

# EXCERPTS FROM CROSSED PATHS

Panda Man

## CROSSED PATHS

DESPERATION SQUAD  
AND THE AGE OF FORTUITISM

KEVIN AUSMUS

*Crossed Paths: Desperation Squad and the Age of Fortuitism* by Kevin Ausmus

ISBN: 978-1-938349-14-0

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015935950

Copyright © 2015 Kevin Ausmus

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>.

The views and opinions expressed in this book are based on the recollections and views of the author. The manufacture and presentation of this book does not warrant the accuracy, reliability, currency, or completeness of those views or statements. No liability whatsoever is assumed arising from any reliance on the views, statements and subject matter of this book.

#### *Front Cover*

- *top photo of Mr. P at the Wckr Spgt tribute show 2010 by Andy Whitson*
- *untitled painting by Bob Jones, 74 by 33 in., acrylic on found panel, 2014*
- *SX70 photo from Arts Building, 1984, photo by Art DiLion*
- *Panda Man photo by Dylan Skrab, manipulation by Kevin Ausmus*

#### *Back Cover*

- *SX70 photo of Mr. P at the PVA by Dave Alvin, 1986*

Photo of Courtney Love © Bob Gruen / [www.bobgruen.com](http://www.bobgruen.com)

*Layout and design by Mark Givens*

For information: Pelekinesis, 112 Harvard Ave #65, Claremont, CA 91711  
First Pelekinesis Printing 2015



One night in late fall 1986, Mark Givens took Mr. P over to his parent's house in Claremont and, as they stood in the garage, gave him a present, something given to him by Bob Fritz, something Mr. P could use on stage: a handcrafted Panda mask. Mr. P thanked Mark for the wonderful gift and tried it on. It was an odd fit. It was made of heavy fabric, with no air holes for the nose, just a large opening at the mouth. Wearing it for more than five minutes would be next to impossible because of the

discomfort. Yet, the mask was adorable. It could and would be incorporated into the act in some fashion.

Panda Man was born.





# PANDA MAN



If there is one universal image of Desperation Squad, it is Panda Man. Panda Man at the Limbo Lounge. Panda Man at the Green Door. Panda Man at the Wash. Panda Man on the steps of City Hall on Election Night. Panda Man on the Warped Tour. Panda Man at the Fillmore. Panda Man cavorting with Regis Philbin. Panda Man shaking his butt at Comic-Con. Naked Panda Man on the pages of the Los Angeles Weekly.

Panda Man was not around during the Arts Building days, true. And the idea of an iconic Panda Man took a while to develop. But the moment Mr. P put the mask on, he was no longer Mr. P, he was Panda Man, and Desperation Squad fans loved Panda Man.

The Panda “head” became the band’s logo, also created by Givens, and among the rare collectibles in the D-Squad universe are the Panda t-shirts made for the “Hot Diggitty Dogs” roll out.

There are two Panda masks. The original was used until 2001, when a newer, sturdier mask was taken on the Warped Tour (the original was in fragile shape and Mr. P was convinced that it would get lost forever on the road). The Warped Tour also saw a “junior” Panda mask for the crotch.

For 30 years Panda Man has been Desperation Squad’s mascot and best known figure. Long live Panda Man!



CROSSED PATHS

# CROSSED PATHS

DESPERATION SQUAD AND THE  
AGE OF FORTUITISM

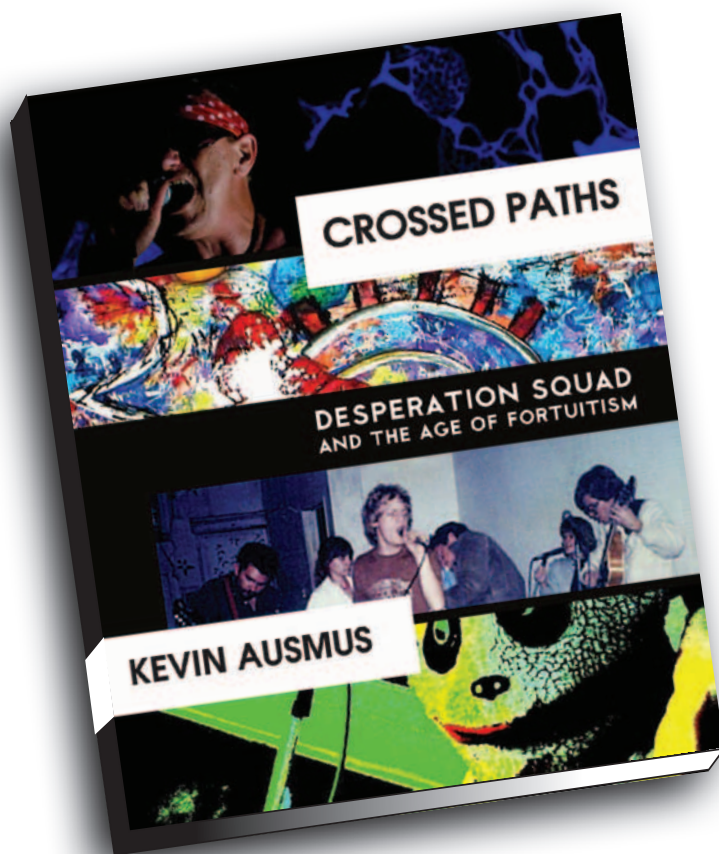
Art Show Opening

May 9, 2015

7pm

A landmark event documenting and exploring a slice of the underground art and music scene in the Pomona Valley, beginning in the early 1980s and moving into the 21st Century with a particular focus on The Desperation Squad.

Highlights include stories from The Warped Tour, America's Got Talent, and Mr. P's run for mayor of Pomona (the "Rock and Roll Mayor"). The show will feature photographs, flyers, music, handwritten lyric sheets, and plenty of legendary tales.



**Space Gallery**

250 West Second Street

Pomona, CA 91766

AND LOOK FOR  
THE BOOK FROM

**Pelekinesis**  
www.pelekinesis.com





## What is Fortuitism?

The lines that are drawn upon the globe, the signals zipping around from one node to another, the paths that cross every day, the people we meet, and the sounds we hear - these are pieces of the world we live in, the world we embrace, and the decisions we make. How we interact with the pieces—which pieces we touch, which pieces touch us—determines how we see ourselves moving through life. Some decisions are out of our control. Some decisions are the lesser of two evils. How we use the results of these decisions are ours, and interact to shape who we are and how we live.

Fortuitism allows for a certain amount of serendipity and spontaneity to enter the art we create. The decisions we make are the signposts along the path.

Fortuitism is a different way to tell a story. Create art, save things, find a venue. You need not be famous or even enduring. Rock and roll is everyone's story. If you are fortuitous enough, you can tell your story in a way that makes it great art as well.