

An artist's statement

- (1) One must observe in nature the cocks, the buns, and the tits.**
- (2) My ambition is to re-do Tom of Finland from nature.**
- (3) I wish to make of hot porn something as solid and lasting as the art of the museums.**

The above parodies on the off-quoted dictums of Paul Cezanne probably result from too many hours spent in art history classrooms, plus a natural penchant for tongue-in-cheek. None-the-less, they're not too far off, when I really sit down and think of what my drawings mean to me.

Starting with the first declaration: of all the things in nature that I like to observe, muscles, dicks, and various other male anatomical features have certainly always held first place. Discovering these wonderful things lurking beneath the work-clothes of the iron-miners and dairy-farmers of my native Minnesota was one of my special teen-age thrills. This set up, I suppose, my adult leatherboot-jeans-flannel-uniform-overshoe-overall-undershirt-etc. fetishes which I now get special thrills out of working out in my drawings.

The drawings began in my teen-age years as strictly private enhancers of erotic fantasy episodes. Jerk-off material, in other words. They strayed on that secret level for years, while I found reasons to travel a lot, work at a lot of different jobs, and pursue a career as a painter. The travelling (from Oregon to North Carolina, from Vermont to New Mexico) and the odd jobs (from lumber-jacking to bussing dishes, from driving taxi to teaching) were intentional efforts to gain as wide a range of experience as possible.

I firmly believed that an artist can only paint or draw that which he knows well. This pursuit of visual data has proved to be as pleasurable as it has been educational.

At some point I discovered the drawings of the great Tom of Finland. It seemed remarkable that another artist was recording the same mountainous shoulders, the same tight, rough buns, the same rock-solid jaws that I was. Could this be a universal ideal? After seeing this same perfect man again and again in the drawings of innumerable other (and often lesser) gay artists as well, the ideal began to lose his special appeal to me. Then

came the realization that this universal beauty was only rarely the guy in the bar that I wanted to go home with. The really hot turn-on was more often someone quite unique. Thus the second ambition: to capture in ink that intangible and individual male sexuality that is different in every encounter. If I could master that, I figured, maybe I could someday match what Tom had accomplished - not with the man-of-our-fantasies, so much, as with the men-of-our-realities.

Sometime later came the next big revelation: that drawing the American Male was really far more vital, personal and important to me than painting the American Scene, as I was doing professionally. Putting all of my creative impetus into the pornography launched it into the product that I'm now ready to exhibit. Throwing a little form and technique into these hot scenes has simply added another turn-on or two to me. Nothing has been compromised. I'm having a good time on many levels when I do the drawings, and, if they do what they're supposed to do, they'll bring a good time on any or all of those levels to those who view them.

"Hero worship hit me early, probably inspired first by my uncle, a power company lineman, whose heavy work gear got pretty closely associated in my mind with the rugged work he did and his bravery in the face of danger. Putting it down on paper became one of my main goals in life - and I'm still working at it."

With the coming of puberty these drawings became devices that prolonged and heightened long jerk-off sessions. The soldiers, miners, farmers and linemen ("with a few cops and Nazis thrown in," he says) were Domino's purely fantasy partners for a while until one hot summer afternoon, he remembers, "when my uncle took me along with him on a fairly routine job to treat me to the firsthand experience of helping him work. That wasn't the only treat I got that day. My uncle, a rough dark, built-like-a-brick-shithouse half-breed (Norwegian and Chippewa), apparently caught on to my turn-on which I had been valiantly struggling to keep hidden all day. When the job was over, and only the two of us were left in the company pick-up truck, he started provoking me with sly innuendos, and a lot of crotch-squeezing until he had me really wildly horny. He suddenly asked why I was blushing, put my hand on that wonderful bulge in his Levi's and my life was changed from that moment on! He was one hell of a teacher."

Right away, the drawings took a big leap forward in the authenticity of their detail and the intensity of their mood and action, he reports, and it was evident that a lot more first-hand research was needed - and wanted. An outdoor john in a local park served as a locale for further investigation into those tantalizing lumps in the soldiers' uniforms - as well as "what to do at a glory hole," he says.

After high school the wanderlust hit, and he spent a number of years gathering first-hand experiences and collecting visual data to use in his drawings. He traveled over much of the country, usually "on my thumb, which added a real taste for the bizarre."

Strong among the store-house of memories collected during these years are recollections of the lumberjacks he worked with in a logging camp near Mount Ranier in Washington. "They gave us great little twoman bunkhouses to sleep in, and we only got into town one weekend a month. Those loggers got pretty horny in the meantime and some wild scenes went on in the bunkhouses before the 5 o'clock morning whistle sent us out into the woods."

Working as a highway-construction surveyor in Minnesota added more material, as did driving a cab in Chicago ("lots of weirdoes when you work the graveyard shift, boy!"), surveying, again, for the Forestry Department in New Mexico ("no bosses to watch over you when you're high up in the Jimenez Mountains alone with a work-buddy whose cock never goes down") and doing a stint in the Navy on the eastern seaboard ("how about hour after idle hour in drydock with nothing else to do but hide out in one of the many unused heads with a huge, humpy Dago bunk-mate?..").

Some formal training and a growing career as an artist eventually brought Domino to New York City where he now lives and continues his "research."

"Currently, I'm trying to instill in my memory the face and greasy work clothes the manager of a certain New Jersey Amoco station. I'm determined to get him alone one of these days, so that I can memorize the rest of him."

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