

December 2004 Issue Sixteen

The Magazine for Graffiti Writers & Street Lovers.

# BLOODWARS

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## Forward

Bloodwars is a Pdf Magazine. Print it out pass it along. Bloodwars intention is to expose the various forms and styles of Street Bombing and what ever else I find stimulating out in the world.

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## Submit

If you would like to contribute to Bloodwars (don't send files) first please send an email and I will get back to you. Submit photos of what you would like to see in Bloodwars: graffiti, stencil, sticker, or what jerks your head back for a second look. Social Commentary is welcomed. [bloodwars@sfaustina.com](mailto:bloodwars@sfaustina.com)

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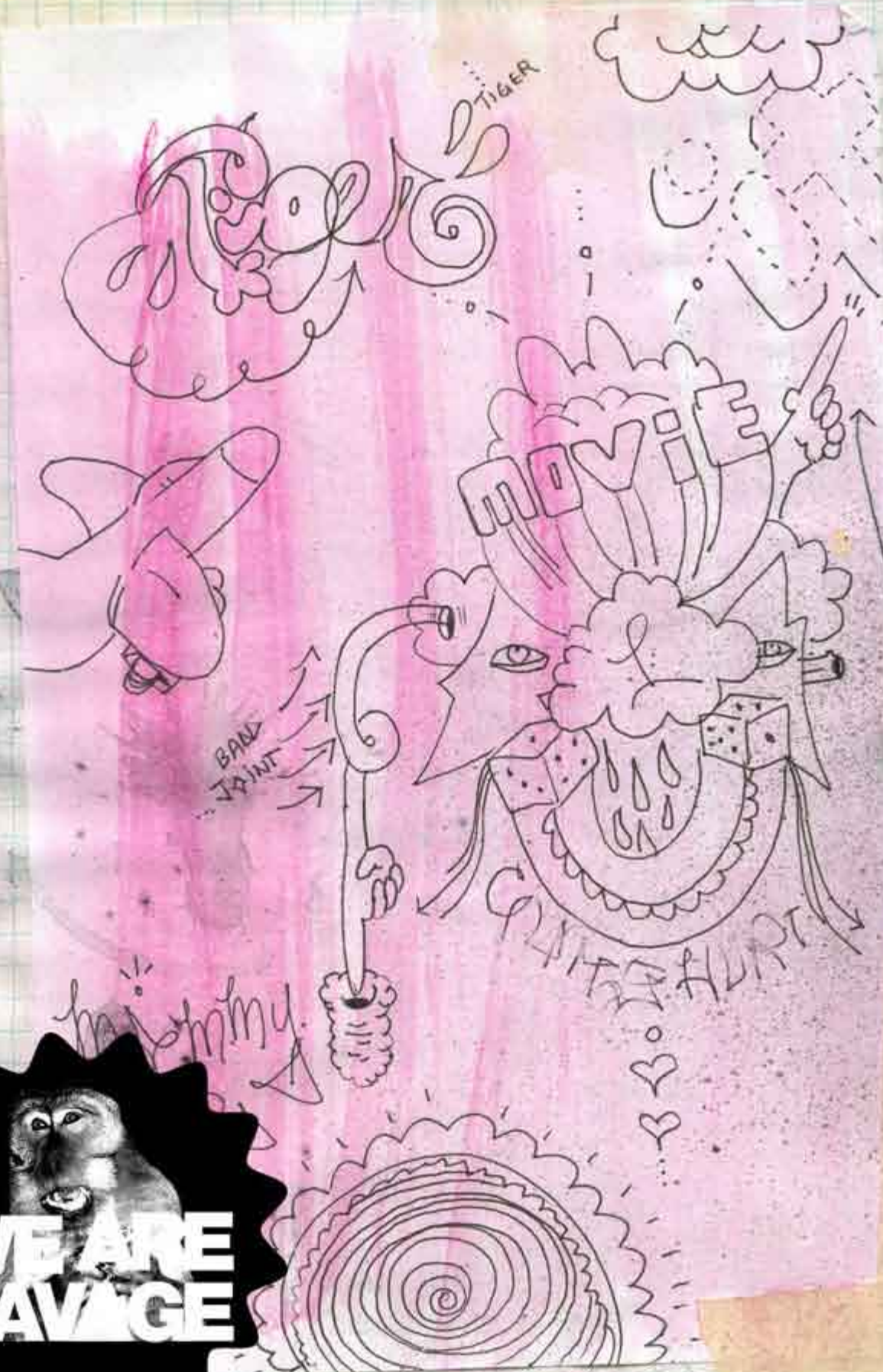
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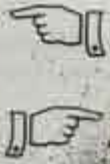
This is a little piece of my world and me thank you for looking. sf\*

**Text\*** Found graffiti newspaper articles.

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Saying that graffiti and litter are everywhere is an understatement. Some of the worst graffiti I've seen was in otherwise pristine Berlin. But to think that these twin scourges of civilization have reached even to New Zealand (think the clean, green scenes of "Lord of the Rings"), well, that's disheartening. "Yes, we have those problems," acknowledges Sandy Beath-Croft, coordinator of the Keep Hutt City Beautiful program. Her city, Lower Hutt, is near Wellington, New Zealand's capital. She'd heard of San Jose's success in dealing with graffiti (and, to a lesser degree, litter), and so she was visiting here the other day to check how we do it. "A lot of the really brilliant work San Jose is doing isn't possible in New Zealand because of our laws," Beath-Croft said. Kiwis apparently are even more protective of free expression than we are, even when it's painted on someone else's fence. "I was impressed by the speed of the city's reaction to graffiti," she added, though that would be hamstrung by red tape Down Under. Too bad, because that's key to keeping San Jose clean. Still, Beath-Croft did find something to take back. "I like that San Jose provides the first can of paint to homeowners to paint over the graffiti. They already feel victimized enough. This is something we might be able to do as well." And she also liked the concept of putting deposits on beverage cans to encourage people to recycle them rather than tossing them onto the landscape. "That also might work for us." But overall, she concluded, "The modern world has just gone more disposable. Cigarette butts are everywhere. Graffiti is increasing. We put up a security camera at our swimming pool. The first thing the kids did was paint over the camera." Even in New Zealand. Sounds like home

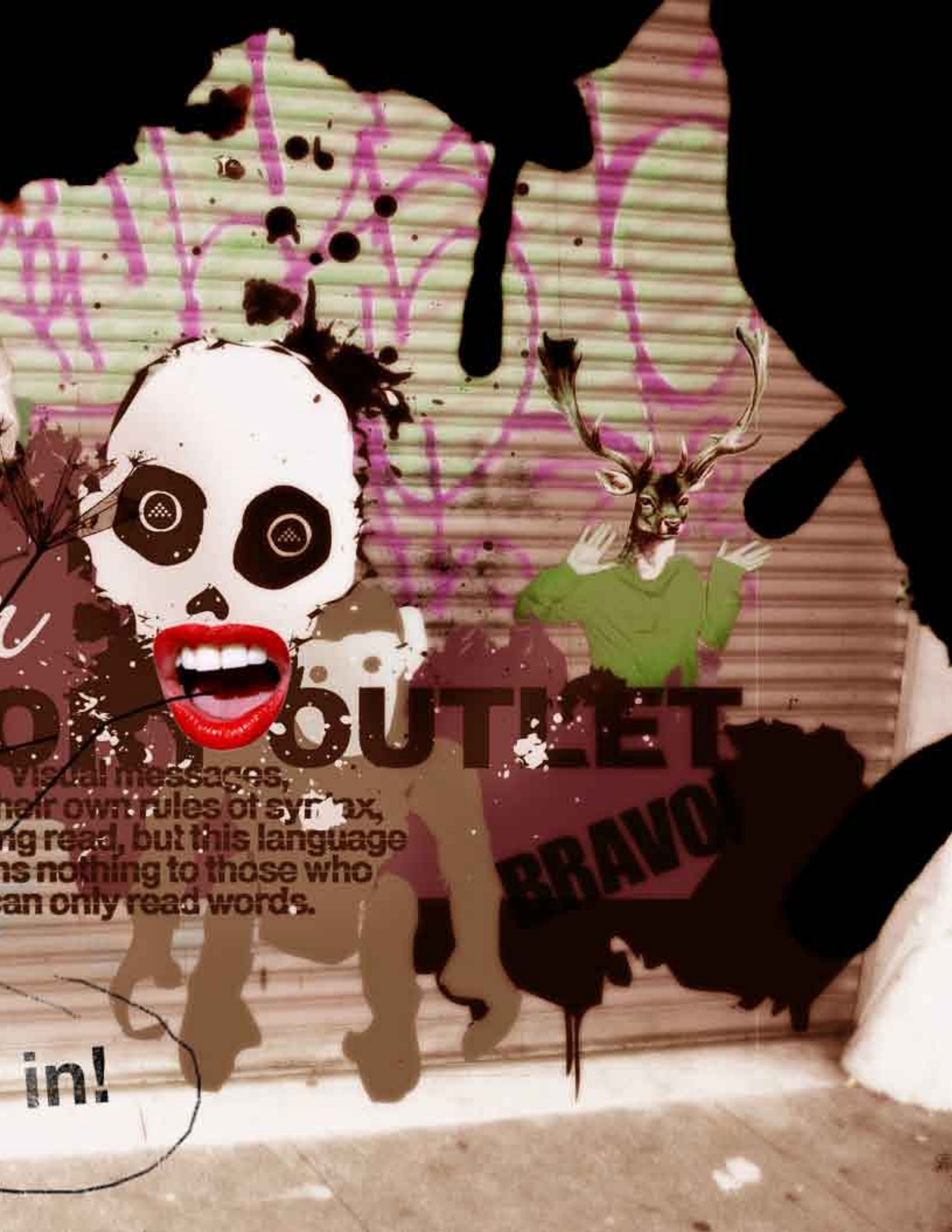
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DECONSTRUCTION  
OF ELEMENTS

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# OUTLET

Visual messages,  
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is nothing to those who  
can only read words.

BRAVO

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# LOOK THE RIFF





Two weeks ago in a back yard in City Heights, a group of drunken hoodlums surrounded a broken piece of fence, waiting for their turn at the spray can. Overcome by impatience, the youths abandoned the spray cans for buckets of paint, flinging gobs and eventually the brush itself until the end result was a mucky mess, topped off by one youngster's urine and another's proud discovery of a dead goldfish. Vandals or Van Goghs? You make the call. "Creativity can't be measured," says Dion Terry, 28, an ex-tagger turned graphic designer who's lived for the past six years in San Diego as an artist and local paint store employee. "F\*\*\* art critics," says he. "It's in the person, it's in the artist's eye." While Dion doesn't necessarily condone illegal graffiti either, he considers it an art form — however lowbrow it may be — and a way of life for kids with nothing better to do. "Graffiti, tagging and all that, it's all egotistical," says Dion. "I didn't fit in with high school people at all, you know, I just kind of did my own thing back then. I don't know if it was just egotistical, it's the running around after hours that's fun."

Dion says there wasn't much competition with other tagging crews. He and his other four crew members put hard work into their pieces, taking time with the lettering and characters. He says they painted murals and "real pieces," referring to the more intricate works of graffiti, not just the scribbles that litter toilets and newspaper stands. Other crews just couldn't measure up.

"Crews battle," says Dion. "They go out on the streets and they do their shit. You do your hit-ups here and there in big places, hard-to-get places. Freeways are amazing. But nobody ever wanted to battle, so I just fell out of it." Jeremy Hunt, 23, whose tag name is Nemo, fell out of the illegal stuff, too. Recognizing the dangers of being caught, he stopped hitting up storefront walls and now helps run a storefront of his own. "It's spelled 'Writerz Blok' — I know it's kinda weird," says Nemo, showing off his and others' pieces that decorate the walls of the free mural and graffiti park on the corner of Euclid and Market. "When I was young and doin' this stuff out on the street, it was what it was."

Now it is what it is. Nemo and others like him run Writerz Blok like any other non-profit organization, soliciting grants and donations from willing community members while running a for-profit business alongside it. Many Southeast community members go to the crew at Writerz Blok for all their graphic design, mural, screen printing and multi-media needs. "Just like any culture, there's an evolution," says Nemo. "The evolution is going well. The American dream is to do what you want to do every day, and we're doing that."

Also capitalizing — dare we say co-opting — the controversial art form is Kaleb Aero, 26, a former well-respected spraymeister turned well-respected president and CEO of the Aerosol Art Association. "What it is, we're a network of artists that get together and accomplish jobs and murals and community services," says Kaleb of triple-A, which was founded in 2000. "We do workshops and seminars. Basically what we do is provide the services of artwork to the clients." Aero started out like Dion and Nemo, going on night runs to get his name out. "Everyone does a little illegal work just to push the limits," says Aero. "It helps get your stuff out there, but the consequences ... I wanted to pursue a different avenue, get it legalized." Requiring at least 10 years' experience from his artists, Aero thinks he and his boys should be "compensated for the mastery of our trade."

So does Mike Jew, the owner of Stacks, a record store in Lemon Grove. The inside of his business is decorated with the work of Aero and the legendary San Diego graf artist Pres-One. And in Pacific Beach, Access Music proudly boasts the work of Dion on the inside and out. Nemo and his friends have been hired to do huge murals decorating the Food 4 Less down the road from their park. Yet artists such as these are few and far between. As Aero acknowledges, "The people who are incriminating the art form probably outnumber the ones who aren't." Tagbangers take over Sgt. Lee Norton, head of the San Diego Graffiti Task Force, explains the four different types of graffiti: "You've got your taggers who are part of a crew; your 'oners' (one-timers) — people who like to put up big pieces but have no affiliation; you have tagbangers, the battling crews; and you have basic gangster stuff." According to Norton, a lot of San Diego graffiti is now gangster graffiti. As opposed to the vibrant pieces like the ones in Writerz Blok, gang graffiti looks like chicken scratches, a bunch of meaningless scribble to the untrained eye. But to opposing gangs, it's a claim to territory and a sign of disrespect to all other gangs. The scribble is encoded with the name of the gang, individuals' names and the date the piece was put up. The Task Force snaps pictures before the pieces are covered up and the investigation begins. "What we do is good old-fashioned police work," says Norton. "We hardly catch anyone in the act."



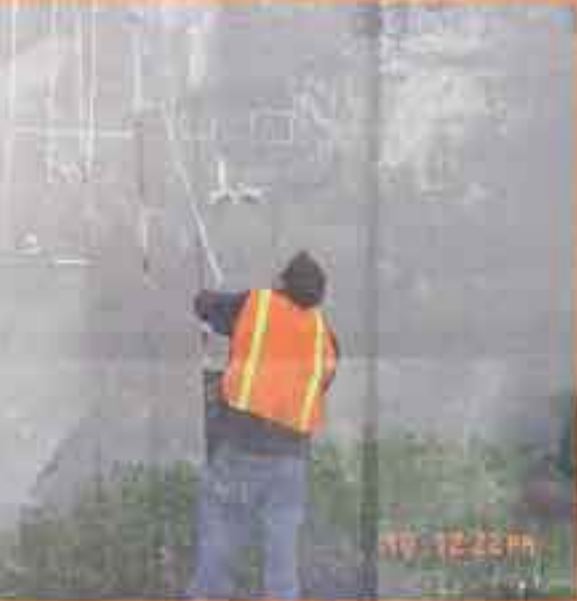
Even so, the force has managed to arrest more than 500 people in the last year and a half, and with the arrests comes money, lots and lots of money for the victims and the city to compensate for the estimated \$2 million in damage caused by illegal graffiti in any given year. Norton, clicking through digital pictures on his computer of ruined property, explains, "We always seem to get full restitution to our victims. We've had restitutions as high as \$18,000. We're getting judgments for victims. We're hoping that will have an impact." Once caught, depending on the dollar amount of the damage and the age of the assailant, the tagger will either be arrested or slapped with a hefty fine.

Task Force officer Damon Sherman clicked through the gallery of graffiti as well, stopping at a picture of a tagged-up stop sign. "That's Born," says Sherman. "I don't think he's even supposed to be out of custody yet. I've arrested him twice. Recidivism, don't even get me started on recidivism." Painting the roses red Some taggers just won't give up. Admant about getting their piece up, and keeping it up, taggers have more than just the police and other taggers to worry about. "We just keep painting it and painting it and painting it," says Patricia Bohnwagner, a young Graffiti Eraser whose job it is to do just that.

Come rain or shine, Graffiti Erasers are out there every day painting over unwanted paint and, in minutes, covering up what took taggers all night to accomplish. Last Thursday — although officially the second day in autumn — was awfully hot, but Patricia, Jose and Will paid no mind. They pulled over on the side of Interstate 5, near the 32nd and Maine exit, with a job to do. "You'll see the same stuff over and over again," says Patricia while hiking up a steep hill covered in ice plant. "This job we're going to right now probably gets tagged every week or two." Sure enough, at the top of the hill, on a wall visible from the freeway, are huge letters that read MBCK.

"They used the rollers on this one," says Patricia. The members squeeze through a hole in the fence, walk through a narrow walkway surrounded by razor wire and then bust out the brown paint. The hot sun dries the paint quickly: MBCK becomes MBC, then MB, then M and then poof, the Graffiti Erasers have worked their magic. The Graffiti Erasers are part of the Urban Corps of San Diego, a non-profit organization that offers San Diego youths, ages 18-25, the chance to gain work experience while furthering their education. The Urban Corps is contracted out by the city of San Diego to do most of the graffiti cleanup. D'Wane Brown, marlager of the graffiti department, explains how it works: "We have a 24-hour hotline. Most calls go through the city of San Diego, and then they send us service requests. We get between 20 and 30 a day."

Brown is described by the Urban Corps CEO as the "poster boy" for the program. A former graduate of the Urban Corps, Brown went from being a high school dropout to heading the Graffiti Erasers, who this year alone have been responsible for wiping out more than 5,000 square feet of graffiti. The program seems to work better than most because, as Brown points out, many of the kids doing the tagging have either gone through the Urban Corps program or have a friend who has. "It's all about putting the youth to work," says Brown. "The young people, they actually go out in the field, and the kids learn, they'll tell their friends, 'Hey, don't mess up that wall, that's a lot of hard work.'" But when will the hard work end? Brown predicts never, but he doesn't seem to mind. "They keep us employed," he says. Legal or illegal, artsy or just plain fartsy, graffiti is here to stay. "It's out there, what do you want?" asks Dion. "There's no way to stop it, it's been created." Once we accept that, maybe we can come to appreciate it. Come to think of it, the urine did have a bit of the sfumato effect on the goldfish after all was said and done.



In search of the Master Race.....It's a Graff Thing.

Okay. I'll admit it, I took a break, but I certainly didn't fall off. So after a hand full short incarcerations and after 5 suck-ass years, my P.O. finally maxed me out!! Let Freedom Rain, and may its runoff guide us in our nightly adventures.

With this new found appreciation of...well...basically everything, I pose the question to myself and you. "Are we really pushing Graffiti to the highest level we can?" Certainly there are those Killin' Shit on the daily, but there are so many out there just floating along, stale as the bread in C-Pod.

There's a whole history to this Graff thing, world wide! After arguably 40+ years, is this what graffiti has come to? Specifically street bombing. I guess I should jump on the bandwagon and start stapling livers to newspaper boxes or something. That'll show'em! Now all I need is my fixed gear, a messenger bag, and a couple tattoo's. I'll fit right in. Seriously though, we need to handle this shit now. Our children's handstyles are falling through the cracks. And I'm sure this computer age isn't going to make things any better. Kids don't even know how to write anymore, they just type, save, spellcheck, save, then print. The future looks bleak.

Ahhh Shit...Don't get me wrong. I'm all for new and innovative concepts to graff but thats just it, New! "That fucking abstract painting you did on cardboard and liquid-nailed it to that door down the alley, in the safe cover of darkness, behind that mouth-watering delivery truck (which you should have rocked a piece on), is so fuckin last week.

#### Consider this your official warning.

So to conquer this atrocious dilemma that is diluting the purity of our Master race, I'm suggesting a sort of government consisting of all the top crews or writers in a given city. This government will encourage and enforce the advancement of originality. Hand styles/letters/fill-ins, just all around pushing the scene to new levels.

In laymen terms, there's gonna be an organized takeout of all wak graff and the suckers that wrote it! Any funky shit that is obviously NOT original or is taking up a good spot with a shitty rendition of say...TIE's throw ups for example! WILL BE TAKEN OUT!! Courtesy of the "Frisco Cartel".

It seems a little ruthless at first but aint no one said this was easy. If we keep letting this stale shit run, the kids coming up are gonna be influenced by what they see. And if they can't even write in the first place, due to the above mentioned electronic handicap of the 21st century, they'll just latch onto any "Weekend Warrior's" coattails and bite away like the fleas they are! NO MAS, amigo.

Every few years Frisco gets a wave of fresh bombing campaigns. Usually brought on by some new kids that get all excited and think they can just catch a few fills, get on a website, and try to draw crowns atop their tags I've got a sneaky feeling it takes a lot more than that to be a KING. Not far from the top of that list, is going all city and as far as I can tell nobody's been All-City, I mean ALL-CITY, from the Beach to the Bridge... in quite a while.

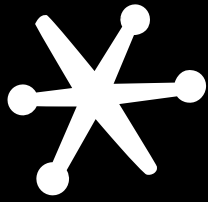
Graffiti is a culture, a race, a lifestyle, and even a death sentence in some cases(R.I.P). It's up to us to keep this brotherhood pure!

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Graffiti is no longer confined to big cities, highway hillsides and occasional street signs. Ask any Turlock police officer and they're sure to tell you Turlock, like just about every other city in California, has a graffiti problem. Graffiti is not art. Sure, there are those who can work wonders with a can of spray paint and a permanent marker, but we're not talking about a particular style of artist. We're talking about the unsolicited "masterpieces" that have been popping up around town on fences, garage doors and the sides of buildings. Today's graffiti comes in various forms: Taggers, gangs and "hate" graffiti. Taggers are probably the most common, and they are the street artists. Graffiti is increasingly a sign of gang activity in a community. For the gang, it is a means of identifying their "turf." It is used to spell out the gang's geographic territory, essentially telling rival gangs, "You are not welcome." There is no question that there is increased gang activity in the entire Valley. Look at the recent home invasion arrests. Police cite the increased methamphetamine trafficking and violent gang-related crimes right here in Turlock. Though graffiti in Turlock is not rampant, it is here. The bottom line is the same for all of us: Property damage, decreased property value, intimidation, fear and increased crime. If we do nothing, the graffiti send a message that we are not concerned about how our community looks and it amounts to a welcome mat for gang activity. What do we do about it? Be proactive in reporting graffiti to the Turlock Police Department. If your property is tagged, call the police so they can take photos for their files and then immediately paint over it. Turlock youths assigned to community service spent their time Saturday morning painting over graffiti at 11 locations. There are also volunteer groups that work to make a difference. Turlock is fortunate to have such programs in place. However, graffiti breeds graffiti. This type of vandalism is more than a nuisance. It's dangerous.

If left untouched the problems will spread throughout the community - and this includes our neighborhoods and schools.

**MONKEYSHIN**  
BLOCKBANG MAGAZINE

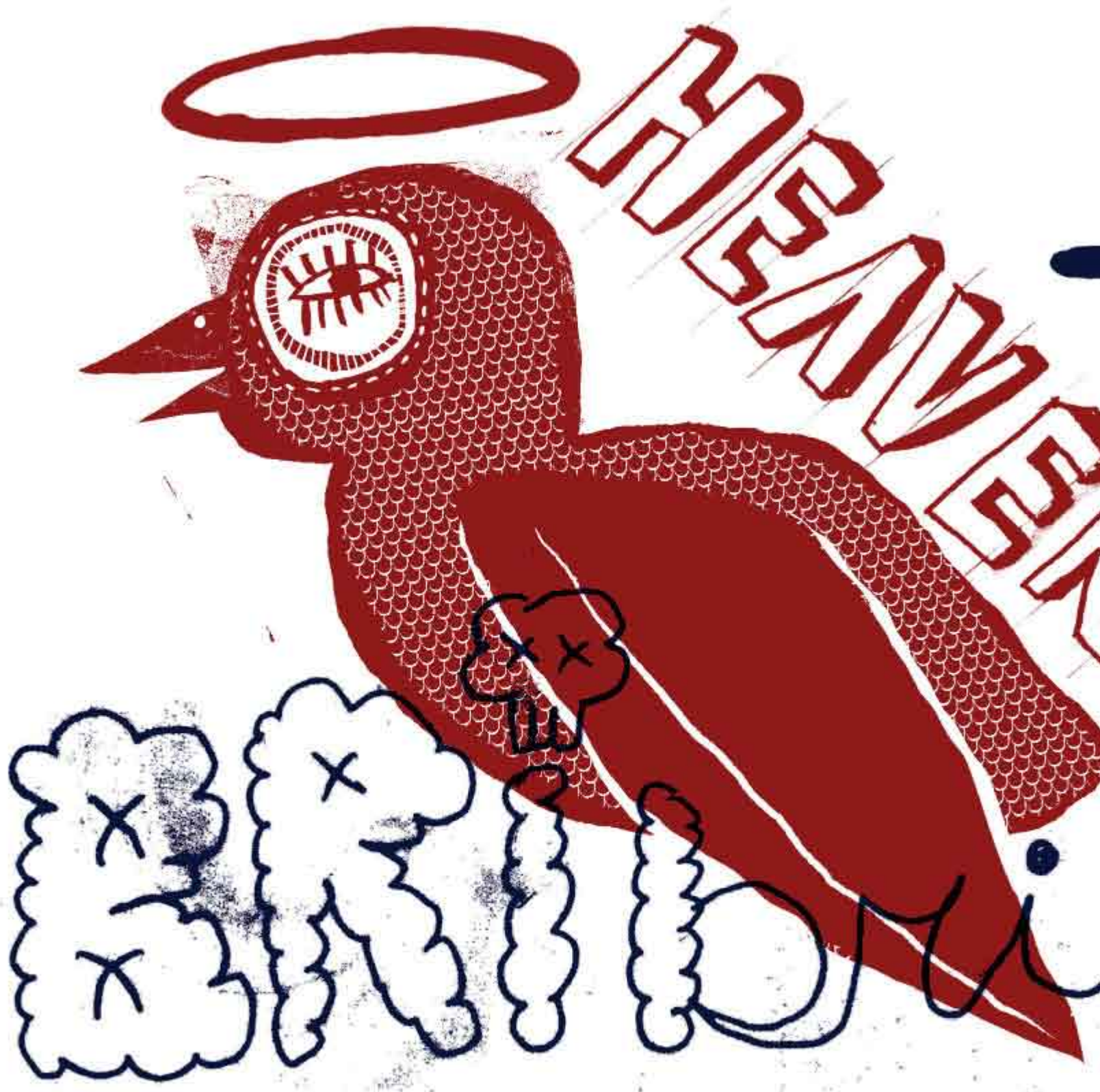
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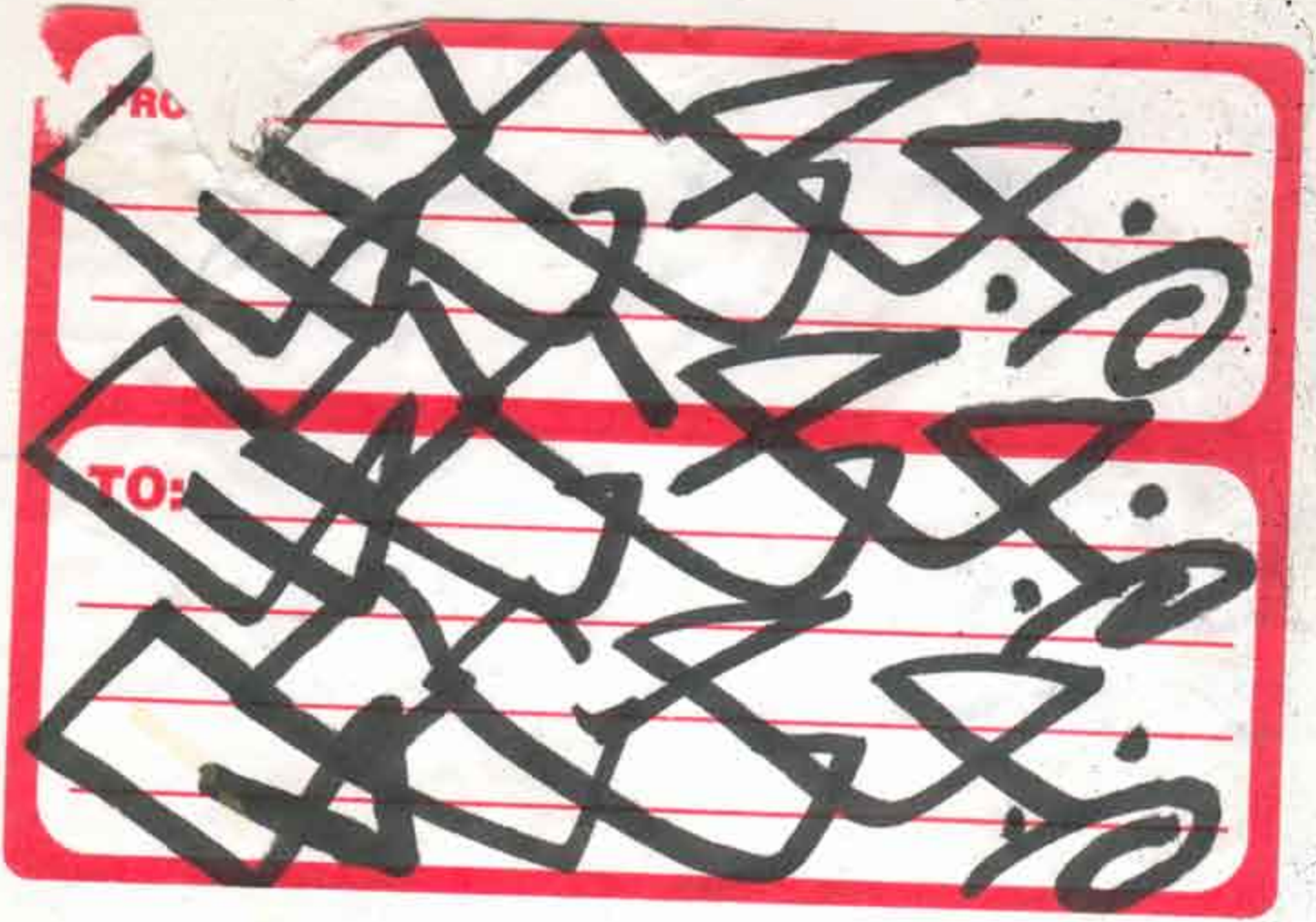




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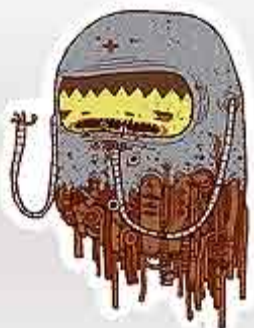
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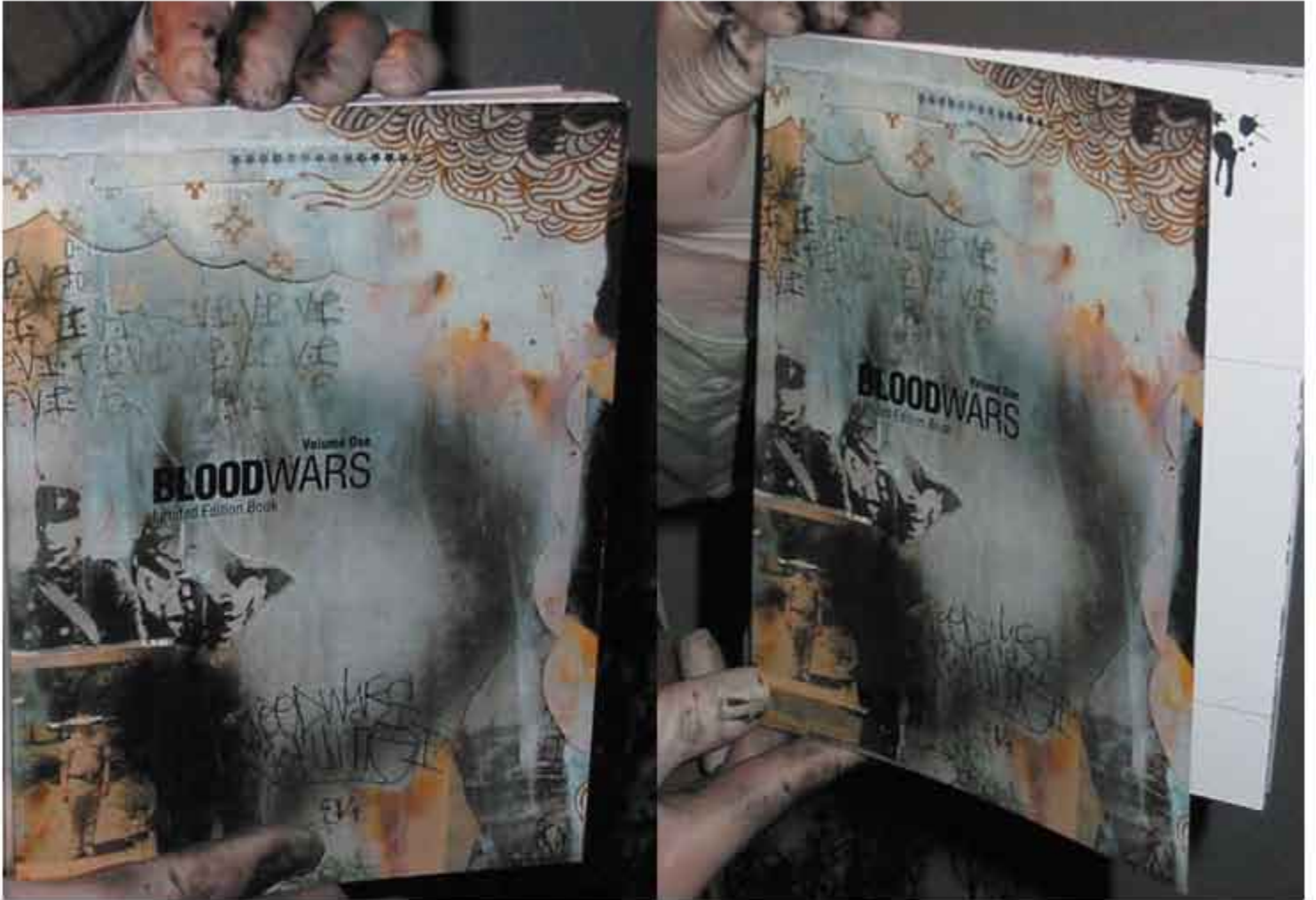
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