

Titled Drawings - Volume Two

- Characters -

19 drawings made long ago, now given names by my community.

Picking up where I left off at the end of volume one. My tendencies to fill sketchbooks with fun, odd, disturbing, lighthearted, weird created characters took on lives of their own. From imagination, and whatever fanciful direction the pens would wander. I was influenced by Leonardo da Vinci, and his enjoyment from sketching grotesque heads I would copy in formative art school years. Naturally all of the pop culture imagery I surrounded myself with plays a strong influential part.

These are some of my craziest character drawings. Fortunately I have a great community of creative wordsmiths! These are some that were named, framed, and now have homes. I started giving framed drawings away partially as a way for me to pay back for the generous donations I've received over these disabled years.

It's been an awful lot of fun — for everyone involved!



"Doc Dragon cleans up the town" 2002

titled by Sebastian Hyde

From a small Italian sketchbook with different colored pages. This ones yellow made the drawing really pop out. I have no idea of what I was thinking when making this, but I can tell it's a fun mood I must have been in! Seb's name for this simply clicked. I mean why the vacuum machine on

the sidewalk? Weirder things have spotted on the sidewalks of San Francisco. I probably saw one recently out there. Or maybe I was thinking about the mayoral campaign of Jello Biafra; keeping San Francisco streets clean — literally by vacuuming the sidewalk!



"The First And Last Time Olaf Allowed Beaky Burd To Choose What They Listened To On The Radio" 1998 - Title by Chandler White

Another created from pure whimsy. I would make these, turn the page to make something else, forgetting what was drawn before. It surprises me years later to rediscover what weird fun I had. In this case red ink through rapidograph pens. Chandler gave this a descriptive title, telling a story I was unaware of. Good collaboration!



"Vincent Price Stars in The Evil Jester of Mission Street" 1992

Title from Jim O'Hara

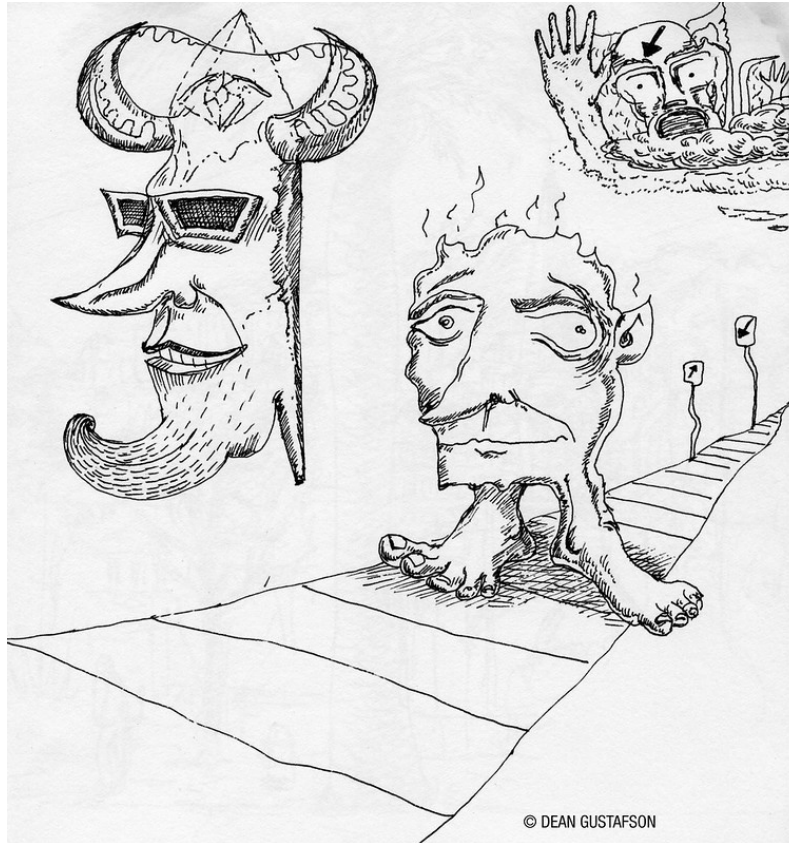
A sketch from a dream scenario, where big carnival heads on pedestals were seen in the Mission where I lived. Jim struck a chord as if it's a movie description. Dreams are kind of like movies. He got the location right, and they look like evil jesters. Vincent Price? Perfect for the role!



"The Trickster Deals Another Hand" 1991

title from Joe Muehleck

A sneaky looking character with an oddly proportioned hand offers a contract of questionable content. What the hell is that? Why? Who? Joe gave this a name with a few meanings. The trickster? Someone you could trust? Dealing another hand. That hand certainly looks like an other! I don't know if I had a specific story for this. Maybe I rejected a gallery contract? Favoring my creative freedom over contractual obligations? Doubt that because I was a starving artist in '91.



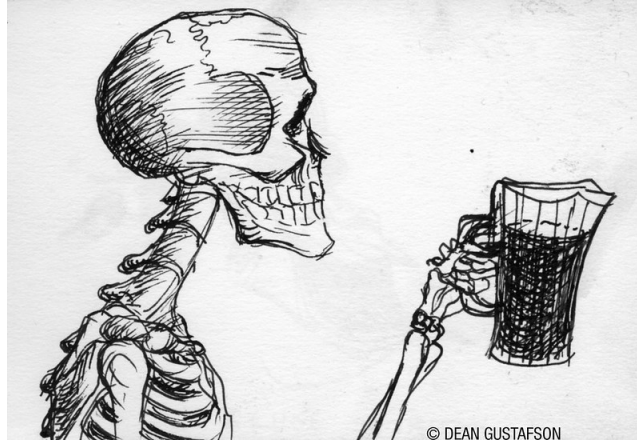
"Wrinkle and Frick : The Final Luchador Escape" 2005
title named by Lauryn Omer

I made this essay about weird character drawings, and this is a prime example. I love how Lauryn gave them names! I was most likely just having fun with pens, creating bizarre heads in unlikely scenarios.



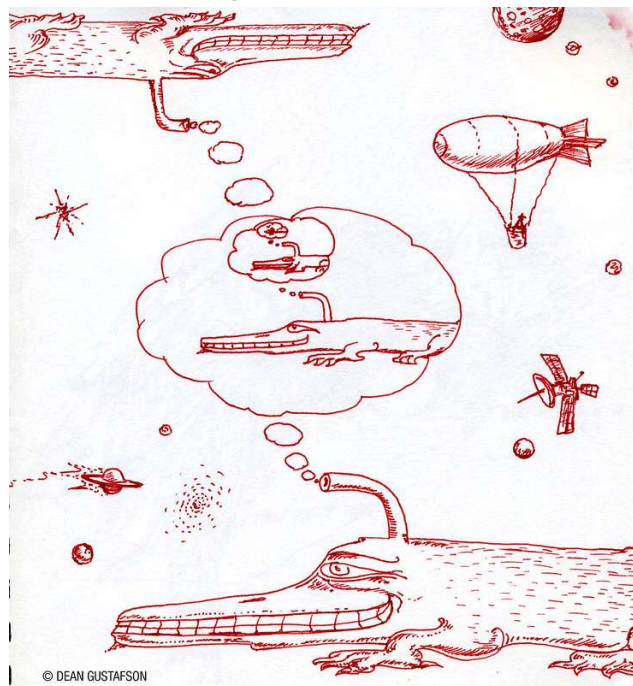
caption by Jon Alexandr

A drawing from 2005, and for this instance I asked for captions instead of titles. The word bubbles were already drawn in, and Jon filled them! Jon came up with a good little conversation between two weird characters, giving context to how they are depicted. You can tell I had fun making this, with fine lines. Looking like rapidographs again!



***"Anchor Steam For The Lucky Ones!"* 1988**
title by Pam Meier

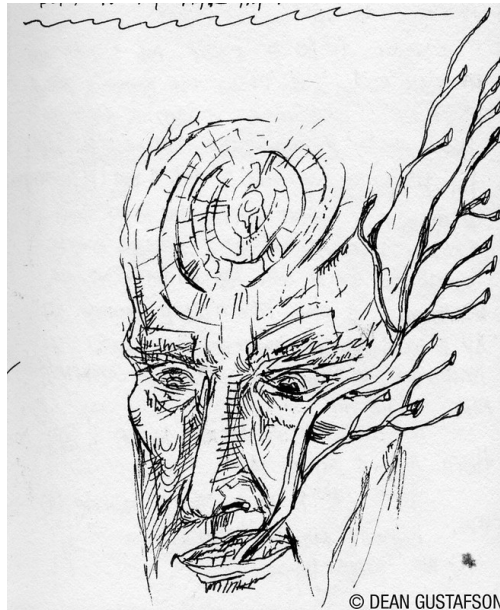
Looking more like a pitcher of Anchor Porter. This title references a phrase by brother Craig, and spread by Pam in letters and even had pressed into Minnesota State Fair coins! Whenever visiting me in San Francisco — home of Anchor brewery for decades — we'd inevitably end up in a local pub, hoisting *"Anchor Steam For The Lucky Ones!"* Now that Anchor Steam sadly ceased to be recently, it's fitting for a skeleton to serve up the last call of Anchor Steam... for The Lucky Ones!



***"I Spout; Therefore, I Am"* 2005**
titled from Jim O'hara

A self-referential Cartesian lizard repeats itself. What a good name from Jim

O. Again! I used rapidographs with the same red ink, again.



"His mind fluctuated as if lost in a wooden labyrinth of mindful contortion." 1994
titled by Lauryn and Seb

A good long name for this mysterious little drawing! This character looks like he's either eating or sprouting neurons.



"Starlings Mimicking Ronn for a Lark" 2009
title by Jojo Davis

The character here is friend and surrealist dada poet/collage artist /cultural scholar Ronn, I did a quick portrait of him in a pub, surrounded with

abstraction. Joanne gave an apt title, being sure to include his name!



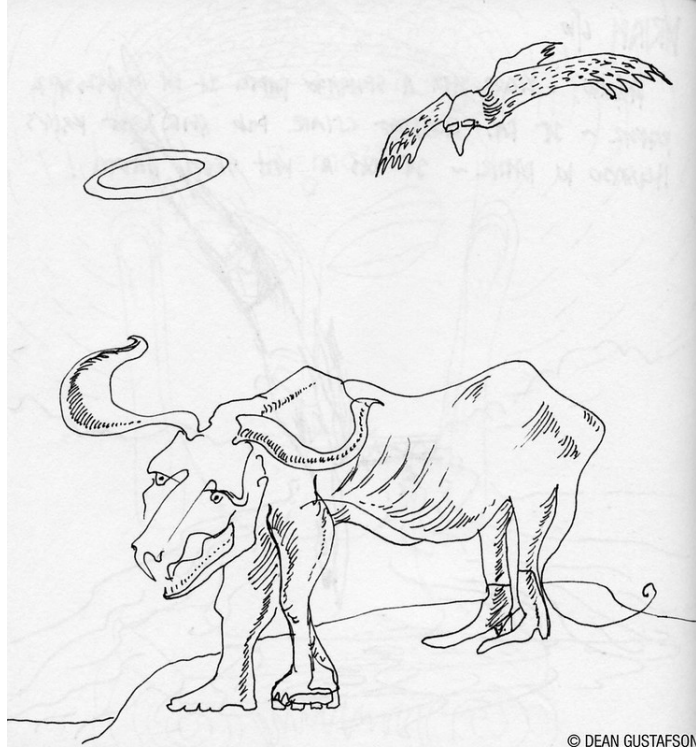
"Fear Ratchets Feeder" 1988
title from Steve Mobia

Exploring fear itself here in a flight of experimental fancy, just exploring expressions. The head seems lifeless as a scarecrow. Didn't work if so because the birds are not fleeing, but there are gun barrels pointed!



"Monsieur Pomme de Terre" 1992
Title from Jim Lauritzen

The name made me laugh! Such a good French sound to it, translated into Mr Potato! As in Mr potato head, especially after aging a few weeks!



"Home on the Strange" 1999

Tite from Geoffrey

Animal characters too! This bizarre ox has character for sure.
Geoffrey's name is just perfect for this.



"I Told You" 1991

Title from Floyd Flanagan

A resentful angry bird-headed humanoid? Was I feeling resentful? Or expressing the Gulf war brewing at the time? It's a good rendering of a difficult subject. The name suggests a vengeful character.



"Memory Lain, Hugh Headloss" 2005

Title from Bruce McKay

Bruce picked a song title from the early 70s progressive rock band **Caravan**. I love prog, and I know that group, just not that song. I thought it suits the drawing well!

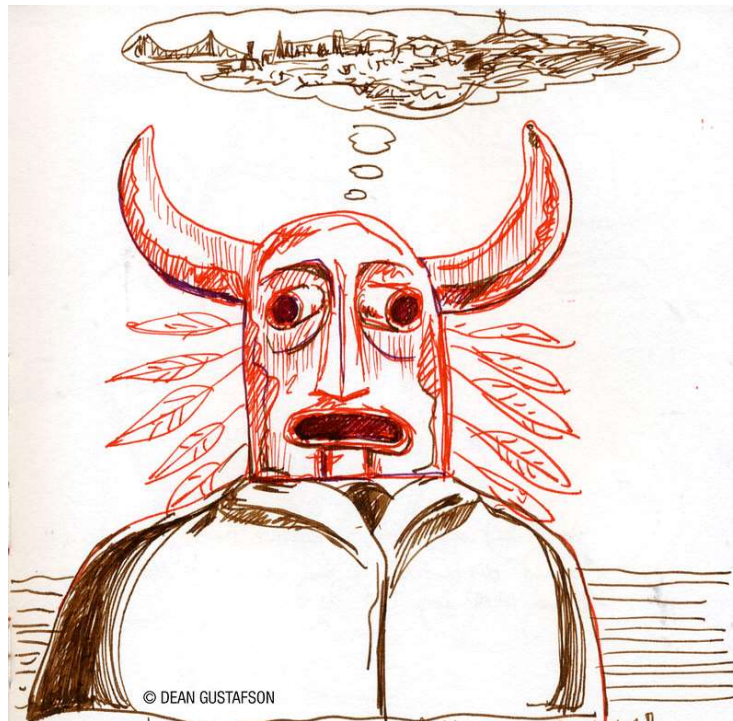
I might have been in a headless bad mood when drawing this. At least some kind of disgruntled expression resulted.



"Skull Lunch Plate Late Date Brain" 1991

Title from Chris Demonterey

Another disturbed image from 1991, a year I was fond of. So maybe the news we're in a war? Or just playing with expressing psychotic issues? Whatever the case, Chris conjured a damn good Dadaist title!



"I Left My Mind In San Francisco" 2013

Titled by Clover Austin

The character is a papier mache mask I made in 1991. It still exists at Seb's

house in Oakland. The sentiment caught by that title is a real one. That year I tried living back in the city, but was bopping from Oakland to Marin, Seattle and back. I felt ungrounded, though my teaching gig at the Academy got stronger as I turned 50. I longed for San Francisco that entire year. It wasn't until December that I found a place in the ideal location. That made 2014 my last decent year.



"Transmorphia Hysteria" 1996

Title from Cheryl Bales

Taking the cake for bizarre characters, this looks easily influenced by the drawings of Robyn Hitchcock. One of my very favorite songwriters /musicians /creative minds. The characters he draws and writes about are very far out!

I believe I must have been attempting to make something similar. I might have succeeded. Regardless, Cheryl made a good Latin inflected title. It makes sense, while not making sense. Know what I mean?

This is a good departure point after 19 drawings included here. Until volume three, which should be about abstractions. I have many more character drawings I didn't get to here, for volumes ahead!

- Dean Gustafson, July 2025