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CULTURE. STYLE. ART.

THE MUSIC ISSUE

FEATURING
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On the cover: DJ Megan Daniels; photo: Christian Saint; stylist: Darius Baptist; hair and makeup: Lisa Thai; set design: Nathaniel Wojtalik.
On Megan: Lisa Blue snakeskin bikini; Swarovski earrings. Shot on location at ACME Studio in Brooklyn, New York.



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INKWELL

You are going to hate some of the music acts we cover in the following pages. There's no way around it when dealing with something as subjective as music or, frankly, any type of art. You might even sneer at some of the tattoos and photographs on the following pages—there is no such thing as the perfect piece or composition. That is what makes creativity exciting. We are Sisyphus, but with ink, and we will ceaselessly push creating music, tattoos, art and editorial content toward such great heights without ever reaching a consensus pinnacle.

What's your favorite song?

That's not the easiest of questions and even if you did have a response chambered, there is no way five of your friends will answer the same way (unless it is, "Let me think about it.") Hell, you'd be hard-pressed to get all the members in a band to come to accord on which is their best song. I'm not much for awards, but think about the established back-patters in music: Peter God-Awful Gabriel is in the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame! Sam Smith won three Grammys and every time I hear one of his songs in passing I want to set a car on fire. Beyoncé and Jay-Z's "Drunk in Love" also won—I find that song so grating that I banned it from being played in the Inked office, but nearly 300 million YouTube plays might prove that I am not the next Berry Gordy.

Luckily I have a great staff, stable of contributors and subjects who have helped shape the tone of this issue. Christian Saint (1) shot the lovely DJ Megan Daniels for our cover and inside feature. The wall of sound and light for that feature was crafted by Nathaniel Wojtalik (6). Kirstie Kovats (5) shines a spotlight on rapper Caskey for our feature on youngins about to break, *Who's Next?* A legend in the music game, Evan Seinfeld, has reinvented his sound and helped launch his wife Lupe Fuentes's career. You are privy to an intimate conversation between the couple as well as special moments captured by Lane Dorsey (2). Our Icon this month is lettering master BJ Betts who talked about the power of words and his life in the music scene with Stephanie Collazo (8). The best in summer portable speakers were selected by sonic guru Vincent Veneziani (7) and tattoo artist Troy Denning (4) curated the cadre of artists who decked out Harley-Davidson tanks, helmets and leather jackets for *Hand Crafted*. From one American original to The Fat Jew, a man so brash with his looks that he copied famous poses of Kim Kardashian, Burt Reynolds and John & Yoko to show them he could do it better. The Fat Jew's recreations were captured by the lens of Matt Salacuse (3). As you will see that feature proves even the most iconic pieces of art can be improved upon.

Rocky Rakovic
Editor-In-Chief
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MAIL



BETTER THAN HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN We are often asked what to look out for in a tattoo shop to indicate that it is on the up-and-up. Chiefly, always seek out an autoclave and overall cleanliness—a tattoo shop should be as clean as a doctor's office or a kitchen after Gordon Ramsey has berated the staff. On the notion of a doctor's office, a secondary cue is finding an *Inked* magazine in the waiting room, remember how your pediatrician had a rack of *Highlights for Children* next to that contraption with the colorful blocks on a wire track? Reputable tattooists put out *Inked*, and we want you to give them their shine. Snap a picture of any of the following combinations: you, the artist, *Inked*, your new tattoo, the Starbucks cup you brought in with your name misspelled, and send it to editor@inkedmag.com

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HEATHER MOSS/MOTORCYCLE

Mike Fredette Ummm...Hello future Mrs. Fredette!

David Rivera Heather Moss on an Indian Larry—great combination

Christopher Barringer My infatuation with chrome!

Silvanus Julias Aquila Would love to ride that

Adrianna McKillop I don't think she is sitting on it right, LMAO

Arjun Bechoo Take my money and give me the bike

ALEE ROSE

Morgan Caitlin Awesome shoot and beautiful model

Joe Morris Baker That's dope

ODD COUPLE

Sara Gorden I knew these guys didn't really get along!

Lee Franz The idea for the pitchfork arrow tattoo is so insane

JASON CLAY DUNN

Bob Greene So far he is the most deserving Ink Master, glad to hear his story

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TATTOO OF THE MONTH



BY: MEGAN JEAN MORRIS @MEGANJEANMORRIS

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INK

CHRISTIE
JAY

PHOTOS BY KEITH SELLE





If you follow *Inked* on various forms of social media you know we are fairly prolific when it comes to posting pictures of tattoos, girls, memes and the occasional skull-themed wedding cake (or a puppy photo that we couldn't resist). For the most part our audience is receptive to the photos we select to share with the community but once in a while a tattoo or a model won't just be "liked" but adored. In this case it was both the girl, Christie Jay, and her owl tattoo, from the Deftones' *Diamond Eyes* album cover, that drew hearts all over our platforms.

"The owl was done by Joseph Barrios in Las Vegas," says the Vegas-based model Christie. "I mentioned the idea of the owl in our emails before our first session, and when I got there we had both chosen the owl from the *Diamond Eyes* album cover. Since we both thought of it, we knew we had to do it. It made the decision easy."

While Christie is a huge fan of the Deftones the reasoning for the owl goes back to her Greek heritage and its mythology. The stories of her ancestors' oral traditions still resonate with not only those of Greek descent, but with all people as the universal truths found within the tales still apply today. "Athena is the Goddess of Wisdom, and I have always wanted to be remembered for my intelligence rather than my looks," she says. "I've always looked up to her as a female role model because she was strong, smart and independent. People respected her. She helped her community thrive and become successful, which is all I can hope for. Athena's companion was an owl. It represented her independence as well as her intelligence. By having my own owl I feel as if he is my companion and a reminder to keep my head focused in times of stress or worry."

Among the things that miff Christie, who is graduating with a journalism degree, are jokes made out of her piece, particularly this one: "Now you have three hooters!" However, she is quick to point out that she has the sweetest fans and tries to respond to almost every comment that warrants a reply on social media.

Her parents haven't been too pleased with her tattoos but have accepted her pieces (many of which use Greek mythology) with the caveat that she stop now. "But I want to start sleeving my arms," Christie says. "My parents have even threatened to leave the country and disown me if I get any more tattoos. It is probably the hardest part of owning my ink. Everyone else is very supportive in my life with my ink choices, but my parents still see them as marks of a delinquent. They will never see the artistic aspect of tattoos, which is what drew me so much into them. I think if my mom grew up in my era she would be covered in ink." Sounds like the underpinnings of a Greek tragedy. 🐦



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GRIMEPOP

GRIME MACHINE

Nickelodeon slimed, DelaDeso grimes

If Richie Velazquez was born 20 years earlier, he would have painted all of the vomit for *Ren and Stimpy*. If he was born a century ago, he would be painting drippy moustaches on Charlie Chaplin and Joseph Stalin, and if he lived during the Renaissance, the Mona Lisa would be covered in a mozzarella money shot. His work is cheesy, his work is grimy, and he couldn't be more pleased. Operating under the moniker DelaDeso and propelled by the rocket fuel that is the internet, Velazquez has delivered a psychedelic scissor kick to anything and everything pop culture.

"Grimy to me isn't always a bad thing," explains the LA native. "I wanted to call my artwork something

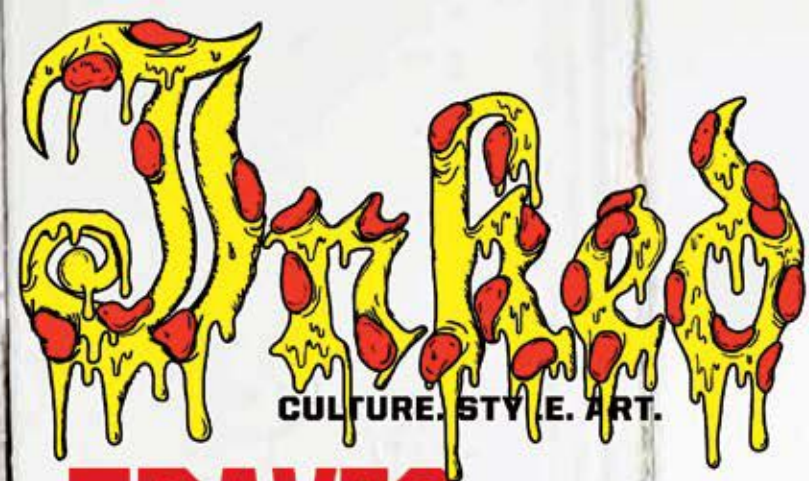
so people could find it and that's how grime came about." DelaDeso's work is poppy, loud and raunchy, and seems to have no limits when it comes to subject matter. Whether it's Kim Kardashian's *Paper* magazine cover overflowing with purple sludge, a six-eyed Nicolas Cage, or a Huey Lewis and the News album cover with extra cheese and pepperoni, there doesn't seem to be a subject that can't be improved with a little grime. "I think it, grime it and post it right away. It's just something I was doing and social media really helped things get out there," states the Grimer-in-Chief. "That's what I love about the Internet, you can get your artwork straight to the source, and when you get a "like" or a repost

it means you're doing something right."

DelaDeso's work is an ooey-gooey sign of the times, a perfect storm of '90s nostalgia, digital media, and an internet fan base that's as loyal as they are down to see their idols grimed. With influences ranging from R.L. Stein to skateboard graphics and Adult Swim cartoons, the young artist has ensured that anyone who grew up on sugary cereal, stolen cable and lax helmet laws will be as obsessed with his work as they are with Seasons 3 through 10 of *The Simpsons*. And yes, of course we asked. His favorite character is Frank Grimes. —Nick Fierro

Check out his pizza-griming of our Travis Barker cover on the turn page.





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I would describe it as a Prohibition-style bar that offers live music and an upstairs nightclub. Whether you're in the mood for live jams, club music or an oversized chill patio scene, we have it covered.

YOU GUYS SEEM TO THROW A LOT OF THEMED PARTIES.

Every weekend we have a different theme, from Alice in Wonderland to Under the Sea. One of my favorites was our Where's Waldo? party.

HOW DO THE CUSTOMERS REACT TO YOUR TATTOOS?

Most customers love my tats! I get a ton of compliments on my tiger tattoo. But I've also had a few older gentlemen make shitty comments like, "Why would you put a bumper sticker on a Bentley?"

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PIECE?

I've always been fascinated with Japanese culture and when I knew I wanted tattoos, a Japanese sleeve was the first thing I pictured. Being able to actually have the work done in Japan was just a bonus!

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT A GUY WHO DRINKS TEQUILA?

If a man can shoot back shots of tequila with me, then he's good in my book. I've even taken a shot of tequila through my nose!

WAIT, WHAT?

Taking a shot of tequila through the nose is better than doing a line of cocaine! Honestly, if you do it right, it's not that bad. I went to a biker clubhouse and the only way girls were allowed in is if they spun a wheel that would eventually land on some kind of derogatory act. I didn't feel like flashing my tits or leaving my panties on a string above the bar, so I told them I wouldn't spin the wheel. They said the only other option was to take a shot of tequila through the nose. So I said, Fuck it, line it up!

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STRANGE LOVE

THE COUPLE THAT PUTS ANTIQUE MEDICAL
DISPLAYS TOGETHER, STAYS TOGETHER.

By Anja Cadlek Photos by Gene Smirnov

If you have ever signed up for a dating website or app (Farmers Only, right?) you know you have to build a profile with your hobbies to find someone with compatible interests. Most looks fade and pheromones die off, but common interests keep couples together.

While both Ryan Ashley Malarkey and Josh Balz are both still young and great looking, they have turned their shared passion into a second business, a second home. Their names may sound familiar as Balz is the keyboarder for metalcore group Motionless in White and Malarkey is a young phenom in the tattooed skin game. The creative couple's cottage industry? Selling antiques and ephemeral at their fairly-recently-opened shop The Strange & Unusual Oddities Parlor in Kingston, PA. "We just collected so much stuff over time that it just seemed logical to open a shop," Malarkey says. "Our relationship actually started when we—as friends—began going on these little antique and junk scavenger hunts. As we spent these day trips together it became very apparent that our creativity was exactly aligned. Our specific interests and visions were mutual on many aspects including aesthetics, creative plans and eventually business ventures. As our relationship developed, our business ideas did as well and soon we found both of these connections grew very strong."

"It helps that we have open minds creatively toward each other's ideas and work with each other rather than against each other's egos," Balz says. "From Day One we have always been a team. It's never a 'Who wears the pants?' debate. We both know it's her....don't tell her I said that."

The name of the shop comes from Lydia Deetz in *Beetlejuice* who uttered, "Well, I've read through that handbook for the recently deceased. It says: 'Live people ignore the strange and unusual.' I, myself, am strange and unusual." Those words, with the addition of *unique*, perfectly captures the essence of Malarkey, Balz and the wares in their shop. "When we first opened we sold lots of our personal collection," Malarkey says, "but since then our definition of strange and unusual has, in a word, evolved."

They feel that there is much overlap between collectors of tattoos and oddities. "Many artistic types are fascinated by the things we have collected," Malarkey, who tattoos in a studio connected to

the store says. "There's absolutely inspiration within the store, I use items as reference almost every day. We have a huge collection of things that are trending in the tattoo world right now. Clients will send me reference photos of things they saw on Pinterest and I'll have the object physically in the store, like Victorian mirrors and frames, vintage vanity items, a skull library and insects. It is amazing; I have literally an inspiration library at my fingertips."

"The store has the same ambiance and aesthetic of what Motionless aims for," Balz adds. "The main similarity [between having the store and our first professions] is the importance of organization and staying on top of everything. You have to learn how to manage your time and responsibilities. In all of our tasks, in

all three industries, we aim to give 100 percent to our customers, clients and fans. Their satisfaction is key and it has helped us dominate all three worlds."

"Our Strange & Unusual regulars are mostly eclectic," Malarkey says. "Some enter curious, or some confused, and leave just as much so. People surprise us all of the time though too, we have a great deal of closet weirdos here in PA and it is always refreshing."

Other than collaborating on the shop, Malarkey has tattooed much of Balz. "I was one of the first people she tattooed years ago," he recounts. "Recently we started a huge project where she's tattooing my whole head and it's cool because I'm being a total bitch about it, but since she is doing it I can tap out at any point."

So hypothetically, if they win a piece of the PA Lottery, do they spend the money on new tattoos or a new oddity?

"This scenario is tough because buying oddities is time sensitive," Malarkey

says. "You have to actually hunt this stuff down—that's what makes it so special. Similar obstacles occur in the tattoo world, the artists I'd love to get tattooed by only go to reachable conventions a few times a year and are booked months in advance."

She's right. Whether it be attending a Motionless in White show, getting a custom black-and-grey tattoo by Malarkey or buying one-of-a-kind piece from Strange & Unusual (like a wallaby skull, Victorian perfume bottle or a bib made from a bat) you are participating in a unique ephemeral experience by the strange and unusual. 🦋



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TIPIC

FEATURING
DJ Megan Daniels





It is a common scenario: You're walking around some city's downtown and a guy will hand you a glossy card promoting some club. The flier—three times the size of a business card—looks like it was made by an overzealous design major who utilizes seven different fonts, overuses Photoshop and features an impossibly gorgeous girl who has never and will never step foot into the place advertised. Unless that girl is DJ Megan Daniels. The blonde baby doll has the softest of looks but is actual fire on the decks—she doesn't just lead the party, she *is* the party.

There was a time when a DJ was in a dark booth—not seen, just heard. But in the current era the only successful mixers without a public face are Daft Punk. “At the moment being a DJ has become largely about image,” Megan says. “It’s almost like the DJ is the new rock star. People want to see you and connect with you. You have to be very front and center.”

So it's not just about the music anymore. But obviously music is integral. “I am a female, and because I began as a model people are skeptical if I am really deejaying or just trying to bank off of the way I look,” she says. “But all I can say is I am the real deal when it comes to my DJ career and I take it very seriously. I started spinning on vinyl and have never used a sync button or a pre-recorded set. I’m always mixing live when I am performing.” Emphasis on her last word, performing. When she is in the booth it is very much a live music performance. While she comes into a venue she has an idea for a playlist but also takes into account the vibe of the crowd and freestyles her sets.

“The DJ has huge responsibilities that I don't think many people actually realize,” Megan says. “The DJ controls the whole atmosphere. Music really has an impact on people. It can relax people, excite them, or make them more aggressive. It's pretty crazy. I really try to switch it up during my sets. I will vibe off of the crowd to see what they are feeling, that dictates what I am going to play. But during a typical set you will hear me play anything from electro house to trap to hip-hop.”

You can get a feel for her tastes through her podcasts and mixes which can be found through her website, but her live shows are influenced by local flavor. As a traveling DJ (she's spun sets in places like Hong Kong, Mumbai, Saint Croix and even Salt Lake City) she checks to see what's trending on the specific city's charts before those glossy fliers are printed.

Oh yeah, her looks. Beyond Megan's bee-stung lips and flowing blonde hair is her impressive collection of tattoos, a number paying homage to music. “I fell in love with Social Distortion at [age] 13, so I have their skeleton on my inner elbow,” she says. But most precious is the pair of headphones with her initials on her shoulder. “No matter what happens down the road with my DJ career, that tattoo will always serve as a constant reminder of an amazing point in my life.” And in case you thought that was code for you missed out on seeing her perform in person, she adds, “I'm not planning on quitting anytime soon, though.” 🎧







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The Harley-Davidson rider is someone who rolls their own way. While the motorcycles are works of art as soon as they are rolled out of the factory, they are also fully customizable. Harley is a heritage brand that truly understands the spirit of individuality. Legendary New York City tattoo artist Troy Denning shipped Harley-Davidson tanks, helmets and leather jackets to esteemed colleagues with the message: Be creative and go nuts. Here is art in H-D.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL KRAUS



TROY DENNING
NEW YORK



GRAHAM BEECH
NEW YORK



JEREMY SUTTON
NEW YORK



MINA AOKI
NEW YORK



CULTURE

THE CHRISTIAN WAY

If you picked up this magazine by its cover you'll love this book. *Tattoo Super Models* is a celebration of inked/Inked girls by Christian Saint, the photographer who shot DJ Megan Daniels for this issue. Long only cast into gritty, dirty settings, Saint puts lovely tattooed girls on their rightful pedestal, in rarified air. His highly stylized, classy and sensual images are works of idyllic art. Only Saint has the vision to play with light on tattooed skin in a way that highlights both the girl and the tattoo as equal works of art.



ROUND 2

Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club 2* (art by Cameron Stewart) picks up as a graphic series 10 years after Project Mayhem. The story's protagonist and Marla are unhappily married. When she tampers with Sebastian's meds in an attempt to resurrect his maniacal alter ego, Tyler Durden returns. —Anthony Vargas



8-LEGGED CHAIR

Artist Máximo Riera follows up his popular Animal Chair collection with a new menagerie of seats featuring a rhino, walrus, whale, hippopotamus, elephant and this noble octopus. Of his functionable creations he says, "Creativity is the capacity to create a piece of art, which might be artistic or anything else which requires imagination. 'Creative' applies to those people who dedicate themselves to creativity and to the things which inspire it. This discourse leads me to try to explain what happens in my mind when I sit before a blank canvas."

Inked

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ENTOURAGE



The boys are back. HBO's *Entourage* finally gets its silver screen release. E, Vince, Drama, Turtle, Ari and a slew of other favorite characters have more Hollywood hijinks. If they aren't enough for you, the list of cameos like Liam Neeson, Jessica Alba, and Mark Wahlberg makes the credits look like a Who's Who list. —*Gil Macias*



THE INKED PLAYLIST

BY JONAH BAYER

ON THE ROAD



Yes! A fourth entry of the Mad Max series with *Fury Road*. George Miller is back in his post-apocalyptic element, (after directing two Happy Feet movies). Mel Gibson is out, but Tom Hardy steps up as the titular Road Warrior. Now Max crosses with a group of escapees including Furiosa (Charlize Theron), who possesses something that an enraged Warlord wants badly. So now, his motorized goons are on their tail. —*G.M.*

DINO-MIGHT

Set 22 years after the events of the first film, we find that Jurassic Park has been up and running on Isla Nublar without incident for years, complete with underwater dinosaurs and Sea World-esque shows and attractions. Things seem to be going fine in *Jurassic World* until a new "attraction" is created and unveiled—a new breed of dinosaur created by scientists that's all kinds of smart and dangerous... —*G.M.*



HE'S BACK

Arnold Schwarzenegger hopes to bring the Terminator franchise back to glory with *Genisys*. Kyle Reese (Jai Courtney) is sent back to 1984, but this time finds an already badass Sarah Connor (Emilia Clarke) who is in no need of a protector and already has a Terminator sidekick (Arnold as an aging T-800). This sparks a new timeline that intertwines with past Terminator plot elements. —*G.M.*



ANCIENT WISDOM

"We Are Damnation"

Occult death rock has never been as catchy as it is on this stripped-down slab of damnation.

BONNIE STILLWATER

"The Devil Is People"

This collaboration between Will Oldham and Watter is a hauntingly satisfying musical meditation.

CEREMONY

"The Separation"

Ceremony transcend their hardcore roots to create an airy post-punk experiment that works.

MODESTEP

"Machines"

Turn this dubstep-club-banger (on *London Road*) on at your next party, if the people aren't moving, get new friends.

CREEPOID

"The Feast and the Famine"

Merging elements of shoegaze and fuzzed-out rock, Creeppoid will transport you somewhere magical.

DESAPARECIDOS

"Anonymous"

Conor Oberst rediscovers his punk roots on this aggressive and politically charged call to action.

HOP ALONG

"Waitress"

Hop Along's idiosyncratic style of indie rock doesn't need distortion to sound utterly cathartic.

MUTOID MAN

"Sweet Ivy"

Members of Converge and Cave In keep the grooves progressive on this psychedelic burner.

PANIC! AT THE DISCO

"Hallelujah"

PATD have had a lot of musical evolutions but "Hallelujah" sees them finding their sonic sweet spot.

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2 KNIGHTS

You Are the Batman

In this impressive finale to the Arkham trilogy, *Darkness Descends* on Gotham, Penguin, Two-Face and Harley Quinn put a bounty on Batman's head, and a new super villain known as the Arkham Knight looks to cash in. Will the new Batmobile be enough to keep Batman from meeting his demise? —Matt Bertz

Staycation Plans



It's too hot out, or it's raining, or any excuse to rip through summer's DVD releases. Among them are *Boardwalk Empire: The Complete Series* (that's all 56 episodes), *Dog Soldiers*—a badass *Aliens* meets *The Howling* action-horror flick with some of the coolest-looking werewolves, and this wicked edition of *The Strain: The Complete First Season*, with a bust replica of "The Master." —G.M.

The Don

Don Ed Hardy, one of the greatest living tattoo artists, is back to reclaim his image through his clothing brand's E-commerce relaunch. "It has been a vehicle to expose certain aspects of my art to a global audience," he says. "It stands for a celebration of life by making art a part of it."



PHONE, HOLMES

You want the most metal phone out there? It's the new HTC One M9. Not only will it blast Iron Maiden but it's shell is entirely made of metal (and finished in a matte black, shiny gold or gunmetal grey). HTC partnered with Dolby to infuse the phone with a 5.1 surround sound from front-facing speakers. Want to turn it up past 11? HTC Connect automatically detects compatible audio systems in range. The jewel of the phone, though, may be the incredible 20 megapixel camera with a sapphire lens cover.



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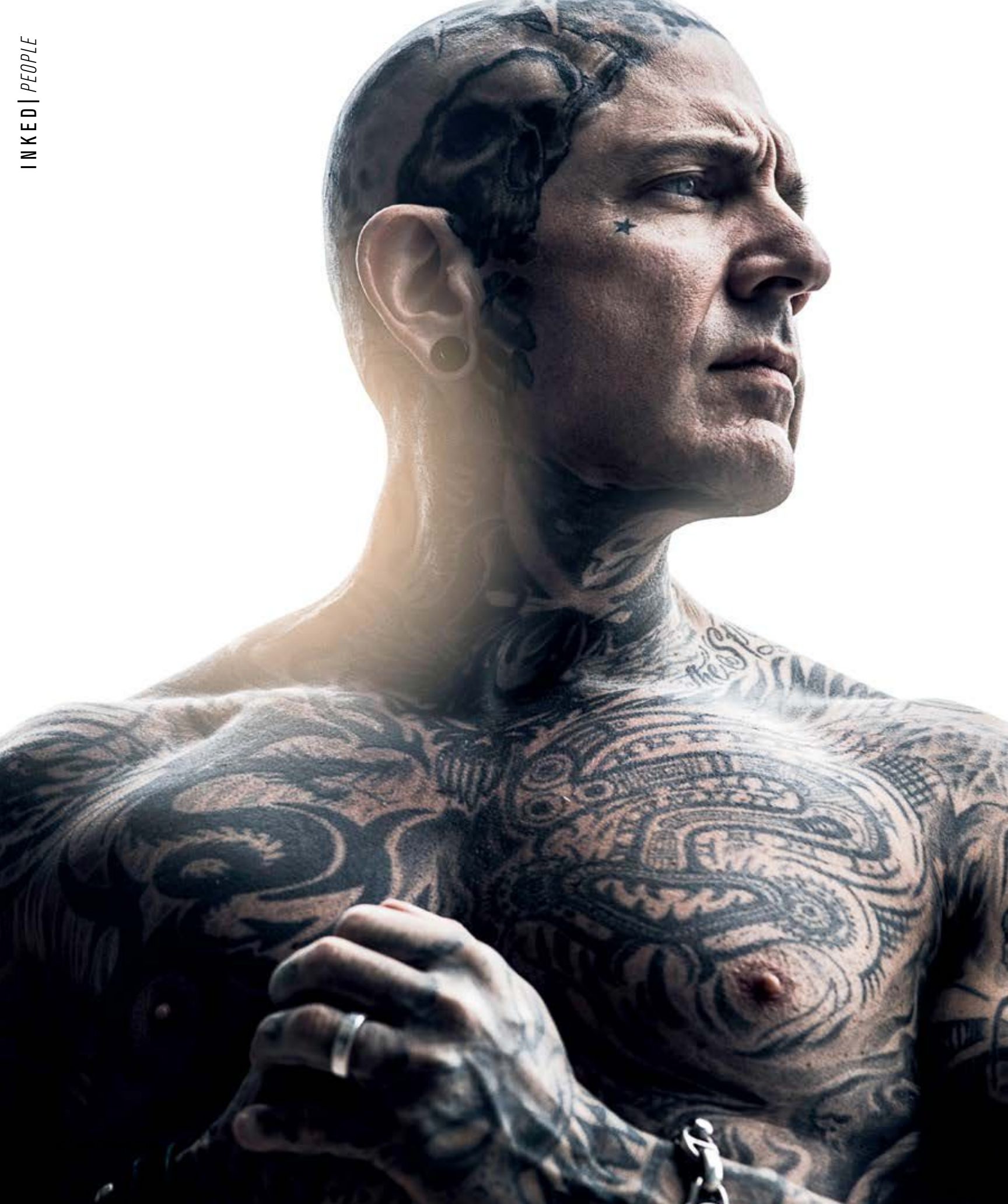
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NOT THE SAME OLD SONG

EVAN SEINFELD AND HIS WIFE LUPE FUENTES REMIX AND MINGLE IN NEW MUSIC SCENES
PHOTOS BY LANE DORSEY



Just as you have turned the page, so have Evan Seinfeld and his wife Lupe Fuentes on their careers. Here is the most candid of conversations about their new direction, had in their home studio over coffee.

LUPE FUENTES: How do you feel that your new band Attika 7 differs from Biohazard?

EVAN SEINFELD: Attika is a chance for me to completely reinvent myself as a songwriter, musician, guitar player, collaborator and as a producer. The biggest thing I want to do is create a new vibe, a feeling to express how I feel today as a grown man living in 2015 with the sum of my life experiences. I want to do something that musically is light-years beyond everything I've done.

LUPE: And you felt like you couldn't do that with Biohazard?

EVAN: The biggest that band got was the mid-'90s, when we were opening up for Metallica, Pantera and Slayer. But I became bored creatively because people wanted to just hear the old songs.

LUPE: For a true artist, to not evolve is to die.

EVAN: I was a dying a little bit on the inside. To play songs that you wrote 20 years ago is like being a cover band of yourself. With Attika, all the songs are brand new and we are on tour with Avenged Sevenfold, Five Finger Death Punch, Rob Zombie and Slipknot—we are playing with cutting-edge bands who are fresh.

LUPE: Is the creative process different?

EVAN: The beauty of the creative process of Attika is that everybody in the band has the freedom to express themselves. I really want Attika to be about the songs. Biohazard was about the scene, people remember the live show, the logo, but never that song. With Attika I am looking to write the outlaw "Stairway to Heaven." Maybe "Elevator to Hell?"

LUPE: You are finishing up an album, how are you feeling it?

EVAN: The new album is tuned so low that it sounds contemporary while the riffs maintain the classic metal sound—it is sonically aggressive. When you connect with the music it is better than any drug you can take, any money you can make, if you connect with people through music, film, television, art. But you know that with your new career that I'm helping manage. We have been together for six years, first in the "Other Hollywood" [the adult industry] now in music. It has been really amazing to watch you become inspired and see you transform yourself from this huge sex symbol to a songwriter, producer, DJ—this music underground style icon. What ultimately inspired you to want to change your entire life?

LUPE: It comes from such an honest place inside myself. I just didn't want to be a product of my environment anymore. I wanted my environment to be a product of my mind, of me, of the person I was meant to be, the person I am inside.

EVAN: I remember watching your face light up like you found some calling when you discovered that you could be a part of house music. And now we have Control Group Management and the label In the Loop. You have been on some great labels and have had several Top-10 records across genres with over 100 million views on YouTube. How does it feel?

LUPE: Amazing. I wasn't doing it to make it big, I just did this because I was having fun making music and I love having projects.

EVAN: That is the mark of a professional. It is good for the soul and I relate to that because I became lazy until Attika. You inspired me to practice, to not rest on the talent I think I have, so thank you.

LUPE: We really motivate each other. If it wasn't for you, I would have never found my path, I would have never found my destiny, what we are doing right now. 🍀

Look for Attika 7's new album, a track from Lupe's label and our new video series with Evan "Bad Ass TV" coming to inkedmag.com.



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FACTOR

BOOB TWERKER SARA X MILLS TRIPS THE LIGHT FANTASTIC
BY ROCKY RAKOVIC
PHOTOS BY BRINSON + BANKS

Sara X Mills's eyes are up here, and they are lovely doe eyes. You know her as the "boob twerk" girl but she is so much more than that, as you'll see/read.

How has your "boob twerking" been received?

Oh God, can we just call it pec flexing? My friend posted the video on one of the tattoo-related Facebook pages with a couple of million followers and put "boob twerk" in the caption—the next day I was on TMZ, they were also calling it "boob twerking," and so it has been ever since. Anyway, there have been mixed reactions. I did it to be fun/funny/because I'm weird. Some people thought I was serious, some people said I was a slut, some people said that I was selling my body, a few people even told me to kill myself—because that's how social media is—but overwhelmingly the response was positive and people thought it was odd and hilarious, which was my original intent. Once the parodies started, I knew I had "made it" into pop culture. The animators from *American Dad* made a little clip in which the character Roger was "boob twerking" and I just about died.

When did you know you could "pec flex?"

I've been able to flex my pectoral muscles probably as long as I could remember—it's just that after I had breast augmentation surgery, with the implants under the muscle, that it began to look so dramatic. What you see now when I flex is actually the implant being moved and compressed by my pectoral muscles. Sexy, right?

Is it a skill that any girl can learn or is it a gift?

Anyone of any gender can learn to do it—it's a matter of muscle isolation—though the smaller your pecs are the more difficult it is to see, especially if you have a lot of natural breast over top. Anyone with the type of implants I have can do it the way I can, I was just the first to go viral online for it!

Before the videos, which physical asset got the most attention?

My boobs. About a year before the Mozart video my boobs went viral all over the place because I have a tattoo on the left one that says "Fuck You Forever" and it's been on all kinds of "Best Underboob Tattoo" [ahem, Inkedmag.com] and "Worst Underboob Tattoo" lists. It was just something I said to someone once when a simple "fuck you" didn't seem sufficient. I laughed at myself for being clever, then the next time I was in a tattoo shop I decided to have it tattooed under my boob on a whim. Unbeknownst to me at the time, it is apparently lyrics to several songs. Most often people think it's from this one band's one song that I have listened to since and think it is garbage, so that gets frustrating. Fun fact: It was originally under my boob, on my ribcage, but once I got implants it migrated to where it is today.

Pre-boobs, my butt and my eyes got lots of compliments. I've been modeling for over 10 years now. I didn't just materialize with Mozart boobs!

You are incredibly charming in the words you write on social media, do you think that helps you find an audience as opposed to models who just have a great visual?

With social media, it's my goal to be myself as much as possible, to show who I am when I'm not wearing a full face of makeup and to show the world that ladies can be weird and funny and not always perfectly made up or dressed. A large part of my audience just came for the boobz, but the lamer ones are all sort of being





phased out now—after many futile demands to “Just show us your tits!!!”—and replaced with way cooler people who are drawn by the things I post rather than just my aesthetic alone, which is rad.

Do you have a most-loathsome comment that you received on social media?

I always get lots of nice comments, but some days there’s so much negativity it’s a little overwhelming. The worst are probably the ones who try to body shame, slut shame, or just come up with cruel assumptions based on looking at a photo... I hate these the most not because of the effect it has on me but because I know that the people leaving these comments probably say the same type of things to other people who are less prepared to handle it. I hate knowing that they’re going to go right along and say the same things to someone whose day it might actually ruin. Close second are the guys, usually young, who haven’t realized porn isn’t real life. I’m like “Hey dudes, no one wants to hear about what you want to do to me, least of all me!”

What do your parents say?

They’ve been married since 1968 and they’re really old fashioned in a lot of ways so they hate my tattoos, but they’re surprisingly OK with and supportive of my “boob dancing.” My mom tells her friends about it, and gets excited any time I put out a new video. When I was a kid, I did a 4th grade talent show where I sang a duet to an oldies song with a turkey puppet—there’s a video, if you’re lucky I might eventually put it on YouTube—and in her mind this is basically an extension of that, showing my weird creative brain at work. But my tattoos aren’t... so go figure.

Do you have a favorite piece?

Honestly, I love them all. The only one that I would say has had any negative impact on my life is my chest piece—having it, I have come to realize that as accepting as society is in general of tattoos now, chest pieces on girls still aren’t. There are modeling jobs and service industry jobs that I’ve been told I didn’t get because my chest piece was just a little too much. I’ve noticed that there exists an expectation in more mainstream gigs that no matter how many tattoos a woman has, even with full sleeves and neck tattoos, they should still have “clean cleavage.”

What does your new Mozart tattoo mean to you?

The Mozart tattoo is to represent a huge milestone in my life. In fact, it’s probably the only tattoo I have with any true meaning! Before the video, I was sort of at a crossroads in my life and I wasn’t sure where I wanted to go. Being “the Mozart boob twerk girl” has allowed me to travel to Europe and Asia for the first time, and to have tons of experiences that I’d never have had otherwise. It’s taught me a lot as well, about myself, about how to handle negative people, and challenged me to figure out more solidly who I am and what I believe in. I thought it was only fitting that I went back to the artist, Carl Fuchs of Red 5 Tattoo in Virginia, who did almost all of my work to get that piece.

How are you planning on topping “Jingle Bells” this year?

You know, I have no idea. I’m hoping it involves a full orchestra. Luckily for me I have a few months to plan. 🎵



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Curated by Vincent Veneziani
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[YOU MAY NOW APPROACH THE JUDGE'S BENCH]

AS THE NEW SEASON OF *INK MASTER* BRINGS IN MENTORS AND APPRENTICES,
JUDGES OLIVER PECK AND CHRIS NUÑEZ TALK CANDIDLY ABOUT THAT DYNAMIC IN
THE TATTOO WORLD

By Rocky Rakovic
Photos by Jason Goodrich



One of the most visual representations of tattooing both to our community and to the world at large is television. The most famous tattooers on the planet, whether or not they are technically and artistically the best, are those who are on TV shows. A great swath of tattooing on television has focused as much on drama as it has on clean lines and placement, but Spike TV's *Ink Master* has forever taken up the cause to promote great tattoo art. "The positive side of what I am trying to do on television is wear out the people who shouldn't be tattooing in the first place and teach the viewers that there is quality in good tattooers," says *Ink Master* judge Chris Nuñez (right). "The face of tattooing has been who is on television. Twenty years ago the elite were great, their tattoos had soul, and now through television and social media there are so many tattoos out there that are hollow."

The great part of growth in tattooing's popularity is the acceptance of tattoos in society and the money in artists' pockets, but now that tattoos belong to the populace, the hierarchy has been upset. The old guard can no longer control who is deemed topflight, and while that decision is now more democratic, we don't want your spinster aunt or much of Facebook (Filip Leu isn't even on there) to have a say. With the system that brought tattooing from an outlaw activity to perhaps the biggest artistic movement of our lifetime pushed aside, scratchers and kids with art degrees—but no training—have been allowed in. The apprenticeship system has been decimated and with that the soul is quickly evaporating from the craft.

"Internet, television and media all hurt the craft really bad in the tradition of how you get involved and, really, the dues you have to pay to be there," Nuñez says. "You can see somebody's time in the business looking at a tattoo."

This new season of *Ink Master* plays off relationships but not in a sensational way. The show invited mentors and apprentices to compete for \$100,000, a feature in this magazine and the title of *Ink Master*.

"They come in as a team—the mentor and apprentice," Oliver Peck says halfway through filming, "and those who have the strongest bond, who both respect each other, have been staying strong in the competition and will go further. The casual groups fall off quick. The stronger tattooers had better apprenticeships because they took it seriously. It speaks volumes to the relationship between the master and apprentice."

Nuñez got his apprenticeship in 1990 from Lou Sciberras. Nuñez was a graffiti writer, walked into art school, walked out of art school and into Tattoos by Lou in his hometown of Miami. "I met Lou, I showed him some of my sketches and he said, 'Hey, why don't you come back tomorrow, kid?' Ami [James] started a week after me and Emerson [Forth] also was that same week, so three of us who are still tattooing today all started our apprenticeships at the exact same time. Lou loved Emerson and Ami and I was just there to pickup—just really be the bitch of the shop."

But Nuñez wouldn't have changed that for the world. "It was great, it was the best experience ever because I earned my apprenticeship, it wasn't given to me. There wasn't a single thing handed to me," he says.

The beauty of apprenticeships in tattooing and not most other training is that mentors teach their apprentices *everything*, to the point that if the apprentice works hard and pays attention they will be equipped to replace the mentor. How many other professions would give away all secrets to young strivers?

"My apprenticeship was running the shop from the top to the bottom," Nuñez says. "Before I even got to do a tattoo I spent months making needles, building click chords from a nickel and a paper clip, cleaning tubes, making stencils, taking payments and selling tattoos." And of the actual "bitch work:" "There was getting coffee, washing cars and picking up dates—all for Lou, none for myself. But at the end of every night I got to be the 18-year-old kid who got to go to the coolest spots in the city and hang out with every club owner and hot models. That was the life."

The mustachioed judge had a different track in Texas. "I started out in my last years of high school and I just wanted tattoos so I figured out how to hand-poke tattoos and then made a ghetto hairdryer-rotary machine," Peck says. "I got a bunch of my drug addict friends to give me money so I could buy some tattoo equipment, and to repay them I tattooed them all. I tattooed hundreds of people and I had never seen a tattoo magazine or been to a shop—I didn't know that it was a career possibility."

He, too, walked in and then right out of art school but eventually landed at a piercing shop that was just starting to do tattoos. He was their first tattooer and admits that both he and they were clueless. Then Richard Stell came to town and, after being bothered by Peck for a spell, offered to show him how to really tattoo.

"He told me to start over," Peck recounts. "Every habit I had was bad. It was harder starting over than starting from scratch. When I first started tattooing I thought that I was reinventing the wheel, like, I didn't use any black for outlines. Richard, he told me, 'Your bullshit isn't going to work. We did that shit when I was a kid too.'"

By being around Stell, Peck was afforded the ability to see other older legends and their tattoos, but more importantly, the tattoos on them. For a young Peck, whose first tattoos hadn't aged a decade, to see how tattoos sat after 20 years made an impact on his approach to tattooing.

"With apprenticeships going away, no one is fucking hitting kids on the back of the head," Peck says. "Trial by fire is not the way to learn tattooing. So many tattooers now do things to their tattoos, like pack white into it and make it look shiny, for the portfolio. I tell everybody who works for me if you put an unhealed photo in your book you are misrepresenting the tattoo that they are going to live with. If you put a bunch of glossy, wet, unhealed photos in your portfolio you are a fucking liar. You are selling me something that I am going to have for a week, not 20 years."

In no way is this season of *Ink Master* meant to serve as a crash-course in tattooing, this is no *Tattoo School*, but rather a reminder to the community that there was a soul to tattooing and that with the right training the art will stand the test of time. "The lesson this season is that only the people who did real apprenticeships, and I'm talking apprentices and mentors, will be the last people to be in the competition," Nuñez says. "All those who did half-assed shit go half-assed out quick." 📺

Ink Master premieres Tuesday, June 23 at 10 pm EST on Spike TV. To see the Season 6 contestants' work visit: inkedmag.com/ink-master-6-cast-revealed/



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WHO'S



NEXT?

CASH MONEY RECORDS HAS TWO NEW, YOUNG SONGSTERS IN JACQUEES AND CASEKY WHO ARE POISED TO BE THE VOICE OF THEIR GENERATION
PHOTOS BY OHAD GRIFFITH STYLED BY DARIUS BAPTIST

In between wardrobe changes, lighting up and smiling for the camera, Caskey proves to be a star in the making. During this, one of his first big photoshoots, he was the center of attention even when he was just kicking it on the couch.

His Facebook post earlier this morning suggested he'd like a bit of pot—he was new to New York City—though he didn't need that or the help of other recreational lubricants to tell a good story. One such was that his mother wasn't too pleased when he got his neck blasted, but her disdain turned into a good subject for a song in his "Tats on My Neck." His words and ink also coalesced on "Be Humble," which is resplendent across his knuckles. A scan at the rest of his body tips you off that he is infatuated with religion—multiple faiths. He's spent about 75 hours getting inked by Ryan Severe, and he's just getting started on his massive Lord Shiva back piece. "I'm interested in all the world's religions. I've studied a lot of Hindu culture. I have the Native American on my chest because that's like the closest spiritual culture that we have in the United States. I still need to get Jesus—a cool Jesus, not like a regular old Jesus."

Caskey's mind and body are poised perfectly for his situation; he embraces where he's been, where he's going, and the unknown. Like his social media, he's impulsive—and it's working. Eight months after dropping out of community college in his hometown, Orlando, FL, Bryan "Birdman" Williams contacted him "out of the blue," and signed him short after. "They [Cash Money Records] give me the freedom to be as weird as I want," but like his mother, the label is "begging me not to tat my face more."

The first white rapper to be signed with Cash Money speaks through rhyme about the temporary world we live in today. "We're in a time where there is a lot of things going on, so don't fight against it. We come up with an idea and we put it out." Caskey's latest album, *The Lost Files*, was released the day before his *Inked* shoot. If the title isn't obvious enough, he compiled all of his unreleased records and "literally put the whole thing together in a week." The next week he released a video for "Montreal" after taking to Instagram for feedback from fans and peers. His living situation could very well be considered every 20-something's dream; he and his team have shackled up in a big Florida home, "it's constantly a creative workplace—and if it's not creative we're playing Mortal Kombat."

After sifting through his amalgam of ink we stopped on "I love you, Dad," written on his wrist. "I found a letter he wrote me, it was signed like that," he says. "When I was 16 my dad passed away and I started writing a lot. My perspective was super pain-driven. The day of the funeral this melody came into my head, like a hook, and I got caught up in making it real." Caskey's love of motorcycles, Harley-Davidsons in particular (hence the iconic logo tattooed on his cheek), comes from Dad, too.

Now we know where he came from, but where is he going? "I wanna see the rest of the world. Everybody is still within the same couple miles, the same state, there's a whole fucking planet out there." It was comforting to see that he feels the same pressure other 22-years-olds face when staring at their futures. "I really have no fucking idea what's going on. I just gotta ride it." —*Kirstie Kovats* 📷





"I started with the neck," Jacquees says. "I knew that if I tattooed my neck that I would have no choice but to make it in music. That was a push to myself right there."

As you have well noticed, the hip-hop crooner has a great deal of work on him, but what you may not know is that these photos were taken the day after his 21st birthday. "I got tatted real young," Jacquees says. "In Atlanta, tattoos are a way of life. That is just how we live. It was really [the influence of Lil'] Wayne, I was young and inspired by the music."

While people will start knowing his name and how to pronounce "Jacquees," from a visual standpoint he looks like a younger Wayne. The body shape, the hair, the tattoos and his excitable energy harken back to Weezy, but the Jacquees sound is nothing like the rapper's.

"On my neck are music notes, some stars, and I put angels wings on my neck across my vocal chords," Jacquees says. "They say I sing like an angel."

His melodic voice is straight ear sugar. His influences that align more with his sound are Lauryn Hill and Michael Jackson. If he was afforded the opportunity to sing on anyone's track, dead or alive, it would be the King of Pop.

"I used to sing like a young Michael Jackson, but then my nuts dropped," he says. "But I can go through major voice changes and I still sound great."

Jacquees first got his shine through YouTube, where he has been posting since he was 14 and attracted over 10 million views on videos uploaded in the past year. In March 2014 he independently released his EP *19* which hit #3 on the iTunes R&B Chart. Then he turned to another young Atlanta upstart Rich Homie Quan to help him out on getting signed. "Me and Quan used to always make music together, this is before Quan was on the radio, we are like brothers," Jacquees says. "His pops put me on the phone with Baby [Bryan "Baby Birdman" Williams, co-founder of Cash Money Records] and my heart stopped. I grew up watching *Baller Blockin'* and listening to the Hot Boys. Baby said, 'Don't even trip, youngin, I'm going to put you on.'"

Jacquees is currently winnowing down his 50-something tracks to put out his first label release with Cash Money Records. In the new effort he feels like he has grown from *19* both in singing and writing to his audience. For those not yet privy to his sound, he promises, "You cannot listen to Jacquees without smiling, and even if you can't sing, you are going to want to sing along." His songs chiefly deal with relationships and while he sings to females, he's got you. "I set the mood. If you want to slow down with your girl you can go play "No Questions;" if you want to turn up or make your girl feel perfect, play "Perfect;" if you want to feel like a party, go play "Come Thru." Even if you can't sing, recite my words, you might take a line out of one of my songs and use it to spit game to a girl."

19 includes some dope collaborators like Quan, Lloyd and Trinidad James. The guests on his next album will be more impressive and the young singer is pretty confident in it and himself.

"I want to be a legend, that is what I am working toward," Jacquees says, then looks down on his newest piece of ink, the FYB [his crew, Fresh Young Boyz] logo on his hand. "Cory Cartwright in Atlanta did this one. When I hold the mic I want everybody to see FYB." And then his smile illuminates the room as he internally envisions his future under a bigger spotlight and adds on, "When I'm holding the Grammy you will see it." —Rocky Rakovic

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NOISEMAKERS



A solid tour schedule kept metal band Of Mice and Men on the road most of the past year, but vocalist Austin Carlile still managed to prioritize his tattoo sessions in between sets. The day before the band hit the road for 32 headlining dates in support of *Restoring Force* and *Restoring Force: Full Circle* he sat in with Franco Vescovi. "It's hard when your tattoo artist is a bigger rock star than you," Carlile says. "I have to text the guys from Korn to hit him up." Vescovi continued his work on the frontman's left sleeve—featuring statues and artwork from the Vatican. Next, he is going to blast his entire back. You can check out the sleeve and, if he rips his shirt off during a heated performance, the progression of his back at one of Of Mice and Men's upcoming shows, just make sure to push the the front of the pit. —Mike Henneberger

OF MICE AND MEN

AUGUST BURNS RED



August Burns Red has been pushing the boundaries of metal for over a decade. Since 2003 they've toured relentlessly and pumped out six full length records. Appropriately enough, this past August they announced their allegiance to Fearless records for their seventh LP, *Found in Far Away Places*, a move that Vocalist Jake Luhrs and Bass player/backing voice Dustin Davidson couldn't be happier with. "The entire staff is incredible", Davidson tells us. "Their team has really stepped up in pushing this new album release", adds Luhrs. Along the way the band has amassed a huge fan base, and a growing collection of ink. "I use to view each tattoo as it's own piece of art but I've found recently that I'm getting away from that", says Davidson. "Now that I'm older, I'm trying to make my tattoos work together better". Luhrs shares his own motivation for getting inked "I believe each piece for me is its own, they remind me of different times in my life, different experiences, different reasons I decided to get tattooed." As for the sleeper tracks on *Found in Far Away Places*, Davidson favors "Majoring in Minors," while Luhrs insists it's "Martyr," but we'll let you decide. —Nick Fierro



As it turns out, not everything that happens in Vegas has to stay there, at least not as far as Five Finger Death Punch's Jeremy Spencer is concerned. While the new rockin' Five Finger Death Punch studio album is earmarked for August, the drummer just opened Phaze Laser Tattoo Removal in Sin City. Spencer first felt the sting of ink removal over a decade ago, and since then he has watched the technology and the demand make advances. Finding a quality remover is just as important as finding a quality artist, and what sets Phaze apart from the rest is it's state-of-the-art Astanza Duality laser coupled with the skilled technicians that Spencer has employed to send your regrettable tattoo packing. "Others may offer a cheaper fix, but you get what you pay for," he warns. Remember, it's never too late to start over, and always double down on 11. —N.F.

JEREMY SPENCER

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Handsome

BOY MODELING SCHOOL

Social media superstar Josh Ostrovsky aka The Fat Jew is ready for his close-up

By Rocky Rakovic Photos by Matthew Salacuse

The Fat Jew (spawned name: Josh Ostrovsky) is a social media maven and sexual object. This summer he is launching a rosé that he has dubbed White Girl, publishing a book *Money, Pizza, Respect* and dipping his bulbous toe into the modeling world. We were fortunate enough to be able to work with the new face and body of male modeling for his biggest shoot yet. For The Fat Jew's coming-out spread we recast the Rubenesque man-baby in iconic photos such as Kim Kardashian from last year's *Paper* magazine, *Vanity Fair*'s pregnant Demi Moore cover, Burt Reynolds naked on a bearskin rug for *Cosmopolitan*, Janet Jackson's hand-bra for *Rolling Stone* and also from the venerable music magazine he plays both John and Yoko. The following interview was conducted while he was on the toilet à la Jenny McCarthy from those '90s Candie's ads.

How would you describe yourself?

Imagine if George Washington, Steven Seagal, Matthew Perry in a post-*Friends* prescription pill spiral, and all the members of Cypress Hill gangbanged Bette Midler at a warehouse rave and put a baby inside her...that baby would be Josh Ostrovsky aka The Fat Jew. I am known by many names: Jewther Vandross, Jewlio Iglesias, Jewy Vuitton, Jewsan Sarandon, The King of Brunch, Fatrick Jewing, Jew Diamond Phillips.

When you look in the mirror what do you see?

A Botticelli. Literally, I'm a modern-day Botticelli woman in a painting. I got that thick 15th century ass, Dog.

How has your male modeling experience been thus far?

Breaking into the modeling world is not easy because obviously I don't have a 60-pack and deep, V-shaped dick lines, so it is hard for me to get into that scene.

How do you feel about the label "plus-sized model?"

I am not really down with being called a plus-sized model. I think they should rename the genre. It should be called, like "sturdy men" or, like, "thick fellas." Plus-sized makes us sound kind of soft and supple and I am proud to have a big, fat shitty body.

What is your ultimate goal in the male modeling world?

To let people know that the current-day body standards glorified by the mass media can be harmful, especially to young people, and that their bodies are phenomenal no matter how they are shaped. Also, to get rich enough to buy an ostrich or to throw a \$20,000 red leather couch in the ocean for absolutely no reason except that senselessly hurting the environment is very baller.

How are you inspired by this shoot?

I am not only inspired by pregnant Demi Moore, I am pretty sure that we look exactly the same. Previously I have been described as having a body like Shrek and Rosie O'Donnell. The Shrek/Rosie O'Donnell body type is going to become massively popular in 2015.

Are there other models who you have been inspired by?

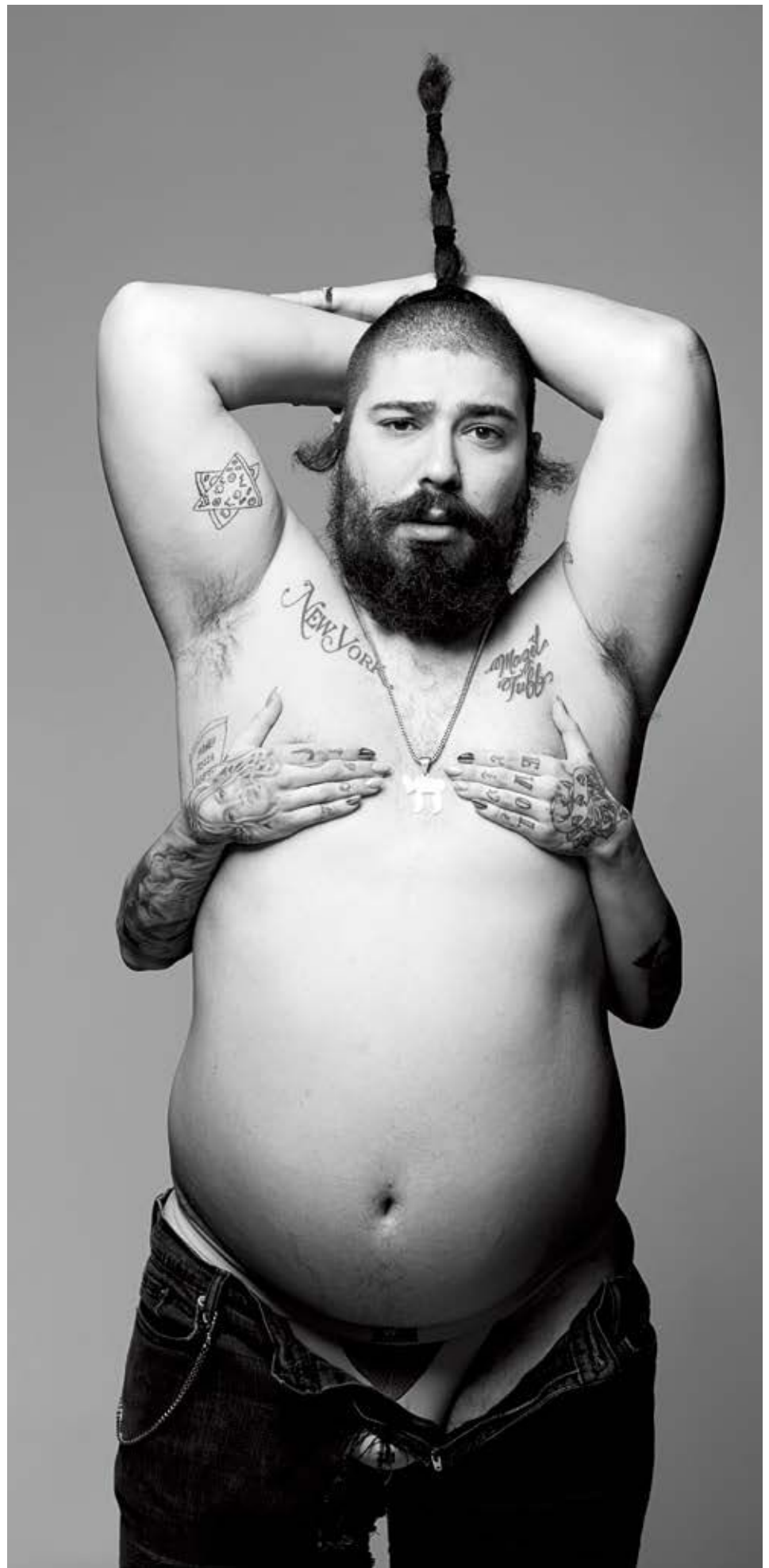
I really connected with...I forgot her name, but she always looked like she was sleeping...she was a Victoria's Secret model and I masturbated to her so many times. Frankie something? Or Frünke? Or maybe it was my dad's friend Frank? He is a union guy—he's like my uncle but he's not my actual uncle, ya know?

Oh, and definitely Anna Nicole Smith. I would definitely want to marry a 95-year-old walking corpse who has billions of dollars and then develop a serious pill addiction, continuously vomit all over myself and then die an icon. That is pretty much the plan; I am the new Anna Nicole Smith.

Are you the new face of modeling then?

Everybody likes to ask, "Who is the new face of male modeling?" But I may not be the new face because this [*points at visage*] is like, whatever, acceptable, but I am the new body of male modeling and that new body is Lena Dunham, because me and Lena Dunham have the same body. If you groped us both in a dark room and had 10 guesses whose body was which you would have a 50 percent chance of being right.

I am the new body of male modeling which is a tall and fat—but taut—adult baby. I am very taut, like a very young Gandolfini—a giant plump infant.







The old industry saw is, “Never work with children or animals.” Do you agree?

The greatest photoshoot I can imagine is me wearing a beautiful half-black baby with a miniature afro and green eyes in a Baby Björn with a majestic falcon perched on my arm. And I’m holding an axe. An axe that’s on fire. That “no baby/no animal” rule is dumb.

What else do you get into on set?

At these shoots there is always a ton of food and none of the other models eat anything. There will be a German dude who has a V-neck that goes down to his navel and he will eat one poppy seed and be full. So I can just, like, hoard food. On the actual modeling shoots I am getting fatter.

Many models have a diet of cocaine and cigarettes, what is yours? It’s all about ecstasy and carbs (and coke).

How about the phrase, “nothing tastes as good as skinny feels?”

Everybody loves that, but that is not true. Have you every drank gravy? I mean, sipped it? Not chugging it like Steve-O, I mean sitting by a fire with a nice snifter of it. Gravy tastes better than skinny could ever fucking possibly feel.

So what of the skinny body image in our culture?

If you are skinny in America you are basically a fucking super hero. If we were in Belgium, or...where is everybody hot? We are not in Stockholm. We are not in Oslo— where everybody is gorgeous, looks like they are from the future and they recycle— this is fucking America, we are big, fat, giant consumption loud-mouth monsters. It is ridiculous to think that any of us are fit. There are maybe 3,000 fit people in LA and 1,500 in New York and that’s pretty much it. Everybody soon will be in a Rascal Scooter so I am the right model for our culture. I am going to need the thing that goes up and down the railing of the stairs. This is what George Washington wanted; this is what this country is founded on. I should be on Mount Rushmore. That should be my next modeling gig: Mount Rushmore.

In case you can’t book that, do you have a back-up modeling aspiration?

I would like to be in Serbian *Vogue*. I don’t know if they have Serbian *Vogue* but if they do I would like to be in it. Former Yugoslavian *Vogue*? I want to be in that bad.

You are a cultural influencer, what are you currently feeling?

The top three things that I am currently into would be nachos on pizza—“Nacho Pizza”—and then probably also Rob Lowe because that guy is just getting younger. He used to look 35 and now he looks 21. He is gorgeous. The last thing is girls with big hands, big rough hands. I am not into guys necessarily, I just like to know that the girl has done some hard labor.

Getting back to pizza, how, as a Jewish man, do you rectify eating pizza with pepperoni as a topping?

As a Jew you are not supposed to eat certain things, but God, don’t be a fucking hater. Obviously I shouldn’t be pouring pork onto my actual face, but have you tasted it? I might be Jewish but this is fucking America. God doesn’t want me to eat pepperoni but George Washington certainly did. That man fought so that I could eat pepperoni for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

You have a slice tattooed on your body.

I am sure a lot of people have said to *Inked*, “My tattoos are like a story, a tapestry of my life,” but in this case that is actually true. I have a couple that I have gotten in shops, but normally, this friend of mine who is a fucking weirdo artist tattoos me in weird places. We have done tattoos on moving trains, in the middle of raves around transvestite cowboys and once went into the bathroom of a restaurant in the West Village and people were knocking on the door while he was tattooing me for 45 minutes. That tattoo says “porno” with a heart, because I love porno. “Money, Pizza, Respect” was done on a speedboat going 95 miles per hour. If you get all of your shit in a tattoo shop, I feel you, but that is kind of boring. I should get a tattoo on horseback, that would be kind of chill. Or we could walk into H&R Block, start tattooing and see how long we could get away with it.

You have a book coming out, *Money, Pizza, Respect*.

I wonder how many people who have written books have had it tattooed on them? While on a speedboat? I’m going to go with none.

What is the book about?

It’s a manual for living your life. I can’t tell you what to do, but I can definitely tell you what not to do. I am the world’s foremost expert in making questionable decisions, and you can learn so much from that. Be inspired by my stupidity. I’m like Ghandi’s really shitty brother with a manageable coke problem!

What’s one thing that your Instagram followers will be surprised to read in your book?

There’s a story in the book involving me getting a handjob from a celebrated actress over the age of 70 in a hot tub in Texas that will probably blow some people’s minds.

And you have a rosé wine coming out called *White Girl*, where did the idea originate?

Last summer, there was a rosé shortage in the Hamptons that left white people panicking and fighting in the streets. It was terrifying. We want to make sure that never happens again.

How would you describe *White Girl*?

It’s free range, macrobiotic, fair trade, grass fed, conflict free, cage-free, low carb, and gluten free. It’s delicious enough to put in your cereal, yet inexpensive enough to fill a Jacuzzi to sit in with some close friends.

If you could have one rapper sip on *White Girl* in a music video, who would that be?

Bow Wow. I would love to have a rapper spokesman for the rosé and would prefer to get someone whose career is basically over because we don’t have a ton of money to pay. He’s three years away from being a waiter at a sushi restaurant in Santa Monica, so I can probably get him on the cheap.

So that, Mount Rushmore or Former Yugoslavian *Vogue*, any other goals for this summer?

If *Money, Pizza, Respect* hits the *New York Times* Best Seller List I am going to legally change my name. I have called the department of records to confirm that I can do this, I will change my name to New York Times Best Seller. I spoke to Kesha at the record’s office and she said, “I don’t know why you’d want to do that.” And I said, “Kesha, I don’t need an editorial, I just need to know if I can do that.” And she was like, “Yeah.” So I can get that on my driver’s license—help make that happen. 🍷



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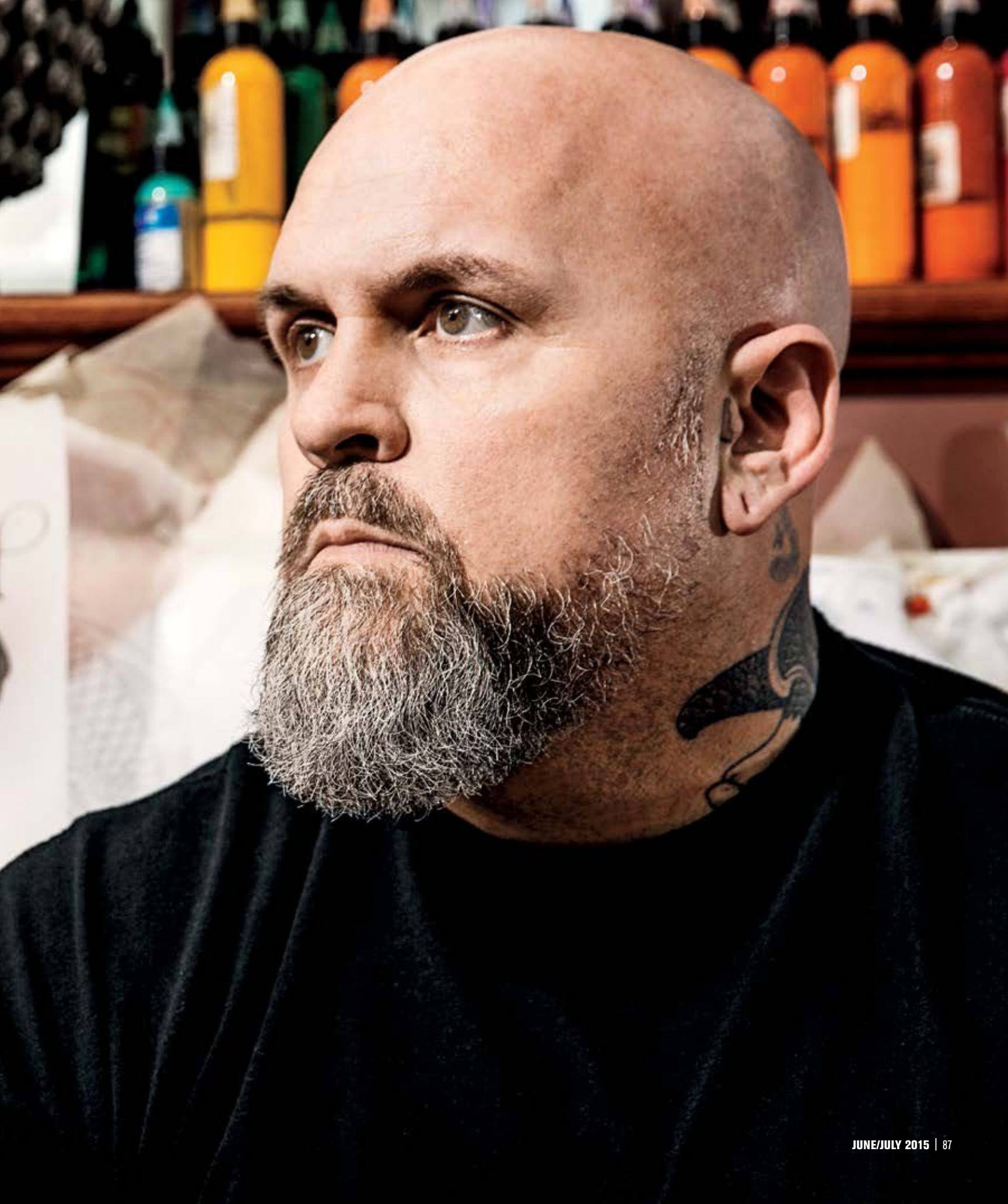
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B.L. Bell

THE MAN OF LETTERS TALKS
ABOUT THE ART OF SCRIPT

By Stephanie Collazo
Photos by Dominic Savini



You can't talk lettering tattoos without speaking the name BJ Betts. Having written four guides on the subject, Betts has become a household name in the tattoo industry—setting the standard for lettering and fonts across the globe. The former Navy SEAL received medical discharge and found the same camaraderie of military life in the tattoo community. Coming up under artists Bo McConnaghie and Zach "Havok" Domstead of August Moon in Bear, Delaware, Betts strived to learn as much as he possibly could about tattooing, even if his apprenticeship was a little informal. Hoping to become proficient in every style of tattooing, he tackled the task of perfecting his lettering after realizing that typography, as an art, was being overlooked by most artists. Having created an unknown number of fonts, it is safe to say that Betts has made his mark on the industry as a whole and it will be interesting to see how he will write the future of typographical tattooing letter by letter.

INKED: Can you tell us about your musical background?

BETTS: I started out playing the saxophone when I was eight years old and played a few other percussion instruments. Ultimately, my love of music led to me being a DJ. I started out helping a local DJ with wedding receptions, birthday parties and smaller stuff when I was 12, and stuck with it throughout my teen years. I deejayed some pretty decent-sized gigs with some pretty famous DJs like Cash Money, Cosmic Kev and Jazzy. Looking back at it now, it was pretty epic!

You were in the military—what branch, how long, and what was your specialty?

I was an Operations Specialist in the United States Navy for just under nine years. I operated radar and shipboard navigation, controlled ship communications for naval gunfire support missions, and reported on combat information. I ended up working in the Special Warfare community, but an injury stopped me from making it my career. At the time it was devastating, but it was one of those blessings in disguise. I really love where I'm at now in my career, my life and my journey through it. I would've missed so much of my daughter's life growing up—the kind

of stuff you can't put a price on. Like, we were all told by our Commanding Officer, "If the Navy wanted you to have a family, they would've issued you one in boot camp!"

How did you make the jump from Navy SEAL to tattooer?

I received a medical discharge and had to start looking at other options. I wanted to do something I loved. I loved the travel and camaraderie of military life, but I really had no idea that tattooing would fill those needs and wants on a large scale. Tattooing has given me the opportunity to travel and meet so many people I consider to be life-long friends.

Did you have a formal apprenticeship? If not, how did you begin your tattoo career?

I didn't have a formal apprenticeship, unfortunately. My good friend Jeff Godwin talked me into trying to make tattoos and I eventually made my first one on him. I really started tattooing while I was on active duty in the military because there was no shortage of people who wanted tattoos. Jeff landed a proper apprenticeship and he passed a lot of the stuff he was learning along to me... so it was like I had a secondhand apprenticeship of sorts. Definitely not the way I would recommend learning. I was just scratching along with little direction and no real idea of what the hell I was doing. I'm sure there are a few people walking around with some questionable tattoos they got from me way back when. When I got out of the Navy, I was on a mission to learn as much as I possibly could about tattooing. I started working full time at a shop named August Moon, in Bear, Delaware, the day after I was discharged and never looked back.

When you first started tattooing who did you look up to?

I worked with a great bunch of guys at the shop and looked up to them not only as fellow artists, but as daily inspiration. Bo McConnaghie and Zach "Havok" Domstead (rest in peace) were the guys at August Moon that I really clicked with and were the ones that had the biggest impact when I first started tattooing. There were also a few local Philly tattooers who were doing some amazing work that I developed a

good friendship with. Dave Fox, Jason Goldberg, and Erik Reith, to name a few. They had only been tattooing a few years longer than me at that point, but it seemed like they were so far ahead. I also looked up to well-known tattooers like Jack Rudy, Freddy Negrete, Filip Leu and Ed Hardy. I have also been fortunate enough to work alongside some of the most inspirational people who have not only impacted my career, but have influenced my outlook on life and my understanding of the tattoo industry as a whole. People like Bert Krak, Grime, Mike Wilson, Dan Smith, Todd Noble, Scott Sylvia, Tim Hendricks, Mike Dorsey, Mike Rubendall, Henry Lewis and Shawn Barber. The list is long.

You're known for your lettering. Why did you decide to focus on typography?

I always wanted to be proficient in every style of tattooing, including lettering. It was almost by default that it turned into what it is now. I felt that typography was getting lost in tattooing. You would see these amazing tattoos: solid color, perfect execution, but the lettering was terrible. It just ruined the tattoo. There were a few tattooers back then who were known for doing some great lettering, but it wasn't their focus. Now there are tattooers who only do lettering. That's awesome to me.

How does typography fit into artistry?

Typography is an art in and of itself. It just happens to be an art that is overlooked by a lot of people. There's something really special about a crazy hand-style.

You've really set the standard for lettering.

How many styles have you've created?

That's a tough one. I can't say with certainty.

Is there a particular script that you think tattooers should retire?

No. I don't think that it's up to the tattooers to decide that. I think the customers should dictate that. Plus, just when I think I'm tired of seeing a particular style, somebody just kills it and refreshes my outlook on it.

Are there particular words that you refuse to tattoo (hate words, couples' names, etc)?

I don't get down with any of the hate stuff. As for names? My rule

of thumb is that if they want it bad enough and I don't do it, they'll just go somewhere else. I may as well do the tattoo so it's done well.

Have you ever made a spelling mistake in a tattoo, and if not, how diligent are you with checking?

Nope. I've done a wrong date once, but it was the date that the customer gave me...I obviously had no idea when their grandmother was born.

Where would you say is the most challenging area to tattoo?

In Berlin, due to the EU ink restrictions. Just kidding. It's particularly challenging to tattoo any part of the body where there's loose skin, or parts of the body that are more sensitive because people tend to move around a little more.

What makes a good script tattoo?

Choosing the proper font to fit the subject matter and legibility are the main considerations for me. You want the lettering to help tell the story, you know? If you've got a portrait of your grandmother, a nice, clean, flowing script plays better than a harder, Old English font. I always keep in mind how well the tattoo will wear over the years too, and I also consider the placement. Sometimes a style of lettering just doesn't work for a certain body part. There are so many variables.

What script tattoos do you have?

My daughter's name and my dogs' names.

Fifty percent of the time we have a hard time reading stylized lettering. What's more important, legibility or style?

Legibility. Always.

How do you mesh the two?

As you get your style more refined, you start to see what needs to be trimmed down or added to find that happy medium between both. It's easy to get carried away with flourishes and all of the extra nonsense, but lettering requires restraint.

When writing on paper in your everyday life how stylized is your handwriting?

It's not very stylized, but it's legible.

What are you working on for 2015?

World domination. 🌍





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WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT INSPIRES YOU THAT MIGHT NOT BE OBVIOUS TO OTHER PEOPLE? I'm truly affected by the beautiful chaos of a city.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR NEW WEB SERIES "BACKSTAGE INK." I am really lucky that my clients are super rad and some of them have epic jobs. I want to give people the opportunity to come with me as I hang out with and tattoo celebrities, rock stars and athletes. It's a chance for the public to go behind the scenes with some of their favorite celebs and watch cool tattoos come to life without all the fake drama on television.

WHERE DID THE IDEA COME FROM? Their stories and ideas are incredible and should be shared. I woke up one day and realized that I need to document these amazing

experiences and share them with whoever is interested. It's real. It's not scripted. There's no fake drama. It's just good company. I've always enjoyed watching interviews with celebrities when it seems like they are genuinely having fun and the conversation feels real. That's what I want to capture here. I just want to do rad tattoos on rad people and talk about whatever the hell we want.

HOW DOES YOUR CELEBRITY CLIENTELE DIFFER FROM YOUR EVERYDAY CLIENTS? I think the one main difference I notice with my celebrity clientele is that they all seem to truly love their job. They've worked their asses off and have made it and now work even harder to maintain their success. It's inspiring to see so much passion. I feel so blessed to make art for a living. 🍷

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WE HEAR THAT A BAD PATH BREATHED LIFE INTO YOUR ART. Being incarcerated wasn't something I had ever thought would happen, but I found a positive from it by using my time to focus and get further with my artwork and spent a lot of my time drawing in there. That was when I really started to see progress in my art and found my calling in realism. I was stoked to be able to apply that back into tattooing.

YOUR WORK USES A LOT OF DARK IMAGERY. IS THAT YOUR PREFERRED SUBJECT MATTER?

Definitely. I try to only work on things that I have my heart in. I want to send my client off with a piece of art that I am proud of. I feel really strongly about high contrast and dramatic lighting in pieces so that's the way I tattoo. I'm really drawn as an artist and as a person to this style.

IS THERE A TATTOO THAT YOU ARE DYING TO DO?

A full Transformers-themed back piece. I'd be pretty down to do that on someone in the near future.

HOW HAS THE TATTOO COMMUNITY INFORMED YOUR ART?

Until very recently I kept to myself. I didn't check out what anyone else was doing or compare my work to anyone else. I really focused only on what I wanted to do and where I wanted to be. I'm not sure if it was a negative or a positive, that's just what I did.

BUT YOU'VE NOW SEEN HOW BLACK-AND- GREY HAS DEVELOPED.

Seeing how much it has already evolved in the few short years that I've been around, it's hard to imagine where it'll go in the years to come. I just hope to be around for it. 🖤

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HOW WAS YOUR FIRST SHOP EXPERIENCE? Being in a small religious college town, we were required to wear uniforms, clock in-and-out on a time card and had no control over our own schedules. We priced by a clear sizing chart that had varying sizes of circles dictating the price of the tattoo, which you held up in front of the artwork and whichever circle it fit into was the designated price. So, we would be charging the same amount for a five-inch astrological sign as we would a five-inch portrait, one taking 40 minutes, the other four hours. The shop was owned by a businessman who had never tattooed in his life and was run in a way to restrict the artists who really wanted to advance in the industry. Once I felt I couldn't handle it anymore, I moved back to my home state, Washington, and started my official tattoo career.

YOU WORK IN MANY STYLES, DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE? My preference changes all the time. I love to be challenged, so for me I find a style I have not done before and experiment with it. I have fun with abstract pieces—including elements of paint splatter, geometric or otherwise. I love to mix styles; I enjoy forcing the juxtaposition of realism with simplistic traditional. Lately, I have been focusing on a mixture of neo-traditional with illustrated secondary line work with my usual muted color palette.

OTHER THAN THE CHALLENGE, DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR A TATTOOER TO BE VERSATILE? The clients we get are always varying in styles. Unless you have the ability to be proficient in different styles and have the versatility that the clientele needs, you will miss out. 📌

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We have a lot of fun at the studio. We are all super nerds, we even dedicated the month of April to animation tattoos—comic books, video games, cartoons—all on special. We do a lot of theme days: Saturday is every Saturday, on May the 4th, we do Star Wars tattoos and my favorite is the \$30 Throw Out. The dartboard is covered in flash by our artist friend, Derek Ward. For \$30 you can throw a dart and get whatever piece the dart lands on. \$10 for a re-throw. Derek's baby has major heart problems and has received many heart surgeries with more to come. The proceeds from the dartboard go to Derek and his family. It's a fun way for us to help him and has been a popular option for many of our customers.

I actually haven't been working at the studio for very long. I started in November and originally was only supposed to work four hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Now I'm working almost every day of the week. I have a busy lifestyle already—I co-operate a personal training company, Hard Luck Athletics, and I ride show-jumping horses. I have three horses of my own; I'm at the barn five days a week with them before I come to work. Everyone at the studio supports my passion for riding by allowing me to leave for competition whenever I need to.

I never imagined I would fall so much in love with what I do here. I have learned so much and have had the pleasure of working with some incredible people and artists. Our owner and artist, Waldo, gives me design projects often, which I love. All artists and staff have a weekly flash art assignment. I haven't flexed my art muscles since high school, so I love that I get so much opportunity to do it here at work. 🐾

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