

## Portrait of an Artist

# CHRIS BORS



Courtesy Photos

"Crumbsuckers," left, and "Murphy's Law," above, are two examples of the pop culture-inspired works by Chris Bors, who is having a solo exhibition at GoNorth in Beacon. Opening reception is Saturday, 6-9 p.m. Call 845-242-1951 or visit [www.gonorthgallery.com](http://www.gonorthgallery.com).

# Punk and pop mix together in edgy works

By **Barbara Gallo Farrell**  
Poughkeepsie Journal

Coloring books, vintage magazines and pop art act as inspiration for the bold, quirky work of artist Chris Bors, who has a solo exhibition of recent paintings at GoNorth in Beacon.

Don't be surprised if you see a reference to the menacing Daleks from the British science fiction show "Doctor Who" or the loveable extra-terrestrial from "E.T." rising from a patch of mushrooms and smoking a suspicious-looking substance in his paintings.

The titles of his works refer to New York's punk scene of the 1980-90s, likely gleaned from his experience writing about that genre of music for such publications as Thrasher and All That and attending hundreds of metal, hardcore and punk concerts since the age of 13.

Born in Ithaca, the thirtysomething artist makes his home and studio in New York City's Harlem. Here's what he had to say about his work and the Beacon exhibit.

**Tell us about your latest work in the exhibit "i against i" at Go North in Beacon.**

My paintings feature logos from

hardcore punk bands matched with icons of popular culture and other bold images. I combine found images from various sources including coloring books, Web sites, vintage magazines and assorted ephemera, while often incorporating splashes of color and abstract passages that activate the work and create a jarring juxtaposition. I'm also showing a digital C-print, "Hardcore Still Lives" (2008) made up of logos from hardcore bands that I copied from different Web sites and a video called "TV Party" (2008) featuring a collage of the opening credits from '70s and '80s television shows.

**How does your background/lifestyle contribute to your process as an artist?**

My background is more directly related to underground comics, music, writing and publishing than fine art. Growing up, I was always interested in underground culture whether it was in the form of fanzines, comics, music, animation or movies. I was also a big television watcher. My process is not always organic, it's more conceptual, and I have ideas about projects and images floating in my head

for many years before I put them in to practice.

**How has being a fan of punk, metal and hardcore music inspired your work? Are you a musician yourself?**

It has been a huge inspiration, both in terms of subject matter, style and attitude. I love the fact that most authentic hardcore bands are basically making the music they want to and are not trying to appeal to a larger, mainstream audience. I'm not a musician myself, but I hosted a radio show called "Twisted Melodies" on WJFF 90.5 in Jeffersonville (Sullivan County) and have written about music for publications such as Thrasher, All That and In Effect.

**How does your work resonate with viewers?**

People respond well to the work because it forces the viewer to take notice of it. It says, "Look at me, I want to be loved, hated or at least paid attention to." Some people relate extremely well or personally to the references and it makes them feel warm and fuzzy inside.

**What excites you about art — what keeps you interested?**

I'm excited it is constantly

changing. Just when the Chelsea area in Manhattan has reached a saturation point in terms of galleries, up pops a new scene on the Lower East Side. I like it when artists take risks and don't stick to a style or theme that has garnered a lot of attention or sales.

**What is the fictitious gallery, Triton Gallery, that you are the director of?**

It's a collaborative art project with my wife, the Greek-Cypriot painter Ketta Ioannidou. The address for the gallery is our apartment in Nicosia, Cyprus, and the gallery's phone number is Ketta's cell phone. We represent real artists who may choose to exhibit work that already exists or to create a new project that would be impossible to realize elsewhere.

**If we were to get a glimpse inside your journal or sketchbook, what would we see?**

Probably a lot of doodles that resemble the drawings of a middle school student. Pure id. Many of my projects get started with a quick scribble.

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