Artist Matt Gondek (pictured) has been designing neon googly-eyed monsters for bands, companies and clothing brands for five years now, and at 28, he is already co-owner of a clothing brand (Wonderful Life). Drawing and designing have always been part of Gondek's life; from the moment he could hold a pencil, he would draw comic book characters and monsters from movies. As he got older, his work progressed with him, and his current career began to germinate as he made the transition from pen and paper into the digital world.

It wasn't long before the artist's striking designs caught Fango's eye, and he was immediately snapped up to design a brand-spanking-new line of T-shirts for us. As such, we thought it high time to catch up with the on-the-rise designer, to chat about the design process…and googly-eyed monsters.

FANGORIA: Many of your designs boast all manner of salivating monsters and dripping beasts. Where do your ideas come from?

MATT GONDEK: My ideas all stem from a mishmash of comic-book art, monster movies and urban art. Those three media have always fascinated me and are definitely portrayed in what I do. I'm not sure where all the gooey slime and saliva came from, through! I guess it's just because I like drawing drippy stuff.

FANG: Are you a fan of horror movies? Are there any particular ones that have inspired you on a visual level, and what's the most disturbing image you've ever seen in a horror film?

GONDEK: While I'm working, I tend to watch a lot of cheesy horror movies from Netflix. I like spooky films with ghosts and aliens, though my all-time favorites are the TREMORS movies. I'm also fascinated with space travel, and I've always been a fan of EVENT HORIZON. The most disturbing image I've ever seen in a horror film has got to be in AUGUST UNDERGROUND. A few years ago, a friend and I went to try and help out a small movie company called Toetag Pictures on a film they were working on. When we got to the guy's house, he showed us AUGUST UNDERGROUND. I think they're called snuff films? The two parts that I can't forget—unfortunately—are when they make an old man cut his member off to save his wife's life, and a part where they cut open some lady and make love to the hole. Pretty graphic.

FANG: Which designers and artists have inspired you in the past?

GONDEK: I'm a big fan of Rob Schrabb's work. He did a comic book called SCUD THE DISPOSABLE ASSASSIN. I also like the artists Peekaboo, Skinner, Jeremyville, Augor and Buff Monster. As far as digital artists go, I have recently become a big fan of a design studio called I Love Dust.

FANG: When you did you make the conscious decision to go into business as a designer?

GONDEK: I went to a tech school to learn how to create websites, but still drew my weird monsters on the side for fun. After I graduated, I ended up doing a website for this landscaping company, and absolutely hated the experience. I got so bored with it that I completely lost all interest in commercial design. A few years passed, and by chance a band on tour asked if they could stay at our house overnight. While they were there, they happened to see some of my artwork and asked if I could design a shirt for them to sell at shows. They liked it so much, they asked me to create a few more.

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