

# UNDERGROUND NR35 **Up** 2006 PRODUCTIONS

## ETC CREW

Enter the world of a Stockholm style crew

## NEWYORK

Meeting of Styles

## STOCKHOLM

Battle of the bins

## FINLAND

Graffiti is more than Helsinki

## DESONER

Underrated but not forgotten

## CARS

Berlin styles in Sweden



Atila – Stockholm, 2006

**Judie:** It's just that we don't paint much with others.

**BillRey:** We got to know each other through graffiti, and have become really tight.

ETC was started by Tosh and Omar in the early 2000s. Soon, King Kong and Judie joined the crew, and then the other members followed. Finally, in 2006, all the members of GAY were incorporated into ETC.

**BillRey:** It was me, Atila and Boyo who started GAY.

**Atila:** They showed a sign saying "Gay Street" on the *Fab Five* show, and we thought, 'cool, let's write that'.

**BillRey:** I think it's a great name even though it raises questions. But now we're in ETC, so we don't write it so much. But it's still in our hearts.

**BillRey:** The idea is to raze society and build Eterica. This is only the beginning.

**Judie:** Eterica is a naturally soft society where everybody feels good and everyone is happy. Everyone runs around barefoot in the grass, and there are no cops.

The conversation gets out of hand. They laugh and start talking at once.

Most of the members of ETC grew up in inner-city Stockholm. Many of their pieces can also be found within city limits, in the shady, hidden places that the City Council condemns in panicky debates, but nevertheless puts on offer. On bridge abutments, viaducts, abandoned and condemned buildings and in parks. But nobody in ETC is interested in limiting themselves to just one part of town.



Atila in Stockholm 2005

**Tosh:** We're more of a Hall of Fame crew.

**KingKong:** No, I think we write more in town than in fames.

**Drum:** Trains are fun; graffiti is really slick on trains.

**Tosh:** Graffiti is nothing but style. People who just go around bombing and doing throw-ups, I don't know.

**KingKong:** Throw-ups can have style, that's when it's really about style. If you can do a really good throw-up, you're skilful.

**Tosh:** I mean that many writers just write to be visible. It's more fun when you try to do something that looks nice.

**KingKong:** You have to make an effort.

**Tosh:** But another thing that makes graffiti fun is that it gets a lot of young guys interested in art. They sit at home sketching and doing something artistic, which they wouldn't have done otherwise.

**KingKong:** We don't have a firm idea of where to write. It's fun to write in new places, so you appear all over town. But I guess we mainly write in town and along the tracks.

**Do you paint trains?**

**Drum:** Me and Tosh used to paint trains, but it feels too risky now.

**Tosh:** I don't care where I write – I can do it on paper, on walls, on trains. It doesn't matter to me.

**Judie:** If I come across a train, I'll paint.

**BillRey:** We're not a train crew.

*"There's an apartment in Sundbyberg. When you open the door, you enter Eterica."*

**Judie:** We started hanging out so much that this spring, we formed one crew.

ETC is an abbreviation for the name Eterica, which in turn has different meanings, the most interesting being the parallel world Eterica. KingKong says you have to take the commuter train to Sundbyberg to find it.

**KingKong:** There's an apartment there. When you open the door, you enter Eterica. It's a world of its own, parallel and supernatural.

**Judie:** Eterica is a world of its own, a bit whatever you want it to be.



Two times ETC, Stockholm 2005



Judie, Loser, Rey – Thessaloniki, Greece 2005



Nute, Eksact – Stockholm, 2006

**BillRey:** Writing graffiti is hard. I'd like to organise a contest – graffiti writers against security guards. Then they'd see what it's really all about. That they're not chasing criminals, but people who really make an effort to make something beautiful.

**Judie:** It bothers me too. People's negative attitude to graffiti. They think someone just came and scribbled when it's a piece that took two hours to do. It takes years of experience

and practice. It's not something you just go out and daub.

**KingKong:** But at the same time, we probably all think it's fun to go bombing when drunk.

**Judie:** A nice tag can be just as nice as a piece if it's in the right place.

**KingKong:** That's where style comes in again.

A discussion about drunken bombing ensues. They all speak at once for a few

minutes. ETC have many different views and all want to express their views on things, even though some are more successful than others. Atila, Drum and Omar speak the least, but once they get a word in, the others listen respectfully. For the most part, something that seems genuine about ETC is the mutual respect. Compliments and words of encouragement are constantly given.

The voices start to abate, and BillRey



Eastland – Östgöta commuter train



Chile, Rack – Påga train, Scania



Mistr – Regional train



Dke – X2000, Scania

# SWEDISH TRAINS



HFU – X40



Tro, according to the writers this is the first wholecar ever painted on the huge X40 trains



Hej – Regional train



Ocf.up – Tram, Gothenburg



Ment – Krösa regional train



Two times TRC – Bvridge train, Scania



Shuk – Påga train



Mofotoys – Blue X Intercity train



Keje, Klös, Klös, Vamp – Intercity train



Cunt, Mofo, Mofo – Regional train



Rens: You should be able to see a funny character next to a wildstyle burner so that people stop and look.

## “A funny character makes people look”

**Write 4 Gold, Roskilde, Sunday June 25<sup>th</sup> 2006.**  
**The graffiti competitions succeed each other one by one. The biggest is Write 4 Gold – now a worldwide event.**  
**UP travelled to Roskilde in Denmark to check out the competitions one sunny summer day.**

*Text: Tobias Barentzin Lindblad & Torkel Sjöstrand*  
*Photo: Tobias, Torkel & Sabe*

We ride a special train straight into the festival area. It is warm, sunny and dusty; the gates opened this morning, and though the festival doesn't begin for another four days, some 20,000 people have arrived. A huge city of tents has risen.

So far, the public has no access to the stage area, so this year's Write 4 Gold contestants can work in peace. And it certainly seems quiet. Most of the crews stay in the shade, fiddling with their pieces. We walk around inspecting the almost-completed colour pieces, and then go on to look at the 100-meter long wall where the elite of Copenhagen write. **Rens** and **Sek** have just finished, and **FYS** crew, spearheaded by **Sabe**, stand sweating.

In the afternoon, it is time for a tag and throw-up battle. The nine crews each send a representative and eagerly await the starting signal. Adrenaline hums, and there! The noise level gradually gets louder, and members shout

out advice. A thick smell of chrome pervades the area. For the first time that afternoon, things get exciting. The excitement continues during the tag competition too.

The piecing itself is a lame affair. The crews do the typically Scandinavian styles, which some probably find quite extreme.

I have a chat with one of the judges and ask him what he has got out of the styles he has to assess? "It's hard to judge," he says. "To be honest, I rate a New York wildstyle higher."

We leave Roskilde as the sun sets. It is still warm, and the people in the tent city have started the first Roskilde party of the year.

Competing in graff is hard. But Write 4 Gold have complicated things for themselves in vain. Why not bring in a time limit for colour pieces, to increase the adrenaline for the contestants as well? Limit the selection of caps and colours. The most important thing would be to allow the contestants to judge



One out of many T2F throw-ups in Copenhagen

each other, Berlin-style. Then you'd avoid putting judges in situations where they had to judge styles they don't like or understand.

The winning crew was **AIM** from Denmark.

On a rainy early summer day in June, Copenhagen makes a more fun impression than Roskilde the preceding day. Despite the rumours that make it to Stockholm, of harsher sentences, writers with beefs, and the old S-trains going out of traffic, Copenhagen is a high-class graffiti town. In June 2006, **Tony 2 Finger** has taken over the inner city with



Cazz and Bye on a S-train in Copenhagen, 2006



Tags by Afex, Black among others in the area of Nørrebro in central Copenhagen



Okegg on a truck in Nørrebro, 2006

his "T2F" throw-ups, burners are painted on the city's walls, painted S-trains are regularly in traffic and **Moa** has tags on most trains. Since the city doesn't buff very much, tags and pieces stay up longer and graffiti is visible in a manner comparable to Berlin. Moreover, the older generation of Danish writers have the ability to make colourful, simple styles and easily intelligible Disney characters, something Swedish graffiti to a great part lacks. This accessible graffiti is inviting to the average public and is not exclusive and aggressive. This gives graffiti the opportunity to be taken into the hearts of uninitiated children and adults. Perhaps something to emulate in Sweden to reduce the conflict around graffiti?



Write 4 Gold in Roskilde 2006. The throw-up battle.



Disk, Mone and Cooler – Roskilde 2006