





Julie Bell & Boris Vallejo

Collaborate with Andrew W.K.

In 2010, Andrew W.K. was invited to host *Revolver* magazine's annual Golden Gods Awards. *Revolver* marketed the heavy metal awards show with a commissioned painting done in the style of many 1980s fantasy paintings—think “sword and sorcery” imagery with mythological monsters, semi-naked heroines and lots of glistening muscles. W.K. was immediately drawn to the work and reached out to two of the posters' artists, married artists Julie Bell and Boris Vallejo.

Eight years after first meeting, the three artists have recently collaborated on a special commission for W.K.'s newest album, *You're Not Alone*, which comes out March 2. “It was great to work with him because our sons had actually been to his concerts when they were younger, and they always said he was an interesting guy. Once during an autograph session, they told me, he wrote a poem for each person—he's just such a warm and generous guy,” Bell says, adding that W.K. was swayed toward certain cover ideas just by visiting the artists at their home. “As soon as he saw the kids in our neighborhood and the homes on the street he got a sense for what he wanted in the painting. These collaborative pieces are a lot of fun because everything just falls into place.”

Vallejo says he and his wife have worked closely on many pieces, and they often just click into their separate parts. “We are together 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and we love it because we are so close together. She does her thing and I do mine and often we can't even tell who did what later on,” he says. “It was amazing working with Andrew because he's such a really sweet human being, and we were very impressed with him as a person and performer.”

W.K. remembers seeing Frank Frazetta's sword-and-sorcery paintings at a young age and admiring them, which primed the well for artists like Bell and Vallejo. “What appealed to me about Boris' work was his realism. I really liked the idea of photorealistic painting. His work looked like a photo, but even better than a photo,” he says, adding that he normally works on his album covers himself. “This cover was especially difficult for me and risky because I was turning a lot of it over to other artists. But they were very open to discussion and perfecting the idea. And they were just so open minded and willing to listen to what I wanted conveyed in the painting. And, in the end, it exceeded my expectations.” ●