

## Felipe Pantone And His Digi-Meets-Blade Runner Artwork

By Felicity Carter

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Insta-famous artist, [Felipe Pantone](#) who also goes by the street artist name, Pant1 has been graffiting places and spaces since he was 12 years old. From there, the Argentinian-Spanish artist went onto study Fine Art at university in Valencia and that's where his studio is based today. You'll notice his work on walls and in galleries from the Mesa Contemporary Arts Center to the Long Beach Museum of Art, and the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, as well as in Mexico City, Osaka, Lisbon, Palestine, Italy, and Australia.



His work, which is at the intersection of *Blade Runner* and PhotoShop deals with concepts from dynamism and transformation to the omnipresence. He also questions themes that relate to today's landscape, namely movement, the notion of time, saturation, alienation, and destruction.

What's your first memory of art? I used to draw Mortal Kombat characters and 80s heavy metal bands logos since I was a baby. My father used to be an ironworker and my mum had many different jobs but nothing art related.



Artwork by Felipe Pantone ARTWORK BY FELIPE PANTONE

Tell us about your background...My parents and I emigrated to Spain from Argentina when I was 10. I started doing graffiti when I was 12 and I've done that obsessively for the past 20 years. I studied Fine Arts at university and the whole degree felt like a waste of time learning all the traditional techniques over and over. However, I took some Art History classes that enlightened me. I understood that it was utterly important to know what's been done before in order to contribute with something. Kind of like science: if the penicillin was discovered already, now let's try to find a cure for cancer. Now my biggest challenge is to get clear of my training as a classical painter and to be free as a creative.



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Sum up your aesthetic...I came up with style in my graffiti pieces. I was trying them to stand out on the street, to be loud and compete against the visual pollution in the cities. I increased the contrast (pictorially) so I ended up painting with black and white and vivid colors only. I introduced optical art elements, dynamic compositions, in order to be striking. Later I got rid of the letters of my graffiti name and I my work became abstract.

Who/what has had the biggest impact on your aesthetic? My aesthetic is a mere response to what I think is the essence of present times. We live in a time where more images are produced than those that can possibly be seen. In

order to thrive nowadays, the work has to be striking, just like graffiti. Graffiti is a response to art, the same way than Twitter responds to traditional sources of information such as newspapers: it's immediate, ephemeral, dynamic, and everyone can write it. I feel my entire aesthetic and discourse are a response to this idea.

Do you have a preferred medium and why? I use all kinds of techniques and I hope to always be adding new ones. We're living in exciting times in which new revolutionary technologies are invented every day and it's important to be open to experimentation. However, spray paint is for me the most versatile tool. I use it to paint small canvases and huge buildings. It's also the most dynamic tool: the fact that it dries so quickly allows you to paint with different colors over and over in no time.



Artwork by Felipe Pantone FELIPE PANTONE

Which artists, past or present do you look up to? My work is a compound of everything that I look at: art, film, music, literature, design, everything influences it somehow. To be more specific, op and kinetic art has a huge impact in my style (Cruz-Diez, Vasarely, Julio Le Parc, Nicolas Schöffer, Tomasello, Soto, etc.). Contemporary artists Rioji Ikeda, Eliasson, Kapoor, Elias Crespín, Futura, Frédéric Plateus, Rafael Rozendaal, Artie Vierkant, Tauba Auerbach.

Which is your favorite piece to date? That's like asking a parent if they have a favorite child! Probably my piece "Integration System" at my last show in New York is my favorite so far. I always like the most the last thing that I've done!

What have you got coming up? I have a big solo show coming up at [Danysz](#) gallery in Shanghai. Also two big installations at MIMA Museum in Brussels. I'm trying to focus on studio work this year, trying to travel less and to think more, but always excited about what the future might bring.