

FRESHLY

# INKED

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It wasn't easy to learn but I put a lot of hardwork and dedication into it and taught myself new techniques to make sure the consistency of every batch was the same, and have been very successful in doing so. I have added 29 new colors to make it a total of 65 to the Starbrite Brand. Payne, Kirt Silver, and Poch have helped in mixing these new inks for advanced artists. You can check there amazing tattoo work out on our facebook page. Our Starbrite colors have come a long way since they have been created, they have been tested, every batch continues to be sterilized, and is trademarked owned by our company "Tommy's Supplies" along with meeting FDA standards for our labels. We want our clients to feel very safe when purchasing our colors.

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-Scotty Munster

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SANDOR PONGOR



ON THE COVER MIKE CHAMBERS, PHOTO BY DAVID YELLEN



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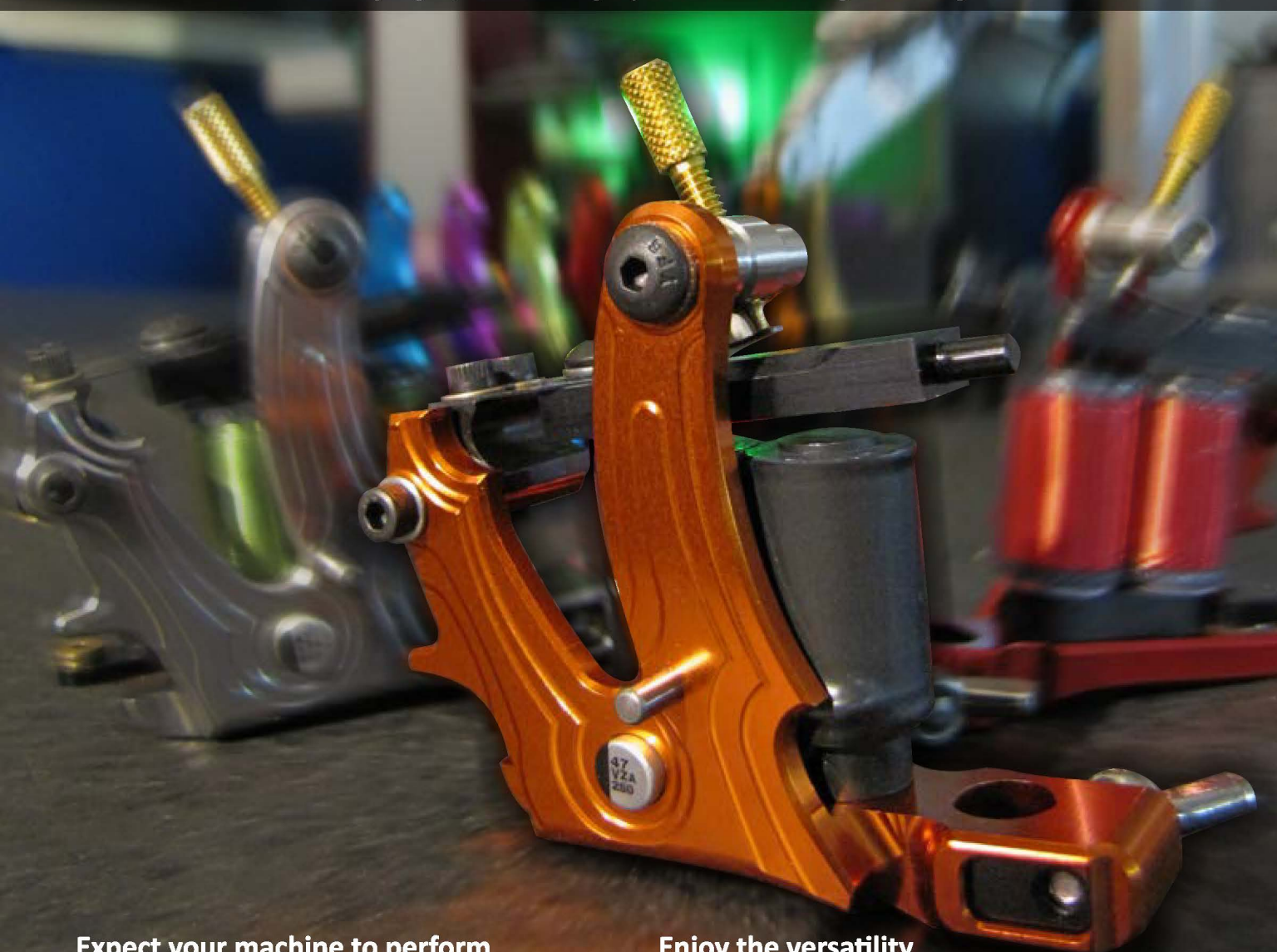
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NEO

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**What year did you start tattooing?** If I remember correctly, I started to learn all of the basics at the age of 16, but I started tattooing maybe four years or so ago.

**How did you get into tattooing?** Well, this is an easy question: My uncle is a tattoo artist. My father and grandfather are artists too.

**What was your first shop experience like?** Well, my career starts in Ireland, in the tattoo shop G's Tattoo Studio. I was starting in this business, so I needed to learn a lot of techniques and I was drawing nonstop. So work was hard; there was a lot of stress and panic if things didn't go well. But I think everybody has to go through this.

**Do you have any special training?** Not really—I learned, like other artists do, from some famous artists' style, like oil painters and drawers, lines again from other artists too. So you're learning styles all together, and at the same time you are trying to learn from a couple people. But I think to learn tattooing, it's all about how artistic you are—and you need to draw a lot.

**What conventions have you done recently or are planning to do this year?** Well, this year I will finish with Brussels Tattoo Convention in Belgium. I did the Berlin tattoo convention, Nordic Ink Festival, and Amsterdam too.

**What is the tattoo culture like in Lithuania?** Well, this is a tough question. More people like tribal in this country, and writing. It's hard down here, hard to push people to choose something really cool and something different. Everybody wants the same classic stuff. So I need to work harder at this point, but it's getting better for sure!

**How do you describe your style?** I can't tell you that. I have my unique style; I do mostly a realistic style, but I'm trying to find my own way. So soon people will see something different from me—I hope.

**What initially drew you to start working in realism?** When I was kid I tried copying faces from magazines, and I like drawing people's faces, hands, everything. I like that tattoos can look real. I like colors and black-and-gray. So sometimes I try to mix colors and black-and-gray, just to experiment. So I think I will stay with realism.

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**What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing?** For sure realistic, but I will try to put something of my own shape in there, or I will try mixing stuff. I really would like to find some new style in the world.

**Before someone gets a tattoo what advice do you give them?** Be sure of your tattoo artist, that he is doing clean, nice tattoos. You need to check the drawings. And how he works with clients. Is he nice to people? Ready to help you with designs and a good choice?

**Is there a tattoo that you haven't been able to do yet that you are dying to do?** There is for sure. I think I'll still keep working on it, you know, so we will see what happens. It's hard to push myself to try something crazy—and I don't know whether people will like it—but I guess the day will eventually come when I find out.

**What tattoo artists do you admire most?** Guys like Phil Holt, who does great tattoos, owns a beautiful shop, runs a very successful pigment company, and finds time to spend with his kids. Though I don't know him personally, from what I hear, Mike Rubendall does the same thing. 📌















## AUGIS TATTOO

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augistattoo.com

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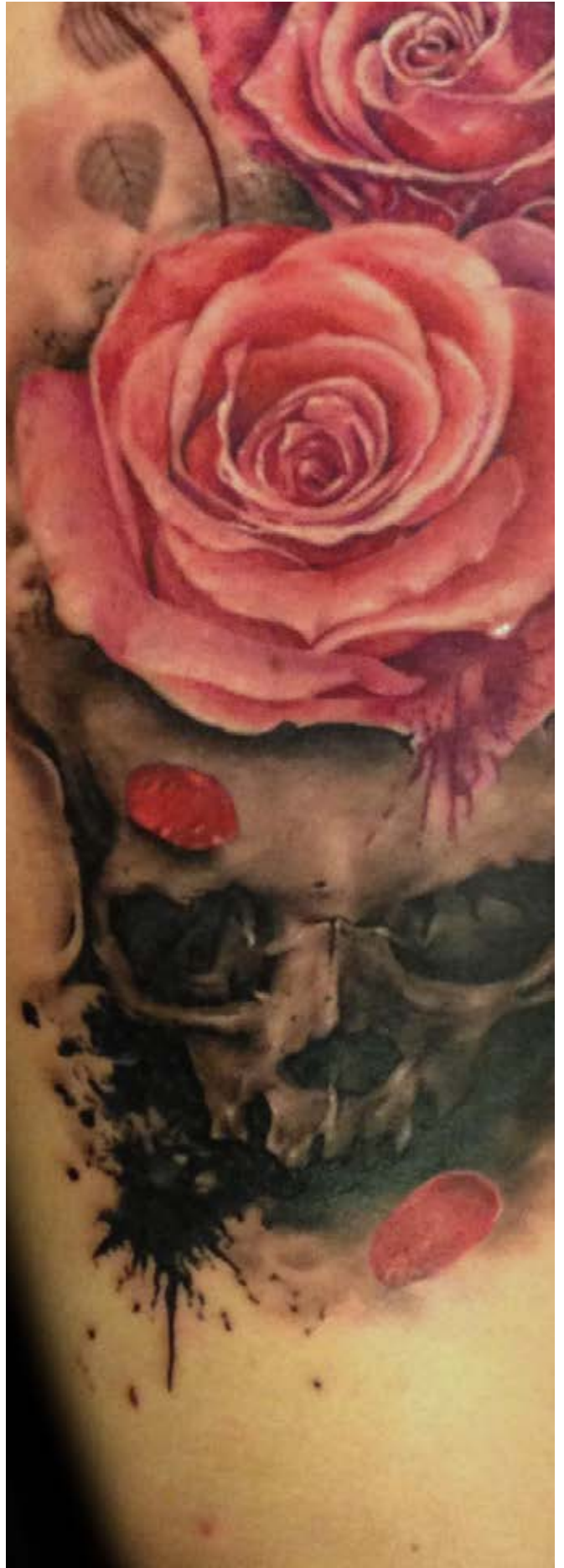
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## DMITRY VISION

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### **What year did you start tattooing?**

I started tattooing full-time in 2010.

### **How did you get into tattooing?**

I started getting tattooed when I was in the Russian military. We didn't have any professional tattooing equipment, so we mostly built our own machines from different electronics we had. I saw a lot of the guys I was with getting logos and military symbols tattooed, but I wanted something different. I chose a design out of a Russian tattoo book. It was a simple design, and the tattoo actually got infected! But it didn't deter my interest in getting tattooed or in starting tattooing. I built my first machine and started practicing on myself. From there I became very interested in the art behind tattoos.

### **What was your first shop experience like?**

The first shop I worked in was located in Connecticut. It was an amazing experience. To be around other artists for the first time was a little overwhelming, but I learned a lot from this shop.

**Do you have any special training?** No, I have had no training or education concerning art. I didn't even start drawing until 2009. Everything I have learned has just been from trial and error.

### **What conventions have you done recently or are planning to do this year?**

I just did the Steel City Tattoo Convention in September. I also have the Philadelphia (Villain Arts) show planned, along with a few others. I've always wanted to work Hell City and do more European conventions as well—perhaps this year I will.

### **What drew you to work in hyperrealism?**

I am interested in difficult challenges, and I find realism to be one of the most challenging. I have tried multiple styles, including biomech, new school, and others. However, I found realism to be the most satisfying. Especially working with skin—it demands an attention to detail that can be overlooked in other styles.

### **What inspires you as an artist?**

I can be inspired by artists of every medium: tattoos, paintings, photography, music, etc. There's a lot of beauty in the world. Different sights and sounds can inspire anybody. I particularly like flowers and women for artistic inspiration.

### **What sets you apart from other artists?**

I feel like I have a certain vision for things that separates me. I try not to get caught in the same traps that I see a lot of great artists fall into. Usually

you can see a lot of artists using the same color palette for every tattoo that they do, or they get stuck on the same reference material. I don't care much for trying to compare my work with somebody else's; I just try to do my best and push myself with every tattoo.

### **What other mediums do you work in?**

I've worked with acrylic, oils, colored pencils, and graphite and charcoal. Now I find myself using Photoshop making digital paintings and sketches. Technology has always had my interest, and I find it amazing that we can use it together with art.

### **How have you branched out from tattooing?**

I mostly focus on tattooing. I don't spend much time with other mediums because I paint on the skin with ink. Tattooing is my medium.

### **What tattoo artists do you admire most?**

In the states, Nikko Hurtado and Carlos Rojas. Outside of the states I enjoy the work of [Dmitriy] Samohin, [Denis] Sivak, and Den Yakovlev. There are a ton of talented artists in the industry, but these are just my most favorite.

**What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing?** I love tattooing portraits of famous rappers, and I'd like



to fully complete my collection. So far I've done Lil Wayne, 2 Chainz, Kendrick Lamar, and Eminem, each one more fun than the last.

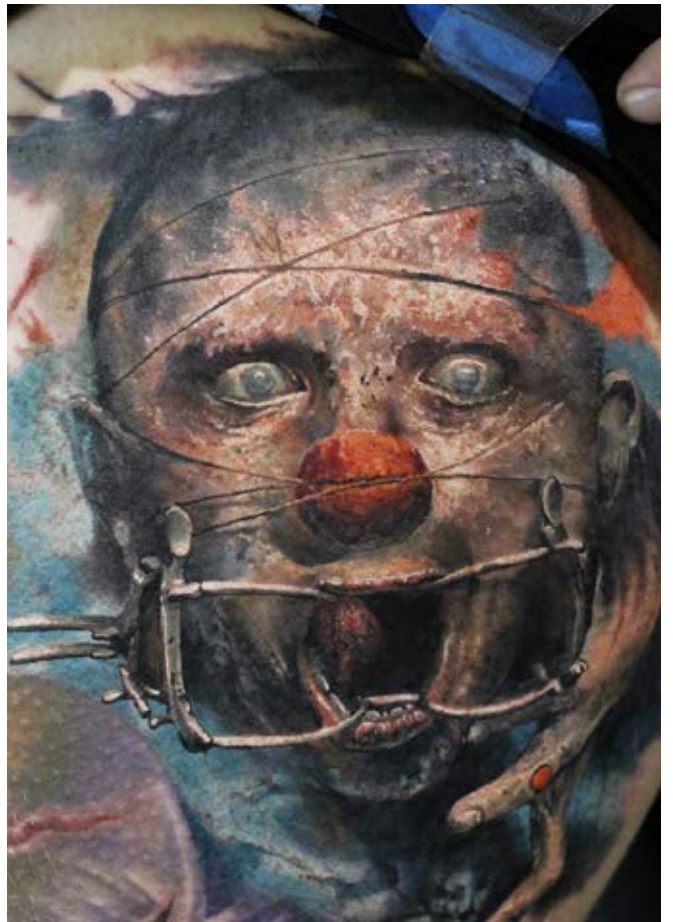
**Before someone gets a tattoo what advice do you give them?** Most importantly, the client needs to trust their artist. I love when a client is also a creative person and has an interesting idea for a tattoo. Other than that, try not to move while I'm tattooing you.

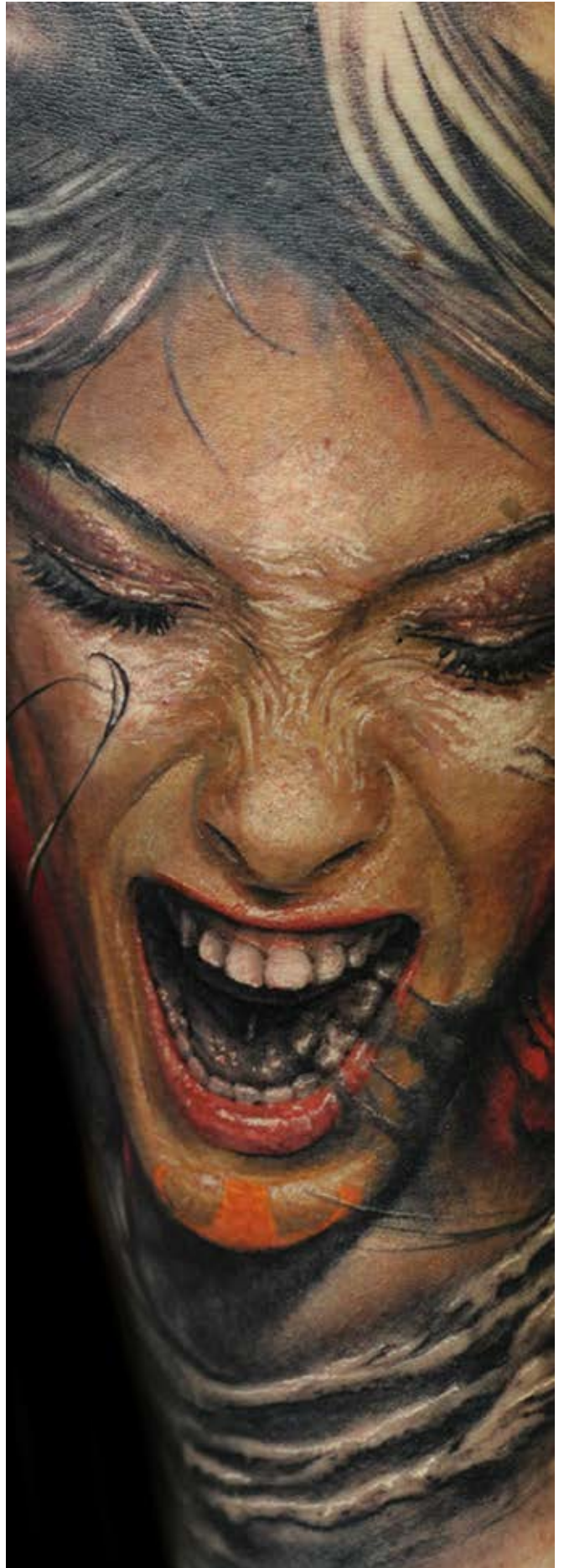
**Is there a tattoo that you haven't done yet that you are dying to do?** Any time I see something that I really want to tattoo, I can usually find a willing client to sit for it.

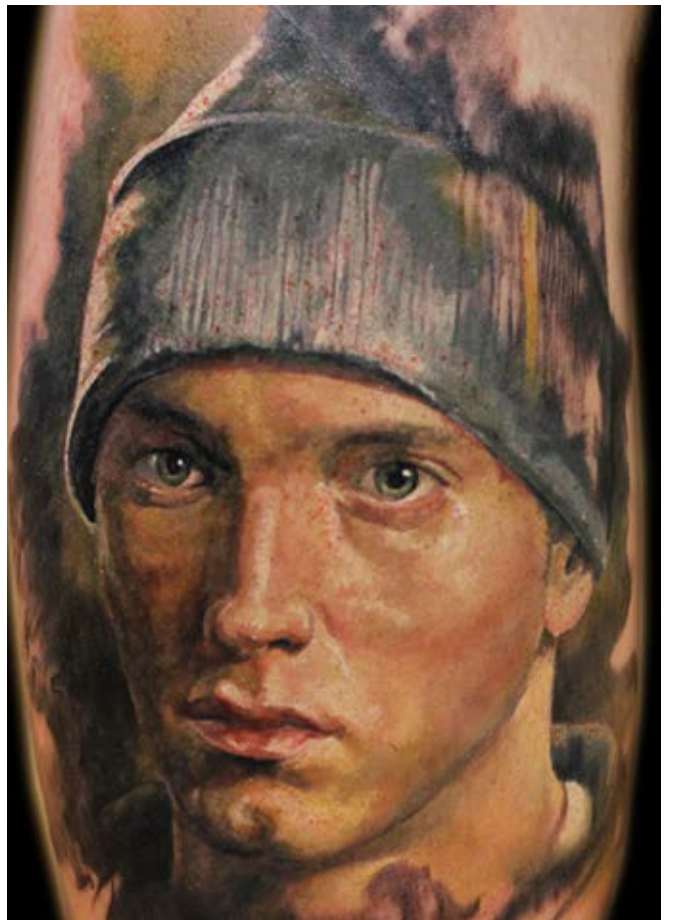
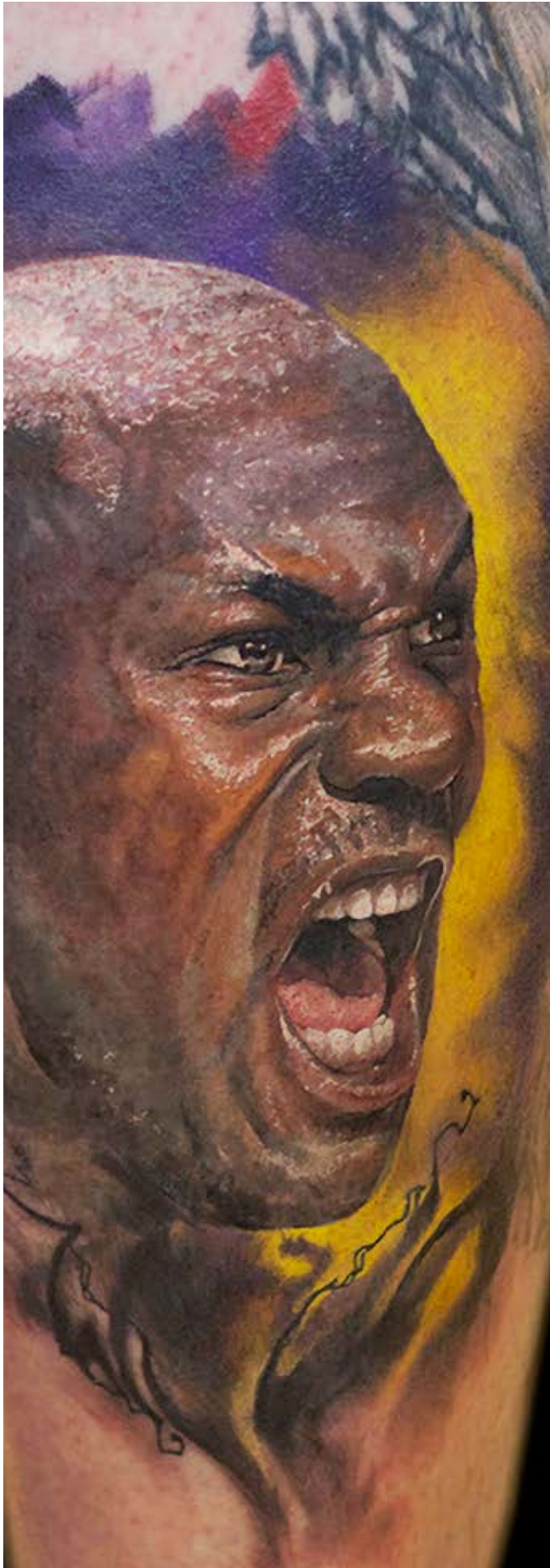
**What has been one of your favorite pieces to tattoo?** I don't have any favorite pieces. I enjoy every tattoo that I do. Even with simple tattoos, I try to find a difficult way to do it, for the challenge. If I had to pick any favorites, I love tattooing skulls and other things with interesting textures. Even though it seems like a generic or overdone object in this industry, you can add a lot of creativity to a piece and make it interesting.

**Is there anyone you would like to tattoo?** Yes. I'd like to tattoo my dad one day. He wants to get a piece by me, and that will be a ton of fun. I can't wait to torture him! 🇺🇸













## OSCAR ASKERMO

Tattoo Studio 73  
St. Mikaelsgatan 2b  
Uddevalla, Sweden 45140  
@/oscaraskermo  
facebook.com/tattooostudio73

**What year did you start tattooing?** I started in 2010, when I was 15 years old. At that time I made my own tattoo machines, which were made out of electrical motors and guitar strings. But when I turned 16 years old, I got my first real machines and started tattooing more and more.

**How did you get into tattooing?** I've been drawing almost all of my life, and somewhere along the way it evolved into doing tattoos and tattooing. I guess it also began with me wanting to have tattoos. I listened to a lot of rock music, and tattoos are a big part of that culture.

**What was your first shop experience like?** When I was 15, I got my first tattoo at a friend's house, by a friend, but I wasn't happy with it so I went to a local tattoo studio to do a cover-up. I had to pretend that I was 18, which was a big part of the experience, breaking the rules. In Sweden you have to be 18 to get a tattoo, as in most countries.

**What was it like getting involved in the tattoo scene at such a young age?** It felt natural—as it grew on me, I knew I wanted to do it. When I first started as an apprentice I was 17 years old, and I remember sometimes not being taken seriously by older customers because of my age. But of course it was really exciting to start working in that environ-

ment and start learning the profession, and I am still learning all the time!

**What is the tattoo culture like in Sweden?** The tattoo culture in Sweden is evolving; in my region it's a lot of black-and-gray, and the people in Sweden are opening their eyes more for new kinds of styles of tattoos. There are many great tattoo artists in Sweden, like Niki Norberg, Heidi Hay, Robert Ekman, Carl Löfqvist, and many more. They all inspire me a lot!

**What first drew you to work in realism?** When I first started out I did almost only old-school and traditional work, but after a while those styles became too basic and boring to do all the time, though it's not an easy task to make a slick and clean traditional tattoo. Realistic tattoos are more interesting and fun to do. It's very different from the classic way of tattooing, so it keeps me entertained.

**How do you describe your style?** Good question! I experiment a lot, as I'm still learning and finding my style. I guess my style can be described as a melancholic mix of all my favorite tattoo artists, as long as it's dark, macabre, psychedelic, or just beautiful.

**What inspires you as an artist?** Anything and everything! Music, mythologies, cultism, a lot of Victorian architecture and art, horror movies, and

sci-fi. But I'm also inspired by artists like Rembrandt, Da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Salvador Dali—and, of course, the people I work with.

**What tattoo artists do you admire most?** I admire Victor Portugal, Bob Tyrrell, Domantas Parvainis, Andy Engel, Carlos Torres, Niki Norberg, Robert Ekman, Dmitriy Samohin, Den Yakovlev, Tommy Lee Wendtner, and my friends and coworkers!

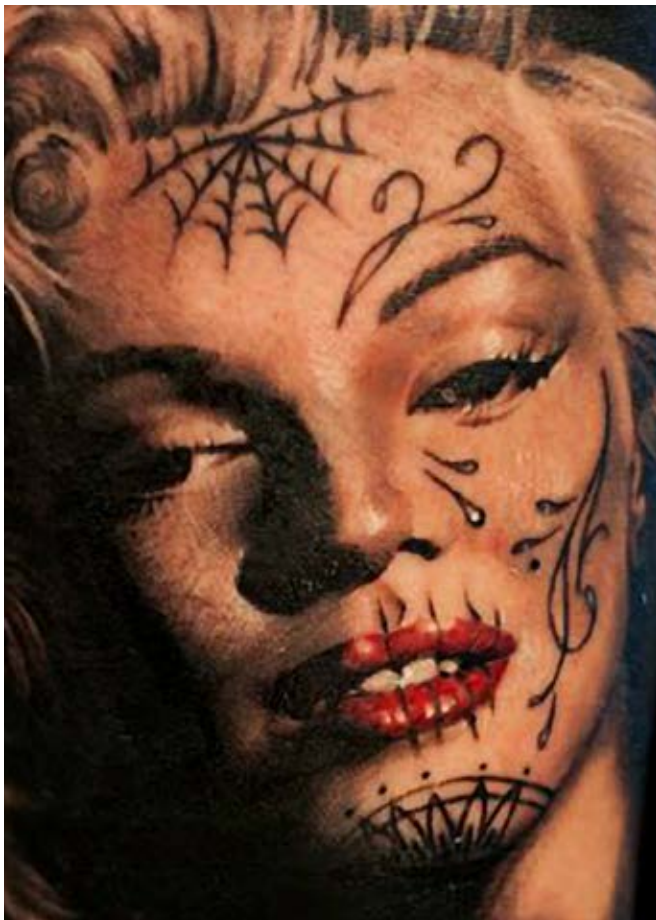
**What other mediums do you work in?** I draw. I like doing a lot of photography, not as much now as I did before, with the tattoos demanding more time! But I've been doing a lot of different things in my life; as mentioned, I used to play a lot of music. I tried sculpting, sewing, acting, experimenting with different types of media to find my thing, doing what I've found exciting at the time. You could say that right now I'm into tattooing, but I think I found my thing. Right now I can't see myself doing anything else other than tattooing. And I aim to keep it that way!

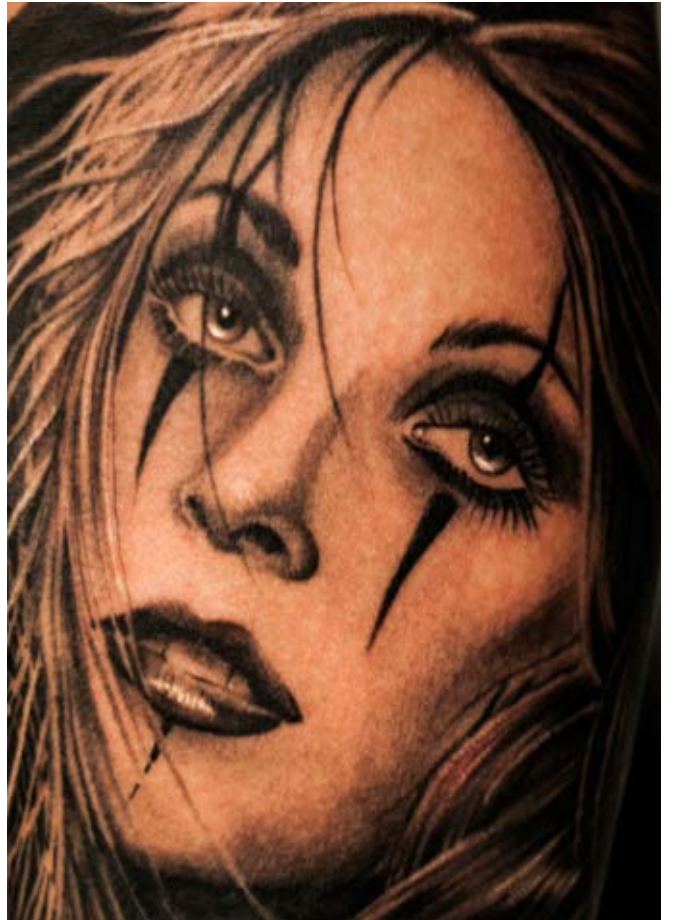
**Before someone gets a tattoo what advice do you give them?** I always tell my customers to get rest and a good meal before getting tattooed. Have a Snickers and Coke while getting tattooed to keep the blood sugar level high and minimize the pain. Also, I appreciate people being sober while I work on them. ■











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A close-up, high-contrast portrait of a man with a beard and tattoos. He is wearing a black baseball cap and has a large, dark, circular earring in his left ear. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting his facial features and the texture of his skin. The background is dark and out of focus.

**MYKE  
CHAMBERS**

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facebook.com/Myke.Chambers.Tattoos  
@mykechambers

**How have you been since *Freshly Inked* last spoke with you?** I've been great. Life has its ups and downs, but that's life, right? It's been a little over two years since the last time you guys interviewed me. So much has happened since then. The most major thing would probably be that I got married to an amazing woman, and that I'm now based in Philadelphia full-time.

**You've been really busy with all the conventions and seminars you've done this year. Can you tell us about some of your favorite shows?** Well, I recently cut back on a lot of conventions. I was doing as many as four a month, at least seven months a year. It just got to be too much. I needed some time in one place to focus on painting more and some large-scale tattoos. Some of my favorite shows are Hell City (Columbus and Phoenix), Detroit, Philadelphia, Boston, Ink-N-Iron, Evian (France), Hampton Roads (Virginia), Asheville Tattoo Fest, Portland (Oregon), São Paulo (Brazil), Athens (Greece), and Paradise Tattoo Gathering. I'll be spending more time traveling abroad in 2014, so I'll be working a few shows I've never been to.

**Your seminars typically focus on watercolors. How does your painting translate to or influence your tattooing? And vice versa?** I definitely feel watercolor translates to tattooing and vice versa, especially with a traditional-influenced style. With oil or acrylics, you can cover mistakes and move on. That's not the case with watercolor or tattooing for the most part. When a mistake is made with watercolor, you have to try and make it appear deliberate. I'm not knocking any other mediums, it's just what I enjoy doing and I've gotten a lot of good feedback from my workshops.

**You started your career traveling the country via freight train. Have your travels influenced your art?** I did. I traveled the States by freight train from a really young age. It was during that time that I really started getting into tattooing. I was very drawn to simple, native-type tribal tattoos in the beginning. Not the '90s "tribal," but the real stuff. I was part of a very close-knit punk counterculture. I was totally against any type of conformity. That's when I got my face tattooed. While traveling with nothing but my backpack, my little brother, and my dog, I ended up falling in love with America. Not the country or the government, but the people that make it up and their diverse culture throughout each region. So yeah, my early travels definitely influenced my art. That's probably why I love traditional Americana tattoos so much.

**You apprenticed in New Orleans. How is the tattoo scene there different from your current location at Northern Liberty Tattoo in Philadelphia?** I did—however, it wasn't your typical apprenticeship. I had already been tattooing on my own—which I don't recommend to anyone—when a friend of mine agreed to show me a few things and took me under him. At the time I was seriously anti-government/establishment, so we opened a completely illegal shop in the Sixth Ward of New Orleans. When we woke up, there was a line at the door every day. The clients mostly wanted names and tribal designs, which was great for me. I wasn't very good, and it was great practice. *[Laughs.]* The difference between there and Philly? I don't even know where to start with that one. It's a world of difference from a Sixth Ward underground shop in the mid-'90s compared with 20 years later.

**Are there any up-and-coming tattoo artists that you think the industry should look out for?** Hell, everywhere I look I see new, amazing tattooers coming out of the woodwork! It's insane. It's taken me 20 years to get to where I am, but I see kids in their second year that are blowing my mind.

**What do you think takes a tattoo from good to great?** I guess that depends on what style we're talking about. If you're talking about traditional-influenced tattoos, most people will say clean line work and solid color saturation. A lot of people think that traditional is easy, but every time I try to explain it, I realize it's actually quite complex. The main thing is to make it look as simple and easy as possible, when it's actually anything but that. Just look around online at traditional tattoos and you'll quickly see the difference in a very well-designed and well-executed tattoo versus a poorly done one, although to the untrained eye it might not be so easy to tell the difference. Then there's a fresh tattoo versus a healed one. Most of the tattoos you see pictures of are fresh, and a lot can change with healing if it's not applied properly.

**What machines and inks do you prefer to use?** I use a few different machines. I always line with coil machines: liners by Keith B Machine-works, Soba, Cory Rogers, Mike Pike, and Chris DeWitt (Amoeba Designs). I use rotaries for shading and color, usually Chris DeWitt (Amoeba Designs) and NeoTat. As far as inks go, I only use Eternal Ink. I've been using it for a number of years now. I tried a lot of others but nothing compared.

I love seeing a 4- or 5-year-old tattoo that looks just as bright and solid as the day I did it. That's a great feeling.

**What have been some of your favorite pieces to tattoo?** While I have a lot of favorites, I don't think it's necessarily the tattoo but more the experience I had with the client at the time it was done. I have so many amazing clients, and the relationship that's built during the process is usually pretty amazing. I'm constantly blown away by the trust people give me to bring their vision into reality. I think a lot of tattooers downplay the significance tattoos hold for each client. That's a serious disservice. Even if the tattoo has no real meaning, just a fun tattoo, the client will still remember the experience for the rest of their life, and it's our duty [as tattoo artists] to give them the best experience we can.

**How has the reputation of tattooing changed since you've been involved in the industry?** When I got into tattooing, it was still very edgy and on the darker fringe of mainstream society. That's actually what drew me to it. It's a completely different story today, especially with the myriad of TV shows and celebrities displaying tattoos. It's become widely accepted, and it's even starting to be considered a fine art, to an extent.

**Who has tattooed you?** Dave "Resp" Cheplivousa, Russ Abbott, Timmy B., Bowery Stan, Jason Kelly, David Bruehl, Nick Colella, Josh Richey, Jack Hinton, Eva Huber, Bunny (Rising Tide Tattoo), Kim Marks, Clint Kephart, Glenn Vail, and Franz Stefanik. I apologize if I missed anyone.

**What led you to start up the *Eternally Bound Sketchbook Series*? Do you have any plans for future sketchbooks in the near future?** Around five years ago, people kept asking if I'd do one, so I said, "What the hell?" Kingpin Tattoo Supply asked to put it out. Evidently people liked it, so I did another a few years later, and then one more. There are three volumes total. The art inside isn't meant to tattoo, but people do. On the first page I ask people not to, stating that it's for reference only. I'm not sure if I'll be putting out anymore of those or not. I'm planning on putting out a book of flash/paintings in late 2014 that is 100 percent for tattooing. I'm also part of a flash book being put together by my friend John Collins in collaboration with a few other tattooers: Paul Nycz, Bill Conner, Michael Broussard, and AJ Lingerfeldt. The release date is early 2014. ■■















# LEATHERNECKS TATTOO

BROOKLYN NY

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## SANDOR PONGOR

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**What year did you start tattooing?** I started officially in 2006, but I had some weak attempts in my parents' house before that. It's better not to mention those attempts.

**How did you get into tattooing?** Some of my friends tried tattooing with homemade machines, but they could not really prosper without artistic and technical skills. They asked me to tattoo them because they knew that I could draw quite well. Needless to say, those were not my best works. But at the moment, when I first held the tattoo machine in my hand, I was enchanted by the whole thing.

**What was your first shop experience like?** I saw real artistic tattooing first around 2005 in a real tattoo shop. I thought, That's a super thing that I have to live through and try myself. A tattoo shop has a spirit that is way better than tattooing around at home.

**Do you have any special training?** Yes, I had! I studied painting and graphics in high school. Later I became more self-improved, and I am still like that to this day. I try to observe everyone, to learn those things I find useful or the things that I believe can help me in getting ahead.

**What conventions have you done recently or are planning to do this year?** I haven't been to a single con-

vention this year yet; I didn't feel like traveling. I will take part only in the Vienna Tattoo Convention in November. I want to get to a lot of these events in the next year. I like these kinds of events very much; they are good for building many new relationships—and above all, you can really learn a lot there.

**What is tattoo culture like in Hungary?** I'm not actually an old hand in this business. I can talk about only my own experiences. My guests can be said to be very courageous among the Hungarian guests. Many people in Eastern Hungary condemn these things and identify them with criminals and prisons. If we look at Budapest and the west side of Hungary, there's a different situation. The people there are much more open-minded and they have higher demands in the arts, and therefore in tattoo as well.

**How do you describe your style?** I cannot isolate. I do not want to get stuck in a certain thing. I have many impressions and they can change my sight in one single moment.

**What inspires you as an artist?** If I like a picture I would like minutes or hours to stare at it. I'd like to prepare such works to make the same effect for other people. If there's only one in the world who likes your work, then it was really worth it to create that.


**What sets you apart from other artists?** Nothing at all; I burn the same fuel as the others.

**What other mediums do you work in?** I like to work with markers very much, and then finish the picture digitally with Photoshop. I am now working on a clothing brand with one of my friends. We design T-shirts and other sweeties. So this is a potential place for advertising. Keep your eyes open—we're coming!

**How have you branched out from tattooing?** I drew and painted before tattooing. I still love these activities and this love has stayed with me over the years. Unfortunately, I don't have enough time for these things.

**What tattoo artists do you admire most?** I could tell you a lot of big names I admire. Highlight first of all Boris: I had, and it seems to be that I will have, an opportunity to work with him. The other name is Otte Timár, I can thank him for a lot.

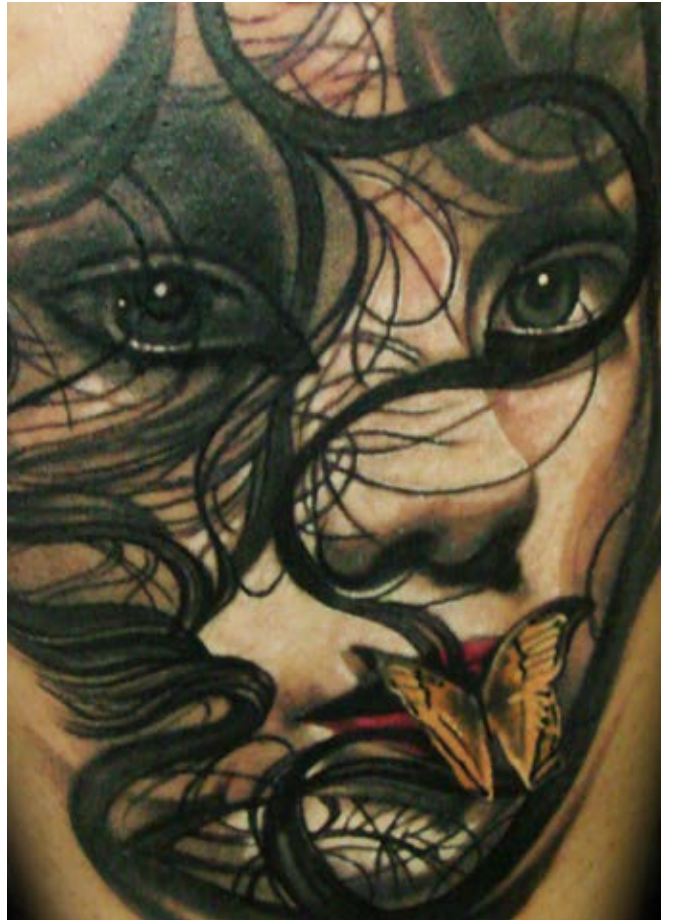
**What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing?** My latest idea is a "Jack The Ripper" tattoo in a possibly larger size, so I'm waiting for the volunteers!

**Before someone gets a tattoo what advice do you give them?** You'd better think well about what you 

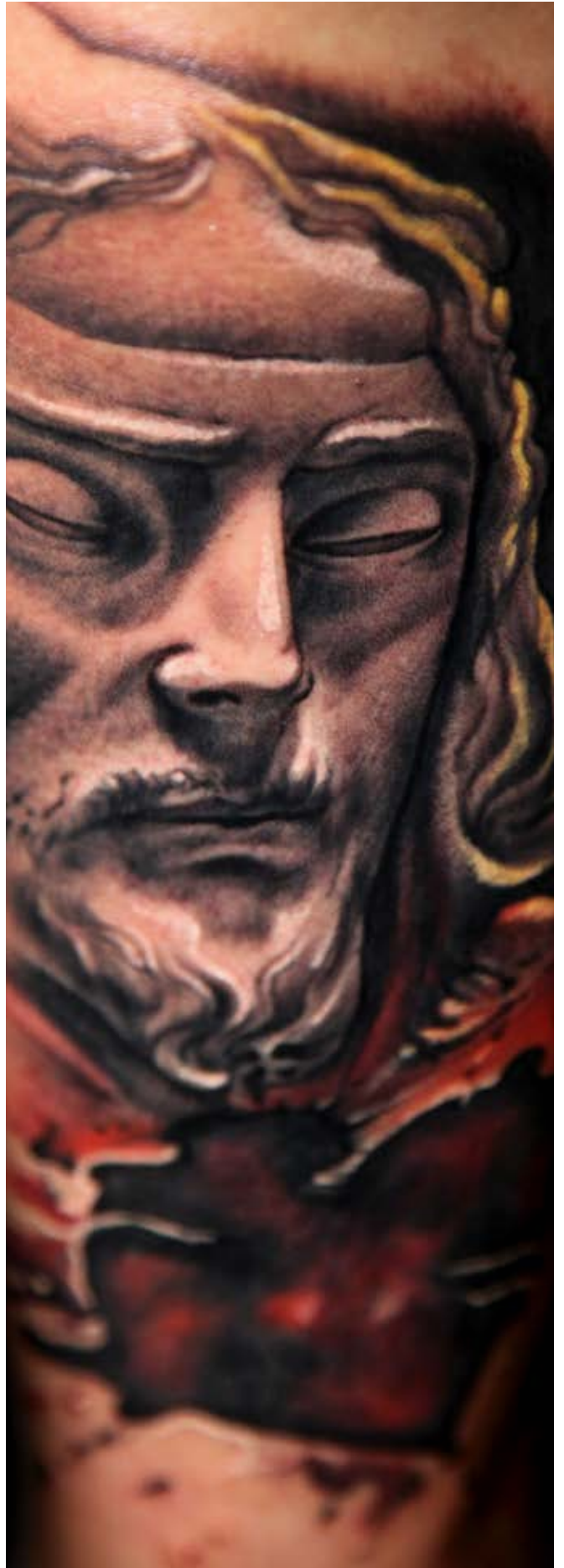














## YOMICO MORENO

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**What year did you start tattooing?** I started tattooing approximately in the year 2003, 2004, in Puerto Cabello, a small city in my country, Venezuela.

**How did you get into tattooing?** I remember an old friend lent me a handmade machine. Ten years ago in my country it was so difficult to find a good machine, needles, or ink; all the artists made the machines themselves, and the needles, etc. The first tattoo I tried was on myself, on my leg. I was scared because I didn't know anything about how to make a tattoo.

**What was your first shop experience like?** It was almost one year after I started in the tattoo world; I remember my first tattoo was a butterfly, and it was the first time that I was trying to use colors. My hand shook and I was sweating, but I think it was a good first experience.

**Do you have any special training?** I like drawing and painting; I think it is always good to do both because they help you understand how to develop an idea for your next tattoo.

**What conventions have you done recently or are planning to do this year?** This year I was at the Liverpool Tattoo Convention, the next stop would be the Florence Tattoo Convention in Italy, and Bogotá in Colombia. Next year I'll be in Denmark,

England, Italy, and Belgium, and it's also possible I'll be in New York.

**What is the tattoo culture like in Venezuela?** I think Venezuela has one of the biggest tattoo cultures in South America. Before, the people were so closed off about tattoos, but now it's frequent that you find people with all of their arm tattooed, the neck, the hand. You can see a beautiful girl with a big piece. Now the people are interested in finding a good tattoo, and we have good tattoo artists working around the world. In January, the International Convention is here, and it's incredible how every year it's bigger and bigger. I think we are on a good tattoo path.

**How do you describe your style?** Realistic. Every day I work to find the way to make better realistic work. I like playing with people's minds, confusing the viewer. I like when people see my work and for a moment wonder if it's real or if it's a tattoo.

**What inspires you as an artist?** Be better and better. Every day when I wake up I want to make my best piece. I want in the future for the people to remember my name as a good artist who remains so through time.

**What sets you apart from other artists?** I think it's the hyperrealistic style; I have always been very curious about the anatomy of the human body, and

when I started with this new skill of tattooing I wanted to re-create everything we have inside, take that anatomy in the tattoo.

**What other mediums do you work in?** Only tattooing. When I decided to be a tattoo artist I did so for the rest of my life. I don't want to do anything different than to tattoo or do the art for it.

**What tattoo artists do you admire most?** Robert Hernandez. I think he changed the way I look at tattoos, the contrast, the highlights, the realistic style; he is a great influence in the tattoo world. I had the opportunity to meet him at the Florence Tattoo Convention in 2012 and he did my hand; it was a big experience.

**What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing?** Full back piece, full arms. Now I have a project to start to make the biggest tattoos and make a tribute to Miguel Ángel Buonarroti [Michelangelo] and Salvador Dalí.

**Before someone gets a tattoo what advice do you give them?** It's necessary to understand that it's for the rest of your life, and after it. If someone wants to get a tattoo do it because you feel it's your best decision, not because you see a reality show or look at a famous singer with tattoos; they need to be personal, and after you do it, you cannot be sorry. ■

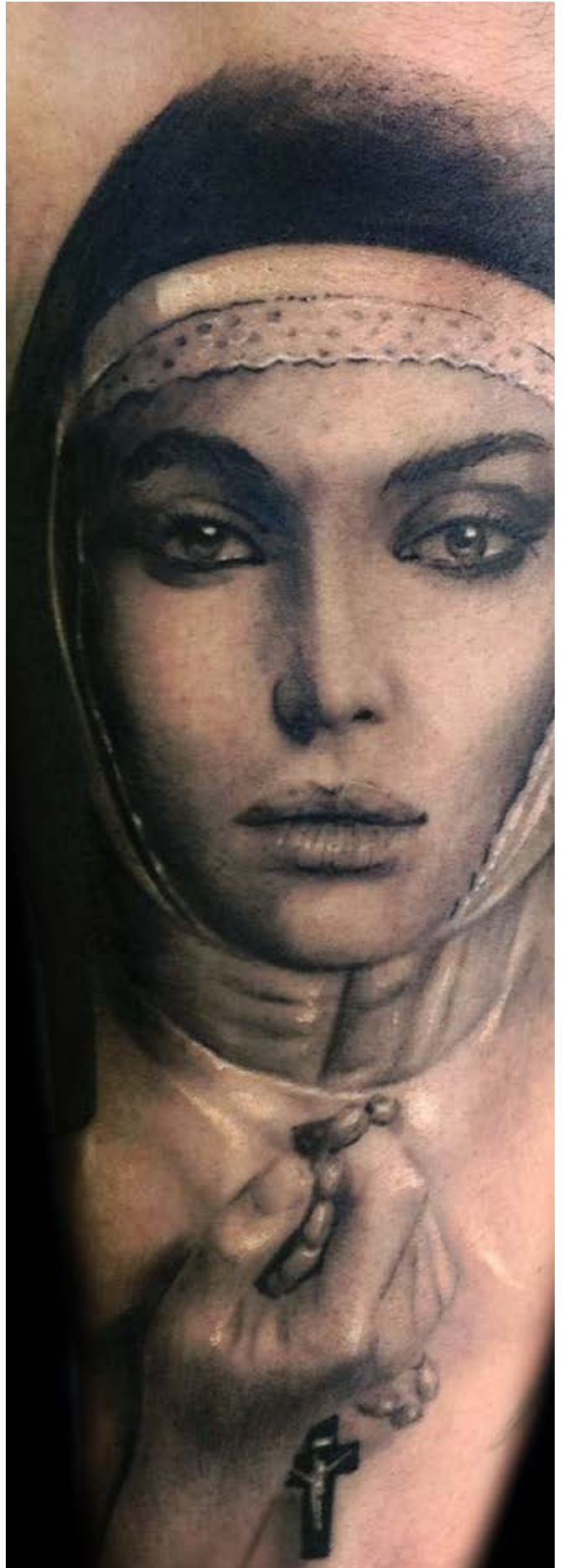














## JUSTIN HARTMAN

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### **What year did you start tattooing?**

I think I started tattooing out of my apprenticeship in '07.

**How did you get into tattooing?** I was going to school for animation, and shortly in, I realized it wasn't really what I wanted to do. I was serving at a restaurant in Arizona called Mimi's Cafe. Occasionally I would serve Darren Yeisley. One day in conversation it came up that Darren was a tattooer, and I mentioned to him being an artist myself. One day I showed up with a portfolio full of my realistic pencil drawings. Darren, being the nice guy that he is, took the time to look through it for me. He said he had a buddy up the street named Sage, who tattooed a lot of black-and-gray and portrait work. So I went up the street to Urban Art with my portfolio. Sage came out, and I handed him my book. He flipped through a few pages without saying anything, and the piercer, Head, came up and looked as well. Sage said to Head, "What do you think?" and Head replied, "I think we need to cut off his hands." Sage flipped through the rest and said, "I'm gonna have a smoke. Come outside." I went outside with him, he lit up a cigarette, inhaled, and said the price of an apprenticeship. I told him I'd hit him up as soon as I got the money. I went to get a loan, but I had no credit at the time, so I put my car up for collateral, and still didn't have enough. I

told him what I could gather, and he was like, "That's cool. We can start." I remember that experience very clearly. He had a lot of confidence in me.

### **Do you have any special training?**

Not really. While studying animation I had to do a ton of line work, making sure each drawing was traced exactly the same so the lines wouldn't move around from frame to frame on film, so that definitely helped me with my line drawings. I took some figure drawing weekly as well at the time.

### **What conventions have you done recently or are planning to do this year?**

The last show I did was Boston. I did the Mesa show here at home, which I always do. I did shows in Reno, Miami, California, and Philly. All I have planned for 2014 so far is the Star of Texas Tattoo Art Revival in Austin in January, and probably Philly right after.

**Your style seems very rooted in traditional style, but with a spin. How do you describe your style?** I guess most people would call it neo-traditional. I started drawing photorealistic pencil drawings when I was 10. I would draw from photographs and get it as close as I could to the photo. I would also re-create comic book images. That's what I drew up until my apprenticeship. When I started learning from the guys at the shop, I started exploring different styles and creating

my own images, which were awful. Traditional was so hard for me at first. I realized I was ignoring my strong points. I didn't want to be traditional; however, I didn't want to do realism. I tried to find a way to incorporate both. I enjoy illustrative types of art and comic book art quite a bit, so all of those things helped develop my style.

### **What inspires you as an artist?**

Other artists, mostly. Everything is so easily accessible now with social media. Most tattooers and artists use it as an online portfolio. There are so many amazing artists popping up all the time. I'm always trying to outdo myself as well. It's like being in competition with yourself. Always trying to find a new and better way to do things.

### **What other mediums do you work in?**

Mostly liquid acrylic. I'm trying to get more into regular acrylic because I feel it would be a better fit for me.

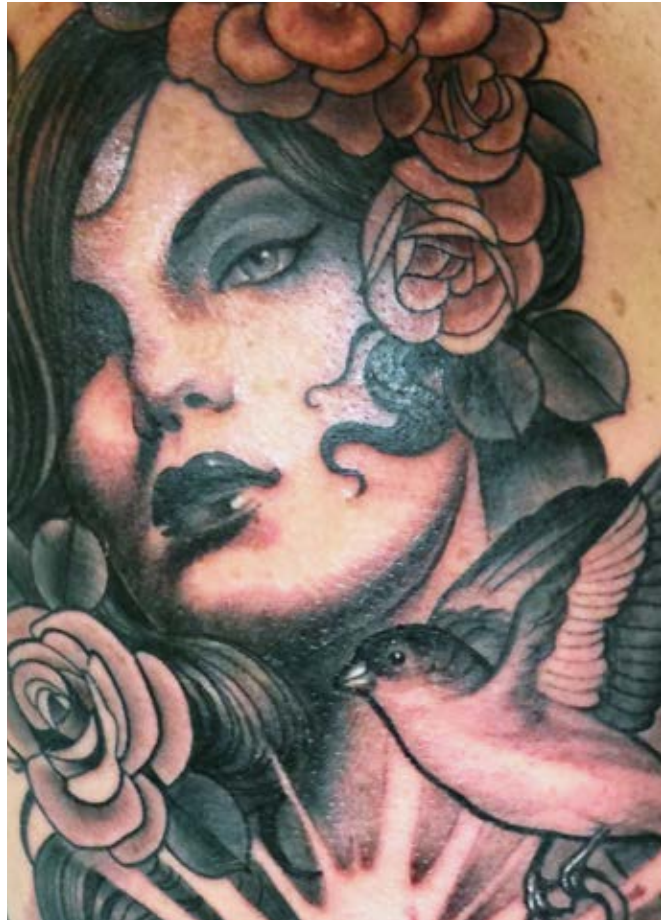
### **Is there a tattoo that you haven't done yet that you are dying to do?**

I think it's a problem to never stop. All artists want to make a different thing every time; it's our signal to know we are growing as artists. My next project would be a full arm with statues of Miguel Ángel Buonarroti [Michelangelo], and I'm looking forward to starting it—but I am sure that when it's complete, I will want to do another tattoo that I've not done yet. 🍻









# MIKE PASTORE PRESENTS MASTERPIECE TATTOO



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## CHAM DOTSTOLINES

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**What year did you start tattooing?** I started tattooing last spring, 2012.

**How did you get into tattooing?**

I got my first tattoo three years ago from Avi Vanunu at Psycho Tattoo Studio in Tel Aviv. It was one of the strongest impacts of my life, as I found the tattoo procedure super spiritual and life-changing.

**Do you have any special training?**

I never had any artistic background, never created art besides playing a guitar as a hobby, and for sure nothing that has to do with drawing or tattooing. In fact, I was not really attracted to tattoos before I started to think about getting one—I can't really explain why it happened. I think that there is a stage in life in which everyone thinks about getting a tattoo.

**What was your first shop experience**

**like?** I decided to copy my life over to Berlin. I'd never been there before, but I had a good feeling about the place, and to take the chances to learn how to be a tattoo artist there seemed more realistic than it would be in Israel. I sold everything I'd ever had and landed in Berlin in search of the opportunity of an open door. Landing in Berlin was easy; finding a place to live and a shop that would take me was very hard. I was couch surfing for three months, and after finding a place to live I started my search for a shop. I didn't have any

portfolio to show and no experience in drawing, just a lot of motivation and a lot of hope. Finally, I found a place that allowed me to have a little room in the back and practice on punks who didn't care how their tattoos looked, and I got to clean the place as a reward for it. I guess they didn't really believe that I would succeed as a tattooist, but they really couldn't resist the motivation I showed. After two months of practicing I started to feel more and more secure with my tattoo machines and started to get my own customers.

**How do you describe your style?**

It is hard for me to categorize my tattoo style as a certain style. But as weird and minimalistic as this style is, it is like it is being asked not to be categorized into a certain conventional style or pattern. I actually started to make those designs because it was weird for me that people try to categorize tattoos and other art forms. I could say that I have that split in my designs, just like in my personality: I make those art-minimalistic lines—the computer kid inside me—and very detailed mandalas, the spiritual man inside me. I do a lot of freehand with my tattoo designs. Most of the lines are designed, and the process of designing is sometimes longer than the tattooing process itself. Our bodies are not symmetric, and to try to put a symmetric design on a non-symmetric object most of the time ends with it looking like a sticker. I experi-

ment a lot, like on a daily basis—which is a bit risky when it comes to a non-reversible form of art, but I guess that is the only way to develop your own style as an artist and create something individual daily. I use black as the main color for my tattoos simply because I think that it is the only color that will look timeless on a timeless design. I also think that it looks good on our bodies, more than any other color. I do use red sometimes, but it is very rare.

**What inspires you as an artist?**

I get inspiration from nature; I think that it is the most honest thing for us artists to get inspired from. I try always to balance my designs as nature does with its creations. When a design is too geometric it often creates a cold feeling; the goal is to find the right balance in it.

**What sets you apart from other artists?**

I am a very spiritual person; I traveled in India for a year, and since then I've adopted a very Buddhist way of life. On the other hand, I was a computer guy who saw the world in a drastic and definite way.

**What is the tattoo culture like in Berlin?**

It is pretty hard for me to talk about the tattoo culture in Germany, as I was not raised here and I have been exposed to it for just around one and a half years. The answer will be a surprise for me as well. ■















## CHRIS GHERMAN

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Currently Travelling United States  
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### **What year did you start tattooing?**

I started tattooing back home in Transylvania in 1995. I was living in Budapest, Hungary, at the time and my friend asked me if I wanted to join him to go to a friend's house to get tattooed. At that time tattooing in Hungary and Romania were still virgin territories, unless of course you count the prison tattoos. We went there the next day and the guy was an old-school biker tattooing from his home. While he was preparing the tattoo, I started asking him questions and kept a close eye on everything that he was doing. I was very curious about the whole process. After two hours of tattooing, and after a few beers, I got the courage to ask the tattoo artist if he would let me tattoo for a few minutes. He said if my friend did not mind then he would go have a smoke while I tried my skills. I got the shakes and started to sweat profusely as soon as I touched the machine, with its weight and vibration and a bleeding arm in front of me. I rigged the needle in and attempted to do what the tattoo artist had been doing. But after digging the needle in and moving my hand, and then cleaning up the blood, I realized nothing came about. Of course, I had no idea about skin stretching and how fast to move my hand. That was my first experience, and I fell immediately in love with tattooing. To celebrate I got super drunk that night. The next day I woke up, still drunk from the night before, and I had the bravest idea ever: to buy tattoo equip-

ment. The biker directed me to a shop I would never forget: Dark Art Tattoo. I spent all the money I had saved in the three years I'd been working hard in Hungary, and I bought the best and most expensive equipment they had. I have never regretted it and never looked back since.

**What was your first shop experience like?** My first shop experience was a mess. I was doing an intricate Celtic design and I screwed up the stencil as it washed away. Because I did not have enough experience, I didn't know what to do. I panicked but was trying to act cool. I asked my business partner to freehand it for me. Lesson learned: Do not mess up the stencil, and do learn how to draw. At that time I did not have any artistic skills, aside from dancing, but that was no help in a tattoo shop. The following year I joined art school and finished two years of classic animation.

**What is it like owning a tattoo shop like 13 Fat Catz?** I think owning 13 Fat Catz Studio was the beginning of my tattoo career. Previous to that I had owned another shop with my business partner from 2002 until 2007. I took a year off to do one year of sound engineering. My motivation was killed because I was fed up with bad requests from the customers: stars, tribals, Irish flags, shamrocks and the Fighting Irish, unicorns, tramp stamps, and the mighty "Mom" and "Dad." So I took a year off and spent all

the money I'd saved on a musical adventure. After realizing that music was not what I wanted to do, I decided to open up my own tattoo shop, 13 Fat Catz, and do it my way. I would only do what I wanted and refused to do any more of the stupid and mindless tattoos. Soon after I was able to practice and develop my own signature style and I became known in the area.

**What is the tattoo scene like in Dublin?** Dublin's scene is pretty slow, unfortunately. The mentality is still a bit behind, but it's picking up now with all the tattoo TV shows. Luckily, I had customers who trusted me, which allowed me to develop my own style.

**What conventions have you done recently or are planning to do this year?** My last conventions were in New York and Chicago. I plan on starting strong in January 2014: the Argentina convention, in Mar del Plata, where I will also be doing a seminar. After which I will be flying to Belgium for another convention, and then I'm off to the Milano convention in the beginning of February. I will also be doing some guest spots in Switzerland, Spain, Germany, and Dublin. I should be back in New York City by the end of February. My plan is to do at least 15 conventions in 2014 here in the USA and in Europe, and hopefully a bit further.

**How do you describe your style?** My style is hyperrealism.



**You're known for your eye tattoos. What made you want to tattoo eyes?** It happened purely by mistake. While I was having a discussion with a friend under the influence of some beers, we started a debate on what has been done and what has not been done in the tattoo industry, and how to make yourself known. I knew that the eye scene was missing and what had been done so far did not have a powerful impact for the public. So I asked him if he wanted an eye tattoo. He said yes. And from that one eye tattoo, I was asked to do many more.

**What inspires you as an artist?** Everything around me, especially nature. I take loads of photographs for my references. But then again, any kind of art is an

inspiration, like trips to museums, and especially the architecture of places when I travel.

**What sets you apart from other artists?**

I think my background. I started tattooing in a country where it was virtually nonexistent and did not quit.

**What other mediums do you work in?**

Painting and digital painting. I would love to try sculpture one day.

**What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing?** I definitely would love to do a leg sleeve with all the eye expressions from young to old. Actually, I had that planned on a friend but I left Dublin before I could start. 🇮🇪















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SHANG

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**What year did you start tattooing?** 2003.

**How did you get into tattooing?** By chance—a friend of mine wanted to have a tattoo, but he could not find a tattooist. As he knows that I can do paintings, he boldly asked me to do the tattoo on him.

**What was your first shop experience like?** Probably because it was my first time setting up a studio, the conditions were rudimentary in every aspect, and my family was not familiar with tattoos. I hadn't made enough preparations, including promotion; most of the clients were acquaintances after the studio was set up. But one thing I was very sure of then was that I would devote all my life to this art and seek perfection.

**Do you have any special training?** I was enrolled in the China Academy of Art in 1998, and I majored in oil painting. I also learned pottery, sculpture, Chinese painting, and Chinese calligraphy during those years.

**What conventions have you done recently or are planning to do this year?** I've joined so many events, including the Supreme Culture and Art Festival that I planned myself. The festival covers art forms of sculpture, handmade art, humanity, country music, modern rock, food, tattoos, fine arts, calligraphy, and performance art. All these forms of art shown on the

same platform gave me rich thoughts and learning experiences.

**What drew you to your particular style?**

My major is oil painting and western fine arts. But in tattoo art, which has a long history, I see a blank area in traditional Chinese culture and style. The sublime nature, majesty, and elegance of Chinese painting are far beyond the imagination. Just like Chinese poetry, Chinese painting has gone far from its origins of narration of objects and description of shape; more than a thousand years ago it entered the phase of magnificent artistic conception. This phase is a supreme realm that aims to express the authors' will and feeling. I try to reflect sentiment and realm in my tattooing.

**What inspires you as an artist?** Love. Love is the only effective motive and source for humanity's recognition of things. As a tattoo artist, I love my family, love human beings, and love every tree and bush around me. And what's more, I love the Chinese culture, where my roots are. Without love, there wouldn't be an ancient art form like tattooing. It is all for love that keeps me having a pure heart and a free mind. Love for Chinese culture: I love Chinese architecture, pottery, costume, fine arts, etc.; they are all my fertile ground for tattoo creation and my source of inspiration.

**What sets you apart from other artists?**

Because of my love for Chinese traditional culture, I absorb the essence of Chinese culture, and reflect them in my aesthetic perception with the structure, colors, lines, and dots of my tattoo work. That's how I set my style apart from the others.

**What is the tattoo culture like in China?**

The modern Chinese tattoo culture is brand new. It just has dozens of years' history.

**What other mediums do you work in?**

I have been doing handmade creations all the time. It's my hobby; art is the way I draw nourishment from the world.

**How have you branched out from tattooing?** I don't like imitations or copies; I love creation and independence. So I learn from the traditional Chinese culture and bring that into my tattoos.

**What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing?** I love the combination of Chinese painting and calligraphy in tattooing. I use calligraphy to draw the lines of tattoo works all over the body. But no other tattooist could do my tattoo works so far.

**Before someone gets a tattoo what advice do you give them?** Since I am good at traditional art forms, I would give them suggestions from these perspectives on how to express their idea into tattoo works. ■



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## JAMES MULLIN

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**What year did you start tattooing?**  
1993, to be exact.

**How did you get into tattooing?** My best friend, Matt, went to get a tattoo at the local tattoo parlor once he turned 18. I was really intrigued because I have been fascinated with tattoos since I was a young boy. My father, a diehard biker, has many tattoos. So once my best friend got one, I was motivated to get my own! So I went to the same local tattoo parlor, it was called Dragon Ray's Tattoo. He welcomed me in, then told me to sit down in his chair, and I got my first piece done on my calf. It was Wolverine from Marvel Comics. A buddy of mine came by the shop while I was getting it done and told Dragon Ray that I was an artist and that I had drawn flyers for his punk band. Dragon Ray said he was looking for an apprentice, since his current one had just left. So the next day, I brought all my drawings I had been doing to him, and he asked me if I wanted to learn to tattoo. I did. I fell headfirst into it and never looked back.

**Do you have any special training?**  
I take a blood pathogen course every year to keep my license current and to keep up to date on all the facts surrounding blood-borne diseases.

**What conventions have you done recently or are planning to do this year?** I was lucky enough to be invited to Bei-

jing, China, and to tattoo at the Lang Fang Tattoo Convention. I attended Tommy's Tattoo Convention in Connecticut and won best tattoo of the day, the Inxtravaganza convention here in Anaheim, and coming up next year I'm doing the Best of the Midwest in Iowa, the Body Art Expo in San Francisco, and Tommy's Tattoo Convention, so far. I would love to be invited to do Hell City in Columbus and Arizona.

**What drew you to your particular style?**  
I'm a pretty versatile artist; I can do everything from realism to traditional. But my favorite is neo-traditional. What drew me to it was my love for new school and traditional and bringing those two styles into one perfect art form: bold outlines, with fine lines showing the detail, and bright colors, with old-school designs and ideas.

**What inspires you as an artist?** Seeing what other artists do daily on Instagram. Whether it be paintings, tattoos, drawings, etc., it motivates me to push myself harder and farther. Seeing the work ethic of David Tevenal, for example, changed the way I spent my free time. Now I draw or paint every day, then go to sleep, then start over the same thing the next day. It's improved my tattooing tenfold.

**What sets you apart from other artists?**  
Being versatile—doing everything and not just sticking to one style. I love

doing portraits, Japanese, biomechanical, butterflies, especially flowers. Roses are my favorite flower to draw and tattoo. I think I've mastered my own unique style to the rose tattoo to where if you see a rose tattoo I've done, you can say, "That's a James Mullin rose."

**What other mediums do you work in?**  
I do watercolor and I do marker drawings. I've been using Copic markers for about a year now and instantly fell in love with them.

**How have you branched out from tattooing?** When I'm not tattooing I draw or paint tattoo designs. The only other creative outlet I have is music. I play drums. It's not too hard to keep a beat and hit things. It gives me exercise, and it's fun!

**What tattoo artists do you admire most?**  
When I first started, it was Gill Montie's skulls and Filip Leu's dragons and style. Then Tony Ciavarro's new school changed the game for me. And now it's David Tevenal, Timmy B., Emily Rose Murray, and Green Bay Bully.

**Before someone gets a tattoo what advice do you give them?** Usually location advice, like where the tattoo placement would look best. Or design advice, like if I think it will be something they'll regret in the future, I might try to talk them into something more timeless that will be beautiful forever. ■





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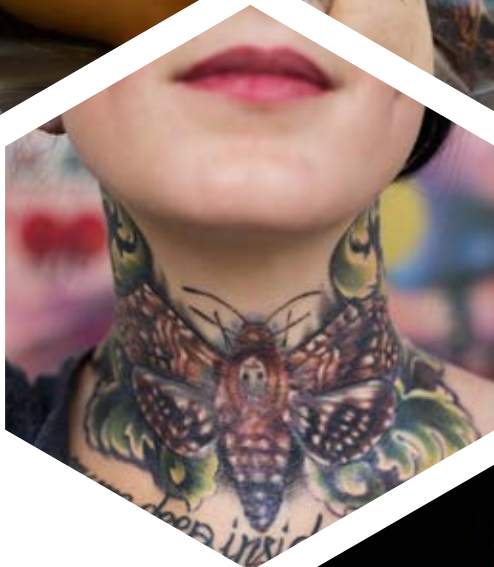
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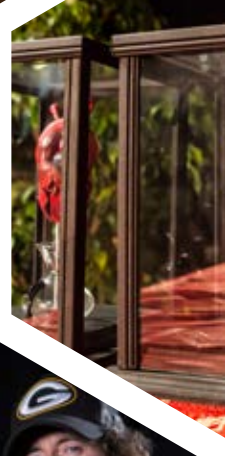
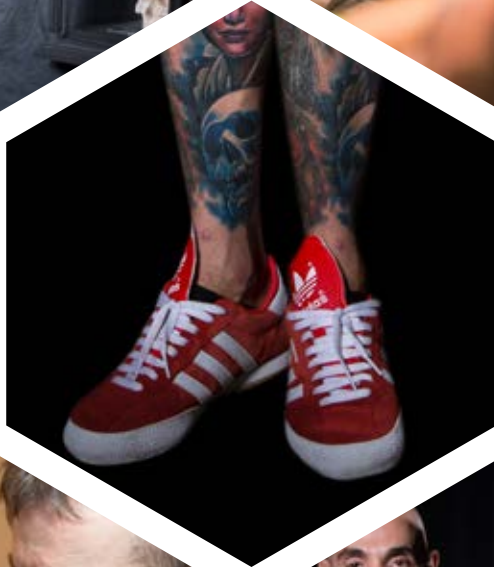


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## EVIAN TATTOO EXPO

Always focused on discovery and international artists, Evian has once again been the epicenter of an earthquake of creativity and "savoir-faire." The convention does not owe its reputation to the beautiful, idyllic scenery it is set in, but to the rarely matched line-up and to the quality inversely related to its size. The presence of Americans is massive: Liz Cook, Timmy B, Tye Harris, Jeremy Miller, Tanane Whitfield and Tony Ciavarrò. But the impressive American presence has not shadowed the many artists who came from Eastern Europe, Japan, Italy, Australia, and Great Britain who swelled Evian's line-up this year. Among the eclectic list, two Italian masters cannot go unnoticed: Sir Matteo Pasqualin for his realistic style, and Marco Galdo for his graphic tattoos. Let's not forget to mention two British counterparts: Leah Moule and Mat Lapping who delighted the lovers of flashy colors and solid lines. The convention season ends on a crystal-clear statement: between the avalanche of new events and the emulation of two new French monsters, 2013 has been a pivotal year for France. And 2014 announces itself full of promises...



words and photos by P-MOD

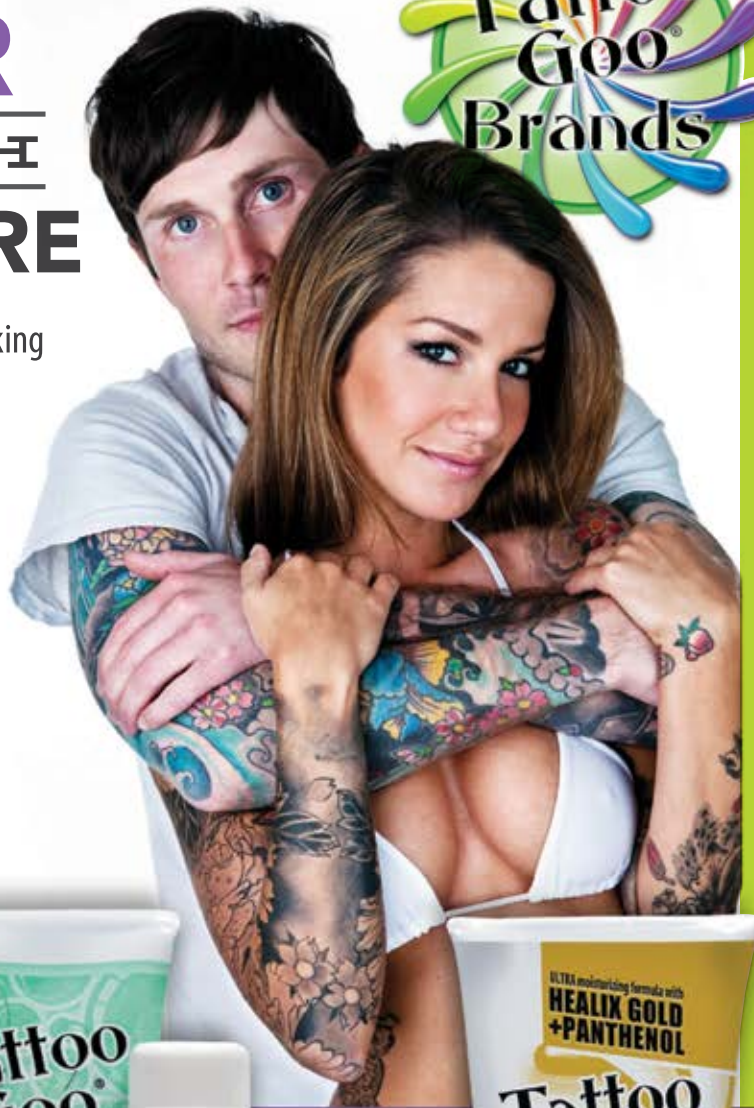
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## NIKKO HURTADO ART SHOW

Nikko Hurtado is known in the tattoo industry as one of the best color portrait artists to arise in the last decade, but he is also an amazing painter. This fall he hosted his first ever solo art exhibition, Renati, in Santa Monica's Copro Gallery. What few may know is that Hurtado got into painting after he was well established in the tattoo industry. So, when he displayed a piece like "Dermographic Illumination" he was not only showing his natural talent in art through his design of the pink haired girl with the tattoo machine, but also how the tattoo industry is heavily involved with traditional art forms like painting. After the great success of Renati, there is a lot to look out for in what other great works Nikko Hurtado will present to the art world.

photos by TAADOW69K



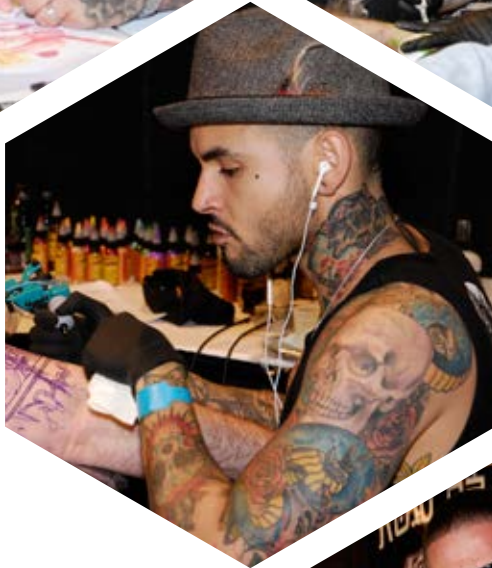
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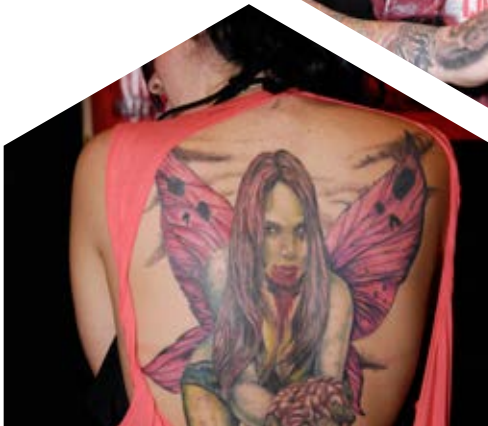
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## ATLANTIC CITY TATTOO EXPO

The 2013 Atlantic City Tattoo Expo was three days of non-stop ink at the Tropicana Casino and Resort in good old AC, New Jersey. Some of the most diverse artists were in attendance including lettering master Big Meas, Freshly Inked cover artist Jon Mesa, and Baltimore based realism artist, Halo. The Expo was emceed by convention circuit favorites, The Brothers O'Brien, who helped ring in the bells for mentalist Lucas Simmons and the Pin Up Beauty Contest presented by Little Darling's Pinups for Pitbulls. Get ready for next year, come on down and get tattooed!



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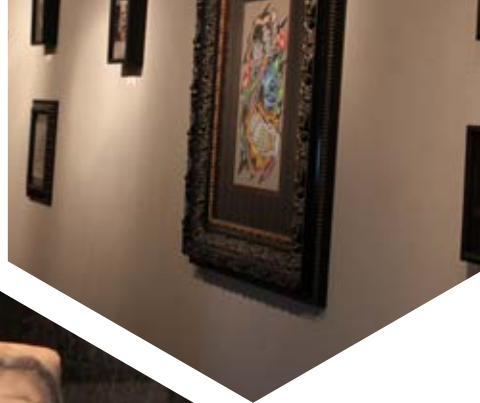
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## POUND OF FLESH ART SHOW

A Pound of Flesh is a company dedicated to helping tattooists reach their full artistic potential without having to experiment with new techniques on their clients. This company has grown to success by creating skin-like synthetic hands and arms for tattoo artists to practice on by simulating as real a canvas as possible. Earlier in November, A Pound of Flesh along with Pigment Dermagraphics held one of the most intriguing art galleries of 2013. The 769 Art Show: A Tribute to Sgt. Chris Doles was held in honor of A Pound of Flesh co-owner Shaun Miller's father in law, Sgt. Chris Doles, after his tragic passing several months prior to the show. All night the gallery showcased and sold synthetic hands tattooed by some of the best artists around. Everyone from Scotty Munster to Jeremy Miller to Thomas Page participated in styles ranging from Biomechanical to Traditional Americana to Sean Brown's portrait of the Internet star, Grumpy Cat. In honor of Sgt. Chris Doles, all proceeds from the show were donated to a division of the Lakeway Police Foundation designed to help support underprivileged children. go unnoticed: Sir Matteo Pasqualin for his realistic style, and Marco Galdo for his graphic tattoos. Let's not forget to mention two British counterparts: Leah Moule and Mat Lapping who delighted the lovers of flashy colors and solid lines. The convention season ends on a crystal-clear statement: between the avalanche of new events and the emulation of two new French monsters, 2013 has been a pivotal year for France. And 2014 announces itself full of promises...





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## ST. LOUIS OLD SCHOOL TATTOO EXPO

Each year famed San Fran tattooist Lyle Tuttle presents the St. Louis Old School Tattoo Expo. The Expo is focused on bringing the old traditions of tattooing into a modern light. Great artists like Tim Kern, Scotty Munster, and Ink Master's Jime Litwalk attended. And James Kern even held two seminars on how to tattoo the impossible and advanced cover-ups. So if you're in need of some quality work, a great cover-up, or maybe just want to see how the world of tattooing has evolved over the years, stop by St. Louis for next year's show.





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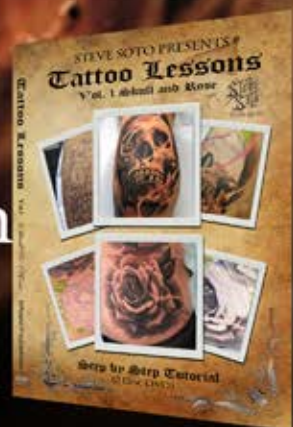
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