

C.O.P.

MARTHA COOPER
IS A TAG CONNOISSEUR

BRIDGE STEHLI
GRAFS ON GUYS

JEAN GRAE
HAS SUPER POWERS

THEBOOBS
DON'T GIVE A %\$&#
ABOUT YOUR IT BAG

INVINCIBLE • MIMI SCHOLZ • MOTEL 7 • GROWING UP IN LA WITH JERK
MUAY THAI CHAMPS • CHUBBY CHASERS • HORSERACING FOR GIRLS
THE SKANKS 'T' LADETTES BOARD GAME • HOW TO START YOUR OWN CULT





MIMI SCHOLZ



I started to work digitally when I got my first computer in 2001. I was studying traditional animation and I taught myself digital skills. The idea of a virtual room with endless possibilities fascinated me from the beginning and still does.

I'm learning more with every picture, which keeps me curious about what comes next. This is the motivation I need for my work. But the other thing for sure is that I've got the opportunity to change everything in the middle of my work every time, no other medium gives you so much flexibility. It's cool to use a medium of every day life in such a special way and to produce art with it.

Why do you think, even though your pictures are based around the female form, they're not really that girly? There's a big trend right now of wistful, floaty, dreamy-looking females but yours can be seen stomping through cities with laser beams shooting out of their eyes, and even the ones that are more 'feminine' look like nothing to fuck with. Is that because you are nothing to fuck with?

Haha, I really like this question! Seriously, no magazine has ever had the idea to ask me that before! Thankyou! In fact I am a very stubborn person with a big mouth and a bad temper and when I was a kid, my favourite word was *no!* People are a little disappointed when they first meet me as an artist because they expected an eccentric man-eater or women's libber. Or both—AND a super-vient! But I'm still quite a friendly person and pretty boring and I'm trying to keep my ass on a relaxed level, heheh. But, as you said, there is a big trend of drawing more harmless, big-eyed girl-types and it seems that most of these artists are young and female, but I am in my thirties and produce art for adults. Most of my stuff is dealing with female sexuality and I like to play with all the funny clichés—I don't take it too seriously. I still like Amazons more than nice girls, even in my circle of friends, but I like to deal with both extremes in my art. The women-types in my works may have a kind of unrealistic beauty and a smoothness but underneath there is always something disturbing, ridiculous, ugly or scary. This is what I want to tell stories about and I am trying to keep myself away from too many trends and stay away from too much art madness.



MEET MIMI SCHOLZ. FEISTY, FIERCE AND FUNNY, HER ULTRA-SLEEK FEMME FATALES CONCEAL SOMETHING WICKED LURKING JUST BELOW THE SURFACE. AS WE TALKED TO THIS SUPER CHILLED-OUT CHICK ABOUT TECHNIQUE, CLICHÉS AND BECOMING AN ARTIST, WE GOT THE FEELING THAT ALL THIS COMES TO HER MORE NATURALLY THAN MOST. I MEAN, CAN'T YOU TELL?

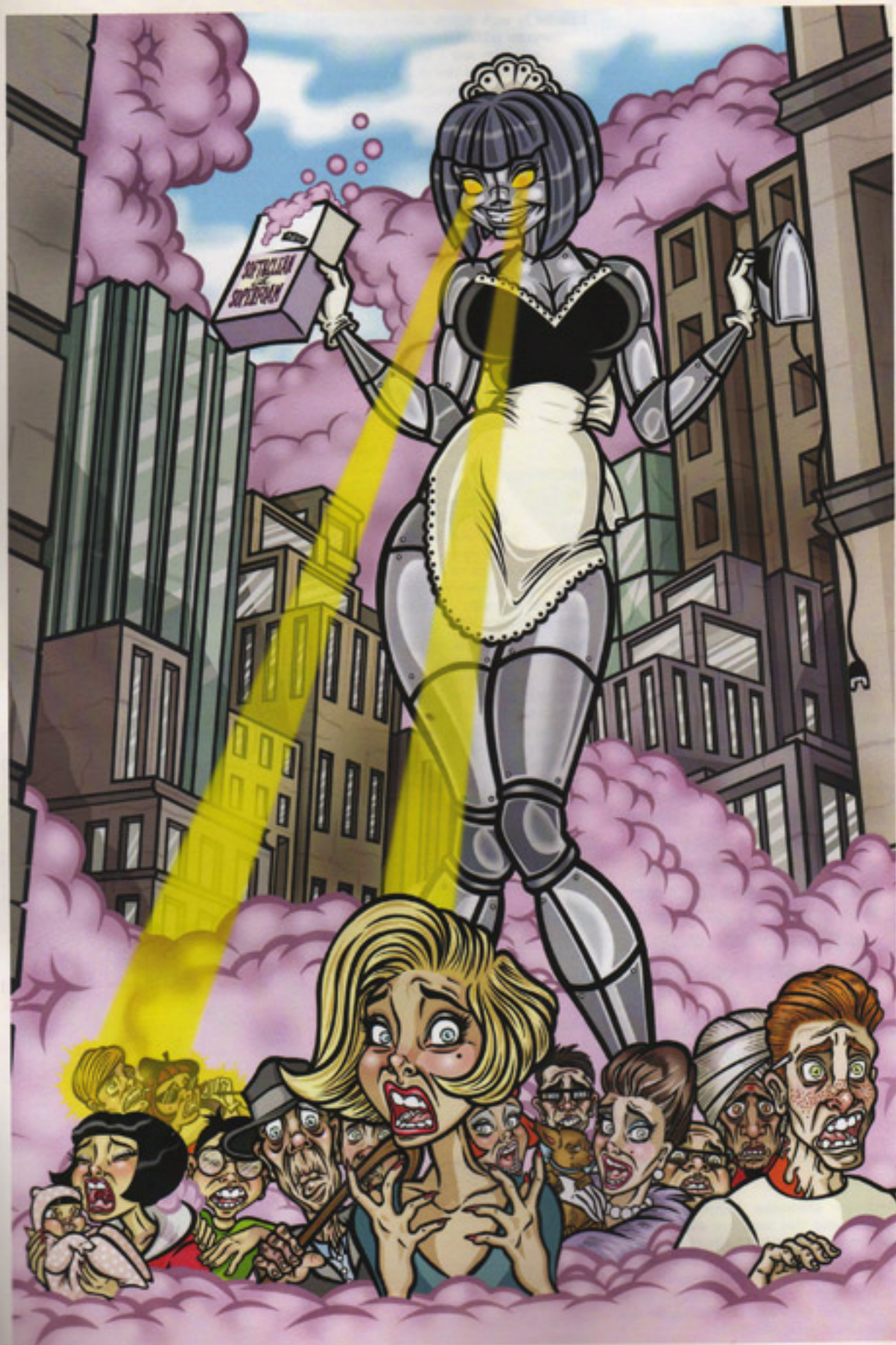
Were you always going to be an artist?

I started drawing in my early childhood, motivated by my beloved mother who was an artist herself... but I wanted to be a vet. I only thought about making money from drawing in my mid-twenties when I decided to study art and animation because I was fast losing interest in everything else. Drawing was the only thing that kept me interested.

Computer illustration technology hasn't been around that long, not even as long as spray. I feel like 'cause of the cost of a computer and the programs and then all the bullshit with trying to learn them—it's just really off-putting for a lot of people. When did you start working with a computer and what keeps you motivated?

I AM A VERY STUBBORN PERSON WITH A BIG MOUTH AND A BAD TEMPER AND WHEN I WAS A KID, MY FAVOURITE WORD WAS NO!





One of my favourites out of all of your artworks is the one with those two dogs by the fireplace. That one is incredible.

Yeah, although it's a few years old that's one of my favourites too. It's actually inspired by something really old and classical, quite heavy stuff. It's inspired by the classic German tale *Faust* ('Fist'), which was made famous in a play by Goethe. He's like the closest thing to a German Shakespeare I suppose you could say, and it's about a man who sold his soul to the devil for a lifetime of knowledge and worldly pleasure. Well I made my own little scene out of it with the very free interpretation of my favourite figures, Gretchen (the pure innocence) and Mephisto (the two-headed dog here, who came back as a black poodle in the original). They're sitting in front of the gates of hell, spiced up by a negligee and tiger slippers...

One of the defining factors you have in common with other C.O.P. feature artists is really, really strong technique. But it also means they're really hard to find. Why do you think that is? If I want to interview a guy with great technique, I think I could find five talented unknowns within the next half an hour.

That is an interesting question. I would even be interested in answering it myself one day, because it's something I still can't find a satisfying explanation for. As you say, there seems to be a larger market of good male artists and illustrators

and it's true, there really is. It can't have anything to do with gender, because I'm sure this has nothing to do with technical facility or talent, but the fact that there is a big mismatch I think has something to do with society and the media. It is just a guess, but I think most of the female artists are still cursed with that well-bred behaviour that society is expecting of us as women. While they're concentrated on us being nice or

beautiful in what we're doing, we're too shy, too moderate and too hesitant in getting our piece of the cake. Male artists just take it because they're more self-confident and they're used to it. Most of them don't give a shit what the public thinks of them, because they're not trained to please and that's what pleases the public—don't we just love a good provocateur!

Our world is flooded with artistic appeals that hit the eye in a good or bad way and it's mostly male art. I would love if more female artists would have the heart to touch on the kind of subjects that male artists seem to be working on as a matter of course. I know what I'm talking about when I maintain that most female artists seem to struggle between not being taken seriously because they're too harmless or being too aggressive and 'feminist'. So they're either floating on the river of constancy or are drowning in the masses.

How did you get to be so thorough, with every single aspect of your creations (still talking technique)—surely there must be some formal training in there? At what age

I STILL LIKE AMAZONS MORE THAN NICE GIRLS, EVEN IN MY CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, BUT I LIKE TO DEAL WITH BOTH EXTREMES IN MY ART.





Mimi S.

did you really feel like you'd 'hit your straps' and start getting offers of representation?

Most of my computer skills are self-taught and I really tortured myself to learn more in the last couple of years... I still do with every picture and it's getting more and more detailed. I learned a lot when I studied animation, like drawing figures in motion and how to create whole stories from beginning to end. I had anatomy lessons and figure drawing daily, that was definitely hardcore training and still is. From working in the animation business in my twenties, I kept the ability of keeping deadlines and to work efficiently by organizing my stuff even under time pressure. I made the big step into the art market when I met Yasha Young from Strychnin Gallery and that wasn't until the beginning of my thirties. I had no idea about the art business and didn't ever really want to until then. She encouraged me to show my stuff to the public and became my agent, then a very close friend and confidante and that's what I need for working. Strychnin Gallery do a lot more for their artists than is usual in the art world... if you're in, you're part of a family.

Last of all, may we know what's coming up for our new favourite 'Berliner'?

That sounds nice! I am going to marry my boyfriend next summer and there will be a lot of family activities this year. There are a few projects and exhibitions with Strychnin Gallery and I am working on my new series which deals with strange love, a series of paintings that has been haunting me for a while. I don't want to tell too much now, but get ready to be surprised!



THE BIG MISMATCH I THINK HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH SOCIETY AND THE MEDIA...FEMALE ARTISTS ARE STILL CURSED WITH THAT WELL-BRED BEHAVIOUR THAT SOCIETY IS EXPECTING OF US AS WOMEN.

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