

Picasso working on a bust of a woman (Marie-Thérèse) 1931, painted by Eran Shakine in 2009.

Caricature Development

Josef Albers stares out mournfully over an Albers-yellow square egg yolk, served “sunny side up.” **Alberto Giacometti** strides down the streets of Paris, his pockets full of *all* his sculptures. And **Marcel Duchamp** uses a urinal and then ponders “what to do next.”

These familiar figures, made sometimes strange, reside in **Eran Shakine’s** picture book *Sunny Side Up*, where **Jackson Pollock** stretches his back “after painting Number 31, 1950,” and **Sigmar Polke** poses beside a penguin in the North Pole.

There are also architects: **Frank Gehry** with Gehryesque “bows” in his hair, **Norman Foster** with a conehead fashioned after his “Gherkin” skyscraper in London, and **Zaha Hadid** with a futuristic headdress. Meanwhile, **John Lennon** and **Yoko Ono** have a chapter all to themselves, where they

play the piano, sit in the tub, enjoy New Year’s Eve 1968 naked on their balcony, and so on.

“I’m interested in the progress of how culture heroes are created,” explains Shakine, who was born in Israel and divides his time between Tel Aviv and London.

His collection of heavily limned caricatures, published by Hirmer, reimagines cultural histories and popular images, bringing his subjects down to *his* earth.

Shakine’s art is mostly speculative. “Who knows why van Gogh cut his ear off?” he wonders. “Was it because of a love affair, or

a fight with Gauguin? Or maybe he painted himself with a bandage so it will look more interesting?”

“I didn’t have to actually meet my subjects—I Googled them,” Shakine says of his process. “Wikipedia will tell me all. And if they have a blog, a Facebook page, or a

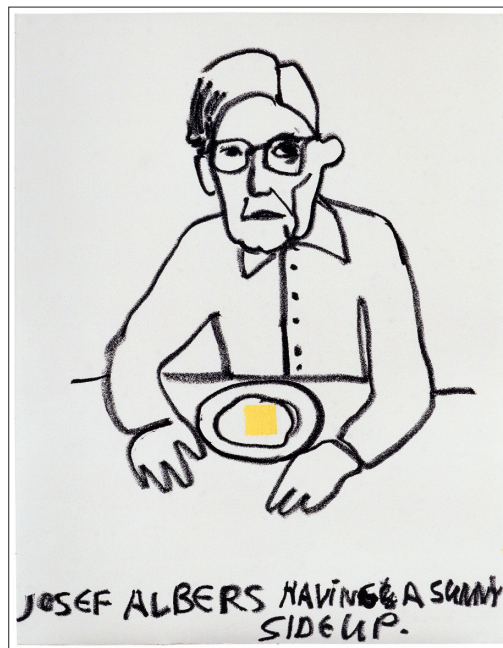
site, I will know enough to marry them. So I guess you can say my drawings are made of 50 percent public relations, 40 percent gossip, and 10 percent imagination.”

Among his favorite pictures in *Sunny Side Up* is the one of **Picasso** working on a bust of his mistress **Marie-Thérèse**

Walter. “The relationship of Picasso with his women is one of the overrated enigmas created by media and gossip. Is it the muse-and-the-creator-type story, or was it a series of different types of abuse? In this painting, the art created looks more real than the artist.

“My shrink—if I had one—would probably say it is all coming from my family history,” Shakine says of his compulsion to draw famous artists. (Both of his parents lost their families in the Holocaust.) So, “maybe it is my imaginary family that I’m adopting for myself.”

—**Barbara A. MacAdam**



Josef Albers having a sunny side up, 2010.