

Inked

CULTURE. STYLE. ART.

All Hail
**JAIME
KING**

PLUS:
Gym Class Heroes
Against Me!
The Bronx

DISPLAY UNTIL FEB. 24, 2009

\$6.99US / CAN

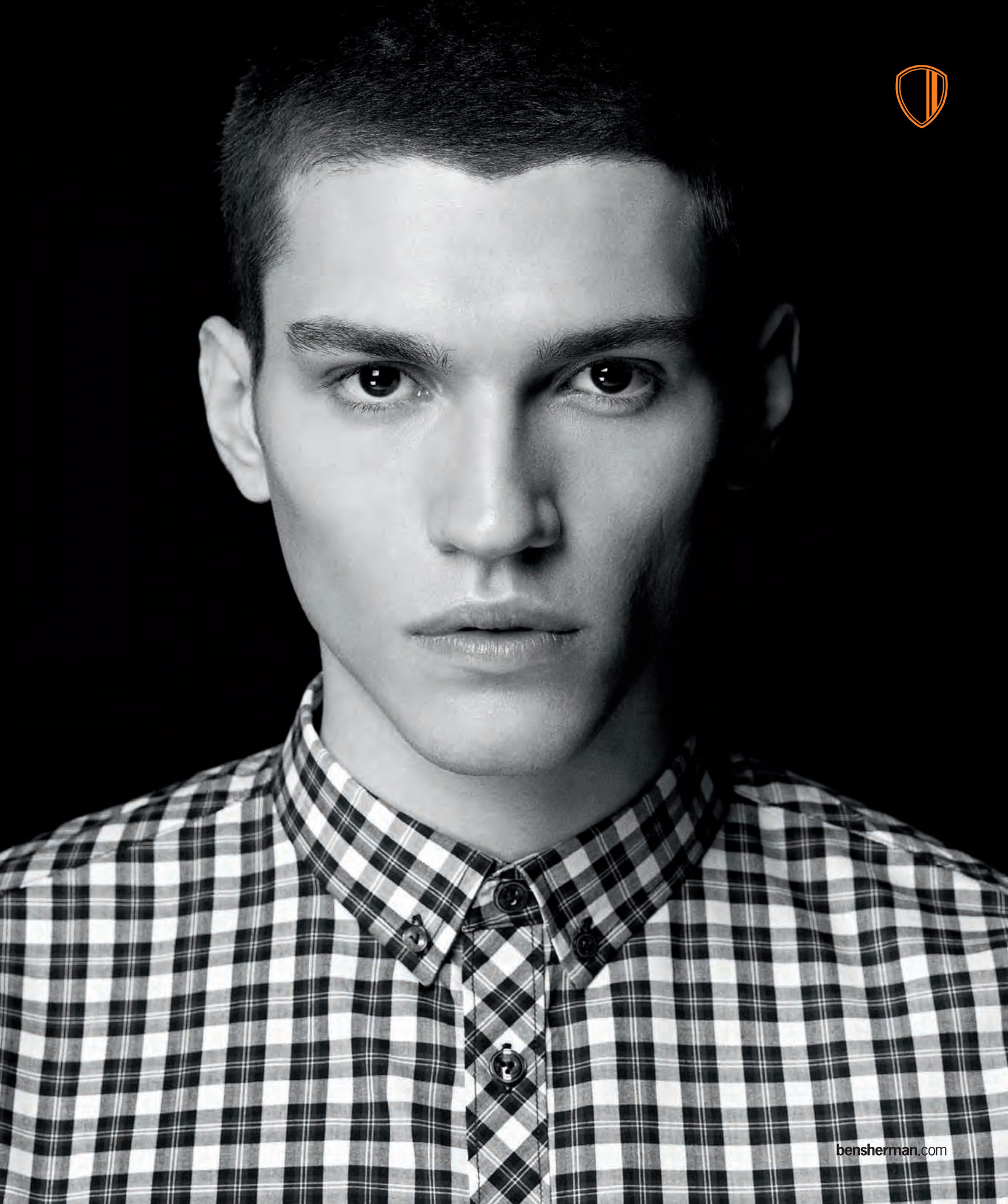
02 >



0 0912847300 0



Ben Sherman®





**ZIRH
IKON**



ZIRHIKON.COM

REDEFINING FRAGRANCE FOR MEN
AVAILABLE AT BLOOMINGDALE'S, MACY'S, AND SEPHORA

table of contents





THE GENERAL
BRYAN DEEGAN



**METAL
MULISHA**
METALMULISHA.COM

table of contents





can you exist

RZST
Fine Art Denim
Collection

www.canyourzst.com

Inked

creative director todd weinberger
editor jason buhrmester
photo director marya gullo
photo coordinator joshua clutter

web master steven intermill
software engineering eric g. elinow

contributing editor jennifer goldstein
contributing fashion director risa knight
contributing market editor julie chen

contributing writers

jonah bayer, matt bertz, tom conlon, marisa dimattia, willie g.,
stan horaczek, cory jones, hayley elisabeth kaufman, george polgar,
alison prato, rebecca swanner, liz van pay, jon wiederhorn

photographers

rudy archuleta, jill "horiyuki" bonny, tom corbett, trevor dixon, aaron dodds,
jonathon kambouris, hussein katz, ben leuner, miko lim, shane mccauley,
jared moossy, bill murphy, frank w. ockenfels 3, jason o'dell, warwick saint,
natalie sojka-gentry, franziska strauss, santi tuamsuk, kelly turso, david yellen

interns

kate daly, lavonda manning, meghan merlini, anna patin, erika wendel

publisher/president don hellinger
don@inkedmag.com
215-901-7448
advertising sales spyro poulos
spyro@inkedmag.com
646-454-9196
kenyon clemons
kenyon@inkedmag.com
917-434-4459
maha einabawi
maha@inkedmag.com
646-454-9197

magazine office inked magazine
326-332 canal st., suite 3a
new york city, ny 10013

corporate office pinchazo publishing
174 middletown blvd., #301
langhorne, pa 19047

main number 212-537-9347
website inkedmag.com

chief financial officer jami pearlman
accounts receivable chris watson
newsstand consultants ralph perricelli, irwin billman
fulfillment prestige fulfillment

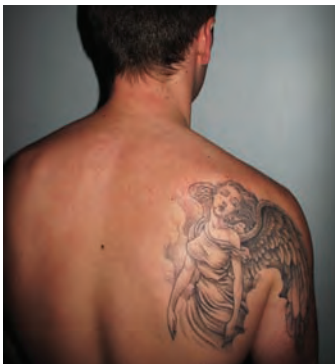
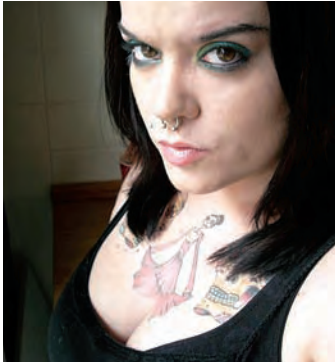
Blak Prince
fine jewelry



Reign with Power

WWW.BLAKPRINCE.COM

contributors



We gave writer **Liz Van Pay** an extra week to turn in her photo for this month's Contributors page to give her new chest tattoo time to heal. Among her numerous tattoos are one band tattoo (a black rose with a banner that reads "Outlaw Heart," in homage to Tiger Army) and two tattoos that will surely send her to hell. "I have the Four Horsemen as My Little Ponies, and an upside-down cross of chocolate chip cookies," she explains. If she weren't contributing to *AMP*, *Alternative Press*, and *Wonka Vision*, Van Pay would be "drinking much more than I do now, and having no medium in which to explain myself." This month, Van Pay profiled MySpace star Metal Sanaz ("Inked People," page 40).

"I was going to have Civ ink my initials in the Gorilla Biscuits font on my arm earlier this year, but then I realized that my only tattoo would be, like, of my initials on my arm," says writer **Jonah Bayer**. For this issue, Bayer talked to hip-hop group Gym Class Heroes ("New Friend Request," page 54) during their photo shoot and learned that if you need a taxi in Philadelphia you should bring a book, because you'll have to wait over an hour for them to show up. Bayer's writing has appeared in *Penthouse*, *Thrasher*, *Revolver*, *Alternative Press*, and *Guitar World* as well as on his infrequently updated website, jonahbayer.org.

She may not have any tattoos herself, but writer **Hayley Elisabeth Kaufman** enjoyed discussing ink, the dark side of Hollywood, and Lindsay Lohan with actress Shirly Brener

("Inked People," page 44). "We talked for over an hour," Kaufman recalls of her interview with the sultry actress. "I definitely found myself a new girl crush." Kaufman also writes for *Teen Vogue*, *ReadyMade*, and *Soma*.

Photographer **Tom Corbett** ("Almost Famous," page 80) was born in Marseilles, France, in 1969. After spending most of his formative years in Sydney, Australia, Corbett moved to London in 1994 to pursue a career in photography. Corbett, who just directed his first promo video, for the Turnberry Isle Resort & Club in Aventura, FL, has shot ads for Sony Ericsson and Tissot, and has photographed stars like Joss Stone, David Beckham, and Franz Ferdinand. He now lives in New York City with his wife and son.

Jonathon Kambouris grew up in the Detroit metro area of Michigan and considers himself to be an untraditional still-life photographer ("Wear," beginning page 16) who sometimes photographs people. His newest tattoo is a black and gray angel on his shoulder blade and arm that was done by Patrick Conlon (Kambouris says he's "highly recommended") at East Side Ink. If Kambouris were not a photographer he would be a pilot. He shoots for *Details*, *Latina*, and *Nylon*.

Chinese-Czech-American **Miko Lim** ("Double Dare," page 60) was born in Malaysia but first fell in love with photography in Seattle, where he was influenced by the art and music of the grungy '90s. Lim's images have

appeared on the covers and in the pages of *Vogue*, *Blender*, *Spin*, *Vibe*, and others, and his commercial clients include American Apparel, Champion, and Alexander Wang. In addition to photography, Lim enjoys far-off travel with his wife and playing Transformers with himself. He currently splits his time between New York City and Tokyo.

"I hate band photos where all the guys stand together and try and look cool," says Philadelphia photographer **Trevor Dixon**. For this month's shoot with Gym Class Heroes ("New Friend Request," page 54), Dixon put the band on a trampoline. "At first I wasn't sure they'd want to do it, but once the first guy went, they couldn't wait to get on." The inked photographer has several tattoos. "I have a ship on my forearm and a geisha girl on my upper arm," he explains. "They are 20 years old at this point, so they look like old-man, Navy-style tattoos. I was so drunk when I got the ship that I wasn't even sure what was under the bandage." He adds, "That was when you could drink out of the bottle at the tattoo parlor."

According to his photographer mother, South African-born photographer **Warwick Saint** was conceived in a photo studio. Now a photographer himself, Saint has shot everyone from Björk to Daniel Craig to Missy Elliott. For this issue, Saint shot our cover story on Jaime King ("Hail to the King," page 46). His work has been featured in *Black Book*, *Arena*, *Interview*, and others.

Sinful



letter



Editor Jason Buhrmester battles sunstroke and a hangover outside the original location of Sailor Jerry's tattoo shop in Honolulu.

I was in Honolulu loaded on rum when it really hit me what INKED is about. Earlier in the day, I had soaked up a history lesson by wandering through the city's Chinatown area, where WWII soldiers once cruised for a tattoo, a drink, and a quick lay before shipping off to war. Later that night, I sat on the back patio of Bar 35, a trendy new nightclub in the neighborhood, and watched as tattoo artists, musicians, models, and other tattooed scenesters packed in for a wild party and a screening of the new documentary *Hori Smoku Sailor Jerry*.

That's when I understood that INKED sits right where the history and culture of tattooing intersect with the people who are keeping it interesting and on the edge today. For example, we love discussing Sailor Jerry's impact on tattoo design (page 76) and then talking with actress Jaime King about her tattoos and her latest movies (page 46). We can explore how Paul Booth (page 95) has reshaped the look of tattooing and later hang with the tattooed heavies in *Gym Class Heroes* (page 54). This is our world.

Let us know who is reshaping your world—the bands, the actors, the artists. Visit inkedmag.com or myspace.com/inkedmag.com, or e-mail us at letters@inkedmag.com to let us know.

Enjoy the issue!

Jason Buhrmester
Editor

LAGER FREAKS & BEER GEEKS!

Welcome to

CONEY ISLAND CRAFT LAGERS™



CONEY ISLAND LAGER™

Step right up and witness the delectable alchemy of 8 malts, 6 hops, & Czech Pilsner yeast.

SWORD SWALLOWER™

Steel hop lager with 8 hops and 4 malts.

ALBINO PYTHON™

White Lager brewed with orange peel, ginger and fennel.

HUMAN BLOCKHEAD™

(Seasonal: Jan.-March) Tough-as-Nails strong lager. 10% alc.

FREAKTOBERFEST™

(Seasonal: Sept.-Oct.) 6.66% alc. Blood Red Lager.



AROUSE!
YOUR LIQUID
CURIOSITIES

AMAZE!
YOUR ORAL
SENSIBILITIES

INDULGE!

YOUR INNER **BEER FREAK**



Est. 1996

www.coneyislandlager.com
(visit for a list of distributors)

Illustrations by Dave Wallin at Tattoo Culture, Brooklyn, NY ★ www.dcvallin.com

Beer Freak face and all text and images Trademark (TM), Service Mark (SM), and Copyright © Shmaltz Brewing Company 1996 - 2008. Sideshow artwork and Funny Face Logo used under special Licence from Coney Island USA.

mail



TICKLED PINK

Your January issue was the best you've ever done. Pink, Lemmy, Janeane Garofalo—amazing! I don't know how you do it every month, but I love it.
Skyler Christensen
Oakland, CA

Pink is so fucking hot! Thank you for putting this girl on the cover.
Kelsey, via MySpace

FEEL THE LOVE

Well, INKED, you should be grateful for the economic slowdown because after taking a look at my expenses I finally decided to subscribe. And as a subscriber I'd like to make a suggestion: Kymani Marley. He is a son of Bob and has some really nice tattoos. Keep up the good work!
Richard Vaughan
San Mateo, CA

Looking forward to the next issue and many more to come. You're the number one tattoo mag, hands down, no competition. When is the next issue due? It seems like it has been a long time since I got one. I guess I'm just in a hurry for a really good mag. Thanks!
Ron Nelson, via MySpace

WE'RE CONNECTED

I'm a big fan of INKED. I look forward to every issue and love the website. Your "Create a Cover" option online is so fun. It's a great way for us to interact with and stay connected to the magazine and also to each other. It was awesome to log in today and see my own cover featured on the home page. I consider it a great compliment, given the number of beautiful women on the site. Made my day. I know sometimes when you're slammed at work, under pressure, and on deadline, it's easy to lose track of the fact that what you're doing matters. Just wanted you to know it really does.

Lisa Lai
Boulder, CO

MORE OZZY LOVE

Awesome work! I was introduced to your mag through a workmate and cannot get enough of it. I read it from cover to cover. Your articles are great reading, and every time I browse through, it urges me on to get a tat. Love the ladies in the mag too. Are all American women this hot? I fell in love with Kelly Feeney. Her Gustav Klimt piece is amazing. Is she single? Once again, thanks for pouring greatness on us, and keep it coming.

Nathan Wakefield
Sydney, Australia



READER OF THE MONTH

CHRISTIE GOULD
Long Beach, CA

Just found your mag in a shop in surfer's paradise in Oz! I'm just in the middle of getting my first sleeve done at the moment. Hurt like hell, but I know it'll be totally worth it. Keep doing what you do, as it's ace!
Matt Willis, via MySpace

VEGAS, BABY

When are you going to do Inked Girls Las Vegas? We're waiting for you!
Nancy, via MySpace



WRITE TO US! Got something to say? Send all letters of praise, notes of complaint, story suggestions, and beer samples to letters@inkedmag.com. All submissions should include the writer's name and address. Letters may be edited for clarity, length, and content.

INKED LIFE

MY FIRST INK

NAME: Jordan

OCCUPATION: guitar tech/builder

HOMETOWN: Sacramento, CA

My first tattoo was a grouping of music notes on my hip. Later, I had Steve'O, an artist at Something Wicked Tattoo in Roseville, CA, surround it with a betta fish, so the notes are now in the tail on the fish. I take getting tattooed like a champ. I get super excited. The only one I didn't handle well was the one at the top of my foot. It hurt so bad, I felt like I needed to do pregnancy breathing!





Clockwise from top left: Es white and gold high-top sneaker, esfootwear.com; PF Flyer brown leather Center Hi shoe, pfflyers.com; Converse gray Skidgrip Mid sneaker, converse.com; Etnies black and red Perry Mid sneaker, etnies.com; Gourmet ivory cutout mid-top sneaker, cmonwealth.com.

HIGH TIMES



★ Buckler

LONDON 0207.377.2767 NEW YORK 212.255.1596
andrewbuckler.com

Clockwise from top left:
Stüssy Coltrane sunglasses,
stussydirect.com; Colab
Eyewear sunglasses,
boundlessny.com; Gucci aviator
glasses, gucci.com; Lucky
Brand Anthem sunglasses,
luckybrandjeans.com; Paul
Frank Digitalist sunglasses,
eyesocietyonline.com; Marc
by Marc Jacobs sunglasses,
solsticestores.com.



FOCUS GROUP

PROF-STYLIST, MEGAN TERRY



NEXX
UNLIMITED
WWW.NEXXUNLIMITED.COM

NEXX

UNLIMITED
WWW.NEXXUNLIMITED.COM

NEW LINE LAUNCHING SPRING 2009

NEW STORE COMING SOON

Clockwise from top: Volcom Roadhouse jeans, volcom.com; Agave gray Gringo jeans, agavejean.com; Buffalo David Bitton Ruffer Jeans, macys.com; RZST skeleton-graphic jeans, rezistance.com; 55 DSL Peex jeans, 55 DSL, 212-226-5055.



GRAY ANATOMY

PROF-STYLIST, MEGAN TERRY

PHOTO: USA BOYLE; MAKEUP: MICHELLE CHRISTMAN; TATTOO: MARK DUDD AT ETERNAL ART TATTOO; MODEL: ROCHELLE KARIDIS



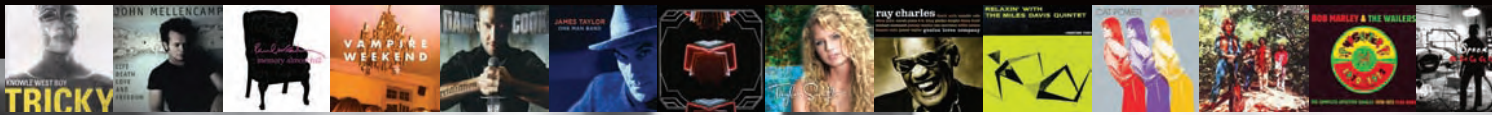
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
**VOTE
FOR THE
HOTTEST
INKED
GIRL**

Check out **4,000+**
tattooed women at
inkedmag.com



From top: Ben Sherman black leather Vega jacket, bensherman.com; Vans AV snap-button leather jacket, vans.com; Public School quilted leather jacket, barneys.com.

HIDE OUT



WHAT IS INDEPENDENT MUSIC? DON'T ASK. LISTEN.

Tricky. The master of genre jujitsu drops *Knowle West Boy*, a boundary-melting, mind-bending journey through a musical hall of mirrors. Download it now at eMusic.com.



DOWNLOAD 25 FREE SONGS + 1 FREE AUDIOBOOK
redeem at www.emusic.com/inkedoffer

WORKS ON ANY MP3 PLAYER, INCLUDING THE IPOD® AND ZUNE®.



emusic

Nº 1 Site for Independent Music

Get up to 25 downloads free with 7-day eMusic trial subscription and get 1 audiobook free with a 7-day trial subscription. Separate subscriptions required. Offers available to first-time eMusic customers only. Internet access, registration, and credit or debit card required. Audiobook offer only valid on 1-credit audiobooks; Some titles require multiple credits for download. Offers and eMusic's prices are subject to change without notice and are subject to eMusic's terms of use. eMusic and the eMusic logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of eMusic.com Inc. in the USA or other countries. All rights reserved. iPod®, Zune®, and PayPal are registered trademarks of their respective owners, Apple Inc., Microsoft Corporation, and PayPal. Neither Apple nor Microsoft are partners or sponsors of eMusic. eMusic is not responsible for products, services or claims made by inked.

Bartender Jaime Less pours them strong at The Dime in Los Angeles.



AMERICAN SPIRIT

We pledge to drink more bourbon, the only liquor native to the U.S.

The next time you're standing at the bar, trying to decide what to order, do your patriotic duty and order a few fingers of bourbon—the only spirit native to America. Bourbon, which must be made with at least 51 percent corn and aged a minimum of two years in charred oak barrels, is the only liquor to be recognized by the U.S. Senate as a “distinctive product of the United States.”

As more superpremium and small-batch brands emerge, bourbon is staking its claim as the leading high-end spirit in the world. “Distilleries are making high-end bourbons aged six or more years to compete with single-malt scotch,” says

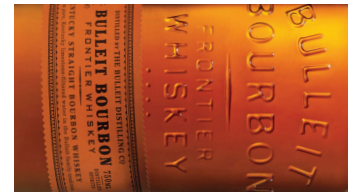
Jaime Less, bartender at The Dime in Los Angeles. “And more bars are now carrying fine bourbons, such as Knob Creek, Buffalo Trace, and Woodford Reserve.”

Most drinkers think of bourbon as a mixing spirit (bourbon and soda, anyone?), but the top-end bourbons need nothing more than a glass and an ice cube or two. “Mixing a single-barrel bourbon with Coke or ginger ale is just as bad as those assholes that like to drink Grey Goose and Red Bull,” says Less. “If you don't like the taste of alcohol, then mix the well shit with your soda. You won't even know the difference. Trust me, I know.” —Cory Jones



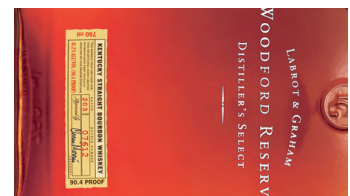
KNOB CREEK BOURBON

One of the best-selling small-batch bourbons, Knob Creek is aged for nine years in the centers of rack houses on a Kentucky hillside. Its sweetness helps balance its alcohol level, which is slightly higher than normal—100 proof.



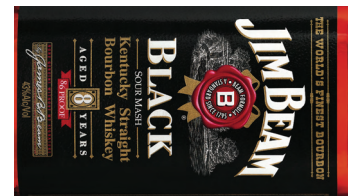
BULLEIT BOURBON

Using a recipe that was formed in 1830, this rye-heavy “frontier whiskey” kicks off with a spiciness other bourbons don't have. It then rides a wave of smokiness and smoothes out the heat in a long, honey-soaked finish.



WOODFORD RESERVE BOURBON

Big, toasted oak and vanilla flavors make this one of the smoother bourbons on the market. Aged for at least six years and boasting a respectable 90.4 proof, it's the official bourbon of the Kentucky Derby.



JIM BEAM BLACK

The mature and refined sister to the more popular white label Jim Beam is well worth the few extra dollars. Rich, dark and fruity flavors make this one of the better bourbons for your buck.

*What do you
use for
protection?*



Model: Tattoo Potion Doll Vanessa Graw



Tattoo Potion™

Tattoo Aftercare - Tattoo and Skin Longevity - SPF30 Color Protection



Despite what Mom says, a proper pair of headphones will actually protect your hearing by isolating outside noise—allowing you to turn Weezy down from 10 to 9. Left: Phiaton MS 400 Moderna headphones (\$250, phiaton.com) feature deep leather cups and lightweight carbon-fiber construction that delivers crystal clear sound. Center: Collapsible Monster Beats by Dr. Dre headphones (\$350, monstercable.com) crank out crisp beats with the blessing of Dr. Chronic himself. Right: For portability, the Audio-Technica ATH-FC700A headphones (\$100, audio-technica.com) use audio drivers designed to pull the best sound out of your MP3s, whether they're downloaded legally or not.

LISTEN UP

PROP STYLIST, MEGAN TERRY

SOUND ADVICE



BEN NICHOLS
The Last Pale Light in the West
[Liberty & Lament]

Lucero frontman Ben Nichols benched his alt-country outfit for this, his first stripped-down solo release. The collection of seven tracks, based on Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*, finds Nichols and his guitar strumming songs about the book's characters, including Toadvine, the misguided kid, and the ex-priest, Ben Tobin. Nichols channels each of the historic characters

with lines such as, "There must be a place/Where this world and grace/Are made to meet." The fingerpicked melody and piano rumble of "Toadvine" might be Nichols's best moment, wrestling with a character looking back at a life of violence. It's Nichols's shot at hitting somewhere between Townes Van Zandt and Bruce Springsteen's *Nebraska*, and he does a damn good job.



NEW FOUND GLORY
Not Without a Fight
[Epitaph]

New Found Glory toughed out the tsunami that swallowed Blink-182, Sum 41, and countless others, becoming one of the most beloved bands of the pop-punk wave. How did they do it? Part of the answer is NFG's hardcore roots, which add a dose of metal chug to their sugary melodies. On their seventh album (this time produced by Blink-182

alum Mark Hoppus), they stretch that sound best on "47," a pogo anthem to a missed connection with a girl who answers on the 47th call, and "I'll Never Love Again," which has an East Coast hardcore gang chorus that toughens the sentiment. The melodic "Listen to Your Friends" could have been a huge hit 10 years ago—and still might be today.



JUSTICE
A Cross the Universe
[Atlantic Records]

The term "French electronica" doesn't call to mind fist-pumping rock, but somehow Justice pull it off. The grinding bass lines, jacked-up kick drum, and overblown synths give the Parisian duo's tracks a doomed overtone that even a Black Sabbath fan could appreciate. On this live album, the two musicians expand on the rumbling riffs of their debut album, *Cross*. Cuts such

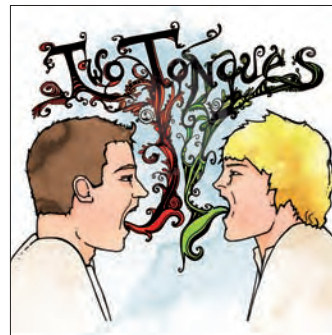
as "Genesis" and "One Minute to Midnight" thump and buzz with frantic live energy, while hits "Phantom" and "D.A.N.C.E." are expanded into multisection jams like a killer metal band taking an extended guitar solo.



THE VON BONDIES
Love, Hate, and Then There's You
[Majordomo Records]

Scrappy punkers The Von Bondies literally fought their way out of Detroit's rock scene years ago. Although the group received a helping hand out of the Motor City from Jack White, the relationship ended in fisticuffs even as critics cranked the group's album *Pawn Shoppe Heart* and their song "C'Mon C'Mon" became the theme to *Rescue Me*. Four years later, the re-

vamped Bondies are a different band. The gritty thump has been smoothed over in a sheen that recalls The Cars and even The Strokes. Jason Stollsteimer's baritone is pumped on the stop-start "Pale Bride," but it's the thundering "Earthquake," on which he deadpans, "Better not fuck with us/Who's sorry?" that signals the Motor City boys aren't playing nice just yet.



TWO TONGUES
Two Tongues
[Vagrant Records]

Most songwriter collaborations wind up a mess of label bullshit and half-baked ideas. That's why we're betting the members of Two Tongues are shocked at how perfect these songs turned out. Featuring Max Bemis and Coby Linder of Say Anything and Chris Conley and David Soloway of Saves the Day, Two Tongues is built around two of emo's best songwriters. Bemis

and Conley sound perfectly paired as they swap lines about wrecked relationships and insecurities—especially when they up the anxiety on the hook-heavy "Tremors." The biggest surprise isn't how well they work together, but just how damn danceable the tracks are. Check "Wowie Zowie," in which they sing, "I don't want to go home unless I'm not alone." Stellar.



LILY ALLEN
It's Not Me, It's You
[Capitol Records]

Call it bigmouth strikes again: It takes only three tracks of Lily Allen's second album for the bratty Brit singer to declare her boredom with drugs and dis a boyfriend who can't deliver in the sack. Allen's charm is that she sounds like she's seen it all. On opening track "Everyone's At It," a thumping look at drug culture, she deadpans, "When will we tire of putting shit up our noses? ... It's meant to be fun and this just doesn't feel right."

Elsewhere, she cheerfully shuts down racism and homophobia on the sunny, piano-tinged "Fuck You." We warned you about that mouth.

Scotty Lago,
freshly powdered
and ready to ride.



TRAIL MIX

As pro snowboarder Scotty Lago's rib cage tattoo attests, whatever happens on the mountain is "In God's Hands." But that doesn't mean he leaves everything to chance. "The half-pipe is my main focus, but I love the backcountry of New Zealand and the interior of British Columbia—and the conditions are harsh," he says. To battle the elements, Lago relies on his Billabong jacket, a

pair of lucky long johns, and Smith shades. Even as low-maintenance as he is ("I think I wash my hair, like, once a week"), Lago admits there are some products he turns to for help (see below). And there are two things he won't be able to do without this February, after World Cup contests in Canada and Italy: "A chiropractor and lots of ibuprofen." —Jennifer Goldstein



NIVEA FOR MEN PROTECTIVE LOTION, \$7, DRUGSTORES

"My skin's sensitive so I wash it with warm water, no soap. I try to cover my face with a bandanna, but I've also been using this lotion."



SCHICK QUATTRO TITANIUM TRIMMER RAZOR, \$14, DRUGSTORES

"I use this to stay clean-shaven. It works great, but you gotta switch the blade up pretty often to make sure you get a close shave."



VERTRA SUN RESISTANCE CREAM SPF 45, \$28, VERTRA.COM

"I try to wear at least SPF 45 because the sun can be strong. This is made for surfers but it also works great when it's snowing."



SPEED STICK 24/7 \$4, DRUGSTORES

"I'm not that smelly of a guy, so I don't usually wear cologne or deodorant. But when I'm going out I'll throw on some of this, just in case."



THE PORSCHE 911 GT3 RS.
BEAUTIFULLY ENGINEERED RIGHT DOWN TO THE PHOTOSHOOT.



Studios • Equipment Rental • CGI • Retouching • Digital Capture • Retail + E-Commerce Photography • Production
New York • Miami • Los Angeles • 212-268-7247 • splashlight.com **splashlight.** GET IT ALL IN ONE SHOT.

Photo Credit: XY Photography

CASH & CARRY



METAL EDGE

Our late night ritual revolves around beef jerky and the brilliant cartoon *Metalocalypse*. The second season found Dethklok, the world's biggest metal band, designing their own fashion line and battling with rival band the Revengers, all with guest appearances from members of Dimmu Borgir and Cannibal Corpse. The two-disc DVD set (\$30, adultswim.com), includes all 18 episodes and special features that the creators have hidden on each disc. Like we needed another reason to not get off the couch.

ADIOS AMIGO

Italian designer Simone Legno's Tokidoki line of products feature limited-edition items that send collectors and celebs into fits. Many of his marquee characters, including a dog in a cactus costume and a teddy bear with fangs, pop up on sneakers, toys, bags, and other products that blow out of stores. This 8-inch Tokidoki plush toy (\$20, strangeco.com) is Adios, a character who spent 500 years in hell before the devil cast him out for being too good. Now he wanders the earth waiting for you to collect him.

SNAKE EYES

Buried among the refrigerator magnets and coffee mugs at your local art museum are typically a few killer T-shirts featuring work from famous artists. T-shirt company 2K was founded with the intent to distribute the best of these shirts from museums around the world, and the company now sells shirts featuring the work of artists such as Yoko Ono, Experimental Jetset, and Jean-Michel Basquiat. The New Uwabami T-shirt (\$35, 2ktshirts.com) was designed by MUSTONE, an upcoming Tokyo-based artist. We just saved you a trip downtown.

RING KING

Our taste in jewelry doesn't differ that much from our taste in tattoos. Little King Ltd., a jewelry company based in New York City, makes well-crafted pieces steeped in tattoo imagery such as skulls, crowns, daggers, and spiders. This skull and signet ring (\$225, littlekingjewelry.com) is made from sterling silver and coated with black rhodium. Need more glimmer? It can be customized with stones by request to match your four-finger ring. You know, the one that says "Biz Markie."

KAT CHRONICLE

Even your mother knows everything about Kat Von D, thanks to the *LA Ink* star's ever-growing empire, including a TV show, concert tour, and makeup line. To get the real story, pick up *High Voltage Tattoo* (\$28, harperdesigninternational.com), Kat's first book. The hefty tome is heavy with photos and includes an autobiography, an annotated map of her tattoos, and sections on her work, her influences, and her celebrity friends, including Bam Margera, Kerry King, and a foreword by boyfriend Nikki Sixx.



Clockwise from above: Artist Amy Crehore and her husband created the "Tickler" brand ukulele featuring Crehore's art; front view of ukulele; "The Caged Wonder"; "Second Fiddle Infatuation."



INSTRUMENTAL ART

As we descend into the Great Depression 2.0, the country's financial situation is enough to make anyone nostalgic for a time before we knew—or cared—about things like the gross domestic product. That might be one of the reasons Amy Crehore's art is so welcome right about now. "One of the things I like most about her work is the innocence of it," says Andrew Hosner, who brings Crehore's "Dreamgirls and Ukes" show to Los Angeles's Thinkspace gallery February 13–March 6.

Crehore herself acknowledges a fascination with the decade leading up to the original Great Depression. "I guess I've always loved the '20s," she says. "It was such a great time aesthetically—the graphic arts ... Josephine Baker in Paris ... the music, the instruments." In fact, it's those instruments in particular that will be the focus of this solo show. Crehore, a painter and illustrator whose works have been published in magazines like *Rolling Stone* and *The Atlantic Monthly*, collects vintage instruments with her husband. And when the time came to focus on new work, she decided her assortment of ukuleles from the '20s should be the focus. "My husband is a luthier, so he's restoring them to playable shape and I'm painting them," she says. "I'm also doing some new oil paintings to go with the ukes."



Like most of Crehore's past work, the ukes and paintings will feature fantastic creatures, colorful humor, and female nudes. "There is always some underlying narrative to draw the viewer in further and really involve them in her works," says Hosner. Past paintings have featured everything from a bass-playing bear watching over a sleeping girl and a bushy-tailed squirrel to a brunette strumming a banjo while a Pierrot and pussycat dance. The new work will be equally surreal. "I've been painting a fantasy land of girls and music ... flowers that are almost like lollipops, a lion, a big tortoise, and flying insects," says Crehore. The ukes themselves will be characters too. "They've been speaking to me," laughs Crehore. "So I've given a lot of them names, like Lucky 13, and let those inspire the design. They're all playable, but also fine art objects."

As if to prove that point, Crehore and her husband, who have been playing old-timey instruments for years as the Hokum Scorchers, will perform at the opening night reception on February 14. "I've played the washboard, tenor banjo, and snare drum, and he plays a National resonator guitar, guitar-banjo, mandolin, and uke," she says. In fact, it's reminiscent of the jug bands of the 1920s. "I guess I just gravitate toward that time period," Crehore laughs. "Maybe I should have lived back then." —Jennifer Goldstein



Just ask KISS: Smoke and lights are the best way to distract a crowd from noticing your shaky musical talent. Bottom right: The Home Stage Kit Rock Band (\$99, pdp.com) connects to your Xbox 360 and adds smoke and colored lights to your performance, all synced to your Rock Band 2 songs. Center: Even Peter Criss knows that a proper drum kit is crucial for any show. Upgrade your Rock Band 2 set to the Ion Drum Rocker (\$300, ionaudio.com). The set can be reconfigured and expanded to include two bass pedals and additional cymbals. Plus, the high-impact pads are quieter than the standard kit (if you're crazy enough to want that).

BAND AIDS

PROP STYLIST, MEGAN TERRY

GAME ON



F.E.A.R. 2: Project Origin [Warner Brothers Interactive]

Platforms: PC, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360

When a creepy kid named Alma sets out for revenge against a company that stole her life and forced her to deliver super-psychic babies before tossing her aside to die, it's up to you to sort out the mess. That dismembered soldier lying in pieces on the floor? Her gift to you. As a Delta Force soldier sent to arrest the president of the wayward corporation, you must gun down scores of the corporation's mercs while surviving the nightmarish onslaught of Alma's psychic outbursts. F.E.A.R. 2 replaces the stuffy office settings of the original with more open environments, which gives the super-smart foes more opportunities to take you out. Keep the lights on and use your skills to slow down time during tough encounters. And if you see a little girl, run like hell!



Halo Wars [Ensemble Studios]

Platform: Xbox 360

No Master Chief? No problem. For Halo Wars, developers ditched the hero of the best-selling Halo series for a prequel that starts 20 years before the Mountain Dew poster boy donned his metallic green armor. Created from the ground up with console gamers in mind, Halo Wars hopes to do for real-time strategy games what Halo did for console shooters—namely, blow your mind. With an entire army featuring space marines, Warthog humvees, and Scorpion tanks at your disposal, you must smoke the Covenant off the planet and secure an alien artifact the enemy doesn't want you to have. In online fights, Arbiter fans can turn the table and control the alien technology to teach the humans a lesson in diplomacy.



Skate 2 [Electronic Arts]

Platforms: PlayStation 3, Xbox 360

While your leg recovers from that last handrail bail, you can still find a gnarly line to shred. Skate 2 allows players to hop off their decks and move objects in the world to create dream skating scenarios. When you finally build the most deadly river-clearing jump this side of *Jackass*, upload it online to share with friends. The game that knocked Tony Hawk off his throne returns with double the amount of tricks—including new rail slides, foot plants, and lip tricks—securing its place as the best in hard-core skateboarding. Biting the dust on a rough rail may cost you broken bones and bloody limbs, but there is art in failure. Epic bails earn you a spot in the *Thrasher* Hall of Meat.



Street Fighter IV [Capcom]

Platforms: PlayStation 3, Xbox 360

After dozens of spin-offs and a Jean-Claude Van Damme movie that made *American Ninja* seem like *Casablanca*, Street Fighter finally returns to prominence. Instead of going full 3-D in the style of *Mortal Kombat* and *Tekken*, Street Fighter IV stays true to the formula that bankrupted teenagers in early '90s arcades. The fighters and environments are rendered in 3-D, but the gameplay takes place on a traditional 2-D plane. All 12 of the original fighters return, including fan favorites Ryu, Chun-Li, and Guile. The game's developers also added a few select characters from other sequels, four new fighters, and a new boss named—wait for it—Seth. Sounds dangerous! —*Matt Bertz*



Clockwise from right: The Kawasaki KFX450R at play; on the trail with the Polaris Ranger RZR; the Honda TRX700XX grabs some air.

OFF-ROAD

HONDA TRX700XX

686 cc engine
\$8,000

KAWASAKI KFX450R

450 cc engine
\$8,000

POLARIS RANGER RZR

760 cc engine
\$10,000

Of all the motorized toys modern man has, few incite as much reckless enthusiasm as all-terrain vehicles. For pure fun there is little to match the experience of tearing ass through wilderness trails and across desert landscapes. The latest ATVs focus on power, capability, safety, and, yes, even comfort. Well, as comfortable as it gets rocketing over off-road trails. Here's a look at some of the hottest new models.

Honda TRX700XX

Any ATV worthy of a white-knuckle ride through the woods must have a strong resistance to the elements—and even stronger brakes. Honda's new TRX700XX features a double-wishbone suspension and a 686cc four-stroke engine. The liquid-cooled engine and the dry-sump lubrication system with large-capacity oil tank are ideal for keeping this sucker running even when it's caked in mud. Triple-disc brakes keep you from eating pine while the steel frame and a tough urethane skid plate protect the inner workings from harsh landings. For comfort on long rides, the gear-driven counterbalance minimizes engine vibration while the ergonomically sculpted plush seating massages your ass all the way back to the campsite.

Kawasaki KFX450R

Don't worry about oversteering the race-ready KFX450R. The four-wheeler is the first competition-oriented ATV to include a reverse gear. It comes in handy on those messy turns and in must-back-up situations. Other race-ready features include an all-aluminum frame, a lightweight titanium exhaust header pipe, and a durable forged piston. While you're blazing through wooded trails, the U.S. Forest Service is watching for sparks that could set the woods on fire. Thankfully, the KFX450R comes with a U.S. Forest Service-approved spark arrester silencer. Smokey the Bear approves!

Polaris Ranger RZR

The most muscular ATV around is the 2008 Polaris Ranger RZR. It's powered by a big-bore 760cc twin-cylinder four-stroke engine that delivers amazing acceleration, going from 0 to 35 mph in about four seconds, with a top speed of 55 mph. At just 50 inches wide, the RZR is ideal for tight trails while still carrying two comfortably. The RZR is also a brawny worker with a cargo capacity of 300 pounds, a lockable space for tools and gear, and 1,500-pound towing capacity for hauling other busted ATVs back to civilization. —George Polgar

Robert Graham



Knowledge Wisdom Truth



Clockwise from top left: Interior of the Café Gerbeaud; room at the Lánchíd 19 Hotel; the Szechenyi Baths; the Budapest Parliament building at night.

Many of the world's historical treasures have been sanitized and Starbucksified until there's little personality left: Moscow's Red Square has tchotchke-hawking souvenir carts, the leaning tower of Pisa has more handrails than a nursing home, and the Great Pyramids have a freakin' laser light show. But somehow Hungary's magical capital city of Budapest has retained its historical charm, even five years after the country became part of the European Union.

Much of that charm comes from the Gothic Revival and Roman architecture that dots the hills of Buda and the Inner City of Pest. The sprawling Parliament Building on the banks of the Danube is not to be missed. Also visit Castle Hill, home to the Buda Castle and its underground labyrinth of caves that feature prehistoric cave paintings.

Thermal springs, which formed the caves thousands of years ago, are also responsible for Budapest's famous baths, many of which are open year-round. Check out the Szechenyi Baths, a marble complex of indoor swimming pools, 13 thermal baths, a gymnasium, and treatment rooms.

After your soak and maybe a vigorous Hungarian massage, head to one of the city's coffee-

houses. In the early part of the 20th century, these restaurant-bakery-cafés were where many of the city's writers and artists gathered. Today, the coffeehouses still have espresso and *kifli* (crescent-shaped pastries), but glitzier spots like the Gerbeaud also have restaurants where you can find refined dishes like filet of venison with onion jam and pumpkinseed noodles.

Don't miss the House of Terror Museum. It's a startling reminder that less than 20 years ago, Budapest was under the control of a terrorizing secret police. In the 1940s, the building that houses the museum was the headquarters of the Nazi-affiliated hate group Arrow Cross. Later, it was taken over by the Communist secret police, who tortured and imprisoned many innocent people within its walls until 1989.

When you're ready to leave the past behind at the end of the day, enter the 21st Century at the Lánchíd 19. With a glass façade that emits an always-changing array of colored lights and sleek chrome-and-glass decor, the contemporary hotel is a nice counterpoint to the Gothic glamour and amazing history the rest of the city has to offer. —Jennifer Goldstein

BUDAPEST PARLIAMENT BUILDING
budapest-parliament.com

THE LABYRINTH OF BUDA CASTLE
labirintus.com

SZECHENYI BATHS
spasbudapest.com

CAFÉ GERBEAUD & ONYX RESTAURANT
gerbeaud.hu

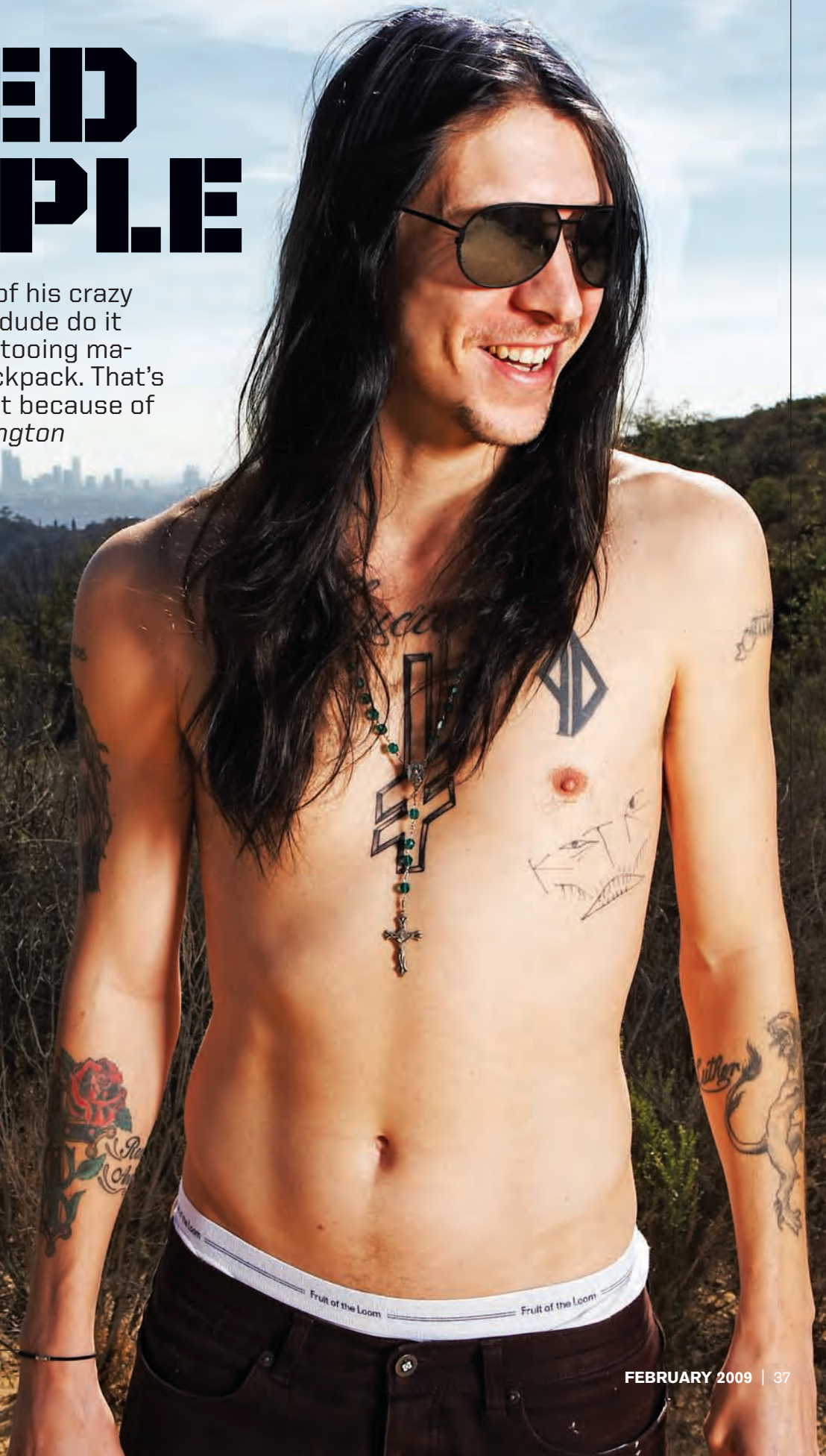
TERROR HOUSE MUSEUM
terrorhaza.hu

LÁNCHÍD 19
lanchid19hotel.hu

PHOTOS: CAFÉ GERBEAUD, LÁNCHÍD 19 HOTEL, AND SZECHENYI BATHS; BUDAPEST TOURISM BOARD; PARLIAMENT BUILDING, ISTOCKPHOTO

INKED PEOPLE

"[Neck Face] drew one of his crazy mouths, then had this dude do it who was carrying a tattooing machine around in his backpack. That's one of my favorites just because of the memory." —Erik Ellington





ERIK ELLINGTON

Pro skateboarder Erik Ellington's first-ever tattoo was nearly a casualty of his INKED photo shoot. "I went bombing down a hill and slammed," the 31-year-old skater recounts. "I rolled down the hill like a rag doll, scraping up my whole right side." The fall slashed up the word "Balance" on his upper arm—the name of the skate company he and a pal started as teenagers growing up in Tempe, AZ, one of the many 'hoods Ellington would call home en route to his current digs in Hollywood.

His life and skateboarding career actually launched in the boonies of Anchorage, AK.

"There wasn't a whole lot to do up there in winter," he says. "But in the summer you'd get between 16 and 22 hours of daylight. So you kind of got a year's worth of skating in those four months."

After Anchorage came Tempe, followed by San Diego and a gig as team rider for skate OG Jamie Thomas' s Zero Skateboards. It was there that Ellington got his second tattoo, a prison job. "I met a dude on tour who told me about the tattooing machines people make in prison," he says. "When I got back to San Diego, I had so much free time on my hands that I rigged up my own little machine with a Walkman motor, guitar string, 9-volt battery, and india ink." Ellington's DIY piece was his name and address on his left shoulder, though he's first to admit that "815 South Palmer" looks more like "815 Street Farmers."

"I gave a few too," Ellington says. "We'd get drunk and I'd break out the machine. This one dude wanted 'Fuck You' on his arm. I did the F and kind of a crazy-looking U. I was halfway through C when he couldn't take it anymore. I saw the guy a couple of years later and he'd tattooed all around it, but kept the 'FUC.' That was kind of cool."

Ellington's days as a tattoo artist are behind him now. The full-time pro skater and dad spends time repping his current sponsors, Deathwish Skateboards, KR3W clothing, Supra Footwear, and Brigada Eyewear (a new project he recently launched with fellow pros Andrew Reynolds, Jim Greco, and Terry Kennedy). He still manages to score sketchy ink whenever possible. His latest is a stamp on the rib cage by friend and graffiti phenom Neck Face. "He drew one of his crazy mouths, then had this dude do it who was carrying a tattooing machine around in his backpack. I'm pretty sure the dude was smoking heroin in the bathroom. That's one of my favorites just because of the memory." —Tom Conlon

METAL SANAZ

Chances are you're already friends with Metal Sanaz. Since launching her MySpace page in 2003, Sanaz has become a fixture on the friend lists of over 700,000 fans around the world who have helped her rack up more than two million video views for her online metal show. That fan base helped earn Sanaz a spot as the official host of MySpace: A Place for Metal, and lead to her work with Dave Navarro on a weekly radio show called *Spread Radio*, which can be found on SyncLive twice monthly. "There was never a goal of having it turn into what it has," says Sanaz. "I just started finding little bands, contacting them, and telling people about it. The reasoning behind that was my love for metal music and nothing more."

Originally from Iran, Sanaz now lives in Los Angeles, where she worked as a waitress and painted in her free time before becoming a metal queen. "MySpace was an amazing tool for me to use to find new talent. One thing that will never change is the fact that I am a fan. The support of friends and bands on MySpace is the reason I gained popularity, and they have all been there for me through my ups and downs."

Those ups and downs are also part of the story behind her tattoos. "My first tattoo was done in Venice Beach, CA. It was a tiny skull with tribal around it, and after a broken relationship I had it covered with my own design—an empty heart with two dragons, representing protection." The piece is an ongoing project, and there have been two further additions. "After a few years, I added a few of the cracks thanks to a great artist named Grey. The last of the cracks were done in Missouri by an artist named Rev. Timmy." Many people spend years covering their entire bodies, but not Sanaz. "The tattoo on my arm is my logo, so it means a lot to me."

These days, Sanaz is finding new ways to use the Web to reach out to bands and headbangers around the world. "We're planning world tours and working on new technology that will help bands sell their merchandise, tickets, and more. We're also partnering with a few amazing companies, and I am coming out with my own music players, creating a new way of promoting metal and helping the bands involved. After all, it's all about the heavy fuckin' metal, baby!" —Liz Van Pay





THE BRONX

The Bronx have a new album out—but you might not realize it. That’s because the Los Angeles band’s third album, like the two that came before it, is titled simply *The Bronx*. It’s part of the band’s plan to keep things simple—a plan that also includes recording at the group’s own studio and releasing *The Bronx* on their own label, White Drugs. “We really wanted to make a record that felt homemade—simpler,” explains guitarist and founding member Joby Ford. “We’re just trying not to overthink it.”

Ever since the Bronx elbowed their way into the Los Angeles music scene back in 2002, fans, critics, and, most of all, music snobs have debated which subgenre best describes the band’s energetic, no-nonsense sound. “It’s hilarious to read that stuff,” remarks Ford. “We file things into good and bad, and we just hope people put us in the good category.”

Most Bronx fans are made at the band’s shows, and there are plenty of those. The six members—Ford, vocalist Matt Caughthran, drummer Jorma Vik, guitarist Ken Horne, and bassist Brad Magers—conquered last year’s Warped Tour, only taking breaks from the sun-beaten crowds to shake things up at smaller club dates. “We put out a record and we tour on it. We don’t want to deal with all of the other stuff that comes with being in a band,” says Ford.

Because of their willingness to get in the van and their nonstandard sound, they have found themselves with tour bedfellows of all kinds. From

straight-up hardcore and metal bands like Converge and Mastodon to hipper acts like Atreyu, the band has yet to feel awkward on a bill. “When a lot of good bands come up, they don’t sound like anything else,” says Ford. “Individualistic bands tend to seek each other out.”

But no matter who The Bronx are playing with, you can always expect the same insane level of energy that keeps their fans stage-diving and clamoring to scream Caughthran’s lyrics right back in his face. It’s such a spectacle that it usually keeps people from noticing Ford’s self-proclaimed “crappy” tattoos. “I got my first tattoo when I was 17. It’s my initials in flames. I had to bribe an artist to get it,” he remembers. “The rest of the guys have more tattoos, but I have the worst.”

Luckily, Ford has a chance to cover those tattoos with a custom-made mariachi outfit for the band’s side project: El Bronx, an alter ego that features the band playing straight-up mariachi music chock full of trumpet and guitarrón and devoid of anything that could possibly be considered punk. According to Ford, the whole project came about from the band’s refusal to play unplugged. “An L.A. TV show wanted us to play one of our songs acoustic and that always turns out terribly,” he says. “We, as a band, love mariachi music so we did it. It all moved very fast. It’s not a joke. It’s totally serious.” Serious enough that El Bronx’s first record is scheduled to drop in March 2009 with 11 tracks of traditional mariachi. The album’s title? *El Bronx*. Of course. —Stan Horaczek

SHIRLY BRENER

"I've gotten to play a lot of drug addicts and hookers this year," muses actress Shirly Brener. The Bardot-esque blonde, who possesses a paradoxical mix of girl-next-door charm and femme fatale-worthy dark sensuality, revels in her distinctiveness. She's as comfortable portraying the bubbly love interest in a romantic comedy as a depraved addict in an indie flick. "Once you really get to know me you see that I am actually pretty edgy," she purrs over the phone. "There is a darkness, an edge, in me, and I really like to go against what is first expected."

The Israel-born and L.A.-by-way-of-London-bred actress got her start in the business at age 2 when she was photographed with her thespian mother in an ad campaign. She has since worked alongside accomplished actors such as Harvey Keitel, Val Kilmer, and James Spader and reached full-fledged celeb status in her home country, where she costarred in an O.C.-like prime time soap opera. Brener recalls her most recent cinematic accomplishment, *Righteous Kill*, the gritty cop drama starring film titans Al Pacino and Robert De Niro: "It was definitely an experience of a lifetime," she says. "It's funny because I wasn't nervous when I booked the job. The audition process was far more nerve-racking."

When asked to discuss her ink—a rotund cherub at her chiseled hip and a glowing sun on her back that she got as a teen in Israel—she dives into a careful explanation of the sun. It's an homage to her maternal grandmother, a Holocaust survivor, who saw her potential as a performer early on. "My grandmother always used to say, 'You are like the sun—you come in and light up the room.' She was a huge inspiration for me and I decided to get this as a tribute to her."

Brener will soon appear in the upcoming comedy *Labor Pains*, starring Lindsay Lohan. "I think that after all the scandal in the tabloids, it was important for her to deliver in this role," Brener says of her costar. "She is a good actress and so pretty up-close, in a fresh way."

And though others, like her grandmother, consider the actress sunny, Brener can't stay away from her dark side too long. After *Labor Pains*, she'll play a drug-addled hooker in *Streets of Blood*, an action thriller based in post-Katrina New Orleans starring Sharon Stone, 50 Cent, and Val Kilmer. —Hayley Elisabeth Kaufman

HAIR: MAXI; MAKEUP: HILLA PEER





hail
to
the
king

BY ALISON PRATO
PHOTOS BY WARWICK SAINT



KING



Previous page,
Alexander Wang
dress. This page,
Richard Ruiz black
jumper; Fendi belt.





Saime King regrets her tattoos only in the middle of the night.

“There have been times where I had to get up at 3 o’clock in the morning because I had to be on set two hours extra so they could cover them,” she explains with a laugh. “But that’s the only downside.” King—she of the silky blond hair, the shining blue eyes, the perfectly imperfect teeth—has packed a whole lotta life into her 29 years. Born in Omaha, NE, she started modeling at 14, got her first tattoo at 15, and, over the next several years, walked runways around the globe, graced countless magazine covers, became addicted to heroin, kicked the habit, and dated her share of bad boys (most notably Kid Rock). She’s appeared in nearly 20 movies, including two with comic book legend Frank Miller: *Sin City*, in which she played twins Wendy and Goldie, and *The Spirit*, in which she appeared as Lorelei Rox.

If that weren’t enough to earn her a spot in the INKED Hall of Fame, the self-described “comic book geek” appears next in the 3-D remake of the slasher flick *My Bloody Valentine* and in the *Star Wars*-themed comedy *Fanboys* (directed by her husband, Kyle Newman). She’s calm and funny as she lounges in her Los Angeles home with her two Shiba Inu dogs, Peter and Wendy (named after the Peter Pan characters), and tells INKED about her career and her next tattoo.

INKED: When did you get your first tattoo?

JAIME KING: I got my first one when I was really young—15. I got a fairy on the middle of my lower back. My girlfriend and I went and got them on St. Mark’s Place in New York. I’ve always loved tattoos. I’ve always thought it was another great way for people to demonstrate their artistry. Ever since I was a kid, I’ve always loved art. So I thought, What’s the big deal? It’s just art on your skin. I told my dad that it was a fake tattoo when he saw it. He believed me at first. I leaned over and he saw it. I told him it was a stick-on tattoo because I was so afraid I was going to get into really big trouble.

When did he find out the truth? About a month later. He saw it again and I was like, I'm not going to get away with this story again. He was pretty mad, but he got over it. Then I got another fairy on my back next to the other fairy, and that was a bigger piece. That one I had done in Nebraska in Omaha, where I'm from. I've always been attracted to angels and fairies—anything mystical and magical. I love the idea that there are other things out there, other than what we see. Like something greater out there.

What's the significance of the diamond and the spade on your wrists?

I saw a spade on someone's Zippo lighter once, and I remember thinking it was such a beautiful symbol. I like the curves of it and the way it looked—so strong. I decided to get the diamond because it was another strong symbol. It wasn't because I have a fascination with playing cards. I just like the idea of strong, symbolic things. One of them I got in Missouri during a road trip. And the diamond I got in London along with the "King" on my back. Then I have another one that my friend did. It's a little jailhouse tattoo—a star.

Do guys try to use your tattoos to hit on you? Dudes have given me some really bad pickup lines, like, "What does King mean? Are you the king? Will you be my king?" lame! But tattoos are very fascinating. People seem to be very fascinated by them. I think people see a tattoo and they think they get a peek into someone's private life.

Do you plan on getting any more? I've thought about it, but as an actor, the downside of having tattoos is that you have to spend a lot of time in the makeup chair covering them up. There have been times where I had to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning, getting to set two hours earlier than everyone else. So that's my major hesitation. But I love this certain Emily Dickinson quote, and I've contemplated getting a tattoo of it.

What's the quote? "If I can stop one heart from breaking, I shall not live in vain; If I can ease one life the aching, or cool one pain, or help one fainting robin unto his nest again, I shall not live in vain."

Where would that go? I have to find the right spot. Mine are kind of all over the place. They can't be in obvious places. It's always been that way. They have to be in places where I can respect the character that I'm playing. I'm happy with what I have. I love tattoos. I don't regret them. They're part of me. They're beautiful. They're not perfect. They're not like the amazing pieces you see in INKED magazine. [Laughs.]

Speaking of magazines, how many covers have you been on in your lifetime? I have no idea! I've never counted. It's very surreal seeing yourself on the cover of a magazine. People hold you in a different light, like you're something greater, but it's not true at all. You're just a person.

Do you have a stage persona that you take on when you're doing a photo shoot? No, not really. If anything, people skew what they see. They don't really know you, but they write things about you on the Internet. Some of my friends get so bummed out, like, "Oh my god, they were saying the meanest things." But I'm like, "Dude, you cannot read that stuff."

Are your partying days behind you? I'm not a club person. That was really fun when I was 18, living in New York. I go out, but I'm low-key. I'm not, like, waving down the paparazzi, saying, "Follow me!" There are so many faux celebrities out there right now. All those reality show people are becoming famous. They're on magazine covers, and paparazzi are following them, and I don't really know what it's based on. You're not going to see pictures of me out at some club, spilling out the front door drunk.

Have you been scrutinized more because you're one of those dreaded model-turned-actresses? Yeah, totally. But it's worked both ways. It's





Alexander Wang skirt;
Calvin Klein bra.

Stylist: Daniel Caudill for
CelestineAgency.com
Hair: Robert Ramos for Estilo
Salon/CelestineAgency.com
Makeup: Lauren Andersen
for MAC Cosmetics/
CelestineAgency.com
Manicurist: Jaimi Ruben Brooks
for ArtistsByTimothyPriano.com
Prop stylist: Jamie Dean at
TheMagnetAgency.com
Location: Smashbox Studios,
Culver City, CA



Cosa Nostra
skirt; Kova & T
tank top; Louis
Vuitton shoes.



helped me because people already knew who I was, but at the same time, looking a certain way has sometimes hurt me. There have been times when I was up for a role, and it was between me and someone else, and I didn't get it even though they said I was a better actor. I remember hearing that they didn't want to hire Cameron Diaz for *Being John Malkovich* because they thought she was too pretty. She had to fight for that role. But if anything, that's added more fuel to the fire for me and made me work even harder.

What's been your most rewarding role to date? A film I did called *The Pardon*. It's not out yet. It's a period film, a true story, where I play the first woman who was ever executed in the state of Louisiana. She was 23. She had a really traumatizing, hard life. What was so beautiful is that even though they killed her, she had become a better person through the mistakes that she made. I felt like I got to explore a lot of areas of the human psyche. It was fascinating. There aren't a lot of great roles for females out there, which is just the truth. There are great male roles. It's so refreshing to be able to play a role where you see a woman walk through fire or go through great challenges to become who she was meant to be. A lot of times female roles are the girlfriend or the arm candy or the hot chick.

Would you be willing to "ugly it up" for a role? Yeah. The character I play in *My Bloody Valentine* grew up in a mining town, and she's kind of tragic, so I wanted her to only wear flannels and baggy jeans. Although at one point they were like, "Okay, you need to put on some tighter clothes." Because I really did look like a little ragamuffin.

Now that you've made a few horror movies, are you less scared to watch them? God, no. I don't watch them. I don't have the stomach for them. I had really bad nightmares while I was making *My Bloody Valentine*.

What's the key to a great movie scream? Screaming makes you feel really vulnerable, because you don't want to sound like a pussy. I was more nervous for my screaming scenes than I have been for some crying scenes or sex scenes. I didn't want it to sound lame. The key is it has to be guttural—primal.

Is there any truth to the rumor that you're writing a graphic novel? I am, with Frank Miller's girlfriend. Frank is like my brother. My husband and I are very close with Frank. We instantly hit it off. I don't know how much I can talk about it—it's top secret. But it's going to be awesome. It's a very strong female character.

Please tell us *Sin City 2* is happening. It is happening. Frank Miller is writing it now and we should be doing it—I hope—within the next year.

If you had to get a comic book character tattoo, what would it be? You know what would be kind of fresh? Yoda. Or Frank Miller's Batman—just the head.

Those comic book fans can be rabid. Have you had any memorable run-ins? Comic-Con fans are the best. I feel like I'm with my people. You make films so people can enjoy them, and it's so nice when you're sitting on a panel and there are 10,000 people adoring you. All the cynicism, crap, shit, rejection, glamour, and illusion of the business melt away and all you see is the reason why you do what you do. It's a powerful experience. And I've worked on a lot of things that have been comic books, and I just voiced the *Star Wars* series *The Clone Wars*.

Speaking of *Star Wars*, you appear in *Fanboys*, which was directed by your husband. It's a love letter from him to everything he loves. He's loved *Star Wars* since he was a baby. He's the ultimate fanboy. My husband and I have the time of our lives at Comic-Con because we can look at comic books, meet the artists, sit on the floor, and play video games. That's how we live our lives anyway. 🐼



NEW FRIEND REQUEST:

GYM CLASS HEROES



Hip-hop? Punk? R&B? No one can categorize this group of outcasts from

upstate New York—and that's just the way they like it.



BY JONAH BAYER

PHOTOS BY TREVOR DIXON



WHEN YOU'RE ONLY ONE INCH SHORTER THAN MICHAEL JORDAN AND NEARLY COVERED IN TATTOOS

and piercings, it's difficult *not* to be an intimidating figure, but right now Gym Class Heroes' frontman Travis McCoy looks even more imposing than usual. It certainly isn't due to a flamboyant wardrobe; McCoy is dressed as a fashion-conscious high school student, sporting a windbreaker, crooked cap, and, yes, Air Jordans. No, it's the white contact lens McCoy is rocking—it throws off his facial symmetry and makes him appear slightly unhinged, like he could lose his cool at any moment. While the rest of the Heroes munch on pizza, McCoy ignores his vegan pie and peruses a selection of magazines before picking up a popular men's title, which wouldn't be worth mentioning if it weren't for the fact that his girlfriend, Katy Perry, is gracing the cover. In other words, it's just another day in the life of Gym Class Heroes, an unlikely group of misfits from Geneva, NY, who became one of the most beloved bands in both the pop-punk and hip-hop scenes without actively trying to achieve success in either.

"I'm not a pussy, man," McCoy responds when asked why the freshly tattooed heart on his Adam's apple is only an outline. The band's on-tour tattoo artist, Craig Beasley, started the piece after last night's show in Albany, NY, but McCoy had to stop. "My face got all hot and I was like, 'All right, enough,'" he says. "Sometimes you gotta just know when to stop; you'll put

your body into overdrive and pass out and it's all bad." Of all the band's members—drummer Matt McGinley, bassist Eric Roberts, and guitarist Disashi Lumumba-Kasongo—McCoy is by far the most inked, which makes sense when you consider that at the tender age of 15 he apprenticed as a self-described "shop bitch" at a tattoo shop in upstate New York.

"At first I was like, 'I'm not going to spend my time in a tattoo shop not getting paid when I could be out chasing girls.' But I learned a lot from the time I spent there," McCoy explains as he chain-smokes Parliaments on the steps of the Philadelphia photo studio where the band's INKED photo shoot is taking place. Although McCoy abandoned the shop to pursue the academic route, he dropped out of art school at 20 and started tattooing a month later. "I was shadowing really good artists and it just sunk in," he explains. "I did my first tattoo on the guy I was apprenticing under, and during the first couple lines I was shaking," he recalls with a laugh. "He was like, 'Suck it up, quit being a pussy!' He had quit smoking cigarettes, so I drew a cigarette smashing itself out, and it came out dope as fuck. Ever since then I've been at it."

In fact, McCoy has tattooed the inside of both of McGinley's arms, which the drummer later shows off with a grin. McCoy has a "gentle touch," McGinley says. "When you're a 19-year-old kid that's getting a tattoo from your friend

"WHEN PEOPLE TRY AND CATEGORIZE US OR FIGURE OUT WHERE THEY THINK





WE SHOULD FIT IN, I DON'T EVEN HAVE AN ANSWER." —TRAVIS MCCOY

who's maybe only done it three or four times before, you need that reassurance," he says when asked what it was like to be tattooed by his bandmate. Sporting a V-neck T-shirt that allows his enormous chest piece of a light-house peek out from the top, he adds, "Travis was definitely a cool dude to have tattoo me."

It was ultimately McCoy's skill with a mic—not a tattoo machine—that made him famous. Gym Class Heroes' fourth full-length album, *The Quilt*, debuted at number 14 on the *Billboard* charts this fall and features producer and guest credits ranging from Fall Out Boy's Patrick Stump to hip-hop and R&B royalty like Busta Rhymes, Cool & Dre, and Estelle.

The R&B track "Live Forever (Fly With Me)" has special significance because it features a contribution from Daryl Hall, whose portrait is tattooed on the top of McCoy's right hand. (Don't worry—John Oates, the other half of Hall & Oates, is on his left.) McCoy was originally going to get his band members' faces tattooed on his shins before inspiration took hold of him. "One day I was looking at the *Private Eyes* cover and I was like, 'That's really fucking awesome.' And I looked at my hands and was like, 'Let's do it.' And so that day Craig just did it."

McCoy knows firsthand how surreal it can be to see yourself carved into

a stranger's flesh. "We get fans all the time that come up to us with tattoos of our lyrics, and there have even been a couple portraits," McCoy says. "At first it was super-flattering, but then sometimes it's just a little outrageous. For example, there's a girl who got my girlfriend's entire CD cover on her whole back. There's a line, I guess."

With his frontman status and unique look, McCoy is clearly the most visible member of Gym Class Heroes, and probably the most likely to have his face immortalized in ink. However, that could all change with *The Quilt*, which is the band's most collaborative effort to date and shows what a tight unit the band has become since McCoy and McGinley started it back in the late '90s.

THINGS WERE DIFFERENT BACK THEN. ALTHOUGH THE BAND EXPERIENCED SOME LOCAL SUCCESS

early in their career, they didn't receive their big break until Stump, the Fall Out Boy frontman, discovered them. They signed to bassist Pete Wentz's Fueled by Ramen imprint Decaydance, which released the band's second album, *The Papercut Chronicles*, in 2004. Merging elements of soul, R&B, hip-hop, and rock, the album was a combination of just about everything the group listened to collectively. They played smaller stages on the Vans Warped Tour before breaking into the mainstream with 2006's gold-selling



BUT JUST BECAUSE THEY LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER DOESN'T MEAN THEY LOOK LIKE EACH OTHER.

disc, *As Cruel As School Children*, which featured the ubiquitous crossover radio hit "Cupid's Chokehold." After a seemingly endless span of touring, the band started work on *The Quilt* last year. Despite the success of previous albums, the Heroes knew they wanted to experiment with the writing and recording process this time around to allow all of their individual influences to shine through.

"I would definitely say that this is the most collaborative album I've played on with the band," Lumumba-Kasongo says. "I remember the very first day we started jamming out and working on the songs. I thought, Man, I haven't felt like this since I was in high school jamming out in a garage. So it's kind of cool, 'cause it was that same feeling, except we were recording for a major album."

Ironically, the album that sees Gym Class Heroes coming closer together as a unit was written while McCoy was on an opposite coast from the rest of his band. "I flew out to California [to write with the band] and I kind of went a little crazy, so I took off," McCoy explains. "The guys were doing amazing, so the last thing I wanted to do was bring them down." While the rest of his band stayed in Los Angeles, McCoy headed down to Miami to work with the hip-hop production guru Dre, who "big brothered" McCoy through his self-induced breakdown and inspired him to finish writing on the East Coast before trekking back to California to record. "It was the first time in a long time that we recorded all together as a band, so it was beautiful, man," McCoy muses about the reunion. "It was a really cool experience."

That's not to say the circumstances surrounding *The Quilt* were all rosy for Gym Class Heroes. Last October, McCoy witnessed a stabbing in his home base of Murray Hill, New York City. Just a few weeks later, his cousin committed suicide. These events prompted McCoy, who says he's been addicted to pharmaceuticals since he was 15, to fully embrace drugs, and he eventually ended up in rehab for the second time (the first time was right before the band was signed). On top of these problems, McCoy continues to

When all four members line up to take photos while jumping on a trampoline, it's obvious just how physically diverse they are. Sporting a shaggy mop of black hair, a leather jacket, and a recently tattooed sleeve on his left arm, Roberts looks uncannily reminiscent of a young Nikki Sixx—a comparison perpetuated by the fact that he says he plans to spend upcoming time off accompanying porn star Shyla Stylez to the Adult Video Network Awards in Las Vegas. The break from touring and recording takes place in February, when Lumumba-Kasongo—the band's only nontattooed member (he's considered getting a map of his parents' birth continent, Africa, on his back)—and his girlfriend are expecting their first child. Rounding out the foursome are McCoy, of course, and McGinley, who displays a perpetual grin and sports a plaid hat with earflaps that would make Elmer Fudd proud. Impressively, he manages to make the style look cool.

Despite their stark contrast in appearance, lifestyle, and ideology, it's clear that Gym Class Heroes are one cohesive unit these days, cheering each other on and laughing as each member takes a turn on the trampoline in an attempt to see who can catch the most air. (Lumumba-Kasongo wins the contest by a long shot.) Their differences mesh into a sound so original that the band members themselves are hesitant to label it. "When people try and categorize us or figure out where they think we should fit in, I don't even have an answer," McCoy says.

"People will ask me, 'Do you feel more comfortable on hip-hop tours or rock tours?' I'm like, 'I just feel comfortable around friends.'" He continues, "It doesn't matter if they're hip-hop bands or rock bands or pop-punk bands; as long as they're cool people and kindhearted and realizing that we're going to be in this together for the next month and a half, I don't give a fuck who we're on tour with." But it's easy to see why Gym Class Heroes are an anomaly in today's highly homogenized musical culture; it's not like there's

"ONE DAY I WAS LOOKING AT THE [HALL & OATES] PRIVATE EYES COVER AND I WAS LIKE, 'THAT'S REALLY FUCKING AWESOME.' I LOOKED AT MY HANDS AND WAS LIKE, 'LET'S DO IT.'" —TRAVIS MCCOY

deal with an injury to his left knee, which was famously aggravated this past summer when the frontman got into an altercation with an African-American fan who allegedly called McCoy a "fucking ignorant nigger" and hit him in the knee during a Warped Tour set in St. Louis. In response, McCoy struck the agitator in the head with his microphone.

"That whole situation showed people that we're just as human as everybody in the crowd, and we react to certain emotions," McCoy acknowledges. "We're just like anybody else—we don't always make the best decisions. I apologized to the crowd right after for the fact that they waited all day and had to see that. But at the same time I feel that had I not done what I'd done, and had security not pulled him out, the fans would have ate that kid alive," McCoy says. "I had people coming up to me afterward like, 'Yo, we were ready to kill him.' What I take away from that is that we have love from our fans to the point where they're willing to stick up for us and have our back the way I would have Disashi, Eric, or Matt's back."

Later in the day, Lumumba-Kasongo elaborates on McCoy's sentiment. "We definitely have each other's backs, which is a good feeling, because I've heard that in certain bands—and I'm not going to call them out by name—a member will be going through a very serious problem and come to the band, and they'll just be like, 'Screw that,' and leave them high and dry," he says. "That's messed up, especially when you're in a band, because when you become part of this industry and this world, you're very isolated. You don't have as much support as people think, and there are very few people who are actually close to you. So if the people who are in your actual band aren't there for you, you're in a very dangerous place."

another band that can cover Lamb of God on a summer Warped Tour and then head out to tour with Lil Wayne and T-Pain. The fact of the matter is, Gym Class Heroes are so off the grid that there's no template to follow when it comes to what they should or shouldn't do—something the band considers a blessing.

"I personally like straddling the lines because I think that it's pretty representative of the band and of me personally," says Lumumba-Kasongo. "But at the same time, it's a natural thing for us. I think it'd be a whole different thing if we were trying not to fit into anything. But the simple fact is that when our iPod has Mastodon and Kanye West on it, then that's going to come across in the music." He adds, "If we were to just say, 'All right, well, let's just be *this*, whatever *this* might be,' it would limit our freedom and it wouldn't represent us as people, which is something I think your music should represent. It should be an expression of you."

"We've been the proverbial sore thumb our entire career," McCoy agrees. "Even before we got signed to Fueled by Ramen, we were playing shows with death metal and hardcore bands and whoever would let us play with them. I wouldn't even consider us a hip-hop band. Musically, it's just all over the place. In a sense I think what's made us successful and attracted people to us is the fact that we are this thing that stands out. We don't look like every other band on Warped Tour, and we definitely don't sound like every other band on Warped Tour. It's fun to be outcasts in that sense."

"Art imitates life," he summarizes, explaining that his band will never fit in, just as he's dealt with not fitting in his entire life. "As corny and clichéd as it sounds, it's the truth." 🐱



On Audrey,
Pinko jeans.
On Madison,
Pepe jeans.

double dare

photos by
miko lim

styled by
risa knight





Blame It On My Bad Side



NEVER GIVE UP

YSL white tank
top; American
Apparel bikini
bottoms.





Pepe
jeans.

TRF denim
miniskirt;
Sergio Rossi
red pumps.







Rick Owens
jacket;
American
Apparel black
bikini bottoms.

American
Apparel
black bra.



American
Apparel
black bra.







YSL white tank top;
American Apparel bikini bottoms.

Models: Audrey Zak for ID Models, Madison Hall

Makeup: Daniela Klein for Ford Artists

Hair: Anthony Campbell for Cutler/Redken

Location: Splashlight Studios, New York City





GM @ VEU x
REAL SOUTHERN
BOYZ
MANEZ

PUN

GO
IAN
INVEST

Camp & Hip Culture

HAMBLIN
BOYS
OF

PUN



Tom Gabel

Against Me! frontman Tom Gabel may be happy that Barack Obama won the election, but he still thinks the world is against him.

BY REBECCA SWANNER PHOTOS BY RUDY ARCHULETA

By the time Tom Gabel created the band Against Me! at 17, the singer had already been arrested twice and inked more than once. He started the band alone with an acoustic guitar, playing on the streets of Naples, FL, before grouping with bassist Andrew Seward, guitarist James Bowman, and drummer Warren Oakes. By 2002, their debut album, *Reinventing Axl Rose*, with its mix of street folk and Clash-style punk, had made them a hit in the underground scene. But it was their breakthrough indie hit album, *Searching For a Former Clarity*, that got everyone else listening to the band's impassioned sound and Gabel's raw vocals. The follow-up, the Butch Vig-produced *New Wave*, marked their first major-label release. The album spawned plenty of hits and an awful lot of hate mail from fans who accused the band of selling out. Not that Gabel cares. He recently released a collection of acoustic solo material titled *Heart Burns EP*, and the seemingly anxious frontman has bigger things to worry about—like moving to Los Angeles and what to write about on the band's next album, now that he can no longer rail against George W. Bush.

INKED: What were you able to accomplish with this solo record that you aren't able to with the band?

TOM GABEL: I wanted to do something that was the complete opposite of the last record in the sense of approach. I didn't want to really think about it. I didn't want to obsess about anything. I just wanted to go in and play songs. I wanted to record because it'll be fun, and that's what this is supposed to be about. The next Against Me! record will be a long, arduous recording and mixing process, and there will be a lot of thought that goes into it. That's not a bad thing because I love that too, but if every single record I made was like that I would go nuts. [Laughs.]

You brought Alkaline Trio's Matt Skiba in to record backing vocals. Did you two pound a few in the studio? Butch brought down some bottles of Duckhorn and fed everybody a little bit of wine to get them loosened up for their vocal take. [Laughs.]

Is drinking usually a no-no when you're recording? Days in the studio are usually pretty long. If you start to drink wine and you have a couple more hours left, even if you don't get hammered, you start to get tired and it wears you out a little quicker. I tend to go the caffeinated route.

You recorded both *New Wave* and your solo record in Los Angeles. You used to hate the city, but we heard you're now considering moving there.

I've always gotten a certain amount of anxiety in big cities. When you go to Los Angeles or New York or Chicago on tour you think, Oh god, this is going to be hell. You have to worry the whole time whether your shit is going to get stolen. But when we were recording *New Wave*, I had a totally positive experience. We stayed in Burbank and recorded in Hollywood and had our daily routine. I saw the same people every day getting coffee in the morning. It was nice.

Will you work with Butch Vig again on the next record? Oh yeah. We will definitely be working with Butch again. He's great to be around, and he relaxes me in a weird way from overthinking. He's also the greatest trump card you can ever have. When we went in to record *New Wave*, there was a definite fear of recording in L.A., because that is where Warner's offices are. The idea of them trying to push their agenda was a real fear. But any time our A&R people would stop by—and I'm not trying to talk shit—but every once in a while, they'd offer subtle suggestions like, "Why don't you try bringing up the bass here, or try something different on the guitar there?" When that happened, I would be panicked and filled with anxiety of *oh my god what are we going to do?* Butch would be like, "Yeah, okay, okay sure." Then, the second they're gone, he'd be like, "Whatever! Moving right along!" And they can't say anything. He's Butch!

Over the years, your voice has sounded less and less raw. Why? I think the biggest change that you hear is that I finished going through puberty. The first record came out when I was 17. When I was 15, I went into the studio with my band and recorded a 10-song demo tape. I gave it my all on the first song and my voice was totally blown. Starting out playing in punk bands, the cool thing to do was to scream. But it was unrealistic to continue to do that when you're playing 200-plus shows a year. What you hear now is how I sing instead of me just going in there and screaming my head off.

One of those raw albums was your first full-length: *Reinventing Axl Rose*. Are you a fan of *Chinese Democracy*? I'm a fan of his voice and I think he has a cool style. From what I've heard, I don't think it's worth the wait. But fuck, man, I think you're kidding yourself if you don't think it's better than the new Metallica record.

What is your lyrics-writing process? I try to pick a vague direction, like I want to write something positive, and adapt my daily life around that and set a mood. I try to be pretty focused and not drink or be in a place where I'm going to be in a lot of social situations. Spend a little more time by myself.

Is that why you lived in a hotel? I wanted to say that I had lived in a hotel for a year of my life. We were touring a lot during that time and staying in a different hotel each night. But in Gainesville, I had this thing where I didn't feel comfortable with the maids coming in to clean, so whenever the room got a little too dirty, I would switch rooms or hotels. I would usually just spend three or four days there. I got this weird, ungrounded, floating feeling, and it kind of drove me a little crazy. I also felt like a total weirdo because I was living on the outskirts of town in a hotel. But it was good for being in a writing mode.

Is it going to be harder to write about politics now that Barack Obama is President? I think what is really important to realize is that it's not like Barack Obama is president and we win! That's it! Everyone can go on vacation now and everything is perfect in the world and all of our problems are solved! There are still just as many things wrong, and just as much work needs to be done. Obama was elected, but then Proposition 8 passed in California. His election makes me really optimistic, but I don't think I'll have trouble continuing to be critical of things.

You read his book and John McCain's. From the books alone, did you get a sense of who you wanted to support? The thing about reading the McCain book was that I come from a military family. My dad was in the Army, he

Last year you were arrested after an altercation in Tallahassee, FL. Was that the first time you had been arrested? When I was 18 I was arrested for obstruction of justice and resisting arrest without violence. When I was 15 I was arrested for resisting arrest with violence and battery on an officer, and when 14, I was arrested because I had some pot in my wallet at school.

Why did you get hauled away at 15 and 18? When I was 18, I was picking up my friend Kevin, who used to play in the band. He was like, "Pop the trunk—I want to throw some stuff in there." I was waiting in the car and I saw two cop cars come up behind me. I got out and they had my friend on the ground. I went up to the first officer I saw and said, "Excuse me, officer, what's going on?" He's like, "Down on the ground—you're going to jail." I started to ask another question and he grabbed me, slammed me into the cop car, and arrested me. When I was 15—they do a fireworks celebration every year in Naples at the beach. An officer asked me to get off the boardwalk. I got off the boardwalk and he came up to me again and he told me to get off the boardwalk. I said, "I am off the boardwalk." They grabbed me, dragged me over to the cop car. Ten other cops came in. They ended up hog-tying me and then proceeded to beat the crap out of me for a good half-hour. It was all over the news.

Why do you think they did it? I was a dirty, grubby little punk kid with black spiky hair who hadn't washed his pants in a year.

When did you get your first tattoo? When I was 14. James in *Against Me!* gave me a pinprick tattoo of the Crass logo in india ink on my ankle. I remember him starting it and me looking down and saying, "Man, you're going the wrong

"There are still just as many things wrong and just as much work needs to be done. ... [Obama's] election makes me really optimistic, but I don't think I'll have trouble continuing to be critical of things."

was a West Point graduate, and in the service for 20 years. I grew up on a military base my whole childhood. I felt I knew the type of person he was because people in the service have a really specific mentality that I almost view with a weird fondness from experiencing it growing up. I just really disagree with a lot of his politics, and I *hated* Sarah Palin, so that was easy. It was frightening that people supported her and found her endearing.

Did growing up in a military family have an impact on your political beliefs? It gave me a political awareness at a pretty young age. During the first Gulf War I lived in Naples, Italy, and security was extremely high. Being in third grade and waiting for the bomb sweeps to end before we got on our school bus and having armed guards on the roof of your elementary school—that was definitely an interesting experience. Then we moved to Naples, FL, which is one of the most right-wing wealthy counties in all of America.

Are your parents Republican? My parents divorced when I was 11. I don't know if my mom is a registered Democrat, but I know she voted for Obama. My dad, who I think voted for Bush in the last two elections, voted for Obama in this election. When he told me he was voting for Obama I thought, You know, he's probably going to win.

The chorus to the *Against Me!* song "From Her Lips To God's Ears (The Energizer)" is about Condoleezza Rice. Are you going to have to retire it? That's actually something we talked about when we were on this last tour. Wow, this song is going to be irrelevant! [Laughs.] I think we probably won't play that song for a while, but maybe at some point it'll come back and be played for nostalgic reasons.

fucking way." Then I had to finish it. The second tattoo, I gave to myself at 15 and it's on my thigh. It's totally embarrassing. It's the symbol for Scorpio. Then, when I was 16 or so, I got the Crass tattoo covered up professionally with the Rebel Alliance logo from *Star Wars*.

That's kind of nerdy. Are you still a huge *Star Wars* fan? I was at the time. I still like *Star Wars*, though those last three movies kind of killed it for me. [Laughs.] I wanted to get it because it was big, solid, and black, and would cover up the Crass logo.

Do you have a go-to artist for your own work? There's a guy in Florida named Dave Kotinsley, Sleepy Dave, who I've gotten a good amount of work from. He runs a shop called Anthem Tattoos. All of my recent tattoos on my arm I've gotten from him—the Virgin Mary and various birds.

What is the significance of the birds? I've always been drawn to them. Even when I first thought of getting tattoos, I knew I wanted to cover the majority of my arms with birds. I think it's really true to say that the older you get, the more tattoos hurt. I used to want a bird chest piece, and then I got a very small tattoo on my chest of my wife's name—and holy fuck, that hurt! And that took all of about five minutes. Screw a chest piece!

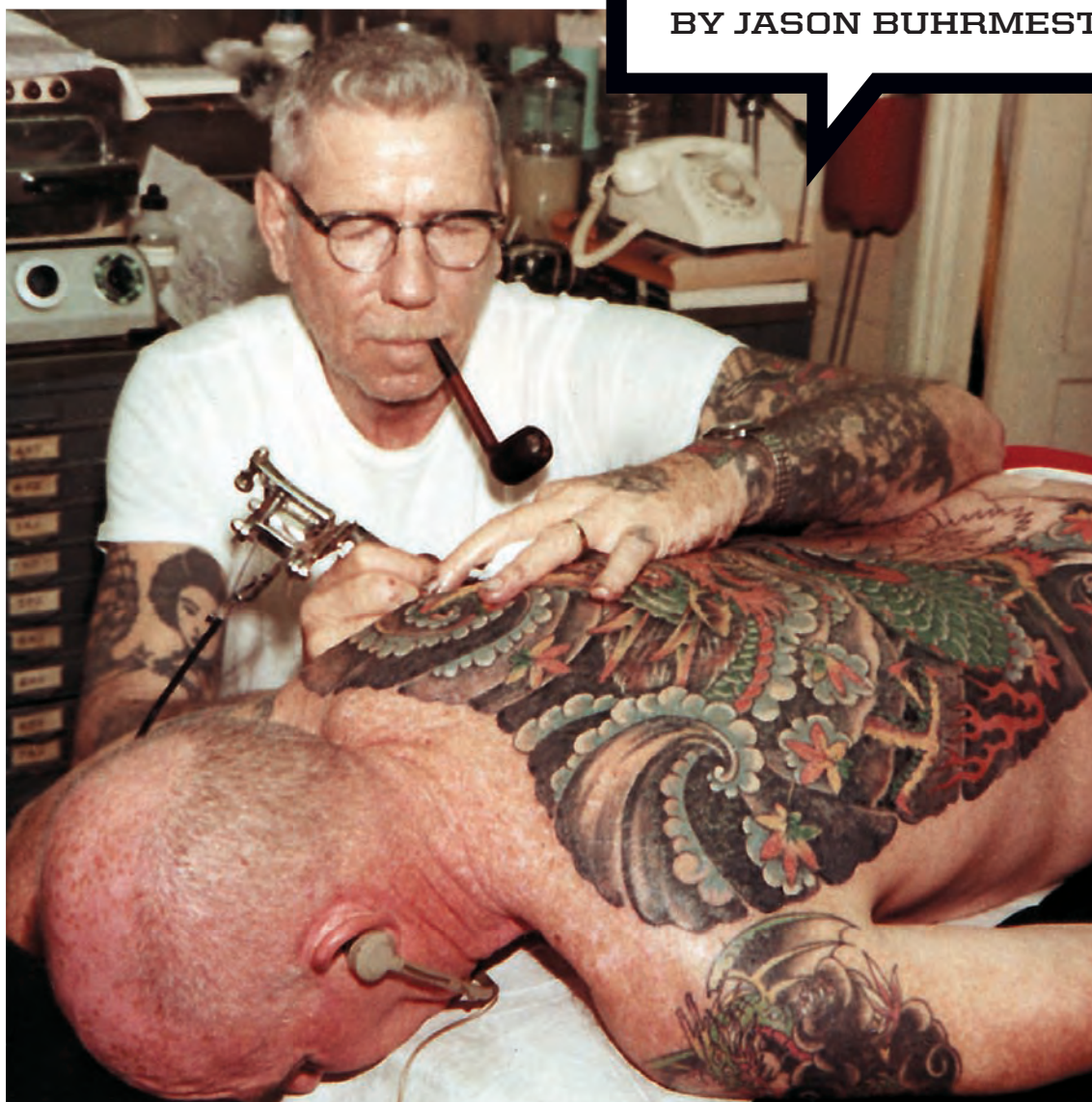
Have you seen any *Against Me!* tattoos on fans? We were playing in Connecticut and this guy who came to the show came up to me and says, "I want to show you something, but don't draw a lot of attention to it." He had my face tattooed on my arm, which I thought was hilarious, and he said, "I tell people it's J.F.K." [Laughs.] 🐦



“MY WORK SPEAKS FOR ITSELF”

A new documentary explores the life of tattoo legend **SAILOR JERRY**, and he hates you for liking it.

BY JASON BUHRMESTER



Clockwise
from top right:
Promotional
poster for *Hori
Smoku Sailor Jerry*;
original art by
Sailor Jerry; flyer
for *Hori Smoku
Sailor Jerry*.



TATTOO LEGEND NORMAN “Sailor Jerry” Collins would have hated this article. The lifelong sailor and roughneck who revolutionized tattooing during the '60s from his tiny shop in Honolulu’s gritty Chinatown developed a strict policy on dealing with the press: Don’t do it. He refused newspaper interviews. He threw a *Hawaii Five-O* film crew out of his shop. If you got pushy, he could always grab the spray bottle of homemade mace he kept at his workstation.

The rule didn’t just apply to him. Jerry frowned on *anyone* talking about tattooing outside of tattoo circles. When tattooer Lyle Tuttle appeared on the cover of *Rolling Stone*, Jerry taped the photo to the inside of his toilet seat. After local rival Lou Norman claimed during an interview that there was no purple ink in tattooing (a fact up to that point), Jerry used purple ink he had secretly developed to tattoo a large dragon on a client’s arm. He covered the tattoo and sent the kid to Norman’s shop to request one like it. As the tattooer launched into his explanation of why it wasn’t possible, the kid yanked up his sleeve to reveal the tattoo Jerry had given him. Norman suffered a heart attack. While Norman was recovering in the hospital, Jerry sent him a gift: a bouquet of purple orchids.

These are just a few of the stories revealed in *Hori Smoku Sailor Jerry: The Life and Times of Norman Keith Collins*, a new documentary that explores Jerry’s immeasurable impact on tattooing and tattoo art, from his work developing inks and needle groupings to his technique of adding Japanese-style shading to bold American designs. More than that, *Hori Smoku* looks at a character too big for what was then the tiny world of tattooing.

It’s a portrait of an artist, a sailor, a fierce patriot, a radio show host, a poet, an innovator, and a man so passionate about tattooing that artists from New York to Tokyo sought him out in his Hawaiian hideaway. The few he let in, including Ed Hardy, Mike Malone, and Zeke Owen, went on to become tattoo legends in their own right.

Decades later, Jerry’s designs now appear on everything from Converse shoes to a line of Sailor Jerry rum, and books have been released of his illustrations and letters. But until now, no one has pieced together his legacy on film. After all, how do you make a movie about a man who hated publicity and whose motto, printed on his business cards, simply warned, “My work speaks for itself”?





Left: The scene at the Honolulu screening of *Hori Smoku: Sailor Jerry*. David Collins is seated in the bottom right. Below: Sailor Jerry Spiced Navy Rum

THE SUN IS SETTING OVER

Waikiki Beach, creating sparkling purples and oranges across the Pacific Ocean, but *Hori Smoku* director Erich Weiss doesn't care. Seated on the roof of Honolulu's Marriot Hotel, the 35-year-old filmmaker is sucking on his third beer and worrying. He's changed out of the bright red "Baywatch Crew" T-shirt he bought earlier at a beachside thrift store and into a button-down shirt. Later this evening his movie *Hori Smoku* will be screened at a club on the city's historic Hotel Street, just a block from where Jerry's shop once operated. But before that, Weiss will be meeting with David Collins, one of Jerry's nine kids. Weiss created the movie without the involvement of Jerry's family, choosing instead to focus on Jerry's influence on tattooing, and tonight David will be the first sibling to see the movie that Weiss has made about his imposing father.

"I did what any normal person would do," Weiss says before breaking into the self-deprecating laugh that punctuates a lot of his conversation. "I called him and said, 'I just made a movie about your dad and I'd like to talk to you.'"

Weiss wasn't supposed to make a movie at all. The Philadelphia filmmaker, who got his start creating music videos for artists such as Eagles of Death Metal and Spank Rock, was originally hired to pull together a short reel about the tattooist's legacy for the licensing company that creates merchandise based on Jerry's art. "I had no fucking money to do this," Weiss explains. "I had to find these guys, then travel around the country to interview them and say to them, 'Hey, I'm not an asshole. Will you be on film?'"

He started by contacting Hardy and Malone,

two of Jerry's protégés, and requesting interviews. Just like the old master, Jerry's students were wary of outsiders. "It wouldn't have been worth it if they weren't," Weiss says of the skepticism he received. "I would have been let down. I'm just some punk-ass kid, and some of these guys have worked 40 to 50 years when this shit wasn't selling fucking T-shirts and sneakers. Even in this secular world, I had to go through these channels and prove I was legitimate and not some guy just trying to make a quick buck."

After an encouraging phone conversation with Hardy, Weiss flew to San Francisco to visit the artist at his shop, Tattoo City. Hardy, a college graduate who spurned an offer to attend Yale's printmaking program in order to tattoo, is the art form's elder statesman and the tattooer most consider Jerry's prodigal son. The plan was to convince Hardy that Weiss was legit and not just a suit looking to cash in on Jerry's legacy—the type the old man would have run out of his shop.

"We kind of really hit it off right in the beginning. He understood what I wanted to do," Weiss explains. "Ed really respects that kind of lineage and that idea that you give back to the people that taught you. He's an articulate man. He's brilliant."

Weiss filmed several hours with Hardy, then headed back to Philadelphia to find Malone. When Jerry passed away in 1973, he left his wife strict instructions on how to handle his shop: If Hardy, Malone, or Owen doesn't buy it, burn it down. With Hardy studying tattooing in Japan, Malone took over the Honolulu shop and ran it for several years before relocating to Austin and then on to Chicago, where Weiss found him running his new shop, Taylor Street Tattoo. After some initial gruffness



("He took a lot of long pauses on the phone and said, 'What the fuck do you want to do this for?'"), Weiss filmed two interviews with Malone. The last happened just months before the tattooer took his own life (*Hori Smoku* is dedicated to him).

"I was only supposed to shoot for a month," Weiss explains. "Just talk to Ed and Mike, compile it, and hand it over. Instead, I came back and explained that this stuff is really important. There's history here, and it's not just about tattooing. This guy is so influential, and we need to get this down."

With no money and nowhere to live, Weiss crashed on a friend's couch while he tracked down and interviewed more old-school icons, often relying on Hardy's help to find them and his blessing to help open the door. The list of appearances in *Hori Smoku* reads like a roll call of American tattooing, including Bob Roberts, Eddie Funk, Joe Boyle, and Philadelphia Eddie ("We killed two bottles of booze and he just told me stories—it was like an after-school special on peer pressure."). It took Weiss

“There’s history here, and it’s not just about tattooing. This is an American folk art.”

another five months of phone calls to find Zeke Owen in Maryland. “Zeke is everything you wanted to be when you were a kid,” Weiss recalls. “He’s Lee Majors combined with a stuntman, a biker, and a tattoo-artist secret agent. He’s so cool.”

Weiss also sat down with Lyle Tuttle, Jerry’s nemesis from the cover of *Rolling Stone*. “Lyle was more savvy with the media,” Weiss explains. “He was a real forebearer of what was to happen with tattooing. Jerry was more about keeping it up a dark, dirty alley and not letting people know about it.”

These days, Jerry’s legacy is more red carpet than dirty alley. *Hori Smoku* has already screened at South by Southwest, the New Orleans Film Festival (where it won the Audience Award), and the Philadelphia Film Festival, where a prescreening party outside the Sailor Jerry store featuring punk band Paint It Black attracted more than 2,000 fans. Now the movie is being prepped for a DVD release. How would Jerry have felt about all of the attention? Weiss doesn’t worry. As he sees it, *Hori Smoku* is more about Jerry’s influence on tattooing and less about the man himself, something Jerry understood.

“Malone met Jerry because he was doing an art show on tattooing at the American Folk Museum in New York. He had to call Jerry and he was petrified because Jerry hated the media. But Jerry knew that this was important, that it was something people were viewing as legitimate artwork. He liked that,” Weiss says, sighing and finishing his beer. “There’s history here and it’s not just about tattooing. This is an American folk art.”

I T’S NOW TWO HOURS BEFORE the screening of *Hori Smoku*, and inside Bar 35 the event’s promoters are making an emergency decision. The line outside the Honolulu club already stretches down the block with local tattoo artists and fans who are clamoring to get into the screening. After a brief discussion, the decision is made to screen the movie in two locations to accommodate the swelling crowd. The outdoor patio with its benches and towering palm trees will be cordoned off as a VIP area, while a second screening will be set up inside for everyone else.

A bald man with an easy smile and a black Hawaiian-print shirt works his way through the rowdy crowd and presents his identification to the bouncer perched at the door. The weathered ID card shows a cracked black-and-white photo of a grinning man



Hori Smoku
Sailor Jerry
director
Erich Weiss.

with thick glasses and crew cut hair. The name reads, *Norman Keith Collins*. The ancient Merchant Marine ID card once belonged to Sailor Jerry, but the man holding it tonight is his son David Collins.

The 46-year-old commercial diver grew up in Honolulu and was 11 when his father passed away. He has only one tattoo (a cow on his hip) and remembers his father as an artist who drew flyers for Boy Scout functions and a babysitter who let him spend afternoons in the tattoo shop. “He would be babysitting me and he would be working on someone and look up and I would be over by the door looking out at Chinatown,” David recalls. “Sometimes when I was 6 or 7, I would walk down to the corner of Smith and Hotel Street just to watch the people go by. I knew most of these places were

places I wasn’t supposed to go into.”

The *Hori Smoku* screening starts and the crowd, aided by Sailor Jerry rum, hoots and yells. Scenes of Philadelphia Eddie’s foulmouthed rants bring drunken howls of laughter, while Hardy’s segments elicit a churchlike silence from eager listeners. Like a college professor, Hardy speaks about everything from the effect of WWII on Jerry’s art and the sailors who arrived in Honolulu on their way to battles in the Pacific to the old master’s insistence for accuracy in every tattoo, down to the rotation of a rudder. Malone is the character, grinning as he relives the wild personalities that modernized tattooing. And the scenes that feature a voice actor reading from Jerry’s letters about rivals, STDs, and technique draw big laughs and a smile from David.

“I was really glad that Ed Hardy mentioned that Dad was kind of a chameleon, in that the face he showed in tattooing was different from what he did on the radio or at home,” David says after the movie ends. “When my dad came home, he was Dad. He was a practical joker and a raconteur. He had great stories about the adventures and the things that he’d done. That has been really influential in my life.”

But that doesn’t mean David discounts his father’s influence on tattooing.

“I’ve popped into tattoo shops all around the world just to look around. I don’t say who I am—it’s not about me. But I go in and look and see Dad’s flash with his name on the corner. ... There was a shop that actually had a photo of my Dad in his dress uniform with the hat. It’s a nice photo. They had it hanging right there in this guy’s tattoo shop. I thought, Geez, he’s kind of everywhere.”





... with me
... never without it
... love, my soul
... you are my world
... every it is make



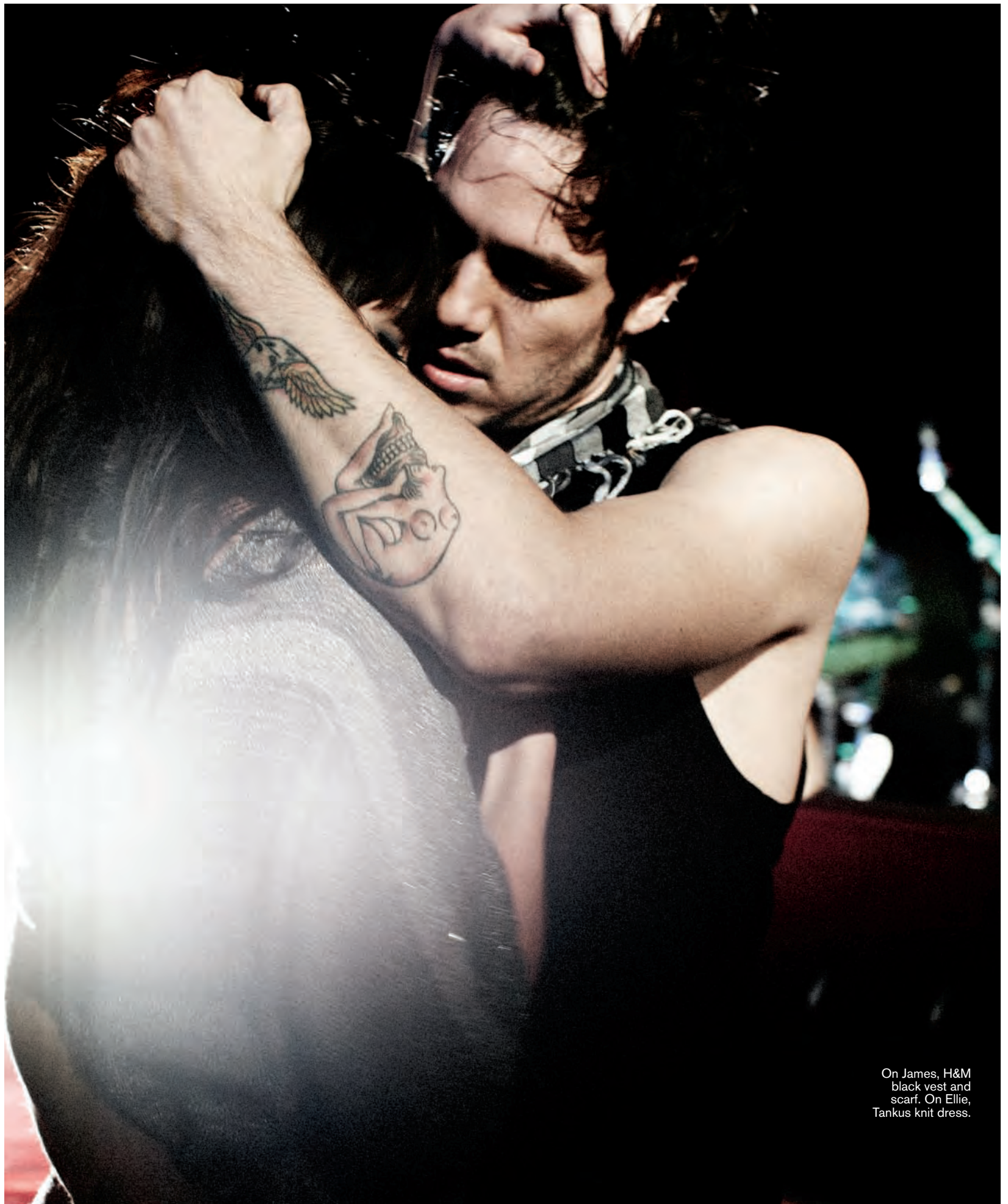
Almost Famous

Photos by Tom Corbett Styled by Risa Knight

On Michael, Chronicles of Never navy scarf; H&M jeans and leather cuff; Calvin Klein black boots; Parasuco studded belt. On Ellie, Fremont white tank top; Parasuco denim skirt and denim vest.



On Michael, H&M gray cardigan and plaid scarf; Uniqlo jeans; Calvin Klein boots. On Ellie, H&M denim and striped vest; APC black hat; Sexes leather cuff; Steve Madden black boots. On James, BBlessing white T-shirt; Levi's denim vest; Surface 2 Air jeans; Converse by John Varvatos shoes; Still Life black hat.



On James, H&M
black vest and
scarf. On Ellie,
Tankus knit dress.






On James, H&M
black vest and scarf;
Levi's jeans. On Ellie,
Tankus knit dress.

On James, Chronicles of
Never black shirt; Surface
2 Air jeans and necklace;
H&M cuff. On Michael,
Parasuco black fur vest;
Calvin Klein jeans; Costume
National black scarf. On
Ellie, Tankus black dress;
H&M black hat; Chronicles
of Never necklace.





On Michael, Uniqlo
Jeans; Sailor Jerry navy
bandanna; Calvin Klein
boots. On Ellie, American
Apparel black leggings;
Parasuco white shirt;
Express studded belt.

Fremont vest; American
Apparel white tank top;
Ksubi jeans; Costume
National scarf; Still Life
hat; H&M scarf (worn
on wrist).



On James, Uniqlo plaid shirt; Dior Homme black denim jacket; Earnest Sewn jeans; Burton black cap. On Ellie, Diesel T-shirt; Parasuco vest; Miss Sixty denim skirt; Skechers boots.

Models: James Stone for Request Models, Michael Hartley for Q Model Management, Ellie for Bloom Models
Grooming: Sylvester Castellano at Bernstein & Andriulli for MAC Cosmetics
Location: The Bell House, Brooklyn, NY



BOMBS AWAY

Graffiti legend Saber is changing the look of modern art—and your neighborhood.

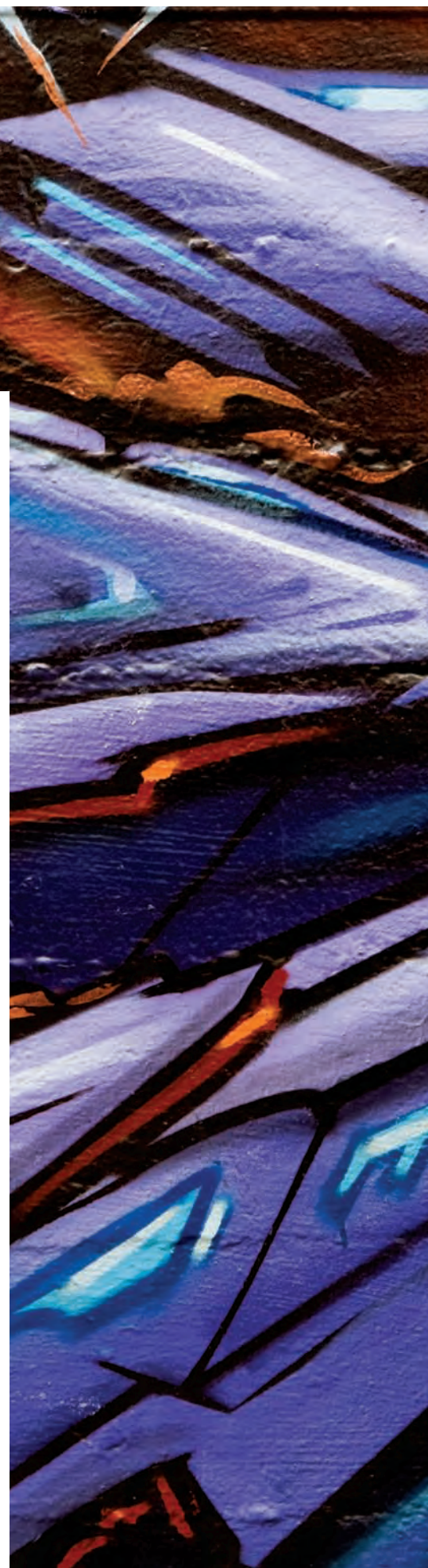
BY WILLIE G. PHOTOS BY HUSSEIN KATZ

THERE ISN'T A HELL OF A LOT SEPARATING THE REALMS OF TATTOOING AND GRAFFITI. BOTH methods of expression have traditionally been shrouded in secrecy, with an unavoidable stigma of taboo from the general public. And as good as you might be, to many your work will never will be anything but desecration. Graffiti legend Saber knows that all too well. At 32, the iconic Los Angeles-based street bomber has been through everything from jail to personal injury in his quest to be regarded as a serious artist. And even now, with a handful of "legit" projects under his belt, the struggle still continues.

A true product of his environment, Saber's creative influences infiltrated his psyche at a very early age. Born in the suburbs of Los Angeles, he spent much of his youth in the shadow of his parents' advertising agency, which operated right out of their Glendale home. And while Dad was an accomplished art school grad, it was Mom's time at Don Post Studios, a renowned supplier of latex and animatronic movie props, that brought the dark, futuristic vibe to Saber's style. "I grew up playing with the real *Alien* creatures," he remembers. "[My mom] had the original face-hugger in her office, so I had some pretty exotic ideas around me."

Coming up in an age that saw such powerful pop culture elements as skateboarding, graffiti, anime, and punk rock all on a collision course with each other, Saber developed into a problem child. "I was kind of an unruly kid," he says. "There were so many things going on in that era that could get you into trouble. But my parents always encouraged me to use art as an outlet. I would paint and it would help to calm me down." Inspired by characters like Wolverine and the Transformers, his canvases and sketchbooks began to pile high, unable to keep up with his desire to replicate, modify, and create anew. It was time to seek another channel.

At 13, Saber first started to toy with a new medium, spray paint, and the twisted combination of expressionism and vandalism that is graffiti. But it wasn't until his older cousin took him to L.A.'s famous Belmont Tunnel that he became hooked. "I was doing my little drawings, and she said to me, 'Oh, you think you know about graffiti, huh? Well, let's go to Belmont.'" Inside the spray paint-covered burrow, Saber first witnessed piecing and the "mind-set of elitism" that comprises the movement's core. "I was just obsessed, immediately," he exclaims. "And through skateboarding, from that point on, I was always on a mission to find something to paint—whether tunnels or a trash can, it was just what I did." Ducking the law as well as rival crews, the teen cut through the City of Angels in a manner reminiscent of his now-famous tag, spreading his rapidly developing





talent everywhere. "The name Saber really didn't derive from anything in particular," he admits. "My friend actually came up with it first but didn't want to use it. He said I could have it if I wanted it. When I analyzed the letters, as well as the order they were in, I knew right away it was a perfect name for writing."

Saber's parents knew almost immediately of the new direction his creative side had taken and were not thrilled. Unable to stop his stealing, breaking and entering, and frequent injuries, they expressed disapproval that turned to disappointment. Magnifying their stress was the new crackdown the city had launched

Determined to distance himself from the vicious tribal mentality that had his beloved city in a choke hold, Saber set his sights not on executing rivals, but on creating the large piece of artwork that had been haunting his dreams. After picking a desolate spot along the Los Angeles River, in a run-down industrial area, Saber set out to make history. "My buddy Fate gave me the idea of utilizing rollers as opposed to spray cans, to hit all the ground we were going to attempt to cover," says Saber, whose finished work would eventually use 97 gallons of paint and measure nearly the size of a football field. "It was like a bad relationship.

I had no idea what the fuck I was getting into. But I'm the type that once I start something, I absolutely have to see it through to the very end."

Saber's all-or-nothing mentality is also evident in his ink. Having waited almost 22 years before letting another artist tag him, the radical jumped in headfirst, opting for a substantial back piece, courtesy of Grime at San Francisco's Primal Urge. "I knew for a while what I wanted, and I knew it wouldn't be quick," he states. "So luckily, I avoided all those random times I could have been in someone's chair with them saying, 'Hey, let's do something.'" After almost 40 hours of work by Grime, Saber's back is now adorned with a flaming sword (or saber, if you will) accompanied by an angel and king.

Elsewhere, his biomechanical sleeves tell another tale of extremism. Describing it as "winning the tattoo lottery," Saber found himself chosen as a ready and willing canvas for the TLC show *Tattoo Wars*. With Guy Aitchison on one arm and Aaron Cain on the other, the graffiti artist kicked back as the pair ran a virtual head-to-head tattoo marathon on his arms. "The crowd voted Aaron Cain as the winner," he says. "But I took the trophy and smashed it. I said, 'This contest is stupid. I'm the one that won here.' They didn't show that part."

Overjoyed with the outcome, the experience has only fueled Saber's passion, and he now plans to outfit himself in a full biomechanical suit.

Recent days have seen the graffiti master applying his talents to more "legitimate" subjects, such as clothing for Upper Playground, airbrushed art cars for Scion and Hyundai, and projects for Harley-Davidson and Levi's. His monograph, *Saber: Mad Society*, has brought a whole new level of diversification to his realm. But his burgeoning empire does not come without personal conflict. "I need money, so that means sometimes I need to be a whore," he admits. "Other than that, I try not to lend any more of my essence to [my clients] because they are corporations, and that's still somewhat against what we stand for. That being said, I'm always down to leave my mark on pop culture. Sometimes I just need to get paid for it."

Saber's main struggle now is being regarded as a serious artist rather than just a graffiti writer turned modern-day icon. "We're getting to a point, me and others like me, where it's going to be hard for the mainstream art world to deny our achievements. Soon they're going to have to see that what I do is just as much of a fine art as anything else in galleries and exhibitions. But in the end, whatever path I'm able to carve out, no matter how big or small, I'm happy to have it." ■



Saber, surrounded by paints in his Los Angeles work space.

"IT WAS THE OTHER STUFF THAT WAS HARD TO EXPLAIN—THE FACT THAT I WAS GETTING HURT ALL THE TIME, MY FRIENDS GETTING KILLED. BUT OUR WHOLE MIND-SET WAS JUST WRONG BACK THEN, AND SO MANY PEOPLE WERE OUT OF THEIR HEADS."

on graffiti artists. Fellow writers, some close friends of Saber's, appeared on the Fox 11 News and the front page of the *Los Angeles Times*. "During high school it got really sticky," he recalls. "My good friend became the center of a really big publicity case. It involved \$4 million in property damage and was all over the fuckin' news and the talk shows. [My parents] were not happy about any of that at all, obviously. But what they were happy about was my general extremism toward it. It was the other stuff that was hard to explain—the fact that I was getting hurt all the time, my friends getting killed. That was hard to explain. But our whole mind-set was just wrong back then, and so many people were out of their heads. Everybody was just listening to way too much gangster rap."

With the gang mentality taking hold not just within the Los Angeles graffiti scene but seemingly throughout the entire city, it wasn't long before Saber began to wonder if he had gotten in over his head. "Things became very obsessive-compulsive and dangerous," he explains. "When you're willing to risk your freedom or well-being and at the same time are willing to hurt others, all to accomplish a goal? Well, it's a sign things have gone awry. Back then we got desensitized to a point of no return, where death and violence became non-chalant. I was just making terrible decisions. Everybody was in that gangster-rap mind-set, and a lot of people didn't come back from it, literally and figuratively."



A sampling of Saber's work, clockwise from top right: Hand-painted Union Pacific car, 2002; hand-painted Hyundai Tiburon, 2005; hand-painted Scion TC, 2005; Linkin Park tour poster, 2008; hand-painted skateboard, 2006; hand-painted and etched ceramic vase, 2002; "Krunch Time" nine-color screen print, 2008; placard for *L.A. Weekly* newspaper boxes, 2006; mural painted on Tarina Tarantino store, 2007.



SALIVA



**"Cinco Diablo" In Stores
January 2009**

"With as much artwork as our band has, we've tried it all. Without a doubt, **H2Ocean** is above and beyond the best aftercare out there. **H2Ocean** continues to make our old tattoos look as good as the day they were done and our new ink heals in half the time. Someone finally figured it out. Thanks for keeping our tattoos beautiful and our throats clear with your sea salt mouthwash. We'll never use anything else!" - Saliva

H2Ocean[®]
FIRST IN FIRST AID[™]

H2OCEAN.COM / H2OCEANPROTEAM.COM / H2OCEANMODELS.COM / H2OCEAN.NET

1-866-420-2326

US PATENT #6,932,966 - 6,737,083 PATENT PENDING

A man with a beard, multiple piercings, and extensive tattoos is sitting in a cluttered workshop. He is wearing a black leather jacket and black pants. The workshop is filled with various items, including a television, a desk with a computer monitor, and shelves with tools and art supplies. A poster on the wall reads "HOMELAND SECURITY" and "FIGHTING TERRORISM SINCE 1492".

INKED SCENE

"I need to control my environment to keep myself somewhat sane. Between my natural instabilities coupled with my career choice, it's driven me deeper into a darker place." —*Paul Booth*



PAUL BOOTH

Last Rites Tattoo Theatre
511 West 33rd St.
New York, NY
darkimages.com

INKED: What's the current state of your shop, Last Rites?

PAUL BOOTH: November 22 being my 20-year anniversary, I feel pretty good saying that, although I feel old, I'm feeling really solid. And with my new crew, it's exciting because I have the creative environment I really wanted. I mean, it's always been a creative environment here, but I find myself really vibing well with this crew, so I'm psyched about moving ahead.

These days, tattooists are rock stars, and you're one of them. How do you feel about that? I still laugh about that. I think I said this once or twice in the past: I have a different way of looking at these things, but deep down I still just see myself as a really lucky fat guy from New Jersey. At the end of the day I can't believe the shit that comes my way. I have hot chicks all around me—I ain't no prize. I can complain about worse things, I suppose. Imagine me feeling like a piece of meat. Lucky me.

So you embrace it? Well, no. I spent a few years celebrating it. I did the whole rock star thing. It was fun, sure. The real fucked up thing about it is that it left me feeling pretty alone. And I still tend to feel alone quite a bit because there are not too many people I know that can relate to what I've been through in my life ... and my career.

Don't get me wrong, I really love what I do—the fans, the experiences. It really is true, though, what they say: Be careful what you wish for. There are reasons why I'm a shut-in now. I understand more than ever why bigger celebrities are also shut-ins and why they can't go out. They are like a prisoner of themselves.

For me, going out to a bar with some friends to hang out and just relax isn't that much of an option. I don't mind if a sincere fan shakes my hand and it's all good. But people get drunk over the course of the night and I end up spending hours with someone repeating to me their next tattoo over and over again, shaking my hand with their beer-soaked paw. [Laughs.] There are a lot of cool people out there but, you know, I can tell you stories that will totally make you understand why I stay home.

Give me one. I don't know how this is going to come across but I'll do my best. I go to this club one night—a fetish industry night, which is one of the circles I tend to find myself in from time to time—and I'm standing outside talking to these people I knew, a guy and his wife, and there's this girl kinda hanging around who knew them. After about 10 minutes she interrupts and says, "What's your name?"

"Paul."

"Paul who?"

"Paul Booth."

"Oh my god, oh my god!"

“I have a client that came in on a long, two-day tattoo weekend.

She suffered through the first day and came in the second day wearing vibrating panties with a remote control and the whole time I tattooed her, she sat there with the remote control.” —Paul Booth



The girl just loses it and all of a sudden she has tears running down her face. She's freaking out that she's meeting me, and I'm thinking to myself, If you're that intense of a fan, why did it take you so long to recognize me? I mean, if you're so much of a fan to have tears running down your face.

It's not like you blend. I know! The next thing I know—oh, and keep in mind that there's got to be, like, 30 people around us outside because you can't smoke in bars in New York City—she falls to the ground, on her belly, three feet away from me and starts dragging herself toward me like I was that wall in Israel, and she wraps herself around my leg and starts kissing my foot, still crying. I'm standing there, thinking, Jesus Christ. Everyone is staring at me, and I don't like to stand out, believe it or not. So I take her arm and beg her to get up, telling her it's cool and how I appreciate how she digs my work, but it's causing a scene. And everyone is looking at me like, Who does he think he is? Shit like that happens. How can you take it seriously?

So did you sleep with her? [Laughs.] Nah, she wasn't my type.

Well, that's what everyone is going to be thinking, so we had to ask. I could have sucked and she still would've loved me! I guess my point is that you become a sort of commodity for people.



You're no longer human. For one thing, they put you on a pedestal that no one can live up to. For another, they want that tattoo or artwork so badly that they forget about important human things like consideration, respect, and sincerity. I try to be patient with it, but being that I hate mankind, it's fucking hard to remind myself that not everyone actually sucks. And I don't omit myself. I suck too.

That's heavy. How do you deal with that? It's not easy. I find myself more paranoid than ever. I have a hard time trusting people now. With women, I feel they just want a free tattoo or want to be seen with me. It's not what I'm looking for. It's hard to feel a sense of companionship with someone when you know in the back of your mind that they're full of shit. Of course, if they're really hot, I'll overlook that. [Laughs.] Yeah, I'm shallow too. So what? Did I mention I'm a walking contradiction?

Have you ever had a client experience an orgasm? I have a client that came in for a long, two-day tattoo weekend. She suffered through the first day and came in the second day wearing vibrating panties with a remote control and the whole time I tattooed her, she sat there with the remote control going up and down, up and down. I was confused as to whether she was in pain or whether she was coming! It was so strange because I'm tattooing this woman and it's like we're having sex. I'm deal-

ing with my own sadistic tendencies of hurting this girl and listening to her whimper—but that's my own personal thing—and on top of that, she's getting herself off the whole time, enjoying herself and using it as a tool to get through the pain.

Readers are going to run out and buy vibrating panties for tattoo pain relief! I'm gonna start selling vibrating panties with the Last Rites logo! If I'm comfortable with someone, I'm cool with it. I've done ritual tattooing and all kinds of weird things.

You must have clients in the fetish world who would get off on tattooing, without the vibrating panties. Oh, definitely. What I love about the fetish scene is that the women tend to be more neurotic. ... If I'm at a party and there's one girl there who looks like she's ready to fall over dead, that's the one I'm all about—the one who's emaciated with makeup running down her face, an emotional wreck ready to jump off a bridge ... I just think that's hot. It's not like I'm out to save them either.

Maybe you're out to share your own bit of crazy. What's your big neurosis? Oh my god. I'm certifiably insane.

Yet highly functional. No, I fake it. I have patterned my universe to fit my disease. I live in a microcosm. I am the master of my universe, no matter how great



"If I'm at a party and there's one girl there who looks like she's ready to fall over dead, that's the one I'm all about. The one who's emaciated with make-up running down her face, an emotional wreck ready to jump off I bridge... I just think, That's hot."

or small it may be considered. I need to control my environment to keep myself somewhat sane. Between my natural instabilities coupled with my career choice, it's driven me deeper into a darker place.

With that need to control your environment, how did you deal with your former Last Rites crew all leaving you suddenly last year? Do you mind talking about it? I don't mind.

Then for those not in on the gossip, give a recap first. In a nutshell, I've always been a bit psychologically unstable. When I was a kid, mostly it was depression, and as I grew older it became other things. Stress triggers it. And with a lot of things I was doing four or five years ago—like *Tattoo the Earth*, a music tour I produced, the beginnings of *Art Fusion*, and all these crazy things—I drove myself too hard. I ended up having a breakdown in Europe. My girlfriend then and manager got me home. I started seeing two separate shrinks a week for six months and took all these brain-candy cocktails to find the right recipe to keep me functioning. It became a battle. The medicine kills the demons but the demons and the art come from the same place. It took me a year to get back in the rhythm and create in a way to give a client 100 percent. And if I don't feel 100 percent, I can't work.

In the end the people close to me had to nurse me all the time. I couldn't go out without a crew. I couldn't go out without people I trusted around. I had a greater safety requirement than the average person. That can range from legitimate paranoia, like someone really out to get me, to aliens peeping under my door. Weird shit.

So through my struggle, everyone was getting tired of being around me. It started with my girlfriend bailing out. And I don't blame her because I knew then what a pain in the ass I was, but I couldn't help it. Nonetheless, it devastated me because this was a girl I thought I was spending the rest of my life with. She did what she could. I don't think anyone in my life has let me down easier. Then, one year to the day that we officially broke up, my entire crew walked out on me on the same day.

The funny thing is that, after they left, a big part of me felt that a cancer had been cut out of my

body. I was sitting in my shop alone feeling nothing but relief, not even knowing until that moment where a lot of my stress was coming from.

Was there a big fight? No. My issue was never them leaving, but how they left. It wasn't cool how things went down. I'm not going to go into detail. I'll just save it for my book. It was more important for me to bite my tongue and stand by my reputation and my professionalism, than proving my gossip wrong. I spent so many years hearing rumors about me that have ranged from being a gay heroin addict or baby-eating satanist. ...

I really have heard the gay heroin thing. Yes, I'm the world's fattest heroin addict. Is it even possible? I got a hot chick on my arm at every convention, and I weigh more than three people. Over the years, I would start my own rumors to see what they'd turn into, like the child-slavery-rumor.

That's a good one. Listen, I've always known that human nature generally sucks. Where I grew stronger from all this is the evolution of myself, and the awareness of human nature that I have now is much greater than ever before.

I had a gallery opening two months after the shit went down, and people actually wrote in the guest book all kinds of shit like, "You asshole. How does it feel now?" All based on rumor. The amount of people who called me to get more than one side of the story, I could count on one hand. I was bedridden for three months. I mean, really bedridden with some dark shit—but I survived.

Did anything positive come from it? I know it will take a lot more than nine people to take me out. I have a new crew. I'm less concerned with what people think, which is good because I was always too concerned. Now I can just give the entire universe the middle finger. —*Marisa DiMattia*





Get **Inked**

\$29.95 for 10 issues

Save over 50%

Subscribe online at
inkedmag.com



ROCK OF AGES TATTOOING

2310 S. Lamar Blvd., #105
Austin, TX
512-804-1213
rockofagestattoo.com

Make a list of cities in the United States with a high ink-to-people ratio and you can bet that Austin, TX, will make a respectable appearance. "You can go to a lot of other big cities, but you'll still find more people with visible tattoos and sleeves in Austin," says Rock of Ages owner Jason Brooks. "Go to any restaurant and your waiter will probably be tattooed—even at the fancy ones."

Like the number of inked people in Texas's self-proclaimed weirdest city, the number of places to

go under the needle has also skyrocketed, which isn't necessarily a good thing. "When I moved here 11 years ago, there were maybe six or seven shops, including the ones on Sixth Street," says Brooks, speaking of the tourist-friendly strip of road that's also home to the annual South by Southwest music festival. "Now you often find two shops on the same block. Just to survive, some of them have to cater to drunk tourists. We're not one of those shops."

With only three full-time artists (Brooks, Hector Fong, and Tony Hundahl), there's little chance of Rock of Ages turning into a slapdash street shop. "With a smaller shop you can put more of the focus on tattooing rather than running the business," Brooks explains. "And I never have to do any babysitting."

Brooks has been tattooing professionally since 1993 but learned how to run a business as part of the now-defunct Elysium Skateboards, a company he started with a friend. The business was



Clockwise from above: Owner Jason Brooks outside Rock of Ages Tattooing; stencils; chest piece by Brooks; work space; tiger by Brooks.



disbanded in 2006, mainly because, as Brooks puts it, "It was fun, but we lost a shit ton of money."

These days Brooks takes care of business at Rock of Ages, where the three-man crew share an obvious Japanese inspiration, with each tattooer integrating elements of classic Americana. Of course, taking advantage of classic styles is simpler when you're surrounded by original sheets from legends like Stoney St. Clair, Ed Hardy, Mike Malone, Paul Rodgers, Owen Jensen, and others. "I have a bunch of original Sailor Jerry sheets up on the wall. It's really cool to know that you're knocking it off the same sheet that he did," Brooks explains. The result is more customers coming in with something cliché on their mind and leaving with something of an education. According to Brooks, people "come in off the street and point at the wall and it'll turn out to be an old Bob Shaw design. I love doing stuff off of our wall."

While Brooks wishes everyone could leave his shop with exactly what they want, he's not afraid to tell a customer that they're better off looking elsewhere for their work. "We have no problem referring someone to another local artist if they want something we're not into," Brooks says sincerely. "If they want something I don't think they can get from anyone around here, I'll tell them just to wait for one of the conventions. I want to be honest."

That's not the only reason you might see someone leaving Rock of Ages inkless. In addition to its origins in naval tattoo tradition, the shop's name also has significance to certain religions. "I picked it because my grandma used to have big Rock of Ages paintings in her house. The images just stuck in my head," Brooks explains. He adds with a laugh, "People come in thinking it's a religious shop—and when they find out it's not they usually leave immediately." —*Stan Horazcek*





NAME: Jude

SHOP ASSISTANT AT: Chicago Tattoo Company, Chicago

I'm definitely the newest person here. I'm the low woman on the totem pole, and holy shit do they let me know. You know how tattoo shops are.

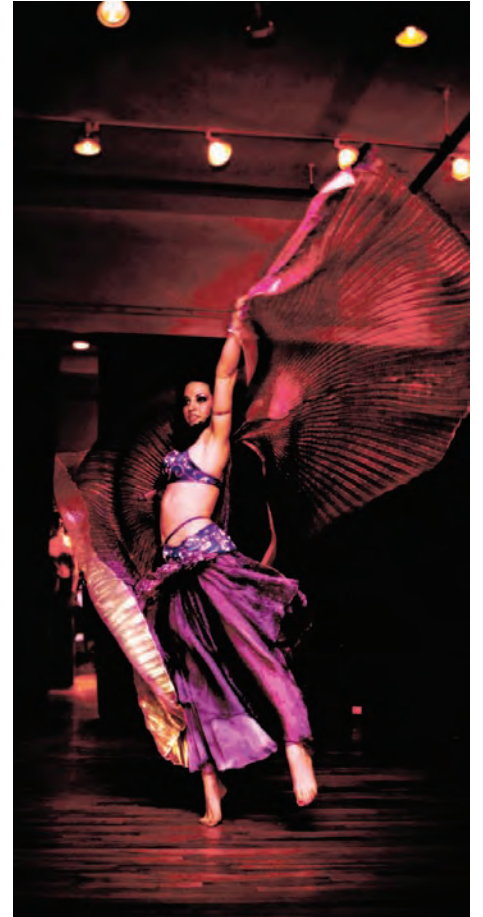
I'm the official Jamba Juice runner. I also greet and help clients, make stencils for artists, answer phones, and take payments. I'm also responsible for almost every little thing going wrong.

I tattooed my boyfriend the other day in a hotel room. It was my first and only tattoo ever. I don't think it came out half bad for me not knowing what the fuck is going on!

I'm training to be an orchestral flautist. I've been studying classical flute for almost 20 years. I came to Chicago to train under the principal flautist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.



Know a stellar shop assistant who keeps the autoclave humming and the tattoo stations organized? E-mail us at shoppirl@inkedmag.com.



SOUL ON SKIN

The Foundation for Open Creation hosted Soul on Skin: Breast Cancer Recovery Through Tattoo Art in New York City on November 8. The event featured a breast cancer survivor fashion show, a performance by Semi Precious Weapons, and art auctions from Chris O'Donnell, Stephanie Tamez, and others. For more photos, go to inkedmag.com.



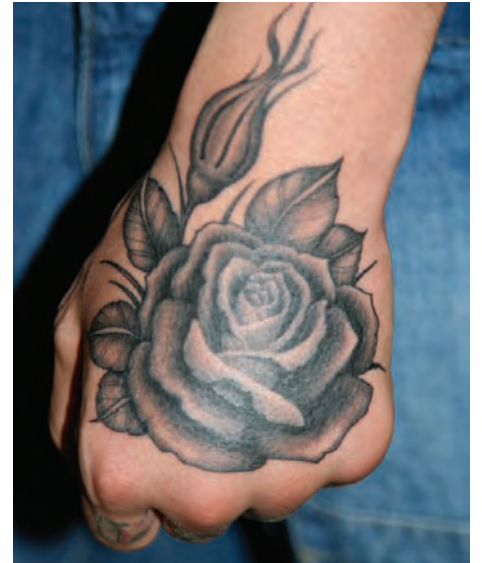


CHICAGO TATTOO CO. 35TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY

Chicago Tattoo Co. celebrated its 35th anniversary with a blowout bash at the Old Oak Tap during the Chicago Tattoo Convention in November. Artists such as Chad Koeplinger and Steve Boltz and local tattoo nuts came out to suck down free drinks and toast the shop. Congrats, guys!

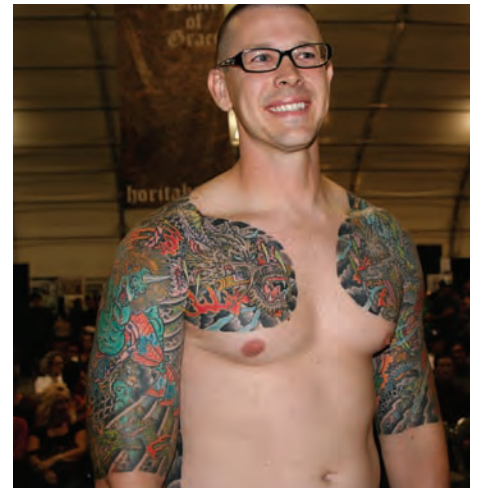
For more photos, go to inkedmag.com.





SAN JOSE CONVENTION OF TATTOO ARTS

One of the most talent-packed tattoo conventions is the San Jose Convention of Tattoo Arts, hosted by Horitaka's State of Grace. Tattooers such as Jack Rudy, Oliver Peck, Shige, and others packed the floor this year, along with an art show by Horiyoshi III and live painting by Grime and Horitomo. For more photos, go to inkedmag.com.

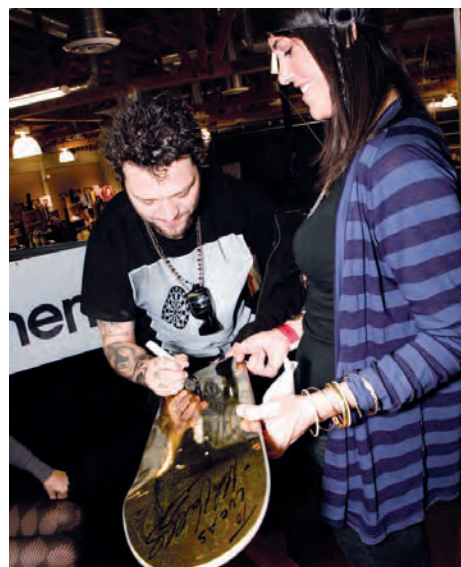


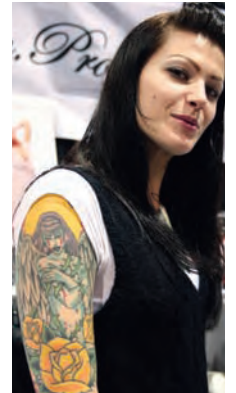
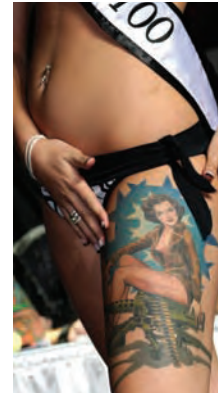


ELEMENT KAT VON D COLLECTOR'S SERIES RELEASE

Element celebrated the release of the Kat Von D Collector's Series decks with an appearance by Kat Von D, Bam Margera, and Mike Vallely at the Active Ride Shop in Los Angeles. Later, Vallely's band, Revolution Mother, blew eardrums and minds with an in-store performance.

For more photos, go to inkedmag.com.



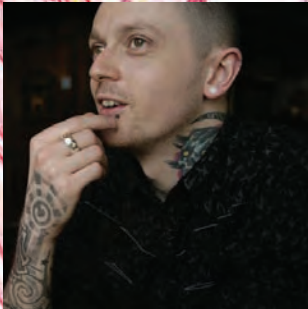
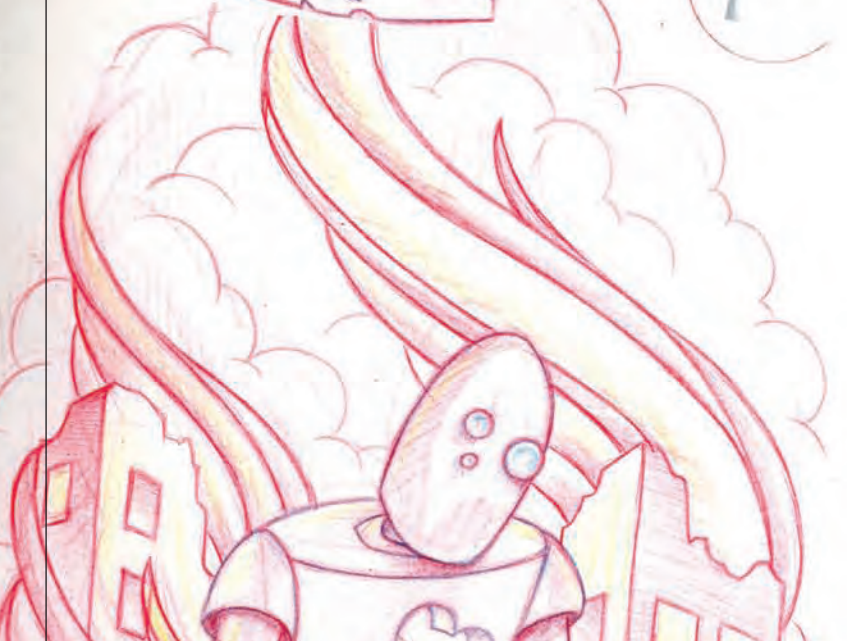
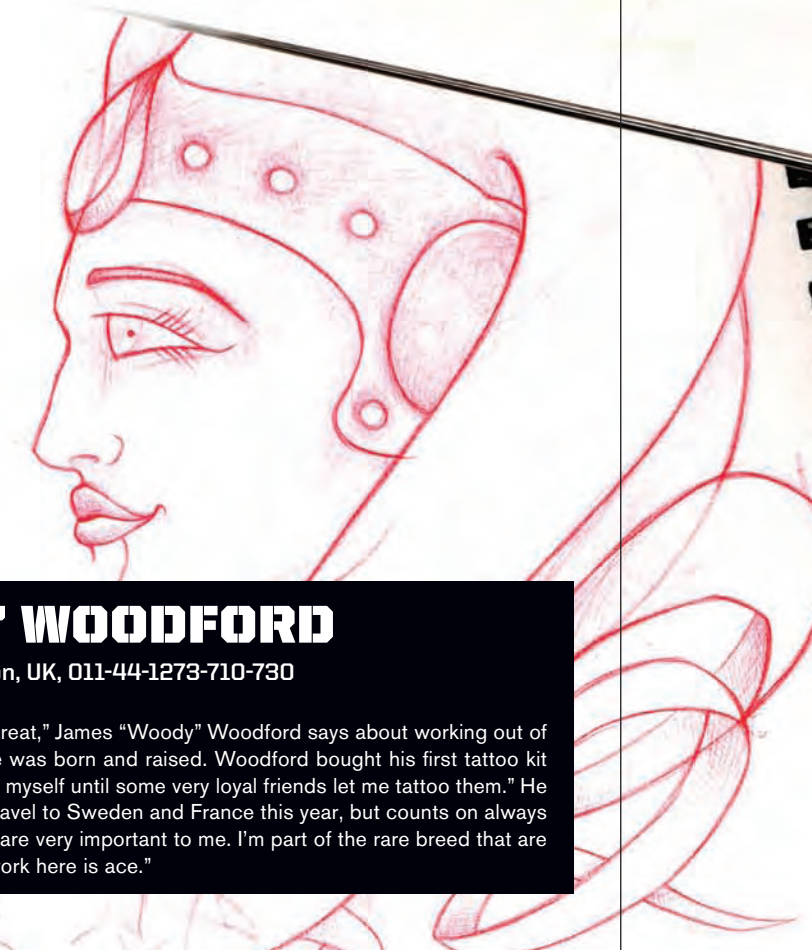
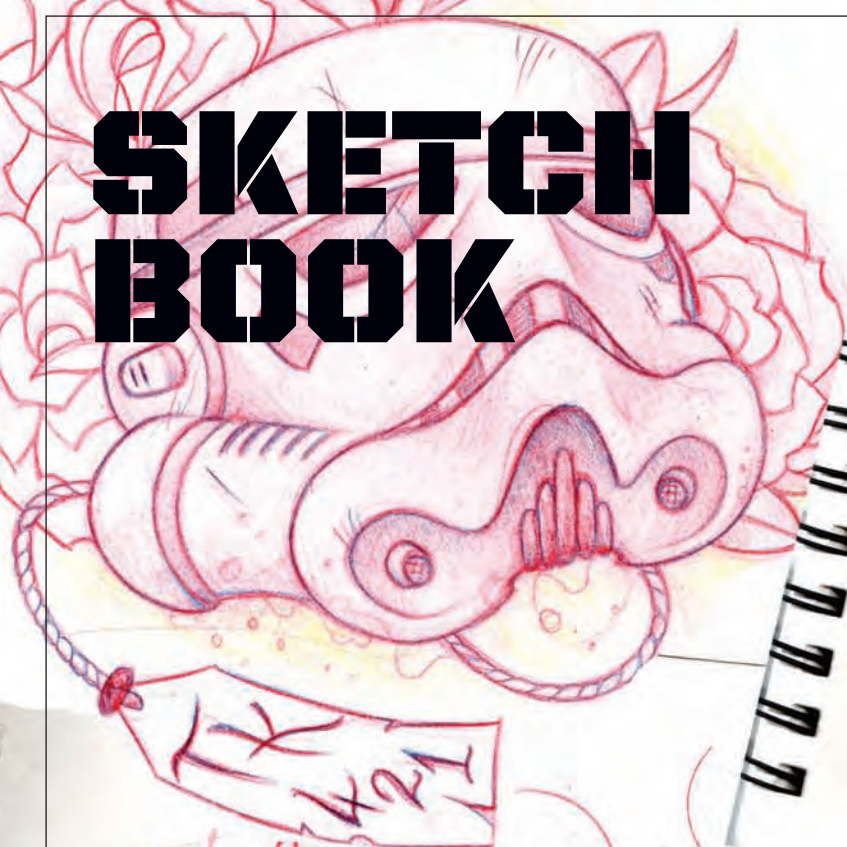


ROCK THE INK

The Rock the Ink Tattoo convention in Rhode Island in October packed 50 bands, 100 tattoo artists, and thousands of sweaty fans together for a wild weekend. Killswitch Engage, Madball, Sevendust, and others rocked the crowd and a party at Red Room left them hungover.
For more photos, go to inkedmag.com.



SKETCH BOOK



JAMES "WOODY" WOODFORD

Into You Tattoo, 4 Little East St., Brighton, UK, 011-44-1273-710-730
into-you.co.uk, woodfordtattoo.com

"Something about tattooing beside the sea is great," James "Woody" Woodford says about working out of Into You Tattoo in Brighton, England, where he was born and raised. Woodford bought his first tattoo kit at 19. "I locked myself in my room and tattooed myself until some very loyal friends let me tattoo them." He pops up at guest spots in Spain and plans to travel to Sweden and France this year, but counts on always returning to his hometown. "Family and friends are very important to me. I'm part of the rare breed that are born and raised in Brighton, so being able to work here is ace."

See no evil.
Touched no evil.
Taste no evil.

FIJI Water lives a very sheltered life. It begins as rainfall filtering through ancient volcanic rock over hundreds of years. Through this natural filtration process, our water gathers silica, an essential mineral that also contributes to our soft, smooth taste. Finally, it collects in a natural artesian aquifer where it is preserved and protected from external elements. Water as pristine as our island sanctuary.

www.fijiwater.com © 2008 FIJI Water Company LLC. All rights reserved.

FIJI Water. Untouched.



92 PROOF
DRINK RESPONSIBLY

4 L



“MY WORK SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.”

CRAFTED TO THE STANDARDS OF
NORMAN COLLINS: THE MASTER
OF OLD SCHOOL TATTOO



MOTHER

designed by
SAILOR JERRY