

# Inked

CULTURE. STYLE. ART.

## THE ART ISSUE

WITH GYPSY ROSE

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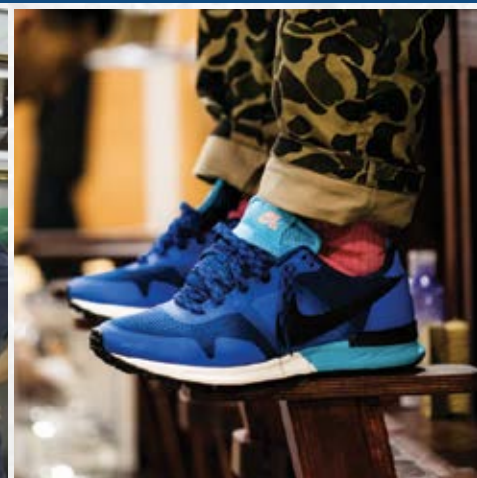
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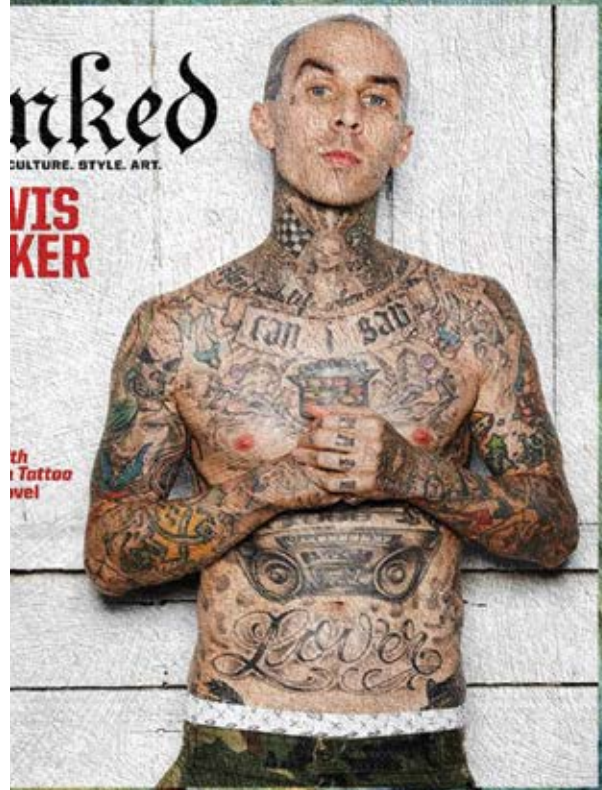




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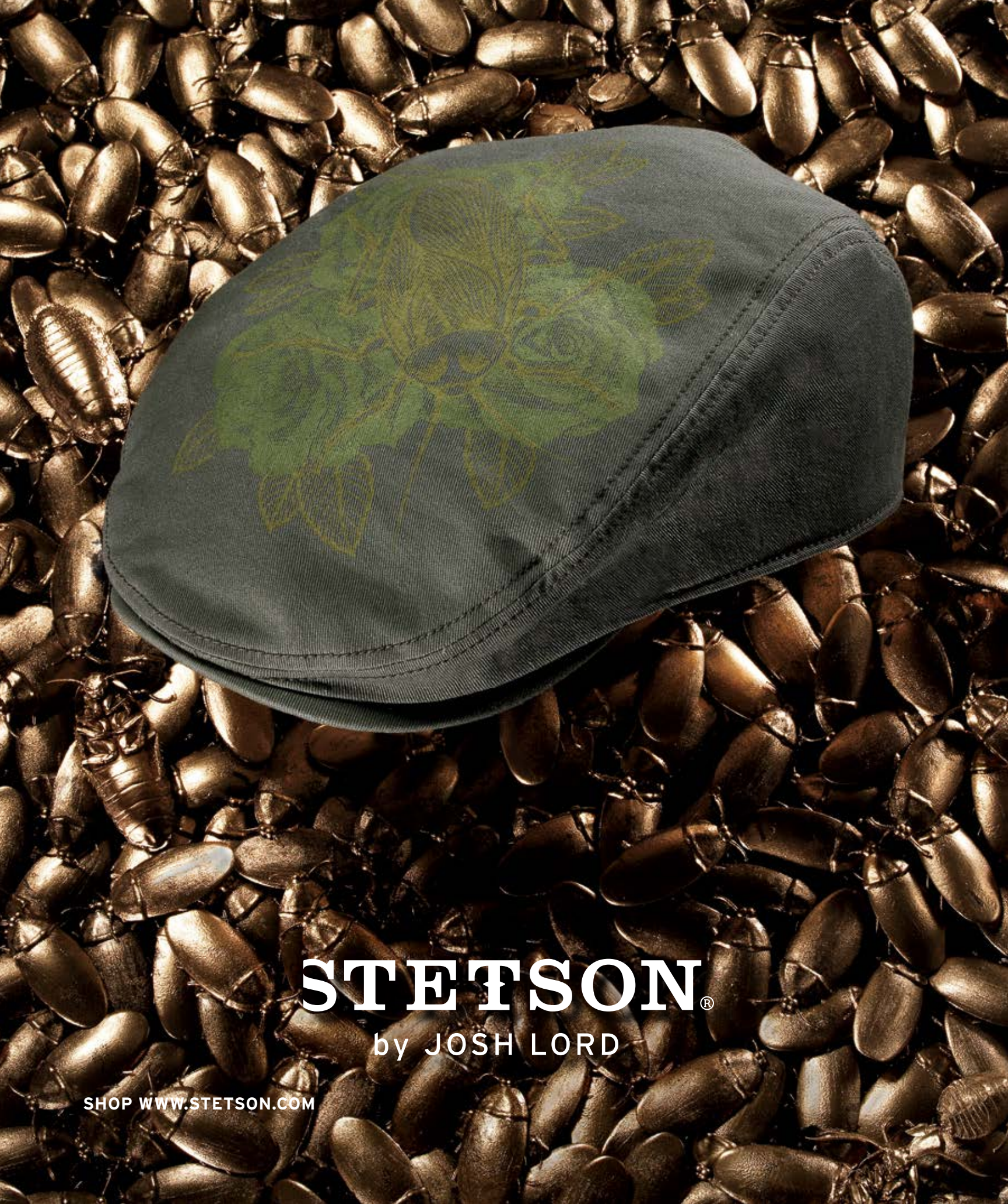


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On the cover: Gypsy Rose; artwork by Big Gus photo: Phil Knott; stylist: Bianca Zanders; hair: Angela Kaeser using Kevin Murphy Products; makeup: Bethany Townes for Ardency Inn. This page: Eisen Bernard V. Bernardo laid our cover over (from left) Psyche at a Fountain by Guillaume Seignac, The Bather by Paul Cezanne and Nymph in a Wood by Arthur Spooner.





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# INKWELL

Here's to the crazy ones. The creatives. The misfits. The rebels. The shaker-uppers. The unapologists.

This, our Art Issue, is dedicated (with a spin on Apple's 1997 "Think Different" campaign) to those who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for conformity. You can disagree with them, glorify or vilify them.

But the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they are our troubadours. They invent. They imagine. They heal. They explore. They create. They inspire. They push our culture forward.

Maybe they have to be crazy.

How else can you stare at an empty piece of canvas and see a work of art? Or sit in silence and hear a rap that's never been written? Or gaze at a feminine form and know they can improve upon nature with a tattoo?

We give them a platform to display their triumphs. These virtuosos are people like Rik Lee (1) who illustrated the striking form of Inked Girl Mary-Leigh Maxwell. Ramon Maiden (2), by request, enhanced Bettie Page's iconic 1955 *Playboy* centerfold by giving her a body suit. And Eisen Bernard V. Bernardo (3) cleverly positioned past *Inked* covers into the classic pieces of art like Paul Cezanne's *The Bather*. Juxtaposing hard-looking tattooed cats with corny holiday wear was the artistry of stylist Janelle Miller (4). I am also talking about visual artists that work in photography, specifically Mike Ruiz (5), who positioned cover model Cervena Fox for her liquid latex shoot. And then there are the artists who used Converse canvas kicks as a canvas such as Monstrinho. In the most intimate of photos, Bilacous (7) presents his lover and inspiration Daisy Darling. Another creative couple combines their aesthetics for a playful pictorial as *Tattoo Nightmares'* Big Gus draws designs around his new bride and partner in art Gypsy Rose (8). The result looks as if the tattoos jump off her skin and surround her world.

While some see them as the crazy ones, we see pure genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.

Rocky Rakovic  
Editor-In-Chief  
editor@inkedmag.com





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# MAIL



**SHOW US YOUR INKED** Nothing gives us more of a thrill than seeing your photos with our community's magazine. From a printing plant in Minnesota, Inked is sent out to the four corners of the world so we love it when we see exactly where the issue lands. Got a picture of you reading Inked on vacation? Send it in. Did you use some photos from Inked to decorate your tattoo shop? Put that up on Instagram and tag us. Did you use our pages to line your chinchilla's cage? E-mail that to me at [editor@inkedmag.com](mailto:editor@inkedmag.com). If you send me a photo of you reading on the toilet, you better be cute. The above Instagrammer showed us Inked was in good hands. Love your magazine. It's my go-to read for my flights. **ACE\_FROST87**

## facebook

### PRETTY DEAD

**Jimmy Rose** Rachelle Nicole Hoffman always leaves me speechless

**Dominic Yazzie** I think I just found the new wallpaper for my phone.

**Erica Solis** Oh my good this is so kool  
**Eric Cleveland** Her beauty is haunting my dreams, in a good way

### OVERALL LOVE

**Steven Wilson** Love the new direction of the magazine

**Astrid Gallindo** Now this issue is badass

**Gwendolyn Bray** My fave issue of the year...

### YELAWOLF

**Colin Hauff** Dope #slmerican

**Christy Vancleave** Beautiful picture

**Kämpe Pettersson** Haha, heart of dixie!

### THIS GIRL IS ON FIRE

**Ben Coventry** This is one tough chick

**Jamie Jackson** She is my hero

**Freddy Tatts** I'm in love, again

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## TATTOO OF THE MONTH



BY: DREW APICTURE @DA\_INK  
 Want to be a Tattoo of the Month?  
 E-mail your ink to [editor@inkedmag.com](mailto:editor@inkedmag.com)

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*Daisy*

Photos by Bilacous







## INKED LIFE | MY FAVORITE INK

The UK model with frozen eyes and gorgeous tattoos is photographer Bilacous' muse and lover. "I'm honored to play a part in such a talented photographer's work," Daisy says. "I'm a very lucky girl to have him in my life. I mean it couldn't be a better partnership; you have a model and a photographer who are crazy about each other and have a real connection together—it's the perfect source of artistic inspiration. I always say Bilacous is my partner in crime."

Daisy acquired her first tattoo as soon as she turned 18, and she started off big as it is a lady spitting blood at the moon. "The idea was meant to be a symbol of how I felt at the time: a lady in the day but a creature of the night." She followed up what was a plan for a half-sleeve with a wolf and then she got the "thirst for tattoos" and completed her arm.

Her headpiece, like these photos, was done with Bilacous. "He and I decided to get our heads tattooed together about

six months into our relationship," she recounts. "In fact Bilacous was the one who treated me to it and introduced me to his artist Wesley Lambe. The tattoo is my take on a mandala. It's a flower shape with compass points and an all seeing eye in the middle. For me it symbolizes blossoming in life, never losing my way and always being aware of my surroundings."

To further their joint creative journeys, Daisy is aiming to become a makeup artist so that she can have a hand in styling the girls that her man shoots. They have a truly complimentary relationship that will continue to create art through skin and lenses. Picture this: an intimate room with a badass photographer with an eye toward the titillating, his fairer half beautifying the comely subject and right before the first picture is snapped Daisy cranks up what she calls "some lip-biting, sexy rock." Flash. 📸

MODEL DREA LEWIS WEARING THE CAMEO RUFFLE TOP  
ARTIST DOUG DORR

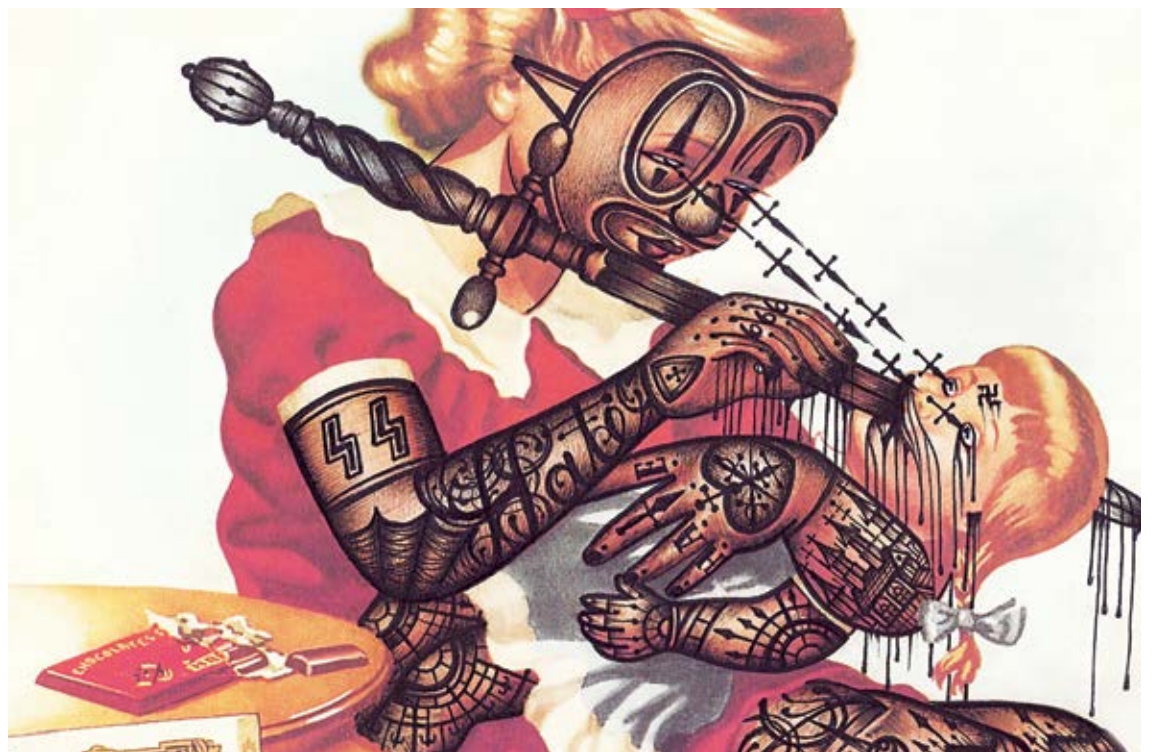
Lucky  
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## RAMON MAIDEN

### The Spanish artist ills his idols.

There is a dream list of people to tattoo in the community. From actresses and celebrities to world leaders and models, every tattooer has a Mount Rushmore of canvases on which he or she hope to leave their mark. Who would yours be? Then there's Ramon Maiden who has inked his designs on Marilyn Monroe, Buddy Holly and Bettie Page. A contemporary, Maiden, draws his tattoos on vintage magazines, advertisements, movie posters and other pieces of ephemera. "Yes,

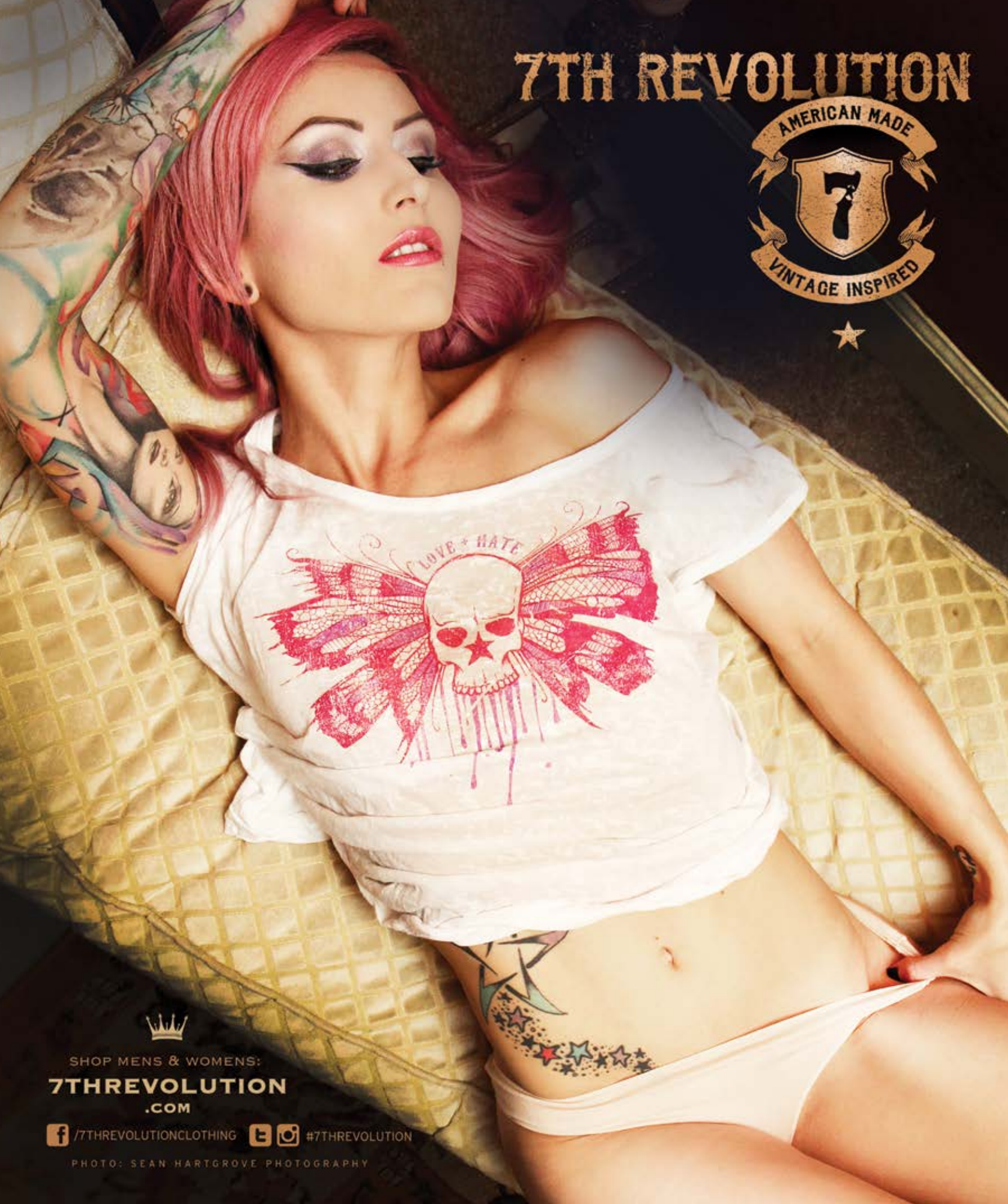
Bettie Page would be tattooed if she were in her prime today," Maiden says. "She was so edgy and sexy, when you think of an edgy-sexy woman now she is tattooed."

Inspired by his friend Dr. Lakra, Maiden alters iconic people (even Jesus isn't safe from his hand) by giving them tattoos of skulls, snakes, and often Maori *ta moko* chin pieces. The result is a jarring visual. When confronted with one of his make-overs you immediately recognize the image, perhaps the face, and then process that the person is tattooed.

Then, with a smirk, you get his genius of melding past iconography with the present style. Delve deeper and you can see the symbolism within the story of the tattooed. That snake creeping up Marilyn Monroe? Maybe that's a bad influence. She has "Lust" written across her brow, she is being choked and consumed by the lifestyle surrounding her. Then there's a young Mao Zedong with a teardrop tattoo and the word "Love." It gives you pause. Look at your own life and own skin, what message are you sending to the world? —Robert McCormick



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PHOTO: SEAN HARTGROVE PHOTOGRAPHY

# DRINK HER IN

## Cocktail Conversation

A CHAT ABOUT TATTOOS WITH BIKINI BARTENDER AIRICA MICHELLE OF DISTRACTIONS LOUNGE IN HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA

**WHAT IS IT LIKE WEARING A BIKINI TO WORK?**

I actually like it because rather than covering my expensive artwork I get to show more of it off than with pretty much any other occupation.

**WHAT'S THE WORST PART OF WEARING A BIKINI BEHIND THE BAR?** Worrying about nip slips.

**DO YOU FEEL THE UNIFORM SHOWS OFF MORE OF YOUR INK THAN NORMAL BARTENDER WEAR?**

Yes, definitely, unless some nude bartender bar exists.

**WHICH TATTOO DO YOUR PATRONS POINT OUT THE MOST?** My mermaid, followed by my dragon—they are hard to miss covering both sides of my body.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CLIENTELE?**

Mostly male—shocking, I know—from 21 to as high as 70, 80, who even knows?

**DO YOU HAVE PLANS FOR MORE?** I have some ideas but I'm satisfied enough with my coverage at this point to take a long break from getting tattooed.

**YOU ALSO STUDY PSYCHOLOGY, AND SOME SAY BARTENDERS ARE PSYCHOLOGISTS, WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO PURSUE THAT?**

I was working as an Esthetician and while I was giving a client a facial she ended up sharing some issues with her life with me that inspired me to want to become a therapist. The next semester I went back to school and continued until I received my BA in Psychology. Grad school is in the near future.

**WHAT'S THE WILDEST EXPERIENCE YOU'VE EVER HAD AT DISTRACTIONS?**

As you can imagine, fights break out at bars. Customers grabbing bar stools looking like they were about to joust was pretty hilarious.

Photo by Gregorio Campo





# SCOTCHY, SCOTCH, SCOTCH

These blended scotch drinks by Joe Donohue will put hair on your chest (and lip like Ron Burgundy).

Photo by Will Styer



## CUTTY SARK EWEN ALEXANDER

- 1 ½ oz Cutty Sark Prohibition Edition
- ½ oz Dark crème de cacao
- ½ oz Grand Marnier
- 1 oz Heavy cream

Add ingredients into a mixing glass, fill with ice, shake vigorously and strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with freshly grated nutmeg.

## J&B SCOTCH WHISKEY WILLIE'S DOLLAR

- 2 ozs J&B Scotch Whisky
- ¾ oz Honey syrup
- ½ oz Lemon Juice
- Ginger beer

Add ingredients to a highball glass, add ice, top with ginger beer and stir briefly. Garnish with a sprig of rosemary.

## JOHNNIE WALKER GOLD LABEL ALLIGATOR RAIN

- ¾ oz Johnnie Walker Gold Label
- ¾ oz Pierre Ferrand dry curacao
- ¾ oz Benedictine
- ¾ oz Lemon juice
- 2 dashes orange bitters

Muddle the mint, lime, and simple syrup in a tall glass, then add ice and the remaining ingredients and stir.

Add ingredients to a mixing glass, fill with ice, shake and strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with an orange twist.

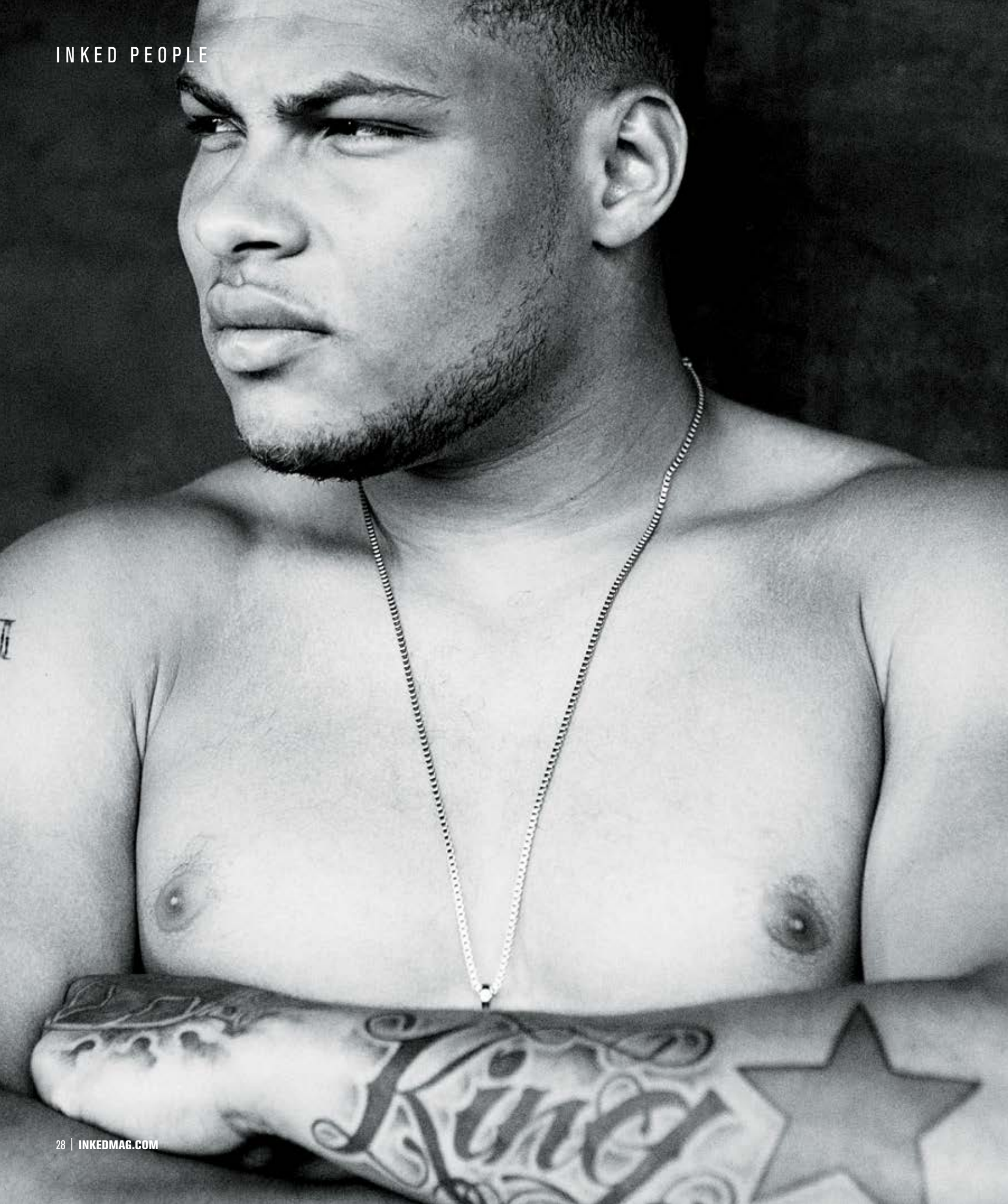
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There is power in a nickname, especially when a packed football stadium of 80,000 people is chanting that name. Few know this quite as well as Arizona Cardinals safety Tyrann Mathieu. In many ways Mathieu's life is the story of two nicknames, each representing a different side of the man's personality. King is the man that Mathieu has always strived to be—successful, talented and in control. The Honey Badger is the animalistic side of Mathieu that makes him a beast on the football field and is less welcome in the other aspects of his life. Mathieu's struggle is making sure the name echoing from the stands is the one he wants to hear.

*Hooooney Badger! Clapclap clapclapclap. Hooooney Badger!*

Mathieu's ability to deliver crushing hits on defense combined with his explosiveness returning kicks made him an overnight sensation. While playing for the Tigers of LSU he was given the nickname the Honey Badger. Like the animal in the viral video at the time, Mathieu played like he didn't care if the man he was trying to tackle was three times his size, he was still going to attack as hard as he could. Everywhere Mathieu went—on campus, on *SportsCenter*, in visiting stadiums—he was bound to see his face and hear the nickname. By the time Mathieu was about to enter his junior season it was all a bit too much for him, in a way his identity was being taken over by his nickname.

"Tyrann and the Honey Badger are two different people," Mathieu says. "The biggest reason [for distancing myself from the nickname] is that when I was going through that rough time it was when I was being called the Honey Badger. I didn't want people to see me as the Honey Badger and think There's a guy who doesn't have his life together. I want people to know that there's a difference between me and the comic figure."

Mathieu's struggle to find a balance between Tyrann and the Honey Badger would eventually lead to off

the field troubles. Mathieu ended up leaving LSU in a move that may have been best for his well-being but was seen by some as a decision that put his NFL aspirations in serious jeopardy.

In the months leading up to the 2013 NFL draft Mathieu worked extra hard to show teams that he had left the Honey Badger behind and that he was mature enough to be worthy of a draft pick. Reprioritizing his life is one of the key changes that Mathieu made. Mathieu wrote a verse about his new outlook and inked it into his leg to make sure that the knowledge would always be with him. "When you're a star you put God first, let your past guide you, and let the future determine..." the tattoo reads.

As he moved on with his life and career Mathieu took time to reflect on the duality of his personality. Looking back at the parts of his life that he isn't proud of Mathieu feels a disconnection; it's as if those actions were carried out by a different person. Mathieu's very first tattoo, a demonic face on his forearm, is a reminder of the dark side that lurks within him.

"I don't regret it, I don't regret anything I do," Mathieu says. "[The tattoo] reminds me of that place that I once was and lets me know that I'm not there anymore."

Every tattoo that Mathieu has—the demonic face, the script saying "King" on one arm, the script saying "Forever Young" on the other, etc.—serves as a chapter in the book that is his life. By the time he is an old man Mathieu hopes to have covered his entire body with tattoos that tell his story.

*King! King! King!*

"My whole life, growing up, people would refer to me as 'King,'" Mathieu says. "People would refer to me as the golden boy, the golden child. Once I started playing football [on a larger stage] it all made sense."

In the NFL Mathieu has the ability to ditch the Honey Badger moniker and reinvent himself. More accurately, he would like to go back to being the King that he pictured himself becoming

shortly before the Honey Badger name was bestowed upon him. The transition has not been an easy one as his NFL career hit an early snag when he tore his ACL and LCL near the end of his rookie year. The supreme confidence that Mathieu has in his abilities, the belief that he will live up to the nickname of King, helps him weather challenges like his knee injury.

There are two significant steps to rehabbing an injury like the one suffered by Mathieu. The first step is physical. Mathieu had surgery shortly after the injury and has been working on getting his knee back in shape for the last eight months.

"I had never been injured before so it was definitely tough to have such a serious injury," Mathieu says. "I have great people surrounding me, a great training staff and a great doctor. I was encouraged as I tried to put my work in so that I could get some positive results."

The second, and arguably most important, step toward recovery is mental. Playing safety in the NFL requires a player to change directions at full speed multiple times in a single play, a physical feat that requires a player to have absolute confidence in the stability of his knees. Countless hours in the gym can help develop some of that confidence but a player can't know if they are 100% until they step back onto the playing field.

"I was definitely a little nervous and cautious at first," Mathieu says. "Obviously, I didn't want to get hurt again. As the game progressed the nerves went away and I was back to my old self."

As of press time the Cardinals are one of the top teams in the NFL, a pleasant surprise after missing the playoffs last season. The secret to their success has been a stifling defense that has been helped in no small part by Mathieu's return to the field. If Mathieu's punishing hits in the middle of the field help propel one of the NFL's most snakebitten franchises to a Super Bowl victory he will get his coronation. ■

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MATHIEU



# Dripping in



WE GIVE THE LOVELY TATTOO MODEL AND FIREBREATHER CERVENA FOX A SECOND SKIN THROUGH LIQUID LATEX

By Robert McCormick Photos by Mike Ruiz Hair by Davide Torchio using Rene Furterer products for Ivy Eleven

Body Art and Makeup by Jenai Chin using Stila Cosmetics and Make Up For Ever latex Graphic Effects Kevin Tydlaska

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2015 | 31







“I believe your body is a canvas, waiting to be filled with gorgeous pieces of art by artists around the world! I am the artwork.”



The idea of art is often put into too small a frame. A piece needn't be hung in a museum or a gallery to be deemed art—art is everywhere. The graffiti scrawled on the walls of a dive bar's men's room, the design of a tattoo machine, heck, even the simple font of these letters that you are reading right now were designed as art. Yes, we know tattoos are art, that's why we call the talented people who create them "tattoo artists," but the rest of the wearer is also a major contributor to that art.

"I believe your body is a canvas, waiting to be filled with gorgeous pieces of art by artists around the world!" says the girl below, Cervena Fox. "I am the artwork."

She's absolutely right. She is a piece of artwork and you are a piece of artwork in the tableau that is our

world. You, who have picked up our Art Issue and have gotten tattooed because you love artwork share a commonality with Cervena.

"I've always been into art," she says. "From the age of 15 I looked into being a tattoo apprentice, then I became one at 16. After two years of working in a studio I decided to just be the one with tattoos rather than be a tattoo artist. I got my first tattoo at 16, the swallows on my hips. I was very lucky to have picked a good location and tattoo artist as I still love them now."

The other pieces she adores are the tarot card on her shin, her pirate sleeve, and, of course, her fox. "One of the many stories about the Nine Tailed Fox comes from Japanese mythology," Cervena explains. "The fox turns into a geisha girl, seducing the emperor and bringing chaos

into the world. The story moves me, I love the effect women's empowerment can have. We don't always play nice..."

In our story across these pages Cervena plays with the photographer using liquid latex, her body and her tattoos. The collaborative effort is akin to working with a tattoo artist on a design. "Both of you are trying to create a piece of art," she says. "A photographer captures the image—making a scenery of their ideas and making it become a reality. A tattoo artist is someone who paints artwork on people, bringing the image alive on their customers skin."

Her shortlist of favorite tattoo artists are: Antony Flemming, Bez, Moni Marino, Roman Abrego and Paul Acker. Cervena is one of the jewel canvases of the tattoo world but she isn't just nice to look at, she's a

performance artist.

"A few years ago I started doing beauty pageants and it came to my attention that I had no 'talent!'" Cervena says. "I started hula hooping for fitness a few months before then which led to the decision to trying it with fire. I also asked my friends, who are fire performers, to teach me how to fire breath and body burn too! I then got into aerial hoop; I have started performing that live this year. I still have a long way to go with that though—you need lots of core strength. I also do a gore burlesque performance inspired by the film *Queen Of The Damned*. Akasha, the queen of the vampires, eats a man's heart and dances in the flames of her massacre. I'm now planning on doing a new gore burlesque performance in the new year. The human body is a beautiful thing."







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Luke Wessman collected a group of all star artists to deck out Converse kicks.



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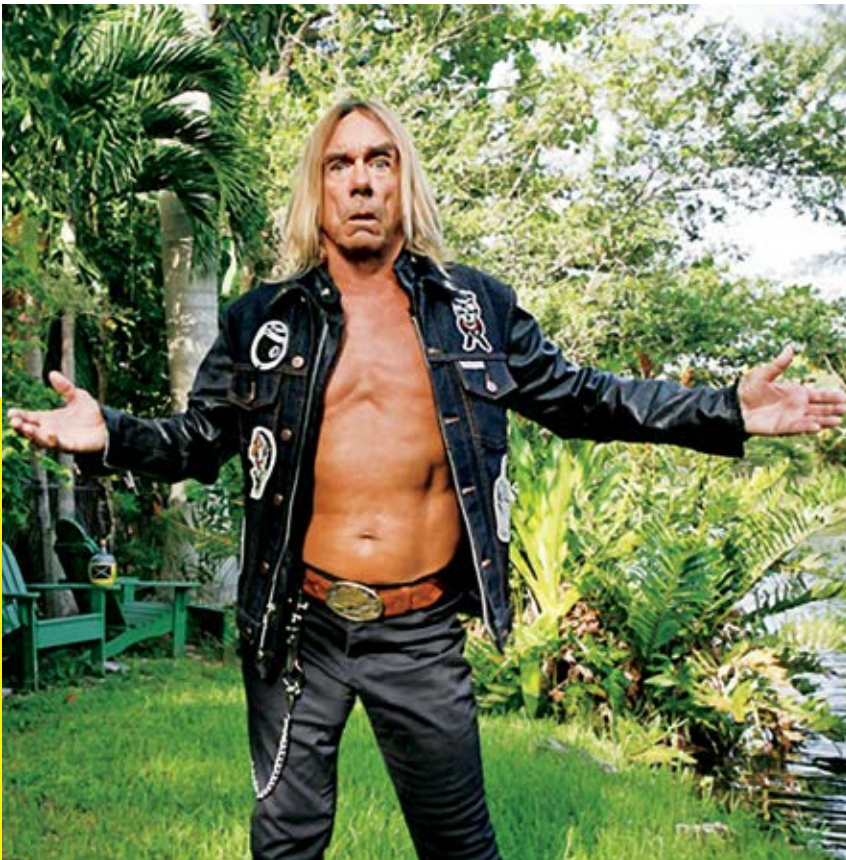
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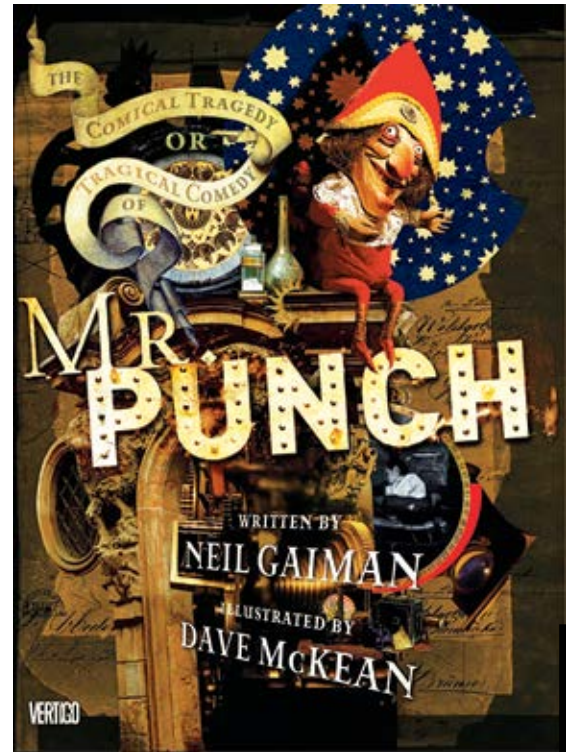


## POP ART

When you imagine Iggy Pop, you think shirtless (and perhaps bottomless) so it is no surprise the 60 year-old punker hasn't delved to far into fashion, until now. Sailor Jerry Clothing had The Stooges god collaborate on a line inspired by another American treasure Norman "Sailor Jerry" Collins. The collection includes a denim vest (\$600) set of patches (\$50) and a leather belt with a brass shark belt buckle (\$240).

## PROTECT YA NECK

Designer Sophia Chang honored Wu-Tang by depicting the five boroughs through dope illustrations of hand tattoos. Now Miss Wax Jewelry took the one-dimensional drawings and alchemized the Shaolin (Staten Island) praying hands into a pendant highlighted by antiqued 14-karat gold finish. Although it's Wu-Tang forever this piece is a very limited edition look for the piece in select stores this December.



## PUNCHED UP

While best known for their work on *Sandman*, Dave McKean and Neil Gaiman had a jewel 20 years ago in *The Comical Tragedy or Tragical Comedy of Mr. Punch*. This beautifully illustrated rerelease parallels the Mr. Punch puppet show, complete with violence, betrayal and unwanted pregnancy.

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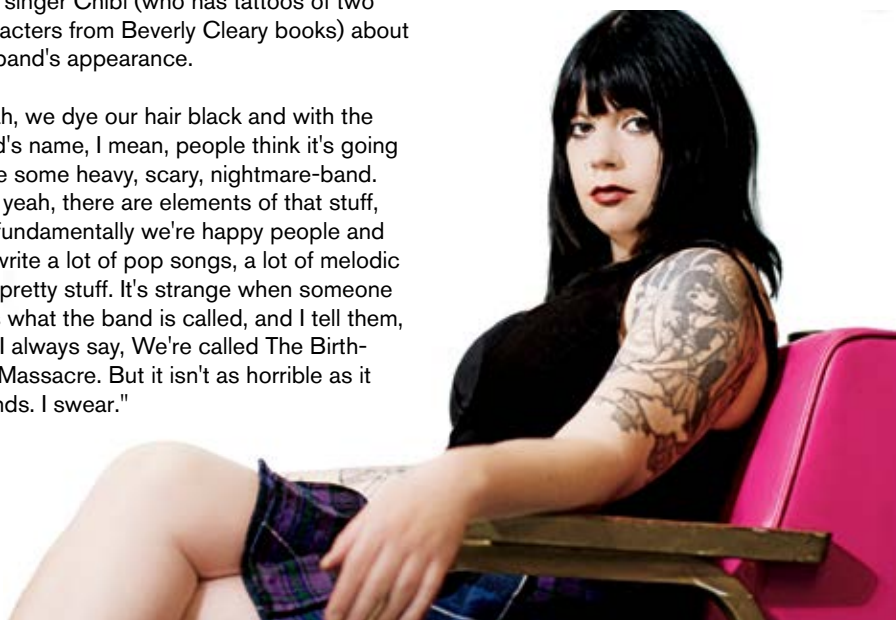
## WORSE THAN GETTING GOAL

In a simpler, harder time, good kids were given toys by St. Nick and bad kids got the wrath of Krampus. If you identify with the

latter show up to Krampusfest's Krampus Ball in LA on December 6th—the naughty girls will most certainly be there.

Canadian electro rockers The Birthday Massacre are back with a stunning new album *Superstition*. Our Gil Macias asked lead singer Chibi (who has tattoos of two characters from Beverly Cleary books) about the band's appearance.

"Yeah, we dye our hair black and with the band's name, I mean, people think it's going to be some heavy, scary, nightmare-band. And yeah, there are elements of that stuff, but fundamentally we're happy people and we write a lot of pop songs, a lot of melodic and pretty stuff. It's strange when someone asks what the band is called, and I tell them, and I always say, We're called The Birthday Massacre. But it isn't as horrible as it sounds. I swear."



## BIRTHDAY GIRL

## FLICKSMAS

Give the gift of testosterone this holiday season with *The Expendables 3*, the third film in the macho-fueled action saga that stars every cinematic ass-kicker known to man. This time Harrison Ford and Mel Gibson



join the ever growing cast that includes Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Dolph Lundgren, Jason Statham and Jet Li to name a few.



Also available is *True Blood: The Complete Series*, which contains all seven vampiric seasons on 33 discs and it's loaded with hours of bonus content. It does

not suck. You can also give some head this season—like this ape bust replica of Caesar from *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* designed by WETA. It's frigging stunning!



*Planet of the Apes: Caesar's Warrior Collection* features both *Rise* and *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* on Blu-ray and you get that awesome bust of Caesar, four collectible character cards, and over five hours of bonus features. A loved one will go apeshit once they unwrap it. —Gil Macias



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# TAKE US TO THE SUPREME LEADER



Crude humor is abound in *The Interview*. David Skylark (James Franco) and his producer Aaron Rapoport (Seth Rogen) run tabloid TV show and in an effort to prove they are legitimate journalists, try to interview

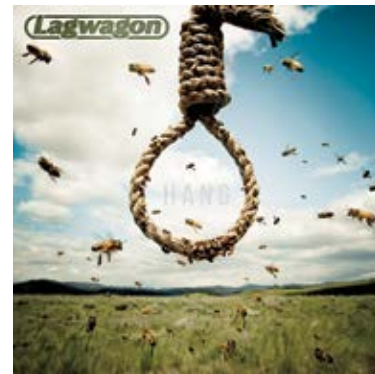
North Korea dictator Kim Jong-Un, who is actually a big fan and accepts their request. Then the CIA recruits David and Aaron to assassinate the dictator and this is not the end of the hijinks. —*Gil Macias*



## THE DEVIL'S MUSIC

Aksel—the hero from the graphic novel *Sing No Evil* by JP Ahonen and KP Alare—once had no problem greater than getting lost in the heavy metal music he was creating. Well, that and also upsetting his girlfriend. When he is accosted by demons, hell-sent evil spirits that may have been brought to life by the music of his band Perkeros, Aksel finally has real issues to deal with.

*Sing No Evil* is a love letter to the Finnish metal scene that raised Ahonen, imagine Scott Pilgrim in a far more brutal band with an actual bear playing drums! Pay special attention to the tattoos (Ahonen himself is sleeved in black-and-gray birds and flowers) of some of the book's characters as the creators' extreme attention to detail certainly have hidden clues within the symbolism. —*Charlie Connell*



## THE INKED PLAYLIST BY JONAH BAYER

### DAVID BAZAN + PASSENGER STRING QUARTET

#### "The Fleeing"

This reworking of a Pedro The Lion staple gets a classical bent and new life.

### CROWBAR

#### "Symmetry In White"

The metallic grooves on this track are so sludgy that you'll need a shower after listening.

### BEACH SLANG

#### "All Fuzzed Out"

As the title implies, this song is a fuzzed-out rocker that's shimmers and shines.

### CHUMPED

#### "Name That Thing"

Chumped strip the feeling of happiness down to its essence with this pop-punk confessional.

### FOO FIGHTERS

#### "The Feast And The Famine"

Dave Grohl & co. lull you into a false sense of security before erupting on this explosive rocker.

### LAGWAGON

#### "Burning Out In Style"

H Don't let the song title fool you, these punk vets sound as incendiary as ever on this melodic masterpiece.

### LEWIS & CLARKE

#### "Triumvirate"

It's pleasurable to get lost in this quietly captivating, eight-minute-long atmospheric folk song.

### J MASCIS

#### "Every Morning"

Dinosaur Jr's frontman gets acoustic and introspective but doesn't forget the guitar solos.

### RANCID

#### "Honor Is All We Know"

Rancid surpass the fury of peers half their age on the raging title track from their eighth full-length.



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## PLAY A GAME?

One of the hottest open world experiences is back, and this time you can bring a friend. Far Cry 4 transports players to a fictional country in the Himalayas being torn apart by a revolutionary war. As the son of the resistance's deceased leader, Ajay Ghale must disrupt heroin operations, work with gun traffickers, and protect ancient temples to rally the people to his side and wrestle the country from the hands of its dictator. Along the way, two friends can team up to take back strategic stronghold via helicopter, turreted trucks, or raging elephants (pick the pachyderms). When you're not turning the tide of war, take in the sights of the breathtaking environment, explore the mountain terrain for artifacts, or hunt down the region's many deadly animals.

**Platforms: PS4, Xbox One, PS3, 360, PC**

—Matt Bertz



### CARVED

Skate decks need to be lightweight but durable enough that they can grind a rail under all your weight. Proof, an eyewear company based in Boise, thought those attributes would also make a perfect pair of sunglasses. Their skate collection, made of Canadian maple decks, is the raddest thing to happen to boards since the kicktail.

## Re:RE



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—Kirstie Kovats



## PRECISION MOVEMENT

Harley-Davidson and Bulova could easily be the ideal American dream team. Both brands embody exceptional technique, precision and timing. Together, their watches deliver with class, pride and vigor to their wearers. Part of the Raised Brake Lever Collection, the stainless steel watch pictured above has a vertically embossed pattern, black dial and a stylized calendar. The timing is tighter than an evolution engine.

—Kirstie Kovats

## BIGGIE, SMALL

The problem with garden gnomes is that they don't give your yard any of the street cred you deserve. Enter Plastic Cell's hand-painted sculptures that include likenesses of the Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac Shakur—put one on the east side of your yard and the other on the west.



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WOLVES WILL  
TEAR US APART

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# Ink & Girls

Welcome to the cool world of Rik Lee



Skateboards, pin-ups, wolves, punk rock, American Traditional, gypsies, flipping the bird....odds are, if you're reading this, at least half of those phrases made your ears prick up like a dog who hears the word "treat." Whether you believe tattoos have inspired society or the inverse, one thing can't be denied: the past few years have bore witness to tattoo culture bursting through the pop culture wall like the Kool-Aid Man with "LIVE FAST" inked on his knuckles. If doe-eyed damsels, sailor tattoos and grinning beasts were the crew of a ship, Rik Lee would be at the helm. "I enjoy the symbolism of certain objects," he begins, "and the narratives you can achieve through juxtaposing these objects. Over the years I've tried to combine these classical influences with my modern interests like skateboarding, tattoo art, punk rock, teen angst and graphic design. I like to focus on the contrasts between my mediums, past and present subcultures, and social trends with a regard for design. Each illustration tends to be a clash of elements and influences that I attempt to present in one cohesive and visually attractive composition."

He's made his living illustrating tattooed ladies and iconic ink imagery for over a decade, incorporating his love for the subculture that spawned him with the imagery that inspires him. Lee's work has a cinematic edge to it with each piece feeling like a single frame from a modern day film noir. Lee's flawless depiction of the female form sets him apart from typical pin-up artists in two very noticeable ways: their beautifully expressive eyes, and the ink that adorns their skin. "As my work developed," Lee says, "I began to take a real interest in illustrating people. Attempting to capture someone, their character and idiosyncrasies, in quick sketchbook portrait studies. Many of my friends had tattoos so I'd incorporate them into my work. If they didn't have tattoos, I'd design my own and add them to the piece. I loved it and found it almost impossible to resist drawing tattoos on any exposed skin of these portrait drawings. It's just something that I've continued to develop with my work, trying to improve my illustrations of people while designing and adding tattoos along the way."

Lee is unhindered by a particular style, inking his beauties in Chicano lettering, Japanese iconography, even stick and poke style designs, whatever he feels would serve to compliment both the form of the woman and the story behind her. "I try to match the tattoo style with the subject I'm illustrating and the look I want them to have," Lee explains. "For example, a while ago I drew a Japanese friend. She doesn't actually have any tattoos, but she's a massive Studio Ghibli fan, so I designed a heart-shaped chest piece featuring Totoro for her portrait. More recently I drew a lady with a 1980s inspired punk—No Wave look. I gave her crude, hand-made tattoos because I thought that would be more true to her style than, say, a perfect Japanese style sleeve." The end result could best be compared to an iconic photo of Audrey Hepburn crossed with that smoking hot chick that bummed a smoke off of you outside a bar last weekend.

The mystique that surrounds Lee's pin-ups shares the same air of intrigue that tattoos, especially Traditional American tattoos, exemplify. We've all caught a glimpse of a dagger or a snake peeking out of a cuff or a collar with a name or a quote written around it and immediately began to connect the dots in our mind to fabricate a storyline. The same can be said of Lee's work. We wonder, what is he trying to express? The mark of a true artist is the ability to simply evoke a complex mental image, "I hope [people] like it!" Lee remarks. "I hope it sparks some interest, some emotion, some inspiration or motivation."

*The image on this page is an exclusive drawing of Mary-Leigh Maxwell that Rik Lee was inclined to produce for you*





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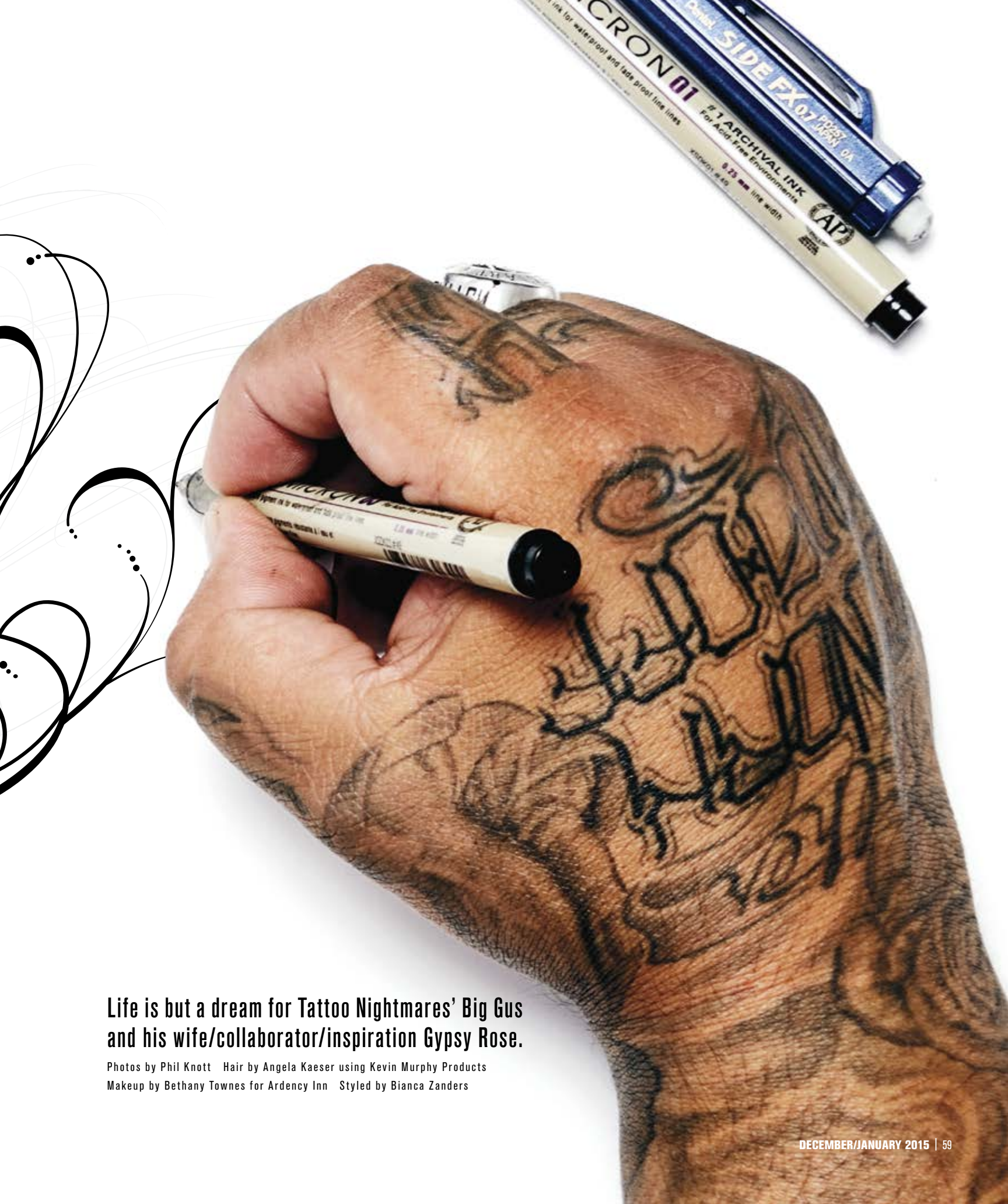
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Photo: Sean Hartgrove



# THE TATTOOIST'S MUSE





**Life is but a dream for Tattoo Nightmares' Big Gus and his wife/collaborator/inspiration Gypsy Rose.**

Photos by Phil Knott Hair by Angela Kaeser using Kevin Murphy Products  
Makeup by Bethany Townes for Ardency Inn Styled by Bianca Zanders





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**Gus:** We met at an art retreat in Colorado that you weren't even supposed to go to.

**Gypsy:** I got forced into going. It was my birthday, the tattoo shop I worked at and my parents made me go.

**Gus:** Your birthday is eventful. Tell them how I proposed to you at the museum.

**Gypsy:** So we were in New York City on my birthday this year and we were supposed to go to the Metropolitan Museum of Art all day but we ended up running errands. We eventually got there and it was only open for an hour. We went to the main outdoor statue area, we love that area the most, and when I wasn't paying attention he did it.

**Gus:** Don't just rush through that: I did the traditional one-knee! Her reaction was funny. Normally the guy gets the ring and you put it on, but she didn't let me put it on. She grabbed the ring out of my hand and jumped on top of me.

**Gypsy:** I started turning red and I didn't want anyone seeing me like that.

**Gus:** Too late. There were little Asian tourist ladies who were all over us going, "Aww."

**Gypsy:** I don't like when people stare at me.

**Gus:** I think people look at you, like you should be confident and own your look. But I think one of the things I love about you is that you don't act like that. You are gorgeous on the outside but even more beautiful on the inside. You are very caring, and very passionate about art, which is how we met in the first place. It is nice to have somebody who is humble, gorgeous and talented. I'm lucky.

**Gypsy:** I am lucky too though. You inspire me every time I watch you tattoo. It is like 'art porn' to me because you are so handsome and I am trying to focus on learning how to tattoo but I split my time looking at you and the tattoo.

**Gus:** With you, I can use you as a reference but you also help me get another artist's point-of-view. I am an artist who lives on drawing beautiful women so to have somebody that I could look at and stand there to pose for me is amazing. I could draw you all the time. It isn't like finding reference material in magazines or on the internet, we have a personal connection that really drives the art.

**Gypsy:** He'll see me in certain lighting and we'll take "memory photos" but they are pictures to grasp ideas for later.

**Gus:** I have used many anatomy photos of her posing for me. But not her face, I don't want to give somebody my lady's face. Fuck that, that's for me to have.

**Gypsy:** And you've tattooed me, the portrait of me holding a machine on my right sleeve. You also gave me the Gypsy and a skull and some dead moths to match my neck on that side. This sleeve represents my love for art.

**Gus:** I have never met somebody so passionate about art as I am and that drives me to not be so comfortable in my art. An artist who is hungry is going to be a great artist. She loves the museum and fine art world and I was born and raised in the tattoo industry so we constantly feed each other. We are never bored. We are not in this for the money we are in this because we love this shit and finally I found a partner who feels the same way.



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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2014 | 13

# Wwale

The hip-hop artist has an unlikely muse: Jerry Seinfeld. Not that there is anything wrong with that.

By Rocky Rakovic Photos by Roberto Chamorro



**W**hen you think of rappers referencing moving pictures the usual suspects are titles like *Scarface* (Future), *Hoodlum* (Gang Starr) or *The Wire* (Eminem). But *Seinfeld*? Yes, emanating from speakers around the block will be *The Album About Nothing*, **Wale's** fourth solo studio output inspired by the '90s sitcom set in New York City's Upper West Side. It's not the "summer of George" it is the winter of **Wale**.

*Seinfeld's* cultural impact doesn't just currently touch upon **Wale's** music, it has informed the fashion movement called "normcore." *The New York Times* fashion pages describe the style as, "Dressing like a tourist—non-ironic sweatshirts, white sneakers and Jerry Seinfeld-like dad jeans—is the ultimate fashion statement." We styled **Wale** with subtle elements of normcore but there were no Manssieres, Urban Sombreros or Puffy Shirts. Here's how to embrace the seminal sitcom without looking like a hipster doofus.

#### THE MAESTRO

"I just can't wait for *The Album About Nothing* to drop. I am excited for it to get out so that I can go out and perform it."

#### MASTER OF MY DOMAIN

"I'm singing most of my own hooks. I feel like I am growing as an artist and I'm not trying to be needy with putting other people on."

#### THAT'S GOLD, WALE! GOLD!

"With this album I'm appeasing my fans trying to make sure they are fucking with what I am doing. I'm going back to things from topics to rap styles that I used to do earlier in my music career that I built my fan base from."

#### SHRINKAGE

"I was inspired by how Jerry would take a small idea and then blow it up. In the way he does dialogue I do lyrics. Jerry is even impressed by how I take one sentence and blow it up into something completely different."

#### SEINFELD, YOU MAGNIFICENT BASTARD!

"What I respect the most out of Jerry is that he is a very consistent dude."

#### LITTLE JERRY SEINFELD

"He is in the entertainment business and I listen to him in the same way that I listen to the old hustlers from around-the-way. He is very wise and a very successful man that everybody should listen to."

#### THE WAIT OUT

"I've only been getting tattooed for four years now. I always wanted them I always saw people with tattoos around-the-way, but I didn't just want to get them. I wanted to have money to get the top-level guys. And when I did get the money I went to Nikko [Hurtado] and went to Randy from Tattoos by Randy. I just go to guys who really live and die for this tattoo stuff."

#### PLUNGE WORTHY

"I got the Dead Presidents from the movie. That is about a whole, taking what you have to do to live tip. I have The Penalty of Leadership. I have the Scarface line, 'I often wish I could save every one but I'm a dreamer.' That was big, he was the first person to get on where I'm from. A lot of people look to me like I'm the savior to fix everything and I have spent so much of my life to do that."

#### NOT A VAN BUREN BOY

"I'm so dark that you don't even know I am tattooed until you see me up close. But I've got tattoos of Martin Luther King, Muhammed Ali, Malcom X, Tupac and Biggie—people that give me an indescribable feeling when I think about them."

#### JUST REMEMBER, WHEN YOU CONTROL WIKIPEDIA, YOU CONTROL...INFORMATION

"Some troll keeps putting that I have Chris Cooley [former Redskins player] tattooed on me. You delete it and they bring it back—it's so stupid."

#### INKSAPPEAL

"I love tattoos on girls, mostly on the neck and the upper-breast."

#### MAN HANDS

"I don't know how far I am going with this tattoo thing. I might do my hands if I have some children or something like that."

#### GIDDY-UP

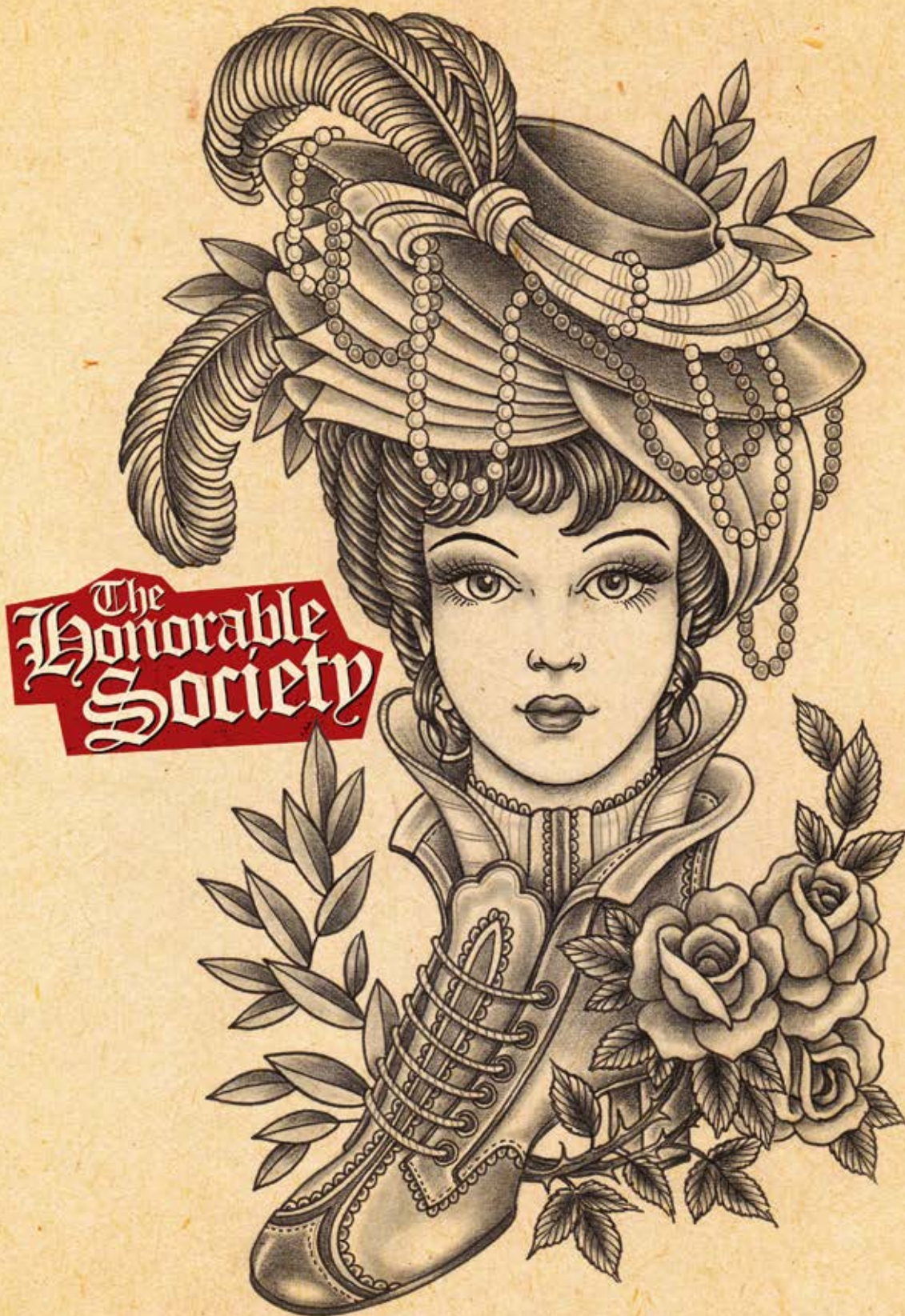
"For right now I have Nikko working on my next piece and I am excited to have *The Album About Nothing* to come out so that my fans can be fucking with what I'm doing."



*“I always saw people with tattoos around-the-way, but I didn’t just want to get them. I wanted to have money to get the top-level guys.”*



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## LORD'S EYE

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### WHO SAYS A TATTOO IS FOREVER?

#### PART 9 OF ONE MAN'S JOURNEY INTO THE ELITE WORLD OF TATTOOING ART AND CULTURE.

BY JOHN BUFFALO MAILER  
PHOTOS BY KATRINA EUGENIA

This was the only tattoo Josh Lord had ever wanted to remove. He had already been through two sessions, but the offending party was still noticeably dark on his wrist. He would need at least two, likely three more sessions. Ariel Lasevoli, the esthetician who would be doing the laser removal on them today, looked like she was 19, although she must have been a few years older, given her resume. In addition to being an esthetician, Ariel was also an acrobat, and certified personal trainer at Crunch Gym on East 34th street in Manhattan.

"Where are you from?" Buffalo asked her. "New York. Chelsea." She said, not looking up from Josh's wrist, which she was shaving so as to avoid the funky burnt hair smell that comes with laser removal if you don't shave first. "Did you have to get certified to do this?" Buffalo asked as innocently as he could. She was annoyed by the question. "Yeah, I'm an esthetician. And then I tacked on a laser certification on top of that." Who was this guy getting her to work for free under the guise of writing some piece for *Inked*? It smelled fishy.

She turned her attention back to Josh. "Do you want to do the whole thing today?" "Yeah. Do you think it's a bad idea?" Josh seemed perhaps a twinge uneasy for the first time since Buffalo had met him a year and a half earlier, when they had first started this piece on his shoulder. "No," she said it with a calming authority. "And I'll avoid the white as much as possible." Why does white always hurt more than any other color, both when going in, and apparently coming out? Buffalo wondered. Was there some racial metaphor to be drawn from

this? "So, what does it feel like?" Buffalo asked Lord, trying not to sound like a complete pussy. "It's a little different for me than everyone describes. I actually thought it hurt a little bit less than getting a tattoo. Almost everyone else thinks it hurts a little more." "But it's in the same ball park of pain?" Buffalo was trying to get scientific about it. He had always found that when you try to define the pain you are feeling in the moment, you diminish it. "Yeah, it's similar. You've done it before. Haven't you?" Both Buffalo and Ariel answered "No" at the same time. She could tell from one look at him that Buffalo had never had any ink removed. She could also tell that he was uneasy, maybe even nervous. "Oh, right, it's your first sitting," Josh said, as if there would need to be more than one. "How many sessions do you think we'll need to do before you can work your magic and finish this piece?" It had been a year and a half at this point and Buffalo, like everyone else involved, had become worried that it would never be done. Rocky, Buffalo's editor, had forgotten about the assignment so long ago at this point, that he wasn't even pissed off anymore that he had wasted his time and connected Buffalo and Josh with nothing to show for it. "I mean, only a couple," Ariel said, eyeing the tiny tat he no longer wanted on his body. "I'm gonna say two," was Josh's feeling. "How long do I have to wait in between sessions?" Buffalo sensed he was not going to like the answer. "I usually recommend five weeks," Ariel said with a nonchalance that suggested she had no idea how long this process had already been going on. Buffalo gave her a grim nod. She finished shaving Josh's wrist and handed him the safety glasses. "So, I need to step out, right?" Buffalo remembered something about the laser causing blindness if one accidentally looked at it without wearing the proper goggles, and she only had two pairs. "Yeah, you can't see anything or..." Josh had started, but Ariel finished his sentence. "Or you won't see anything." Buffalo turned around and went to the other side of the room.

The tattoo machine had sounded like a combination of hair clippers and a Harley. But the sound of removal was completely different, more like a snare drum beating out the warm up to a war march. *Tap tap tap tap, tap tap tap tap, tap tap tap*

*tap, tap tap tap tap.* Buffalo waited as Josh tried to make polite chit chat, but he could hear the sweat in his voice. This obviously hurt Josh a lot more than he had remembered. Which translated in Buffalo's mind to proof that removing the ink was a fuck load more painful than putting it in. This was confirmed when it was his turn to sit in her chair about fifteen minutes later, when Josh had had all he cared to endure for one session. In his attempt to diminish the pain by defining it, the closest Buffalo came was the thought that it felt like someone was going into his arm with jagged microscopic pliers and ripping out each drop of ink that had been placed there 15 years before. It hurt all right. No two ways about it. But it was perhaps the most fascinating pain Buffalo had ever experienced. As she lasered off each spec of what was once the small tattoo he had designed and gotten with a friend of his named Jaime, a beautiful red head he had known since high-school, Buffalo's head was suddenly flooded with memories from the moment he had had the ink put in his arm. He assumed the phenomenon was due to the unique experience of feeling pain in exactly the same micro-spots he had felt a similar (although significantly less intense) pain 15 years prior. At the center of pain, is radiance. His father's line from his novel *Ancient Evenings* echoed through Buffalo's head.

As her laser ripped out his ink, Buffalo could remember the smell of the artist's breath (if you could call the guy who had done the simple round design they had brought him an artist). Buffalo recalled how he and Jaime had designed the little tattoo together that day, then walked all over the East Village in search of the tattooer she had in mind. It was a rainy day in New York, cold and mean. Buffalo and Jaime had been friends since they were 16. While in college, he once visited Jaime at her school and the two finally consummated what had always been boiling under the surface of their friendship. As he moved inside the smooth wet warmth she had for him, holding her tight and close and staring into her blue oceans of eyes, they both looked down and smiled at the vision of the tattoos each had on their pelvis (the laughing and crying masks of theater for Jaime on her right, the broken bleeding heart

for Buffalo on his left) rubbing up against each other as if the pieces were making their own form of sweet love. That Summer they decided to design a piece together that they would both carry with them for the rest of their lives. But they never found the artist Jaime wanted, and ultimately went with some random dude with a shaved head who happened to be available at that moment, in a shop neither one of them had heard of.

Buffalo went first, of course, chivalrous to a fault as always, and wound up with what was at least a symmetrical tattoo, even if it was not the greatest piece ever known to mankind. (From a distance, it looked like a grey birthmark.) Jaime went next and it quickly became apparent that the dude with the shaved head had unfortunately just gotten lucky with Buffalo's tattoo. This guy was no artist. Jaime ended up walking out of that shop with the most sloppy tattoo either one of them had ever seen on anyone. Instead of round, it was egg shaped. And the scarring was needless and plentiful. Buffalo had always felt guilty about how that had turned out, even though he knew there was nothing he could have done to alter the outcome, save calling the whole thing off until they found an artist at least one of them knew could do decent work, which neither one was prepared to do. Now they were both stuck with it. Or were they?

Several years after they had gotten those tattoos, a miscommunication on the phone lead to a fall out. Like a very bad friend, Buffalo had confused the day of Jaime's wedding and missed it entirely. For that, she could never forgive him. This was shortly after his father had died and his mother was not doing well, having to have surgery three weeks after his old man had passed. Buffalo was just kind of fucked up at the time, over-worked, and too fried to prevent such a mistake from happening. He had tried to explain this to Jaime, but she was, understandably, not having it. She hung up on him in a cold rage and they had not spoken since. Now he was getting the last remnant of their time together removed from his body. He could not help but wonder if she had ever done the same. Who says all tattoos are forever?

*Inked has been serializing John Buffalo Mailer's literary tattoo memoir. If you missed the earlier installments visit [inkedmag.com/buffalo](http://inkedmag.com/buffalo)*





INKED SCENE | *ICON*

# ZACK **SINGER**

By Natasha Van Duser



Few young tattoo artists find success in the industry as quickly as Zack Singer. The Dallas-based tattoo artist doesn't yet have a decade of skin in the game but he has already made such an impact that he is at the iconic level.

The owner of Perception Fine Body Art, the man is gifted with skills that range across all of the major styles of tattooing. Singer is best known for his ability to flawlessly combine a multitude of tattoo aesthetics that should normally clash when mixed together. He has helped redefine the dotwork genre of tattooing by using a stipple method to create life-like portraits entirely out of little black dots. This stippling style has really put Singer ahead of his time, as he not only dabbles in basic dotwork but also expands it to incorporate qualities of illustrative and realistic imagery, truly making him an icon of the new inked generation.

**INKED:** How did you first get involved with the tattoo world?

**SINGER:** Well, my dad took me to get my first tattoo when I was 18. I was always into tattoos; I was a little skateboarder kid and all my older homies were all tattooed up, so it's just something I've always been into.

**Was there a defining moment where you knew you were going to be a tattoo artist?**

I randomly met Billyjack Gunter at a party, and he's the owner of Artistic Encounter Tattoo here in Dallas, Texas. That's actually who I apprenticed under for three years. I pretty much worked for Billyjack for seven years and that was the only tattoo shop I worked at until I opened my own [Perception Fine Body Art]. I left Artistic Encounter and did my own thing. I had a private studio that I tattooed at by appointment only for about a year or so, and then just travelled after that. It's been quite a process getting my shop going. So that's my adventure for right now.

**What led you to want to open up Perception Fine Body Art?**

I just wanted to give back to my customers and create an atmosphere that hit the style and quality

of my tattoos. I wanted to be able to have a lot of artists that want to work in an environment that helps them be creative and helps the artists produce the highest quality that they can produce as well.

**What would you say is the overall vibe at Perception Fine Body Art?**

I would say it's a relaxing environment, yet still artistically stimulating. I put a lot of my own design into the building, so every aspect of it has geometric patterns and curved walls. Even the stations where artists put their ink has glowing pyramids with LED lights and stuff like that, so the shop has a very modern, spa, art gallery feel, which is kind of a unique mix.

**As a shop owner, what do you look for in a tattoo artist that you would want to work with or hire?**

I look for someone who always wants to evolve and move forward with their artwork, not someone that's really set in any one specific path. Someone that's fun to be around who gives good constructive criticism, but can also take constructive criticism, just someone that you can kind of reflect and grow with and really be artists.

**You work in a variety of styles that mix realism, pointillism and illustrative all together. What led you to want to work in such a unique style?**

I like doing a mix of styles. I kind of get bored doing just one and I feel like you can create a balance by mixing styles. You can create a balance with different weights of pointillism and line work and photo-realism to kind of give things certain amounts of depth. So that's kind of why I'm into mixing.

**When you first started tattooing what were the styles that you found yourself working in?**

Really it was just kind of basic. It was hard to turn my tattooing style into something that was actually tattooable. When I first started out I was drawing some weird stuff and really didn't understand how I could translate it into skin because tattooing is already its own art form in itself. I just kept kind of small and did a bunch of flash, just typical apprenticeship stuff. I was doing

a lot of roses and Japanese. Just doing all of that kind of led me to be able to do a mix of styles.

**How have pointillism masters like Georges Seurat influenced your work?**

His famous painting *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* was one of the first pointillism pieces that I ever saw. When I saw that it was kind of crazy to think that you could create something realistic by only using dots, changing the distance between the dots, and the contrast of the dots. That concept was just really crazy to me. One thing I like about that now is that when you look at everything, they're like little atoms, and atoms make up matter. It's just a cool correlation to think about, just the idea that little tiny things do matter and create a big image.

**If you could collaborate with one artist, either dead or alive, who would it be?**

Salvador Dalí is a big inspiration; he was really into photo-realism but really bent reality making your mind kind of go there. It gives you something different to look at. It's not just your typical stuff, but you can still relate to it because everything is photo realistic, abstract and everything.

**What others artists inspire you?**

I like Nick Baxter; he's awesome. He does this really organic, down-to-earth, kind of cosmically connected type of artwork. Alex Grey, he's an amazing artist; he's kind of this spiritually connected artist as well. He really knows the human anatomy and consciousness. I feel like that's a really big part of art, to be able to portray those types of things because everybody relates to them. Whether they really understand it or not, everyone is kind of drawn to it for some reason.

**There's been a lot of talent coming out of Texas recently. Who would you say are some of the top artists of that scene that you really admire?**

Right off the bat, the first person that comes to mind is Andrés Acosta. His art is just out of this world. He's really good about composition and creating tattoos that have a lot going on but are still very readable as tattoos. He keeps me

very inspired with that, for sure. Nate Beavers is an amazing artist, too. He kind of keeps me inspired to stay really versatile. He does a lot of photo-realism and he'll do a little bit of traditional, so that's pretty inspiring for me. The same thing goes for Jeff Ensminger; he'll kind of dabble a little bit in some traditional looking stuff and he'll kind of get into some of the organic, sacred geometry stuff as well. Just seeing people that are versatile and able to produce different types of styles at a very high quality is really cool to me; it keeps me motivated to keep pushing my limits.

**Where do you see yourself 10 years down the road?**

Wow, hopefully just progressing with my art and having a shop full of talented artists with awesome guest artists coming down to share their artwork. Really I'd just like to see progression and be healthy and just do my tattoo thing.

**You named your shop Perception Fine Body Art and you have the word "perception" tattooed on your forehead. What is the importance of that word to you?**

It's really kind of for everybody. It's something that people don't really think about, and it's a word that kind of re-came into my life. Everybody's lives are based off of their own perceptions, how you look at a situation or how you deal with it and stuff like that. I feel like tattooing has reached a level in which people are looking at tattoos differently [than they did in the past]. People's perceptions of tattoos are becoming more understood as artwork and fine body art, not just "Oh, I got this little random thing." And that is always fun, I have those random tattoos as well, but people are starting to take tattooing much more seriously. They're planning out masterpieces and really finding artists that are taking that extra step and time to create something new, unique and special. So, Perception Fine Body Art to me is kind of my definition of where art is going.

**How do you feel about the current portrayal of tattoos on television and in the mainstream media?**

I think it's cool. It's getting more tattoo awareness out there. You can



take reality TV as seriously as you want, but I think it's cool because people now are at least taking the time to research artists because of TV. People are starting to want to get higher quality tattoos; they're starting to understand that it really takes a special person to tattoo them and that different artists have different specialties. So in that sense, I really think that tattoo related TV shows are good.

**When it comes to tattooing what kind of machines and ink do you use?**

Recently, like this last half of a year, I've been using my Bishop Rotary and that's probably my favorite tattoo machine that I've used. Then ink wise, I've been using Eternal Ink since I started tattooing eight years ago. That's probably my number one favorite ink. Recently, it's controversial or whatever, I got sponsored by another ink company called Electra-Pro, so I use a mix of two different companies for ink.

**Is there any tattoo that you are absolutely dying to do?**

I'd like to do more stippled portraits for sure; that's probably one of my new favorite things to do. I'd like to do an Albert Einstein stipple portrait with some molecules and some stuff going around. I think that'd be pretty cool. Actually, I'd like to do more of my bioorganic stuff, more like organic flow. That's what I call it. It's probably one of my favorite things to draw.

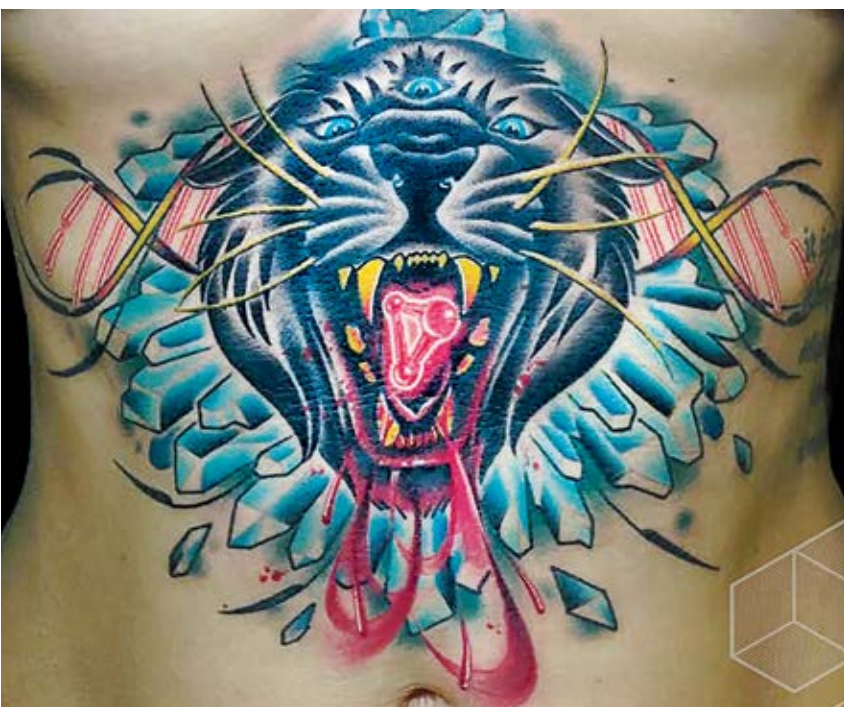
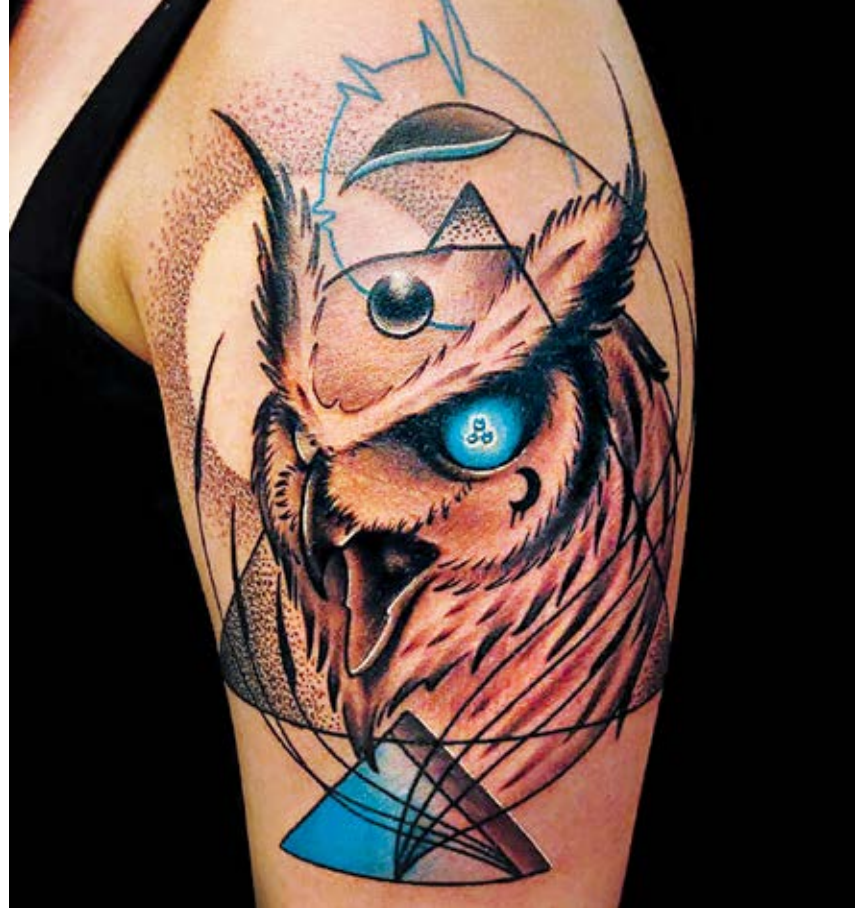
**When you want to do something bioorganic, how do you go about designing the piece for the client?**

I usually freehand all of that. I feel like the piece has a much more natural flow because you can balance it with the actual structure of the body and use muscle structure and stuff like that to your advantage to create different depths of field and flow.

**If you weren't a tattoo artist, what do you think you'd be doing right now?**

I'd probably be either a professional skateboarder or wakeskater; or I would be racing cars. I do all of that now when I have the time. 🐾









# ANOTHER DIMENSION

Little Swastika, an artist's tattoo artist, continues to advance tattooing to places it has never been. Recently the German-based creative powerhouse pushed the boundary of tattooing a body by inking his cohesive design across the backs of 10 people. More than just an art project, the endeavor pushed Little Swastika's endurance and legitimately brought people together. Here are excerpts from his journal during the experience that he called Third Dimension.

Three years ago was when I first expanded a tattoo across more than one human body. After I finished my first double-backpiece I tried different things to play with two human bodies working together as a canvas. When a tattoo covers more than one person, the entire session has more depth. In the spirit, fun, pain and chaos there is a bonding and a bonding. Normally those pieces are between twins, two great friends or a couple, so they already have a connection and the logistics of getting them into the studio are easier. In 2013 I experienced tattooing three people, and then four for my Love Project. But I had the vision to make a tattoo bigger than anyone has ever seen.

It took me a month to figure out how I could position people to paint the design. As I already said, logistics are important, and because I needed to have so many people together at the same time, I enlisted friends who I taught to tattoo—Freak Mike and Basti—to color in the black. That way I could tattoo the design and we didn't need to keep the people twice as long just so I could color in the black.

I created a rough sketch that allowed me to put the design on people and then tattoo them solo, as to not risk cross contamination and long times of waiting while another person was getting tattooed. After I published a sketch of eight people sharing the tattoo I got such a response from willing canvases that I decided to push it to 10 and called Gerhard

Wiesbeck from Time Traveling Tattoo to help fill out the last two.

Everybody came from far away. Ten canvases, four tattooers and two helpers. I planned 80-100 hours of tattooing throughout four days, one day for painting, one day for photography and one more day just in case. The canvases were very easy to work with as I rotated them around until I liked the way they fit together. They knew that they were each getting a backpiece but that I couldn't grant their individual wishes; they accepted that all that mattered would be the end result. If you think about it, just one backpiece is only 10% of the art. Even though it may have seemed absurd, they were ready to get one tattoo, be one as a group and take one trip together.

Before this endeavor, during my Love Project, I tattooed for 11 hours without taking any real break and it brought me into this trance state. I wanted to see what the limits of endurance for tattoos would be.

After exactly 23 hours I finished the last of the outlines. The first backpiece was finished after 24 hours. It became exhausting for all of us. There was a lot of pain, laughs, craziness and loud music. During the night session people were dancing and people were crying. Everyone was on a few hours of sleep but we were doing what we had to do to make this possible and on the afternoon of the third day everything faded as we put in the last point of ink.

During the process we didn't want other people there as it was a special moment between those involved. But we did want to share the art so we made sure to document it. When everybody first got naked and I saw one complete piece running over them I stared at it speechless for a long time. I think that it was an amazing experience for all of us. It may have been the toughest thing we have ever been through but we have a beautiful memory of the time.

I already have a plan for a bigger piece in my mind but for right now I have no idea if it is possible. We'll see... 📷





# PIETRO SEDDA

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#### WHAT MADE YOU GRAVITATE TOWARDS SURREALISM?

My art form evolves and gets shaped as a result of the inspiration I get towards things I observe and admire. There are visual artists whom have left a mark on my background. I've brought their work inside my world, and as a reflecting mirror I put their influences into my tattoo imaginary.

#### ARE YOU INSPIRED BY OTHER TATTOOERS?

Honestly, I don't think tattoos are inspiring on their own. My sources are others: illustration, visual art, fashion and cinema. I believe that tattoo art, in order to evolve, shouldn't look at its inner self.

#### DID YOU START TATTOOING IN YOUR UNIQUE STYLE?

No. In my opinion, the first period of the learning process is really important: as a first approach towards tattooing, you should be learning to do any kind of work, and not trying to impose or demand a particular work frame. As per style, you have it or you don't. You can shape it and transform it, obviously through practice and perseverance, but I don't think it is possible to acquire a style from a zero point.

#### WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO CONVEY IN YOUR FACES?

Nothing conscious. I tend to merge my client's requests with my imagination. Between the tattoo artist and the client something has to spark, like magic. 🍷

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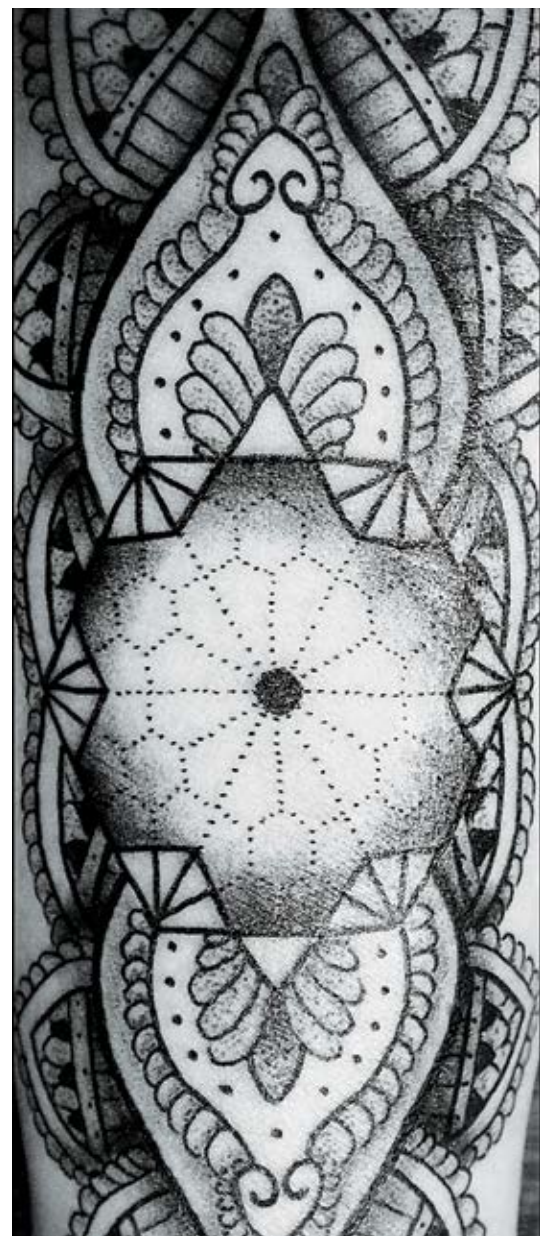
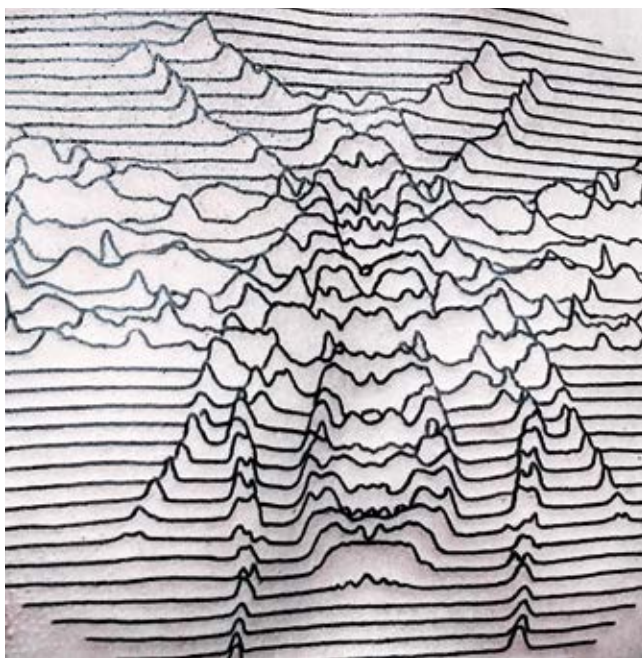
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# DOTSTOLINES

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## CHAIM MACHLEV AKA DOTSTOLINES HOW DID YOUR JOURNEY START?

I was born and raised in Tel Aviv, Israel. Most people in the Western world connect negativity with tattoos. I was never attracted to tattoos until I considered getting one; there is a stage in life in which everyone considers one. I got my first tattoo three years ago. Immediately, my prejudices vanished. When I lost negative feelings towards tattoos, I lost prejudices towards other things that society doesn't accept.

## NOW WHERE ARE YOU?

My studio is located in Berlin; it is private, only one person is tattooed at a time. I have a problem tattooing in

front of people. It is a very intimate process; the experience raises a lot of emotions. I experiment daily, which is risky, but that is the only way to develop personal style.

## WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ART WORLD?

In my eyes, there are a lot of artists who enjoy the title of being an artist much more than they do actually fulfilling their duty. Artists must develop themselves which is a never-ending process. As a tattooist, your work is so permanent and immortal and it isn't even yours. When that person walks out of your studio, you may never see them again. You have just one chance, a few hours, to make a permanent mark on their body. 📌



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**YOU TATTOO ACROSS DIFFERENT GENRES, DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE?**

I like bringing together genres that don't seem to fit at first sight—building bridges where most people would not consider to. From time to time I favor one style more than the other, but I really try to do as many different things as possible. I don't want to end up as "the guy with the hexagon-patterns." I would get pretty bored doing the same stuff over and over again.

**SPEAKING OF THE GEOMETRIC PATTERNS, WHAT MADE YOU GRAVITATE TOWARD THAT STYLE?**

I've been fascinated by geometry for half of my life. I

feel a strong sense of purpose in geometry, like it is a language that explains the whole universe by looking at it. The grid-stuff and the platonic solids are like blueprints of creation itself. I feel aesthetically and spiritually connected to geometry. It connects philosophy, science, religion and art and so many other things that I see in it.

**WHAT MARK DO YOU HOPE TO LEAVE ON SOCIETY?**

If people see my tats and think "Oh, that's something I didn't expect from a tattoo" or something like that, I'm happy. Especially if people who never thought about having tattoos pay attention to my work, then I feel like I've changed something in the perception of society. 📌

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## CAROLINE Russell

OF A&E'S *EPIC INK* AND  
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From the outside of Rogue Leader you'd never expect to enter a world of nerdy, sci-fi filled walls and endless amounts of insane art. Jeff Wortham and Stockton Lee took a huge risk opening a tattooer's dreamland in an uncommon location. My position at Rogue Leader is to keep the ship moving. Literally—our walls are completely spaced out, so you'd think we were on some sort of UFO.

We are convinced that there are aliens hiding inside our shop. Stockton will kill me for sharing this, but one time his wife dropped him off at the shop super early in the morning and he decided he was going to doze off for a bit. He said he woke up to the sounds of Jeff and my voice but when he turned around to talk to us we weren't there and then he heard strange alien-like noises in our back office. Naturally aliens would disguise themselves as a familiar person to comfort their prey before abducting them, right?

Our neighbors used to sell upscale consignment furniture. One day I overheard the voices of some older women chattering away about one of our couches. When I walked out one of the ladies told me she'd like to purchase our couch. I was initially confused at what was going on, but I quickly realized she was lost. When I tried to explain to her that they were in the wrong shop, she continued to walk around and point at things asking how much. Needless to say, they left empty handed, tattoo-less and confused. There is so much weirdness, quirkiness and laughter that goes on at Rogue Leader. We've had twerking parties, lightsaber battles, movie nights, art shows, flamethrowers, pranks wars and the list goes on and on. An unusual day in the real world is just another average day at Rogue Leader. 🚀

Photo by Shannon Bray





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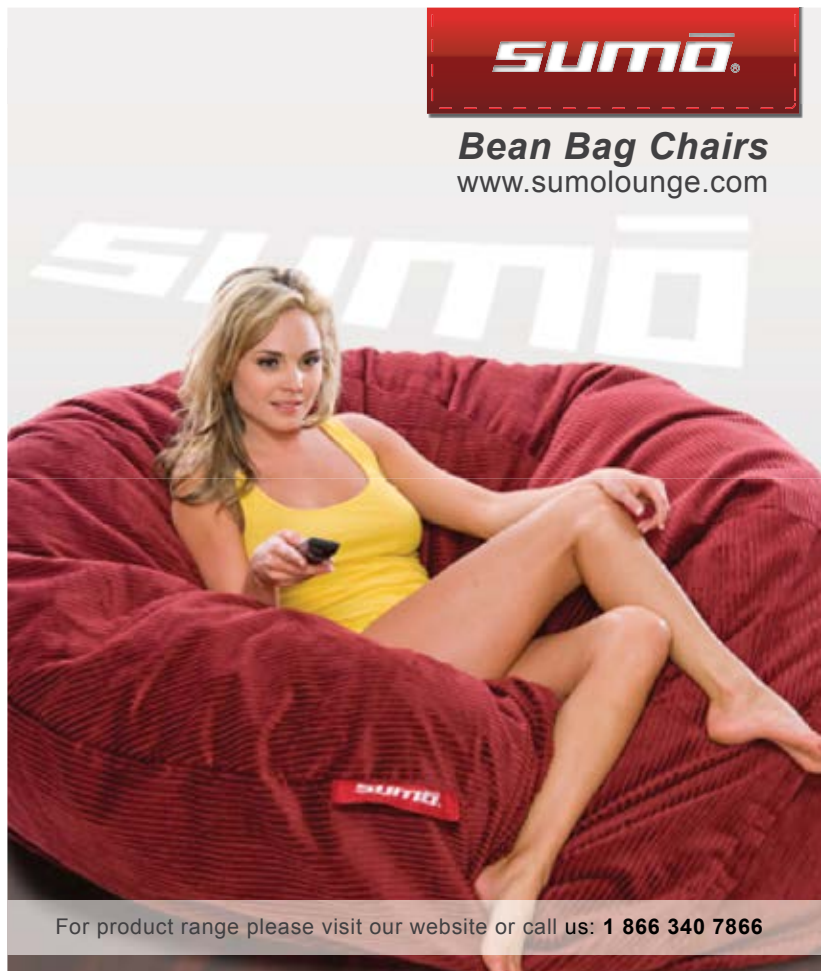
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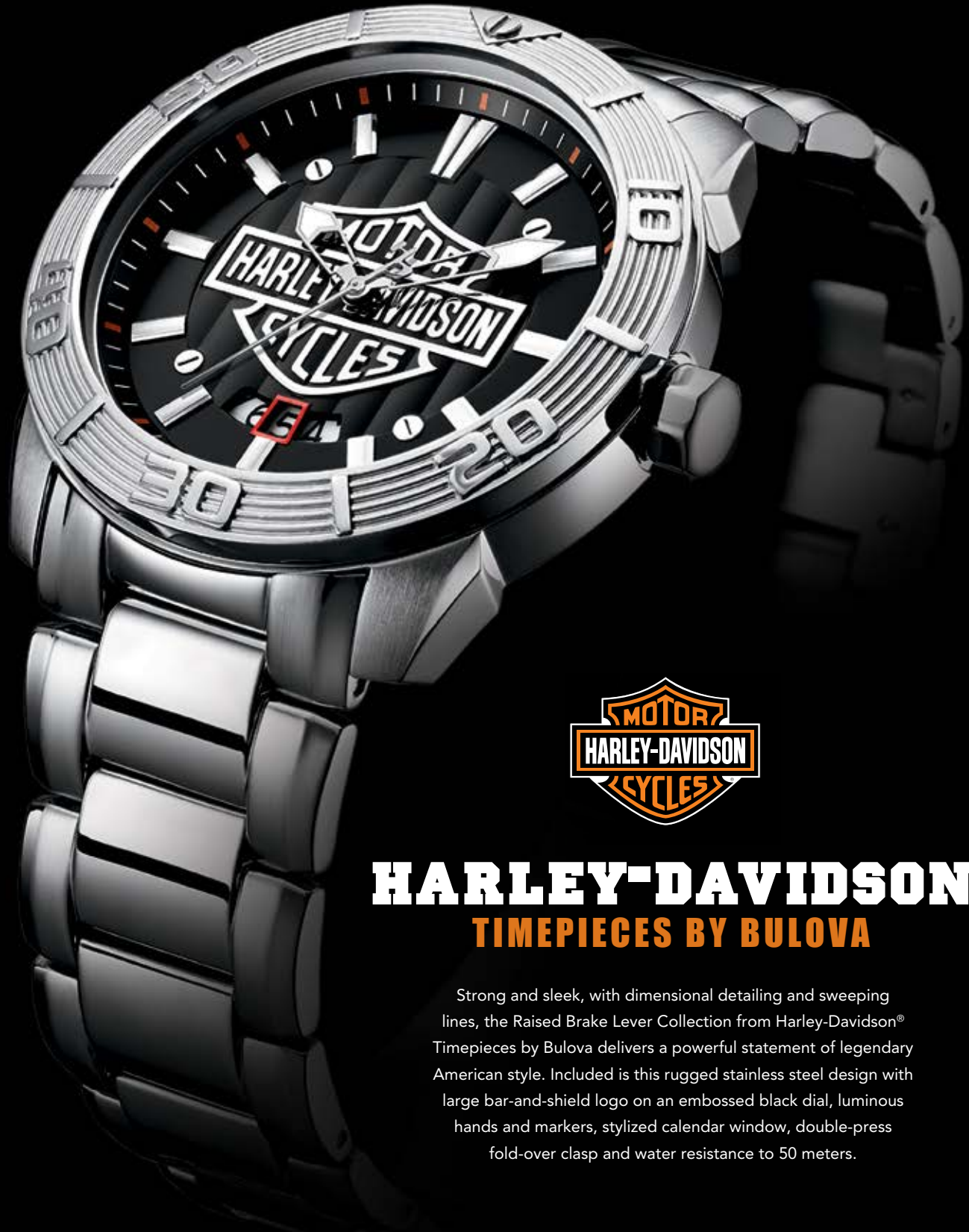
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