

Fine Arts at the The National Academy https:// Aleiansdreen.growing up I was not at all connected or even aware of visual trends or cool avant-garde design from Europe.

Then what got you interested in fine art at the time?

All I had were political manifestos and improvised graphics on the walls, which were all about socialism. I grew up between faded letters painted on the walls of houses with words having become invisible with time, the scrappy remains of old political posters of a forgotten revolution.

Until the age of 18, when I left Cuba for Argentina, I had nothing to do with graphic design or what is called advertising in the western world as there was no such thing in Cuba at all. No poster campaigns no press or TV ads, no radio ads, and of course there wasn't any internet – so no online ads either.

In Buenos Aires, I met I guy who ran an ad agenose alled Agulla y Baccetti. They made great ads in

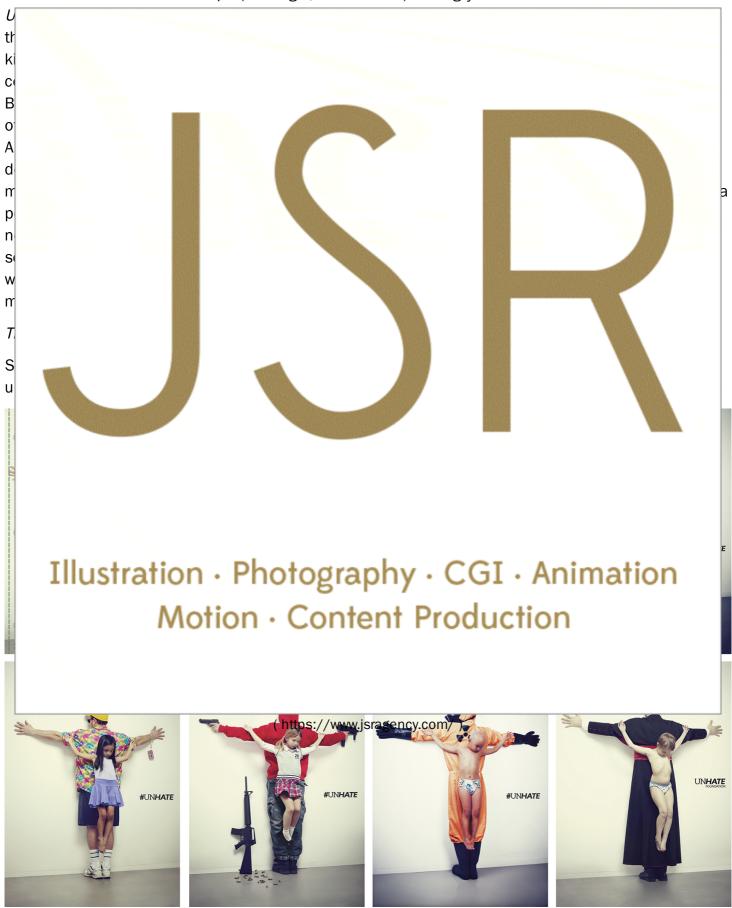


the world because they copy so much itthat/sometimescitonakes me go crazy. If curators and museums were calling me instead of calling the people who copied my work I would be one of the busiest artists around I guess. You can find my work in places like the Saatchi Gallery in London (Christ on the electricity pole) with a different artist's name attached to it. He just decided to photocopy my work and place it in the gallery. It is actually a piece of art I originally made back in 2007 in Cuba.

Another example is the "Black Pieta", which was exhibited in a gallery in Milan. I created that to show my support for migrants. But except for one detail, the piece was re-made some months ago by some other artist and gets exhibited under another name.

You can also find my work copied by others in hipster's music video clips, such as the one by Damian Marley's *Nail Pon Cross,* which is trying to look little bit rasta as his dad, the great Bob certainly was. No shame at all, but "Hey, that's my work there you're using!"

You know once I made the Pope (Ratzinger, notligations) so angry! I showed him in that Benetton



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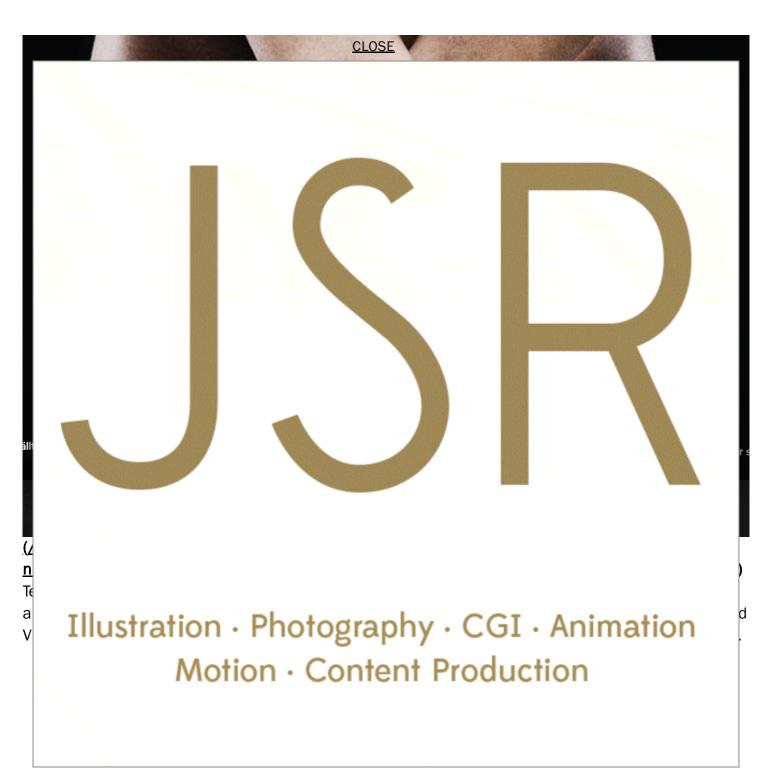




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