

Spain Rodriguez

Born 1940 in Buffalo, NY; died 2012 in San Francisco, CA.

Spain Rodriguez, called the “socialist soul” of the 1960s underground comics movement, combined leftist politics, outlaw biker adventure, and science fiction in dynamically drawn stories. Raised in Buffalo, where he became a member of the Road Vultures Motorcycle Club, he attended an art trade school for a few years before working a factory job for the first part of the 1960s, which provided him with comradery and decades of material for his comics. Rodriguez moved to New York’s East Village in the mid-1960s and began a run of publishing that was interrupted only by his passing. He became a staff cartoonist for the most celebrated of underground newspapers, the *East Village Other*, appearing alongside the likes of Ed Sanders and Allen Ginsberg.

In 1969, the artist moved to San Francisco, where he was invited to join *Zap Comix* by Robert Crumb. Rodriguez went on to either found or contribute to many of the most important underground comics, including his own *Subvert Comics*, *Insect Fear Comics*, and the seminal anthologies *Arcade* and *Weirdo*. In the ensuing decades he published widely acclaimed memoirs, graphic non-fiction, erotic thrillers, and the ever-evolving story of Trashman, a kind of urban Marxist James Bond. His life and work are the subject of a planned five-volume set of books edited by Patrick Rosenkranz, and published by Fantagraphics, three of which have been released thus far: *Street Fighting Men*, *Warrior Women*, and *My Life & Times*.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2022

Hard-Ass Friday Nite: The Art of Spain Rodriguez, curated by Dan Nadel, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY

2012

Spain: Rock, Roll, Rumbles, Rebels & Revolution, curated by Anthony Bannon, Don Metz and Edmund Cardoni, Burchfield Penney Art Center, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, NY

2009

Rebel in Ink: The Art of Spain Rodriguez, Cartoon Art Museum, San Francisco, CA

Road Vultures and Rumbles: A Career Retrospective of Buffalo’s Spain Rodriguez, The Poetry Collection, State University of New York at Buffalo, NY

1988

Spain: A View from the Bottom: Posters, Comic Strips, Caricatures and More, Galería Esquina de la Libertad, La Raza Silkscreen Center, San Francisco, CA

1967

Spain Rodriguez Drawings and Paintings, Peace Eye Gallery, New York, NY

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2026

Tom's Stretch, David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

American Landscape Summer Show Extravaganza!, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY

2025

MPM/IRL, mepaintsme, New York

2022

The Underground is Always Outside, curated by Aline Kominsky-Crumb & Dan Nadel, Outsider Art Fair, Paris, FR

Field Trip: Psychedelic Solution, curated by Fred Tomaselli, Outsider Art Fair, New York, NY

2019

Somos/Funky, Juan R. Fuentes Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2012

Blowing Minds: The East Village Other, the Rise of Underground Comix, and the Alternative Press, 1965-1972, Arthur L. Carter Journalism, New York University, New York, NY

2011

Zap: Masters of Psychedelic Art, 1965-1974, curated by Gary Panter, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY

2008

BLAB! A Retrospective, curated by Bill North, Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KA

1994

Zap Comix Artists, La Luz de Jesus Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

1992

The Chicano Codices - Encountering Art of the Americas, curated by Marcos Sanchez-Tranquilino, The Mexican Museum, San Francisco, CA

1990

Zap Comix Artists, Psychedelic Solution Gallery, New York, NY

1972

COMIX, curated by Patricia Stewart, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL

1969

Human Concern/Personal Torment - The Grotesque in American Art, curated by Robert Doty, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

The Phonus Balonus Show, The Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C. Comic Museum, curated by Kim Deitch, New York, NY

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

The de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL

Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

New York University, New York, NY

The Whitney Museum, New York, NY

FILMS

2021

Bad Attitude: The Art of Spain Rodriguez, directed by Susan Stern

AWARDS

2013

Will Eisner Hall of Fame

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

2021

My Life & Times: Spain Vol. 3, Fantagraphics, edited by Patrick Rosenkranz

2018

Warrior Women: Spain Vol. 2, Fantagraphics, edited by Patrick Rosenkranz

2017

Street Fighting Men: Spain Vol. 1, Fantagraphics, edited by Patrick Rosenkranz

2014

Farmworker Comix: A History of the Farm Labor Struggle in California, text by Bill Morgan, California Federation of Teachers

Zap Comix #16, Fantagraphics

2012

Cruisin' With The Hound: The Life and Times of Fred Tooté, Fantagraphics

2011

Zap: Masters of Psychedelic Art, 1965-1974, Andrew Edlin Gallery

War: The Human Cost, Paper Tiger Comix

2010

Devil Dog: The Amazing True Story of the Man Who Saved America, text by David Talbot, Simon & Schuster

2008

Che: A Graphic Biography, edited by Paul Buhle, Verso

2003

Nightmare Alley, text by William Lindsay Gresham, Fantagraphics

Women Art Revolution, text by Lynn Hersham Leeson and Alexandra Chowaniec, Women Art Revolution LLC

Dires Irae: One Man Against the American Empire: A Graphic Story of 9/11, text by Wolcott Wheeler, Independently Published

2001

Sherlock Holmes' Strangest Cases, text by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Word Play Publications

2000

Alien Apocalypse 2006, with Kathy Glass and Harold S. Robbins, Frog Ltd.

1997

Boots, text by Harry Kamper, Precipice

1994

My True Story, Fantagraphics

1993

She: Anthology of Big Bitch, Last Gasp

1989

Trashman Lives!: The Collected Stories from 1968 to 1985, Fantagraphics

1982-2005

Zap Comix #10-15, Last Gasp

1976

Subvert Comics #3, Saving Grace

1973

Food Price Blackmail: Who's Behind the High Cost of Eating, text by Margaret Lobenstein & John Schommer, United Front Press

1971

Mean Bitch Thrills, Print Mint

1970-72

Subvert Comics #1-2, Rip Off Press

1969-78

Zap Comix #4-9, Print Mint

1969

Trashman Vol. 1 No. 1, Fat City & Red Mountain Tribe

1967

Zodiac Mindwarp, East Village Other