

# SELFLESS



**“The Pander Bros. are no strangers to edgy media.”**

*WIRED* magazine

**“A power duo of creativity.”**

*SOMA* magazine

Widely known for their work as critically-acclaimed comic book creators and illustrators, award-winning filmmakers, and cutting-edge visual artists, the Pander Bros. are making their feature film debut with “Selfless.” The provocative drama was directed by Jacob Pander and produced by Arnold Pander from their own original screenplay.

While still in their teens, the Pander Bros. helped forge the independent comics revolution with their high-style artwork that pushed the boundaries of the medium on such breakout series as *GRENDEL: Devil's Legacy* and *Triple X*. The legendary artists behind 65 books to date, their portfolio includes three graphic novels, ten series, and 15 stand-alone issues for such major publishers as Marvel, DC Comics and Dark Horse. They've also served as the creators and writers of *Batman: City of Light* and *Batman: Apocalypse Girl*, among others.

*The Oregonian:*

“They are among the best-known and most successful comic book artists in Portland. Since they burst onto the scene in the early '80s, fresh out of high school and filled with ideas, the Pander brothers have made their mark on the city's cultural life. They've designed rock

The Panders Bros.' work in film includes 15 music videos (seven of them for Palm Pictures); the concept for Gus Van Sant's "Runaway" video for Deee-Lite; the award-winning cult classic, "The Operation"; the feature-length documentary, "Painted Life"; and a series of shorts

The sons of prominent Northwest painter Henk Pander, who emigrated to the U.S. from the Netherlands in the 1960s, and a mother who received her masters degree in fine arts, the brothers were encouraged to explore their creativity from the time they could hold a crayon. As kids, they were back-stage regulars at Portland's landmark Storefront Theater, where their father designed installations and stage sets. By their preteens, Arnold was consumed with drawing 'superheroes' and Jacob, though equally gifted with a pen and brush, was already plotting out his first movie, inspired by such late night TV serials as "Flash Gordon."

Their first 8mm film, "War is Hell," was directed by Jacob at age 12, and starred Arnold, 10, as an ambushed soldier. (To his teacher's horror, Jacob poked holes through the film stock to create the illusion of gun fire flashes.) Their first 16mm film, "Time Gate," two years later, found Arnold stranded in an apocalyptic future. Their first pen-and-paper collaboration, around the same time, was the comic strip, *Gamma World*, which ran in their high school newspaper. Their first after-school jobs were in the Future Dreams comic book store (Arnold) and at a local art house theater (Jacob).

Indeed, it was as a result of Arnold leaving one his drawings behind at Future Dreams, when he quit the job, that their first big break came only a year out of high school. Popular comic book author Matt Wagner spotted it and had Comico sign them to create the covers and inside illustrations for his *GRENDEL: Devil's Legacy* series. Overnight, they went from "selling Christmas cards out of our shoulder bags" to being able to afford a trip to the family homeland when it was over. The 12-issue series set a new sales record for an independent comic book (on a par with Marvel and DC Comics), merited nominations for the coveted Eisner and Manning Awards, and scored

posters, opened experimental galleries and teamed with their father, renowned painter Henk Pander, to decorate Tri-Met's Cultural Bus. But it's comic books that have won the Panders a loyal audience."

### *Willamette Week:*

"Dilettantes usually produce art that's mediocre at best and awful at worst. For proof, look at Hollywood actors such as Keanu Reeves and Bruce Willis, who have made lamentable stabs at rock stardom in their spare time. Portland painters Arnold and Jacob Pander already seemed like notable exceptions; last year, the brothers delivered a critically-acclaimed graphic novel, Triple X, Jacob won the 1995 New York Underground Film Festival with

the industry's top fans-choice award for the duo.

While working on the 4-issue mini-series, *Ginger Fox*, for Comico, the brothers spent much of the next two years in Amsterdam, developing their own monumental work, *Triple X*, published by Dark Horse Comics in the mid-1990s.

The futuristic 7-issue series and its 1997 graphic novel were hailed by critics on both sides of the Atlantic. Among them, *Huh Magazine* in the U.K. called *Triple X* "a global comic book *piece de resistance*...It reads like an illustrated James Bond novel...The brothers' previous work inspired a bunch of well-deserved acclaim, but nothing quite matches the cinematic scope utilized throughout XXX. This ain't your typical comic. It actively engages the reader in the story, making it something of an interactive comic adventure." *Spin* magazine labeled it "a wild agitpop thriller," and *Anodyne* declared: "When it was all said and done, *Triple X* challenged people's perceptions of what comics could be."

Among other notable projects, the Pander Bros. created the groundbreaking "Secret Broadcast" comic book/companion audio CD tribute to renegade radio. Designed to function as a soundtrack to its published counterpart, the album featured tracks from such artists as reggae-rapper Jamal-Ski, DJ and musician Zeb, hip hop electronica artist Supersoul, and producer/songwriter Mark Pistel. With the Dark Horse mini-series, *Exquisite Corpse*, the first comic book designed to be read in any order, they were thrust into the middle of an international controversy, when it was banned in several countries.

After studying 16mm filmmaking at the Northwest Film & Video Center and serving as an apprentice editor on the 35mm feature, "Shadow Play," Jacob launched his professional career in the 1990s with a series of shorts infused with rebellious humor. Among them, "The Spirit of 76" featured painter and sculptor Tom Cramer, whose volatile and unpredictable interview style keeps the viewer on constant edge as the artist probes the meaning and American zeitgeist of the early 1990s ; "Media Hijack" was a 20-minute visual narrative

his short "The Operation," and they've made visually arresting music videos for now-defunct bands the Dharma Bums and Hitting Birth. Recently, the Panders successfully teamed in another guise, as record producers. 'Secret Broadcast,' an ode to free radio, is the first notable compilation of electronic music to come out of Portland."

blending repurchased media images and sound; and “The Other Side of the Tracks” chronicled a day in the life of three heroin addicts.

Then came their 1995 cult classic, “The Operation” (produced by Arnold) – which took first place at the New York Underground Film Festival, 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the Chicago Underground Film Festival, as well as honors at festivals in Berlin and Copenhagen. Shot in infrared video, the erotic short was also screened at the London Institute for Contemporary Art and included in a tour of shorts to Europe and Japan.

*Film Threat* noted that “The Operation” was “the most unusual, inspiring and crowd-pleasing piece” in the NY Underground Film Festival, confirmed by *Film Threat Video*: “Without a doubt, the most innovative film screened at the Fest was Jacob Pander’s ‘The Operation.’ Although only 10 minutes long, it had created a huge buzz before its 11:15 screening on Saturday night. So much in fact that we were forced to witness its debut from the projection room. But it was worth it... Pander never expected the reaction he has gotten from ‘The Operation,’ but film festivals as mainstream as Toronto’s are asking for copies.”

Calling it “simultaneously sinister and erotic,” *Wired* described “The Operation” as “the kind of video that can rewire your neural net.” And Northwest Film & Video Festival judge Dan Ireland told *Willamette Week*: “It’s like a 16mm version of going over Jupiter in ‘2001: A Space Odyssey’!

In 1992, Jacob was hired by Frontier Records to shoot his first music video, “Light in You,” for Dharma Bums, which received extensive play on MTV. Among the others, the brothers conceived, directed and produced Hitting Birth’s “Drive On,” the winner of the Oregon Cascade Award, and the half-hour concept film, “Suck it and See,” for Palm Pictures, which featured such international electronic artists as Howie B., Fantastic Plastic Machine, Spacer, and DJ Miku.

In 2002, Jacob’s “Painted Life” provided a riveting look into the

creative process behind his father's internationally-celebrated work in still lifes. Filmed over a period of seven years and funded in part by a grant from the Oregon Arts Commission, the feature-length documentary became an official selection of the Northwest Film Festival and was screened at Seattle's prestigious Fry Art Museum.

Long fixtures on Portland's cultural scene, the brothers co-founded the landmark FUSE Gallery during the 1990s. Patterned loosely on Andy Warhol's Factory, the non-profit collective of art studios was a showcase for eclectic, artist-driven dance, theater, and alternative music and film events. Among them, Gus Van Sant premiered his short film, "God Bless America," written by and starring William S. Burroughs.

As fine artists, they also frequently exhibit at one of the city's leading venues, the Mark Woolley Gallery. Jacob has also shown in New York – when a collaborative media installation he produced with noted experimental filmmaker Steve Doughton, featuring music by acclaimed electronica artist Aphex Twin, was mounted at the Mary Ann Boesky Gallery in Soho.