

## Nashville Scene

# Renowned printmaker Michael Krueger discusses his *Full Metal Journals* and upcoming visit to the Nashville Print Revival

Iron Man

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February 20, 2014

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The Nashville Print Revival, a citywide printmaking symposium comprising events, workshops and exhibitions throughout Nashville, is structured to reflect the printmaking ethos: to be hands-on, collaborative and as inclusive as possible. The second annual event will take place this weekend. Along with portfolio exchanges and a culminating party at Barista Parlor where printmakers from all over the region will gather to sell their best wares, a handful of visiting artists will lead artist talks at local universities. Michael Krueger, who has been teaching printmaking at the University of Kansas for 20 years, is among them.

Krueger's familiarity with Nashville runs deeper than just this weekend, however. "I used to show at TAG gallery, when it was still around," Krueger tells me over the phone from his home in Lawrence, Kan. But since Mark Hosford began teaching printmaking at Vanderbilt, Krueger had an additional impetus for coming to town. "Mark was one of my first students, back when I first started teaching," Krueger says, before joking about how Hosford had set the bar pretty high for all the students who came after him. It makes sense, then, that Hosford would invite his former teacher to participate in the Print Revival, communing with the student body who look to Hosford in much the same way as he viewed Krueger all those years back. It's like an artistic game of telephone, where influences are tunneled through years of classwork and external input, coming out the other side as something completely new, but with the same supportive frame.

That kind of communal activity is something Krueger is deeply familiar with. "We'll be printing together, and the students are helping. I do a lot of this kind of thing, and I see it as an opportunity to teach and engage with the class in a different kind of way — as an outsider who can really come share what I do with them."

But Krueger's interest in communing with other artists has roots even deeper than that.

In 2007 Krueger started *Full Metal Journals*, a series of prints based on notebooks from his youth, which he stumbled on while visiting his mother in South Dakota. "They were just filled with these doodlings of heavy metal imagery and stuff that I was into at the time, but also in the notes there was stuff I was learning in school.

"When I was in high school it was the wake of the Vietnam War, and I had uncles that were in the war, and so I started re-examining that. So what I ended up doing was taking my original notebooks and scanning them and reproducing them on a high-end digital printer, and then creating new images to put on top of them."

The results are some of Krueger's most interesting works, filled with the codes of heavy metal imagery — Led Zeppelin symbology and sketches of Flying V guitars that are so on-the-nose they seem to be fabricated by someone well aware of their significance to that specific time, like a props designer for *Dazed and Confused*. But Krueger has enlarged the original pages to four times their original size, and on those sheets he's printed new imagery that turn the originals into nostalgic fables: a hand reaches for a satanic Black Sabbath crucifix inside a churning Raymond Pettibon sea, and a defiant toucan chirps, "So What," over an old detention slip.

"In a sense," Krueger explains, "I was sort of collaborating with my past self." Now *that's* heavy.

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MICHAEL KRUEGER



#### Nashville Print Revival

Feb. 17–22 at various locations.

For a schedule of events, go to [nashvilleprintrevival.com](http://nashvilleprintrevival.com).

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