



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:
PHOBIAS, unpublished, 1983;
SEX BLINDERS, Paranoids Guide
to Them, 1982; **MACBED II**,
 unpublished, 1985; **CBC, The Globe**
and Mail, 1985; **WORK OF EQUAL**
PAY, The Globe and Mail, 1982.

ize myself with what the writer is saying. You compare it with your own experience, knowledge about it. And then you're acting, the movie is starting: different images, different ideas, some are crazy. Then you have to select from your roughs, that is tough. I think because I am working every day on it, I am (more) mentally prepared. So I am coming up with ideas much faster. In the beginning, I remember, it took me time to come up with ideas. And in the beginning I tried to do something which would be acceptable for editors . . . But I am more confident, more loose.

EXCAL: *A lot of your humour stems from an unexpected juxtaposition of elements. Could you discuss that a bit?*

KOLACZ: If you change the angle of looking at things, unexpected things seem natural. In other words, if you know about something and then you look at it from a different angle it looks completely different. And for many people who have (specific) models of things, they are surprised that you can see this a different way.

Some situations are so obvious and everybody think it's right. But if you think about it, it's crazy. and when you show that it's crazy probably many people are ready to say 'Yes, he's right, it is crazy.' But society accepts it as normal, but it is not normal . . . Changing points of view is important; it's like three-dimensional thinking.

EXCAL: *A lot of the humour stems from the ability of the drawings to get people to laugh at themselves.*

KOLACZ: Yes, a sense of humour always helps to understand, to see things . . . I want the readers to laugh. But the satire is not just to make you feel good; sometimes I can be cruel.

EXCAL: *Do you ever have problems with not being given enough freedom—for example, an art director tries to dictate the outcome of a work?*

KOLACZ: Initially yes, but recently, this has not been a problem. They trust me. Sometimes if I am too strong they try to soften some things but then I try to persuade them the other way.

EXCAL: *Have you ever felt that there was a subject which you were uncomfortable dealing with?*

KOLACZ: Yes, a few times I have felt this way but it is not important—it has to be done, I have to express my opinion.

EXCAL: *Is there ever a conflict between the opinion which you are expressing and the opinion of the author? If so, what happens?*

KOLACZ: Yes, sometimes I (won't do the assignment). But it's very, very rare.

EXCAL: *Do you get input from the authors regarding your work?*

KOLACZ: Yes, I have a chance to talk to them sometimes. Very often, doing an image for a newspaper the story is not yet written. So I have to talk to the author, and actually our discussion sometimes changes the angle of the story.

EXCAL: *So it's reciprocal?*

KOLACZ: Yes, at that point, it happened a few times. The writer said he is going to change the angle of the story a little bit to support the drawing. It's fantastic.

EXCAL: *You enjoy the immediacy of a newspaper assignment. How long do you usually have in which to produce a drawing?*

KOLACZ: One or two days. Sometimes a few hours. Recently, I had an assignment for the *Boston Globe* that I had to do in only a few hours—it was on an article about the stock market.

EXCAL: *How do you feel that your particular fine art and design background contributes to your illustrations?*

KOLACZ: It's like good health helps an athlete perform. It is an important tool—mental and technical tools to do the job.

EXCAL: *You mentioned earlier how you think that designing posters and doing illustration require essentially the same processes.*

KOLACZ: There are technical differences. A poster is big and usually there is one strong element: Which is what I try to put into my drawings too—to create something which is strong and visually attractive.

EXCAL: *Do you have any influences?*

KOLACZ: Everybody is influenced by everybody else, but there is no one in particular I feel I am influenced by . . . I am just the result of the culture—I am part of it.

EXCAL: *So you would attribute your way of seeing the world to your particular European background?*

KOLACZ: To the mirror. When you look in the mirror you have to smile. Maybe it's true that the European background . . . it has been hard for Poland and for other European countries to survive. There has been a war. To survive you have to have something and the humour helped to survive.

EXCAL: *Obviously you're very prolific now. Do you ever worry about burn-out? Or about your images losing their effect because of saturation?*

KOLACZ: Always. [laughs] I don't think that this is a profession—this is just the ability to do something. I don't think about how I will die, I enjoy life and until it happens I will not think about it. So in other words, I will not worry about it.

EXCAL: *Do you have any advice for aspiring editorial illustrators?*

KOLACZ: I think that if they feel the great need for sharing opinions and if they're interested in what's happening around them and they have artistic talent—they know how to deal with form and colour—it's all they need. I have no specific advice. You've got to love what you're doing—love, it's pleasure and pain.

