



Interview by Ash Davies

So, who is Crossed sickles? Since there is not much information available about you online or anywhere really.

Well first of all I want to say thank you so much to let me be a part of your extraordinary publishing books of art. I'm very happy for this collaboration to happen! So my name is Frankie Ferreira, I was born in Portugal in the year of 1988, I'm a illustrator and painter.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in a very small rural village in the "Beira Litoral" of Portugal called Arada. Where most large part of the people are farmers and factories working class. Mostly farmers, agriculture is the essential subsistence, there are alot of farmers of corn, potatoes, beans many other vegetables to sell on the markets.

Recalling in the old times there were donkeys, cows and oxen carts passing by. Is now an extinct Portuguese parish, in 2013 as part of a national administrative reform, having been aggregate to the parishes of the city Ovar. It had a total population of 1,525 in 1864 to grow slowly to have 3,318 people nowadays, just for you see how small.

Have you always made art?

Yes and no. When I was probably 12/13 years I started to go after school, help working with my father at is job at recycling paper and plastic to factories and that also included truck transportation. It was dirty, smelly and heavy job but you learned a lot for example how paper is made again before arrive to our hands in different ways. Right now, I try combine both art studio and working at a stationary store where you do different types of printing, silkscreen, binding, deal with different art supplies, stamps etc.

4 to 5 years ago I only dedicated myself to making art, also I even invited people I trust and know over to paint together, have fun mostly while working but since felt the need to be in more contact with people and learn new stuff I changed that routine. I don't want to say that in a while it won't change again however.

What got you interested in Japanese culture?

I think traditional Japanese culture itself is interesting because Japan has been separated from the rest of the world for so long. So there wasn't any western influence for a long time in those old days. I can't remember correctly probably, I saw in the 90's VHS movies that we rented at the video club at random to see at home from anime like for example Be-Bop High School to 70's to 80's movies like for example one of my favorites still today in black and white the "Seven samurais" with one of my favorites Japanese actors Toshio Mifune. I saw movies like the Yakuza with Japanese actor Ken Takakura, Mamushi No Kyoda etc. Also the language sounds good, I know how to speak a bit the language. So, after all that I got hooked and started to explore going from history, music, art, temples, shrines, buddhism, shinto, art materials, media, food... I love the punk from Japan haha!



What materials do you work with?

I work with silkscreen on paper or textil, in paper quality I use rice paper and Arches that is 100% cotton and made in a round shape. Acid-free, it has an alkaline reserve and meets the ISO permanence standard. It is a sharp grain paper, without optical brighteners. Ideal for drawing, art editing, engraving, linoleum, lithography, screen printing and printing.

For the ink I make my own from watercolors to acrylics and gouache, with traditional natural mineral pigments ink powders it is better then tubes I think and the colors become more vivid on paper. Also I try always to make them with the max opacity possible according my art form.

What favorite paint themes do you have or enjoy to do?

I love to do themes with Japanese mythology the most, I feel very connected to that kind of subject and you must study each god or deity since there is a huge unknown background . It is something that deeply intrigues me and puts my curiosity on the table, making me want to represent and pass that same knowledge to someone in representations.



Do you have any formal art training?

I studied 2D / 3D animation arts basically making cartoons or 3d for television effects, how to write synopsis, BD's and the like. But it came to nothing and I followed my own path. Everything I know until today I learned by myself with tips here and there from people willing to share what they know and helped me. I feel that after years I have been getting comfortable in do whatever it come to mind, but there is always the possibility to improve further.

Where do you currently live and work?

I moved to a Portuguese city called Santa Maria da Feira, we call the short name Feira, it is located on the antique province of "Douro Litoral" between city of Aveiro and city of Porto. Forgot to mention the city is also know by "Terra de Santa Maria", Land of Saint Mary cause they have a long long antique history with pre-Roman or Romans, middle ages times. They have a famous castle in the center of the city, where in the summer they do every years a medieval recreation. It was been ok working and living here. It is a quiet place, plus we have the beach very close.

Do you have any hobbies outside of painting?

Yes. I do alot of cycling, volunteer in kennels, collect Japanese antiques and vintage from books, hanging scrolls, ukiyoe, masks, sculptures, this not only Japanese but a bit of all. I also have an interest in WWII airplanes, aircrafts original photography, punk rock music records, enthusiastic photography and freelance graphic design.

Do you own many books?

Yes. I have a vast personal collection from Edo period to nowadays in different subjects, not only Japanese books too.

What is your favorite artist/s, which inspire you?

Personal inspiration is my family but in terms of art, ukiyoe masters inspire me the most like Kyosai, Torii Kiyonobu II, Yoshitoshi, Katsukawa Shunsho, Utamaro, Kiyonaga, Kuniyoshi, Kunisada, Torii Kiyotsune. In tattoo artist Horiuno I/II/III, Horitake, Horibun, Horikin, Horigorō I/II...





What role does the artist have in a community in your opinion?

Artists present windows into the unknown and create space for people to think for themselves, engage in their own imaginative process, and expand their perceptual and emotional consciousness.

Ideally how would you like to see your art evolve in the future?

Ideally want my art form to reach more people to appreciate truly, be influenced by and have a piece maybe on their collection art to always admire.

Where, when and what artwork have you displayed publicly? Is this something you would like to do more of?

I don't do much public display but yes, I would love to do it more often. With responsible and competent people to manage it, was trustfully to send the artworks over and get them back in one piece or make the deliver personally.

Do you travel much or have plans to?

I made short travels to Japan, UK, Spain and Germany. I have plans in make long visit to Japan again or a short visit to USA or Canada or Australia.

I have to ask since this will be the first non tattooer book published by Atonement, why don't you tattoo? Is it a conscious decision? As far as I'm aware, a lot of your followers are tattoo enthusiasts. You must get asked this a lot.

People ask me that aloooot... well, what can I say, it is not that I haven't tried to enter a studio, be tattooed, make art exchange with that same artist, get along with and try to be accepted for a proper apprenticeship. The thing is that I have always the same answer, they are not taken apprenticeship for many of their own reasons. I respect each decision and comprehend perfectly that it takes patience, time and a little of everything. So, I think I got to the point that I made my best and I will keep trying. Despite that I get a lot of questions from professionals in the tattoo industry to help them in their jobs like iconography of Japanese gods or other subjects, I never turn my back and extended my hand to help in what I can and share my knowledge with that same person.

Why crossed sickles? Does this somehow symbolic image hold any specific meaning to you?

Yes. My own roots and family. A reminder.

Why do you love what you do?

I have a devouring passion for what I do. I love making new paintings with uncommon themes that I haven't seen before. It's similar to when I hear a new song for the first time. I'm always looking for that exciting and unknown feeling.

Thank you Frankie for taking the time to answer a few questions, it has been great and very easy working with you on this project and I am very happy with the finished book "Bright and bold". I think it makes a great addition to any traditional Japanese enthusiasts collection, a great refrence and inspiration.

Thank you.

Crossed Sickles "Bright and bold" available now, Atonement books.

