND* on October 9. It is absolutely fantastic.*