



Featherproof's first collaboration with Mandible will be *The Inborn Absolute: The Artwork of Robert Ryan*. Robert Ryan has deep roots as a musician and devotee of Lord Shiva. His art reveals a profound mastery of the American tattooing tradition while creating a mystical and imaginative world brimming with his unique takes on Eastern religious iconography. This forthcoming monograph covers two decades of his stunning paintings & tattoos, as well as interviews with art and music luminaries Freddy Corbin and Genesis P. Orridge about Ryan's work and the lineages it draws from and expands upon.

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The Inborn Absolute will be available in August 2016

Robert Ryan lives in Asbury Park, NJ where he has been painting and tattooing for 20 years, taught in the classic traditional American style of bold line, heavy shading and solid field of color. His knowledge of Eastern Spirituality, Western Mysticism, and Amazonian Shamanism are all distilled through the filter of this powerful folk tattoo aesthetic. Robert's work has been featured in many galleries, schools, and publications world wide. As a musician he has released albums with the bands Lord Sterling, Out Like Lambs, and Harmonize Most High as well as his solo effort, American Cloud Songs. Continuing to take many pilgrimages to India, Nepal, and Peru, learning from Curanderos, Sadhus, Tantrics, and Monks, his work has tapped into a hidden knowledge which can only be passed down through the oral traditions and ancient practices.



“It was a true study in the element of soul to me. You started seeing people trying to incorporate the esoteric and occult in their work in would just look off. It was like all the elements were there, they had the same references, same vocabulary—but it wasn’t alive. It’s because the work wasn’t being done. The initiation wasn’t there. You can’t make psychedelic art without having a psychedelic experience, you can’t make devotional art without devotion, and you surely can’t have expression without something to express.”

—Robert Ryan, in an interview with Freddy Corbin



“When you introduce a lot of these cultural engineered ideas, it’s tough when they start to become commodities. With tattooing, I feel that there is magic involved, it’s an ancient practice, there’s a little shamanism involved. There’s also currency and now there’s a level of celebrity involved. It’s really risky. It could take away from it. Maybe it has taken away from it in a lot of ways. But I feel that the practice is so strong—of marking your body—that it has the power to overcome that. It is still special. The way you perceive it, use it and learn from it is your responsibility but that doesn’t negate the power of it.”

—Robert Ryan, in conversation with Genesis P Orridge



from an interview with Genesis P Orridge...

3

Genesis P Orridge: What's your relationship with the mushroom and that sort of visionary experience?

Robert Ryan: I think it's important and I think it's one of the gifts. I feel that stratus around the gods and halos are representative of mushrooms originally. I think the idea of Santa Claus and him coming through the chimney because he couldn't get in the door because they were snowed in, and he would come bring mushrooms to the people. I do think that they were instrumental in culture at some point. I still use them. They are powerful teachers. I think they're alien.

GO: That's what I was just going to say to you. You picked up on it. I was going to ask if you thought they were alien creatures.

RR: I think they are.

GO: An alien form of life here on earth. There's a huge one somewhere that's like 20 miles long. If you think about it as one conscious organism then it's the largest organism on earth. It's in Vancouver.

RR: What else could they be there for, if not to give knowledge?

GO: They grow out of dung. They eat rotten things and create visions. How beautiful is that? From nothing comes something amazing