

# Inked

CULTURE. STYLE. ART.

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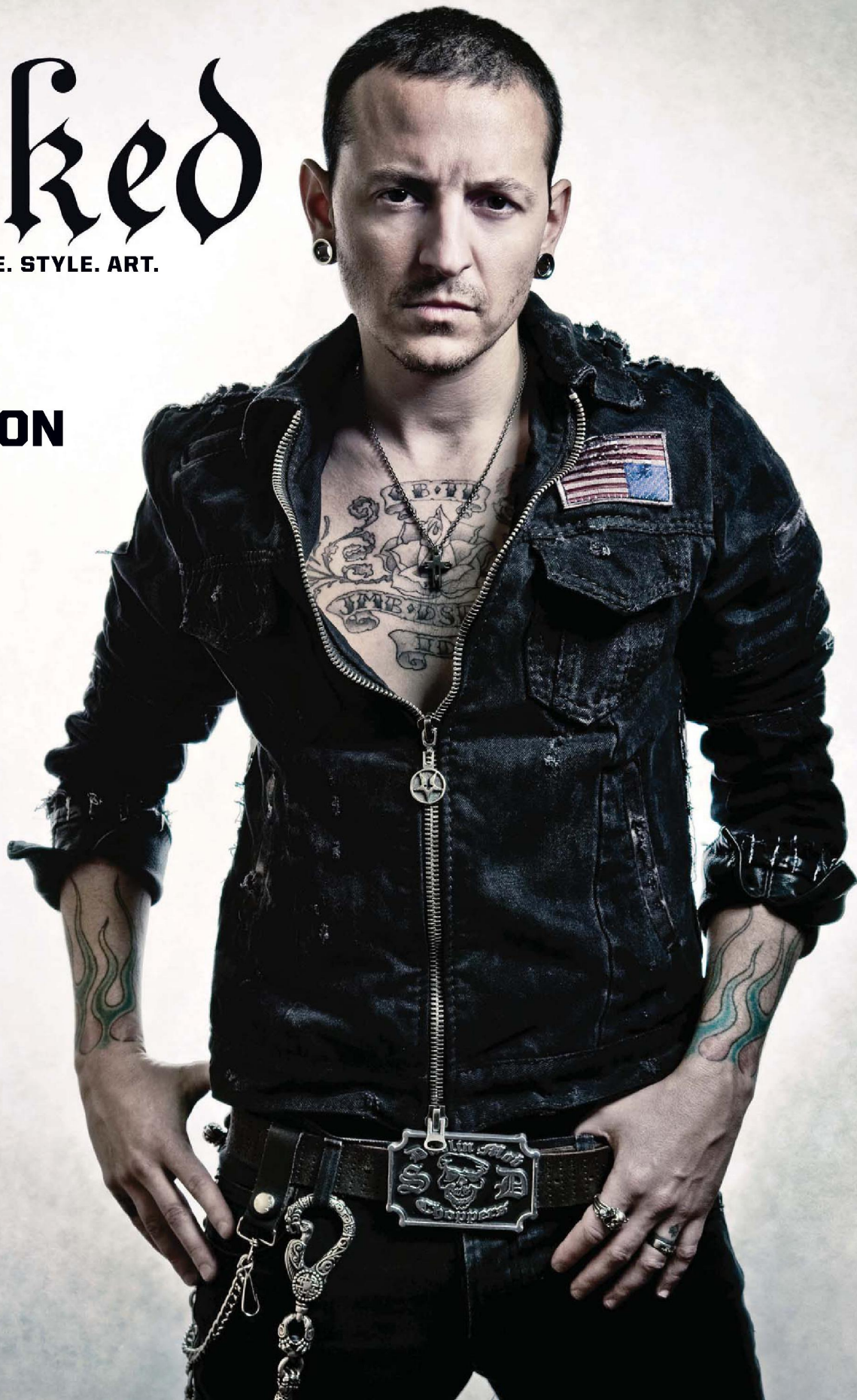
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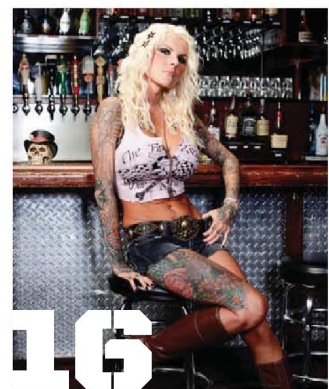
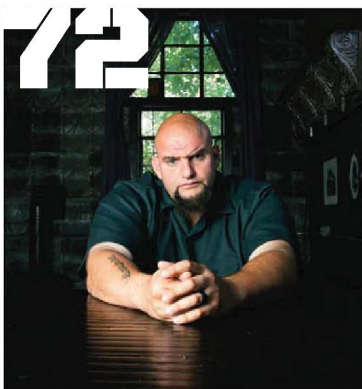






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92 PROOF



# “MY WORK SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.”

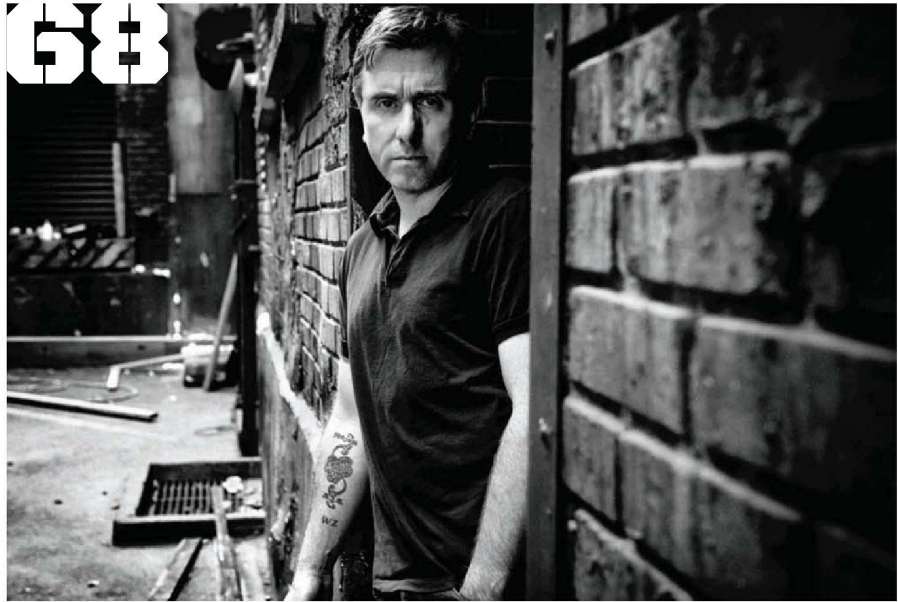
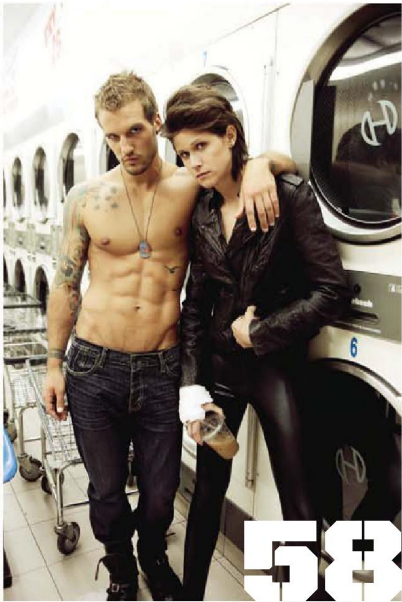
-NORMAN “SAILOR JERRY” COLLINS

TO MANY, NORMAN COLLINS IS KNOWN BY HIS NICKNAME OF SAILOR JERRY. TO A GENERATION OF TATTOO ARTISTS, THE FATHER OF OLD SCHOOL TATTOOING IS SIMPLY KNOWN AS “THE MAN.” FROM HIS BRASH REBELLIOUSNESS TO HIS INDEPENDENT AND INNOVATIVE SPIRIT, SAILOR JERRY’S LEGACY AS THE FATHER OF OLD SCHOOL TATTOOING LIVES ON TODAY.

RESPECT HIS LEGACY. DRINK SAILOR JERRY RESPONSIBLY.



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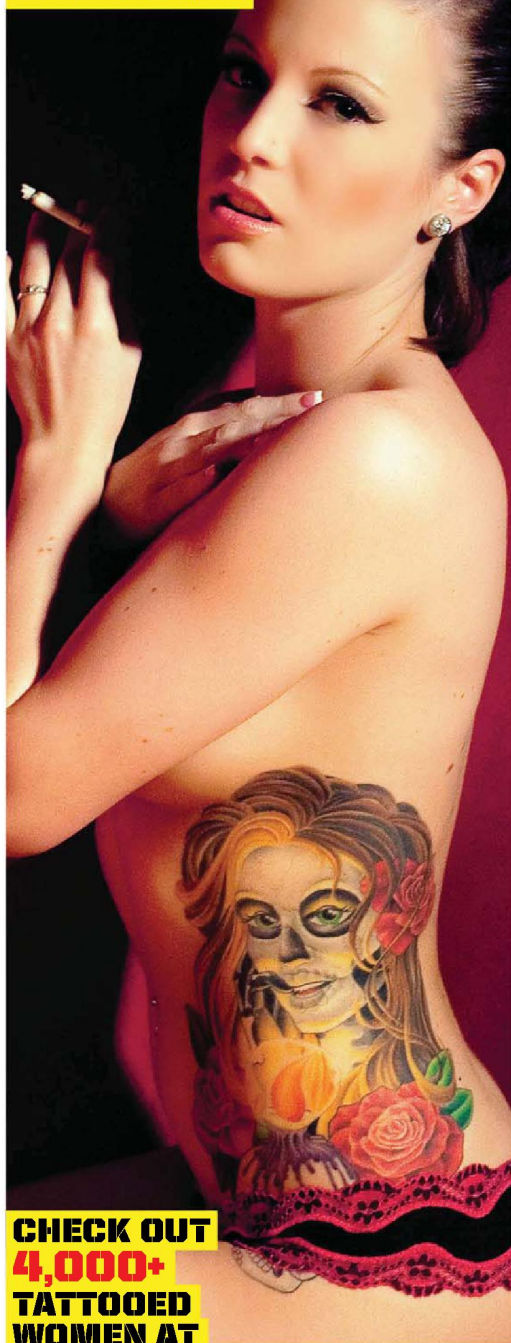
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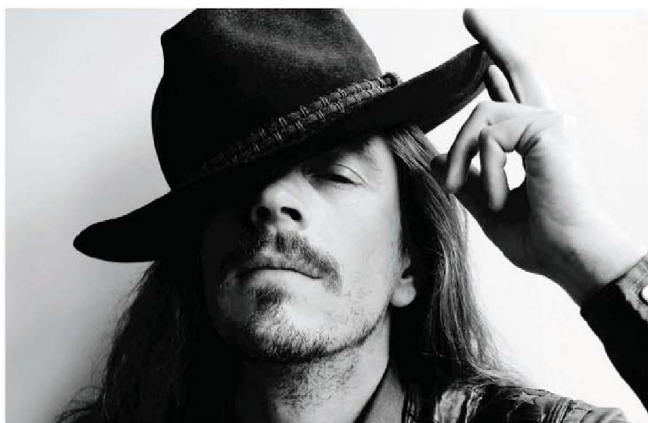
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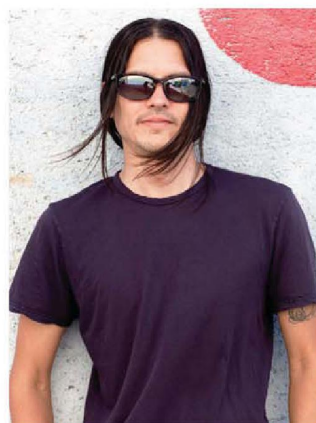
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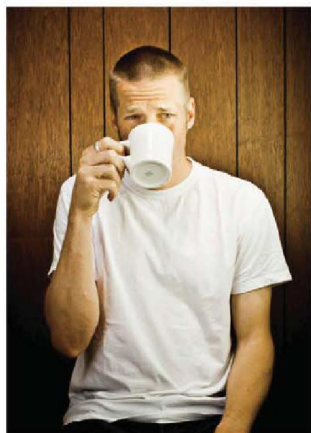
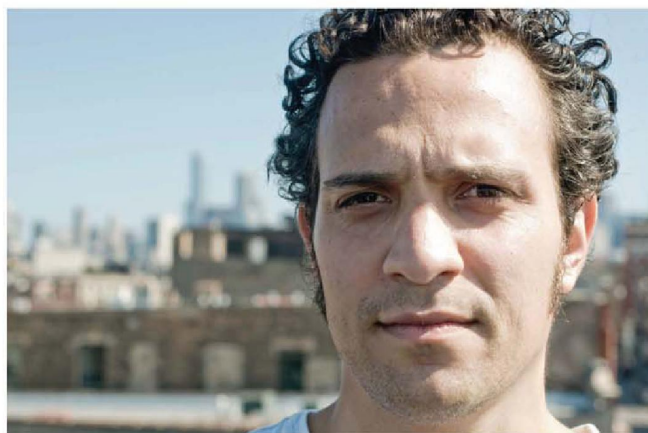
# contributors



We sent photographer **Steven Perilloux** to shoot Canadian singer Lights (page 35), and he reported back that everything was "smooth as silk." Perilloux, a former assistant to photographer Terry Richardson, has tattoos from Charlie Roberts at Spotlight Tattoo, Mike Brown and Bubba from Shamrock Social Club, and some Old English lettering from Jacci Gresham at Aart Accent in New Orleans. Perilloux's work appears in *Black Book*, *i-D*, and others. If he weren't a photographer? "That is a very good question," he says. We'll give him some time to mull it over.



When photographer **Stephan Schacher** gathered his trio of models for this month's fashion shoot (page 58), one thing did not go as planned. "We were all a bit surprised when our female model, Jennifer, showed up with a cast on her arm," he laughs. "She said she would cut it off, but in some odd way it just made the story more authentic and we decided to run with it." Schacher's shoot took place around the Lower East Side of Manhattan, in bars, taco stands, and even on rooftops. "Besides a few dangerous moments on the roof, and passersby repeatedly wanting to have their picture taken with the models, there was no real trouble." His work has appeared in *Interview*, *Detour*, and *Vanity Fair*.



It's tough to shake tattoo legend Freddy Corbin. Photographer **Jay Watson** learned that while shooting the Oakland tattooer for this month's Icon feature (page 79). "When one of my 2,400-watt lights exploded in his shop I jumped four feet off the ground, but he didn't flinch at all," Watson laughs. The photographer doesn't have any tattoos and left Corbin's shop without getting one, despite sticking around for a while. "He is so incredibly friendly that I could have hung out, drank tea, and smoked cigarettes with him all day—except I prefer coffee and don't smoke." Watson's work appears in *The Source*, *Garage*, *Dub*, and others.

Writer **Ben Fasman** is based in Chicago, but the Windy City writer has tattoos from some of New York's finest. "I have a full sleeve of a raven and a skull by Thomas Hooper of New York Adorned," he says. "I also have a bird flying out of a rose on my forearm by Bailey Hunter Robinson at Saved Tattoo, lettering on my chest by Stephanie Tamez at New York Adorned, and my feet were done by Sweetie, who works over at East Side Ink now." For this month's issue, Fasman wrote about artist Dennis McNett (page 26). "I had been a fan of Dennis's work for a long time and it was rad to be able to talk to him." Fasman, a former editor-at-large for *Stop Smiling* magazine, has written for *The Economist*, *Juxtapoz*, *XLR8R*, and others.

# Sinful



# letter



INKED creative director Todd Weinberger's newest tattoo, by Chris O'Donnell at New York Adorned.

In the past week I've run into two different artists who have tattooed me. Both said the same thing: "Where have you been? I never see you." It's true. I have been lying low (although I recently saw killer shows by Off With Their Heads, Naked Raygun, and Polar Bear Club). Truth is, we've all been working hard to tighten up the best tattoo magazine on the planet. Specifically, we've added a News column (page 14), tweaked our Go page (page 28), and shuffled a few pages around. Check it out. See how it feels.

We've also been focused on bringing you even more of the best hard-hitting stories ever seen in a tattoo magazine. This month, we spent time with John Fetterman (page 72), a mayor in Pennsylvania who has a tattoo for every person murdered during his tenure. It's a gritty and compelling story. We also hung out in Arizona with Linkin Park frontman Chester Bennington (page 42), who talked about addiction, divorce, tattoos, and his latest project, *Dead by Sunrise*. I'm also stoked on our Q&A with Tim Roth (page 68), someone I swore on my first day that I wanted in the pages of INKED. Finally, don't miss our interview with tattoo legend Freddy Corbin (page 79), one of the best Icon features we've ever run.

Enjoy the issue!

Jason Buhrmester  
Editor  
[editor@inkedmag.com](mailto:editor@inkedmag.com)



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# mail



## HAIL DIABLO!

Thanks for your amazing article on Diablo Cody [September]. As a tattooed woman and aspiring writer, she's an inspiration. Glad to see one of our own kicking ass in Hollywood!  
**Tara Brown**  
El Segundo, CA

## SOLDIER ON

Your story on Pfc. Marcos Sierra ["Art of War," September] blew me away. What these guys go through over there is awful, and to have someone like him tattooing and helping these guys stick together is just great. Thanks for telling his story, and most

of all thanks to these soldiers for all they sacrifice.

**Tim Daniels**  
Boulder, CO

I knew that INKED blew every other tattoo magazine out of the water when I first picked up an issue, but your story on Pfc. Marcos Sierra really convinced me to be a lifetime subscriber. Reading about what he's seen and gone through in Iraq was really powerful. You guys have a knack for showing all of the sides of tattooing. Never change!

**Joe Cochran**  
Worcester, MA

## INSPIRED INK

I read an article in one of your recent issues about Club Tattoo in the Planet Hollywood Shops in Las Vegas, and was intrigued. I spent an entire month in Vegas for an internship in August and eventually decided to go get my first tattoo done at Club Tattoo because of your magazine. It was an amazing shop, and getting a tattoo done in the middle of a mall where hundreds of people walk by was pretty awesome. Props to Krystof for making my first tattoo awesome. Thanks, INKED!

**David Switzer**  
East Lansing, MI

## PRAGUE LOVE

I was thrilled to see your article on Prague [September]! You covered where I got my very first tattoo, Tsunami Tattoo, which I stumbled upon with some friends a few years ago on a school trip. Though I was nervous as hell for getting it (I had signed a contract with my high school stating that I would not get tattoos or piercing on the vacation), I had to do it! I'm of Czech heritage and I love the city, so of course I couldn't pass up the opportunity. Also, Comix Gallery Bar Alternatiff, across the alley from Tsunami, is a great hangout spot. The Charles Bridge is one of my favorite places in the world, and your photography of Prague was beautiful. Props!

**Rachel Kadlec**  
Fort Collins, CO

## THANKS, POPS

I am a new reader and subscriber to your magazine. I don't have any tattoos—yet. But I have a few designs



**READER OF THE MONTH**  
**JESSIE LAUREN**  
Rutherford, NJ

floating in my head. I like the magazine and so does my father! Heh! He will probably never get one himself, but it is amusing to watch him read your mag. Keep up the good work.  
**Nathanael Vitkus**  
Aurora, IL

## IDEA BOX

I love love love your magazine, and while it takes frigging ages to get to me here in Australia, it's always worth the wait! I think that you should do a story on London LeGrand. He's an amazing singer (Brides of Destruction/Rockstars on Mars/Souls of We) and he has cool tattoos.

**Amanda Graham**  
Sydney, Australia



**WRITE TO US!** Got something to say? Send all letters of praise, notes of complaint, story suggestions, and other comments to [letters@inkedmag.com](mailto: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:** Alissa Dandrea

**OCCUPATION:** Dog caretaker at High Tail Hotel

**HOMETOWN:** San Francisco

My first tattoo was a giant X on my back. Straight-edge tattoos seemed like a great idea then. My parents didn't know about it until about two years later. Then my mom took me to get one more with the promise it would be the last one, which obviously worked well! I continued getting tattooed and hiding them until I turned 23—my mom found my Facebook page, saw them all, flipped out, and tried to ground me from 3,000 miles away. Mike Davis at Everlasting Tattoo is actually going to cover my first. The plan is a WWII fighter plane back piece. I'm beyond stoked!







## ROOM SERVICE: TATTOOS

The history of tattoos and travel stretches around the world, from the old-time sailors who turned port cities like Honolulu and Tokyo into tattoo meccas to the road dogs who travel to tattoo conventions across the globe today. **Hotel Erwin** ([jdvhotels.com](http://jdvhotels.com)) in Venice Beach, CA, is adding itself to the map with the new Ink & Stay package. Book accommodations before December 30 and the hotel will include a \$100 voucher for a tattoo from the in-house tattoo artists. The deal originally launched with tattooer Norm, but these days the in-house squad is made up of members of the local tattoo-graffiti collective **Sea of Ink**. Hotel reservations start at \$399 and include Lubriderm lotion, an ice pack, and a bottle of tequila. If you *really* enjoy your stay, get a tattoo that says "I Heart Hotel Erwin" and the hotel will throw in an additional \$500 bonus. Hey—it beats "I Heart Holiday Inn."



## TIME WARP

There was more to '80s fashion than frosted denim and feathered hair. In tribute to the good that came out of the streetwear of the era,

Timex recruited tattooer **JK5** from **Saved Tattoo** in Brooklyn, NY, to create this limited edition watch (\$85, [barneys.com](http://barneys.com)) for part of their Timex 80 collection. Only 500 will be made available at Barney's, Barney's Co-Op, and [barneys.com](http://barneys.com), so plan on being on time.



## Scratch That

In the new iPhone game **Tattoo Mania** (\$4, [itunes.com](http://itunes.com)), you get to tattoo customers by dragging your finger around a design as quickly as possible. Go outside the lines or take too long and your clients will howl in pain and complain. You'll also have to juggle the growing crowd at the shop by choosing tattoos that will earn you the most money and take the least amount of time. The game is filled with tattoo stereotypes, including bikers, hot babes, and tribal armbands, but if it keeps just one potentially bad tattooer from picking up a real machine, we're all winners.

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## BOMBS AWAY

Drop drinks are making a comeback at bars across America. Prepare your liver.

Drinking is the ultimate social lubricant. It can turn an awkward relationship with a coworker into an all-night party with your new best friend. But while a few casual beers can help bring people together, nothing says “let’s kick-start this friendship” better than a few old-fashioned “drop drinks.” There’s something about taking a shot glass full of delicious alcohol, dropping it into a pint glass full of more delicious alcohol, and then chugging that concoction as fast as possible that can bring camaraderie to a bar full of strangers. And according to Jessie DeVille, a bartender at The Fire Escape Bar & Grill in Citrus Heights,

CA, “People like to race their drop shots because it almost becomes more of a game—a game that gets you wasted really fast.”

You’ve probably downed classic drop shots like the Irish Car Bomb, Boiler-maker, and Jäger Bomb, but there are new mixtures in line to destroy your liver, such as the elegant Sake Bomb and the vicious Mexican Sweat (see below). These aren’t just for college freshman. Once you revisit this glorious form of binge boozing, you’ll wonder why you haven’t made “drop and chug” your only form of liquid consumption. Then you’ll forget your name and fall down. —Cory Jones



### REVERSE IRISH CAR BOMB

Fill a rocks glass three-quarters with Jameson, drop in a shot glass filled with one part Guinness and one part Baileys, and chug. Then drop to your knees, sing “Sally MacLennane,” and hack up a leprechaun.



### FLAMING JÄGER BOMB

If there’s one thing the Jäger Bomb was missing, it was fire. Set a shot glass of Jägermeister aflame and drop it into a pint of Red Bull. Then drink it like you just lost your job, because you probably will after a few of these.



### MEXICAN SWEAT

Down a shot glass full of habanero pepper sauce and chase it with a shot of tequila. Suck on a lime and then die. If this is what Mexican sweat actually tastes like, remind me to not lick a *luchador* anytime soon.



### QUANTUM LEAP

Get one huge glass (or a bowl if you’re feeling fancy) and fill it with a can of PBR, a shot of vodka, a shot of Jack Daniel’s, and a half can of Red Bull. Then down it as fast as you can. Then wake up in a different dimension.



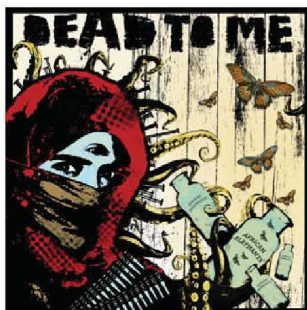
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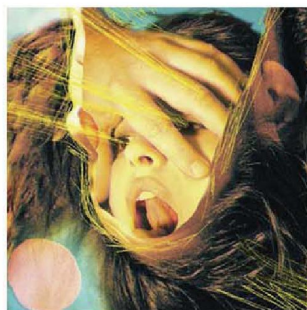
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# SOUND ADVICE



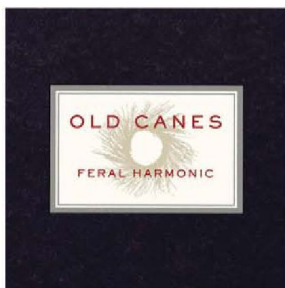
**DEAD TO ME**  
African Elephants  
[Fat Records]

San Francisco punks Dead to Me drop their Clash-inspired sound and change up the buzz saw guitars for stop-start riffs that suggest they've been spinning a lot of Gang of Four in their rehearsal space. "Tierra del Fuego" is filled with jittery funk riffs, as is "A Day Without a War," a plea for peace in which singer-bassist Chicken howls, "We'll never be safe again." There are still plenty of nods to Joe Strummer and gang, especially as Dead to Me explore world music influences. They slip through dub on opener "X" and bring Latin influences to "California Sun." Don't miss "Cruel World," Chicken's Replacements-like musing on the state of the world.



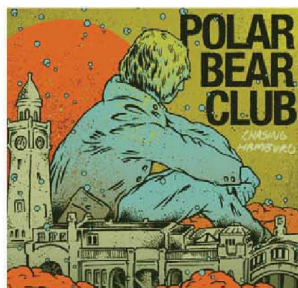
**THE FLAMING LIPS**  
Embryonic  
[Warner Bros.]

What a long, strange, really weird trip it's been for the Flaming Lips. The beloved band has survived more than 20 years of musical upheaval while becoming the elder statesmen of experimental rock whose "Do You Realize??" was named the Oklahoma state rock song. The Lips sound stranger than ever thanks to a formula of less guitar, more drums, and trippy sounds. The blown-out beats and throbbing bass lines of "Worm Mountain" and "See the Leaves" show the Lips' psychedelic side. Singer Wayne Coyne lends his trembling voice to "If" with the opening line "People are evil this is true/But they can be gentle if they decide." It's that weird innocence that makes the Lips so endearing.



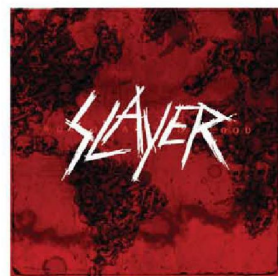
**OLD CANES**  
Feral Harmonic  
[Saddle Creek]

It's a tried and true formula: the songwriter for a pioneer band spends the winter snowed in with a pile of old records and a collection of instruments and pulls together a twangy album of noisy folk. When it's Chris Crisci from The Applesseed Cast, we'll give it a chance. "Under" has all of the elements of a basement record, including harmonica, mandolin, and slightly offbeat vocals, as does the barren banjo instrumental "Black Hill Chapel." Crisci sounds more confident backed by the tight strumming and tambourine beat of "Trust," a song ripe with Pedro the Lion/David Bazan influences in which he sings, "Little one be careful/There are people out there who'll steal your soul." It's old-timey advice that still stands up.



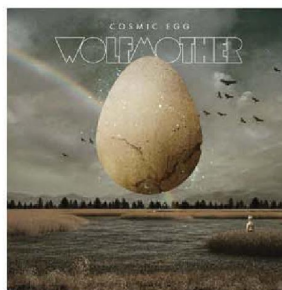
**POLAR BEAR CLUB**  
Chasing Hamburg  
[Bridge Nine]

Polar Bear Club's debut album made best-of lists everywhere, but it takes until nearly the end of this follow-up for them to prove why. Not that *Chasing Hamburg* isn't brilliant—it's just that "One Hit Back," a post-hardcore punch to haters everywhere, is so fist-pumping good that its shadow looms over the rest of the songs. "Living Saints" comes close as singer Jimmy Stadt swears, "All my friends are living saints" over guitars that leap from mellow to pit-stirring. Mostly, Polar Bear Club mix the passion and fury of Hot Water Music and Latterman with hooks and a spit-polish (with an occasional nod to Lifetime—see "Drifting Things"). And we swear to spend more time with the rest of the album once we take "One Hit Back" off Repeat.



**SLAYER**  
World Painted Blood  
[American]

Slayer fans are so devoted that one might throw up the devil horns and scream "Slayer!" through the window as this is being written. The thrash titans built that blind loyalty through an onslaught of savage albums and brutal live shows. The group's 10th album continues the Slayer mission: Take the ugliness of the world and turn it back on itself. Chemical warfare ("Unit 731"), apocalypse ("World Painted Blood"), and pandemics ("Human Strain") all get the Slayer treatment with sharp-as-shrapnel guitar riffs and thundering drums. The stabbing riff of "Hate Worldwide" is vintage Slayer as singer-bassist Tom Araya grimaces, "I'm a godless heretic/Not a God-fearing lunatic/That's why it's become my obsession/To treat God like an infection." We never doubted them.



**WOLFMOTHER**  
Cosmic Egg  
[DGC/Interscope]

If you're going to cop your sound from bands that were around 30 years ago, you'd better be damn good at it or make it obvious that you're just taking the piss. Wolfmother never quite did either, leaving the listeners of their debut album wondering, Are they for real? Don't count on *Cosmic Egg* to clear that up. The Aussie trio thump and bump through the Sabbath-influenced title track, "Cosmic Egg," and deliver their own "D'Yer Mak'er" on the hip-shaker "White Feather." Then frizzy-haired singer-guitarist Andrew Stockdale drops an eye-rolling line like, "Standing in the front of the rainbow/Could you tell me where all the people go?" and you have to stop head-banging, even if just for a second.



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## LIP SERVICE

Tell your girlfriend we said it's your charitable duty to grow a 'stache this month.

It's easy to stereotype a man with a mustache: He has a weak upper lip; he listens to a lot of Arcade Fire; he has a custom-airbrushed van—or a flourishing career in adult film. But no matter what you think of the mustache—be it your own or someone else's—it takes confidence and an abundantly healthy testosterone level to grow one.

If you're not yet sporting upper lip hair, November is a good month to try it. By doing so, you can be part of Movember, a worldwide movement that raises money for prostate cancer research (participants get friends to sponsor their 'stache growth in the same way they would sponsor someone in a charity walkathon). And by signing up for Movember, you're doing more than sprouting hairs for cash; you're also a billboard for prostate cancer

awareness, according to Movember's founder and CEO, Adam Garone. "You can't just start growing a mustache and think no one's going to ask you about it," he says. "You're compelled to explain. And that becomes an opening for you to talk about men's health and the importance of screenings." To date, Movember has raised more than \$24 million, which gets donated to worthy groups like the Prostate Cancer Foundation and LiveStrong. If you're interested in participating or attending one of the many wild Movember galas and parties around the country, get more info at [movember.com](http://movember.com). And read on for our grooming tips, which may just give you the upper hand (or should we say lip?) you need to win the coveted "Man of Movember" prize. —Jennifer Goldstein



### SWISSCO MUSTACHE BOOT COMB

Ron Burgundy would approve of this boot-tipped tortoiseshell comb. Use it to keep things classy (\$8, [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)).



### CLUBMAN MOUSTACHE WAX

If the outer edges are reaching past your mouth (tattooer Oliver Peck would approve!), pinch a little of this clear, waxy pomade on the tips to keep them from froing (\$5, [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)).



### TWEEZERMAN MUSTACHE & BEARD SCISSORS

Unless you want your lunch to stay with you until dinner, keep the hairs along your lip line trimmed with these sharp little scissors (\$12, [folica.com](http://folica.com)).



### CONAIR CHOPPER 11-PIECE FACIAL TRIMMER

This electric groomer has multiple mustache and beard attachments so you can tame a walrus situation or scale back to a John Waters special in minutes (\$28, [conair.com](http://conair.com)).

COMB AND MUSTACHE WAX: TIM EASTMAN; MODEL: ANNE CUIZIN

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# GAME ON



## BORDERLANDS

**Systems: Xbox 360, PlayStation 3, PC**

Finally, a shooter that drops the half-baked sci-fi story and lets the bullets fly. The mission in *Borderlands* is self-explanatory: The barren world of Pandora holds untold alien treasures, and your job is to find them. Choose one of four characters, take the safety off your weapon, and start shooting your way through baddies in the barren *Mad Max*-like setting. Your reward? Loot. Tons of it, including more than 3 million weapon combinations, such as shotguns with sniper scopes and rifles that shoot homing darts. With four-player drop-in/drop-out co-op, you can grind through 160 quests in randomly generated levels to collect the biggest arsenal of futuristic weaponry this side of Comic-Con.



## CALL OF DUTY: MODERN WARFARE 2

**Systems: Xbox 360, PlayStation 3, PC**

*Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2* is the superpower of shooter games. This sequel takes the first-person-shooter genre to new heights with a thrilling story that picks up from the last game and features frantic co-op challenges and the best multiplayer around. The explosive single-player campaign includes dangerous new war scenarios that find you scaling icy mountains to infiltrate a top-secret base, racing a snowmobile down a mountainside while dodging a hail of enemy fire, and tailing terrorist suspects through the crowded Brazilian slums. Multiplayer ups the ante with new customizable kill streaks that let you unleash the fury of an AC-130 gunship upon those suckers sitting in broad daylight.



## DJ HERO

**Systems: Xbox 360, PlayStation 3**

With gamers suffering from a *Guitar Hero* overdose, it's time for turntables to take center stage. With consulting help from legendary artists Jay-Z and Eminem, this hip-hop take on *Guitar Hero*'s addictive gameplay wins over wannabe mix masters with its turntable controller that features a sample button, cross-fader, and a record platform for scratching. Playing as characters such as DJ Jazzy Jeff, Grandmaster Flash, and even the late DJ AM, you'll combine over 100 iconic songs from a diverse group of genres to create unique mash-ups—like M.I.A.'s "Paper Planes" and Eric B. & Rakim's "Eric B. Is President"—you won't hear anywhere else. Plug in a *Guitar Hero* guitar for some multi-instrument co-op, or fuel your party with an automated playlist when you're spinning.



## FORZA MOTORSPORT 3

**System: Xbox 360**

Spend more time with your cars than with your girlfriend? Look into counseling and clear your schedule. With 400 road burners from 50 manufacturers, *Forza 3*'s garage makes Jay Leno's car collection look like a used car lot. The second *Forza* title in three years delivers even more grease monkey realism with a new physics system that includes tire deformation, car flips, and a cockpit view, while the career mode boasts over 200 different events. Drivers who can't tell a stick shift from an automatic can still get into the race with new features aimed at making the experience more accessible, like an auto-braking system to help on those nasty hairpin turns and new race-rewind controls that let you erase the fatal mistake that sent you spinning into the stands. —*Matt Bertz*



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-CHUCK BILLY OF TESTAMENT

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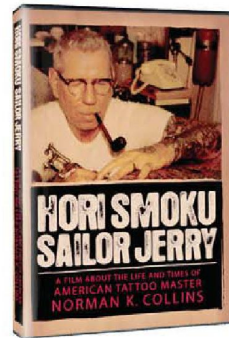
## REAP & SEW

T-shirt lines designed by tattooers have had a bad rap ever since someone started slapping the name Hardy on everything from T-shirts to energy drinks. Don't let that scare you off, since there are plenty of killer clothing lines by tattoo artists. St. Louis tattooers Brad Fink and Sean Baltzell created **Me Against the World** to make T-shirts featuring all of their killer artwork. This monster of a tee is the Fink Reaper and features original woodblock artwork by Fink (meagainstheworld.net, \$28).

## SHOOT FIRST



Nobody believes your grainy footage of Bigfoot is real. Time to upgrade to a high-definition camcorder. The **Canon VIXIA HF S11** (usa.canon.com, \$1,399) records full HD video and captures 8-megapixel still images, then saves them to 64 GB of built-in memory. That's enough space to stuff 24 hours of high-def footage of Bigfoot frolicking—or whatever it is that he does.



### UP IN SMOKU

The origins of your tattoo can most likely be traced to Hawaii during WWII, and the center of that storm was Norman "Sailor Jerry" Collins, the godfather of American tattooing. The incredible documentary *Hori Smoku Sailor Jerry*, now on DVD (horismokumovie.com, \$25), explores his life and his overpowering influence on protégés such as Ed Hardy and Mike Malone. This is better than at least 10 DVDs in your collection. Trust us. We checked.



### BLACK OUT

Talk tattoos with author and INKED contributor Marisa Dimattia Kakoulas and she'll quickly school you on neo-tribalism, dotwork, and her love of black tattoos. She put that expertise to paper for *Black Tattoo Art* (lastgasp.com, \$159), a 536-page tome on black tattoos and their practitioners in Borneo, Athens, New Zealand, and elsewhere. The six-pound book is filled with 500 gorgeous photos, from the hand-poked to the eye-popping.

**Skin**  
industries



PHOTO ERIC BLACKMON / S RIBBED V-NECK ZEN SIZE M



Featuring

**Kayla Collins**

*Playboy's Miss August 2008*

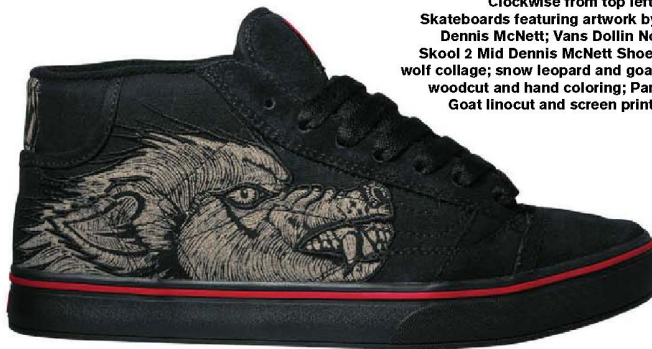
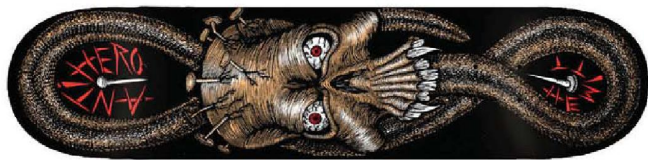
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Clockwise from top left: Skateboards featuring artwork by Dennis McNett; Vans Dollin No Skool 2 Mid Dennis McNett Shoe; wolf collage; snow leopard and goat woodcut and hand coloring; Pan Goat linocut and screen print.



# LONE WOLF

Enter artist Dennis McNett's world of wolf-bats, Viking lore, and punk rock.

Blame a steady diet of punk rock and skateboarding for Dennis McNett's artwork. Those two influences informed his style early on. "It wasn't just punk album covers, it was all of it that was an influence," says McNett from his Brooklyn, NY, home. "The album covers like Raymond Pettibon's Black Flag album covers to Pushead's Zorlac board graphics to the raw layout of *Thrasher* magazine. Skating, the grinds, the scabs, the blood, the loud, pissed music, and even all the collaged Xeroxed show flyers. All that stuff had the same flavor to me—just a real alive and raw aesthetic."

That aesthetic is alive in McNett's art, which often involves predators and

fantasy creatures created from woodblock prints. After one of McNett's prints fell into the hands of an employee of a skateboard distributor, Antihero Skateboards came calling. He did a series of boards for the company, followed by work for Vans, Volcom, and others. Whether it's images of animals, both real and imagined, or scenes from Norse mythology, his work is at once menacing and beautifully detailed, regardless of the medium, which include woodblock prints, papier-mâché, and even skin (a few of the Antihero skaters have gotten McNett's illustrations tattooed on them).

His work always seems to be telling a story, and part of that comes from his interest in Nordic tales. "Norse mythology has epic battles, Hel, Vikings, giant wolves, serpents, ships. If you are slain in battle, a hot warrior woman called a valkyrie takes you to Valhalla, where you drink and eat all day while preparing for Ragnarök, the great battle between the gods and giants. What more do you want?"

An added bonus for casualties of our failing economy: McNett keeps his prints affordable. He loves doing prints in large editions, so people can leave his shows with an accessibly priced (\$20–\$40) piece of artwork. Now you know where to go for that giant print of a wolf-bat that you've always wanted in your kitchen. —Ben Fasman



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# DESTINATION: CAPE TOWN



Tattooer **Tamar Thorn** shares the best of South Africa's "Mother City."

With a background in high fashion, fine arts, and acrylics, picking up a tattoo machine probably wasn't the logical next step. But then, Cape Town, South Africa, artist Tamar Thorn never cared much for the rules. "You have to have a 'fuck it' switch to work in this industry," she says. We asked Thorn to share Cape Town's best spots for food, booze, music, and more, to show us what the city is all about. —Jimmy McGregor



### ☞ BEST BEACH FOR GETTING A TAN

"I love taking a drive out to Langebaan Lagoon in summer," says Thorn. "You have to keep an eye on the weather, and it's a bit of a trek—but it's worth the drive. It's situated inside a nature reserve so it's quite remote and untouched. And because it's a lagoon, the water is pretty calm and warm."

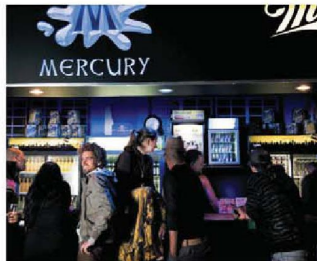
### WHERE TO FIND HER ☞

Thorn was recently at Freestylers Tattoo Lounge ([tattoostudio.co.za](http://tattoostudio.co.za); 3 Beach Boulevard) in Table View, where she specializes in colorful custom pieces and portraits. You can also join her for a drink most nights just before sunset at La Vie Cafe (205 Beach Road) on the Sea Point beachfront.



### ☞ BEST SPOT FOR LIVE MUSIC

"I really like Mercury Live [[mercury.co.za](http://mercury.co.za); 43 De Villiers Street]. It isn't fancy but it's well-worn and comfy, and the best bands from all over the place play there. You are guaranteed to hear some great music." Hang out pre- and post-gig next door at The Shack. And if local punkers Hog Hoggidy Hog are playing, "You better throw your curfew to the curb."



### BEST PLACE TO SHOP ☞

For traditional and exotic food, homemade clothes, and funky trinkets, Thorn recommends local hotspot The Old Biscuit Mill Neighbourgoods Market (375 Albert Road) in Woodstock. "Make sure you go on a Saturday morning," she says. "The Bloody Marys are killer!"



### ☞ BEST BREAKFAST

"Arnold's Restaurant [[arnolds.co.za](http://arnolds.co.za); 60 Kloof Street] has great breakfast specials. The staff is friendly and the venue is fantastic. The breakfasts are yummy and well-priced!" Thorn says. This spot isn't just for mornings; dinner specials like calamari steaks, grilled Mozambique prawns, and local game such as ostrich, springbok, crocodile, and warthog are great too.

### ☞ BEST COCKTAILS

"Hit Julep [end of Vredenburg Lane, off Long Street] on a Wednesday night. Lonesome Dave Ferguson plays live country-blues fusion there every Wednesday, and the cocktails are delicious." No visit to Julep is complete without trying their legendary mojitos and chocolate-infused tequila.

LANGEBAAI LAGOON, COURTESY OF CAPE PHOTOS.CO.ZA; LA VIE CAFE, HAYDEN PHIPPS; ARNOLD'S RESTAURANT, AERIAL PHOTO.CO.ZA; MERCURY LIVE, JACQUI VAN ZYL



Clockwise from top left: Ford F-150 Raptor SVT interior; side view; Raptor dashboard.

## DESERT STORM

The Ford F-150 Raptor SVT proves that you don't need asphalt to drive really, really fast.

**FORD F-150 RAPTOR SVT**  
\$38,995  
5.4-liter V8  
320 horsepower

Being the fastest production off-road truck on the market sounds sort of like being the youngest geezer at the nursing home, or the thinnest person at the Fluffernutter Festival: a good thing, though nothing to write home about. But the Ford F-150 Raptor SVT is so different from other pickups—including its F-150 cousins—that it practically deserves to be in its own class of truck.

Ford's Special Vehicle Team (the same speed freaks responsible for the nasty Mustang GT500) started with a chassis that's about 7 inches wider than the standard F-150. While that makes parallel parking almost as much of an adventure as off-roading, the intended and achieved result is increased stability. Added to that is the Raptor's most important cactus-shredding feature: Fox Racing shocks. The dampers start off soft at the beginning of a bump, then end up stiff at the end, which makes for a tolerably soft ride that's remarkably absent of bouncing. Wrapped around the Raptor's 17-inch wheels are unique 35-inch BF Goodrich All-Terrain tires, designed to handle all manner of off-road conditions—mud, snow, sand, the neighbor's front lawn—without making the kind of noise on pavement that off-road rubber typically does.

Spinning those extra-special tires is the F-150's 5.4-liter, 320-horsepower V8, which produces 390 lb-ft of torque. (Early next year Ford will offer up a 6.2-liter V8 that churns out about 400 horsepower and 400 lb-ft of torque.) Passing on the highway can leave a little bit to be desired: The truck has an electronically limited top speed of 100 mph, and the six-speed automatic transmission upshifts too fast to take full advantage of all the power.

Lest you think otherwise, the speedy Raptor knows how to slow down and do some rock crawling. There are 11.2 inches of travel up front and 12.1 inches in the back, an aluminum SVT-stamped skid plate, and an extremely intuitive speed-limiting hill descent mode. But once you've got a flattish expanse of land in front of you, it's time to go fast. While the truck's electronic brain can practically do the driving for you when fully engaged, its Off-Road Sport mode allows you to get loose in turns without freaking out when it detects wheel spin. The result? No matter how long or short your off-roading résumé is, you can settle back into the Raptor's well-bolstered seats and immediately start scaring the crap out of Ma Nature. —*Ky Henderson*





Clockwise from top left:  
LRG The Grass Roots green  
sweatshirt, karmalooop.  
com; Crooks & Castles  
black sweatshirt, Crooks  
& Castles, 323-944-0576;  
Stüssy checked sweatshirt,  
stussy.com; Zoo York ZY  
Institute crew, zooyork.com;  
10 Deep The Bad Seed black  
sweatshirt, karmalooop.com.

# SWEAT SHOP

STYLIST, KATHLEEN D. FRIEDMAN

# BUTTON IT

Clockwise from top left: Nicholas K blue henley, nicholask.com; Converse by John Varvatos mini-check henley, John Varvatos, 212-358-0315; Volcom Worn Out short-sleeved T-shirt, volcom.com; Oliver Spencer Grandpa Top in navy, oliverspencer.co.uk; Ambiguous Clothing purple short-sleeved henley, ambiguousclothing.com.



Clockwise from left: G Star scarf, g-star.com; Burton CB scarf in mocha, burton.com; Norsea Industries scarf, norseaindustries.com; 7 for All Mankind navy knit scarf, 7forallmankind.com; Psycho Bunny Macfarlane scarf, psycho-bunny.com.



# WRAP STARS

STYLIST, KATHLEEN D. FRIEDMAN

Clockwise from top left: Dr. Martens black pull-on boot, [drmartens.com](http://drmartens.com); Billy Reid Kentwood Roper Boot, [billyreid.com](http://billyreid.com); Camper brown leather monk strap boot, [camper.com](http://camper.com); Red Wing Shoes Engineer boot, [redwingshoes.com](http://redwingshoes.com); Timberland Company Colrain Reissue 10" boot, [timberland.com](http://timberland.com).



# BOOT UP

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-Mike DeMasi-

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# INKED PEOPLE

"[My sparrows tattoo] was a symbol of freedom. But sparrows always know how to get home no matter how far they travel." —*Lights*





# LIGHTS

Lights is a multi-tattooed, sci-fi-loving 22-year-old who also happens to be pop music's latest rising star. Her ridiculously catchy '80s-influenced, synth-based songs have been featured in Old Navy commercials, and her debut, *The Listening*, netted her a 2009 Juno for new artist of the year in her native Canada. (The CD was released stateside in October.) And to think it was only a few years ago that Lights, whose given name is Valerie Poxleitner, was playing guitar in a metal band and dreaming of being the next Tom Morello. "I had a massive Rage Against the Machine moment," she acknowledges.

Lights moved out on her own at a young age—she was just 18 when she settled herself in Toronto—and it was a struggle at first. She marked the transition with a tattoo of two sparrows on her stomach. "It was a symbol of freedom," Lights says. "But sparrows always know how to get home no matter how far they travel." When the tattoo healed, she went home and showed her

parents—after administering a sedative. "I gave them each a glass of wine," she laughs. Her own brand of pain reliever? *Star Wars*. She watched it when she got a laser gun tattooed on her belly to distract herself from the ouch factor. Derek Lewis of Hartless Design in Toronto gave Lights her most recent ink: a Twinblade of the Phoenix from *World of Warcraft*. "I enjoy fantasy games," she says. "I can do crazy things like fight dragons."

She may be young, but Lights is light years beyond most 20-somethings when it comes to facing her fears. Suffering from arachnophobia, she took herself to the pet store and bought Lance, a tarantula that is now her roommate. "One of the big advantages of having a tarantula is you can scare people when they come over," she says mischievously. "I'll disappear into my room and come out with the spider on my chest." Don't say we didn't warn you. —*Kristina Feliciano*



# AARÓN SÁNCHEZ

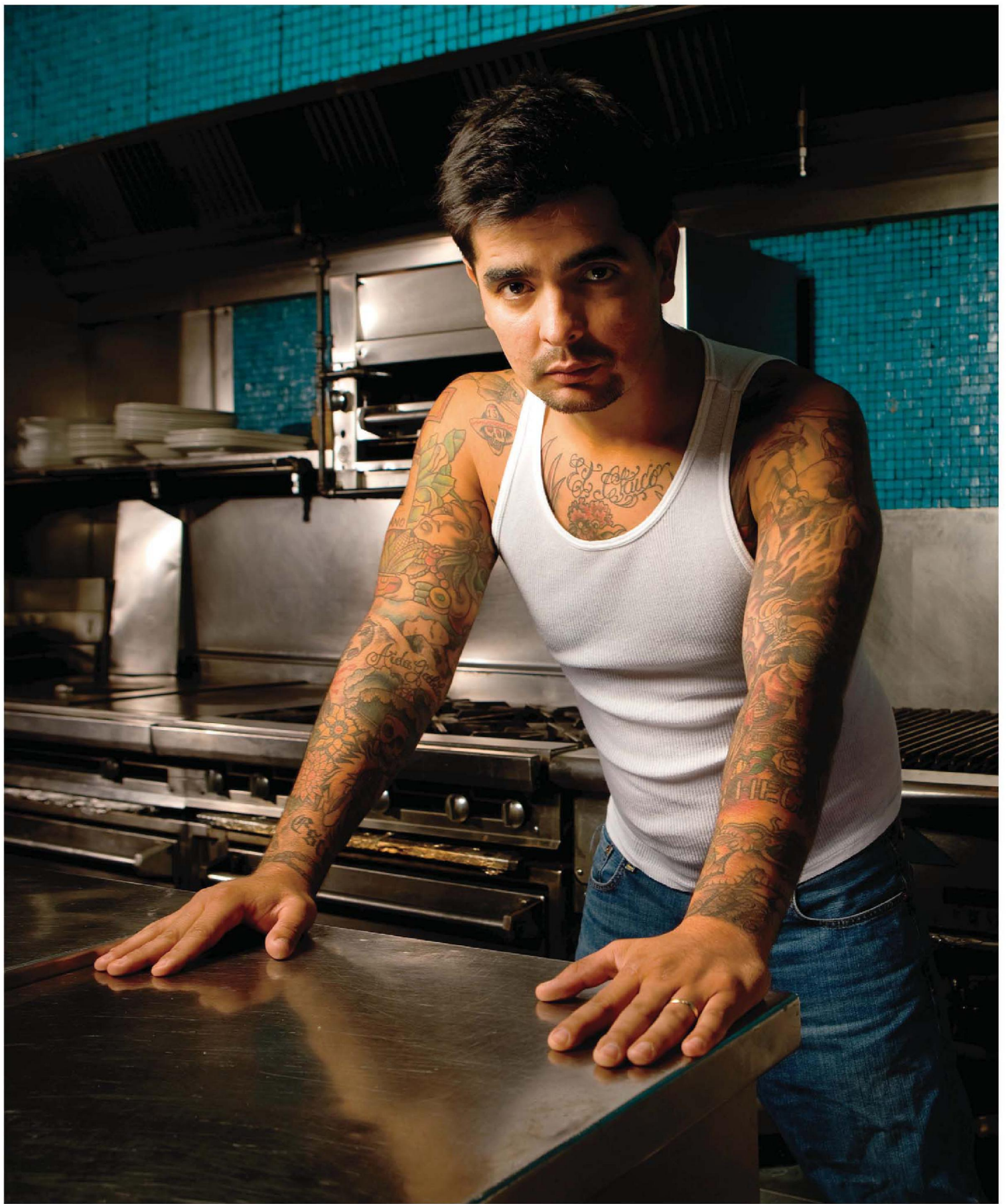
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The story behind the start of chef Aarón Sánchez's career is not all that unfamiliar: "I started cooking because I was an undisciplined teenager—coming home late, hanging out with the wrong group of people, not going to school on time—and the kitchen was a logical place to get discipline." Even though he's now the executive chef and owner of two well-known New York City restaurants (Centrico and Paladar), Sánchez still possesses his streetwise attitude. After a few guest appearances on the Food Network (he's been a judge on *Chopped* and a talking head on *The Best Thing I Ever Ate*), Sánchez landed his own series on the channel. "It's called *Chef vs. City* and it's like *Throw-down* slash *Amazing Race* slash *Treasure Hunt*," he explains. "My partner Chris Cosentino, who's a chef in San Francisco, and I run around to different cities taking on local foodies." Finally, a food show that's not hosted by pretty boys like Bobby Flay and Tom Colicchio.

In fact, Sánchez is what a chef is supposed to be. He talks fast, he's chill with his staff ("I'm on the phone, bro," he tells an interrupter during our inter-

view) and his entire torso is covered in tattoos. "I have two sleeves, a chest piece, a full back piece, two stomach tattoos and my shoulders done." His first tattoo is in Spanish and translates to "my heart is in your hand." Others include a tribute to his grandmother, an eagle biting a serpent (part of the Mexican flag), the yellow roses of Texas, an Aztec sacrifice scene, an Aztec god holding fruits and vegetables, a bullfighter, two doodles of his fiancée's name, and more—all done by Michelle Myles or one of the other employees at New York City's Daredevil Tattoo. "I've been loyal to one shop and one shop only," Sánchez says. He believes in loyalty but also wanted the consistency of their work, as he lets the artist create each piece.

Over the years, Myles and Sánchez have become close outside of the shop ("She'll be at my wedding," he says). And with Sánchez's growing family—and his entire lower body still inkless—they'll probably do business together a few more times. "I'm hoping to put my kids' names on me somewhere. Maybe my legs." —*Lisa Freedman*



# CONVERGE

When Jacob Bannon was 13, he dreamed of screaming. “When a lot of kids were thinking about baseball cards and becoming astronauts, I was immersing myself in a culture that I still love to this day,” the vocalist for hardcore icons Converge says. Nearly two decades later, Bannon is still screaming. He and his bandmates—bassist Nate Newton, drummer Ben Koller, and guitarist Kurt Ballou—recently released *Axe to Fall*, the band’s most brutal and concise album yet.

Bannon was also young when he was first tattooed. “I started getting tattooed on living room floors when I was 15 years old,” Bannon remembers. “I think it’s funny when people go and get tattooed and they have it planned out 100 percent. You’re no longer allowing an artist to be an artist. I really want to give my artists as much free rein as possible to create something inspired.”

His most identifiable piece is the winged heart strewn across his throat. “I got that tattoo from Adam Barton back in 2002,” Bannon says. “His wings and his anatomical hearts are sort of his trademark and I had always wanted to get tattooed by him.” The rest of his pieces come from myriad artists, ranging from U.K. transplant Thomas Hooper to Jef Whitehead, who did Bannon’s hands.

In addition to running his label, Deathwish Inc., and getting wild onstage with Converge, Bannon is also an accomplished visual artist, having earned his BFA in design from the Art Institute of Boston. He was one of the pioneers of the whole skull-and-wings aesthetic that has since been blatantly lifted by countless clothing and design companies. “I see what they’re doing as decoration,” Bannon says. “They’re trying to create something that appeals to the masses. They don’t create anything, and I’ve had to send a lot of cease and desist letters because they just keep taking things from me with no authorization.”

The visual arts take up a lot of time in Bannon’s professional life. He oversees almost all of the artwork for Deathwish releases and has a healthy roster of freelance clients. “You could call [Deathwish] my day job, but I don’t make a living from it,” Bannon tells INKED from Deathwish’s Boston headquarters. “If anything, I give myself to this for 40 or 50 hours a week—sometimes more. Our bands have entrusted us to work for them.”

It doesn’t leave a lot of time to get tattooed. “I haven’t been tattooed in probably two years now, mainly because of time,” Bannon says regretfully. “I’m starting to get the itch again, though.” —*Stan Horaczek*





From left: Nate Newton, Ben Koller,  
Jacob Bannon, Kurt Ballou.



# OUT OF ASHES

HE'S DONE WITH DRUGS. HE'S FINISHED WITH BOOZE FOREVER (HOPEFULLY). AND AFTER SELLING A WHOPPING 45 MILLION ALBUMS, HE'S STOPPED CARING WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT LINKIN PARK. MEET THE REBUILT AND REFOCUSED **CHESTER BENNINGTON** AND HIS NEW SIDE PROJECT, DEAD BY SUNRISE.

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BY REBECCA SWANNER PHOTOS BY TRAVIS SHINN





There's a strip mall in Tempe, AZ, the desert suburb just outside of Phoenix. Actually, there are a lot of strip malls. But this particular strip mall is home to the original Club Tattoo, a shop opened in 1995. When Linkin Park and Dead by Sunrise vocalist Chester Bennington enters the shop on a bright, blazing hot August afternoon, he seems infinitely less intense offstage than he does when his voice is barreling into the microphone. He is dressed in blue jeans, camouflaged slip-on sneakers, and a white T-shirt that shows off his tattoos. The 33-year-old singer seems at home in the shop, and he should be. This is where Bennington got his first tattoo, 15 years ago, long before Linkin Park. Now, 45 million albums later, he and longtime friends Sean and Thora Dowdell own this shop and four others throughout the States, including a swank new location at the Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas.

Parked in the back office, Bennington points to the large koi fish on his left biceps. "This was my first when I was 18. There was a girl named Jodi [Wendt] who I thought was super fucking hot who worked here. I wanted her to give me my first tattoo so she would be forced to lean over me for five hours. I wanted a Pisces symbol, and it turned out to be this thing with these weird fish and these stupid faces. But it's my first tattoo and it has sentimental meaning."

Despite the ear-shattering guitars and guttural screams, Bennington can be sentimental. Just not for Arizona. The singer grew up on the west side of Phoenix, in an area he describes as "just suburbia." But he wasn't happy. "I hated being in Arizona growing up. Between the abuse as a kid [at the hands of an older male "friend"] and my parents getting divorced and getting into drugs, there were—with the exception of music—no real good memories here. I couldn't wait to get out."

**A TOUR OF THE AREA WHERE BENNINGTON GREW UP IS ABOUT WHAT YOU WOULD** expect from a future rock star. He spent his days manning the grill at the local Burger King, skateboarding with friends, and fronting his first band—the garage rock group Grey Daze—alongside Sean Dowdell. He also did a lot of drugs. At the time, Bennington was addicted to crystal meth, among other things.

"Cocaine was never really my favorite. I've done a lot of it [laughs] but it wasn't my drug of choice. I'd be like, 'Oh, okay, you have coke. I guess I'll do that. Anything else? No? All right, then.' Cocaine's high wasn't really the best. ... I love to do things that make you feel really good, like ecstasy and acid and mushrooms. But you can't do those every day because they don't work every day. Things that do are alcohol, marijuana, and speed. Those usually work all the time."

By the time he was 18, Bennington had overcome his addiction to crystal meth and other hard drugs by quenching that thirst with alcohol and pot. He met his first wife, Samantha Olit, while working at the fast food chain. The two were married on Halloween 1996 when Bennington was just 20, and because money was tight he had his wedding band tattooed onto his ring finger. In 1999, the singer auditioned and was accepted into Linkin Park as their second vocalist. He relocated his wife and their first child to southern California and didn't look back. Linkin Park's debut album, *Hybrid Theory*, was released in 2000 to explosive success and by 2001 had already sold nearly 5 million copies. Bennington appeared antidrug during this time, denouncing drug use in interviews and singing "Breaking the Habit," a song Linkin Park's other vocalist, Mike Shinoda, wrote for the band.

The respite wouldn't last long. The problems started when Bennington's marriage crumbled. Their drama-filled relationship and messy divorce in 2005 paved the way for his relapse. "It wasn't like, 'Oh I'm so sad this relationship is over—what could I have done to make it better?' It was more like, 'This is sad because I've become someone I don't even like because I fucking hate this person and she hates me and life is not fun. It was miserable all the time. There was yelling

constantly. I preferred to be out on the road than anywhere near my house.

"My parents have both been remarried three times and I refused to accept the fact that I was not happy in this relationship. I was like, *I'm not getting divorced. I will not be that guy who didn't work it out—who didn't hang in there for 30 years and then all of a sudden there's magic.* So stupid." When the dust settled, Bennington claims he didn't have much left. "I lost all my shit. All my money and half of my publishing up until *Minutes to Midnight* is hers. There is a lot of anger that goes along with that—like, You did not *do* that. All she did was piss me off. She fought me on my career a lot of time. That's what I don't understand. How is this fair? But life isn't fair."

Bennington tattooed over the wedding band with a big black line: "I was thinking of getting it lasered, but I decided to get it covered up." Through former Orgy guitarist and Dead by Sunrise member Ryan Shuck, he was introduced to Talinda Bentley, a teacher who had modeled for *Playboy* twice during her college days. He was smitten and soon called a friend to say that he was going to marry this woman he had just met. Though his friend thought he had lost his mind, Bennington's gut was right. The two were married on December 31, 2005, and Bentley gave birth to their son three months later. [He has two other children from a previous relationship.] But despite the happiness he was feeling, the dissolution of his first marriage was still having a huge impact on him.

He recalls, "I didn't realize how much weight I had put on my stuff and how much that had meant to me. I would wonder, *Is happiness having a good relationship with somebody? Is that actually more important than the cars and the house?* That was tough. My heart was telling me, *You've got to be kidding.* But my brain was telling me, *That's what shows people what you've done. Taking all that away might mean you're not that guy. It might mean you're just another fucking washed up musician who lost it all and you're going to hang out at the Rainbow every night and talk about the glory days for the rest of your life.* That was what I was afraid of. And it really fucked with me."

By 2006, Bennington was dabbling in drugs again. Alcohol had become his gateway. "Alcohol was the one thing that got me into those other things. If I hadn't been drinking ... I wouldn't have fallen through the window or locked myself in a closet for a few days."

He saw his life unraveling again but he just couldn't stop.

"Given the nature of my disease and who I am, once I start, I need to do as much as I can for as long as I can until I literally feel like I can't do anymore or I'm going to die. Then I have to stop and just drink. [Laughs.] And I drank more and more and more and used more and more and more until I had to make a decision. I had this beautiful woman loving me, and I loved her. And she was motivating me in a lot of positive ways. I was afraid I was going to lose that. There is only so much a person can take if you're not willing to help yourself."

But this knowledge only sent him down into a darker spiral. "It hurt me to watch how much I was hurting her. I was there but I wasn't present in my kids' lives. My band members didn't really like to hang out with me. I felt like I was going to die all of the time. That scared the crap out of me. I got to the point where I was like, I'm no good for anybody, I'm never going to change, the world would be a better place if I just go disappear and not have anyone that cares about me around because I'm only going to hurt them." That's when those closest to him stepped in. "My friends were like, 'That's not reality.'" Bennington decided to get help.

He dropped out of the first rehab program and started drinking again, but then enrolled in a second and has been reasonably successful since. "I've slipped up and I've battled it, but I'm working on becoming the person I'm supposed to be. Someone people like to be around. My kids think I'm a great dad and my wife thinks I'm a great husband and my band members think I'm a great bandmate."



**DON'T LEAVE CHESTER BENNINGTON ALONE.** That's what the singer learned after his second stint in rehab. In an attempt to not fall back into his destructive cycle, Bennington restructured his life, making sure that he's around others most of the day. "I don't tend to do very good when I'm sitting by myself," he says, then half-jokes that he's replaced drugs and alcohol with the gym. "My wife called me two days ago and she was like, 'Where are you?' I'm like, 'I'm still at the gym.' She's like, 'You've been there for four and a half hours.' [Laughs.] But my abs are great!"

He also created a side project, now known as Dead by Sunrise, with help from Shuck and Amir Derakh, formerly of the bands Orgy and Julien-K. Together, the new group recorded *Out of Ashes*, an album that hit stores this month. Bennington's side project marks a definite departure from his previous work. The first song he wrote was the cathartic "Let Down." Inspired by his messy, painful divorce, it came out easily. From there, he started looking at—and using—the past five years of his life as material for the record. "It's a personal album. I'm writing about falling in love. I'm writing about being alone and everything that goes on with that. I'm writing about these crazy thoughts in my head about my love affair with being miserable."

While some songs, such as "My Suffering," twist and writhe in pain like his Linkin Park work, other songs are romantic and acoustic, proof that his range as an artist extends beyond pit-stirring metal. Bennington wrote all of the songs himself instead of collaborating with another vocalist, and as a result, each piece has a personal connection to his own life. In fact, he wrote the song "Give Me Your Name" for his new wife. "If someone hates 'Give Me Your Name,' I'll be like, 'I'll fucking kill you. I'll fucking cut your face off,'" he jokes. "I

a lot of weird mixed emotions that I have been trying to avoid." In fact, Bennington hates the feeling so much that he nearly didn't release the record. "I've thought about that a couple times. Like, I don't want to take the risk. I don't want to face rejection. I've kind of gotten over that and am now like, 'If this thing doesn't do well, at least you did it. You can't expect Linkin Park-esque things to happen twice. It's a miracle it happened the first time.'"

For now, Linkin Park is busy working on their fourth album with legendary producer Rick Rubin. Early reports called the yet-untitled record "genre-busting." Bennington explains what that really means: "We started working on a concept record. We started with this huge, grandiose idea, where it was going to be this soundtrack to this insane, monster thing that was more than just a record. Like, have a movie, and a rock opera, and a game. Way bigger than *American Idiot*. That was a concept record in itself but it wasn't something that went along with this story that you interacted with."

It was Rubin's response that prompted the band to bring him on for the second album in a row. "For the very first song he's in there and is like [*Bennington mimics head-banging*]. Rick doesn't do that. Rick is usually like [*Bennington leans back in chair and puts feet up*] with his vegan soup. He's like, 'Hmmm, okay,' with his beard and sunglasses. So when he's in the chair head-banging with his hand up in the air and turns around and says, 'If I heard this song and I had no idea who it was, I'd fucking rush out and buy 50 copies of the album,' we're just like, 'Maybe we should stop now, because that was the first song. It's only going to go downhill from here! Three songs later he turns around and goes, 'I don't know what the fuck you guys are doing but don't stop doing it! Ever!' We're just like, 'Okay, great—we won't. ... What is

## **"THERE WAS A GIRL NAMED JODI [WENDT] WHO I THOUGHT WAS SUPER FUCKING HOT WHO WORKED HERE. I WANTED HER TO GIVE ME MY FIRST TATTOO SO SHE WOULD BE FORCED TO LEAN OVER ME FOR FIVE HOURS."**

had this acoustic guitar riff I had been playing with that was very mellow and I was like, 'Summon beautiful music in your mind. And it just came to me. It was the first song we danced to at our wedding and it was good enough to make the record. I wrote 'In the Darkness' and 'Into You' about our relationship, and even 'Inside of Me' is me needing to be with her when I was out there losing my fucking mind and she was 600 miles away.'"

This level of closeness to the songs has left him vulnerable. "I want people to like this record. I feel that I've gotten over bad reviews from Linkin Park because the albums sell well. When I got into Linkin Park and we started touring, nobody knew who we were. But because we were this rap metal band, we already had a stigma as being in a genre of bands that fucking blow ass. Articles would be written like, 'Not only does Linkin Park suck, but Chester must be the reason why the world is fucking shit.' I was like, 'What did I do?' Wow, our music is that bad?! I didn't realize that I caused AIDS or death. It made me feel like, 'Fuck those guys. I knew what we had was special. With Dead by Sunrise, I don't have as thick a skin. They are my songs, my lyrics, my melodies. If people don't like them I'm going to be like, 'Maybe I don't know what I'm doing in that sense. Maybe I should just stick to singing.' But all of these are just insecurities. I am an insecure person naturally. I think most singers are. I think that's one of the things that make us endearing or likable or tortured in some way."

**DEAD BY SUNRISE—AT LEAST AT FIRST—WILL LIKELY BE KNOWN AS THE SIDE PROJECT** for one of Linkin Park's members. And that means people will be expecting a lot more from it than they would from another new group. "There are expectations, perhaps unrealistic expectations of it. But that's part of me living in the future, which I don't like. It makes me feel really anxious. This album has caused me

it that we're doing? What does that mean?"

Finishing an album with Linkin Park means that a lot of touring is ahead for Bennington. And while he enjoys interacting with his fans, the road experience can be brutal. In fact, that lifestyle is what gave Bennington the idea for his newest tattoo—a zombie gypsy woman who represents how he feels on long tours. While on the road, he's seen some interesting things and some tattoos he's not into—including those on a fan in China who copied all of Bennington's ink on his own skin. "He was like, 'Dude check me out!' And I thought, 'I fucking hate you. It really bothers me,'" Bennington says, adding that he doesn't like it when fans copy his signature flame tattoos. "If you're going to get flames on your wrist, get flames on your wrist. Don't get my flames on your wrist." But he says the most disturbing Linkin Park tattoo is actually his own—the band's name on his back. "I had decided if I ever sell a million records, I'm going to get that band's name on me," he says. "The words are great, the design is cool," but, he says, it represents something he just didn't think would ever happen.

These days, Bennington gets tattooed at Club Tattoo, the hometown shop that he hopes to expand to nearly a dozen more locations. "When I came on as a partner, they said, 'What are your plans? What do you see us accomplishing?' I was like, 'World domination. Period. We need to be the top tattoo company.' Thora was like, 'Let's fucking be realistic.' I was like, 'I don't think small anymore. I've accomplished the impossible, so I think anything is possible.'" For now, Bennington is home. It's where he's most comfortable, back to the quiet life—which is part of what prompted his return to Arizona in 2008. "I spent my whole life trying to figure out a way to get out of here, and I did," he laughs, with a grin that says it's good to be home. 🍌



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# INKED GIRL

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ELLYSE AMELIA

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Ellyse Amelia is studying to be a vegetarian chef while writing a novel about a blood-sucking vampire. She lives in Brooklyn, NY, but gets tattooed in south Florida. She's done most of her recent artwork in pencil, but she's covered in ink. Yes, Ellyse, 22, is definitely a woman of wide and varied interests.

"I guess that's true," she laughs. "I'm just a creative person." It's one of the reasons she decided to leave her job as an EKG technician at a hospital in Florida and begin taking classes at New York City's Natural Gourmet Institute. "I love to cook—it's a way for me to see instant gratification of the creative process."

Other outlets for her creativity are the pencil drawings and collages she does, the book she's writing about a lesbian vampire who's stuck in what could be considered vampire purgatory, and, of course, her tattoos. "I got the first when I was 16, with my mom," she says. "Then my grandmother saw ours and decided to get one too."

She went on to get more artwork than the other women in her family, and much of it—including a passage from *The Prophet*, by Kahlil Gibran, and a line from the Emily Dickinson poem that begins, "If I can stop one heart from breaking"—has been inspired by her love of literature. She also has a few hand-poked tattoos that she did herself. The largest piece, however, is still a work in progress. "The phoenix on my back is from my friend Jamie [Smith] at South Florida Tattoo. Next time I go back he's going to brighten it up with some orange and Tokyo Pink so it really pops."

She's got plenty of other plans for the future. In addition to her chef training, Ellyse is studying to become a certified trainer. "Eventually, I want to be a personal chef and trainer so I can help others complete their lives and become the healthiest people they can be," she says. —Jennifer Goldstein

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PHOTOS BY AMY POSTLE  
STYLED BY GENEVIEVE ESPANTMAN

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"I got the first [tattoo] when I was 16, with my mom. Then my grandmother saw ours and decided to get one too."





Agent  
Provocateur  
bustier and  
panties; Chinese  
Laundry shoes.



Agent  
Provocateur  
bra and  
panties.

“The phoenix on my back is from my friend Jamie [Smith] at South Florida Tattoo. Next time I go back he’s going to brighten it up with some orange and Tokyo Pink so it really pops.”



Parasuco tank top; Agent Provocateur panties.

“I’m just a creative person. ... I love to cook—it’s a way for



Hair: Jessica Whalen for Arrojo Salon  
Makeup: Nicola David

me to see instant gratification of the creative process.”

Agent  
Provocateur  
bustier and  
panties; Chinese  
Laundry shoes.







From left: Alex Varkatzas,  
Travis Miguel, Dan Jacobs,  
Brandon Saller, Marc McKnight.



# TE AR IT DO WN

They pioneered metalcore, then spent a decade pushing its limits. Now **ATREYU** talk about who they are, where they've been, and why sometimes it's a good idea to wear long sleeves in Orange County.

BY JONAH BAYER PHOTOS BY TRAVIS SHINN

## YOU DON'T FUCK WITH ATREYU FRONTMAN

Alex Varkatzas. Behind the two full sleeves and penetrating stare, the singer for Orange County's most vicious metalcore band is currently in the midst of a training regimen worthy of a gladiator. During his rare moments of downtime from the road, Varkatzas fills his week with 10 two-hour workout sessions that include private jujitsu lessons, high-impact kickboxing, and strength conditioning with an ex-football player. So would Varkatzas ever use his physical prowess to intimidate a shady promoter? "I'm very nonviolent," he clarifies. "That said, if someone swings at me, my fiancée, or one of my brothers, then shit's on. But I think our booking agent will ruin your day up if you try to fuck us for money," he adds with a laugh. "I don't have to worry about that."

Besides, these days Varkatzas has more important things on his mind. His band, Atreyu—which

we were always on the road," he explains. "We got stuck in that makeup-wearing goth metalcore band thing that we definitely never wanted to be, so I think it's liberating now to be free of that." After two more albums on Victory Records—2004's *The Curse* and 2006's *A Death-Grip on Yesterday*—the band left the label and released their major label debut, *Lead Sails Paper Anchor*, in 2007. It was a polarizing album that saw Varkatzas taking a more melodic approach to his vocals. "I think, if anything, *Lead Sails* served the purpose to sever any of those ties to the goth metal thing," he elaborates. "Any close-minded kids who just thought we were going to be one thing and that's all they wanted to hear probably checked out on that record."

But even fans who stuck around might not be ready for *Congregation of the Damned*, a master opus that's both a huge sonic step forward for

**"I LIKE MEMORIAL TATTOOS, BUT NOW THAT I THINK I'VE GOT THEM OUT OF THE WAY MY TATTOOS ARE JUST ABOUT FUN STUFF I'M INTO. ... I THINK EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE A FEW FUNNY TATTOOS."  
—BRANDON SALLER**



also includes drummer-vocalist Brandon Saller, guitarists Dan Jacobs and Travis Miguel, and bassist Marc McKnight—are releasing their fifth full-length, *Congregation of the Damned*. It's an album that sees the band's signature sound finally coming full circle. Since the group came out of the Orange County, CA, scene as teenagers in the late '90s (alongside acts like Eighteen Visions and Avenged Sevenfold) and exploded in 2002 with their metalcore opus *Suicide Notes and Butterfly Kisses*, their music and image have matured. They've evolved from an Anne Rice-obsessed goth metal group to one of the genre's most unique and celebrated acts—a progression that hasn't come without its fair share of misconceptions.

"I don't like being asked questions about makeup," Varkatzas says dismissively. "We wore that literally not even a year, but there was a shitload of pictures taken around that time because

the band and proof that adulthood hasn't dulled their ability to shred. If anything, Atreyu sound more energized than ever. "When we started writing [this album] it was a 10-year anniversary, which was big for us and made us think back on all the things we've accomplished," Saller says. "It's kind of a reflective record but at the same time I refer to it as a 'best of' because it's really a collection of highlights from what we've done so far," he says. "In a lot of ways it's a cool retrospective of who we are as a band."

From hyper-melodic, radio-friendly rockers like "Gallows" to raging thrash like "Stop! Before It's Too Late and We've Destroyed It All" and glam-friendly anthems like "Insatiable," *Congregation of the Damned* sees the band once again reinventing their sound without abandoning their hardcore roots. "Life is all about reevaluation, or you'll never grow," Varkatzas explains. "I think the

piano ballad 'Wait for You' will definitely surprise people because there's absolutely no screaming on the song at all and it has that '80s rock ballad feel, but I love keeping our listeners on their toes." Via shredding guitar solos and Jacobs's pointy, splatter-painted axes, the band never made their love of glam metal a secret. But Varkatzas says he feels like this is the first Atreyu album to incorporate those influences in a cohesive way that doesn't sound forced or contrived.

"I'm gonna catch heat from the dudes in my band on this, but I'm going to say it anyway: We all love the song 'Blow' and think it's a cool track, but I almost think it's just too tongue-in-cheek for me now," Varkatzas says, referring to the Skid Row-worthy single from 2007's *Lead Sails Paper Anchor*. "I really like playing [that song], but I think we could be a little more tasteful when we throw in our '80s elements instead of making it so obvious,"



calf, the day before Varkatzas turned 18 (with the envious underage duo of Jacobs and Saller at his side). These days Varkatzas has more than 15 roses tattooed on his body in addition to a Japanese-themed sleeve on his right arm and a horror-centric sleeve on his left arm that features Frankenstein and his bride, a severed geisha head, and a zombie Virgin Mary. "I wish I planned out [my tattoos] a little more, to be honest," Varkatzas admits. "But I don't mind getting it done over the years because that shit hurts."

Saller's tattoos are more tribute-based and include a halo and wings on his shoulder as a memorial to his sister who passed away; a skull and crossbones with a whisk and a wooden spoon replacing the bones, in tribute to his bakery-owning mother; and a old-school radio with crosses as an homage to his musician father. And all of this is in addition to a back piece that acts as a memorial to



have always felt a need to evolve instead of blindly fitting in with the masses. Part of the evolution on *Congregation of the Damned* comes lyrically, as Varkatzas stretches out to address government corruption as much as his own personal demons. "I wanted to have every song have both a political and personal meaning at the same time," says the typically apolitical frontman. "I think the leaders of our country are full of shit; I'm not super intelligent and don't follow politics very much, but for the past few years I have. So there are a few songs where I just kind of open my mouth and throw out a 'What the fuck?' because I think we're getting screwed," he continues. "Right now I think the few people in charge are leading us like lemmings to the slaughter and they're picking our pockets and throwing us off the cliff at the same time, so that's kind of where the title *Congregation of the Damned* came from."

And if you're part of an act that has ripped



he continues. In other words, "guilty pleasure" isn't in Atreyu's collective vocabulary. "You look at bands like Aerosmith or Bon Jovi and they're humongous years and years later, and there's a reason for that: It's timeless, classic music," Saller says. "I really think people who immediately write off arena rock are close-minded, and ultimately they're cheating themselves out of some amazing songs."

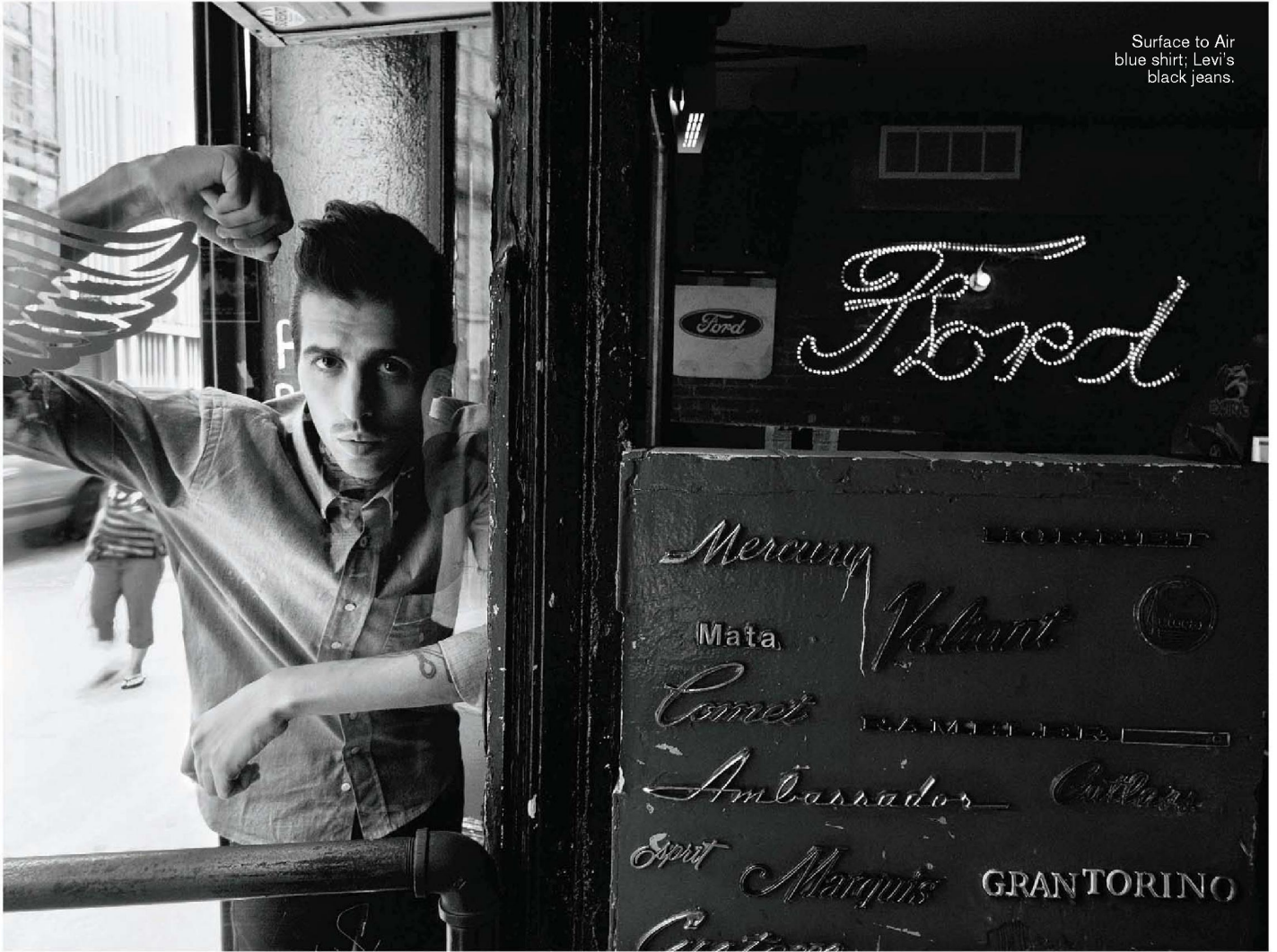
In a constantly shifting musical climate, the one constant in Atreyu's career has been the fact that they've always been slightly ahead of the trends, both musically and aesthetically—an attribute that has ended up biting them in the ass when it comes to their copious tattoos. "When I started getting tattoos there weren't as many douchebags in Orange County running around with sleeves," Varkatzas explains. Jeremiah Barba at Outer Limits did his first tattoo, a traditional-style rose and dagger on the back of his right

his grandfather. "I like memorial tattoos, but now that I think I've got them out of the way my tattoos are just about fun stuff I'm into," Saller says. "I like them both; I think everyone should have a few funny tattoos, but I also think it's a great way to express something that means a lot to you."

That said, Saller also professes a distaste for people who have turned his outlet for self-expression into something trivial. "There are people who just get tattooed as a fashion statement and don't realize that five or 10 years later, they might be bummed about the tribal on their throat," Saller says with a laugh. "I love tattoos but I definitely wear long sleeves sometimes because when you get tattoos you want to be different, and that becomes difficult when they become so popular."

The same thing can be said about Atreyu's music. Despite the fact that metalcore has now fully transitioned from VFW halls to Hot Topic, the band

off Atreyu's massive breakdowns and arpeggio-infused leads over the years, you're not safe from the band's fire either. "We're sickened with how mundane a lot of bands are today," Saller says when asked what he thinks of the current music scene. "There are so many copy-and-paste bands out there and we don't want to sound like them, even though that's something that we started." In the simplest sense, *Congregation of the Damned* is as much a gigantic middle finger to those aforementioned acts as it is the sound of Atreyu finding their identity at a distinct moment in time. "We don't want to get pigeonholed into one place because that's just who we were at that time; we all still love vampire movies and books and dark imagery and all that stuff—but we don't want our music to be all about that," Saller says. "We'd rather evolve into something that's cooler than what we started out doing." ■



Surface to Air  
blue shirt; Levi's  
black jeans.

# 6 DAY BENDER

PHOTOS BY STEPHAN SCHACHER  
STYLED BY RISA KNIGHT



On Michael, Marc Jacobs brown leather vest and black jeans; Zadig & Voltaire white shirt; John Varvatos brown boots. On Zach, Converse black leather jacket and sneakers; Calvin Klein white shirt; Marc Jacobs black pants. On Parker, Marc Jacobs black vest and black boots; Alternative gray shirt; Zadig & Voltaire jeans.

On Michael, Levi's  
jean jacket; Trim shirt;  
A.P.C. jeans; John  
Varvatos black boots.  
On Jennifer, Ksubi  
jean jumper; vintage  
necklace and boots.  
On Zach, Levi's blue  
jeans and jacket;  
Calvin Klein white shirt.











On Michael, Levi's green checkered shirt, jean jacket, and jeans. On Jennifer, Levi's burgundy leather jacket; Parasuco black bra top; April 77 blue jeans.

On Jennifer, Levi's black leather jacket;  
Parasuco black leggings; vintage  
shoes. On Parker, John Varvatos black  
jeans; Marc Jacobs black boots.





On Michael,  
Rowdy black  
button-up shirt.

On Michael, Stapleford blue checkered shirt; Heritage jeans. On Jennifer, Alternative gray shirt; Levi's black jeans; vintage black boots and necklace. On Parker, John Varvatos black checkered shirt and gray suspender jeans.

Opposite: Levi's jeans and jacket; Trim shirt; Marc Jacobs boots.

Welcome to  
Detroit  
renaissance  
Founded 1701

**Models:** Michael for B1 Model Management; Parker for Red NYC; Zachary for DNA Models; Jennifer for Rocket Garage  
**Grooming:** Sacha Harford at TheArtistLoftNyc.com using Umi hair products and Korres makeup  
**Locations:** Motor City Bar; Schiller's Liquor Bar; Neighburrito







# Tim Roth

From indie movie staple to human lie detector, the British actor hasn't been shy about documenting his life and career in ink. Now if he can just remember how many tattoos he's got.

BY ERIC ALT PHOTOS BY JAMES MINCHIN III

Tim Roth, it should come as no surprise, makes a concerted effort not to bring his work home with him. Of course, for a guy who spent three quarters of a movie writhing in blood, whipped out a revolver and held up a diner on a whim, ruled over a planet of monkeys with an iron fist, and bitch-slapped the Hulk up and down the streets of Harlem, it's less a personal preference and more a survival mechanism. These days, Roth has been introducing himself to American TV audiences as human lie detector Dr. Cal Lightman on the Fox series *Lie to Me*, the latest stop on a long and bizarre career that has left as much of a mark on his body as it has left on pop culture. Now a family man in his 40s, Roth thinks his days of marking significant events on his flesh may be reaching an end—unless, of course, the next big thing comes along.

**INKED: How many tattoos do you have now?**

**TIM ROTH:** Hang on a minute, I dunno. [*Counting them:*] One, two, three, four, five, six, seven ... eight? [*Laughs.*]

**Are you sure?** [*Laughs.*] I think so. Hang on. Let me look. ... They're all little, so ... they're only little things. Basically what I did was I kept them like a diary, really, as I was going on, of major events. But I never went down the road of someone like Colin Farrell, which is a humongous commitment, you know? I think because of what I do for a living it would have been a nightmare with cover-ups and all that. Although it's better now—the new makeup and all.

**Are any of them tougher to cover than others?** My stuff is really mundane. I wanted a few with my kids' names in it, stuff like that. Very sort of simplistic. But I remember when I was in San Francisco with my wife—not my wife then, we were engaged at that time—and there was a guy who did the armband I've got, which is pretty corny, I suppose, nowadays.

**The tribal tattoo?** Yeah. It's very sort of pedestrian now, but the stuff that he was experimenting with and the drawings he was doing at that time—I'm trying to remember his name. ... His girlfriend, who was pregnant at the time, was sort of his canvas and he was doing these big, huge pieces. But the kind of work he was doing, with no outline, just sort of different kinds of drawings,

seemed to be the way things were changing. I think the kind of work tattoo artists are coming out with now, it's so much better than it was. A lot more interesting and varied, and the colors are better.

**Do you have any plans to get more?** I don't really. I'm not sure, I mean. If something else happens. ... The last one I did was just get the initials of a film that I directed on my arm. But if something like that comes up, then I might do it again. I think my days are numbered in that department, really. [*Laughs.*] Mind you, I do like it. I like the sensation. And I like the permanence of it. But I don't know. We'll see.

**Do you have any regrets about any of them?** No, not at all. Even as kind of bad as some of them are, or whatever—no, I don't. I like them. I like the statement of them because they mark specific moments in my life. That element of it I really like.

**Do you remember what inspired you to get your first one?** I just wanted *something*. I didn't really know what I wanted, but the idea of it really intrigued me. I was at art school. I was studying sculpture at art school in London and I just wanted to know what it was like. So I went to a real little sweatbox in South London, in Peckham—a place where the tourists don't go. I was in a little cubicle in the back of the shop, you know, and I got two little squares with a couple of adjoining lines on them. I thought it was kind of, in my head, about the De Stijl movement and Constructivist art movement from Eastern Europe, but basically all I wanted was to have something. And I quite liked it. I thought it felt rather good. [*Laughs.*] Maybe that's me, I don't know.

**So you didn't need to down a pint or two beforehand?** I didn't mind the pain at all. It was fascinating to me. Then I played characters with lots of tattoos, so I visited a lot of tattoo artists and stuff to look at what they had. I played a skinhead my first job out and he had a couple of pieces. And we did them very badly—we had to draw them on and such. Back in the early days, before stencils and things. So I ended up meeting a lot of people who do that, tattoo artists, and I've always found them fascinating. Even when I came to Hollywood for the first time, there was a tattoo artist up the road who has put a couple of



“I like [my tattoos]. I like the statement of them because they mark specific moments in my life. That element of it I really like.”

things on me and I used to go in there and take pictures of him working and stuff. It was a place called Purple Panther on Sunset, which was my neighborhood when I first got to town.

**So if people watch your skinhead character in *Made in Britain* closely, they'll see the drawn-on tats jumping around?** Yeah, yeah—very, very messy. *[Laughs.]* We had no money and we just had a go, you know? It was funny, really.

**Have any of the tricks from *Lie to Me*—reading people's faces and mannerisms—rubbed off on you? Have they started to affect your personal life?** You kind of do a bit, but I make a very strong attempt not to learn this stuff. Once you learn it you can't really get rid of it, so I tend to just do what's in the script. But you do find yourself watching, especially politicians. You do find yourself watching them and it does make you laugh. Some of the actors really love it—they get themselves very involved in it. But I tend to sort of stay away a little bit. I never like to bring my work home anyway. I think it keeps you more sane, really.

**You once attributed your aversion to doing TV to “snobbery.” Is it safe to assume that's changed?** That's true. And I think a lot of actors used to be that way. What happened, I think, is that American television completely stepped up. American television in general really elevated itself to the point where film actors just wanted to do it because that's where a lot of the good drama was being made. So, yeah, I had a ridiculous kind of snobbery in regards to television that has completely vanished. I used to think: On one hand it's good for the employment, but on the other it's not really as good as the other stuff. And I think it's changed now. If you get a shot at doing something that's fun, quite dramatic—and it's like you get to do a little film every eight days or 10 days. Although it's much harder work than film, I think it's as valid and I think it's as satisfying—if not, at times, a lot more.

**One of the issues with episodic TV is that there's a chance you could miss out on other opportunities. Has that been the case?** Yeah, it has happened, and it's the price you pay. It was something I was worried about when I went into this, but it's just the price you pay. I'm reconciled with it. But I have a window where I can do stuff and I try and plug a film in there. And if we get cancelled then it's back to square one. *[Laughs.]* My take on it is just to do the best you can possibly do with what you've got. So if you can come away from it and hold your head up, you're all right.

**Do you think you would have felt that way at the start of your career?** Yeah, you're right. I've got 25, 30 years in now, being an actor. I wonder if I would have panicked if this had come earlier. But my feeling is that it wouldn't have come earlier. If you look around at the kinds of guys who are stepping into TV shows, there tends to be someone in the cast around my age. And they go after you at this point. They wanted a film actor. Sam Baum, the creator of the show, said, “Let's get somebody in who's a film actor. Sod it, let's go after him.” And they did. They came after me like gangbusters. Took them a while to get me. *[Laughs.]* I didn't know if I was ready. But as soon as I made the decision, I went in 100 percent—which you have to do. You can't be half-assed about it.

**You named two of your sons after your favorite authors, Hunter S. Thompson and Cormac McCarthy. Would that make you resistant to being in a Cormac McCarthy adaptation if one came up? Maybe it would ruin his allure?** I've love to do it. Love to. There's one I'd actually like to direct—I would love to direct *Blood Meridian*. I was given that by Brian Dennehy years ago when I worked with him. He said, “You should have a look at this.” That's what got me started on Cormac McCarthy, actually. There's another one, *Suttree*, which I think would make a great film too, but I think they've all been snapped up now, obviously, since the Coens got in there. They do a fantastic job of rendering his stuff. So I don't know what the possibilities of that would be. I'd love to act in one too, but I don't know where I'd fit in, really.

**Do you remember the last time someone shouted a line from *Reservoir Dogs* at you?** It happens quite a lot. *[Laughs.]* Usually “I'm fucking dying here—I'm fucking dying” is the one. I get that and I get stuff from *Pulp Fiction* too. It's still going.

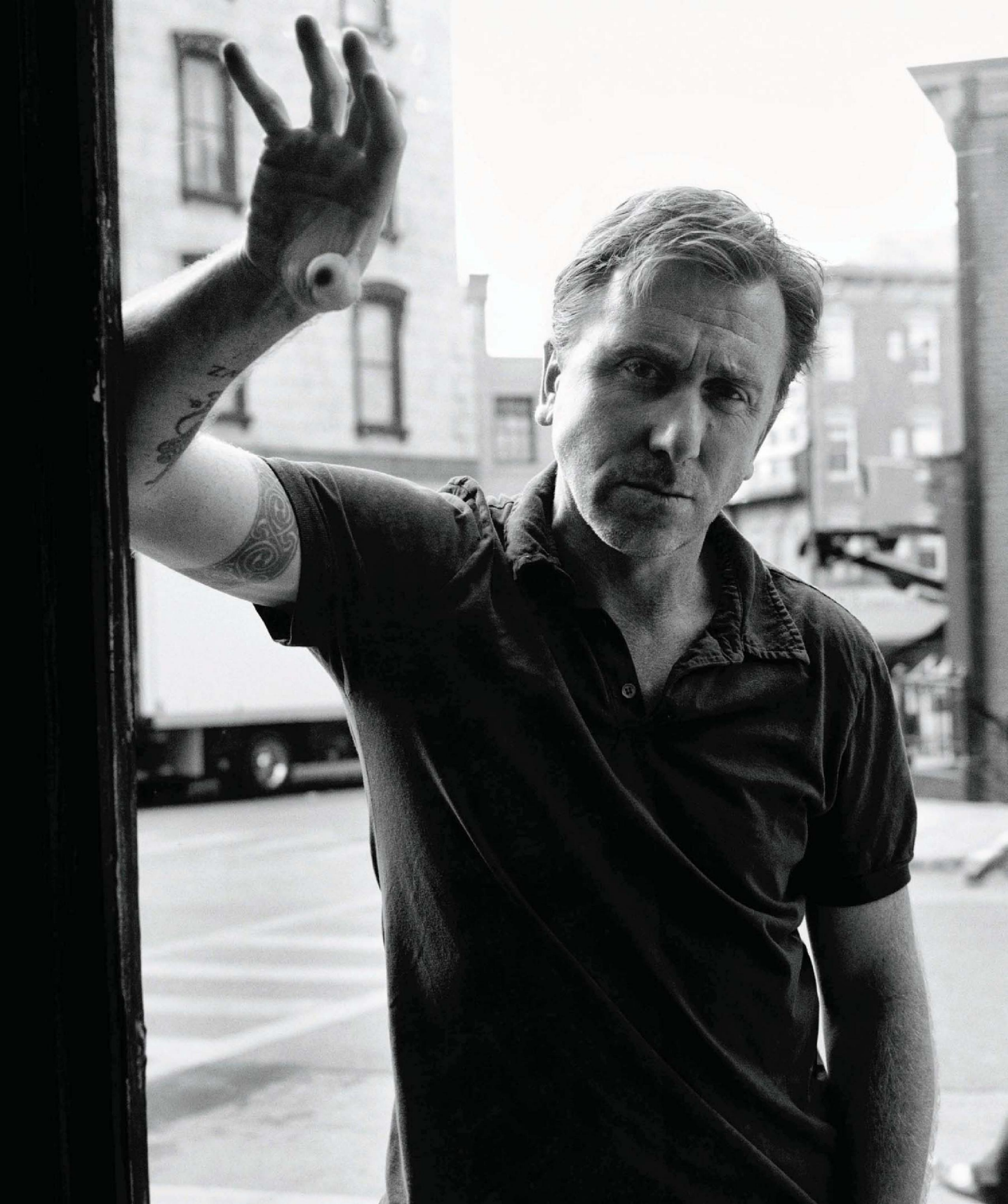
**Do you remember the first time you saw it?** The first time I saw *Reservoir Dogs*—Quentin [Tarantino] gave me a tape, a VHS, of it and I got some mates over and we watched it in my bedroom. I had this little apartment on Sunset and they all came over and we sat and watched it. With the time code on the bottom and all that stuff.

**Did you have any idea it would blow up the way it did?** No, we didn't. I mean, we all thought we were making something that was quite good, but we didn't want to jinx it, you know? So we didn't talk about it that much. But on viewing of it, even on a small screen, you could tell something was coming. And they were very clever the way they marketed it, and Quentin's personality was a very marketable thing. We hit the ground running. We went all over the world, every festival we could get our hands on. We worked very hard to get it out and get it to an audience. And it kicked in.

**Has there been any talk of you returning in another Hulk movie?** That got kind of misquoted in the press. Basically when I signed on to do the first one, they sign you on for three—if they want them. It's only if they want to keep coming back. The only rumors that I've heard is that they might bring The Abomination back within a different framework later on down the line, which I like the idea of. It was such fun for me, playing around with that guy. I had a very good time making that film. But it's really up to Marvel, so who knows? I love the Marvel films, I really do. I love *Iron Man* and all that. Absolutely terrific stuff.

**What is it that you like about them?** I think they have a darkness to them now as well as the comedic aspects. There's a darkness to them that I think is really appealing. They're much more multilayered. It's quite intriguing. They're good little adventure stories.

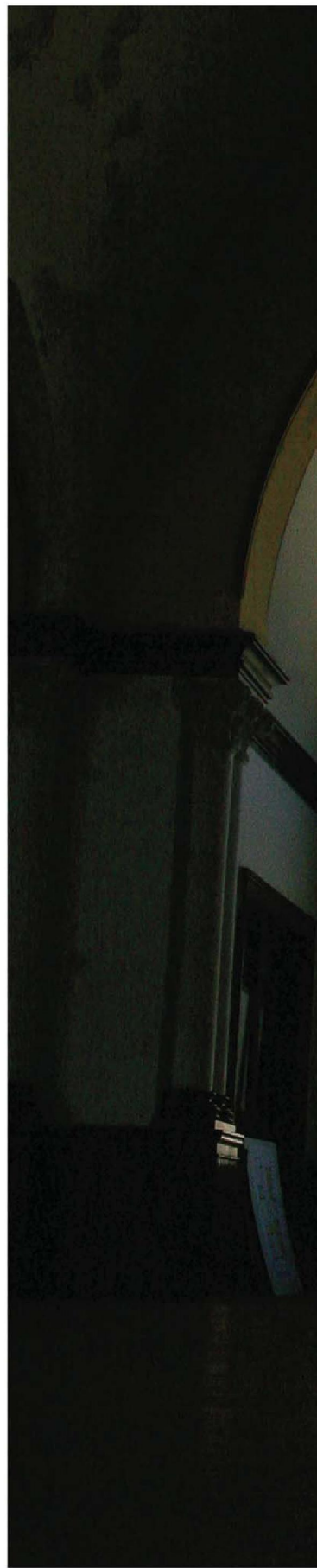
**So will we have to plan a follow-up interview when you finally decide to get a huge Abomination tattoo across your back?** A whole back piece, yeah! *[Laughs.]* And sleeves. Big muscles and all ... 🐶

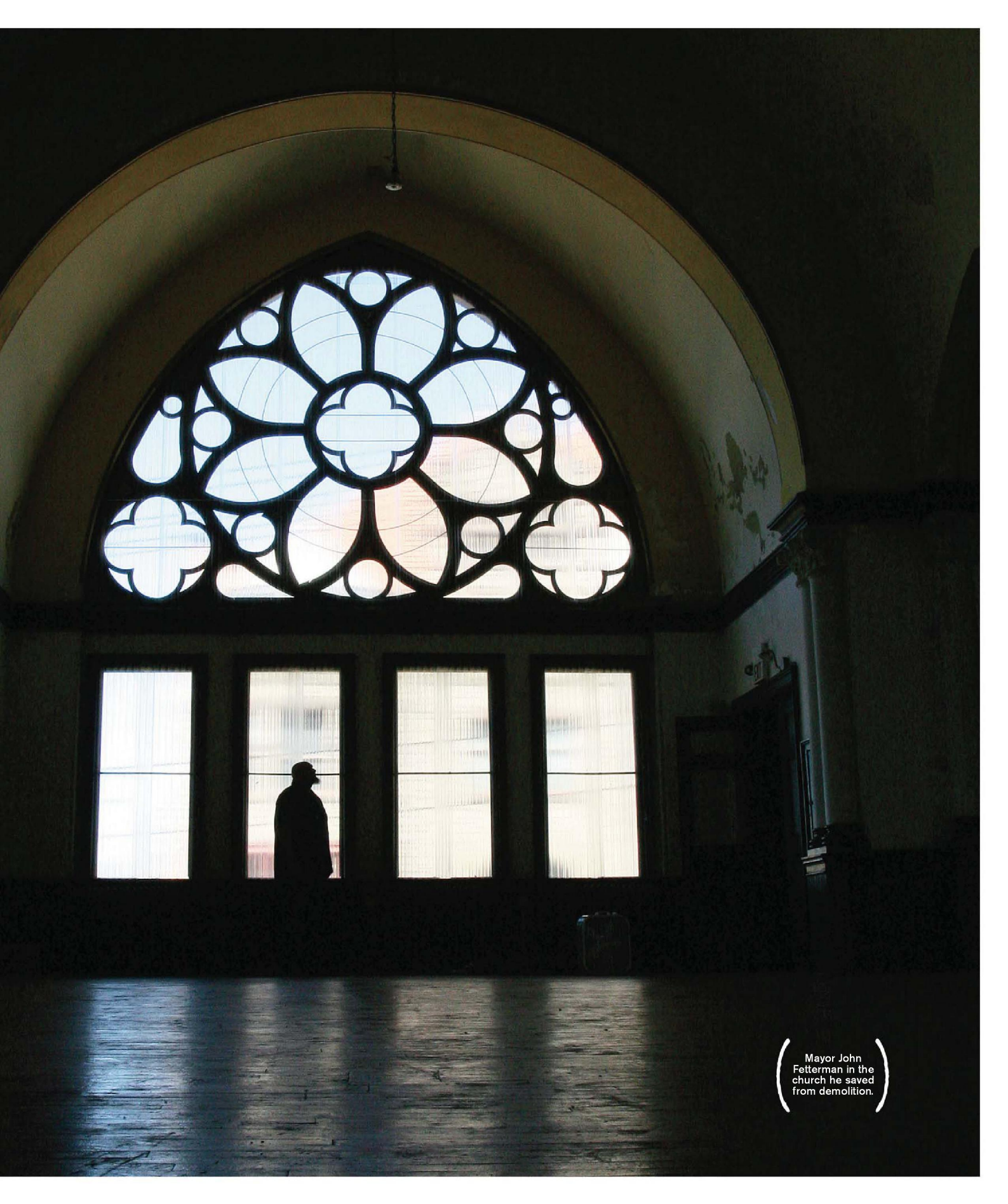


"I  
will  
make  
you  
hurt."

Mayor John Fetterman took over a dying town and began tattooing the date of every murder committed under his watch. But can one rebel mayor save post-industrial America before it tears him apart?

By Joy Manning  
Photos by Chris Casella





Mayor John Fetterman in the church he saved from demolition.



From left: artwork on church; mural on Fetterman's home.



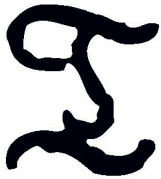
No drugs. "It turns the stereotype—that these kids are nothing but trouble, problems—on its head," he says. And even people who had those concerns have since admitted, according to the mayor, that the basketball games beat the abandoned, overgrown lot that recently marked this spot.

When Fetterman was earning his MBA in the '90s, he never imagined he'd be celebrating his 40th birthday in a town with a population of less than 3,000. He certainly didn't consider the possibility that his future job would pay an annual salary of just \$1,800 and that he'd funnel that meager sum right back into the borough. Like most business school students, he saw a flush future in the money business, as a trader or banker, living the kind of life in which \$1,800 might be a single night's bar tab. But that version of John Fetterman abruptly vanished 16 years ago when his best friend was killed in a car wreck. Fetterman had been waiting to meet him for one of their routine trips to the gym. "When I got the call, time slowed down," he says. "I was in my mid 20s, but suddenly everything changed. I was in the final months of completing my MBA, but I knew that finance was something I would never pursue. I had to find something that was really meaningful to me."

Fetterman finished his MBA, but upon graduation, he applied for AmeriCorps, a government program developed in the early '90s to put young people to work addressing the country's most critical needs. It was Fetterman's AmeriCorps service that initially brought him to the Pittsburgh area. He worked primarily with at-risk young people who needed to earn their GEDs. Born and raised in York, PA, Fetterman was sensitive to the issues of post-industrial decline. Pennsylvania is dotted with steel towns gone bust, and though his own family prospered, he was familiar with the economic hardships, deflating population, and increasing crime that are features of that cycle.

While in Pittsburgh, the nearby town of Braddock captivated him. "It's an outlier among outliers; even among towns that have lost jobs, population, a tax base, Braddock is an extreme case." Over the course of the years he spent in AmeriCorps, he decided to go back to graduate school, this time for public policy. Service, he had learned, was his life's work. He emerged with a grant proposal to help Braddock's young people earn their GEDs. He presented the plan to the Hill House Association, a Pittsburgh-based nonprofit that sponsors programs that support urban communities. Though he wasn't surprised the group chose to implement his proposal, it shocked him that they wanted him to run it. And with that, Fetterman packed up his fancy degrees and took up residence in what may be Pennsylvania's most depressed steel town.

At first it was the kids that connected Fetterman to Braddock. But soon it was the soul of Braddock itself, the place's very bones, the abandoned homes and roofless storefronts whose wasting struck Fetterman as "malignantly beautiful." He traversed Braddock with disposable cameras, taking the photos that would decorate his future mayoral residence, a stylishly appointed refurbished warehouse that Fetterman bought for just \$2,000. But beyond the town's aesthetic drama—



he 10-mile car ride from Pittsburgh to Braddock, PA, is littered with signals that you're headed to the wrong side of town. Through the depleted neighborhoods of Swissvale and Rankin, you can't miss the decay. Paint peels in big, desiccated flakes from crumbling buildings; trash tumbleweeds blow past shuttered pawn shops with faded signs that read "We buy gold." When you arrive in Braddock, the site of Andrew Carnegie's first steel mill, the feeling is desolate—at least until you hit Library Street, the block where Mayor John Fetterman lives.

On basketball courts whose asphalt is so conspicuously new they don't seem to belong to the dilapidated town, a dozen black teenagers in high-top sneakers or plastic sandals and socks shoot hoops. It's Community Day in Braddock, and these kids are warming up for the basketball tournament that coincides with the festivities. For many of them, the inflatable slide and basketball games will be the undisputed highlight of the summer. Just off the courts paces 40-year-old John Fetterman, a white Harvard grad who looks a little uncomfortable passing a basketball from one of his giant paws to the other. He is Braddock's unlikely mayor, the man who built these courts, and the primary organizer of this league. "Football is really more my sport," says Fetterman.

At 6'8" with a broad barrel of a torso, Fetterman commands respect from the kids even in the absence of basketball prowess. In his long, loose denim shorts and Dickies work shirt, he doesn't look the part of an elected official—or Ivy League grad, for that matter. He looks like a professional wrestler off the clock and out of costume. His shaved head, overgrown goatee, and tattoo that reads *I will make you hurt* lend him a menacing aspect, but his light gray eyes brim with the seriousness and intensity of a man who sees his job as a ministry, as though there were no work more urgent on the planet and it's up to him to save the world. Or at least this one tiny town.

"Today is not just about basketball," he says. "It's about doing something about the dearth of recreational activities here, giving these kids something to do instead of get in trouble, giving them mentorship, guidance, hope." He proudly avers that there have been none of the problems that the community feared might accompany the courts: No loitering. No vandalism. No violence.



Fetterman at home in the 3,000-square-foot warehouse he purchased for \$2,000 and refurbished.

“When you see something like [a murder], it affects you. It’s horrible. The tattoos, well, it’s an easier place to carry it.” —John Fetterman

the consumption of splendor by decay—there was Braddock’s distinguished history pulling Fetterman in as well, the story of how a place that was once more densely populated than contemporary Brooklyn became a ghost town.

The town of Braddock grew up around the Edgar Thomson Steel Works, Andrew Carnegie’s first mill, built in 1873. The population and local economy grew with the steel boom. Some of the few remaining residents recall the 1950s, when Braddock Avenue, the town’s main drag, was lined with shops, restaurants, and a movie theater. But as in other such towns and cities, as the steel industry collapsed in the ’70s and ’80s, jobs evaporated, families went broke, gangs, crime, and drugs invaded, and people fled, fanning out into the growing suburban sprawl in search of jobs and a safer way of life. Braddock has lost 90 percent of its peak population and 90 percent of its buildings. It’s an Act 47 town, meaning that it is bankrupt. Its tax base can’t pay for Braddock’s most basic municipal services. The town’s derelict beauty and epic rise and fall gradually mesmerized Fetterman. In 2005, he decided to run for mayor.

“I never expected to actually win,” says Fetterman. “I just thought it would be a good way to start a conversation about the things I thought needed to be dis-

cussed.” He knew the position wasn’t a legislative one; his official powers and duties would be almost nonexistent. To his surprise, he won the Democratic primary by a single vote. There were, as expected, no Republican challengers in the general election. Fetterman became mayor. At once, his big personality and progressive ideas—infusing Braddock with an art scene, painting murals, kicking off green initiatives—rankled the status quo politicians of the borough council. He says he has mostly worked in spite of, not with, the existing leadership. He’s outlined his own nontraditional agenda, implementing programs and starting initiatives he believes could eventually revivify the town.

Fetterman’s larger-than-life charisma may have played a part in repelling the borough council, but he’s been able to magnetize a small group of impassioned people to his cause. One of them, Jeb Feldman, is a Carnegie Mellon graduate who recently went to work for Allegheny County in an urban planning job. Before that, he worked as a bartender while in graduate school and spent the remainder of his waking hours working with Fetterman. The two have salvaged abandoned homes with their own hands, laboring to make the property’s inherent usefulness and value visible to an outsider. “It’s filthy

Abandoned homes are a common sight in Braddock.



work," says Feldman, who seems too cerebral for any project that requires the use of the pickup truck he drives. With Fetterman's help, Feldman bought and refurbished a vacant school. The property now houses an arts center called Unsmoke.

Inside, there are galleries and large studios with abundant natural light where eight artists currently work—rent free. "We ask them to pick up a share of the utilities. It costs a lot to heat this place," notes Feldman as he proudly shows off the rehabbed space. That "we" keeps surfacing as he explains his role in Braddock; though the sweat equity, planning, and management of Unsmoke is clearly Feldman's, he is constantly sharing credit with Fetterman. Feldman speaks of the mayor in a reverent tone of voice: "John is the pivotal person. ... John is the key to what is happening here in Braddock. ... John is the hub of the wheel."

One of Unsmoked's artists-in-residence is photographer LaToya Ruby Frazier. A Braddock native, Frazier recalls the ravages on the '80s, the relentless erosion of the collective quality of life due to the crack cocaine epidemic and its attendant increase in poverty and crime. In fact, this is often the subject of her work. She is by any measure a successful artist; she is represented by Higher Pictures gallery in New York City and has exhibited around the world, but she maintains close ties to her town by working here.

"I've never had my own studio until now," says Frazier. "Not even in graduate school." Though one of her best-known photos is of her mother using drugs, her most recent project, a collaboration with 88-year-old artist and fellow Braddock native Victoria Hruska, focuses on Frazier's grandmother, who was friends with Hruska during the town's halcyon era. The installation, called *1921 Braddock Summoning 1982*, juxtaposes

their experiences of Braddock by interweaving mementos and artifacts from the two artists' childhoods. The project came about because Fetterman introduced the two women. "He knew it would be a great idea," says Frazier with gratitude. "John is intrigued by human complexity."

The arts community is a cornerstone of Fetterman's vision for Braddock. It's an unorthodox approach to small-town leadership, but the strategy has been effective at drawing in new residents. "With so many empty spaces, so many people gone, it's important to bring new people in to have growth," says Fetterman. He knows that the cost of acquiring a home (sometimes for as little as \$2,000) and a studio space (often free) in Braddock is alluring. With such low overhead, artists can pursue their work full-time with few of the financial stressors that can sabotage artistic efforts elsewhere. One artist, according to Feldman, settled in Braddock after being priced out of a total of eight neighborhoods around the country that were once artist-budget-friendly.

Fetterman is quick to point out that what is happening is *not* gentrification, which elbows poor residents out of their longtime communities. "There is all this space and nobody here to be pushed aside. We need people to come," says Fetterman. The nascent arts community he has almost single-handedly built is small but close-knit. They gather at Unsmoke for impromptu salons or around the recently built outdoor brick oven for pizza and beer. And newcomers often follow Fetterman's lead in terms of community service. Transformazium, an arts collective that has moved to Braddock from New York City, has held fundraisers for the town and launched community arts projects.

The attention Fetterman has brought to Braddock has made him a target for some who believe



Fetterman at  
the community  
basketball courts  
he had built.







Scenes from Braddock, PA.

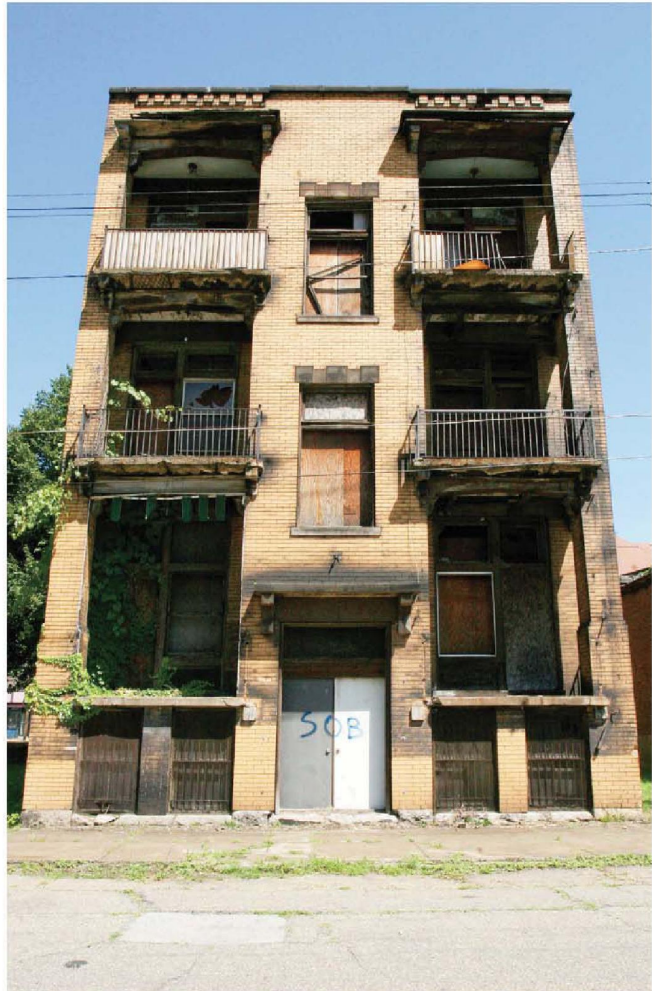
he is more interested in cultivating his own celebrity than erasing local blight. “When I was reelected last year, the *Post-Gazette* called it the nastiest campaign on record in Allegheny County,” says the mayor. “But you know what, when the votes were tallied, I won by a 2-to-1 margin. That was validating.” The tensions between Fetterman and the city council are ongoing, and he no longer attends meetings. Members wouldn’t return calls requesting interviews for this article. Someone who answered the phone in the borough office called Fetterman “nothing more than a glorified ribbon cutter” before refusing to provide his phone number and slamming down the phone.

In spite of the imbroglios that sometimes surround him, it’s impossible to overlook the mayor’s accomplishments. He has spoken before Congress in support of cap-and-trade legislation. Braddock Redux, a community non-profit organization, has recently salvaged two historic properties and turned them into homes for teenagers who have aged out of the foster care system. The summer work program that Fetterman implemented with the help of AmeriCorps keeps 100 kids employed for \$8 an hour installing environmentally friendly green roofs. The community basketball league keeps another 100 kids engaged and out of trouble.

Ryan Wooten, police chief in neighboring Rankin and co-commissioner of the basketball league, says he’s noticed that the program is making a dent in local crime. And he applauds Fetterman’s efforts. “A lot of people say they care, say they want to take an interest with these kids. But we’re not talking—we’re doing something,” says Wooten. Fetterman plans to convert the old church next to the basketball courts into a full-fledged community center. As with many of his projects, he will likely pour a lot of his own money into the renovation. During the Community Day tournament, as Fetterman, flanked by the kids of Braddock, passes out pizza and Gatorade, it’s impossible to imagine him working on Wall Street.



It wasn’t until after his 2005 election that Fetterman got his first tattoo. It’s Braddock’s zip code writ large down the inside of his hulking forearm. It was etched there by Rich Cosgrove of Inka Dinka Doo in Pittsburgh. Just 10 days after he took office, he decided to get another tattoo after being called to a crime scene where he saw the body of a pizza delivery man who had been shot in the head. Fetterman would



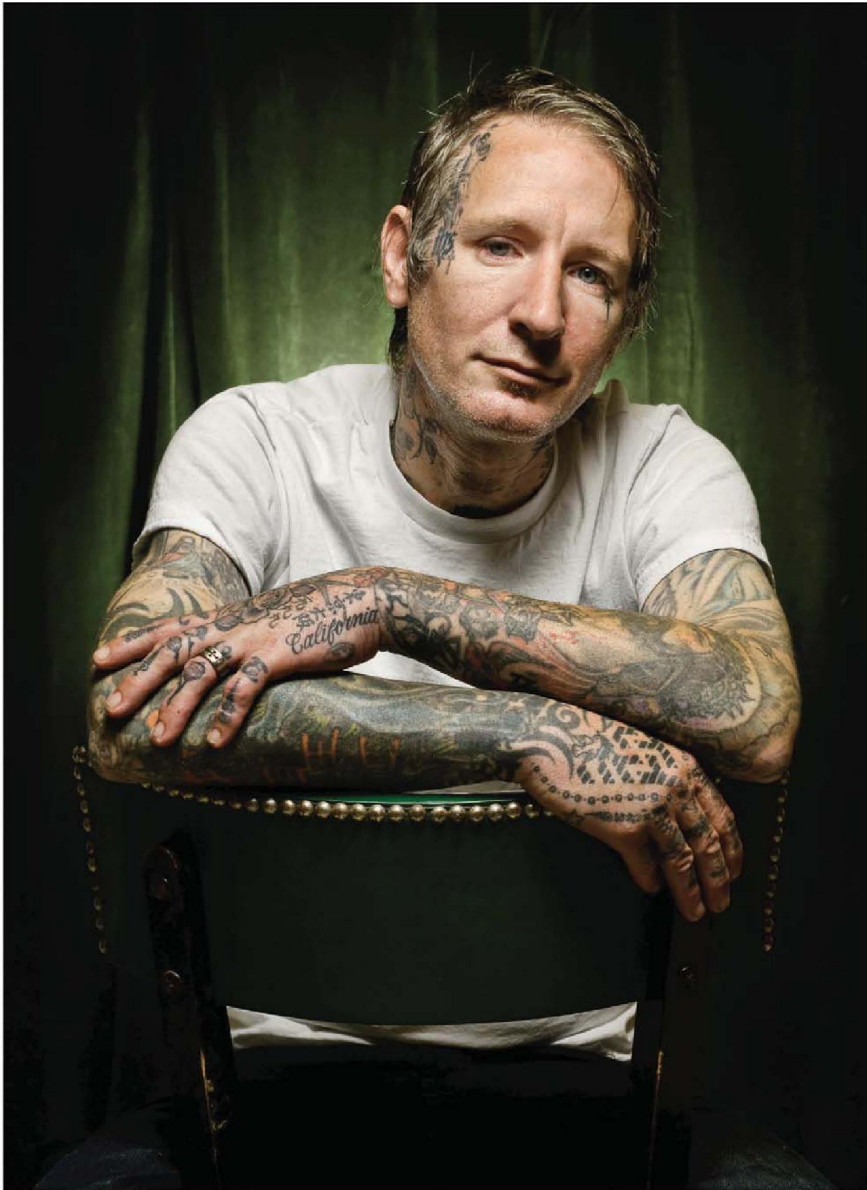
get the date—01.16.06—tattooed on his other arm. It was just the first of five such dates he had inscribed on his flesh, each the date of a murder that has happened in Braddock during his tenure as mayor. A more recent one—02.03.07—is a reminder of the most disturbing crime scene Fetterman has been called to yet. It’s the day 2-year-old Nyia Page was allegedly beaten unconscious by her own father and then left in the snowy woods to die. “There were tiny footprints in the snow; she froze to death,” he remembers.

The *I will make you hurt* tattoo isn’t a threat, says Fetterman. “It references the personal anguish the circumstances [of those dates] cause me.”

When one of Fetterman’s friends was killed—10.08.06—he says he took some degree of solace in getting the tattoo. “When you see something like that, it affects you. It’s horrible. The tattoos, well, it’s an easier place to carry it,” says Fetterman, pain roiling his typically serene expression. In his old life, he had never even considered a tattoo, but he believes these memorials are meaningful and appropriate. They remind him of the commitment he’s made to this community and his hopes that as his adopted hometown comes back to life, the murders, the tattooed dates, the hurt, will fade into the past, and that a new Braddock based on refugee artists and the emerging green economy will take shape. They also give him a way of coping with his grief. “Because it’s just the numbers, it feels private, not like if it were their names,” says Fetterman. “Most people think they’re prison tattoos. Not everyone knows what they are. But I know.”

# INKED SCENE

"I was getting a tattoo and my urge to tattoo was growing as it happened. ... I just said, 'Oh my God, this is my medium.'" —*Freddy Corbin*



## FREDDY CORBIN

**Temple Tattoo**  
384 17th St.  
Oakland, CA  
510-451-6423  
templeoakland.com

**INKED:** When did you first step into a tattoo shop?

**FREDDY CORBIN:** I went to the shop on Broadway in Sacramento and I pretty much just walked out. It was a really funky, funky shop. I was, like, 17 or 18 and I knew I wasn't going to get tattooed by the guy in there. His name was Broadway Bob. If

“Everything edgy is going mainstream. Outlaw bikers, rock ‘n’ roll, and tattooing. I go to the grocery store and they’re playing Ozzy. Nothing is outlaw anymore.”

you wanted to get a punk rock tattoo, like a skull with a mohawk or some lettering or something, he could kind of pull that off. But I wanted a dragon or some kind of wild shit and he just wasn't up to par. I didn't walk into another tattoo shop until I walked into Lyle Tuttle's place in San Francisco when I moved there a year later.

**Was that when you got your first tattoo?** I actually tattooed myself first before I went into the shop. My girlfriend had a tattoo of an Egyptian eye that she had done herself. She hand-poked it. I walked into the shop because it was going really slow and I thought, Man, this is going to take forever.

**What did your artist say when he saw your handiwork?** It was interesting because it's such a cliché for somebody to walk into a tattoo shop and say, “Oh, I did this one myself.” But I was so innocent that they treated me really cool. The tattoo was great and so were the people. I had great experiences and I was off at that point.

**Is that when you realized you wanted to tattoo professionally?** I was getting a tattoo and my urge to tattoo was growing as it happened. At the time, I was doing all this artwork with black ink and black paint. The tattoos that I was seeing matched what I was drawing. It was an organic transforma-



tion. I just said, "Oh my God, this is my medium." I was sitting around looking at people who could wear whatever they want, talking to people, listening to music and surrounded by all this art. I don't talk about this a lot because it'll make a lot of people want to become tattoo artists. [Laughs.]

**Where did you go from there?** I immediately started asking where I could get equipment and stuff, which is such a faux pas. They corrected me because I was calling them "guns" even though I knew they were called "machines." I said, "Oh shit, I blew it already." They said they didn't really sell that stuff and then I kept my mouth shut. I just kept getting tattooed by different people until I found somebody who was willing to teach me how to tattoo or at least sell me equipment.

**Did you land an apprenticeship?** I never really got an apprenticeship because Erno [Szabady], the guy who taught me, was busy partying. Basically, I was making it really easy for him to run his business. I would smoke a little weed, but I wasn't really partying. He showed me how to set up a machine. He said, "Here's what you want to do and if you have any questions, ask." I learned through trial and error. I learned through asking questions. I was getting tattooed by Henry Goldfield and I learned a lot from him too.



**Did you ever think that you wanted a more traditional apprenticeship?** I just wanted to tattoo by any means necessary. I wasn't going to say no to somebody who was just going to open the door for me. I wasn't about to say, "I want a real apprenticeship. I'm going to find someone else." He handed me the keys to the shop and let me tattoo my friends.

**How did you get a key to the shop with so little experience?** It was Halloween 1987 and I had been hanging out and tattooing my legs. I used to draw tribal tattoos on my friends, a lot of whom were small-time dealers. They would get a ton of attention and they couldn't wait to get work done by me. I told them they'd get their tattoos when I got my machine. They always had cash lying around, so one night my dealer roommate handed me \$500 and told me to take it down to Erno to see if it could buy me a couple of machines.

**Did he go for the deal?** I put the money down on the table and told him it was for tattoo machines. He picked up \$250 and put it in his pocket. Then he handed me the rest. He said, "You've got the keys, just do the tattoos here." My dream had just come true. I had done maybe three tattoos and I was already working in a shop. I went back that night and did a skull with an anarchy symbol on its head for my friend.

**How did you get hooked up with Ed Hardy?** I worked at Erno's for just under two years. At the time, Ed Hardy was charging \$200 an hour for tattoos. You couldn't just get tattooed by him, either. You had to write him a letter. He started tattooing me and we hit it off. He liked my idea. Instead of a geisha sitting down with a bodysuit of tattoos, I wanted a nun sitting down with a bodysuit of religious tattoos. He loved the idea and he had seen a tattoo I had done and he thought it looked really good. I didn't realize that when he was tattooing me, he was really interviewing me.

**How did it evolve into you working for him?** Eventually, I told him I wanted him to do a Rock of Ages back piece for me. He got this surprised look on his face, set his machine down and said, "I have always wanted to do a Rock of Ages." He had only done one at the time. I was so jazzed that he was excited. For me to be hanging out with Ed Hardy was like being a kid who's just learning how to play the guitar hanging out with Keith Richards. I was just tickled to even be there.

**Did he offer you the job on the spot?** The next morning at, like, 9 a.m., the phone rang. I didn't answer it because I never got up that early. Eventually, the machine picked up and I heard Ed's voice. I rushed over to the phone and he asked me to come work at Realistic Studio with Bill Salmon. He offered me more money and he said that people who work for him only paid half for his work. He wanted to start on my back piece right away.

**Did you accept immediately?** The one thing was that I had a lot of love for Erno. I really wanted to say yes, but I asked if I could talk to Erno first and think about it. I called him back in two hours, but I scored some points that I didn't jump ship immediately. He was stoked that I thought about it before accepting.

**Did you start working with Ed right away?** I was at Realistic Studio with Bill. Ed worked in a condo that he was renting in the Tenderloin and it was super Japanese. You had to take your shoes off and the tiny bedroom was the tattoo room. I worked for him but not with him. It was probably better at the beginning because I would've been so nervous.

**How do you feel about the clothing line that bears Ed's name?** Everything edgy is going mainstream. Outlaw bikers, rock 'n' roll, and tattooing. I go to the grocery store and they're playing Ozzy. Nothing is outlaw anymore. The clothing lines and the TV shows play a big part and I really don't dig it that much. But thank God Ed got that gig. Ed has probably done more for tattooing than any other artist. He published *Tattoo Time* when there were no publications about tattooing. It was so much work. Do I like the product? No. Do I like Ed Hardy steering wheel covers and lighters and perfume? No, I think it's stupid. Do I think it's ridiculous that somebody can buy a big tattoo design of a bulldog with



"I was in Miami a few months ago, and I'm at some Walgreens on the corner and some old lady started telling me in broken Spanish that God didn't want me to do that to my body. I usually remind people that their bodies are their temples. Do you want to go to a temple that's just four blank walls, or do you want to go to a church with stained glass windows and incense burning?"

an Ed Hardy signature and put it on their car? I think it's ridiculous. But I'm glad Ed got the gig.

**You now have two shops in the Bay area. Do you still have time to tattoo?** When you have 14 employees, your work never ends. Either the toilet breaks or someone wants to go on vacation or it's someone's birthday. It's always something. Right now, I do two tattoos a day, five days a week.

**Where does your infatuation with religious imagery come from?** It comes from my heart, I guess. When I was younger, I didn't even believe in God. I would go into someone's house and if I saw a picture of Jesus I would think they were sheep. As I got older, I realized they were metaphors. Jesus, to me, became an icon for being compassionate and doing the right thing. I'm technically considered a Christian, but when I go to India and pray in a temple, I'm basically blaspheming. A real Christian wouldn't go pray in a Buddhist temple. Organized religion is a crock of shit. It's fear-based. That's what I love about Hinduism and Buddhism. They believe they came from each other and neither one is right or wrong. I'm into Jesus, man. I'm into Martin Luther King. I'm into Jimi Hendrix—anything that's positive.

**Have you gotten any negative reactions from other Christians about your religious tattoos?** I used to go into religious stores and buy holy cards that were blank on the back. Then I'd print my info

on the back and hand them out as business cards. I would walk into a church supply and they would usually call people over and look at them. I was in Miami a few months ago, and I'm at some Walgreens on the corner and some old lady started telling me in broken Spanish that God didn't want me to do that to my body. I usually remind people that their bodies are their temples. Do you want to go to a temple that's just four blank walls, or do you want to go to a church with stained glass windows and incense burning? My body isn't permanent, so putting artwork on it is no big deal.

**When was the last time you got tattooed?** It was in England back in May. There are some artists over there that are breaking new ground. Guys like Tomas Tomas and Thomas Hooper—who actually works at New York Adorned now—who are doing this new kind of tribal stuff that doesn't look like anything else. When Leo Zulueta started doing tribal, he could do it really well because he was using Borneo organic images. But it became these zigzags with points and it just looked horrible. It became shallow. Real tribal was all black. The Polynesian, Japanese, and all that South Pacific stuff looked very soulful to me. They're taking that kind of subject matter and throwing a psychedelic spiritual twist on it.

**You've done a lot of design and artwork for the TV show *Sons of Anarchy*. How did that come**

**about?** My good friend David Labrava, who's a Hell's Angel, introduced me to John Linson, who is the producer of the show. I was tattooing David and he started telling me that they were pitching a show to FX that's basically *The Sopranos* meets the Hell's Angels. I thought it sounded fucking cool, but I never thought it was going to happen.

**But you ended up designing the patch and the show is a hit.** They wanted the patch to look like a real outlaw patch. They didn't just want to send it to the art department. They were afraid it was going to come back with some bullshit that didn't have any balls. I was honored to design the patch and it became the show logo. You see it constantly. I wanted something that looked really gritty and '70s. I made sure the letters weren't all the same size. I didn't use masks. Normally, if I was doing a rocker on someone's stomach I would make sure it was all even. I wanted it to look kind of clunky and real.

**Will you be doing any cameos?** Charlie [Hunnam] always said to the writer that if we ever needed a tattooer on the show, it had to be me. I thought, Whatever. Then Charlie calls me and says it's actually going to happen. I'm super stoked. I've never wanted to be on a reality show, but I have an infatuation with TV and film. I'd always want to play, like, a hood or drug addict or gangster. That's the look I have going. I can't play an innocent kid or anything. —Stan Horaczek

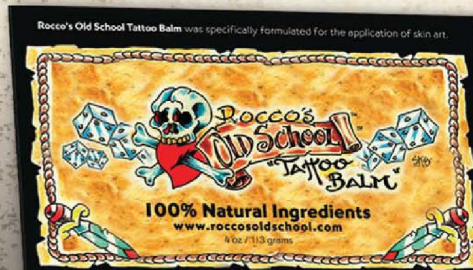
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## GOODFELLAS

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Goodfellas is a fitting name for Steve Soto's latest tattoo studio in Orange County, CA—not in that Joe Pesci way, but fitting for the solid roster of artists who excel in all styles of tattooing for all manner of clients. The crew may look badass, but the relaxed, positive vibe that engulfs the shop belies any gangster connotations.

"When I opened the new Goodfellas, I had a vision of what I wanted it to be like," says Soto. "I set it up so that it's an open space. There are no separate rooms, so tattooers and clients can see each other. It's like an old-school walk-in shop, although we're far from it. But it does have that energy. Once we get three tattooers working at a time there's a vibe that can't be denied, and no walls can hold it in. That's what I always wanted, that interaction. It inspires the artists and the clients."

Soto opened up the new Goodfellas three

years ago, originally in partnership with Marc Everle, who owned the original Goodfellas studio nearby, just north of the historic Orange Circle. Today, Soto has doubled the original space (taking over neighboring shops) to 2,000 square feet, making the studio more comfortable for clients. And to take their minds off the needles, he also installed a surround sound entertainment system, which often plays comedies on DVD or streams videos from the Internet.

Expanding the studio also meant Soto could bring in more tattooists, including some of his favorite artists, such as Carlos Torres (who has tattooed Soto) and Carlos Rojas. Soto, Torres, and Rojas are renowned for their black and gray realism. In fact, they recently swept awards for the category at the Hell City Phoenix convention, with Soto winning best of show for a bodysuit of portraiture.



Clockwise from top left: tattoo by John Caleb; tattoo by Carlos Rojas; tattoo by Carlos Torrez; Goodfella at work; tattoo by Steve Soto; Goodfellas interior; tattoo by Kurtis Gibson; tattoo by Soto; tattoo by Caleb; tattoo by Soto.

One of the reasons for Soto's success has been the special technique behind his realism work. "I don't start with a liner—I just go straight into the shading," he says. "Not a lot of people do this, because it's more difficult, but it gives the tattoos a different look. ... The key is to bring the image to the front and make it pop. That's my idea of a good tattoo: one that can stop people in their tracks."

While he will do an occasional color piece, Soto says 99 percent of his portfolio is black and gray. For other tattoo styles, he also has artists John Caleb, Kurtis Gibson, Steven Johns, and Larry Casas on hand to do walk-ins and appointments. "We're a full-service tattoo shop," Soto says. "A lot of people think we just do black and gray, but we can do anything, from full sleeves to little kanjis. Take care of the client and [he] will always come back to you." —*Marisa Kakoulas*







**NAME:** Courtney

**SHOP MANAGER/PART-OWNER AT:**  
Studio 21 Tattoo, Las Vegas

**I got involved here** full-time about four years ago and I am part owner of our family business. The most challenging part of my job is working with family all day. Most jobs want you to leave personal issues at the door, but it doesn't get more personal than family. At the end of the day, though, I'm a happy girl!

**We filled a kiddie pool** with pumpkin guts for a Halloween art show we threw. Two strippers ended up wrestling in it in their birthday suits. That was pretty crazy!

**I have tattooed one thing** and one thing only—a corn dog! I've put one on 10 different victims, just as a joke. My nickname is Corn Dog. All the artists here have one.



Know a stellar shop assistant who keeps the autoclave humming and the tattoo stations organized? E-mail us at [shopgirl@inkedmag.com](mailto:shopgirl@inkedmag.com).

*What does Ms. Tattoo Potion 2008, Nikky Toohey, use for her protection in the sun this summer?*



*Well look at her! isn't it obvious?  
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Photo by: Aaron Melendrez photography

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## EASTERN DISTRICT

Call it a summer art and recession jam: A huge list of artists crammed into Eastern District gallery in Brooklyn, NY, for Plenty of Room on the Couch, a show with every piece priced \$300 and less. Tattooers such as Patrick Conlon, Nikki Balls, Civ, and others joined in and we got there just in time to see all of our fave artworks already snatched up. Damn!

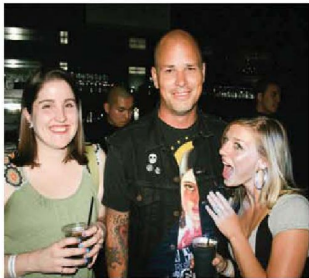
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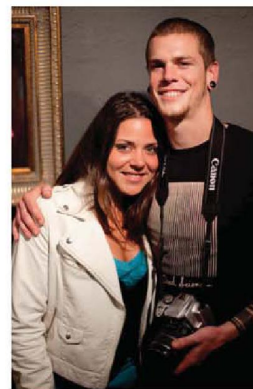




## SAILOR JERRY 10TH ANNIVERSARY

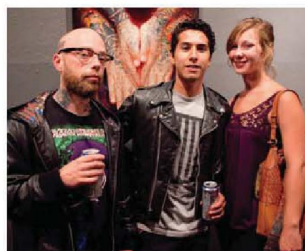
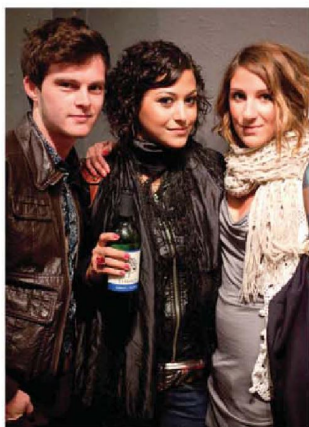
Tattoo legend Norman "Sailor Jerry" Collins may be gone, but his legacy lives on. The folks behind the creation of Sailor Jerry clothing and rum celebrated their 10th anniversary at Wasted Space in the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas with a party featuring the Raveonettes. Happy anniversary! For more photos, go to [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com).





## SHAWN BARBER'S "TATTOOED PORTRAITS"

Before he became a tattoo artist, Shawn Barber made a name for himself by painting portraits of tattooers and folks with tattoos. Barber continued his painting series with a show at Shooting Gallery in San Francisco titled Tattooed Portraits: Snapshots. **For more photos, go to [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com).**

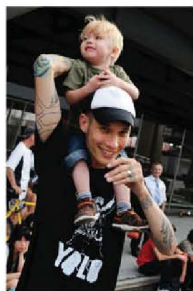
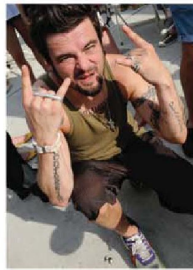


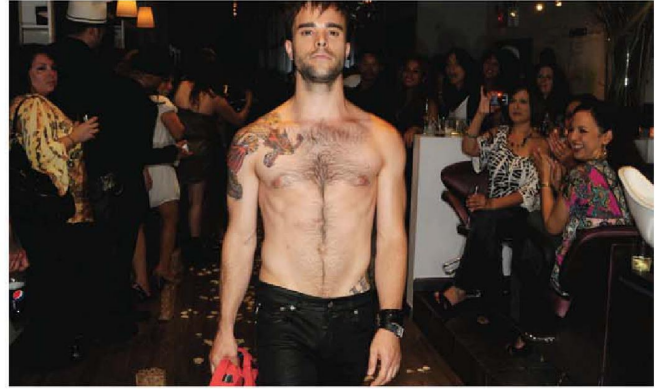


## NEW YORK ADORNED BLOCK PARTY

One of the highlights of the summer for INKED's Brooklyn-based staff is the annual block party thrown by New York Adorned at their Brooklyn location. Free booze and eats plus a killer crowd make for one sweet summer jam!

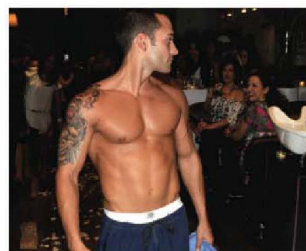
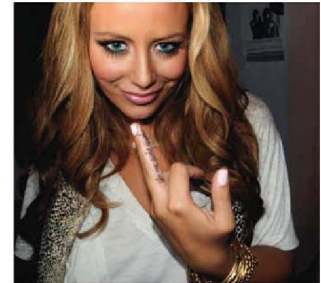
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## FRIDAY JONES STUDIO OPENING

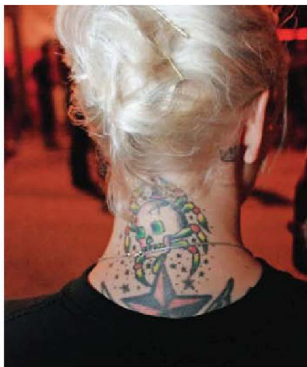
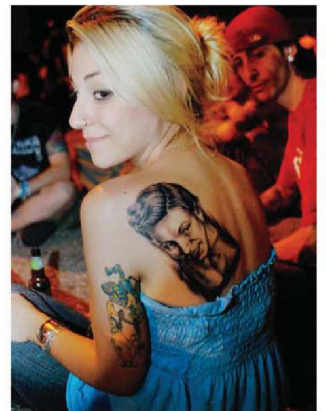
Tattoo artist Friday Jones celebrated the opening of her new studio, a posh space inside the Sense New York Spa and Salon on Fifth Avenue in New York City. Jones tattooed singer Aubrey Day while partyers, including tattoo legends Lyle Tuttle and Spider Webb, downed drinks and watched a fashion show. **For more photos, go to [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com).**





## ROCK THE INK

The Rock the Ink series of tattoo fests include tattoo artists, live bands, and more. The Providence, RI, convention featured special guest Bam Margera, a Miss Tattoo pageant, and bands such as Otep and (Hed) P.E. alongside more than 100 tattoo artists. Next stop: Atlanta, GA, December 18–20. Don't miss it. For more photos, go to [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com).







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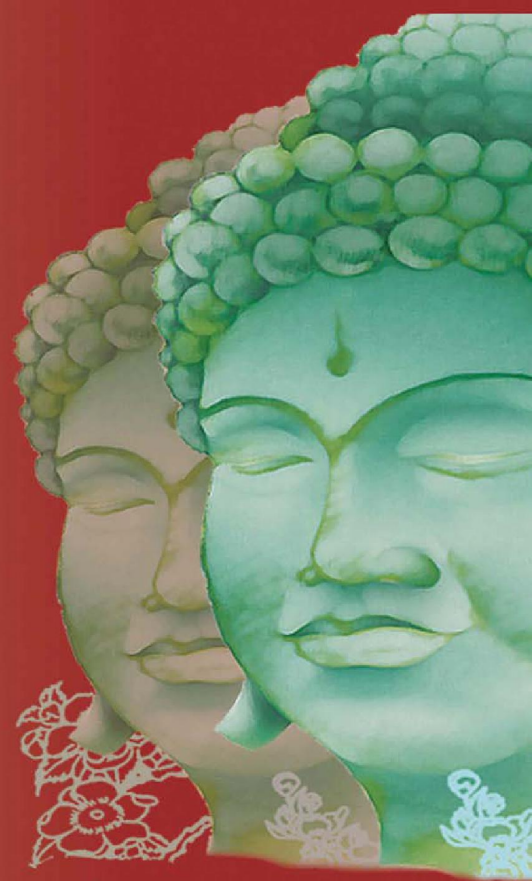


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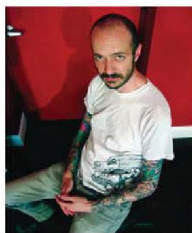
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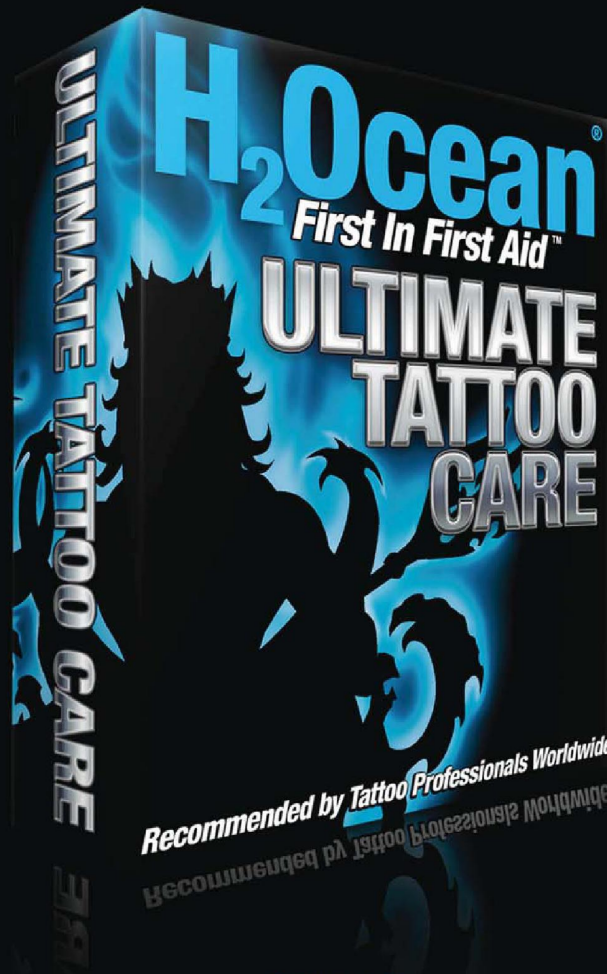


# GENE COFFEY

Tattoo Culture, 129 Roebling St., Brooklyn, NY, 718-218-6532, [tattooculture.net](http://tattooculture.net)

Artist Gene Coffey works at Tattoo Culture, a gorgeous studio and art gallery tucked into the hipster haven of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY. "The shop I work in gets all kinds of requests so I have to be pretty versatile," he says. "I like doing realistic black and gray work, though I wish more people in my neighborhood would get stuff like that." Coffey counts Shige, Jeff Gogue, Derek Noble, and Dan Marshall as influences and spends a lot of time painting when he's not manning the tattoo machine. "I also play the banjo and make really bad electronic music. Oh yeah, and then there's that damn Xbox!"

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