

# GRAFFITI Bible

A COMPLETE GUIDE ON HOW TO DO GRAFFITI

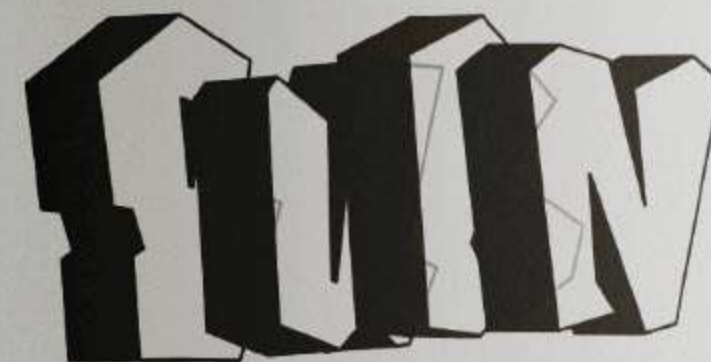
ESKE TOUBORG



6. When you get comfortable doing simple 3D letters, you can move on to add some complexity. This can be done by bending each letter in various ways, making the letters blend into each other, adding extra elements as arrows and broken pieces or most importantly eventually work with many more nuances of your letter fill-ins.



Same 3D piece made step by step on a wall



1. Make a simple 2D sketch with distance between the letters like step one on page 338).  
 2. Add a shadow going to the left to each letter. Combine the letters making them overlap a lot. In this example, the letters are transparent so it's easier to understand the principle.

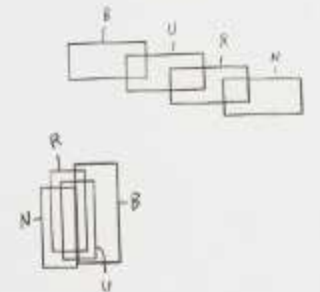


4. Now you have a piece, where it looks like each letter is on a different level - like a ladder. When you understand the principle of how to do this, you can go straight from making a sketch to step 5, when doing your shadows.



3. Now, cut the shadows with approximately the same distance to the outline on each letter. The places where the shadow doesn't touch the fill-in of the letter behind it, let the shadow run through.

The piece viewed from the top and side.



5. Now, imagine the piece is being lit from a lightsource. In this example it's directly from above. Paint the lightest color where the light hits the most, here it's on the top.  
 6. Fill-in the letters with the middle nuance  
 7. Fill-in the shadow with the dark color, the places where

the light hits a bit less.  
 8. End off by painting the darkest colors the places, where the light hits the least.



# How To: Pieces

## UNDERSTANDING A PIECE

A piece, short for masterpiece, is a graffiti writer's ONE made with complicated and colorful letters. A piece is where the writer's style shines through. It's more time consuming than a throw up due to the higher level of details in the letters such as arrows, cracks, blocks, cuts and wild color combinations. A well executed piece gives more respect from other writers and is considered something experienced writers do.

Before you start making your own pieces, grab a graffiti magazine and copy as many pieces as you can. By copying the work of other's you get to practice drawing graffiti pieces and letter structure without having the pressure of having to make something from scratch yourself. When you copy the work of other's, be sure not to take credit for it. It should be for the mere purpose to practice. If you claim that it's your own work it would be called biting.

## TIP

→ Build graffiti pieces letters with the log rule in mind, just like when making throw up letters!



## EXERCISE

→ Copy down 5 pieces from other writers.





# BATES

You started painting graffiti. How come? I started early on as a 13-14 year old, in 1984. You must bear in mind, that when you are that age, everything leaves a huge impression on you. Also, not much graffiti existed before this time – we were a part of accelerating it. Really, it was a whole new and exciting thing, and then it came along with the hip-hop-culture. I started dancing electric boogie, before I started painting graffiti, and actually the first piece I did was with my mum at some factory in the middle of the day. In the local paint store my mum had bought spray cans for me, because I just wanted to try that thing out. She was supportive about everything, that I did and was interested: "Then let's go out painting!". She jumped into a suit and helped me do it, and then I was all set. Although I didn't know how to fill out nor use the space – I have seen some pictures of the first piece (laughs). My second piece was made in my local youth club, and the piece was published in Dandy's Bubblegum in 1985, so I got a very GREAT start. My local youth club, "Thomas P. Hjele ungdomsklub" at Nørreport station, actually sued Dandy, because it was a piece, I made outside, in front of the club, and they had just photographed and used all the photos. So our boss wrote them, that they were not allowed to do that without asking for permission. I think, we got 340 euros or something like it in compensation, and we were also gifted with a whole package of

chewing gum. I thought "Shit. This graffiti is just the wildest thing ever!" Having 340 euros and chewing gum as a 13-year old (laughs). Everyone in the class were given these chewing gums, and the stickers inside got on bags and tables and so on. It was the wildest thing. I got a legal job at the local library with an access to 200 cans. We almost didn't use 50 cans for something like this. So one night I asked my mum to arrive with a suitcase, and then I simply filled half a suitcase with cans and threw it right out of the window for her to bring it back home. So then I had 150 cans, and I started painting with my mentor REZQ.

What tag did you write for the first years? Well, I had a bunch of different names. As one of the first names was SHAKY and WHYZ, and the most famous one of them was SAL42. It was published in Danish Wildstyle book as well. I think back then, it was about making some cool letters. You didn't know, that the word itself needed to have some punch in order to be good!

Where did you grow up? Hellerup, a suburb near Copenhagen. We went to Thomas Bahailey at Nørreport, which was the hotspot for hip hop at that time. It was all nuts. I had a really good start, and I believe, I had the right tools for starting up. Already in '86 I was in Malmo to paint, and



The Graffiti Bible

in '87 in Stockholm, and in '86 I met GREAT for instance, who became my partner for many years. So, I have a very good foundation. Along with that, I have travelled very much and with that many doors open. You meet all sorts of cultures and all kind of people, who become important later on in life. Then, it's this guy you talk to if you are traveling New York or Brazil or attending a jam in Germany or distributing cans in Belgium or Spain, and all that networking helps a lot. So what goes around comes around.

Who had style, when you started? Who inspired you?

SMAK, GANGWAY, KYLE, FREEZ, FUSE, SMURF, APACHE, JAP, SIDE, RZEN, ROMANCE and the international invasion of SHOE, JOKER, BANDO and DELTA from Holland for sure. When they came, everything changed. They had visitors coming from New York City early on because of the exhibitions in 1983 at Yaki Kornblit Gallery in Amsterdam showcasing: DONDI, LEE, BLADE, FUTURA, QUIK, SEEN, DAZE, NOCI167, RAMMELLZEE, ZEPHYR, CRASH, BILL BLAST. They had visited Amsterdam in '82, '83 and '84 and made exhibitions there. So the local youths and hang outs joined these exhibitions and met the New Yorkers, who they brought with them – something one had not seen or heard about. Previous to these important shows in Amsterdam, they had their own Dutch graffiti punk scene, you know, with slang and punk logos and all that stuff, and they (New Yorkers) showed Europe the true hardcore letter based style-writing graffiti with characters such as b-boys. After the Dutch invasion in Copenhagen by their visit in 1986, the Dutch/Paris writers showed us that graffiti could be technical, could be tiny, more aggressive or style oriented. They used special caps and the pieces were not bigger than 1 x 0,5 meters and they made silver

pieces, and nobody made silver pieces in '86. So this completely changed the "Danish" style.

How could you sense, that it influenced your style?

You experimented a lot more because suddenly now, it was something completely else. Now it was about the technique, and that you could do something to the spray actually. That you could turn the can around and take off the pressure. That you would put another cap on top of a standard cap. The first 3 years we used to spray with standard caps. It was completely nuts. The first years from '86 to '87 was one big mess. Everybody experimented and painted by using weird colors and made FUTURA 2000 fill-ins and outline with a fading.

When do you go to New York the first time?

I got there first time in '93 or something like it. So it was quite late for me coming over there. Already back then, I had travelled a lot in Europe, so mainly it was about coming back to, where it started, see for myself where it all came from. I had also met some of the New Yorkers earlier on in my life. Back in '91 I already met WANE in München and POEM, who also came from New York. They made the graffiti magazine Flashback, and WANE was someone, who travelled a lot. So he would be our first connection to New York. I remember in 1991, we did a huge wall in Næstved dedicated to WANE with CMPONE, MESK, RAIDE, JAME and many more.

When do you start writing BATES?

I do that in '86. Actually I am writing SIMS in '86, and from then on I change to BATES, because I watch this science fiction series called "V for Victory" which is a true '80 science fiction with UFO's and monsters and everything, and in there, one of the character's name is









1997 MADC  
BAUTZEN (GER)



1999 MADC  
MUNICH (GER)



2000 MADC  
BAUTZEN (GER)

# 1997

1998 MADC  
NEUKIRCH (GER)



1999 MADC  
CHEMNITZ (GER)



2001 MADC  
DRESDEN (GER)



2005 MADC  
NEW YORK  
(US)



2005 MADC  
"THE MATRIX"



2008 MADC & KLARK KENT  
"GHOSTRIDER"

2008 MADC, DARE  
LEIPZIG (GER)

2007 MADC  
(GER)



2008 DARE, MADC,  
DERS  
WEIL (GER)





# Modern Old School

## NEW LOOK OLD TECHNIQUES

When you see old school style pieces today, many of the old characteristics still remain, but some new style elements have found their way into the style making it more modern. This is what I call Modern old school style and here you can see my take on such a piece. See if you can spot the old school elements between the new ones.



## EXERCISE

→ Make your own version of a modern old school piece.





NYCHOS INDEX PAGE



FAVOURITE COLOR COMBINATION



INSTAGRAM @NYCHOS  
COUNTRY Austria, second residence California  
ACTIVE SINCE 1999  
CREWS The Weird, Jukebox Cowboys, LORDS

NYCHOS TAG

FAVOURITE CAPS

Astro fat cap cap



FAVOURITE LETTER



EXERCISE

Fill in this sketch by NYCHOS directly in this book and post it on instagram with #GraffitiBiblesketch





# Fill-in Pieces

## SAME LETTER DIFFERENT ATTITUDES

Fill-ins are a huge part of making graffiti pieces, to say the least, and is something that is part of defining your style and you as a graffiti writer. A great fill-in, is often the key to transforming a mediocre piece to a real burner. If you keep finding yourself making the same fill-ins, here are some examples you can use as inspiration.





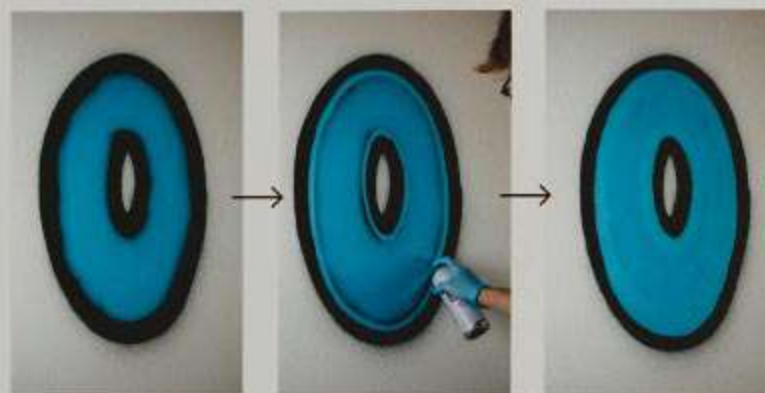
# Cutback

## PRECISION IS KEY

Making cutbacks, or cutting lines, as it's also called, is one of the most important skills to master, if you want to become a great graffiti writer. Most newly started graffiti writers find their outlines and detail lines to be very dusted in the first many pieces they do, which can be frustrating. When you become good at making cutbacks, you will definitely find your skill level to rise exponentially, so it's easy to say, that this is something, you should practice a lot.

## TIP

→ Cutting outlines in fill-ins, where you have faded between colors, is difficult, because you can see, where you have cut the lines afterwards.



When making cutbacks in circles or rounded shapes, do it in one go!

## EXERCISE

→ Make a letter with a dusty line as you can practice your cut backs. Take before and after photos.



Letter where the outline hasn't been cut.



Take the fill-in color and draw a hard line up to the outline. This is done in a fast movement with a skinny cap to get the best result. Have the can close to the wall, stay grounded firm on your feet and keep the movement in your body and arms (not in your wrists!) to get the best result.



Paint over the rest of the outline color with the fill-in color and your cut is done.



Letter where the outline has been cut



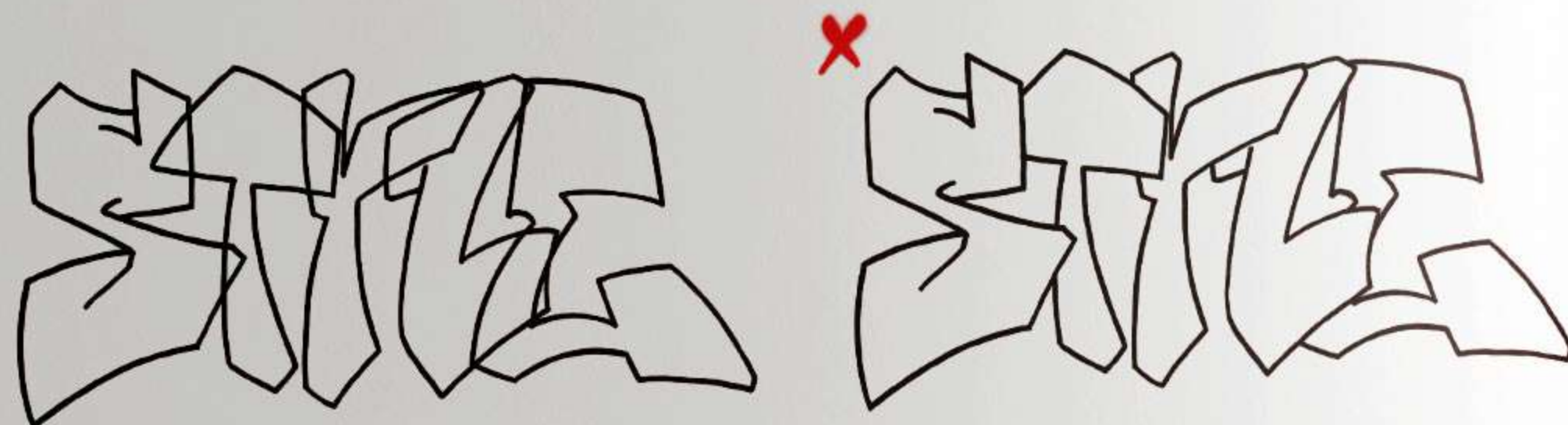
### MAKE YOUR OWN PIECE

When starting to make your own pieces from scratch, create each letter separately before combining them. Add the same style to each letter so the overall style of the upcoming piece is coherent. You want to avoid making one letter only with round shapes and then the next only with hard edges. The higher pursuit is to combine different styles so they compliment each other, but be careful not to overdo it in the beginning – less is more.

When each one of your letters are made, combine them into one piece. Turn, twist and make them overlap each other, so they become one whole in the best possible way. After you have combined them, you can add extra details to fill in the negative space such as drips, blocks, cracks and shadows. We will look more into this in chapter 6 and 7.



† The round-shaped Y doesn't go with hard-edged letters – always try to follow the same style throughout your sketch!



† When you've created all your letters, combine them into one piece. Turn, twist and make them overlap each other until they fit together in the best possible way.

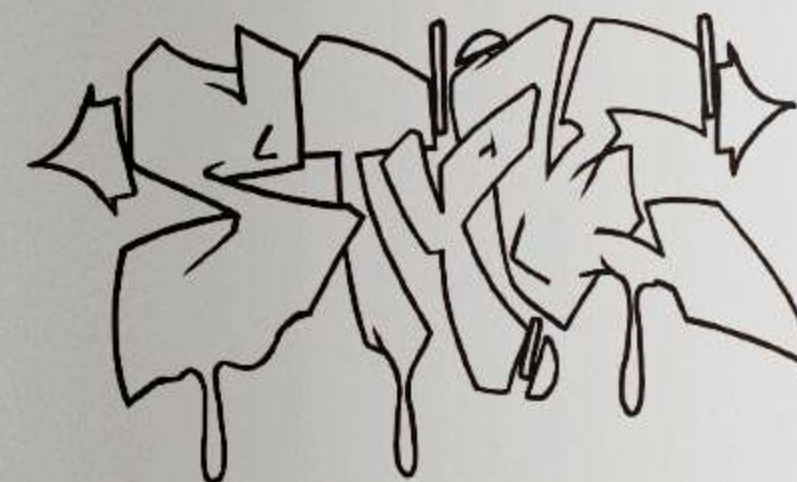
† Letters combined without connecting the piece hides key areas (see page 178).



† Combined letters connect the piece.



† Erase some of the overlapping lines without erasing the key areas of each letter.



† When the letters have been combined, add extra details such as drips, blocks and shadows to fill in the negative space.

