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HOT IMAGES

THE SEX ISSUE

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HARLEY QUINN

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KLEIO VALENTIEN
JESSICA WILDE
LEIGH RAVEN
JORDYN RYDER
& SUICIDEGIRLS!

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OF MICE & MEN

C O L D W O R L D

A V A I L A B L E
S E P T E M B E R 9 T H



EMBRACE THE LIFESTYLE.



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Sex is like air—it isn't important unless you aren't getting any. That's an old joke, albeit not the funniest turn-of-phrase, but it rings absolutely true. Sex is that crucial. Sex is the ultimate pleasure, creates an essential bond with your human (if done right) and is the giver of life. No earthly action compares, yet talking about sex was impermissible for much of modern history—as taboo as it once was to walk around with a visible tattoo.

What a time to be alive! In this issue you will have an intimate experience with tattooed women like Venom (6) who shot her SuicideGirl sisters in their own personal spaces. Get up close and personal with AVN's (*Adult Video News*) Best Supporting Actress Kleio Valentien (yes, that's the way it's spelled, yes, she is dyslexic and, yes, she has fun with it and everything/everyone she does). Art Director Claire Metcalfe (3) chose the most titillating photos of Kleio and the many other gorgeous Inked girls in this issue for your enjoyment. You'll also meet a new, scintillating porn starlet-in-the-making, Leigh Raven, through an interview with Catherine Lagoa (1).

That girl on the cover is Ashley Nicole Shelton, who plays our (more) tattooed version of Margot Robbie's Harley Quinn from *Suicide Squad*. Set designer and prop stylist Rachel Barker (7) set the scene for the insane shoot in which Harley served *Inked* intern Serena Muhammed (8)—who also sketched the art for "Release the Cracken"—her last meal. Don't fret, she went out with a delectable cake handmade by *Chopped* champion and tattooed model Ashley Holt. Another woman who is an alchemist with her hands, artist L. Be (2) turned a bedroom blindfold into gold for "Sensory Decoration."

The model who cut a striking figure for "Entertain at Home" is Violet Oliphant (4). Picture this: a woman picks you up and asks you to take her to your place, but all you have back at your place is harsh booze, this feature gives you tips on how to soften hard, hard liquors for the fairer sex. Speaking of pointers, our resident sex columnist Jessica Wilde (5) is here to help us hapless men in bedrooms, relationships and DMs. Did you notice that last sentence was the first time I mentioned anything related to the XY chromosome? That was by (intelligent?) design. So many men's magazines are put together by-men-for-men, and include many winks and nudges and bad sex jokes like the one I led off with. Fellas, we can be idiots when it comes to sexuality, so I made sure we had many a feminine touch when putting together this issue for you, for us.

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

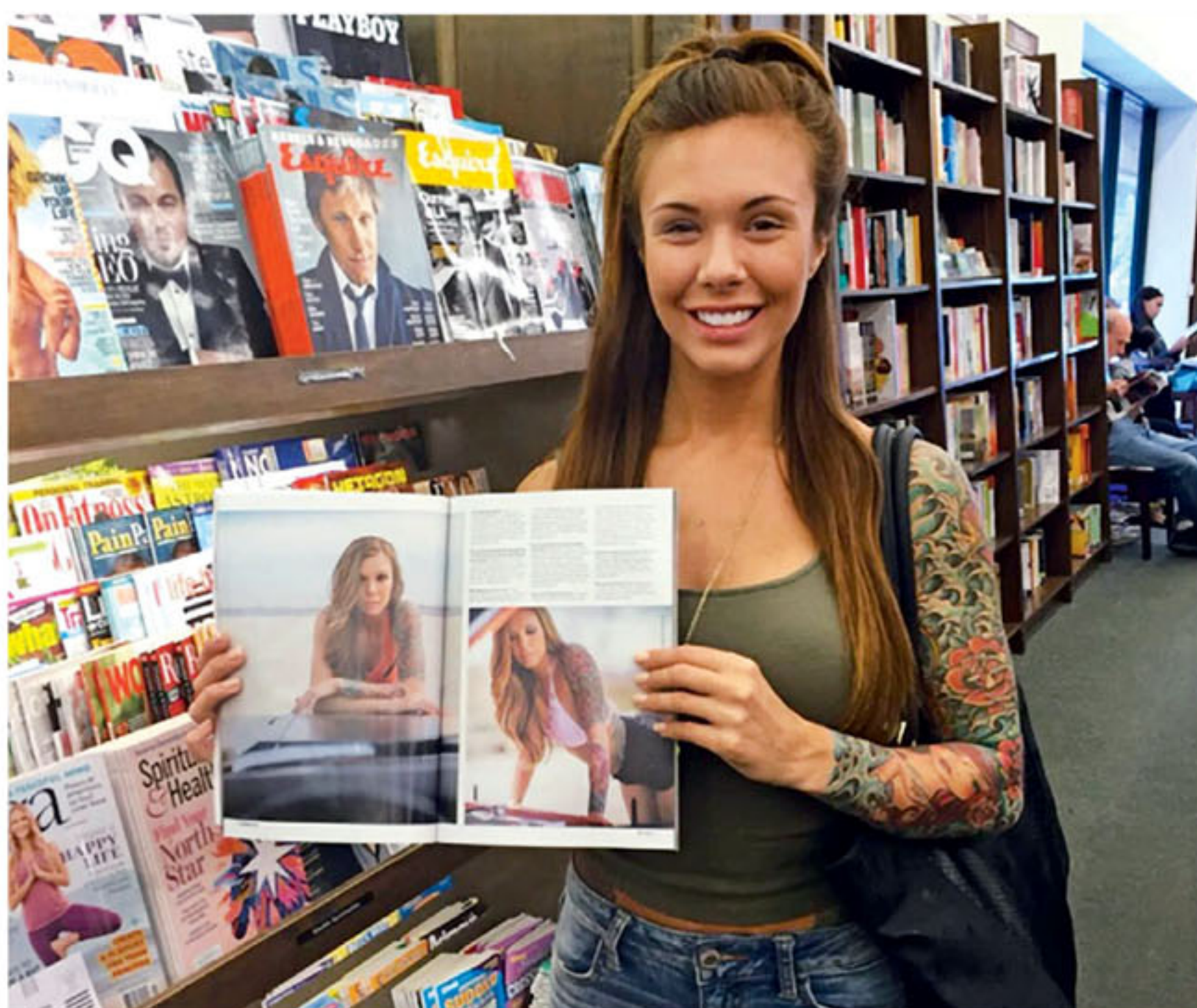


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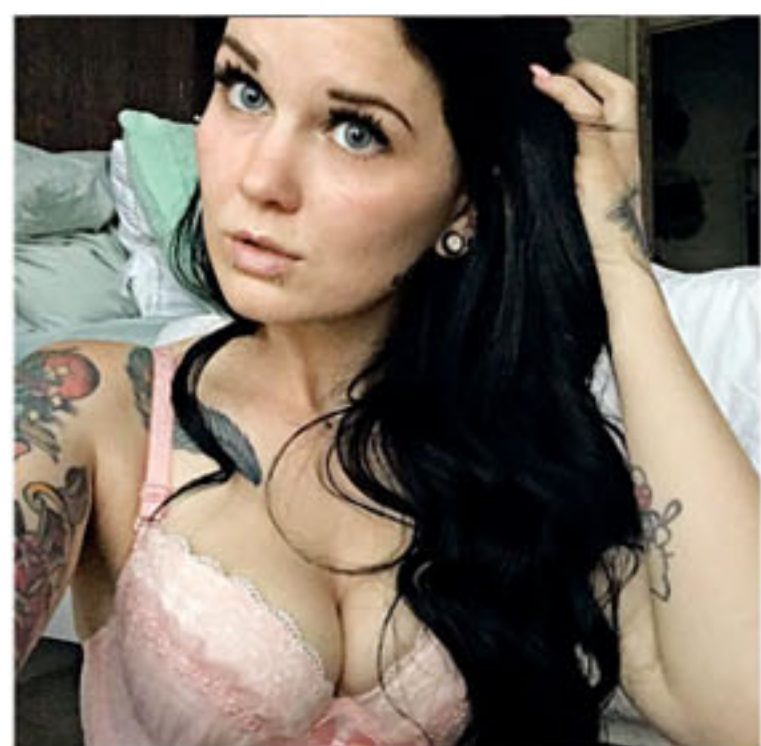
YOU AUTO KNOW. The lovely, lovely Amanda Chu posed with some awesome Detroit steel for her spread "Built to Thrill" in our July issue. Adorers of tattooed women and cars chimed in with praise for Amanda with "car talk." Here's some of the comets (damn, autocorrect!):

- "It's legal, let's get hitched."
- "Better than my ride at home."
- "You are making me overheat."
- "Now that's an auto body experience!"
- "Nice rearview."
- "I love that fat tire."

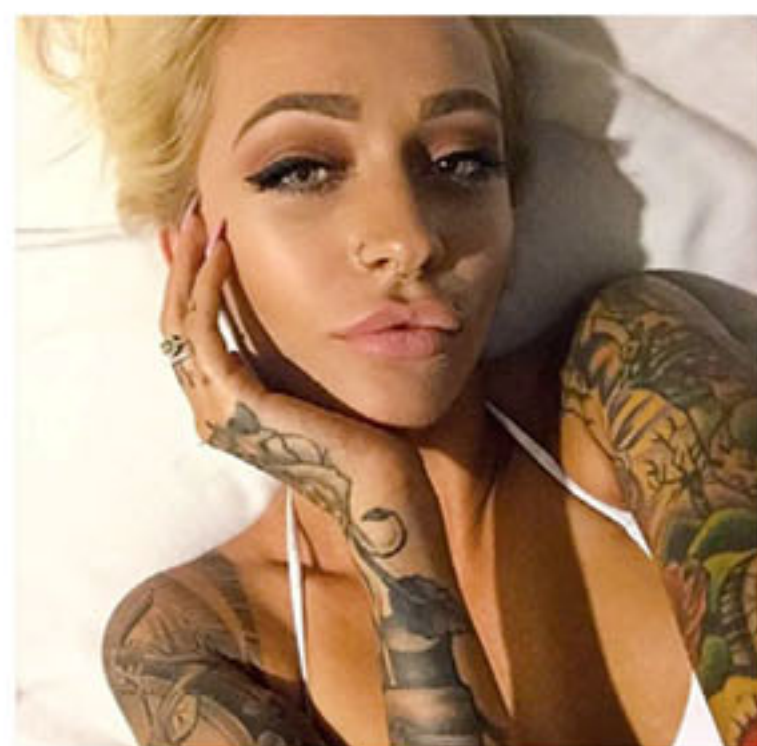
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- AMANDA CHU**
Bryce Mulvaney Move over, Megan Fox
- Archie F. Pajimula** Make sure the door jam is clean down to the corners next time. Otherwise a great picture. [Editor's Note: Fuck you Archie.]
- TATU BABY & CLYDE**
Victoria Carole You look like Brigitte Bardot in the movie [she was not in the movie, but whatever]
- Juan Sebastian** Beautiful Baby
- REFEN DOE**
Bob Sue Prettiest face tattoo ever
- Dan Clegg** You are the hottest. Game over. Everyone else can go home.
- Paul Singleton** Nice to see a model with good ink try tattooing
- AMINA BLUE**
Phineas Bourne She's hotter than the Arizona summer
- April** She and the tattoo are beautiful
- Carina Covington** Simply beautiful
- Triple Double** Kanye West is the black Benny Hill of finding 10's

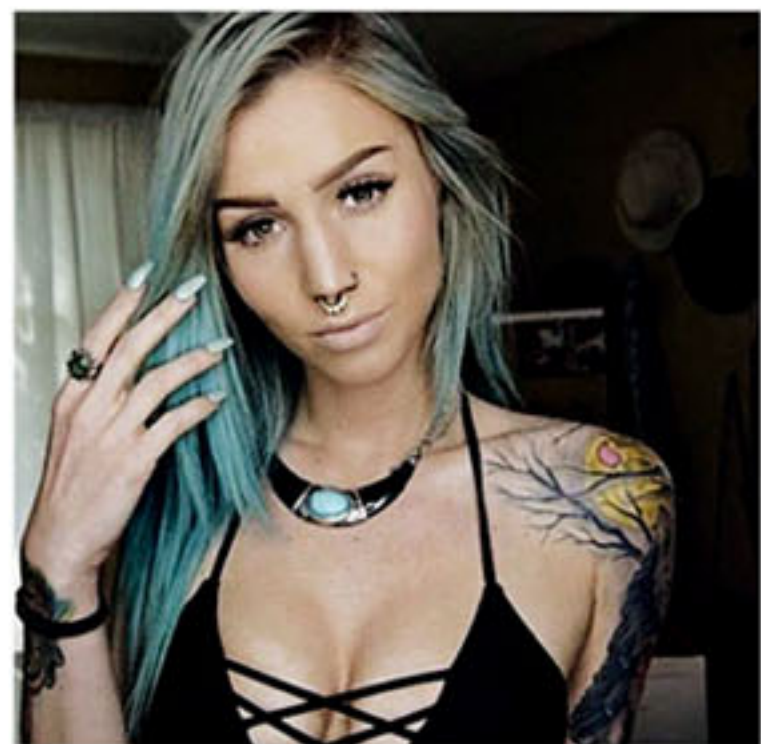
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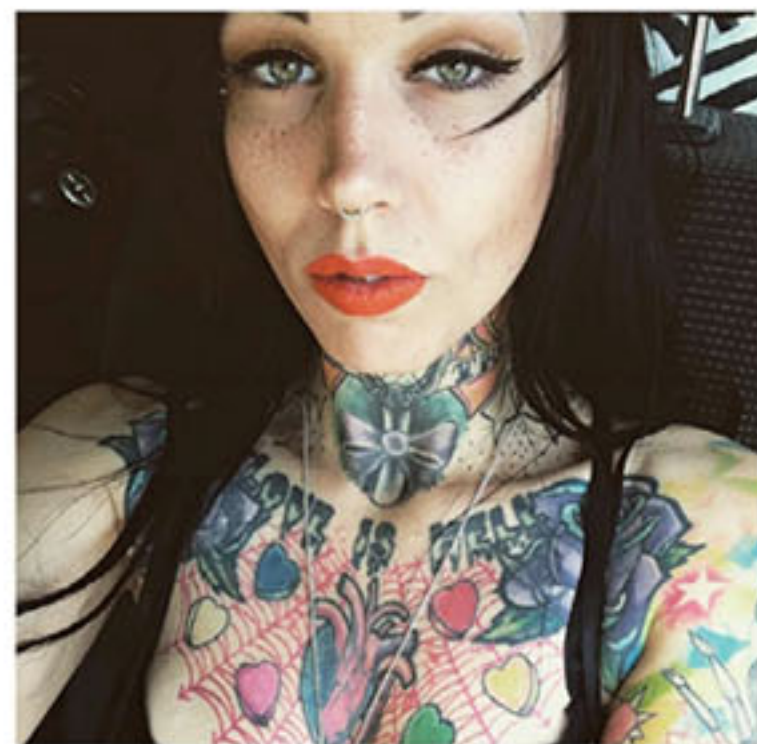
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TATTOO OF THE MONTH



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INK

MY FAVORITE

INK

leigh raven

PHOTOS BY ANGRYMOON

My favorite tattoo is one I got pretty recently, at a tattoo convention by an amazing artist/friend Fame, who owns Eminence Ink in Connecticut. It's a portrait of my best friend's baby picture on my hand. We have been friends for 15 years and I thought it was time to honor her beautiful face. Her name is Hannah, but now goes by the name "Hand-ah"...it makes for pretty interesting porn scenes! I'm pretty new to porn. I've only been in the industry since December 2015, I've done less than 20 scenes, and I love it. Typically tattoos tend to be a hindrance to one's porn career, but they have contributed to helping me meet some of the coolest people in the industry. I've had the pleasure of working for Burning Angel and befriending the tattooed porn queen Joanna Angel. Working in the industry has made me very comfortable with my body and sexuality. Sex is a normal, natural thing, and no matter the kink, nobody should be ashamed of what they like. I'm super stoked on my first film called *Lezz Be Roommates*. It's an all-lesbian movie for Filly Films, written and directed by my wife! I was lucky enough to be cast in three scenes (wink) and have even been paid to have sex with my wife!





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CARVING SACRED COWS

Butcher Billy cuts through society using its idols

Precision, craft, history, it's all in the name. Just like your neighborhood meat market, Butcher Billy serves up fresh cuts (of commentary). "[The name] comes from the idea that I'm always slicing pieces of pop culture to bring them together in different ways."

The native Brazilian prefers the use of American pop references but doesn't see his work in terms of territories, opting instead for universal icons and concepts. As a child he was always interested in British and American pop culture without even realizing it. "Cinema, music, comics, games, history...recently people even came to me saying that I seemed to know aspects of their culture [through my art] so well that they couldn't believe I was from another country and culture."

Being an individual with such a unique perspective on socio-cultural concepts, it's only natural that he would be influenced by an eclectic mix of individuals. Those who made the cut? Salvador Dalí, Stanley Kubrick, David Bowie, Frank Gehry, Banksy, Tim Burton, Nick Hornby, Bettie Page...and that's just to name a few. "When it comes to who inspires me one way or the other... inside my head they all make sense," Billy says. That internal mash-up produces some of his most provocative and informative work.

Heavy is the hand that holds the cleaver, and Billy has a certain responsibility with icons that people hold dear. Needless to say, it's not a job without adversity. In the early days, his work produced backlash and outrage. He countered with persistence and a "fuck it" attitude. "I don't mind what people think of what I do," Billy says. "I believe that if you really love what you do, you're going to do it so well that people notice one way or the other." And younger audiences in particular are taking heed. "I don't think I use totally obscure icons or concepts, but I constantly hear from young people that they get to know more about pop culture by examining my pieces and discovering touchstones."

Billy enjoys his freedom to work with so many different elements, a factor that has fused with his artistic identity. His Bukowski piece is one of many that exemplify his ability to meld the unusual. "I always wanted to explore the culture of quotation on the internet," Billy says. "He's one of my favorite authors, so it all came quite naturally."

The recent influx of comic book movies are also a catalyst for his current attraction. "I noticed there's a symbiotic relationship between media in which one draws from the other. Cinema obviously takes everything from comic books from 40 years ago, while the comics industry benefits from the update."

The connection of timeless images and today's technology has significantly changed the platform, allowing the Butcher freedom to cut things up precisely the way he wants to. "Pop art that was initially made in the '60s was all about making a comment on aspects of that time. Today it doesn't matter if you're using computers and tablets or brushes and canvas. The current pop artists that don't get pop art in a conceptual way fail miserably in my opinion." Stand in line and grab a numbered Archival Print from Billy Butcher. —*Catherine Lagoa*

love at first bite. 



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TAP QUEEN

La Habra, CA

YADIRA MARTINEZ AT CASK & HAMMER IN LA HABRA, CA, IS THE BEST TYPE OF BEER SNOB

WHAT'S CASK & HAMMER ABOUT?

It's a very low-key craft beer bar.

NOT WHERE WE'D TYPICALLY EXPECT TO FIND AN INKED GIRL.

When customers see me at first they're surprised, because usually the bartenders are just dudes that know a lot about beer—kind of hipster guys. They think I was hired mostly just for show. But once they start asking me questions and get to know me they're really surprised because I actually do know a lot about craft beer. Obviously they're happy that I'm around then. They think this chick doesn't know much, and I turn the tables on them.

DO THE "BEER SNOBS" LOOK DOWN ON TATTOOS?

La Habra still attracts people who ride bikes and are into rock'n'roll, my types of people. So they have tattoos too. But when we do get the craft beer crowd, they're more interested in what my tattoos actually are, because they haven't seen a girl with a sleeve of my type of tattoos—everything I have is Traditional.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE?

My favorite is actually one I can't even see normally—I kind of made a mistake when I did that! It's a clown on a unicycle on the back of my arm. When I was little my family would go to Vegas a lot, and we would always stay at Circus Circus and go to the circus shows. I loved the whole scene and became obsessed with it to the point that I wanted to be in the circus when I grew up! One time when I was seven I ended up losing track of my parents because I was so caught up in the show. This beautiful circus girl found me crying and took me back to where the circus people were practicing, and some of the clowns kept me company and happy until the police came and got in touch with my parents.

PHOTO BY ROBERT DURON



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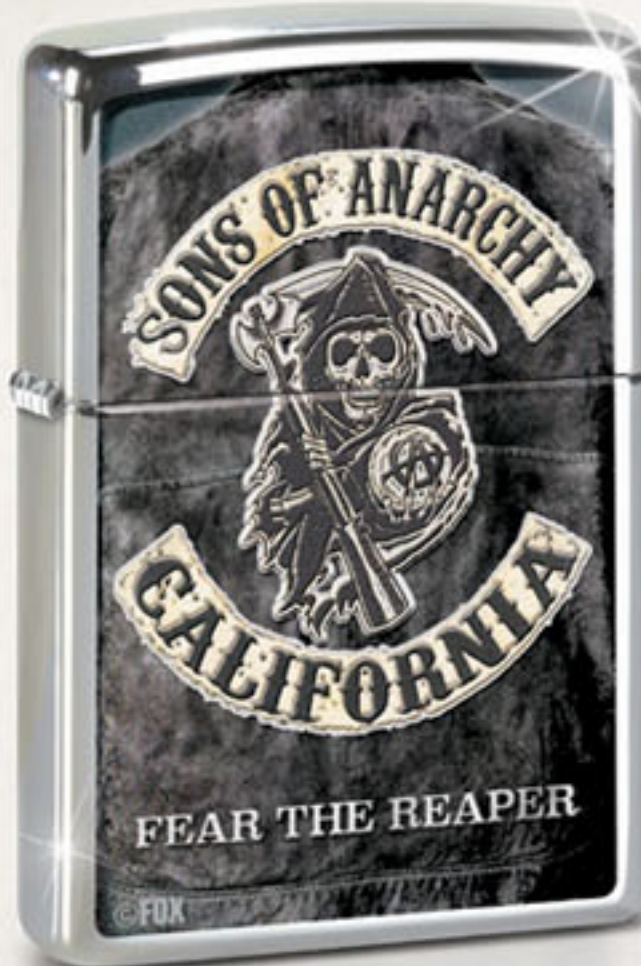
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THIS BOTTLE DESIGN IS BY TATTOOER SCOTT CAMPBELL

THE BEES' KNEES

- 1½ parts Casamigos Blanco tequila
- ½ part honey syrup
- 2 splashes of fresh lemon juice

Add all ingredients to a shaker with ice. Shake then strain into a coupe glass and serve up. Garnish with lemon twist.

PEACHY KEEN

- 1 part Gentleman Jack
- ½ part Cointreau
- ½ part simple syrup
- Splash of lemon juice
- ½ a peach sliced (skin on)

Muddle peaches and simple syrup in mixing glass. Add Gentlemen Jack, Cointreau, lemon juice and top with ice. Shake vigorously. Strain into mason jar filled with crushed ice.

COGNAC COLADA

- 1½ parts Hennessy V.S.
- 2 oz coconut cream or Pina Colada mix
- ½ oz chocolate syrup
- Splash of lime juice
- Splash of Amaretto

Add all ingredients to a shaker with ice, shake, then pour into a glass. Garnish with an orange slice or a cherry or both.

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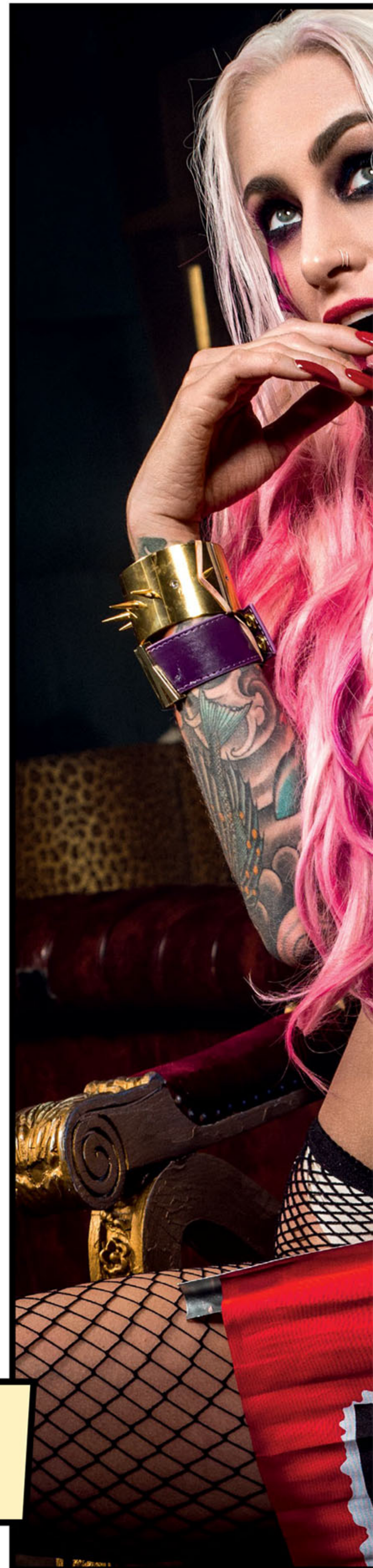


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ANDRE ACOSTA'S TATTOO ROSES REMIND ME OF MY MOTHER, JUST SOFT AND TIMELESS. ♦ ZACK SINGER AND I WERE JUST SEARCHING THE INTERNET FOR INSPIRATION AND CAME ACROSS A VICTORIAN LADY EATING A HOTDOG. WE THOUGHT IT WAS HILARIOUS AND BEAUTIFUL SO WE TOOK INSPIRATION FROM THAT. ♠



I LIKE ALL TATTOO STYLES COLLECTIVELY. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY I HAVE SO MANY DIFFERENT STYLES—A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING ALL ROLLED INTO ONE, LIKE MYSELF. ❤️





TATTOOS MOLDED ME INTO WHO I'VE BECOME. WHEN I FIRST STARTED GETTING VISIBLE TATTOOS I WAS GETTING OUT OF A FIVE-YEAR ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP. THEY'VE NOT ONLY MOLDED ME INTO WHO I AM BUT WHO I WAS SUPPOSED TO BECOME.

I APPRECIATE ART AND I LOVE HOW WE CAN EXPRESS OURSELVES WITH OUR OWN INDIVIDUALITY. ♣ I DON'T THINK EXPRESSING SEX OR NAKED BODIES IS THAT BIG OF A DEAL.





I SAY DO WHAT YOU WANT AS LONG AS YOU'RE SAFE ABOUT IT. ✦ "WHY BE THE GOOD GIRL NEXT DOOR WHEN YOU CAN BE THE BAD GIRL ACROSS THE STREET?"






THE END!



SUMMER ROSE
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Sensory

DECORATIONS

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PHOTOS BY POOKIE | FEATURING SERENA MUHAMMED



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CULTURE

SERVICE WITH A SMILE

What do you get when a photographer immerses herself behind the scenes of porn shoots for four years taking pictures of all the action around her? Unless you guessed a highly-awarded art photo exhibition, you should get your mind out of the gutter. *It's Just Love*, Amsterdam-based photographer Sophie Ebrard's collection highlighting the extremely

NSFW world of adult filmmaking, has been shown at the Unseen Festival (inside the photographer's own home) and featured in the *British Journal of Photography*, *The Creators Project* and *TIME Light Box* to name only a few. If you only deal in the classiest of provocations, the artist sells individual prints on her personal website. —Brett Williams

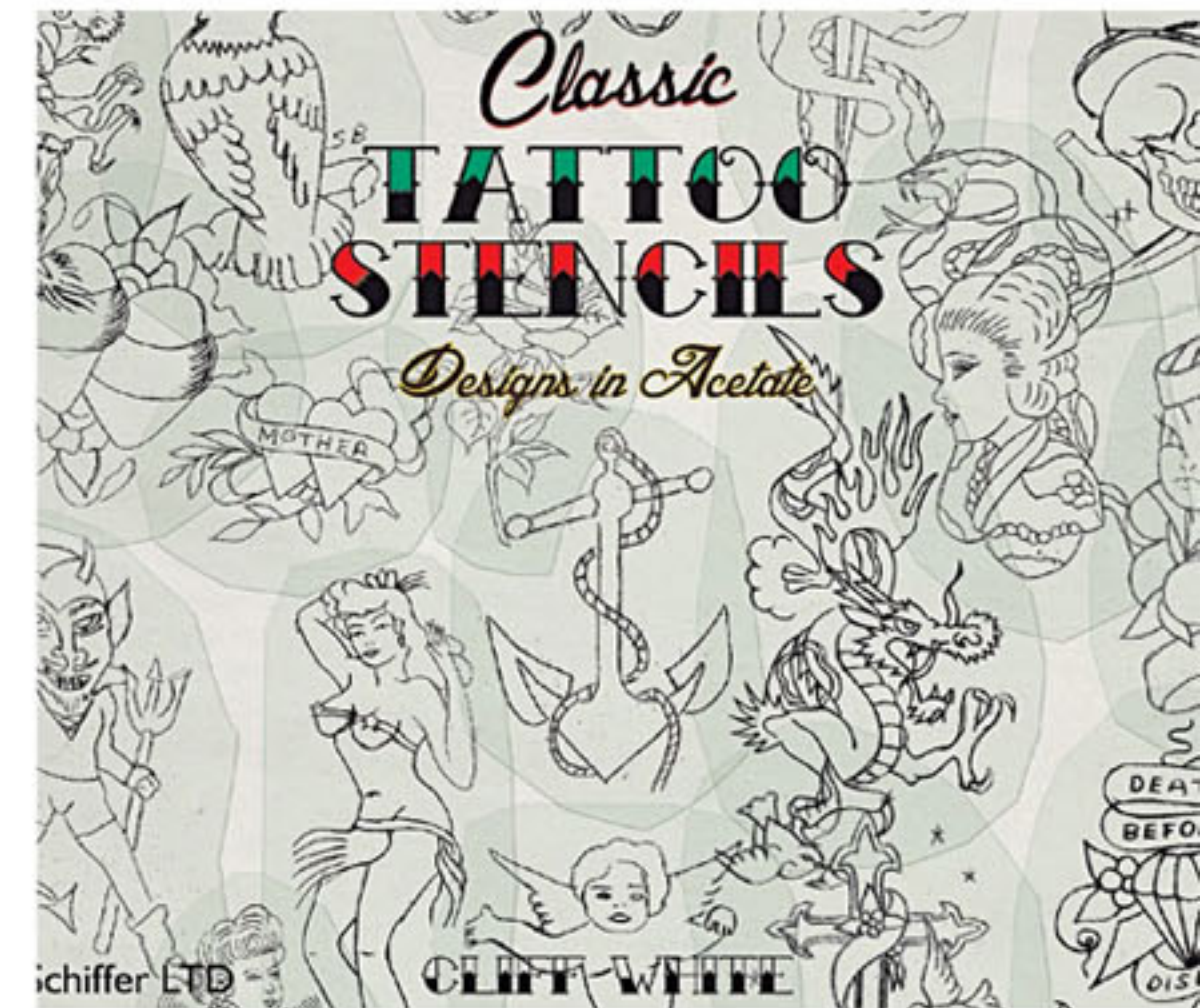
JOKES THAT KILL

Don't be fooled. this is no weak Saturday morning cartoon. Based on the best-selling graphic novel and considered to be the most fucked-up Joker story of all, comic fans are finally getting the long-awaited animated feature adaptation of the controversial *Batman: The Killing Joke*. It seems Warner Bros. and DC Comics took notice of the success of the R-rated sensation known as *Deadpool* and decided to give fans what they want—yes, kids, an R-rated *Killing Joke*. And to add icing this already delicious green and purple cake, Kevin Conroy (Batman) and Mark Hamill (Joker), both *Batman: The Animated Series* alumni, are lending their iconic voices to these characters. —Gil Macias



BACK IN A FLASH

If you're an old-school tattoo junkie with a wide open space on your (hopefully sturdy) coffee table, this is the book for you. This 440-page hard-cover behemoth is filled to bursting with 2,000 examples of vintage acetate tattoo stencils, presented as if they were cut from an artist's workpad and pasted to the page like an arm ready to be inked. —B.W.



PICK UP THE BOOM STICKS!

Madden NFL 17
PlayStation 4, Xbox One



In a country filled with Monday morning quarterbacks and fantasy football gurus, everybody thinks they know how to turn their favorite NFL franchise around. This year's Madden issues the pigskin equivalent of an SAT to test those theories, with a bevy of hardcore changes aimed at separating the Bill Belichick from the Bert Bells. More realistic gap control, zone schemes, run/pass counters, and a greater emphasis on special teams bring this virtual gridiron closer to the real game than ever before. Besting your opponent now requires more than just twitch skills; it demands you put that elite football mind to work with smart playcalling and midgame adjustments. A new commentary team of Brandon Gaudin and Charles Davis join to grade your performance, calling out your best efforts and biggest gaffes. Pro Tip: Stop going deep every play—this isn't the Madden of yesteryear. —Matt Bertz

MADE FOR ARTISTS

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CHEYENNE ARTISTS:
// VALENTINA RYABOVA &
// MONI MARINO





SEX TAPE

Looking to have a red-hot restrained bondage session with your lover(s) but sick of duct tape tearing off your hair and skin once it comes time to break loose? You're not alone. Liberator "bedroom adventure gear" feels your pain, both figuratively and literally, and has stepped up to make at least one part of your BDSM adventures a little less sticky with Erotic Bonding Tape. The PVC restraint tape sticks only to itself, so once you've taped your lover to the headboard (or the chair, or to each other or anywhere else your twisted mind can dream up) unrolling them for other adventurous love-making is hassle-free. Duct tape doesn't have a safe word. —B.W.

RUM JEREMY

What do you get when you combine the most infamous, prolific adult film star of all time and a top shelf spirit? Ron de Jeremy, an award-winning line of rums from the appropriately named One Eyed Spirits. The Hardest (Working) Man in Showbiz is well represented with bourbon-aged reserve editions, along with spiced and, unsurprisingly, "Hardcore" varieties which have, of course, a "long and smooth" finish—just like their namesake. They're calling it "the adult rum," which should set it apart from any other variety only by what you choose to do to emulate Ron himself after you drink it. You know what we're talking about. —B.W.



BOURNE'S BACK

Sorry Jeremy Renner, while we somewhat enjoyed your flick and would love to see you team up with Matt Damon one day, your Aaron Cross was no substitute for Jason-Fucking-Bourne. Following the events of *The Bourne Ultimatum* (2007), the titular trained assassin

on the run re-emerges after years of being off the radar. Remembering who he truly is, he is once again uncovering more hidden truths about his past. Paul Greengrass (*The Bourne Supremacy*, *The Bourne Ultimatum*) returns to the director's chair. —G.M.



THE SUMMER PLAYLIST BY JONAH BAYER

THE ALBUM LEAF

"Between Waves"

This minimalist, electronic-tinged ballad is so haunting that it will stay with you indefinitely.

THE BOUNCING SOULS

"Up to Us"

For nearly three decades The Bouncing Souls have been crafting punk perfection and this song is no different.

CULTURE ABUSE

"Dream On"

If you're feeling down this three-minute-long fuzzed-out track will make you smile and air drum.

DESCENDENTS

"Victim of Me"

Descendents' first new track in 12 years fits in flawlessly in their legendary catalog.

KATY GOODMAN & GRETA MORGAN

"Where Eagles Dare"

Members of La Sera and Springtime Carnivore put a girl-group twist on this Misfits classic.

FRAMEWORKS

"Tangled"

If you think screamo has to be inherently abrasive, you're wrong and this song proves it.

^ PANIC! AT THE DISCO

"Bohemian Rhapsody"

Brendan Urie nails this ambitious Queen cover for the *Suicide Squad* soundtrack

RLYR

"Slipstream Summer"

Members of Pelican, Locrian and Bloodiest get heady and heavy on this instrumental jam.

SUM 41

"Fake My Own Death"

Canadian pop-punk icons sound reinvigorated on this undeniably catchy anthem.

TOUCHÉ AMORÉ

"Palm Dreams"

West Coast post-hardcore titans return with a song that's as melodic as it aggressive.

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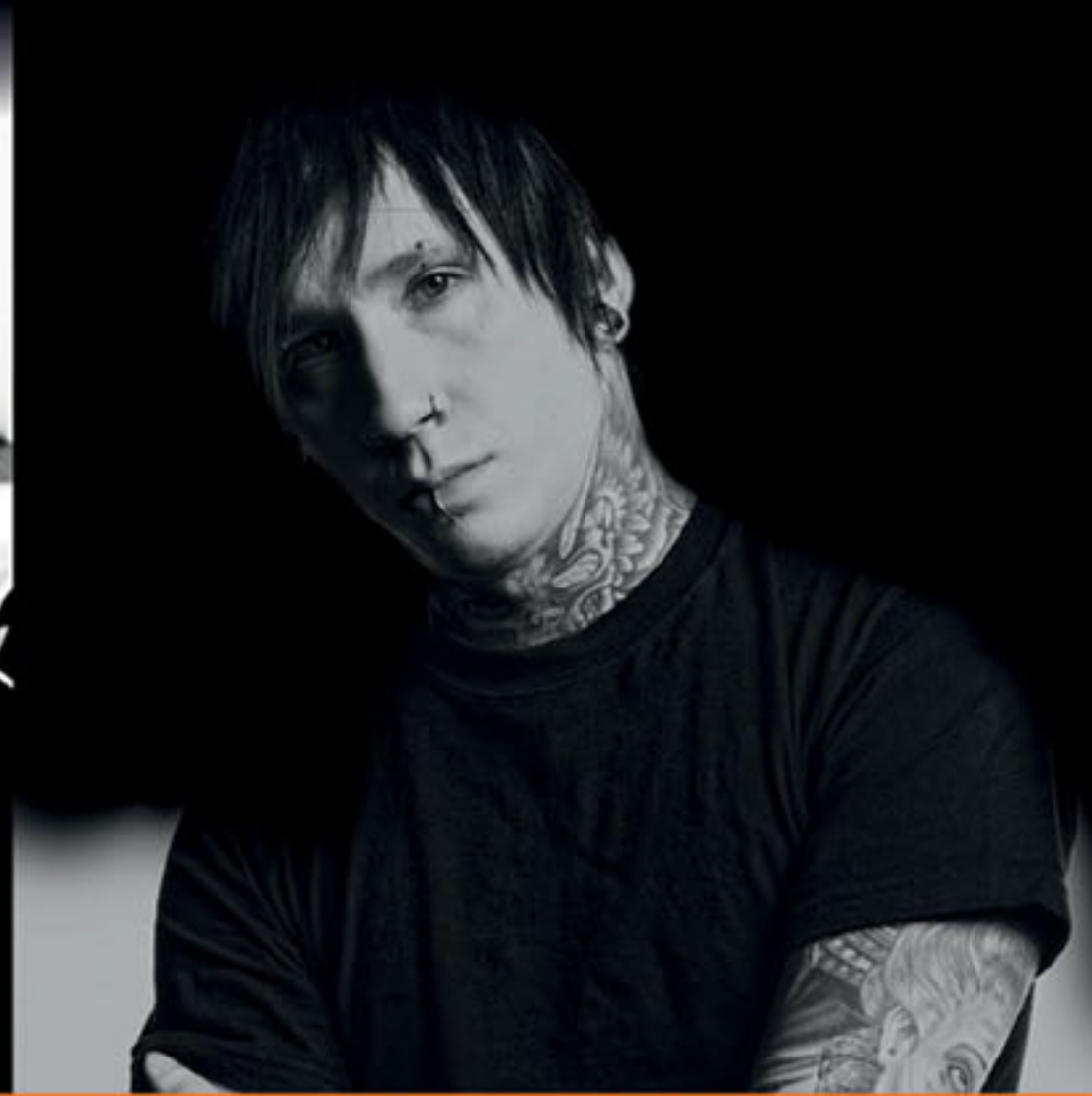
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ROMAN ABREGO



RANDY ENGELHARD



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SQUAD GOALS

Jared Leto follows in the footsteps of Heath Ledger and Jack Nicholson and takes on the role of Batman's number one arch-nemesis of all time, The Joker, who is all tatted up in this latest incarnation of the maniacal clown prince of crime. *Suicide Squad* is a band of incarcerated supervillains who are assembled in secret by US Intelligence officer Amanda Waller (Viola Davis) and used to do the government's dirty work. Think of them as the Anti-Justice League. The motley crew also includes: Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie), Deadshot (Will Smith), Rick Flag (Joel Kinnaman), Killer Croc (Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje), and Captain Boomerang (Jai Courtney), to name a few. —G.M.



WILDE ABOUT SEX

Jessica Wilde (@jessicawildemfc) is here to answer your burning sex questions—though if it burns consult an actual doctor right now. She's not a doctor, but she once role-played as a nurse so she's beyond qualified. Send your questions to press@inkedmag.com.

My boyfriend loves to take me doggystyle, he almost never wants to do any other position. Is this a domination thing or what does it mean? - Sara

Different strokes for different folks! There's nothing wrong with having a favorite position. That being said, if you prefer a more personal face-to-face experience, you'll have to communicate that to him and make compromises.

I'm scared to introduce my girlfriend to my parents. They're super conservative and she's covered in tattoos. Do you have any advice on preparing my parents to meet her? - Lucas

Now is the best time to get back at your parents! (kidding) You can't change people's views on tattoos but you can definitely have fun with it. Most judgmental people come around once they get to know someone. I'm sure it will go swimmingly.

Do girls like dirty talk in general? I'm kinda inexperienced, so what do you think? - Anonymous

Dirty talk can be kind of awkward, can't it? Some people really enjoy being vocal in the bedroom. If you're new to the concept I suggest practicing alone. You may feel silly doing it, but she won't know you've rehearsed your lines.

I'm really shy and theres this girl I like. Every time I try to talk to her I stammer and its embarrassing. Should I write her a letter or is that too cheesy? - Phil

It's your era! Have you heard of sliding into DM's? It's the modern day love letter minus the chivalry and romance. Nowadays you don't have to talk to women in person, send that girl an instant message to build up your confidence first. How do you slide into hers DM? Be funny, be bold and/or be you—but no eggplant emojis ;)



L.A. STREET LEGENDS

Two of the most prominent fixtures of L.A. street culture—skateboarding and graffiti art—come together in a once-in-a-lifetime mashup from Dusters California Skateboards. The line of boards was produced in tandem with art collective California Locos, a group of five monumentally influential Golden State creatives, each of whom contributed a painstakingly designed deck. We're most excited about the offering from the legendary Chaz Bojórquez, known as both the Godfather of Cholo art and one of the first influential graffiti and street artists to cross over to the fine art world. His iconic tags have become an essential tattoo staple in West Coast culture. We'll ride with that any day. —B.W.



TWD SEASON 6

We still have a couple of months until we find out who in the hell is going to have their head bashed in by Negan and his barb-wired bat named "Lucille." Until then, catch up or re-watch all 16 episodes of Season 6, including an all new extended edition of the controversial, cliffhanger season finale "Last Day on Earth" (Blu-ray only). You'll also get to see an Alternate Negan scene, six featurettes,

commentaries, and deleted scenes. Season 7 of *The Walking Dead* premieres this October. Place your bets on who will be "taking it like a champ" in the highly anticipated season opener, but please don't let it be Daryl. —G.M.



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KEEPING IT

BY BRETT WILLIAMS | PHOTOS BY ANDREW HANCOCK

5000

Professional athletes and tattoos may go hand in hand, but there's a certain type of sports star you expect to see rocking an intricate sleeve or all-encompassing back piece: the kind of player you consider to be a baller, who stands out in a room even without their distinctive ink. Race car drivers, both because of the conventionality of the sport's culture and its reliance on heavily marketed sponsorships, don't usually fit that profile. That perception hasn't stopped Verizon IndyCar Series' Tony Kanaan from embracing body art as one of the most decorated drivers in the world, both on the track with wins in the biggest races of his sport and off of it with an impressive collection of black-and-grey work covering his upper arms and ribs.

Contrary to what you might expect from a tattooed driver going against the grain of the IndyCar community, Kanaan isn't some young hotshot heralding the arrival of a new wave of less conservative racers. The Brazilian has been competing in the U.S. since 1996, winning the IndyCar championship in 2004 and the Indianapolis 500 in 2013. At 41, he's the oldest driver in the Series, currently in his 19th year with (as of press time) 318 consecutive starts, the all-time record. That consistency has been a hallmark of his career. When he won the championship in 2004, he was the first driver ever to complete every possible lap in a season, a feat which has yet to be duplicated.

He's also one of the fastest drivers of all time. Kanaan's Indianapolis 500 win in 2013 was the fastest ever recorded in the 100 years of the hallowed contest with an average speed of 187.433 mph. More recently, he posted the fastest practice lap leading up to 2016's 100th anniversary edition of the race, which he went on to finish fourth.

With that rare mix of speed and consistency in his racing, it's easy to see why he's well established as a fan favorite. Add his easygoing demeanor, which translated perfectly to the small screen during recent appearances on the TV shows *American Ninja Warrior* and *Family Feud*, and you have a star in a sport where the competitors are usually moving too fast for fans to really keep up with. His popularity is most evident through his massive social media following, especially on Instagram, where he shares snapshots of a life filled with family, fitness, and of course, racing. It's just about everything you'd expect from a stereotypically clean-cut driver—which make his posts showing off his ink even more surprising.

"I love tattoos," he says. "That sometimes doesn't go along with my job description, but it's one of my passions."

It's a passion Kanaan embraced early on in a life spent in the fast lane. He broke free of expectations and the rules and got his first tattoo well before the legal age back in Brazil. "I started when I was 13," he says, laughing. "I have a monkey on the inside of my arm. That was totally illegal—I'm not

even gonna disclose the artist, or he would get arrested!"

When he became old enough to have more work done, he added a tribal symbol on his ribs ("I was young, in my 20s, and it felt like something that would make me look tough. It hurt like hell!") and a quarter sleeve on his other arm, made up of a smiling skull (because he likes skulls but "smiles a lot"), Japanese calligraphy for "best friend" he got with a buddy in Brazil, and "race car driver" in Arabic as a tribute to his father, who got him into racing at an early age and passed away from cancer when he was only 13.

But his other tattoos flew under the radar until recently, when Kanaan hooked up with Swedish artist Nikki Norberg for a striking piece of work on his right arm that set the racing community buzzing. "I had no idea, and Nik didn't either, that this was gonna catch so much attention," says Kanaan. "I did the tattoo because I love his work and because I love ink."

It's a beautiful example of black-and-grey pastiche. Norberg, who typically specializes in photorealistic black-and-grey portraiture, challenged Kanaan to consider what goes into a prestige tattoo—from every perspective. "Nikki is a very particular guy," says Kanaan of their collaboration. "After a little research and trying to get ahold of him they said I had to wait in line for four years, but I got introduced to him by a good friend of mine. When I sat down with him, he was very specific. He gave me this really cool speech about how tattooing needs to mean something to you. He said 'I'm not just gonna design something on your body just because—it's also my art on you. That's gonna represent me, because people are gonna ask who did it.'"

What it came down to, then, was what matters the most to Tony Kanaan as a driver, as a father—as a man. But that all had to mesh with Norberg's artistic vision, too. "We sat down in São Paulo in Brazil," says Kanaan, "and Nik said 'What are some of the cool things you've done?' He obviously knew who I was, and I said, 'let's do the hand and footprints of my kids, which I have on the back of my helmet.'"

"He was like, 'Yeah, but that's boring.

That's it? We can do that, but let's do something else.' Then we just started from there. I showed him the Borg-Warner [the Indianapolis 500 trophy], I showed him the helmet with the footprints and handprints of my kids, I showed him the bricks and he said, 'Okay, hold on. Come back tomorrow and I'll show you what I've done.' And sure enough, I came back the next day and that's what's on my arm right now. I already had the birthday of my first kid in Roman numerals there so I added the other, their initials, and my wedding date. So we did my biggest achievements in life: my two kids, my marriage, and my two big wins, which are the Daytona 24 Hours [represented by the clock on the tattoo's outer border] and the Indianapolis 500. We did the trophy, put the kids' footprints and handprints where the faces usually go on that, and then the bricks to fill up the entire arm."

The work was done in two six-hour sessions on back-to-back days, which gave Kanaan a greater appreciation of the action of tattooing, the craft that goes into the work. He began to see a direct connection between the physical and mental toll of creating an intricate piece of artwork and applying it to someone's body and the toll of controlling a race car at breakneck speeds around a track.

"They're so similar," he says of the focus and stamina needed for both pursuits. "I think in any sport or anything you do well, anybody who is extremely successful, the dedication and concentration are extremely similar. I don't care if you're a quarterback, a race car driver, a high executive [in] a meeting, or a tattoo artist."

The result of the collaboration is a singular tattoo that made people in the racing community bigger fans of ink—even his sponsors, who have an invested stake in keeping his image as marketable as possible.

"Everybody has been really cool because there's such a story behind it," he says of the response from his sponsors. "Anyway, if I wear a T-shirt it's hidden. It's not like I put it on my forehead! So if I ever have sponsor dinners or commitments it's always covered, unless people ask me to show it."

Still, there are limits to Kanaan's freedom to express himself, at least for now. "My lifetime dream is to have a full sleeve, but I think with my job right now people wouldn't take it well. So I keep it at just half of my arms so I can cover them with my shirt sleeves. Eventually, I'm gonna let it go."

He might not be branching out for his sleeves just yet, but it will be hard for Kanaan to stay out of the tattoo chair for long. After all, he has to keep things on the up and up with his family, and there will soon be an addition who will need recognition in ink. "My wife is expecting another



baby, so that's gonna have to go there. We already have his two brothers' birthdays so we can't leave him out. So that's another excuse!"

Along with family, racing is and will remain the major focus of his life—even with all the risks involved with consistently being one of the fastest men in a sport obsessed with speed. Both Ayrton Senna, the Brazilian Formula One

legend Kanaan calls "my hero" and one of his best friends, former teammate Dan Wheldon, died in race day crashes. After IndyCar racer Justin Wilson died in a crash in 2015, Kanaan took to the *Players' Tribune* website with an eloquent essay to fans, "Why We Race." The essay served both as an elegy for Wilson and Wheldon and a resolute manifesto on why, after so many years spent in racing, Kanaan still

comes back to the track.

"I still love what I do," Kanaan reaffirms. "And that's the only thing that's gonna make me keep going. When I have a tough day on the track or a tough race, I always remind myself why I started racing: it's because I love the sport. I love the adrenaline the sport gives me, I love to go fast, I love to be inside a race car. That's the way I am."



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Fuck Cancer





**DON'T
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ME FOR
SUCH A
SWEET
THING**

BY BRYAN REESMAN | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHAD GRIFFITH

As heard on their new album *Never Alone*, Stitched Up Heart's sound is akin to the brutal punch of Pantera married to the epicness and romanticism of Evanescence. The mixture makes sense given that offstage singer Mixi Demner is charming and thoughtful, while onstage she exerts an impassioned, headbanging presence.

"When we're out there on stage, it's like this completely different animal comes out of me," she declares. "I'll turn into a lion. I don't even realize how hard I'm going. I think I hurt my knee yesterday because I was stomping the ground so hard on the stage when I was headbanging and I almost broke my mic stand in half on my leg." Kind of like that aching euphoria after "doing a marathon when at the end you're all wounded and sore. Headaches from *bangovers*."

After winning the *Redemption Song* pop music competition show on Fuse back in 2008, Mixi won a solo contract with Geffen Records. Then after her debut single received a lukewarm response she was dropped. But Mixi was more rock than pop and missed playing in a band, so she formed Stitched Up Heart in 2010. The singer describes their music as "heart rock;" she's a hopeless romantic at heart. "I still have that Disney Princess mentality where you want to fall in love, meet your Prince Charming, and have the happy family and home and cook really great dinners," she reveals. "That classic love feeling, I have that deep inside of me. I think that if you truly believe in love you'll find it."

While earlier Stitched releases like the *Skeleton Key* EP were admittedly darker affairs ("Marionette" is about killing yourself," she says), new tunes like "Monster" and "Event Horizon" explore a more optimistic perspective. "Unconsciously I ended up writing a lot of songs that were really hopeful, pulling from the dark and bringing a positive message," Mixi says. "I noticed that it's a running theme. Stitched Up Heart is [about] picking yourself back up again and stitching yourself back up. It's just an ongoing process in life. Rocks are going to be thrown, and you're going to fall down a few times, but you've got to get up. It's all about how you react to the situations."

Mirroring her band's intensity, Mixi's striking hair color "changes with the seasons" (she's done purple, pink, blue, black, and half-blonde half-black), and her current light blonde do was inspired by Khaleesi from *Game Of Thrones*, whom she loves. She is also a big *Star Wars* fan and she adores animals. The band donates a percentage of their merchandise sales to kittenrescue.org, and Mixi has fostered baby kittens and found homes for them, even adopting one herself.

A native of Orlando, Florida, she spent some time living above a tattoo parlor called Built For Speed, which was attached to a small music venue. "It was an adventure, and that's what got started me with all the tattoos," she recalls. Jeremy Ashe did the wings on her back and some other pieces, then when the singer relocated to LA she connected with Mr. Monster, who now works at Electric Pen Tattoo in North Hollywood. "He's basically done a majority of the stuff that is on me right now." The "hopeless romantic" inked on her knuckles was done by Kyle Hecker in Durango, Colorado.

Mixi has sparrows on her right hand and a compass on her arm to represent travel. She wears some thunderclouds, lightning, stars and the hot air balloon, "represents me floating through the storms of life." The treble clef with bloody wings on her collarbone expresses her undying loyalty to music. The downward pointing guns on her hips indicate that you shouldn't mess with her. And the bowties on the backs of her thighs? She thought they looked cute. Mr. Monster set her up with a machine at home, and she is working on a boombox tattoo on her ankle.

Adjacent to some inked roses, the cassette with wings on her left forearm was inspired by *Guitar Hero*. "I'm a huge gamer nerd too," she confesses. "I was obsessed with *Guitar Hero* when it first came out. I also play *World of Warcraft*."

Her admitted *Warcraft* addiction led to a two-month binge that made her girlfriends physically extract her from her apartment to see people. "Everything was a quest, everything was a mission," she recalls. "I eventually realized that it was becoming a problem, that I needed to socialize with real people, not 12-year-old kids on the internet, and I wanted to focus more on music."

She still feeds into her gamer urges from time to time. "Sometimes music is like any other job where you are constantly doing music, and sometimes you need a breath of fresh air," says Mixi. "So the video games take me away and I can be a dragonslayer." Then it's back to being an edgy goddess onstage. The Mother of Dragons with a microphone.







Nude, *Kleio* & Tattooed

Forget about being a "trophy wife," Kleio Valentien earns her own accolades including 2016's Best Supporting Actress (for a film called *Axel Braun's Inked*, no relation) at the AVN Awards.

BY NICK FIERRO | PHOTOS BY MIKE MILLER | HAIR & MAKEUP BY STEPHANIE NAVARRO









Of all the porn parody roles that you've played, which one was your favorite?

Oh gosh, definitely Harley Quinn in *Batman Vs Superman XXX* for Axel. Having the chance to play Ronda Rousey in *Ronda ArouseMe For BurningAngel* was also very cool too.

Your role as Harley Quinn won you an AVN Award, how did you celebrate?

I allowed myself to go to bed an hour earlier.

What is it about that character that people find sexy?

Definitely her "I don't give a fuck" attitude.

As a Texan, is it hard to find decent BBQ in California?

I haven't even tried.

What are some misconceptions that people have about a Texas girl that grew up hunting?

That we listen to country music, eat crawfish and grew up with a broken car on our lawn. Actually, that is all true!

Aside from hunting and fishing, what did you enjoy doing while growing up?

Riding dirt bikes, quads and motorcycles. I was a bit of a tomboy.

What tattoo piece are you the most proud of?

I love my stomach/thigh black-and-grey piece. It's a work in progress, though.

How does being tattooed help or hurt you in the adult industry?

To be honest, I don't think it helps, but this is who I am!

Topping Harley Quinn is no short order, what roles can we look forward to seeing you play in the future?

Actually, I'm in the middle of playing Harley once again, this time for *Suicide Squad XXX*. So, I hope you will enjoy it just as much!

"I'm super-competitive by nature, so the adult industry is a great fit for me. Porn has always been at the forefront of technology (think video streaming and VR) and it's awesome that a big part of my job involves being one of the first to experiment with new ideas and products in emerging tech. On a social level, my friends don't really care about what I do for a living—it's just the thing I do to pay my bills and to give my cat a luxurious quality of life."

Katie, the face of YouPorn on social media

"What I like most about having my own channel with my photo and video galleries is that I am in control. There are so many girls who send pictures to guys and don't know what happens to them after that. These private photos can be spread around and sometimes end up on sites where someone else profits off of them. With findrow.com, I know who is seeing them and I earn my share—it's sexy to be in control."

Jordyn Ryder, shares intimate photos at jordyn.findrow.com

DIRTY WORK

What it's like to have a sexy job

"When I first started writing books that featured lots of sexy times with tattooed boys, I thought my audience would have a lot in common with me: rebellious, tattooed and not quite in my prime. As it turns out, women from all walks of life and across all age groups have a fantasy or two about inked-up bad boys."

Jay Crownover, author of romance novel series Saints of Denver and Marked Men (tattooed paramours)

"My ex-girlfriend was a dancer. One day I went to hang out at her job and the DJ got sick. She told the manager I was a DJ, so I jumped on and saved the night. From then on I continued working. At one time promoters wouldn't hire me because I was a 'strip club DJ,' but now everyone wants to be on the strip club scene."

DJ Tantrum, Cityscapes Gentlemen's Club

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Release The Crackles





Daizha Morgann is cunning, beautiful, and mysterious, and although she's about four limbs short of her cephillapod spirit animal, she embodies the mesmerizing grace and allure of the creature she keeps close to her heart and even closer to her ass.

"I've been infatuated with octopi since I was young and fell in love with Ursula from the *The Little Mermaid*," confesses the lead performer and founder of Stripclub2u.com. Daizha made the internet do a double take last year when she unveiled what has become her claim to fame, an enormous and intricately detailed octopus tattoo protruding from her back-side, with tentacles peeking up over the small of her back and stretching down her legs. "Since my butthole is my money maker, the placement just made sense to me. I wanted something that would accentuate my body shape, not cover it." And accentuate it did: The adult film star and stag night entrepreneur already had

an established fan base surrounding Anal Ring Toss, the adult party phenomenon that her business partner pioneered back in 2000. Always looking to up the ante, she rolled the dice and came out on top of the highly competitive Las Vegas bachelor party scene, more on this in a minute.

Placing such a bold design on such a delicate area, however, was no short order. Daizha enlisted the steady hand of tattooer Greg James, renowned for his large-scale bodysuits and traditional Japanese tattoo designs. The two hit it off immediately, as she explains, "I fell in love with his Zen-like energy and knew he was the only person that could do the job. He did one draft, scaled it to size, and I fell in love right away."

Over the course of 10 sessions, roughly 35 hours under the needle, and as Daizha reminds us, "One session just to color in the hole again because it didn't take the first time," the deed was done, the one

thing that she wasn't prepared for, however, was the reaction from her fans. "I thought it would be a novelty for my bachelor parties. I never thought it would get the attention that it did. It took to social media like wildfire!"

All of the attention that Daizha garnered from her experience has transformed her into one of Vegas's adult entertainment elite. Siegfried and Roy have white tigers, she has an octopus and "the most elaborate bachelor party Las Vegas has to offer," she says. "We set up the room like a mini strip club. We spend the first part of the show focusing on the bachelor. Then of course there's Anal Ring Toss, and the championship 'Sudden Anal Death' round where you win prizes like Porn DVDs and T-shirts. It's more like a two girl sex show with front row seats. We finish it off with a hardcore bondage show, with a strap-on, butt plugs, a restraint bar and ball gag. I'd love to say more, but I wouldn't want to give up any spoilers." —*Nick Fierro*







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HEY MR. CARTER

THE ISSUES' VOCALIST HAS A BOLD VOICE

BY JENNA ROMAINE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYAN PURCELL

What comes to mind when you envision a bisexual rock star? Chances are it's not a heavily tattooed, gold tooth-sporting metal-core band co-frontman. But for Issues vocalist Tyler Carter, that's the point: no parts of his identity should be defined by narrow labels.

His tattoos prove as much, alternating between styles and messaging to form a colorful collective that only come together through his own perspective. His left forearm features three disparate pieces by Keith Kuzara, owner of Sink or Swim Tattoo in Buffalo, NY: the mask from his favorite movie *Nacho Libre*, a traditional-style moth and, most importantly, a bold equality symbol that ties his body to his outlook on love. "As a member of the LGBT community, this symbol of equality means a lot to me," he explains. "I've come to understand the complexity of love and have no limitations on sex or identity."

The Issues vocalist came out as bisexual to the world in 2013. While he was never "in the closet," as he told *Alternative Press*, he felt the he could no longer stay silent after a Nashville venue, Rocketown, fired an employee for wearing a shirt in support of gay marriage, causing major controversy in his corner of the music industry.

Fan reactions were overwhelmingly supportive. "I think that there are a lot of LGBT youth in our scene because this scene and this music we come from is one of the biggest and most accepting places there is, especially for teens," Carter says.

Carter's musical endeavors began at a young age playing drums for a praise band at a local church in Georgia. He rose through the alt-rock ranks as a co-vocalist in the bands A Path Less Travelled and Woe, Is Me in 2008 and 2009 respectively, before breaking away to form Issues in 2012.

His current co-frontman Michael Bohn was a member of each of the bands as well, as he departed Woe, Is Me to joining Carter in Issues. The band's self-titled debut was released in 2014, gaining them a solid fanbase. Their highly-anticipated sophomore album *Headspace* dropped this past May.

"I'd like to think it's doing pretty well. I try not to pay too much attention on the business side or really focus on the numbers," he says. Even with that attitude, the numbers are more than good, with the record debuting at number one on *Billboard's* Alternative & Hard Rock Albums chart. "But as far as the touring side goes it feels like everybody is really enjoying the songs, learning the words. That's always rewarding."



Carter won't be tied down to just one style of music, either. His influences extend well beyond the rock and metal world, as he reaches to the stylings of R&B and pop artists like Bryson Tiller and Drake to find inspiration. "We just come from all sorts of backgrounds in music so everybody's got their own flavor, their own inspiration," he says.

The broad range of influences extends further to the page and screen, personified in the music video for the single "Coma," inspired by the movie *If I Stay* (based on the young adult novel by Gayle Forman).

"The lyrics of the song are basically just the plot of the movie and how she was really fighting through this coma and how the love of her life and his constant reminiscing, being there and talking to her kind of brought her out," Carter explains.

The music video stars albino male model Shaun Ross sporting anatomical ink across his body: a brain on his back, heart on his hand and lungs on his chest. "It was just an artistic visual that the director Dillon Novak and I discussed. It doesn't specifically have this crazy detailed story other than it's kind of the emotional elements of it," he explains. "Shaun Ross and the tattoo thing just kind of helped portray the emotion behind the song."

Unfortunately, creative movie tie-ins and the success of *Headspace* haven't been the only thing on Carter's mind as of late. Both of his intimate communities, music and

the LGBT, have faced tragedy in Orlando in one weekend in June. Following the murder of Christina Grimmie and the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub, he was affected personally and professionally.

"I think it's heart-wrenching, a chilling situation," he says. "I think everyone thinks that, why Christina? Because she was so pure, you know? I think it's very shaking because it could have happened to any of us. We all do soft-club tours and we all are very trusting of our fanbase. We go out and try to meet fans and not be too high [with] security, we try to be personable. And it sucks because now there's such precautions and we're not able to do that anymore because of the break in safety."

As the lawless nature of the internet gives trolls easier access to get off on creating hateful comments from behind the safety and anonymity of a screen, Carter has taken to avoiding the comment sections.

"There are people who are like, 'Well they're fags, they deserved to die.' It's fucked up, and I just don't have room for that negativity in my life with all the stuff that's going on," he says.

"And for somebody who is in the scene and is also a part of LGBT it's almost double the danger. Those paranoid thoughts definitely cross my mind. But I have a really good foundation, and I try not to dwell on it too much." He cranks up the music and cleanses his headspace.



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Who has more fun: blondes or brunettes? The answer is SuicideGirls. "The word 'suicide' in 'SuicideGirls' comes from the idea of committing 'social suicide' by not conforming to the norm," says SG Lindsey Jennings. "I love that. Obviously don't kill yourself, please!" You can meet the girls on suicidegirls.com in sexy photoshoots of all kinds but we wanted to get more cozy with them, so we shot them in the most intimate of places—their homes.

BY KIRSTIE KOVATS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY VENOM

The Tattooed

GIRLS

ARE

THE

COOL

MIASHELBY

@missmiashelby

"This is home and my sanctuary. The wall is about surrender and devotion, which are very personal to me. I love the reaction I get from guests as they pass through. My favorite tattoo is the phrase, 'nurture over torture' on my ribs." Mia has a strange affinity for numbers, loves *Game of Thrones* and is a "chronic masturbator."





"Suicide Girl means being a fierce and beautiful lady, embracing who I am and will become—often naked. I live in a huge hipster nerd mansion with a few people who live similar lifestyles to my own, a lot of time on the computer and a lot of time partying. They don't mind when I want to listen to punk at 3 AM on full blast while hula hooping naked."

MILLOUX
@millouxsuicide



JENNINGS
@lindseyjenninz

"My space is cozy and I love that it's full of amazing art from dozens of artists including people I'm a fan of and fans of mine who have drawn or painted me. There's so much love and color in here. I've become enthralled with roast-battling and do it at The Comedy Store (Hollywood), which just got interest from Comedy Central. If you are sick of living in an overly PC world, like I am, you must see this brutal verbal violence."





VENOM

@venomblackbird



"I'm in a city, but tucked away enough that I can still hear hawks circle in the afternoon, and not far enough removed that I can't Postmate fancy vegan desserts! I'm a photographer [she shot this feature!], mediocre free diver, enthusiastic dog mom, bone collector, jeweler, stone worker but most of all I'm a rock climber. I'd really love to be sent out to Thailand and be photographed rock climbing over the ocean. That or maybe riding an orca out in some faraway ocean."

"Becoming a Suicide Girl means finally appreciating who I am as a woman and owning the keys and rights to my body, its beauty and its flaws. My favorite thing about my place is that it's all mine. I have mirrors set up just so I can rehearse my burlesque acts. I live walking distance from one of the most badass alternative bikini girl dive bars—yes, I just described heaven on a weeknight."

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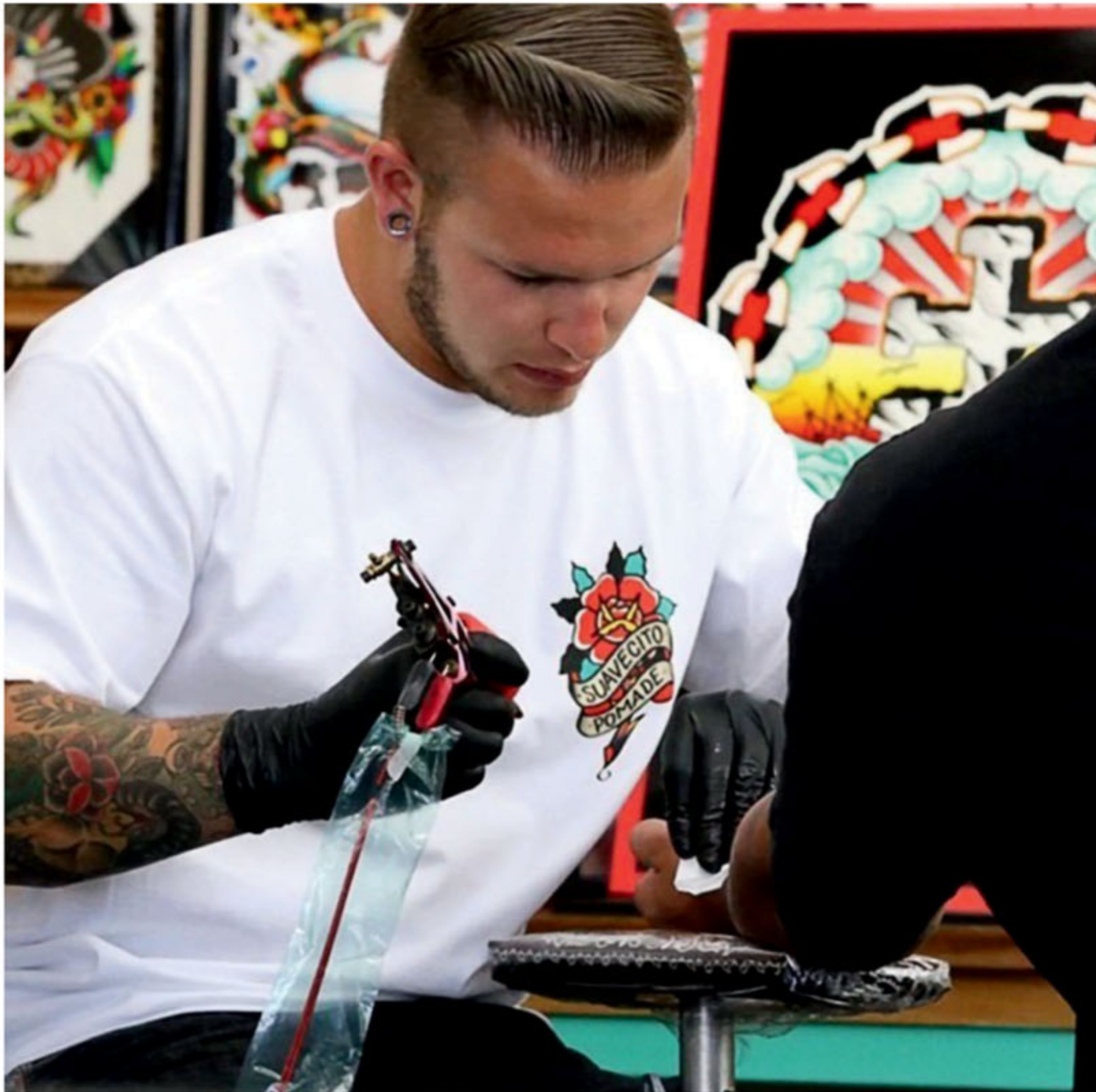
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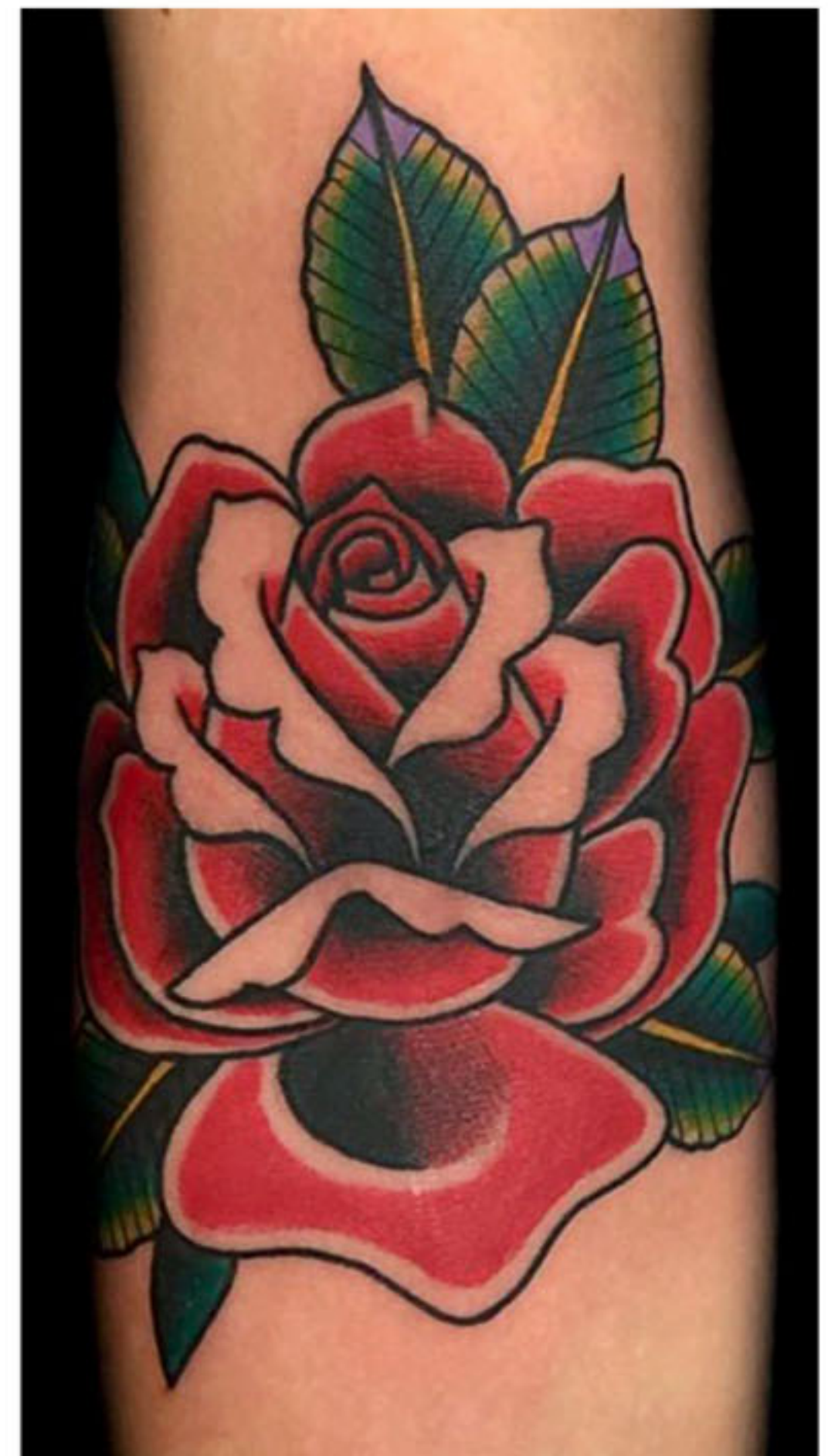
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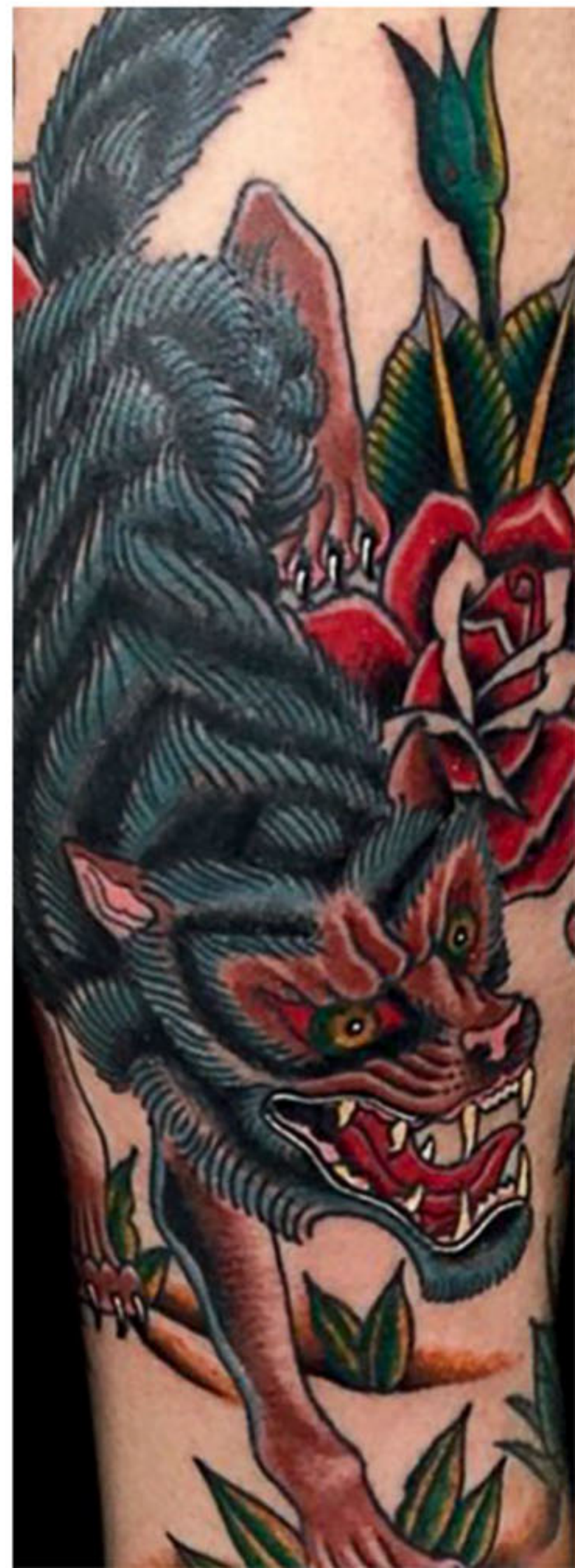
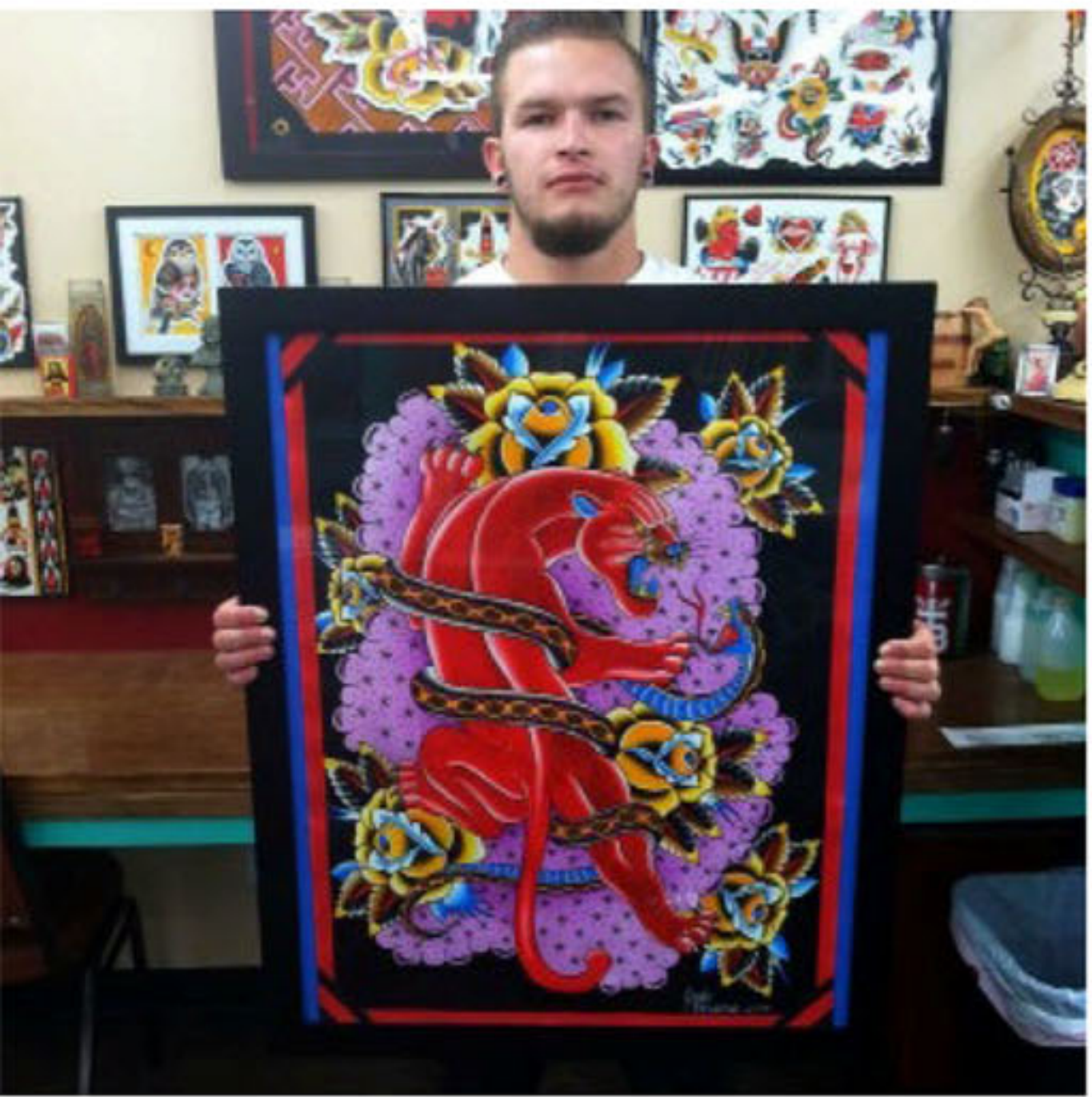
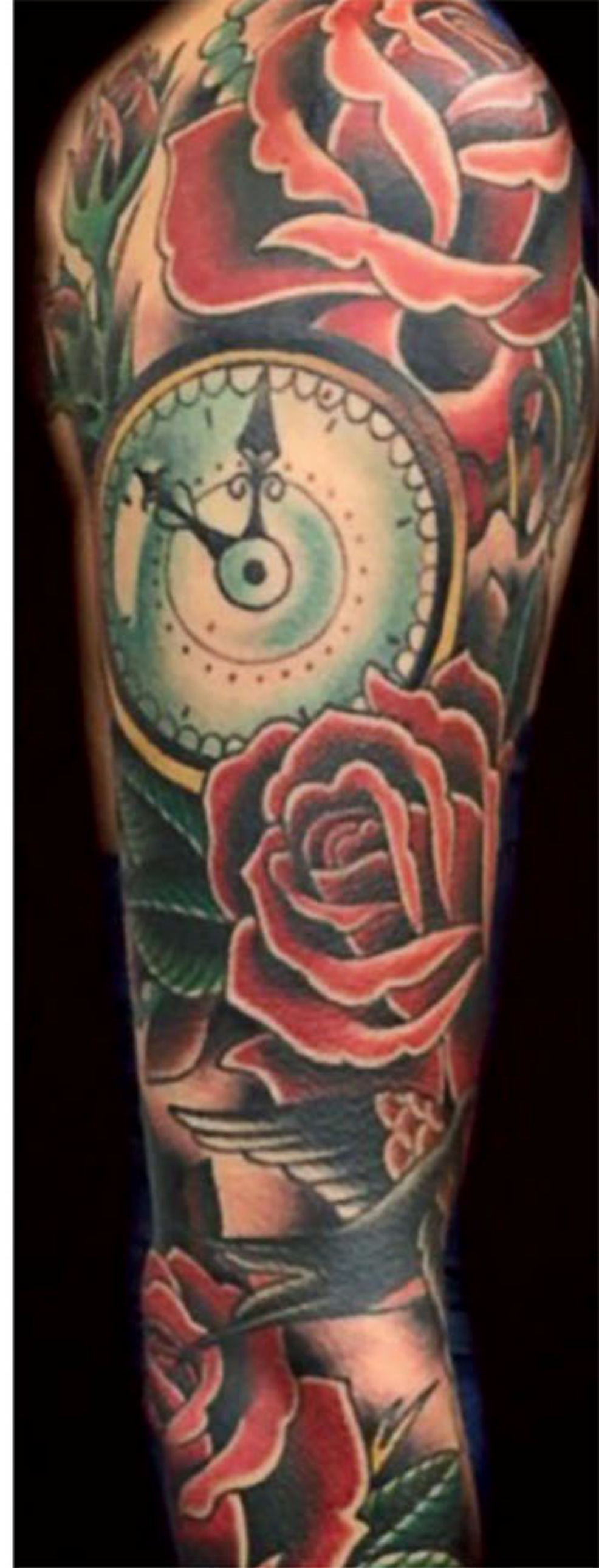
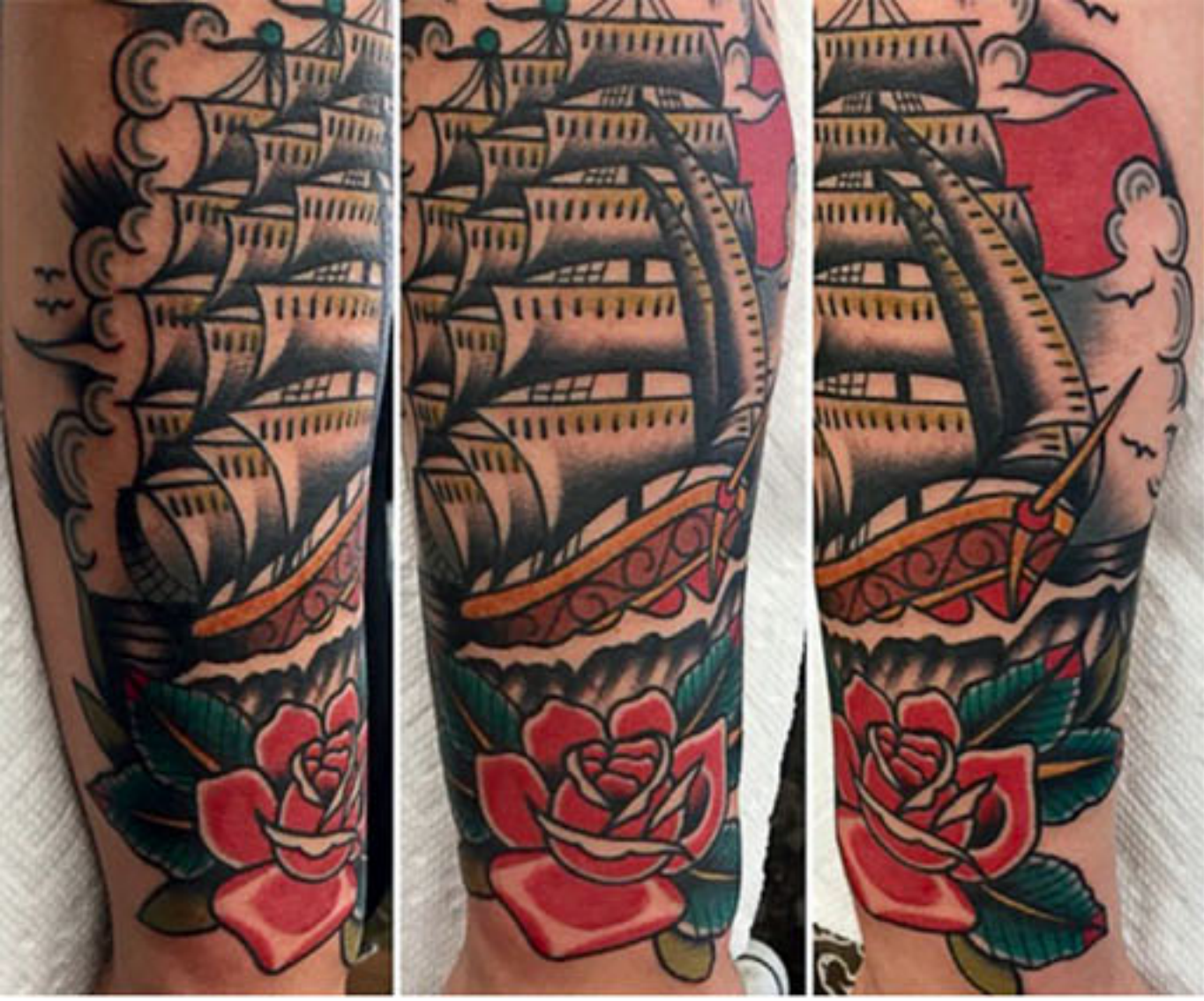
REST IN PEACE *JOSHUA RYAN PERSONS*



On an average Sunday morning ride with the boys, May 29th 2016, something shook this industry to its core. Josh Persons was taken from this world in a tragic motorcycle accident. His impact on the tattoo world is now shining through the pain and we can reflect on his dedication to his craft. Josh Persons writes in an autobiography "I bought my first machine in 2007 at the age of 18. After a couple years of drawing, researching, studying, and tattooing a few friends I decided I needed to make this a career." His artistic ability was evident. He decided to fulfill his calling and began his apprenticeship at a local tattoo shop where he built his clientele. His relocation to Huntington Beach did not slow him down. Josh describes "January 2013 I became a part of HB Tattoo working with a variety of amazing tattooers from around the world. I'm a street shop tattooer who enjoys producing quality work in all styles, but definitely have traditional tattooing as my main focus." Clients traveled from as

far as Australia or parts of Europe to adorn their skin with one of Josh's signature style traditional tattoos. Josh's passion for traveling took him to tattoo at various shops all over the globe. From as far as Cape Town, South Africa to Kungälv, Sweden, and many shops throughout Europe, his talent for capturing a person's vision was remarkable. Some of Josh's favorite shops were right here in California, he always strived to visit and work with the best in the industry. He had the ability to portray someone's deepest love and passion with his artwork. This was beautifully displayed at Josh Persons' memorial service, where hundreds of people stood in representation of the artwork he had left on their bodies. Josh leaves behind a community of loved ones who will never forget what an amazing person he was. Josh was able to create a legacy in the 26 years he lived. Josh Persons will be deeply missed, but never forgotten as his artwork and memory will live on forever.







JOSE LOPEZ

BY ROCKY RAKOVIC
PORTRAIT BY WILLIE T

Lowrider Tattoo Studio
Southern California
lowridertattooorange.com

We were in a hotel room high above Times Square in Manhattan. The lights, the hustle and the Naked Cowboy were shut out by a window shade because despite being in one of the most ostentatious places in existence, the real show was in the room. Jose Lopez, the master, was at work.

Lopez was in NYC for a few days during a world tour of tattooing and was currently pouring a pocketwatch into a young, affluent Asian man who was nice enough to let us come watch the awesomeness of Lopez's hand. It was mesmerizing (video on Inkedmag's Facebook page), the art and his touch was brilliant but then it hit us: Lopez, who was shot in SoCal during its turbulent days and is a second wave O.G. of black-and-grey tattoos, travels the globe, stays in swanky digs and tattoos in a prison-inspired art style on the international elite of diverse cultures. How far Southern California Chicano art has come is a testament to his journey. Lopez is one of the most prominent ambassadors of tattooing to the world, and he is ideal for that role as his art is stunning and his conversation is warm but enthralling.

Do you mind if we talk while you tattoo? Nah. I was shy for a long time; I wouldn't speak when I was in high school. I was too afraid to speak because I used to have a stuttering problem—I still kind of do. One day I just said, "Fuck this. Why am I embarrassed? If someone has a problem with the way I speak that's their problem. It's not going to be my problem." And now you can't shut me up. And I like to talk when I'm tattooing, it's actually one of the reasons why I love tattooing.

Talking to your clients? It's really the personal connection with people. Through tattooing I've been blessed to meet and make so many friendships with people—that's part of tattooing. We're doing huge projects so you get to know people and they share things with you. They tell you about their lives and a lot of times we end up having a lot of things in common. Tattooing brings people together. When somebody thinks that they're going through [unique] problems you go, "Whoa, wait a minute, I have the same fucking problem."

Do you feel like a therapist sometimes? Yeah, but I think it works both ways. You are listening to somebody and they are listening to you. It's very therapeutic to be able to tattoo and share things. It's like the perfect setting for somebody to, I don't know, talk about whatever's going on in their life. You refer to people as 'clients,' but I don't like saying that because 90% of the people you tattoo end up becoming our friends.

That's a wonderful part of the tattoo community. A friend of mine was complaining about what he was paying for the tattoo and all the pain that he was going through and I told him 'I'm sitting with you for more than 10 hours and we're just talking like buddies.' He was like

'Yeah, I like that.' Then I said, 'I don't even do that with my wife! If I sit down with her for an hour we want to kill each other.' To be able to spend time with somebody is a really cool experience and at the end we're both rewarded with a really nice piece of art.

And sometimes the actual piece of art is a memorial tattoo that helps bring closure.

Two days ago a guy came in from Toronto and he was really a happy guy. So we started talking and he started explaining to me what he wanted to get and why he wanted it. And it was very tragic. While on vacation with his pregnant wife somebody hit her. He lost both his baby and his wife. We had a two-day session so we got to really know each other, just by talking about our experiences. I had a really bad experience myself so I could relate. Tattooing is what brings it all together.

Do you mind sharing your bad personal experience with us? Yeah. I got shot when I was 15 years old. It was just a random shooting, just a Halloween shooting. Back in the early '90s there was a lot of violence and there was a lot of shooting so if you didn't get shot you weren't cool enough. I just happened to be one of the cool ones. I was shot at a Halloween party, it was very unfortunate and, I guess, very tragic but it also changed the whole course of my life. Because of that we're sitting here now. It's a tragedy but with everything that happens there's always a brighter side as well. For me, I've been very blessed. Ever since I got shot I want to say my life got better in a weird kind of way. I was exposed to tattooing and I think tattooing is one of the main factors why everything got better for me after that. Tattooing, meeting different people, being able to travel all over the place—it's a big privilege. It's

something that I don't take for granted. I'm very grateful for it. I see it growing more and more and it makes me think what's going to happen next year and the year after that and where this is going take us.

Recently you've been everywhere recently—London, Hong Kong, the Middle East—which means that black-and-grey has been everywhere. How does it make you feel that a lowbrow, Chicano tattoo style from East LA has spread so vastly? There's some people that are negative and say, 'Why should this person get that? They don't know anything about this culture.' But who cares? I'm flattered that people like something that has to do with our culture. It's really nice when you see people having an interest about something that you grew up with. The first [outside the US] that were really into the style were the Japanese. Back in the late '80s/early '90s he would hear stories about [Mr.] Cartoon traveling to Japan and we thought it was silly. But it was happening, Cartoon, was out there letting the culture be known. He was putting it down. Now we're doing that in different places. If somebody told me that I was going to travel the world and tattoo people with this type of imagery I would have never believed it.

And in-turn, through travel you get exposed to other cultures' art? Exactly. Before we just tattooed in our city, so basically the only things we were tattooing were the things we were exposed to. Now so much material has been opened up to me. People are doing some amazing stuff on skin that I never would've thought would look good as a tattoo. Other than seeing different styles of tattooing, travel has allowed me to see my reference material in person. Back in the day I had to use art books to draw angels, but now I've been to the places in Europe that have those angel statues. Not only have I been able to see it with my own eyes, but I got to take pictures from different angles so I have my own reference material for tattoos.

What do you think the future is for tattooing on a whole? Judging from the quality and how fast all these artists are growing, it's not going to stop, it's just going to get bigger and bigger. One thing that I see changing is that tattoo artists creating tattooing products. Artists' states of mind are changing. They're becoming more aware and more business-oriented



so everybody wants to not just tattoo but to create their own little companies. Since everybody has different ideas, a lot of different products are being developed. It's making the industry grow and making people's tattoo experiences more pleasant. So I see tattooing growing tremendously.

What's next for you? I like working but I would like to work less. Back home there are a few close friends who just started to realize that we can't tattoo forever. I tattoo a lot, tattooing is my life, but I need to realize that I'm not always going to be able to do it. Sometimes when something happens to you and you're not able to tattoo—your back goes out, you get sick, you break your hand—is when you realize how easy it can go away. It makes you think more and more like a businessperson. The fact that the industry is growing just creates more opportunity to stay involved in other ways. I think we need to all come up with better ways to make the whole tattoo experience a lot easier and comfortable for both you and the artist. So maybe developing some products in the future is something that definitely I would like to do. I'm in the business of tattooing and we're tattooing day-in-day-out. Who better to know what works for us than the artists and us as artists?

Other than the products, do you see tattoo art to continue to grow? Now everybody's putting in their own input into tattooing, they're showing all the possibilities and it's attracting a lot more people to get tattoos. I think all the social media platforms and magazines are really helping to grow the audience for tattoos. In many different countries where tattoos are not permitted or not accepted the people are now seeing all these amazing images on people and they want to get tattooed. Per all the tattoo shows on TV, as good or as bad as they might be, there's still somebody somewhere watching that and saying, "Wow, I thought tattoos were for really bad people, but apparently they're not."

You grew up in a tough place, were your early tattoo experiences with hardened people? I started tattooing when I was 15 years old. I saw a guy who had just gotten out of prison doing a tattoo and it was very interesting to me, I wanted to try it. I thought that the best way for me to start learning more about it was to get a tattoo. Then to learn more I went to a shop and I was turned away.

Why? I guess it was disrespectful to go in and ask about tattooing. I saw an ad for a tattoo machine in a tattoo magazine and I wanted to know if it was a good machine. Now I look back and think, how stupid of me, it was just a cheap kit. They could've told me, "Yeah, just buy that machine." That probably would've hurt me more.

You would've ruined the neighborhood. Yeah, they turned me away, and after that I swore I would never go into another shop and ask anything. So I started working at my house, not knowing how to tattoo. I just started trying to figure out ways and eventually I started to develop in my own way of doing things.

Didn't you sell flash back-in-the-day? Yeah, at the beginning I wasn't even known for tattoos. I started doing tattoo flash and tried to get into conventions. Ink Slingers Ball was one of the shows that people from all over the place came to. When I tried to get into that show they would just laugh at me like "Bro, you got to get on a waiting list to get into this show." But then 9/11 happened and a lot of artists weren't flying. I guess the promoters went to that waiting list and called me and they told me—they didn't even ask me, they told me—telling me would I like to attend the show. "Look, you want to come to the show, you bring us the money." That was the first actual convention that I went to. After that I tried to go back and they told me, "No, you can't come back, it was just that one time."

Geez, do you carry that with you? I remember everything. When I opened my first tattoo shop I knew how it felt to someone wanting to learn about the industry. So when somebody comes in and asks for information or wants to work at the shop we always welcome anybody who comes by the shop. That basically turned into more what we have now at Lowrider Tattoo. It's a place where a lot of people want to come and tattoo. I don't think it's—I mean I'm proud of what I do and how I do it—but I think people like to go there just for the environment. It's a good breeding ground for tattoo art. A lot of guys have gone through Lowrider and have become amazing artists. It's probably the best thing that has come from all my experiences—other than meeting a lot of exciting people and making really good friendships with all the customers.





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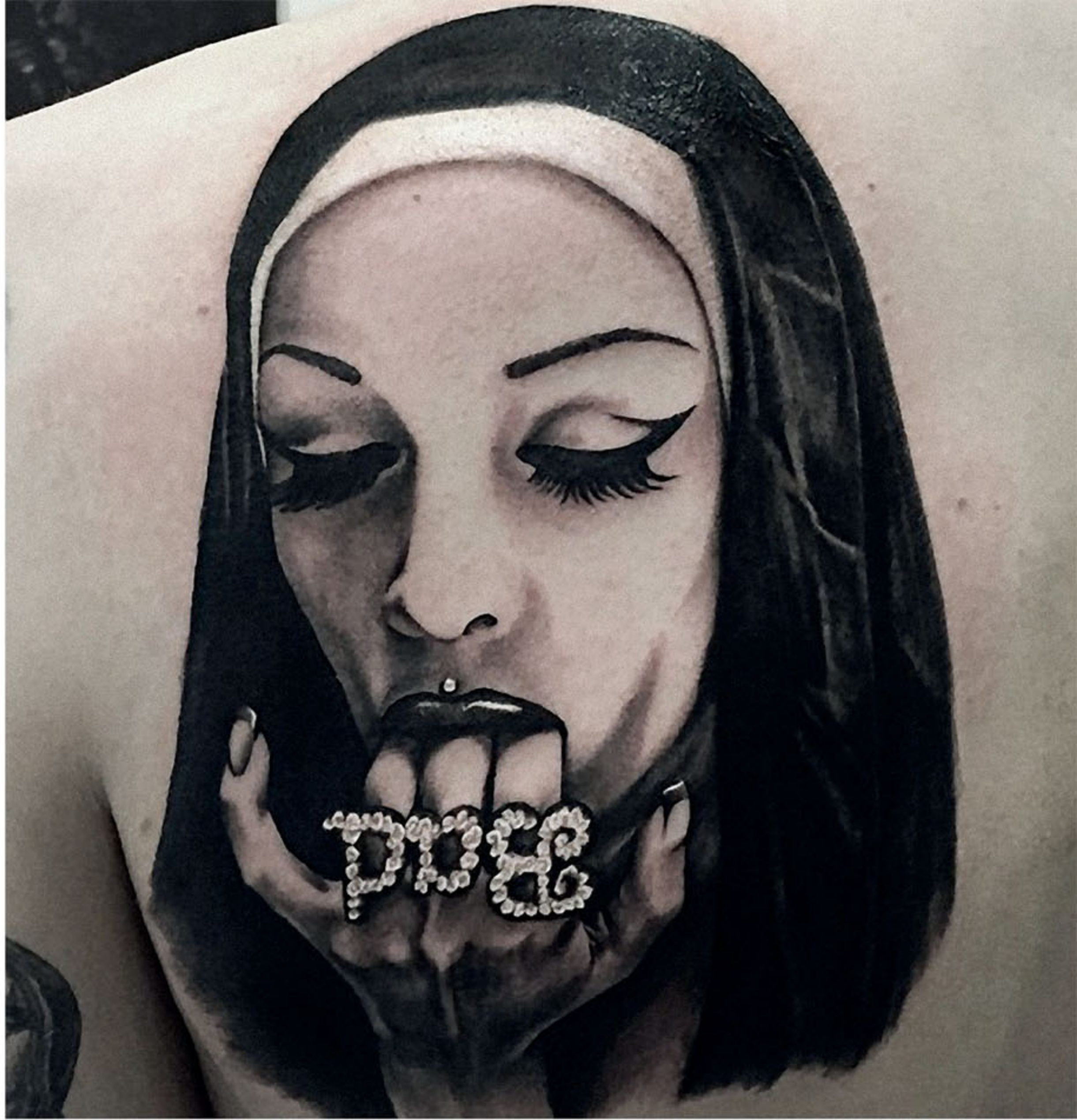
YOUR STYLE MIGHT BE BEST DESCRIBED AS DARK—BOTH BECAUSE YOU DON'T USE COLOR AND BECAUSE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER. I would say it's a mixture of realistic dark, sexy, fetish and dreamy with a touch of surrealism. It's hard to say where that comes from. I've had this kind of attitude since I was a kid. Also Europe is the cradle of artistic styles I love: Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and full of architecture, paintings and sculptures everywhere so it is easy to get influenced and inspired by such amazingness. There was a lot of dark artists back in those days.

DO YOU FEEL EMPOWERED WITH ALL OF THESE DARK, STRONG FEMALE FIGURES IN YOUR WORK? Yes, I do feel empowered and comfortable in representing dark, strong females because it is part of who I am. I get requests for dark, demonic, wicked figures instead of angels and sweet family portraits, and that was exactly my goal.

WHAT ABOUT ALL THE TWISTED NUNS? I grew up in Italy, where Catholic morals are very strong. I went to elementary school with nuns where I also had to pray, go to church and all that stuff. I guess that's where it all started.... I am anti-religion in terms that I don't see the point of divinating a god that, in my opinion, doesn't exist and for sure not idealising people like nuns or monks as they are made of flesh and blood. In the end religion, like war, is a big profit business and they are closely connected to each other. You just need to look at history and at what still happens nowadays to get an idea of it. Besides that, I like to represent the "behind the scenes" of life—the hidden sides of human beings.

IF YOU HAD TO DESIGN A PIECE OF ART FOR YOUR GRAVESTONE, WHAT WOULD IT BE? I ain't want no gravestone. Maybe, "Don't wake me up!" I'm into black humour, obviously.

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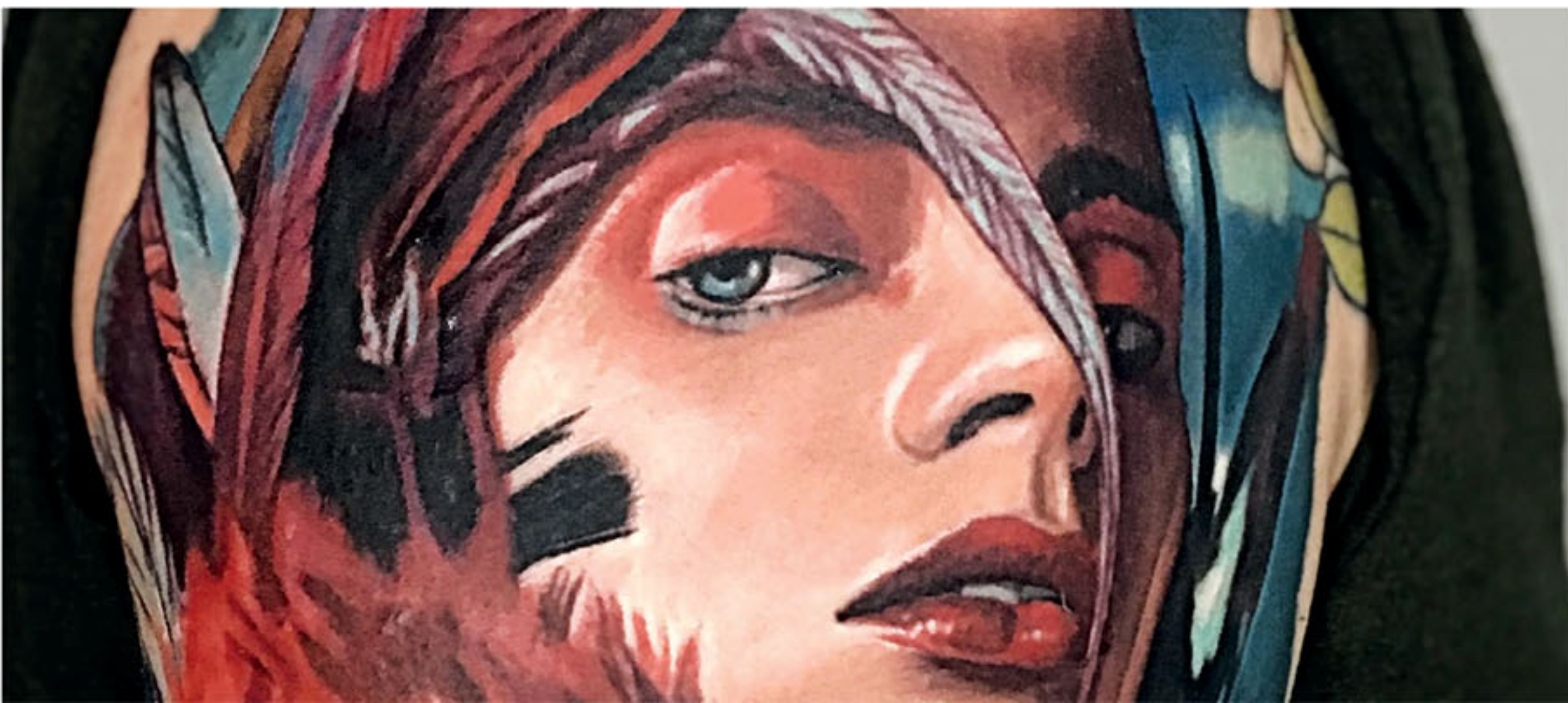
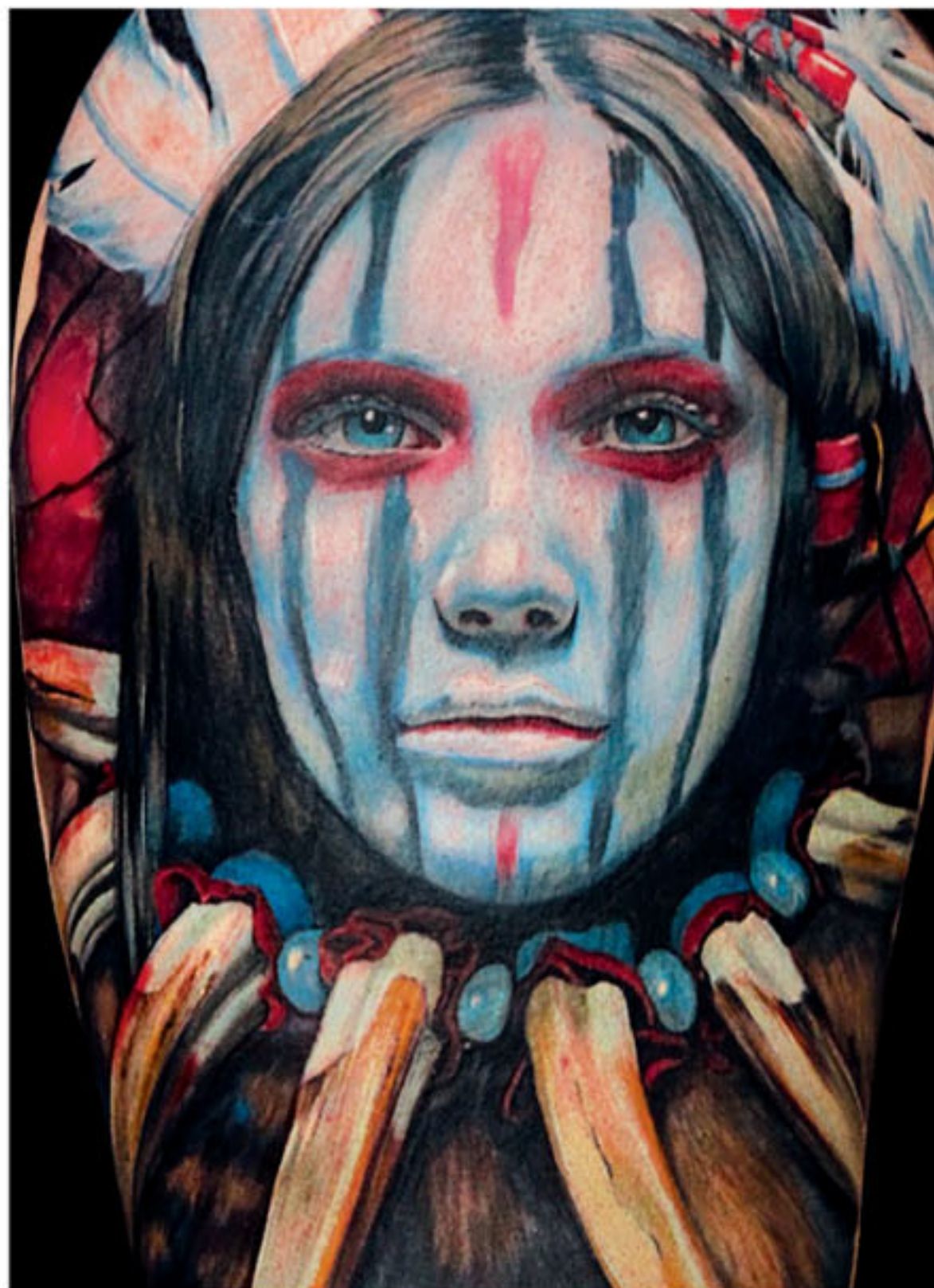
YOU HAVE A DEGREE IN ARCHITECTURE AND STARTED TATTOOING LATE IN LIFE. WHAT BROUGHT YOU INTO A SHOP THE FIRST TIME? I have always been connected to art and painting since I was young. I used to spend my school breaks in my parent's basement, drawing, painting and airbrush painting. I painted helmets, cars, motorcycles, fuel tanks and paintings. I loved it. I remember buying tattoo magazines and trying to convince my parents that the "tattoo world," was what I wanted to pursue. But they didn't agree. They wanted me to get a college degree that would provide for my future. So, within the arts, I chose architecture. Then I worked as an architect for 12 years but when I got my first tattoo at 35 years old, while I watched the tattoo artist work, I thought to myself: I can do this.

YOU'VE ONLY BEEN TATTOOING FOR THREE YEARS. HAVE YOU HAD A DIFFICULT TIME IN THE ELITE TATTOO COMMUNITY WHERE SOME THINK THAT YOU SHOULD PAY DUES FOR YEARS BEFORE GETTING ACCOLADES? I think that everything happened naturally. I knew that if I wanted to learn as a tattoo artist I needed to be in contact with other artists, going to guest spots and conventions. So I decided to travel and I got the chance to meet great artists.

WHAT TATTOO ARTISTS INSPIRE YOU? There are lots of artists that inspire me, but the two that inspired me most in the beginning were Led Coult and Dmitry Samohin.

YOUR WORK IS INCREDIBLY REALISTIC WITH BOLD COLOR—MAYBE THE LAST THING YOU'D EXPECT FROM AN ARCHITECT. HOW DID YOU COME TO THIS STYLE? Well, my style as an architect is minimalism: simple shapes and forms and neutral colors. But as a tattoo artist I knew if I wanted to be successful, I had to find a personal, individual and unique style that will distinguish me as a tattoo artist.

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GORDON PATTERSON

VISIT: @GORDONPTATTOOIST

YOUR INSTAGRAM REFLECTS MOSTLY ARM- AND CHEST-PIECES, DO YOU DO MANY BACK PIECES? I've no idea why that is, to be honest. I wish I was doing back pieces and leg pieces, but I think everyone over here in Scotland wants to show off their tattoos as the weather isn't the greatest, so people are covered up mostly.

WAS REALISM YOUR PREFERRED STYLE OF ART GOING INTO THIS INDUSTRY? AND IF SO, SINCE REALISM IS RELATIVELY NEW TO TATTOOING, DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD BE A TATTOOER 20 YEARS AGO? I wouldn't class my style as realism. All of my work has big bold lines in it and very strong exaggerated contrasts, as I think purely about the heal of my tattoos, which a lot of artists don't put much thought into. I'd call my style semi-realism if anything. Twenty years ago I thought I was going to join the Power Rangers when I grew up.

YOU'VE DONE A FEW COMIC BOOK CHARACTERS AND STAR WARS TATTOOS. DOES THE FACT THAT "NERD CULTURE" IS CROSSING OVER INTO TATTOOS MAKE NERDS HIPPER OR TATTOOING A LITTLE LESS GANGSTER? Ha, I don't think I'd ever have considered tattooing gangster. I love the fact that most of my clientele are nerds as I'm one of the biggest nerds around, plus they're always open to wacky ideas and they come out with some hilarious chat. I don't think a real nerd could ever be more hip, trust me, I've tried.

HOW MANY SUICIDE SQUAD CHARACTERS DO YOU THINK YOU'LL BE TATTOOING AFTER THE MOVIE COMES OUT? Hopefully none! It looks terrible, but I'll go see it anyway to see if it lives up to the hype. I really hope no one wants the new Joker tattooed, he doesn't look anywhere near as good as the previous ones. I do however hope that someone lets me tattoo the new Batman on them, he looks insane, definitely the best one yet!

TO SEE MORE TATTOOS VISIT INKEDMAG.COM



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