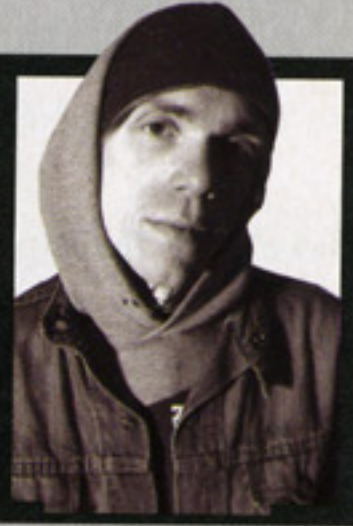


# GRAND DESIGNS

JACOB BANNON

**WORKED FOR:** Converge, Trap Them, Blacklisted, The Hope Conspiracy, As I Lay Dying, Modern Life Is War, Cave In, Cursed and more...



CONVERGE



When he's not working on music Jacob Bannon is locked away working on his art. ROCK SOUND thought it was time to find out how the highly respected man of all crafts fits everything in...

INTERVIEW: Joe Watson

**B**annon has cast the fine lines of artist, designer and writer aside in favour of being a 'life artist', where his many musical projects co-exist alongside his label, Deathwish Inc, and his incredible artwork, to produce a creative world that is free of limitations. His limited edition screen prints send hardcore nerds into rabid frenzies and bands all over the world want him to design their cover art. With the recent launch of his own personal website and the Converge tour just around the corner, it seems like the perfect time to find out about Jake's artistic outlook.

**JACOBANNON.COM RECENTLY WENT ONLINE, WAS IT A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE SIFTING THROUGH ALL OF YOUR OLD WORK AND SEEING HOW YOU'VE PROGRESSED AS AN ARTIST OR WAS IT A WEB DESIGNER'S NIGHTMARE DUE TO THE VOLUME OF MATERIAL?** "I didn't reflect on the work too much, but the process did bring to light just how much work I do on a yearly basis - the site contains less than 50 per cent of what I've worked on in the past. That was a pretty intense discovery for me. All in all, it was just a great experience to finally get some of it up there because I get a good deal of inquiries about my history in art / design / music, etc."

**ON THE SAME SUBJECT, IS THERE AN EARLY PIECE OF WORK THAT YOU WISH YOU COULD DO AGAIN?** "No. I look at all of my work as a forward movement. Some visually more successful than others of course, but it's all a process - it's not about one single project. For me, it's about a grand vision and the evolution of my own artistic / creative process."

**WITH EVERY CONVERGE RELEASE YOUR ACCOMPANYING ARTWORK IS ALMOST AS ANTICIPATED AS THE MUSIC; YOU'VE USED WORK BY DEREK HESS AND FLORIAN BERTMER IN THE PAST, BUT NOT RECENTLY. COULD YOU SEE ANYONE ELSE TAKING ON THE DUTIES IN THE FUTURE AND WHOM WOULD YOU FEEL SAFE HANDING IT DOWN TO?** "I've worked with a number of artists on the Converge visuals. The projects you mention above were all split releases. Visually, we felt that these records could break away slightly from the approach we've had with full-length albums. Bringing in friends / artists to collaborate with allowed us to do that. We still work with outside artists; Thom Hooper, Stephen O'Malley (Sunn O))), Aaron Horkey, Jef Whitehead and Dennis McNett, for example, have done some tour posters and apparel. Aaron Turner also played a large role in the early visuals for the band too."

**YOU APPEAR TO HAVE A GREAT LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING OF ART HISTORY, WHICH IS IMPORTANT. DO YOU THINK THAT**

**THE CURRENT WAVE OF DESIGNERS ARE NEGLECTING THE PAST MASTERS IN FAVOUR OF A COPY OF PHOTOSHOP AND A SET OF SPLATTER BRUSHES?** "Knowing the past is everything. It's sad that many forget that."

**DO YOU EVER REGRET SACRIFICING ALL OF YOUR TIME WITH DESIGN WORK, CONVERGE AND DEATHWISH INC, WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHER PEOPLE, OR IS A REGIMENTED NINE-TO-FIVE LIFESTYLE OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR YOU?** "I consider myself a 'life artist' as my work encompasses most of it. With that said, it's all about sacrifice in some way. Being involved in the independent music community has allowed me to progress as an artist / musician and I am forever grateful for that. It may take up much of my time as an individual, but it's also helped to define me and give me a sense of purpose. For me there's nothing to regret in that regard."

**IT'S SAFE TO SAY THAT YOU'RE A BIG INSPIRATION FOR A LOT OF ARTISTS. DO YOU FEEL FLATTERED OR ANGERED WHEN YOU SEE A PIECE OF WORK THAT IS OBVIOUSLY COPYING YOUR WORK OR STYLE?** "I do what I can to not pay attention to outside contemporary artists, especially those who emulate what I do. I can only say that I hope they find their own creative voice instead of emulating mine."

**THE COVER OF 'JANE DOE' HAS TO BE ONE OF THE MOST TALKED ABOUT HARDCORE COVERS OF THIS DECADE AND IT HAS SPAWNED HUNDREDS OF TATTOOS ON FANS. HOW DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL TO SEE SOMETHING THAT YOU'VE CREATED ON SOMEONE'S BODY?** "Each to their own. I'm genuinely appreciative of that kind of admiration."

**YOU PRIMARILY DESIGN FOR THE HEAVY MUSIC COMMUNITY. IS IT BECAUSE THAT WAS THE MUSIC THAT INSPIRED YOU WHEN YOU WERE FIRST STARTING OUT, OR IS IT BECAUSE NO OTHER MUSIC GENRE INSPIRES YOU TO CREATE THE KIND OF VISUALS YOU ARE RENOWNED FOR?** "I've done a great deal of work outside the aggressive music community, it's just that people only discuss what they immediately have knowledge of. These days I do less and less client work as I focus on my own fine art, as well as Converge and Deathwish Inc / Malfunction related projects. Though I enjoy the challenge of working for clients, I tend to get more satisfaction out of more personal visual work."

Catch Jacob on tour with Converge in July; see gig guide for dates. [www.jacobbannon.com](http://www.jacobbannon.com)

