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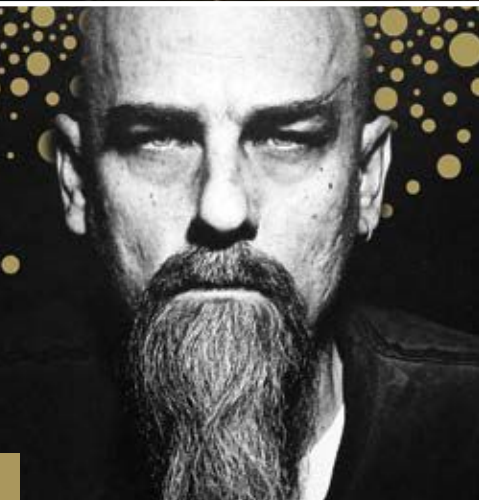
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FRESHLY INKED, ISSN (2160-0988) Issue 22, is published bimonthly by Quadra Media, LLC 12 West 27th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10001.

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ALEX BRUZ

What year did you start tattooing?

February 7, 2012 I remember it perfectly.

How did you get into tattooing?

I never thought about tattooing, I started as a client and one day I bought my own equipment because I wanted to learn, inspired by my father who is an artist and sculptor.

Did you have formal training?

When I decided to learn I attended many seminars held by national and international artists. I'm mostly self taught, I researched information, and I observed what other artists did when they tattooed me.

You are sponsored by a few companies, what do these sponsorships mean to you?

It is the best, and I do not see it as a publicity exchange. I see it as people and companies that believe in what I do, and trust in my talent. That support is what makes me committed, what gives me the passion to do what I love every day better. I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to say thank you to my sponsor Electricink and Universal Tattoo Supply, who supply me with the materials I need to work. I recently joined Hush anesthetic, and Volcom has been there forever.

You work mainly in black and gray, why have you decided to do?

It's not that I prefer to work in black and grey tones; it's that because of the skin tone of the majority of my clientele, mostly Venezuelan, it is recommended to use "shadows", so that the color doesn't dull out.

You occasionally work in color, which do you prefer and why?

I recommend using color when the person's skin is very fair. Although I enjoy working in color; it is more practical for me to work with shadows because it only requires the use of black with water.

What about realism appeals to you as an artist?

I generally try to be an integrated artist, despite the fact that there are styles that I still haven't mastered, like oriental, but realism for me is a challenge, to achieve a photograph's dominance of light, contrast and volume.

How do you test your boundaries as an artist?

Working everyday, working hard on each job. I try to be a perfectionist, and pay attention to the details in each piece. I give myself challenges like finishing a whole piece using only one machine, with only one magnum 15 needle.

What other media do you work in?

Only Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, and working on my website.

What tattoo artists do you most admire?

In my country Axel Lopez who was my tattoo artist, and has given me many tips, Darwin Enriquez who is a great artist and is always evolving, Emerson Pabon who is a comprehensive and high quality human being, and international Nikko Hurtado who is an icon in color and solid technique.

Do you travel for conventions? Which will you attend this year?

Up to now I have only attended conventions in my own country, but I do have plans to accept the invitations I have received from other countries.

You are living/working in Venezuela, what is the tattoo scene like there?

There is still prejudice and it is still thought to be taboo. In the past few years people's views on tattooing have evolved greatly. In a sense a new generation of artists of artist being born, myself included.

What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing?

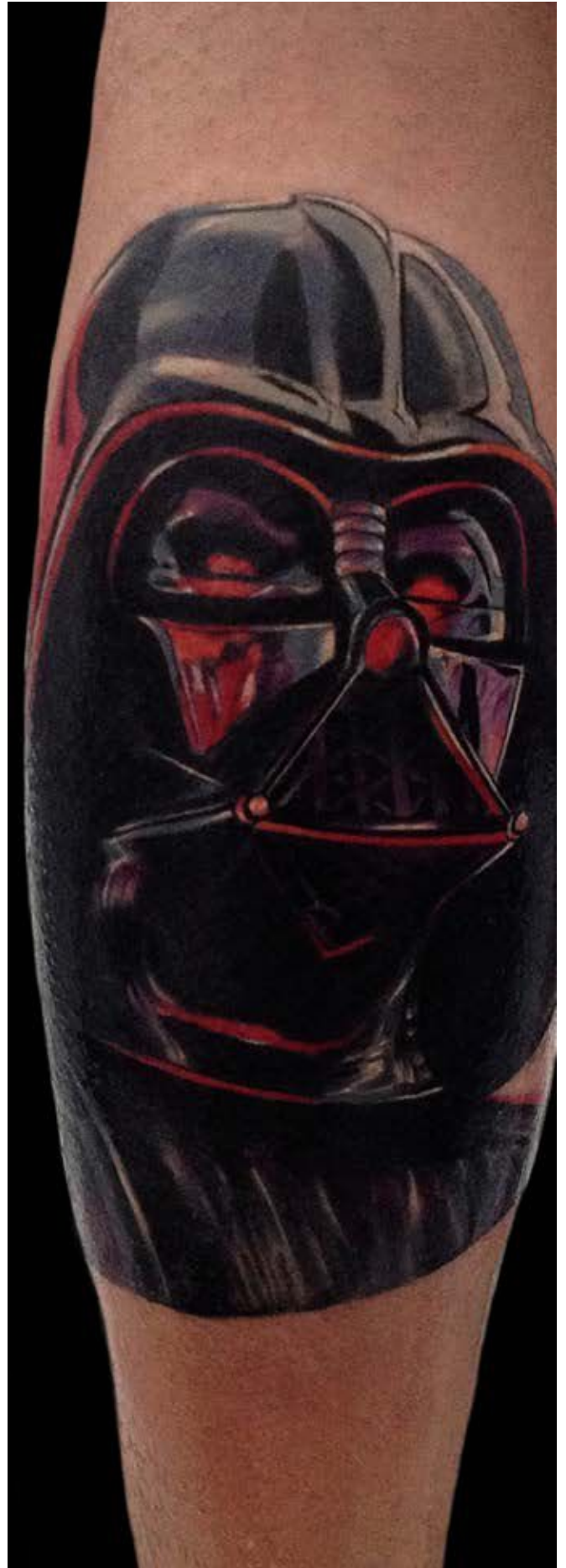
Large pieces, full back pieces and I'm looking to create my own style that is more than just a good technique.

Is there a tattoo that you have not done yet that you're dying to do?

Yes, legendary guitarist Slash of Guns And Roses.







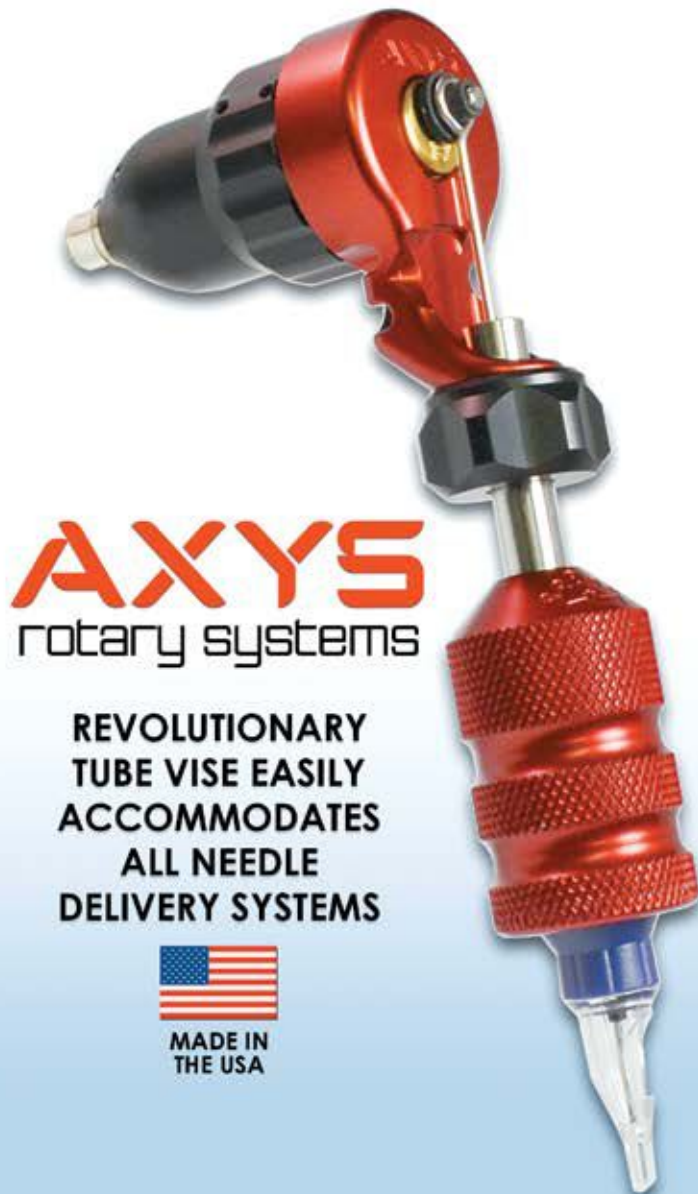


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What year did you start tattooing? I got my apprenticeship in 2011. I started tattooing pretty much a year after so in 2012. I did the usual walk ins and what ever I could to learn the skill. I've been doing custom work for the best part of 2 years I'd say!

Did you have a formal apprenticeship? I'd say my apprenticeship was pretty formal! I didn't touch a machine for the first year! The first 6 months I spent working the desk and cleaning floors. I can't say for certain I had the hardest apprenticeship in the world but it wasn't a walk in the park. I feel like I earned my right to be in that shop learning and I'm still thankful to this day for everyone who helped me to get to where I am. I'm still based in the studio where I was taught and still work along side my mentor.

You have a very unique style, where do you draw inspiration for your work? I'd say my main inspiration comes from Europe and Australia! The way they approach their work is different to the usual way you'd see in Americana tattoos. I like the use of weird and crazy color combinations. I like to think I do my own thing with what I've seen out there.

If you had to describe your style to someone who has never seen your work, how would you describe it? Describing my style is always the

hardest; it's a mix of a lot of styles. I use strong outlines, which are usually seen in traditional tattooing, but then I blend my colors rather than whip shading like you would in more realistic work. The style is branded 'neo traditional' but I'm not 100% sure on the whole branding a style. It's hard to compare artwork to anyone else because it's all so totally different.

Have you always worked in this style? How has your work evolved since you started tattooing? I feel like my style has developed over the years I've been tattooing. When I started out I was just doing what ever I could get my hands on to learn, but then when I discovered the whole European movement of tattooing I wanted to hone in on that a little. I think I took on a lot of techniques from that movement but then added my own flair to it, or at least I hope I have!

What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing? At the moment I have the most fun doing stylized portraits. Whether it's of famous people or of family members. It blows me away that people still want me to do portraits of their family and loved ones, my approach isn't super realistic so it means a lot to me that people support my style of how I'd do them.

What does your wait list look like? My wait list isn't super huge, I only

really book out 2 months at a time because I like to be able to plan my travelling around my work. If I take bookings for too long of a time I feel a bit overloaded with work and like I've taken way too much on!

It is safe to say you are a traveler, what country have you visited that had the most strict tattoo laws? I haven't visited every country in the world but the US seems pretty tight on strictness! I've never worked in the US because I wouldn't want to get banned from even visiting the country! Maybe one day but we will have to see what happens.

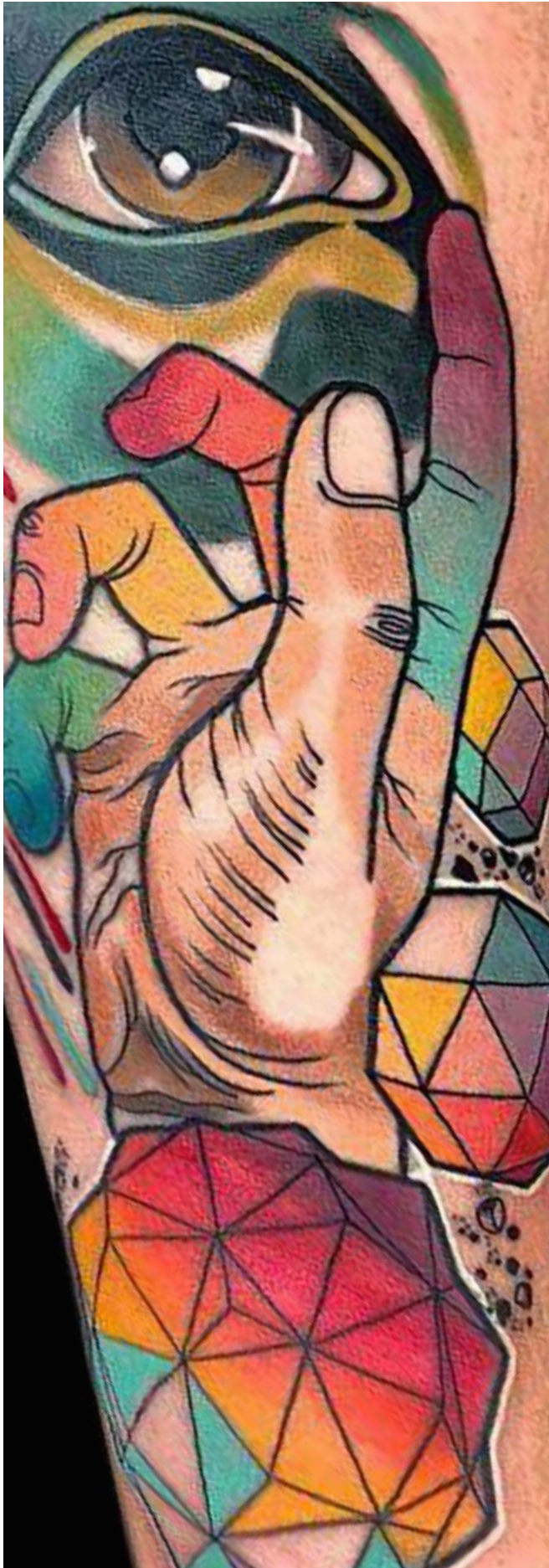
Favorite country to visit for work and why? My favorite country to travel and work in is either Germany or Australia. Germany because I have so many friends out there in the tattoo industry. but Australia because I was lucky enough to travel there and work a full month. The people I met and worked with out there were amazing and I'm stoked to head back over there to see them all again!

What does the rest of your year look like? The rest of my year looks fairly quiet for now. Heading to Germany to work next month and hopefully Australia at the end of the year again. I'll do a few UK guest spots in the mean time but like I said nothing has been organized yet!











FEATURED ARTIST AND MODEL: MEGAN MASSACRE

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PETRA HLAVÁČKOVÁ

Bobek Tattoo
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www.petratattoo.com

What year did you start tattooing? I bought my first machine when I was 17, that was around 2007. I studied art in high school, and later while attending university, so I did not have much time for tattooing other than on my friends on the weekends. I started with tattooing properly after I came to Prague, almost 3 years ago.

Did you have a formal apprenticeship? Yes, I was lucky enough to work with Peter Bobek and Ernesto at Bobek Tattoo.

You are located in Prague, how are tattoos accepted in your community? Tattoos are in fashion in Prague, people love to get tattooed, they give you free hands, and are open to new ideas. On the other hand some people are stuck in the middle ages and still think it's only for criminals.

What is the tattoo scene like, are there many shops and artists? We have so many original tattoo artists in my country, who are going against mainstream, and pushing borders of tattooing every day. People are starting to see tattoos as kind of art, because a lot of students of art schools are buying equipment and becoming excellent tattoo artists. I would say there are a lot of shops there but only few are good ones and I see that each studio raises its own tattoo family and these families live their own creative process.

What style of tattooing is the most popular? Realism, neotraditional, dotwork are popular. Blackwork is also becoming very famous now. A lot of people want abstract work, which is great; people are becoming more open to

any new ideas. Watercolor style is very popular in my country. I don't do it anymore, because it became so popular.

What other countries/ states have you visited and tattooed at? I especially like to work in Berlin, Paris, London, and Sweden, but every country has something special. I enjoy every opportunity to do guest spots around the world. It's important for my mind to change location as often as possible, so I don't get lethargic. I love to observe other cultures and learn as much as I can from other people and their life experiences

How are they similar and how are they different? I find that my artwork attracts mostly similar customers around the world. Culture or behavior is different, but I think we are all same. The difference between continents is that, to me, the United States has more breathtaking nature and European countries have an interesting culture scene.

Outside of Prague what is your favorite country/ state to visit for work? My dream place to work is Australia. I went there once and I fell in love with everything there. I feel that I belong there.

Your designs are very painterly, where do you find your inspiration? I take lot of inspiration from observing the real life, from people, places, also nature is very powerful source of inspiration for me. Music is also big influence for me, it creates interesting moments which influence the result of a creation.

Thanks to the music, I sometimes find myself in a sort of trance while drawing. I also take inspiration in a spiritual way, from my dreams, meditation, and unconsciousness. I'm fascinated by the return to basics, where the tattoo had a ritual, magical or healing function, so sometimes I'm inspired by South American shamans. I need time to meditate on each design. Ideally, I need one month of drawing and thinking for one week of tattooing. From my design style you can see exactly who I am, because I put everything into it.

What other mediums do you work in? I love to work in a wide variety of art fields such as audio/visual art, painting or drawing. I do animations, which I'm using to connect music and visuals. I do projections and VJing for audio/visual projects or electro bands. This medium makes me see my artwork in totally different way. What I find in different kinds of artwork I can insert into tattooing and it keeps me inspired and constantly evolving as an artist.

What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing?
I would like to do more black and grey abstract stuff on people who see tattoos in the same way I do, as a powerful tool and unique way to reflect ones self-transformation. I strive for a higher purpose with tattoos, connecting with them as a different form of art. I try to make every tattoo special, and have it represent the client's state of mind or show their values, ideas, capture some important things, and feelings from their personality. That's what I really look forward to.











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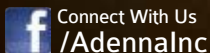
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DIMITAR KRKALIEV

BPhresh Ink 10/20
Siganto Drive, Gold Coast,
Queensland. www.dimiktattoo.com

What year did you start tattooing?
2013

How did you get into tattooing? I got into tattooing after being out of work for a while. I injured my knee in my previous job delivering kitchen appliances. Graham 'Gretch' Seymour had been tattooing me for years and at that point had become a close friend so I was always at his shop when I wasn't working. He eventually started to teach me to draw and the basics of tattooing.

What was your first shop experience like? It was a massive learning curve. I was lucky to have a good group of artists around me who never held back any knowledge they had. I'm forever grateful for how much they all helped me.

Did you have a formal apprenticeship? My apprenticeship was unorthodox because I was put onto the machines in a short amount of time, but I was definitely expected to pull my weight with shop duties just like any apprentice should. I loved it.

What inspires you as an artist? I take a lot of inspiration out of working alongside the artists I've worked with. They are all so diverse and their knowledge in this trade is priceless.

You work primarily in black and grey realism, do you ever work in color? I have worked in color for a few pieces. Black and grey is where my passion will always be though.

What appeals to you about black and grey? Black and grey appeals to me because of the level of work that is out there. There are some artists that are doing unbelievable work in black and grey, it really pushes me to try reach a higher level.

What other mediums do you work in? Pencil portraiture and charcoal drawings are what I'm constantly working in on the side.

What tattoo artists do you admire most? Artists such as Gretch, Fred Flores, Alexander Suvorov, Domantas Parvainis, Denis Sivak, Den Yakovlev and Dimitry Samohin are artists I will always look up to.

What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing? More portraiture and dark style custom girls.

Is there a tattoo that you haven't done yet that you are dying to do? A portrait of Boris the Blade from the movie Snatch.

What is your artistic process for your

custom work? (Like do you layer images in Photoshop, freehand the designs, draw them prior to the appointment etc.) I do a mixture of everything I guess. A lot of work goes in first through Photoshop and I refine things with drawing and freehand work.

Do you travel for work? I haven't had the opportunity to travel yet. I'm hoping to do a bit of traveling through 2016 if my name gets out there a bit more.

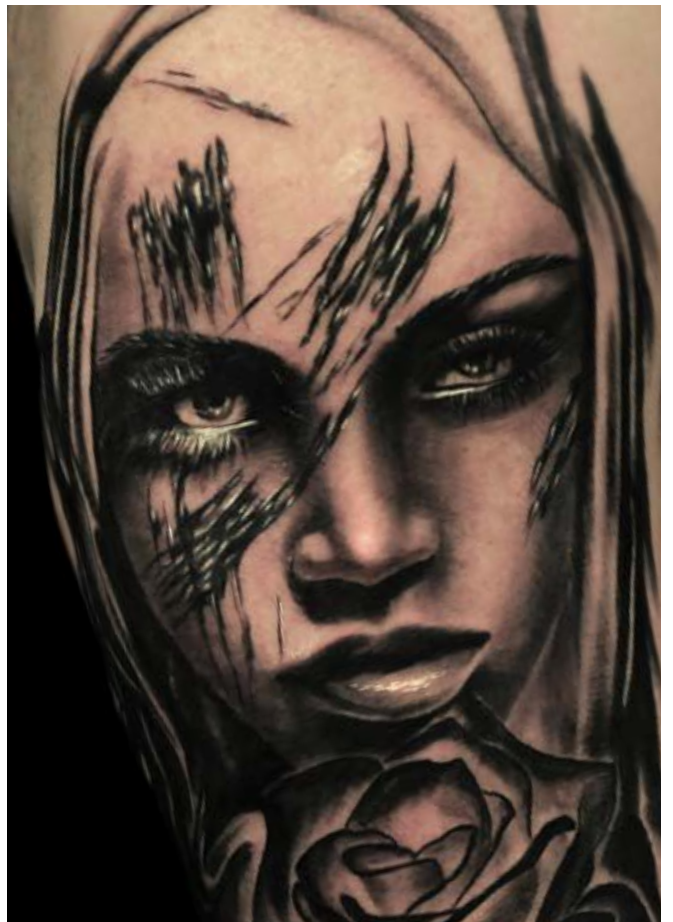
Is there a prominent tattoo scene Australia? There is a massive scene in Australia for tattooing. Some amazing international artists are making their way in now for local conventions.

What are the laws/ health codes on tattooing in Australia? In my home state we are all required to have a skin penetration/infection control qualification and be licensed through the state with a Tattooist License. There are pretty strict laws now in Queensland and a couple of other states.

Who are some Australian artists we should keep an eye out for? There is so many to name but definitely keep an eye out for Gretch, Beaudean Crawford, Sean Holdinghausen, Niko Vaa, David Nash, Ups Patterson and Josh Kuhne.

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TATER TATTS

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www.blackanchorcollective.com
@crojasart

You're known as Tater, where'd the name come from? Tater actually came from a party around 10 years ago when I was about 19. I was talking like a hillbilly and I referred to myself and my girlfriend at the time as being like "Punkin n Taters." It kind of stuck amongst my friends, so later on when I started tattooing I wanted an alias name and Tater Tatts had a nice ring to it.

When and why did you get into tattooing? I have always been fascinated by tattoos, for as long as I can remember I was drawing all over myself and sticking temporary tattoos everywhere, much to my parents' disapproval. I tried on many occasions to get into the industry while I was in high school, and later on after completing a graphic design course without success. It wasn't until I was late in my 1st year/early 2nd year of a metal fabrication apprenticeship that I had a phone call from Scott Kelb who had just started a shop, enquiring if I'd be interested in working for him. As I still had 3 years left in my Fab trade we agreed I would come and start with him after I had completed that. And that's what we did.

What was your first shop experience like? Nerve wrecking would be an understatement haha.

Did you have a formal apprenticeship? I would have to say no. I think Scott knew I had a good discipline and work ethic, he was very easy going and let me find my own way. I owe a lot to him, he gave me a shot when no one else would, and let me set high ambitions to aim for. I don't think I'd be where I am today if it wasn't for him.

Is the tattoo culture different in Australia than in the states? Yeah, the last couple of years in Australia, everyone has been tattoo

crazy. The younger generation of kids seem to just be getting whatever, wherever trying to be part of a growing image. America seems to have settled down, and seem to think a little more about what they want, from what I've seen anyways.

You're traveling to California for Ink N Iron, are there any other conventions you attended regularly? There are a couple in Australia, but not really. It's hard travelling when you have a family, I miss them too much.

While in California you will be doing a few guest spots, where do you guest spot and how often? I try and come out once a year at least, it's hard I have a lot of offers to do guest spots but it means I have to spend more time away from home. I usually do Black Anchor, Timeline Gallery and MD Studio, that way I get to catch up with my friends and stay around So-Cal.

Who are some of the artists that you've been tattooed by? Nikko Hurtado, Carlos Rojas, Timmy B, Harley Kirkwood, Matthew "Bumer" Joyce, Benjamin Laukis, Sam Clark, Darren Riordan.

How did you come to work in realism? I had seen work from artists such as Boris, Nikko, Carlos Rojas, Carlos Torres, Mike Devries, Mick Squires etc. who earlier on really pushed realism tattooing. It seemed like more of a challenge for me, and there weren't many people in Australia doing it. As a person of competitive nature it was right up my ally.

Many artists working in realism will lean more towards black and grey or color, which is your preference and why? I honestly enjoy doing even amounts of both, a balanced

diet so to speak.

Is there a certain style of tattooing that you would want to branch out to? I wouldn't mind getting into a little more new school stuff, but I'd need to loosen up, my brain over thinks everything too much.

If you could do any tattoo you want, what would it be? Probably a full torso piece based off a painting I had done.

What's your view on sponsorships, you have quite a few, how do they help or hinder an artist? It's funny, I'm lucky enough to be sponsored by products I already constantly used and liked, none of my sponsorships are under signed contract so to speak, so I don't really feel pressure. It might be a different story if I was under an endorsed paying contract, but at the same time I wouldn't sign up to a product I wasn't happy with.

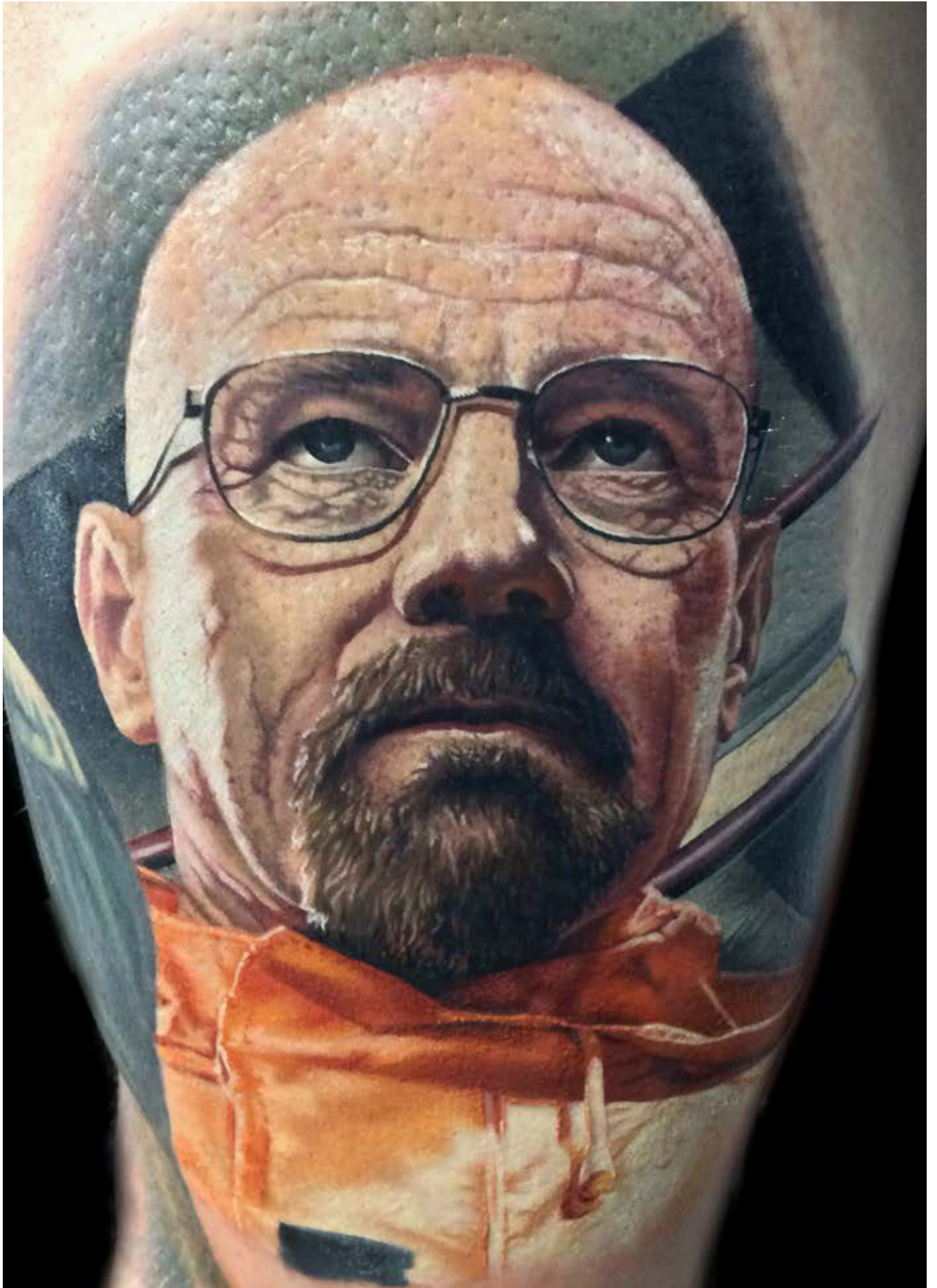
Your Instagram shows that you're a fan of dirt bikes, do you do this competitively?

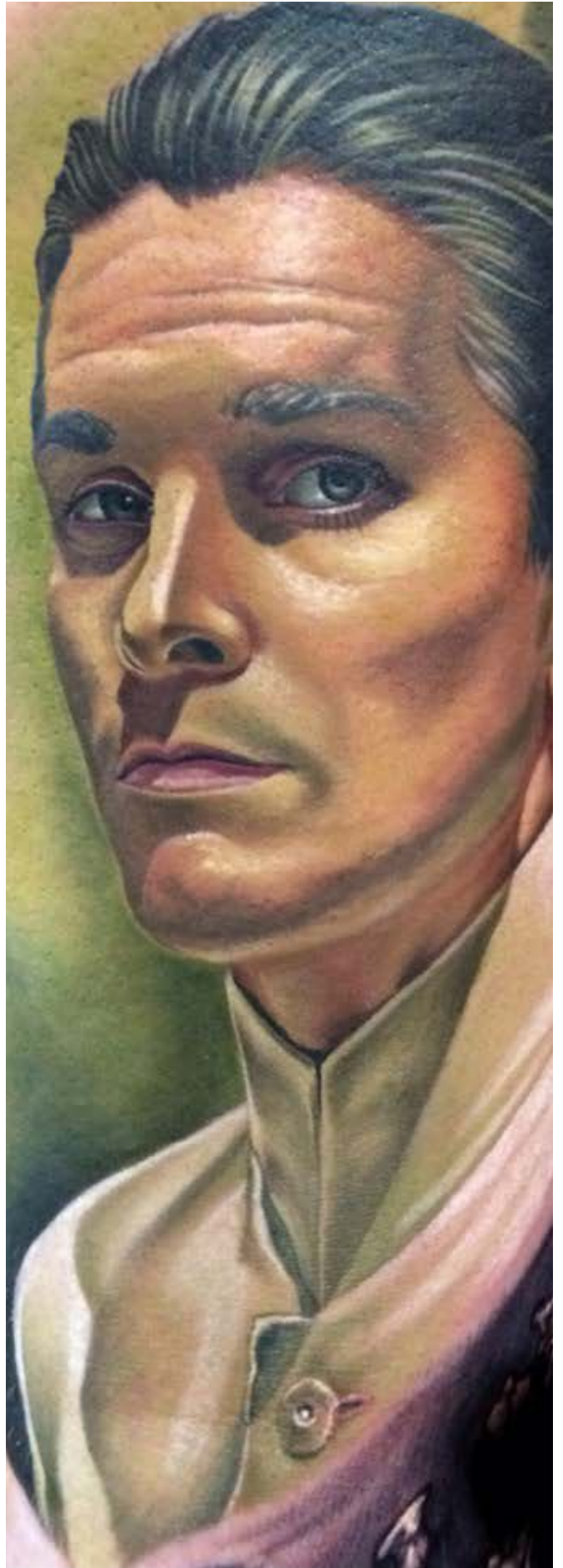
If there was anything in the world I could do everyday it would be ride my dirt bike, it has ran through my veins for as long as I can remember. I used to race when I was younger but have to be pretty conservative these days, it's more of a release for me now.

Do you customize your helmet or bikes?

No, I try to keep all that stuff separate. I might paint a helmet one day though.

Is there anything else you want to talk to the Freshly Inked Magazine readers about? I'd just like to thank you guys for this opportunity, and a big thank you to my girlfriend Emma and son Archie for putting up with me and supporting me







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RACHEL BALDWIN

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What year did you start tattooing?
2007

How did you get into tattooing?
After finishing my degree I annoyed local tattoo shops until one of them gave me an apprenticeship.

Do you have any special training?
I can make a pretty slammin' mojito! Bar training aside, I have a bachelors degree in fine art painting.

Do you travel for work? Where do you do guest spots or conventions?
In the UK I have done guest spots from Brighton to Scotland and have done a couple of spots in California and Vegas. I love doing guest spots and working conventions, however I am taking a year or two off from them as I recently had my first baby! Next year I hope to do a few guest spots in Europe and in a couple of years we plan to come back to the US, I really want to see Oregon!

What inspires you as an artist? Fashion, cartoons, children's illustration, graffiti and food! Although I do take influence from traditional tattoo imagery, I think it's important to mix it up with new ideas.

What other media do you work in?
I paint watercolor inks mostly, but every now and again I bust out the acrylics or oils.

What tattoo artists do you admire most?

There are so many amazing tattooists out there now! When I first got into tattooing there were only a handful of really big names I admired; Xam, Steve Byrne, Valerie Vargas, those guys are still killing it. Now there are even more outstanding artists making unreal tattoos. Emily Rose Murray, Jason Minauro, Curt Baer and Alex Strangler, to name just a few.

What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing? Anything cute and palm sized! I enjoy doing big work also, but there is something really satisfying about doing a one shot piece.

You have a background in fine painting, did this influence your tattoo style?
It definitely helped that I had a few years to work out what I enjoyed painting the most. Despite specializing in portraiture when getting my degree, I still found myself creating a lot of stupid cartoons that nobody really liked.

You describe your style as putting a girly spin on "traditional." How did you come up with this unique style? There weren't many tattooists who mixed girly and traditional when I started out. New school was starting to fade out. I was trying to make my tattoos look more solid, with fun colors and less 'graffiti' style, I guess I picked up where that left off.

You use a lot of color are there any circumstances where you do black and grey? I used to do black and grey tat-

toos, I think they look great, by the right person! I just don't think they work in my style.

Your shop raised money for the Alder Hey Children's Hospital its first birthday. Are there any plans in the works for its upcoming birthday in September?

Now that was a party! With a lot of help from my friends we made over \$12k for the local children's hospital. It was a really fun day and I will definitely be doing another charity event in the future. Maybe not until next year, I have a lot on my plate getting the hang of being a mum!!

In 2013 you helped raise over \$32,000 for cancer research through tattooing, why do you think it is important to give back to these charities? I lost my mother to pancreatic cancer in 2012, that event was in her memory and I was thrilled with the response! I can't thank my friends enough for helping me with that event. It was crazy but so worth it. It's nice to give something back if you can. We're here for a fun time, not a long time!

Your work combines Japanese culture and cartoons. How have you perfected this aesthetic? I wouldn't say I have perfected it! I'm a long way from being happy with my tattooing. I just make silly drawings. I am lucky enough that people let me tattoo them! Generally if a drawing makes me laugh (or squeee) I know it's good enough to tattoo.





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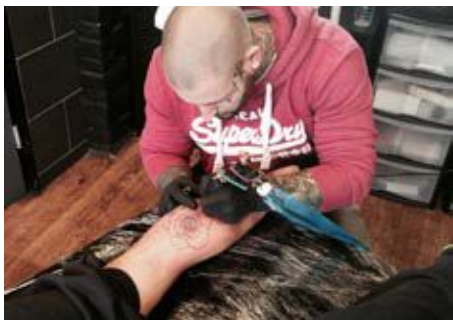
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LITTLE ANDY

How did you get into tattooing? I started getting tattooed at 18 and soon after that my girlfriend at the time put out the idea of trying it out for myself so I set about doing just that.

What was your first shop experience like? It was great Dave Notley gave me my first opportunity to work in a shop for which I'm eternally grateful, met lots of weirdoes, and great characters. It was an incredibly un PC environment which I think is great and how a tattoo studio should be. I don't work in an office so why act as if I am?

Did you have a formal apprenticeship? No I scratched from my bedroom for about two years tattooing myself and friends then friends of friends so I'm a self taught tattooist.

You've worked in Australia and London, where else have you travelled for work? Ah yes and a lot of places all over England and also Dublin Ireland doing guest spots.

Have you been to the states? No, I've never been over to the states it's defiantly something I'm interested in doing. I have spoken to a couple people about it, but nothing's set in concrete at the moment.

What's your favorite country to tattoo in and why? No place like home. I'd say just the people I work with mainly, I have to click and feel I can be myself

with whoever I work with and I don't suffer fools or anyone that's easily offended it's all about taking the piss out of each other.

What inspires you as an artist? I'm not really sure to be honest. I'm not really sure inspire is the word, but I do have some favorite tattoo artist like Phil Wilkinson from the UK, Zack Singer US, Timur Lysenko to name a few.

You have a very unique style that has been described as surrealistic, neotraditional design inspired by realism, how did you come to work in this style and how would you describe it? My style has progressed rapidly over the last year to year and a half. It really started once I moved to Australia last year. I think the change triggered it but I'd say it's been a natural thing I haven't forced it in any way. I'd say it's like part of my personality although I've never taken drugs which surprises people as my work often looks like I might be on acid. People are always trying to label it I'm not really sure what it is myself, I guess abstract, surrealistic, neotraditional, psychedelic, spacey, all apply to it.

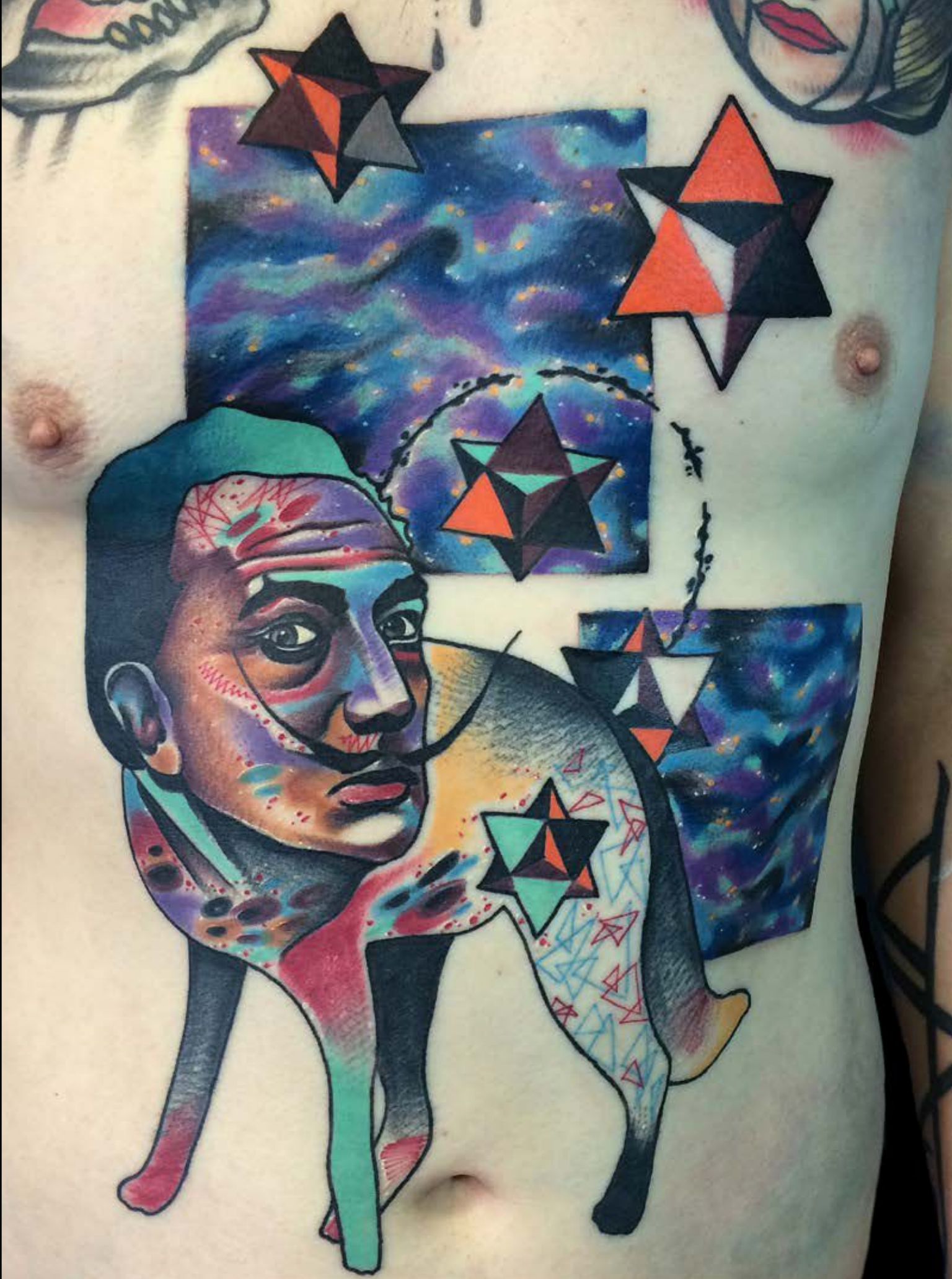
Have you always worked in your own style or has it evolved since you first started tattooing? My works changed loads since I started but it's changed a lot more in the last year then in the previous 7 years of tattooing put together.

What is your artistic process? I pretty much like as little input from my clients as possible as my work is very spontaneous and not planned out. I work without any restrictions placed on me by clients otherwise my style wouldn't work. I basically draw something really simple and make everything up as I go during the tattoo.

Weirdest tattoo you've ever done? Maybe the Dali head on a fox body front piece. This was my idea and Ben was up for anything I wanted to do and he sits like a statue too, perfect client.

What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing? Animals are always good fun but I'm really getting into portraits. Basically anything that doesn't make sense or is just plain weird why would I want to tattoo a rose and pocket watch when I could tattoo Freddie Mercury with a carrot over half his face and surrounded by space? It makes no sense but that's the point it's more interesting to tattoo and to look at.

Is there a tattoo that you haven't done yet that you are dying to do? I think I've got crazier ideas in my head than most of my clients, but I'm going to be drawing some of my ideas, and hopefully I can bully some people into getting them done haha!





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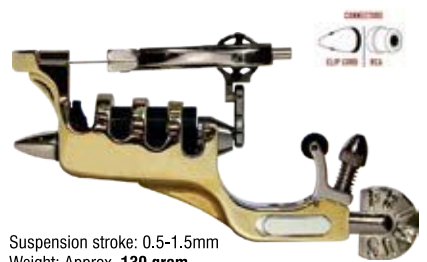


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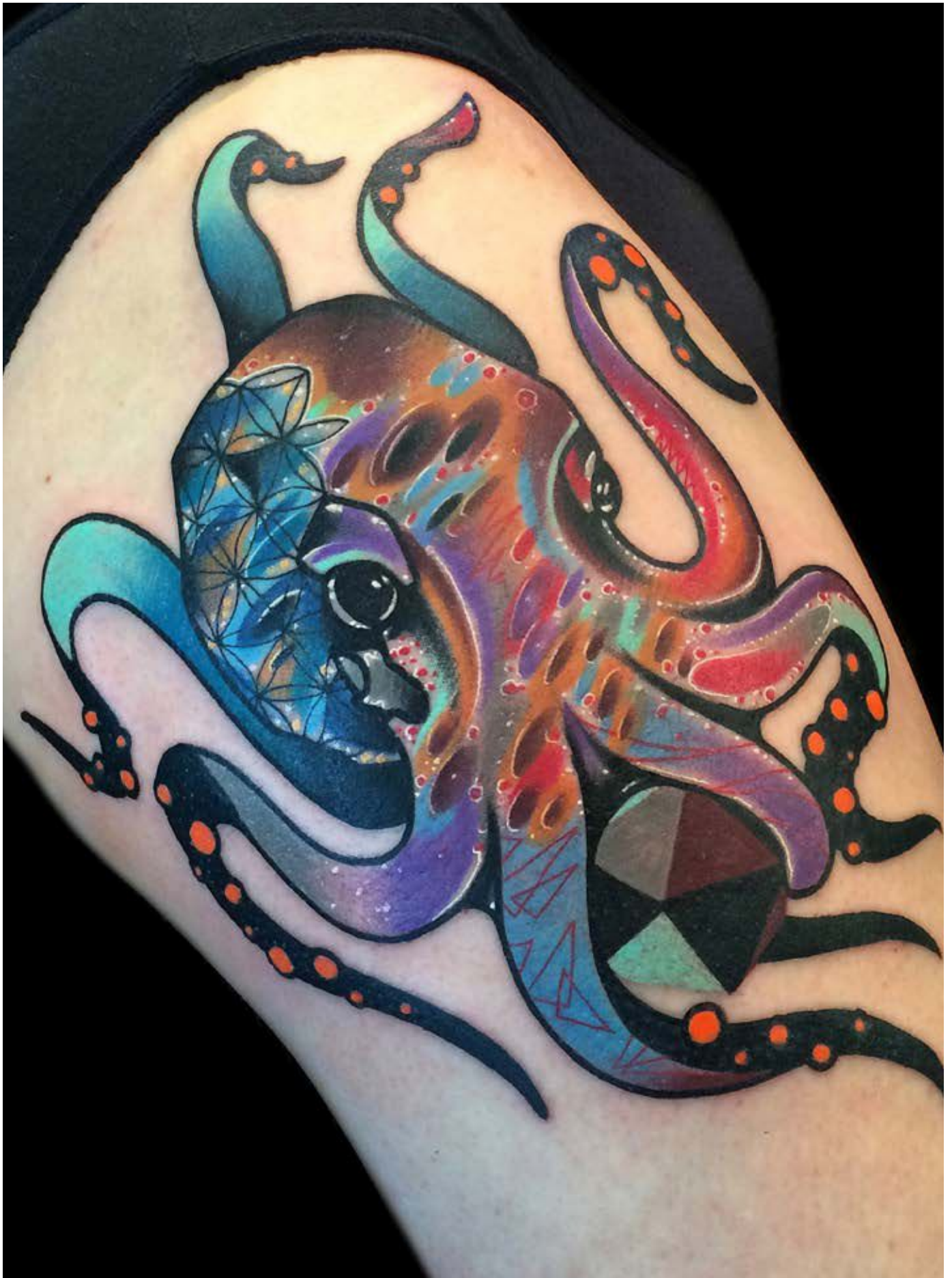
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ROBERT BORBAS

How did you get into tattooing? I had a solo exhibition at a venue in Hungary and the owner of Dark Art Tattoo, Zsolt Sarkozy, visited the event. After a long conversation about art in general and my work for bands he asked me the question: would you like to start tattooing? I was speechless. He is one of the pioneers of the Hungarian tattoo society, so it was more than humbling that he offered me this chance. I hesitated for 8 months, so in late July 2012 I got myself together and decided to hit him up and make my first tattoo. I asked a good friend of mine to be my first victim. He came up with the idea of an undead medusa head. I remember every single line of that piece. The guys at the shop helped me to put the machines together, make everything clean and proper, and after that I started tattooing. It was hard and honestly I approached it like drawing, but onto a different canvas, this is definitely not how it works. After several months I started to do some research, ask more, and sacrifice everything to become a tattooist.

Your technical approach in blackwork is really rich and different from most of the artists that chose that style. You do a good amount of large scale pieces and they have great composition and depth. Can you explain your approach on this style of tattooing? What drew you to pursue such elaborated work using only solid black ink? When I started tattooing I did loads of color work. I loved it, but all of a sudden I started to do only black/ black and grey tattoos. My theory is, basically if you turn every kind of picture into black and grey, the contrast and depth is way deeper and stronger. A perfect example would be a tree with all its wonderful textures, leaves etc. It's

gorgeous in color, but in black and grey it shows it's rough and natural look. This is how I see all my work and try to reproduce this effect. The flow, textures, and grandly effects. I'm not saying that what I stated is the law, but if you think about it, it makes sense. Also, lines are super important for me to structure a nice and flowing composition, which never ends, but connect and live together with your body. For me that's the best and the most beautiful part of working in black and grey and approaching large scale works. I'm also always open minded for palm size pieces, but because of the complexity and the personal connection of the project sleeves, fronts and in the future finally bodysuits are the closest to my heart. I've started to put more grey wash, soft tones to my works to widen the complexity and detail in my works.

Was this the style you've always wanted to do? What type of tattoos where you doing back when you started? When I started I loved neotraditional, realism, Japanese, everything haha. I'm inspired by every kind of tattoo style, but I try to avoid looking at tattoo artists' work everyday. I follow loads of illustrators, painters, comic book artists, urban and underground brands and stuff. I did pretty much everything, including trash polka, it's not my cup of tea but I respect the style. I once tattooed an old t-shirt design I did upon a customer's request. I think that was the point when I knew I had to incorporate that style and rework it to make it "tattooable."

If you had the freedom to do any tattoo, what would it be? I would love to make the circles of hell into a bodysuit. Some other biblical themed tattoos, or even just stuff what comes out of my

mind when I'm just doodling. I spent eight years in a catholic school and even if I do not agree with the Catholic Church, I respect religious people, because I've met some super nice and hard working people I can look up to. That is the reason I'm inspired by some religious topics and I love to read about all of its imagery and different theories.

What is your creative process when you are about to design a tattoo?

I do some research collecting reference pictures, even taking some and trying to mix and change it into my own style and give it a twist. If it's necessary I read about it, even if it's a special animal, for example an oriental cat. I had never heard of this species. Then a customer asked for it and I was mind blown. How they look, act, where is this breed from etc. I love this part.

What or who inspired you in and out of the tattoo world back when you started tattooing? My main source of inspiration is mainly Mother Nature. I'm impressed with all the structures, textures and wide range of beauty it offers.

Do you practice any other art medium? Art related projects?

I wish I could do it more, but I love to paint and work on personal inkings. I would like to do lithographies and etchings again. Hopefully I can make a nice schedule in-between tattoo work, to work on these personal pieces, making exhibitions and the most important, loads of limited prints. I'm in the middle of putting together an art book, including my sketches, never seen works, close ups of tattoos and loads of in progress shots I have never published.





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VOLKAN DEMIRCI

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What led you to work at Diagon? Sonat Gokdel, who is the owner of Diagon Tattoo, is a good friend of mine and we always wanted to work together. Sonat and I visited with each other regularly and passed the time discussing our art and supporting each other to make better art. At last we joined forces, along with Tugrul Erkus, and started to work together in 2010.

Do you have any special training? I neither have any special training nor any academic study. I've always been interested in trying different art supplies; markers, acrylics, oils and color pencils. It's kind of self-learning process.

How do you describe your style? Actually, I focus on realism but recently I am interested in and shifting to mixing neo traditional with realism.

Why color realism oppose to black and grey? Tattooing is my life style, I love all kind of tattoos. In my opinion, you should know how to play with dark and light in order to work with colors properly and efficiently. I work with black when I am sketching and afterwards I colour my designs. I really have respect for black and grey artists, but I feel better when I work with colors. I think if you want to have your

own style, you need to break limits first. I want to break my limits in realism because I really want to bend realism.

What about fantasy tattoos appeal to you? Boris Vallejo impressed me when I first saw his fantasy art. I love fantasy art because of its composition. Every painting tells you about an emotion, an action or a myth. When I look at the figures of a fantasy art I feel like I am reading their stories. Your fantasy tattoos tells me about who really you are.

What is it like to work at a tattoo studio in Istanbul, Turkey? What makes that location special? Istanbul is an amazing city. If you look from the geographical point of view, it is a transcontinental city in Eurasia, which makes it easy to access Europe and Asia. It hosts a lot of people from different cultures, this generates chaos and chaos brings creativity. Although Istanbul is a crowded city and a lot of people have interest in tattoo, it is hard to find clientele that allow for studying specific styles. Therefore in the coming months I am planning to move to U.K. or to another big city in Europe.

Do you travel for guest spots or conventions? If so where will you be traveling

this year? I travel for some guest spots domestically, but I haven't had the chance to be a guest artist outside of Turkey. This year I am planning to visit Berlin and London conventions.

Your oil paintings are attracting a lot of attention. What would you like to say about this medium? I like experiencing different kinds of painting supplies. I tried acrylics, oils, markers, and color pencils I recently started using a graphic tablet, I recommend using Corel oil brushes to those who are interested in digital painting. But if you want to feel real art you need to play with oils, after that you can be better at digital paintings.

Which tattoo artists do you admire most? Nikko Hurtado, Boris, Domantas Parvainis, and Dmitriy Samohin.

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

I really want to work with my own digital paintings, especially my last Joker design.

How long does someone have to wait to get an appointment from you? I'm usually scheduled one month in advance, but in the summer it increases to two months in advance.









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GIAN KARLE

When did you start tattooing? How? I started tattooing five years ago, I went to my first tattoo convention and fell in love with tattoos I said, "I got to learn how to do that" so I bought I cheap tattoo kit and started tattooing my crazy friends at my studio apartment for free. I never knew it would become a career.

Your work is very well rounded. You do great color as well as black & grey. Which do you prefer? It depends, I love to do black and gray. There was a time when it was most of what I did, but lately I've been enjoying doing color pieces, I guess it's a little bit more challenging for me, and color palates are so endless it kind of intrigues me, but I love both.

What type of tattoos where you doing back when you started? How did you start to work in other styles? Like many new artist now days I was trying to do realism work when I started, and it really wasn't working out for me, so I decided to go back to the basics doing more traditional work. I guess somehow I mixed some of the styles of the different people I've worked with along the way too.

If you had the freedom to do any tattoo, what would it be? Any subject, body placement, or style. I guess if I had the freedom to do any tattoo, the design would depend on the person, body type, skin color, etc. but I really love to do flowers. I think they look good on everybody.

Your work is mostly custom, how do you approach a new tattoo idea? Does it start as a sketch, do you just go freehand, or both? What would the difference be when working from a stencil vs freehand? What would your process be like? Most of the time I get an idea of what the client wants by asking them a couple of questions like, where is the tattoo going to be placed? How big do you want to go? Color or black and grey? etc. Then I do a quick sketch on tracing paper and I polish it as I go. I don't do a lot of freehand, but I do enjoy it once in a while.

What do you think is the most difficult part of creating a tattoo? Composition, flow, elements/characters or choosing the color palette? I think the most challenging part of creating a tattoo for me is the composition and choosing the

right color palette for the color of the skin I'm working on. I like to do a lot of contrast in my tattoos, using a lot of black and showing lots of skin in my designs.

Where do you usually find inspiration? What or who inspired you in and out of the tattoo world back when you started tattooing? What or who inspires you today? When I started I used to get a lot of inspiration from Google images of tattoos and images that I liked. Even to this day I use it, but now a days I usually find inspiration in my friends artwork, and stuff that I see and like from all sorts of mediums of art. I learned a lot from fellow coworkers along the years, especially Juan Lopez and Angel Villanueva.

Do you practice any other art medium? Drawing, painting, oils?

I practice drawing every night and love to paint with watercolors and oils, but my true passion is painting with ink on Arches paper. I sometimes wish I had more time to paint since it's one of my favorite things to do in the world.







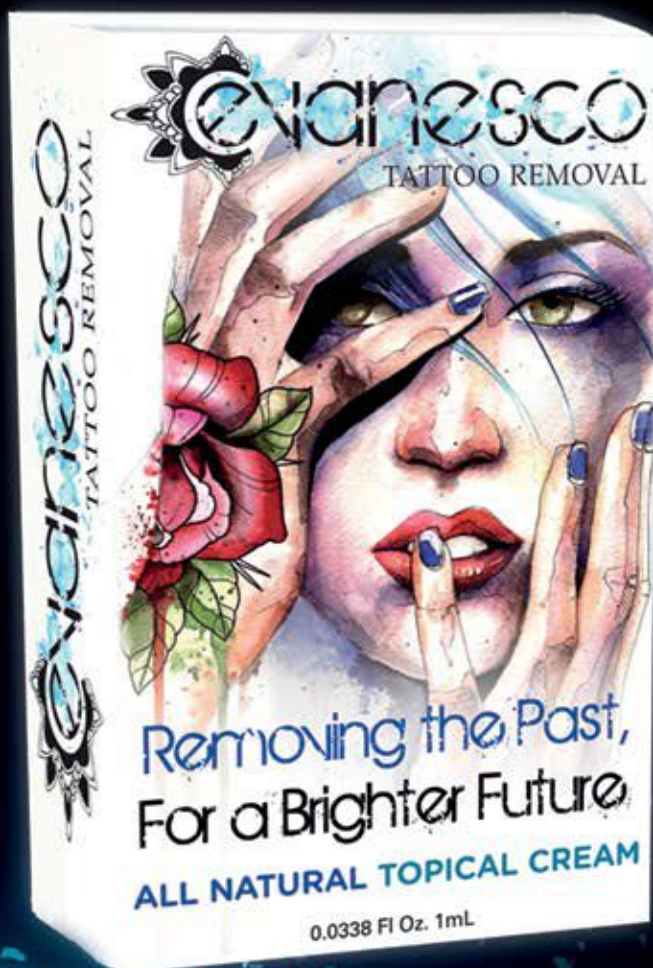
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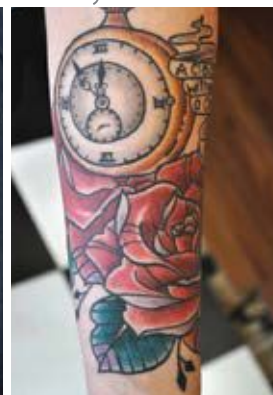
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HORIEI SHINSHU

7th Heaven Artwork Matsumoto City,
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When did you start tattooing? How?

I started tattooing 10 years ago. I started by studying everything about drawing, tattooing, health, and sterilization by my self.

To many artists Japanese Art and Japanese bodysuits have been a key inspiration in the composition of large scale tattoos in other styles across the world. How do you see Japanese art in tattooing today?

I don't do traditional Japanese tattoos, but I follow the way of Japanese traditional tattooing with my own style. I pay respect to this unique and mysterious art and the artists who have been a part of making history. I think Japanese art and full body suits inspire tattoo artists who are doing different genres of tattoos too. I've seen a lot of big pieces inspired by Japanese art and many artists trying to make full body suits, full sleeves, back pieces, and front pieces with inspiration taken from Japanese art. I think the culture also art will across some kind of border and it will make another level of tattooing, I'm really interested in seeing where it goes, and taking inspiration from it.

How do you see tattooing in Japan?

Japanese tattooing began during the Edo period. The road has been paved by a number of great traditional Japanese tattoo artists, myself included, and we are honored to be part of this long and beautiful history.

Large Scale tattoos are a whole lot of work when you are creating custom designs. You need to consider things like placement, body flow, composition, and actually draw. Not to mention choosing a color palette and the use of light/shadow on your own for a custom design without the use of any reference (most times). How is your creative process when designing a tattoo like this? What do you feel is the hardest, challenging and more satisfactory part of the process? I would have to say designing takes the most time. I will imagine the piece in my mind first, envisioning the configuration. Once I have done this I will start drawing, as I do so I roughly figure out my color palette. The most difficult thing to draw is depth, while complimenting the main subject. I always try to do my best but I have never been fully satisfied with it.

So if you had the freedom to do certain tattoo, what would it be? Any subject,

body placement, style. If I had the chance to do whatever I wanted, I would want to make a full body suit on someone that has not been tattooed before. But it is very hard to accomplish this because most clients won't get a full body suit as their first tattoo.

Where do you usually find inspiration? What or who inspired you in and out of the tattoo world back when you started tattooing? What or who inspires you today? I usually find inspiration in books or paintings of Japanese art. I got a lot of inspiration by Filip Leu when I started tattooing. Most of the artwork that my eye has stopped on in tattoo magazines have been done by him. Now I have been looking for inspiration in artists that work in realism and more of a cartoon style, it's not for inspiration in my own tattoo work, but it will inspire me to make something different one day.

Do you practice any other art medium? Drawing, painting, oils?

I'm drawing everyday for practice also painting with alcohol markers and watercolor a bit. I would like to continue doing so for practice and make some artwork.





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KATIE SHOCRYLAS

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How did you get into tattooing?

Tattooing wasn't really on my radar until I was about 19, as I'd been dancing pre-professionally for most of my childhood and teenage years. However, I've drawn and painted since I was very young, and went to university to study visual art. After graduating, I spent a year travelling New Zealand, and one of the friends I made abroad was heavily tattooed. She took me to get my first tattoo and I immediately grew fascinated with the entire process. Although I didn't have any experience with the reality of being a tattooist, it seemed like a perfect career fit for me, and upon returning to Canada, I started working towards finding an apprenticeship.

What was your first shop experience like? Interesting, challenging, definitely a huge learning experience!

Do you have any special training?

I have an Honors Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, with a minor in art history, and went on to do a post graduate program in art therapy. I also have a background in life drawing (I started taking classes when I was in high school).

What inspires you as an artist? I look to a variety of sources for inspiration in my own work including nature, other artists (both contemporary and historical) who work in a variety of media, fashion photography, drag (queen) culture, as well as pop culture, mainly from the 1980s and 90s.

What other media do you work in?

When I'm not tattooing I'm usually drawing, so I definitely struggle to set aside time to work in other media, but, I do believe that a varied practice is important in order to continue challenging oneself and growing as an artist. I did a lot of large-scale mixed media work while I was in school, and still love working with charcoal, ink, and oil paints. I also really enjoy photography and incorporating it into work with other media.

What tattoo artists do you admire most?

I admire so many tattooists! To name a few: Steve Moore, Kate Mackay Gill, Cody Eich, Teresa Sharpe, Onnie O'Leary, Emily Rose Murray, Greg Whitehead (better known as Greggletton on Instagram), Dan Smith, Annie Frenzel, Brian Thomas Wilson, Danielle Rose, Wen Ramen Pham, Kat Abdy, Sam Clark. Also, artists working in other media including Andy Dixon, Camilla D'Errico, Casey Baugh, and Tina Lugo.

What kind of tattoos do you look forward to doing?

I feel very lucky to do what I do, and get a lot of really rad tattoo requests, so I genuinely look forward to every project I take on. In particular, I love doing animal portraits, especially those involving any type of cat! Food is also really fun to tattoo. I'm very detail-oriented, so the more details I get to include in a piece, the better.

Is there a tattoo that you haven't done yet that you are dying to do? An illustrative drag queen portrait! Also, a zebra.

You use a lot of vibrant colors in your work, what has drawn you to this aesthetic?

Tattoos adorn the body, so why not make them stand out? Instinctively, I'm drawn to the intensity of vibrant colors and the wide range of emotions they can evoke. It's a lot of fun to create bright, bold images. My vibrant color palettes have evolved naturally. I approach color in a tattoo the same way I would in a painting, and strive to achieve a balance between various tones and hues.

A lot of your work involve animals, is there a reason for that?

I'm a huge animal lover, from both an emotional and aesthetic perspective; they make me happy, I think they make a lot of people happy. To me, the animal kingdom is mysterious and incredibly interesting, a whole different world that we'll never know everything about. Also, the colors, patterns, and textures found in nature are excellent source material.

Why do portraits appeal to you as an artist?

Portraits not only capture characters, whether real or imagined, at a specific moment in time, but also allude to their past and future narratives. I strive to evoke imagination through my work, so I suppose that by creating portraits (human as well as animal), I am also able to bring these characters and their different "personalities" to life. I know it sounds a bit strange, but when I finish a tattoo of, say, a fuzzy little animal, I feel a bit like I've created a little friend for the person wearing it.





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DEVILS HOLLOW TATTOO&ART FESTIVAL

This year the first annual Devils Hollow Tattoo and Art Festival was held at the downtown Grand Wayne Convention Center in Fort, Wayne, Indiana. The show was packed to the brim with talent. Kyle Dunbar, Big Gus, and Joey Tattoo were just a few of the artists in attendance. Tattoo collector and Freshly Inked contributing writer Yallzee was at the show adding some pieces to his amazing collection. We had the pleasure of judging the Ms. Vixen pin up contest hosted by Laura Lynn and the INKLLUSIONISTS wowed the crowd as they always do. There was also a live art fusion demonstration where artists rotated between five canvases every 20 minutes, the pieces were auctioned off and the money was donated to Make-A-Wish. If we've peaked your interest, head on over to the shows website to book your booth for next year.



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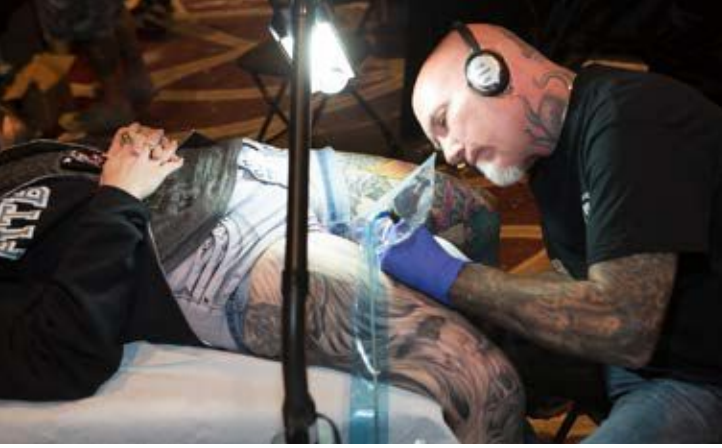
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HELL CITY

On May 1st the Hell City Mascots were unleashed to welcome the Hellions to Killumbus. Durb Morrison never fails to throw one of the best conventions in the circuit and this year was no exception. At this years show Guy Aitchinson and Russ Abbott held a "Wacom Weekend Seminar," educating artists on how to use digital tools with their existing design process. The Fine Art Gallery featured Gunnar's "Better Late Than Never" and Dave Tevenal's "Threshold" art shows. There were live performances by The Do Goods and The Girls, and we couldn't get enough of the beautiful Suicide Girls walking around the show! Missed it? You're going to have to wait until 2017 for the next convention in Killumbus because Durb will be taking the show to Venice, Italy for the Venetian Tattoo Gathering in 2016.



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INK AND IRON

In June artists from across the globe travelled to Long Beach, California for the 13th Annual Ink N Iron Festival. Freshly Inked cover artists Tater, Roman, Josh Payne, Nikko Hurtado, and Carlos Rojas were all in attendance. Pennywise, The Bouncing Souls, Killswitch Engage, Hatebreed, and The Dillinger Escape Plan kept the boat rocking all weekend long! From tattooing to pin striping and live music there was something for everyone at this years show. Bummed you missed out on all the fun? You can catch Ink N Iron in Nashville this August.



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ARUBA TATTOO CONVENTION

This year Inkspiration Tattoo Studio owner Ryan Tromp threw the third annual Aruba Tattoo Convention at the Radisson Resort, Casino, and Spa. If you're into the laid back island vibe, and looking to mix a little business with pleasure, this is the convention for you. Artists in attendance travelled from the US, Venezuela, and the Netherlands for the two-day convention. Matt Gone, Guinness World Record holder for being the 5th most tattooed person in the world, was spotted throughout the weekend taking photos with attendees. Ivanabitch vodka helped get the party started, passing out free vodka shots throughout the evening, and the True Flavor Squad amped the crowd with their break dance show. Bummed you missed out on all the fun? Start planning your trip for 2016!





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