



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ART/ILLUSTRATION

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## Paul Garland: Bold, Colorful, & Graphic

PAUL WASN'T A STUDENT OF MINE, BUT I REMEMBER HIM WANTING TO PURSUE ILLUSTRATION AS A CAREER. HE WAS KEEN AND TALENTED, AND ALL I DID WAS INTRODUCE HIM TO MY AGENT AT THE TIME. I GUESS THE REST IS HISTORY.

**Brian Sweet**, *Artist & Illustrator*

PAUL JOINED MY AGENCY EARLY ON IN HIS CAREER. I COULD SEE HE HAD GREAT POTENTIAL. HIS UNDERSTANDING OF A CLIENT'S BRIEF IS EXCEPTIONAL, MAKING FOR CLEVER, OFTEN WITTY, AND BEAUTIFULLY EXECUTED ARTWORKS.

**Jacqui Figgis**, *Former Agent & Artist, Jacqui Figgis Sculpture*

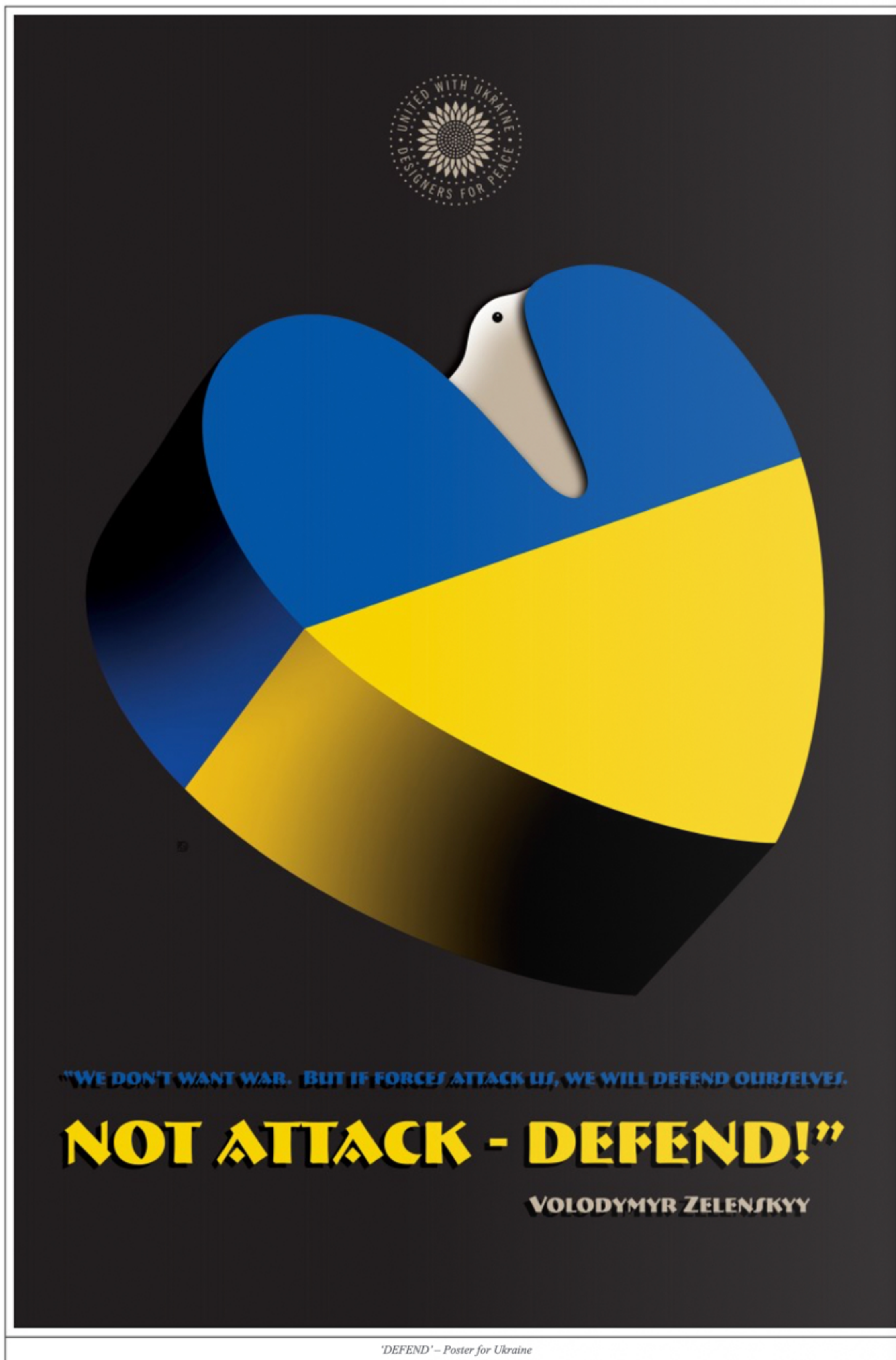
PAUL IS A WONDERFUL, WARM INDIVIDUAL WHO TIES HIS HEAD, HEART, AND HAND IN DEVELOPING STRONG CONCEPTS THAT STOP AND ENGAGE THE VIEWER. HIS COLOR PALETTE IS THE ICING ON THE CAKE.

**Charles Hively**, *Design Director, 3x3: The Magazine of Contemporary Illustration*



(Page 95) 'Sounds of the Underground' - for Transport for London / (Above) 'P E A C E' - Poster for Ukraine





## Introduction by Tim Mendola *Founder, Rapp Art*

I have been an admirer of Paul Garland's work from when he was represented by Morgan Gaynin. His bold, graphic, and smart concept illustrations make him one of the industry's top editorial artists. I was reminded of his work when I saw his portfolio on The I Spot, and when I realized he was no longer represented, I took a chance and asked if he would consider representation through Rapp Art. I was thrilled when he accepted our offer. Great editorial illustration begins and ends with smart conceptual thinking. An interesting, compelling style can only go so far without the big idea. Paul begins each project with multiple ideas, any one of which could make a great final illustration. Once the client selects their favorite, Paul creates the final art and another happy customer. That's why the most respected publications in the world have Paul on their shortlist for their next assignment.

### Q&A: Paul Garland



#### *What inspired or motivated you to have a career in illustration?*

I really didn't know what to do with my life whilst at school; there wasn't much in the way of career advice offered at the time. When I was 14, I started work on Saturdays and in school holidays for a large motorcycle dealership. This led to what I thought was going to be my long-term career as a motorcycle technician. At 19, I completely lost interest, partly because the industry struggled due to the negative reputation that the government was giving motorcycles.

My main interest in life at that time was fashion, and my creative juices were slowly starting to manifest themselves. I went to visit my local art college and had a chat with some of the lecturers, and they kindly gave me some advice. Their suggestion was to take a foundational course in art and design and not specialize in fashion, which proved invaluable as I soon found out that I loved the design process but simply hated sewing. From my foundational course, I went on to do a course in fashion illustration, and later to illustration in general.

#### *What is your work philosophy?*

To always produce the best work that I can, and to always meet deadlines. I try to make my artwork visually interesting at postage stamp size or poster size.

#### *Who is or was your greatest mentor?*

While at college, Brian Sweet helped an awful lot; he was a UK-based illustrator represented by Arena. Later, Brian Grimwood helped me in my early days with lots of invaluable advice. Ultimately, my first agent, Jacqui Figgis, helped build my confidence and spread my name around the UK. Mid-career, I gained a lot of help and advice from Charles Hively, publisher of *3x3 Magazine*; he continues to be a go-to person if I feel the need.

#### *What is it about art and illustration that you are most passionate about?*

Creating something that wasn't there before. If it can enhance another person's life in some way, then I'm happy.

#### *What's one distinct thing about your illustration style that stands out?*

It's bold, colorful, and graphic. That's not one distinct thing, but it's the essence of how I perceive my work.

#### *What is the most difficult challenge you've had to overcome to reach your current position?*

My health. During college, I was diagnosed with epilepsy, which for an invincible, happy, and healthy 22-year-old was life-shattering. I cannot express how debilitating this has been throughout my life and career. For the first 10 years of living with epilepsy, it wasn't stabilized, and it was really difficult to live with. I had many talks with neurologists, who eventually thought the best decision would be to operate (though this wouldn't be without risks). However, after some careful and long consideration, I declined and kept on working with the specialists to juggle my medication until eventually, we found a compromise. Although I still have seizures, they're much less frequent and not as severe, and I know how to manage the condition pretty well to the point that it's at least partially stabilized. Why am I revealing this now after all these years of secrecy? Well, the stigma that associates itself with epilepsy is quite incredible and had to be buried and hidden, or I would've had no career at all. In today's society, with the major focus on mental health, I feel it's right to talk about this now.

#### *Who were some of your greatest past influences?*

Tom Eckersley, Edward Bawden, Eric Ravilious, A. M. Cassandre, Abram Games, Edward McKnight-Kauffer, Shigeo Fukuda, Paul Rand, Seymour Chwast, Milton Glaser, and many more. As for artists, Picasso, Braque, Hans Arp, Terry Frost, Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth, Andy Warhol, Fernand Leger, the Bauhaus—the list is endless, but you probably get the picture.

#### *Who among your contemporaries today do you admire?*

The list is far too big to name them all. For fear of leaving some out, just look through any of the last five to 10 years of *Society of Illustrators*, *3x3*, *American Illustration*, or *Workbook* publications, and the inspiration flows.

'DEFEND' - Poster for Ukraine



**What would be your dream assignment?**

The cover artwork for the next Rolling Stones album and promotional material. Well, we can all dream, can't we?

**Who has been some of your favorite people or clients you have worked with?**

My first rep, Jacqui Figgis, was simply incredible to work with; she was always supportive and helped develop my love and passion for illustration. I've had several reps since then from all over the world, but none until now have come even close to Jacqui. Earlier this year, Tim Mendola called me and asked if I would be interested in joining the Rapp Art group. After several telephone conversations and a lot of careful consideration on my part, I agreed to give it a go, and I'm pleased that I did. Everyone at Rapp Art is very supportive, which as a represented artist I've found is the most important element. Agents need to look after those whom they represent first and foremost whilst also keeping clients happy; this, I have found, is a rare commodity throughout my career and through several major reps.

**What are the most important ingredients you require from a client to do successful work?**

Quite simply, the freedom to create! This sounds simple, but it rarely happens, so when jobs do come along with the freedom to interpret and form one's own solutions, they're overall far more successful as pieces of artwork.

**What is your greatest professional achievement?**

To still be getting illustration assignments after almost three decades of working in the industry.

**On top of being an illustrator, you're a visiting lecturer at art schools around the UK. How did you start giving lectures, and what's your favorite part about that?**

I started after having gained a few years of experience and was invited back by one of my lecturers to give a block series of lessons and lectures to students. Being able to pass on knowledge to the next generation was something I found incredibly rewarding. I haven't done it for a while due to my freelance schedule; perhaps it may be time to think about helping again in the future. Who knows? I do still regularly help students and early career professionals by answering emails.

**You're also a fine art painter. Is there any sort of crossover between your illustrations and your paintings?**

I think there are a couple of crossovers. First, my fine art works are very colorful, graphic, and bold. They don't have a narrative or have to sell a product in any way; they're simply an escape for me to be able to paint what I want in any manner that I see appropriate. The works are meticulously hand-painted, which may drive some people nuts, but to me, it's a great stress reliever as I don't have to meet deadlines and don't have anyone else to please apart from myself.

**Your work has won several awards from major institutions such as the NY Society of Illustrators and Lürzer's Archive. Is there a particular award you're most proud of?**

Not really. I'm always very proud and flattered when judges vote for my work. Thank you to every one of them!

**What is the greatest satisfaction you get from your work?**

Hands down, seeing it in print. Particularly large-scale advertising works on billboards—very proud!

**What part of your work do you find most demanding?**

Art directors who don't really know my work. By that, I mean that they look through my folio and want to assign me a project, but then want me to work in a very different way. I find it quite insulting and frustrating, but alas, it happens.

**What professional goals do you still have for yourself?**

I'd like to pursue more poster and design-based work. Working in the music industry would also be nice. But ultimately, I want to carry on making good work which may be looked back at with pride, and for the phone to keep on ringing. Longevity is hope and should never be taken for granted.

**What advice would you have for students starting out today?**

Be prepared for the hard times as well as the good. Keep practicing your drawing rather than relying on the computer, and don't be too precious about your work. If you really want it, don't give up, and finally, don't undersell yourself. Know your worth; you're a business that must make a living.

**What interests do you have outside of your work?**

Music is a huge part of my life, both recorded and live. I love going to gigs and collecting vinyl, which I'm so pleased has had a resurgence in recent years. Being able to see, feel, and hold record covers at full size and to be able to actually read the type is a massive part of any music lover's life. Music has helped my creative work in ways that I simply can't explain.

Secondly, and most importantly, is my family. My wife and my daughter are my absolute world.

**What do you value most?**

My wife, Cheryl, and my daughter, Amber Rose.

**What would you change if you had to do it all over again?**

Nothing. The struggles and hard times make the successful periods all the more special.

**Where do you seek inspiration?**

Books. I read an awful lot, and have quite a large library of inspirational work. Music, as I've said before; I get lost in music to the point of inspiration. The beach is a wonderful help. I used to live within a 15-minute walk of one of the best beaches in the UK and would take walks daily, particularly if ideas weren't flowing. This helped to clear my head. Since moving away, I now have my family. My wife and daughter are just the best tonic and help ground me and give me a good shake if I need it. Every piece of artwork that I complete is run past them both before being sent.

**How do you define success?**

That's a tough one, and it's different for any creative person. Awards help, but for me, the best form of success in this industry is to still be chosen out of the myriad of illustrators and artists in the world to complete assignments.

**Where do you see yourself in the future?**

I don't look too far into the future; I'm more of a day-by-day kind of guy. Yes, I have ambitions to keep on creating work that can be seen as valid, but as long as I'm happy and challenged, and my family is happy and healthy, that's really all that matters to me personally.

**Paul Garland**

www.paul-garland.com, www.paulgarlandart.co.uk



'Addiction Safe House'—for Johns Hopkins





*'World Vaccination' - for Liberty Specialty Markets*



*'The Midnight Hour' - for The New York Times*

WHEN JOBS DO COME ALONG WITH FREEDOM TO INTERPRET AND FORM ONE'S OWN SOLUTIONS, THEY'RE OVERALL FAR MORE SUCCESSFUL AS PIECES OF ARTWORK.

**Paul Garland**, *Illustrator & Artist*