

HOGRE PROPAGANDA

Curated by Jacopo Gonzales

S P A Z I O



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Advertising occupies a considerable portion of our visual field; it is a significant and now unavoidable element to which we have become addicted—one that renders us passive and resigned to the consumption of a product or service, and which over time has developed increasingly sophisticated devices to incisively influence our choices.

As already postulated by Bernays in his famous 1928 essay *Propaganda* advertising is a practice that exists in continuity with totalitarian political propaganda: a medium that exploits the masses and their instincts, promising benefits with the real purpose of controlling individual choices.

It is inevitable that, in reaction to such a totalitarian regime, an underground contestation was born—a movement of dissent emerging from a fringe of activists and artists who launched a counteroffensive against the advertising diktat by hijacking the messages of propaganda itself.

From this contestation stems *subvertising*, a practice that involves the reworking of advertisements and the reversal of their propagandistic language, transforming what was once a tool of control into a cry of protest.

Artists who practice *subvertising* operate primarily on billboard and advertising spaces in the public sphere—an action aimed at reclaiming both the space itself and the codes and languages typical of advertising, giving rise to an objection that takes the form of a mock or jest.

Over the years, many artists and collectives have embraced this practice, promoting its spread: from legendary publications like *Adbusters*, through the work of artists such as Ron English, Alexander Kosolapov, Darren Cullen, and Chris Woods, to collectives like Antipub, Brandalism, and Special Patrol Group.

HOGRE's irreverent and playful subversive attitude, forged in the practice of stencil art, found fertile ground in *subvertising*—a medium that has allowed him over the last three years to execute numerous site-specific actions, documented in a UK-published book and culminating in the design of a digital platform where subverted images become open-source, and thus freely available and exempt from *copyright*.

PROPAGANDA is a retrospective entirely dedicated to this artistic project—a heterogeneous body of work ranging from painted canvases to lightboxes, including billboards, canvas sketches, screen prints, and stickers, offering an eclectic focus on a dissident practice that aims to remind us how to remain free thinkers in a system that continuously attempts to keep us subjugated.

An artist well known on the European scene for his unauthorized interventions, his poetic signature has always been marked by irony and reversal, positioned in opposition to mass media and massification. Artistically active since 2007, he has collaborated with several galleries, including Mondo Bizarro and Laszlo Biro in Rome, Galo in Turin, and WAR in London.

In 2013, he participated in the exhibition project LaTour 13 in Paris, and in 2018, he was among the organizers of the Subvertising Warsaw action in Warsaw. He has published the books What's Hogre? and Subvertising, and currently collaborates with the British publication Dope Magazine. He has several skeletons in his closet.



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