

Inked

CULTURE. STYLE. ART.

10TH
ANNIVERSARY
ISSUE

Golden Goddess Brittanya

PLUS:

CODY "NO LOVE" GARBRANDT
YOMICO MORENO
BAD SANTA

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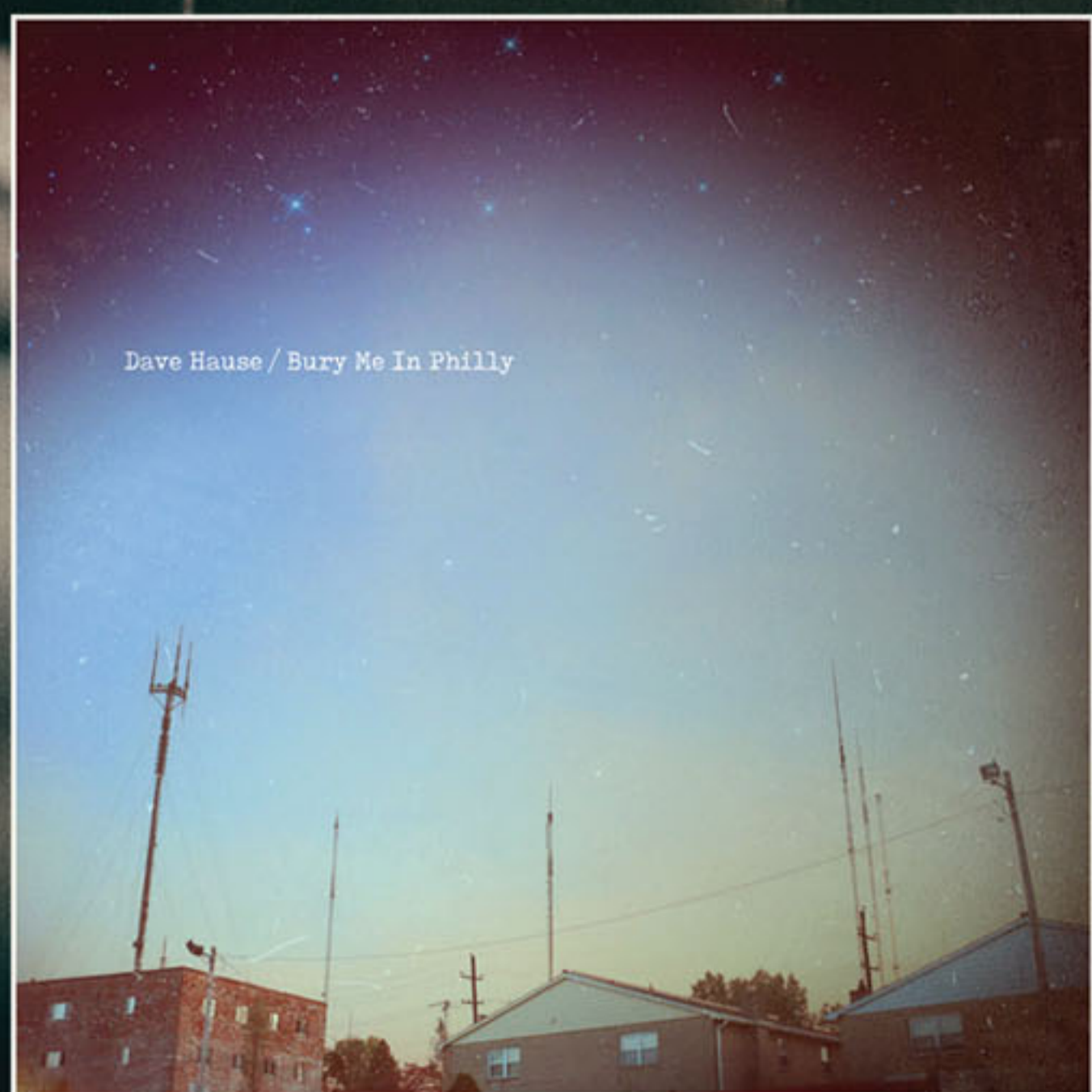
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Cover: Photo by Jose Guerra, styled by Darius Baptist, hair and makeup by Amanda Thensen, gold leaf by Fernello, jewelry by Gasoline Glamour
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Ed Hardy

FRAGRANCE



Can you believe that we have been publishing *Inked* for 10 years? What started out as the “outsider’s insider magazine” (and is still referred to as such on Wikipedia) has become a vast community. From the onset, *Inked* was created to give a legitimate voice to the tattooed because the mainstream media treated ink as a freak curiosity and the other tattoo titles were steeped in a mindset that was so outdated. “Shots fired!” I know. Those in charge of curating *Inked*’s content for the past decade have done an incredible job protecting our integrity by tapping the sharpest writers, most daring artists and absolute rockstar photographers to shape our point-of-view. The mission was accomplished, the tattoo scene was given a proper publication and we helped steer the conversation of tattoos and tattooed culture with the public in a positive and progressive light. *Inked*’s message of uplifting the tattooed has been covered by illustrious outfits such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *TODAY* show and *The New York Times*—albeit the *Times* used the word “freakish” in the article. We have also been lauded by the more culturally (?) relevant outlets like *Vice*, *BuzzFeed* and *TMZ*.

We are no longer outsiders. Through highlighting the creative and inspiring members of the tattoo scene we have shown the world that the tattooed set is truly one of the most dynamic group of people. When we published our first issue of *Inked*, only 14% of American adults had a tattoo, now it’s one-in-five. I doubt we had much to do with that number, but I do think we inspired millions who were thinking of getting another tattoo to get a better piece. In this installment, Paddy Vipond (3) does the math on investing in a quality tattoo.

We brought Brittanya, one of our most favorite cover girls, back for this celebration. She was shot by Jose Guerra (4). While looking back on old issues, we asked our artist friends—like Rocio Montoya (5)—to remix old *Inked* shoots for “Cover Art.” Other talented visualists who contributed to this issue are the imaginative Mathijs Vissers (6) and the hyper-realistic machine Jennifer De Boer (1) who captures another former cover girl, Madzilla, expertly.

Beautiful women are an essential part of the tattoo culture’s DNA. Think about it, how many other scenes are based around physical appearance? Two more strong, splendid women presented on these pages are Alana who was interviewed by Angie Piccirillo (7) and Eleanor Love who was shot by her husband Brian Love (2).

A photographer and a subject who also love each other but aren’t romantically linked are shooter Lionel Deluy (8) and MMA beast Cody Garbrandt. Despite the fighter’s nickname “No Love” he’s a decent hugger. As I said before, I think of *Inked* not as a publication but a community. We conducted Garbrandt’s corresponding interview through Facebook Live during which you guys contributed. Kelly Cardwell asked about UFC 207’s Bantamweight Title Fight, “What tattoo are you going to get when you beat Cruz?” Angel Borrego let us know, “This is getting more views than the presidential address on FOX!” And then there was Jason Stewart who just wrote “I like to lather up in oil and crawl on the floor like a slug.”

I love you, you awesome tattooed freaks.

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



Agenda
Long
Beach
JAN 5 & 6

The text is rendered in a mix of bold, blocky, and cursive fonts. The word 'Agenda' is in a tall, condensed font. 'Long' is in a classic gothic script. 'Beach' is in a large, flowing cursive. 'JAN 5 & 6' is in a bold, sans-serif font. Illustrations include a shark, a palm tree, a seagull holding a drink, and a bear wearing sunglasses on a skateboard. A red map of California is on the left. The background is white with a red and white striped border at the top and bottom.

AWA



INKED LIVE. IF YOU GUYS HAVEN'T BEEN FOLLOWING ON FACEBOOK, WE HAVE BEEN BROADCASTING SICK LIVE VIDEOS.

Through our Facebook Page, you are able to watch revered tattooists like Jose Perez Jr., Steve Butcher and Popo pull lines in real time. We've broadcasted from a porn convention, Jordyn Rider's bedroom and the shoot for this cover with Brittany. Watching Mr Cartoon (above) tattooing Tony Touch was a religious experience that tied together our whole community. Here's a sampling of places viewers checked in from: Brazil, Texas, Delaware, Hawaii, Scotland, Cambodia, Alaska, Newfoundland, Puerto Rico, Australia, Sweden, India, Denmark and one jackass who got that Adele song stuck in our heads when she wrote, "Hello from the other side."

facebook

CHRISTY MACK

Kelly Brown I would fight that snake just to bite that ass!

Kevin Burback You are a beautiful strong woman and I thank you for being who you are.

Mike Eckstrom Do not know how, but for a woman with more ink than most bikers, you still manage to pull off elegant.

Angie Selak I love that you guys are highlighting what happened to her. Most folks brushed her off because, well, you know why. Good to see her in all her glory.

DEREK WEIDA

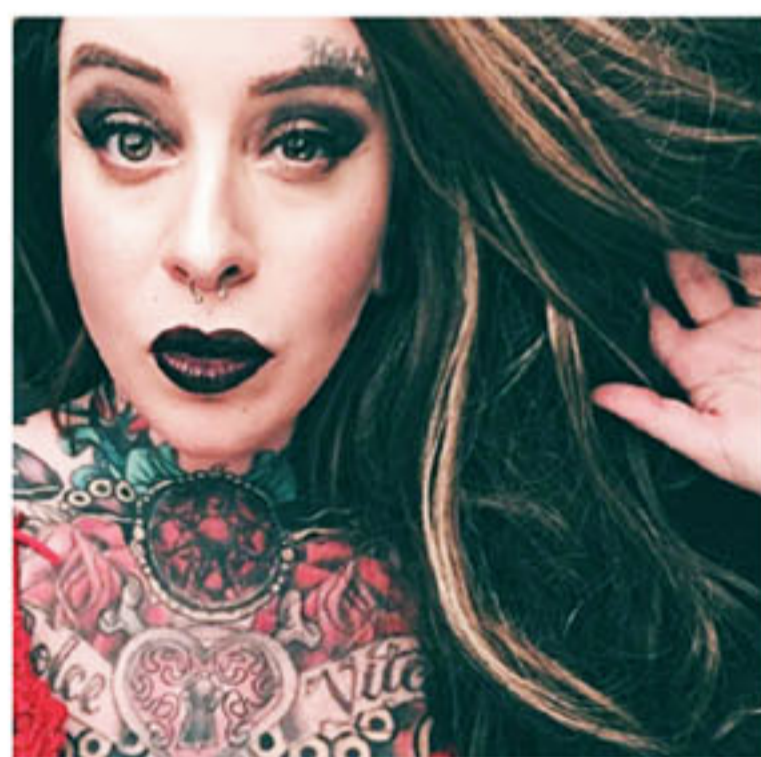
Lucas Hara Not gonna lie, you choked me up a little bit!

Richard Saenz Bro, it's because of you I fuck shit up at the gym! We all deal with shit differently but you can't quit, bro! That's just not an option now. Keep going, keep pushing—you'll get over that hump!

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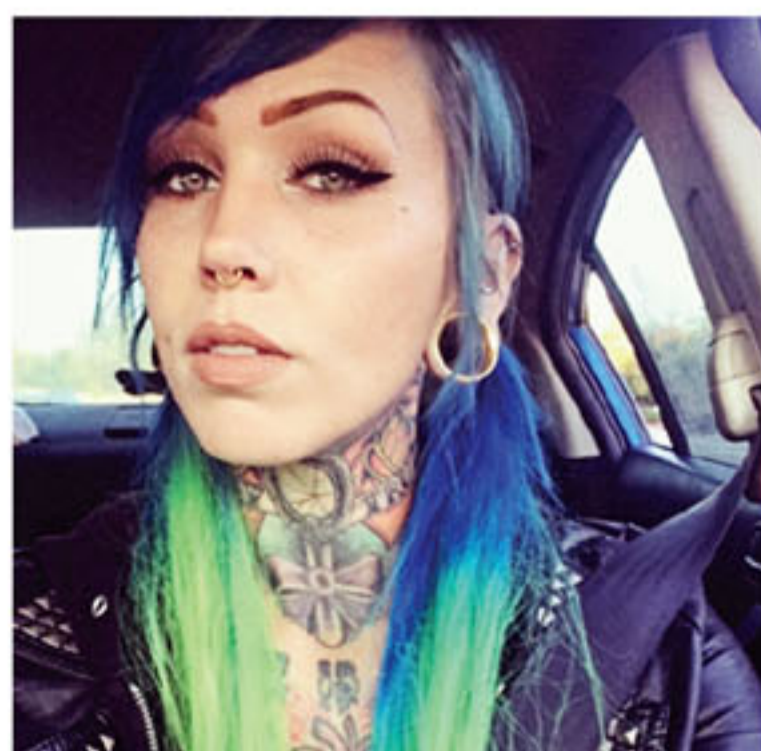
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MY FAVORITE

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photos by Michael Dydasco



Alexandra Heart

"The phoenix to me represents more than just a bird or character. I've overcome so many obstacles throughout my teenage years. But having the courage and self-hope to come out of all I was facing unscathed was the biggest accomplishment of all.

To me, this phoenix symbolizes a second chance at life and knowing you can overcome anything thrown your way. It was done by Tony Linville, who now works at American Nightmare Tattoo in Las Vegas. He actually had the idea of the feathers wrapping around to my butt, which hurt like hell! But in the end it was worth it. To this day everyone asks me about it and if they can see it. I love showing it off!

My family took a little bit of time to accept and get used to it. They still aren't extremely fond of my tattoos but love the story behind them. But above anything I have support from my friends and family on my tattoo decisions. I wanted my left side first and I'm still debating about what to get on the other. Being 21 years old and having so much ink kind of made me want to slow down a little.

On a woman, I would have to say the side of the neck is the sexiest place to be tattooed. Not full neck, but one side. Now that is sexy! On a man I love when he has his stomach tattooed. That to me makes me want to see more!

What fascinates me is fashion. I love following bold models and photography inspiration. People who aren't afraid to look different than the norm, or have a crazy, cool, far-fetched idea. I love tattooed and non-tattooed models simply because it's variety and everyone loves variety. I have a passion for interior design and fashion. I hope to have my own clothing line one day. I've always dreamed of being an interior designer for famous people's homes. It's better to dream big, always!

When I'm not modeling I am working out or starting a new book. Working out is definitely new but I love the results after the sweat sesh. As far as hobbies go, I love being outside and am definitely looking forward to traveling the world soon!"



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FREAK OFF A LEASH

Welcome to the “Floating Freaks” show by
Mathijs Vissers

“You could use a tiny bit of crazy!” is Mathijs Vissers’s welcome to his website. Damn skippy. We could all use a tiny bit (more) of crazy. For some of us, we grow up, work for the man, and vote down a party line while tamping down the crazy to assimilate into society. Remember that crazy, that freedom, we had when we were young? Vissers never lost that part of him.

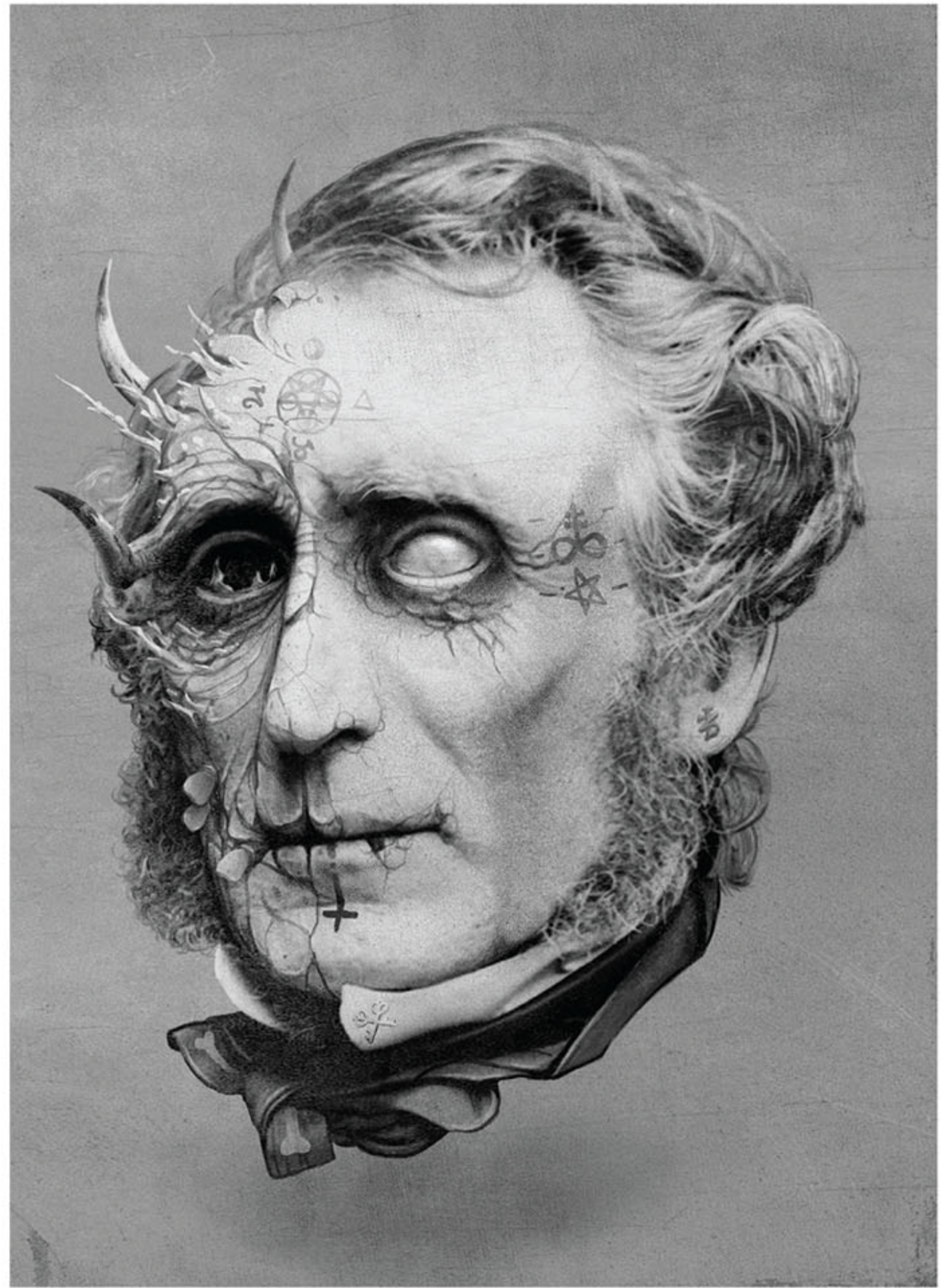
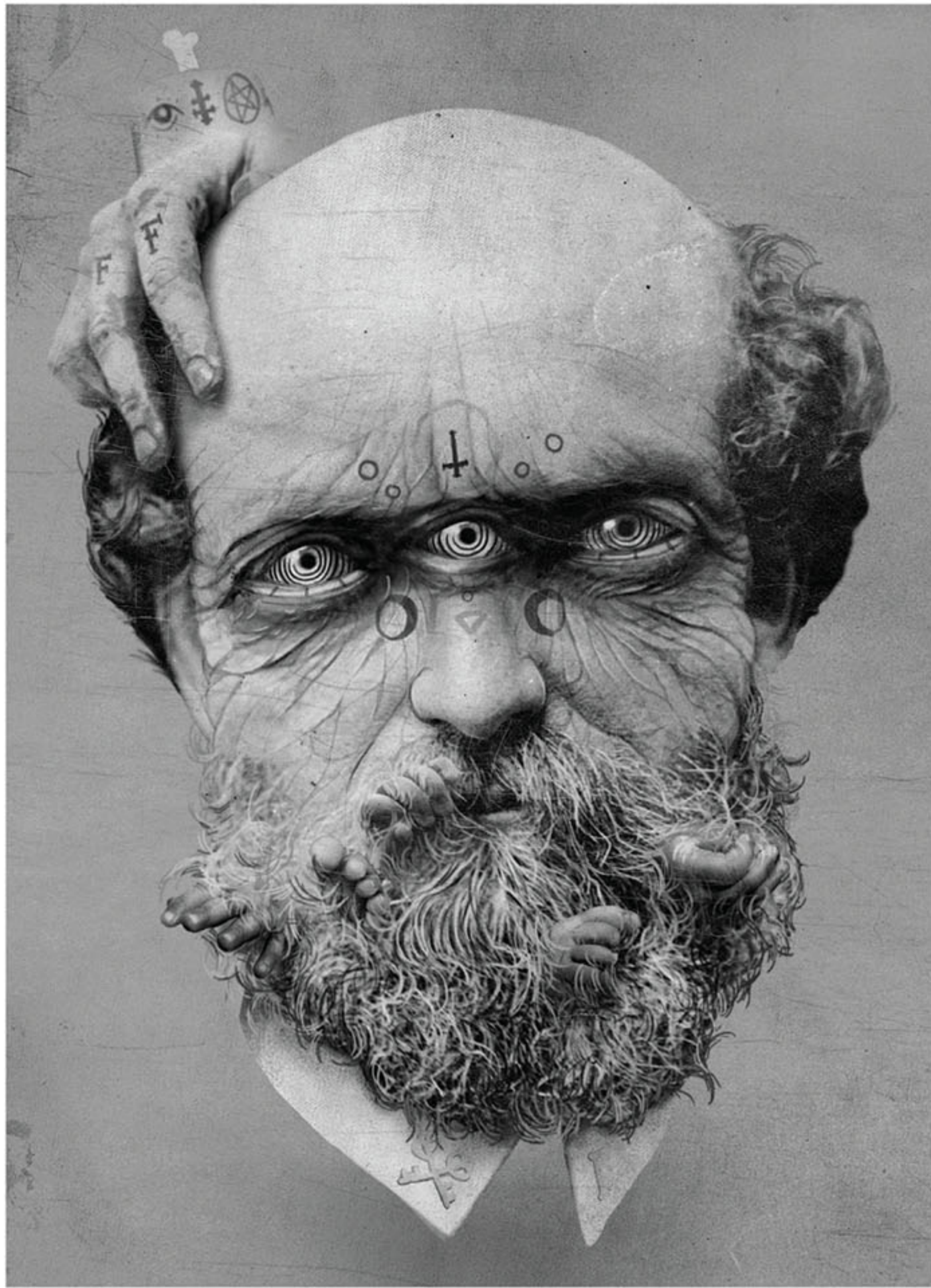
“Like most kids I was always drawing, and I just kept on drawing,” Vissers says. “Having three older sisters and an older brother, I got to see a lot of weird movies and cartoons, which sort of shaped the things I drew. I loved making random stuff, weird for the sake of weirdness. As I grew older the weird sometimes turned into strange and bizarre, like some of the things I create these days. But there’s still plenty of crazy in there.”

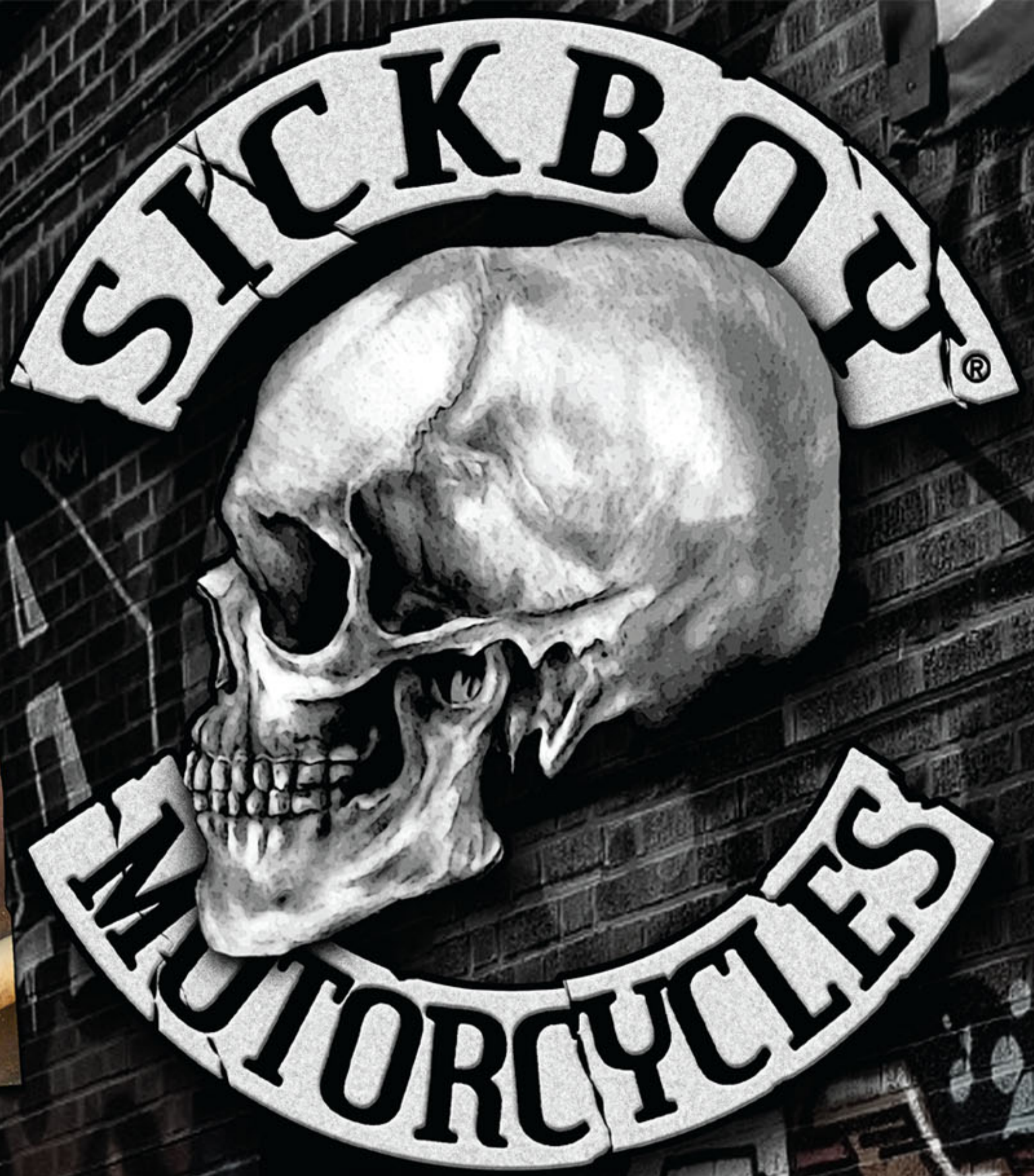
One of his recent bizarre projects is called “Floating Freaks,” which he describes as, “a group of scary characters from a freak show, all with their own haunting facial features.” He packs so much emotion into these works that the imagery haunts but also gives the viewer a tinge of melancholy for the sympathy felt for these tragic figures. While we await for a reader to get one of these characters inked in black-and-grey you can purchase one (“The Visionary”) on a T-shirt from threadless.com.

We can’t stop staring at his work. His output ranges from colorful work lampooning *Adventure Time* and Chuck Norris to bringing a unicorn skull to life...err...death...that was inspired by Murakami’s *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of World*. “It’s a fascinating thing, a skull,” he says of all skulls in general. “I’m not sure if it’s morbid curiosity, or the reminder that everyone ends up that way eventually, but there’s just something to them. Death is an interesting concept as nobody is entirely sure what happens to a person when they die.”

Good art deals with subjects. Great art leads the viewer toward concepts.

“I suppose [what I want people to take away from my work] is essentially a sense of wonder,” Vissers says. “I want them to get lost in the little details and discover more each time they view something.” —Robert McCormick





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HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIENTELE?

In a word, awesome! The Wet Spot is a sports bar so we have a lot of male clientele, but we get plenty of ladies in the door as well. I have a wide variety of regulars from all walks of life as Los Angeles is a very eclectic city. I love being able to say that I know lawyers, an industrial machinist, a NASA scientist...where else can you network like this? Bartenders have the best resources!

WHAT DO YOU PATRONS THINK OF YOUR INK?

I have been told countless times, "I don't normally like tattoos on women, but yours suit you." I feel pride knowing that I might be able to change even just one person's perception or preconceived notions about tattoos.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PIECE?

That's a tough question for me. I guess I'll talk about my owl since it is my most prominent and talked-about piece, and I love it dearly. Her name is Gigi and she was done by Alex Atencio at Por Vida Tattoo in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Owls are historically associated with wisdom, you know, "The Wise Old Owl," and for me, that's my grandmother. I grew up in a very matriarchal family since my grandfather passed when my mother was fairly young; my grandmother really came to be the wise cornerstone of the family. She always had the best advice and all the answers to your troubles.

TELL US ABOUT THE MANTRA "BEERS BEFORE BOYS"

One of the perks of bartending has to be wearing fun things to work! I love my "Beers Before Boys" tank that I recently picked up from Hazmat Design here in LA. Where else can you work and wear something like that and people love you for it?

WHAT'S THE MOST ANNOYING THING A BAR PATRON CAN DO?

Ask what the cheapest drink is. Please go to 7Eleven and get a 12-pack of Old Milwaukee and then take yourself home, pal.

photo brian love





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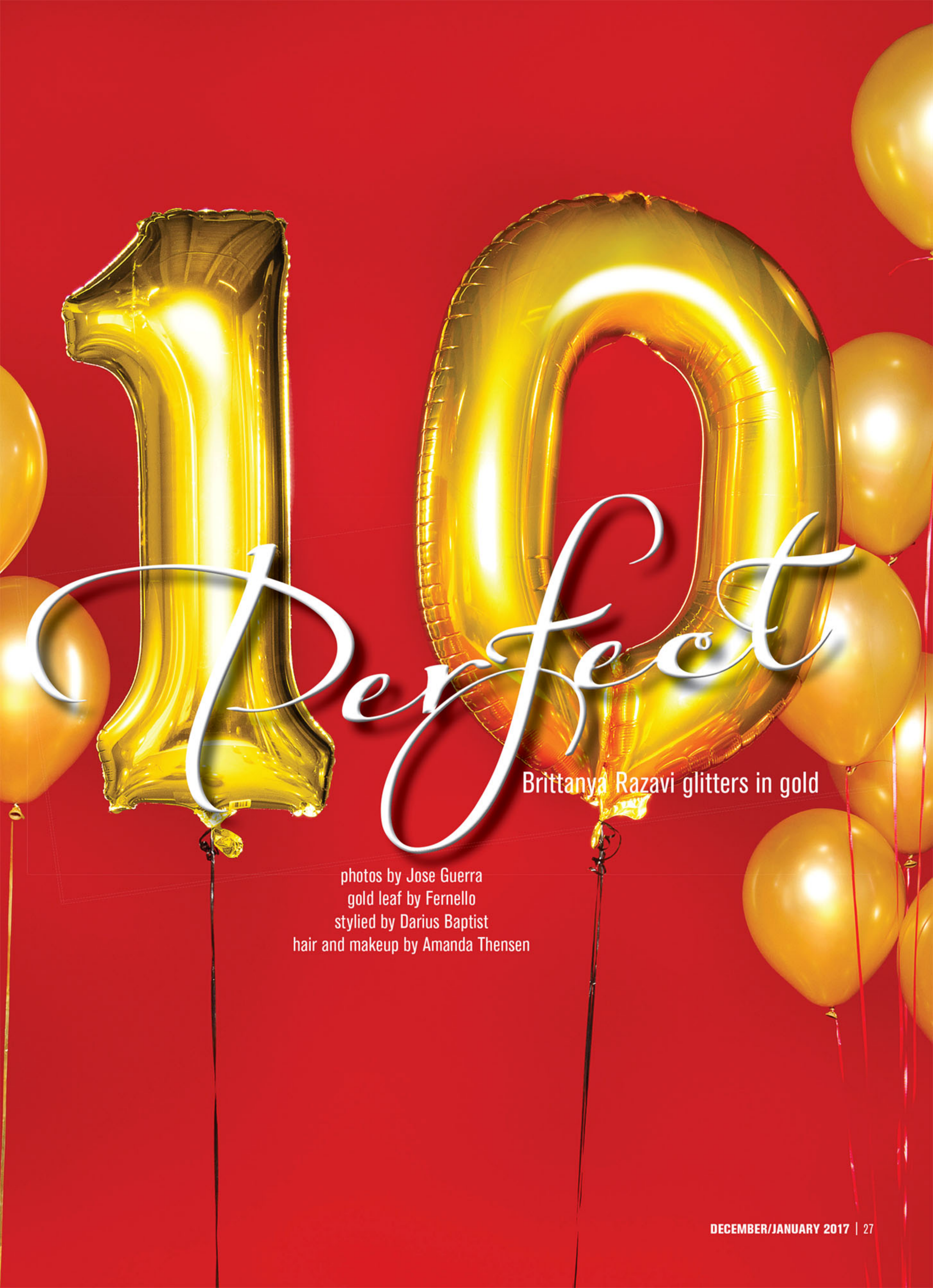


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Brittanya Razavi glitters in gold

photos by Jose Guerra
gold leaf by Fernello
styled by Darius Baptist
hair and makeup by Amanda Thensen



10 questions for a bonafide 10

1. When did you first get tattooed? "I was 11 years old at a party. And it is so lame but I got my own name on my back. It is covered now. But the good news is that he turned out to be a phenomenal tattoo artist. Even when I was 11 years old I knew what was up." (She still mainly gets tattooed by Manuel Valenzuela.)

2. If you didn't grow up in Southern California do you think you would have different tattoos? "Most of the work I have is black-and-grey but as I got older, now I just love color. But that is hard to say because I think tattoos reflect who you are and how you were brought up. It is not where you are, tattoos are who you are."

3. What is your favorite tattoo? "I love all of them, but I'd say the cross on my left hand that I got two years ago."

4. What do people notice first about you: your smile, your tattoos... "Come on! I wish it were my smile or something nice but it's usually my body parts. People seem to enjoy the scenery."

5. Do you think you are more popular from the reality shows or from Instagram? "Definitely Instagram. Reality shows were my stepping stone, but it's what you do with that stepping stone. I was able to drive it full gear and be blessed to get the followers on Instagram. I definitely have more attention through Instagram than I ever had on TV."

6. What's your non-Instagram side? "I put up sexy pics because that is what works there but the other side is that I am a mom, a businesswoman. People think they know you so well because they see you in pictures but I want to do seminars and teach people how to become successful. I know that I won't be able to always count on my looks so I am focused on having cash flow when I can't make money off hot pictures anymore. Right now I have my rental properties, my brand 187 Clothing (it means "killing it") and I'm always looking for the next hustle."

7. So do you have a conflicted relationship with your Instagram persona? "Oh no. Through the Instagram photos I feel confident, I feel happy."

8. What do you say to a girl who wants to do reality TV? "Stay true to you. And knock 'em dead. Don't half-ass anything, go full force—full-ass it!"

9. What is the sexiest place for a woman to be tattooed? "I like when it goes from behind the ear and down the neck. I like when a girl has one big piece maybe down her side. I can't say there is a sexiest place because it is like clothes: it isn't what you wear but how you wear it. Growing up I loved Angelina Jolie because she was so badass and so successful but I think all women are beautiful in their own way."

10. Any plans for your next tattoos? "I am going to do a little more on my legs and then get something big on my throat. Then that's almost everything."







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Artists remix some of our favorite Inked covers from the past 10 years

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CULTURE

Until the Next Episode

While we eagerly await *Episode VIII*, here's something for Star Wars fans to chew on. *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* is a standalone prequel of sorts that follows a band of misfit heroes who are on a high-risk mission to steal the Death Star plans from the Empire and get them to the Rebel

Alliance. This takes place just before the events of *A New Hope*. That means that Darth-Fucking-Vader is alive and well, so these heroes better watch out. We might just see some dark side, Force-grabbing mayhem in this one, and we can't wait. —*Gil Macias*

HOUSE SHOES

House of Future linked up with Joey Pang of Tattoo Temple in Hong Kong to put out a limited run collaboration. These crispy kicks feature a traditional dragon that sits on a Tyvek and micro-leather shoe. Pang's other two offerings display his artistic lotus (one pair is black and the other is white). The shoes have a similar silhouette to your favorite high top skate shoe. But your favorite skate shoe doesn't have the artwork of Hong Kong's finest tattooer.



WEAR SASHA UNISEX

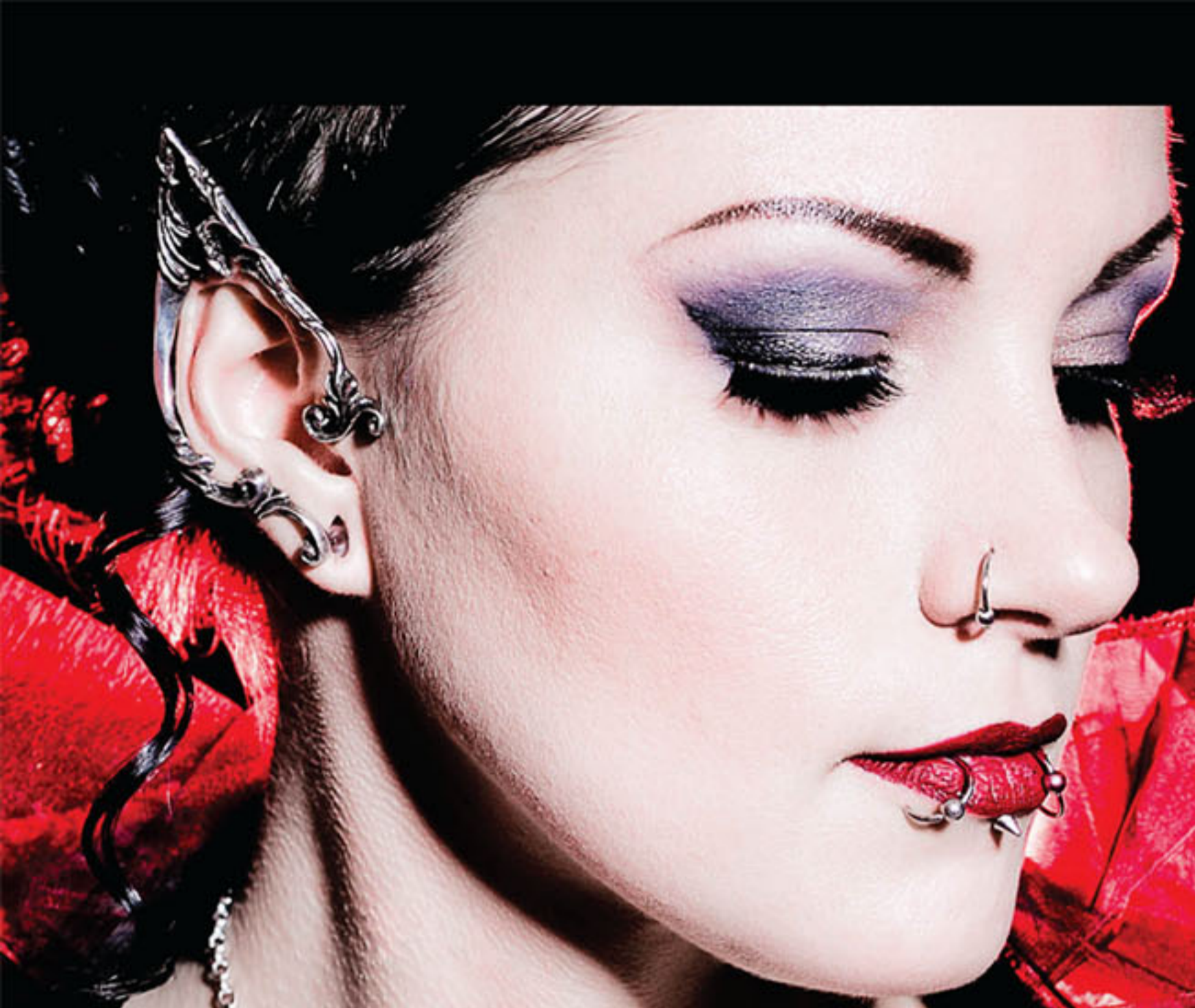
Sasha Unisex is one of the most original new tattooers to pop up in years. For her watercolor tattoo she uses unconventional colors and often incorporates other designs within the silhouette of the tattoo. Two problems: she is booked out and she lives in St. Petersburg, Russia. But through a collab with Ocotpus Brand you can cop T-shirts and socks with the Unisex spin on the brand's namesake.



TOM HARDY RETURNS TO TV

FX will be home to Tom Hardy's *Taboo* this January. Set in 1813 Great Britain, Hardy plays James Delaney who returns to London upon the death of his father, a wealthy shipping magnate. Assuming his father's empire will prove problematic with many villains, the most treacherous being a big business. "His greatest struggle will be against the East India Company," says scriptwriter Stephen Knight, "which, throughout the 19th century, was the equivalent of the CIA, the NSA and the biggest, baddest multinational corporation on earth, all rolled into one self-righteous, religiously-motivated monolith."





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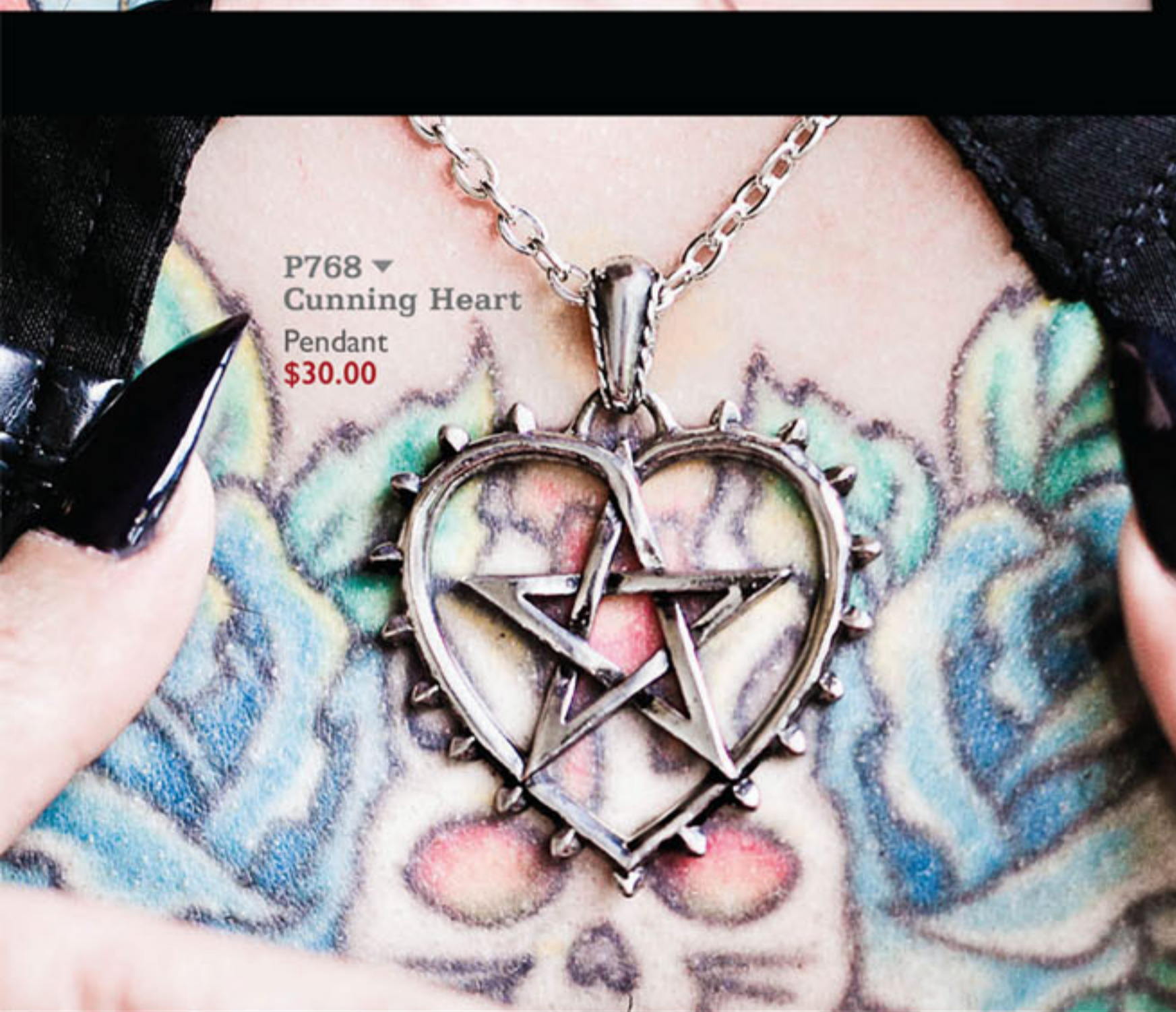
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Templars of Doom

Based on the wildly popular video game series, this high-budget movie adaptation *Assassin's Creed* stars Michael Fassbender as Callum Lynch, a man who gets plugged into the Animus, a revolutionary machine that unlocks the genetic memories of his ancestors. Callum is soon reliving the life of one of his ancestors, Aguilar, a master assassin who kicked ass as part of a secret society of assassins during the Spanish Inquisition. Callum starts to gain the abilities and knowledge of his ancestor and quickly finds that he is caught in the middle of a conflict between the Assassins and the Templars. —G.M.

STACK YOUR DECK

"This is the coolest!" an 11 year-old kid exclaimed in the cafeteria while playing *Magic: The Gathering* in 1994. Now we want to build a time machine only to go back to that elementary school and show the kid Virtual Reality because the first collectible card game for Virtual Reality is kickass! *Dragon Front* from High Voltage Software and Oculus VR is set in a fantasy/1940s dimension—think Hitler riding a dragon—but has the familiar deck and mana system. The best part? Since there is online play you can branch out and compete with people out of your local nerd scene. No? Not ready for that? OK you can stick with your buddies. —Robert McCormick



FIRST-ROBOT SHOOTER

The problem with first-person VR shooter games is that they can make a person dizzy. If you prefer to battle a sniper over nausea we suggest *Damaged Core* for Oculus. The gameplay is smooth and follows a 10+ hour story-driven campaign that was written by one of the dudes from *Bioshock*. In the game

you aren't human, just a form of intelligence who can inhabit different hosts with various degrees of functions and weapons. Long gone are the days when you had to stick with the same character for a whole campaign—see how the other half fights and then crush them once you learn their vulnerability. —R.M.



THE HOLIDAY PLAYLIST BY INKED STAFF

"A FAIRY TALE OF NEW YORK"
The Pogues and Kirsty MacColl

"THIS TIME OF YEAR"
The Mighty Mighty Bosstones

"ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH"
Bad Religion

"CHRISTMAS TIME FOR MY PENIS"
The Vandals

"CHRISTMAS SONG"
Juelz Santana Feat. Skull Gang

"RUN RUDOLPH RUN"
Lemmy Klimster, Dave Grohl, Billy Gibbons

"BABY, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE"
Dean Martin and the Rat Pack

"CHRISTMAS (BABY PLEASE COME HOME)"
Darlene Love and Phil Spector

^ "SNOWBALLS AND HIGHBALLS"
Wonderlux

"IF IT DOESN'T SNOW ON CHRISTMAS"
Joe Pesci

"NO PRESENTS FOR CHRISTMAS"
King Diamond

"THE SEASON'S UPON US"
Dropkick Murphys

"MIRACLE"
Matisyahu

"CHRISTMAS IS ALL AROUND ME"
Billy Mack

"KRIS KRINGLE WAS A CAR THIEF"
Wesley Willis

"SILENT NIGHT"
Johnny Cash



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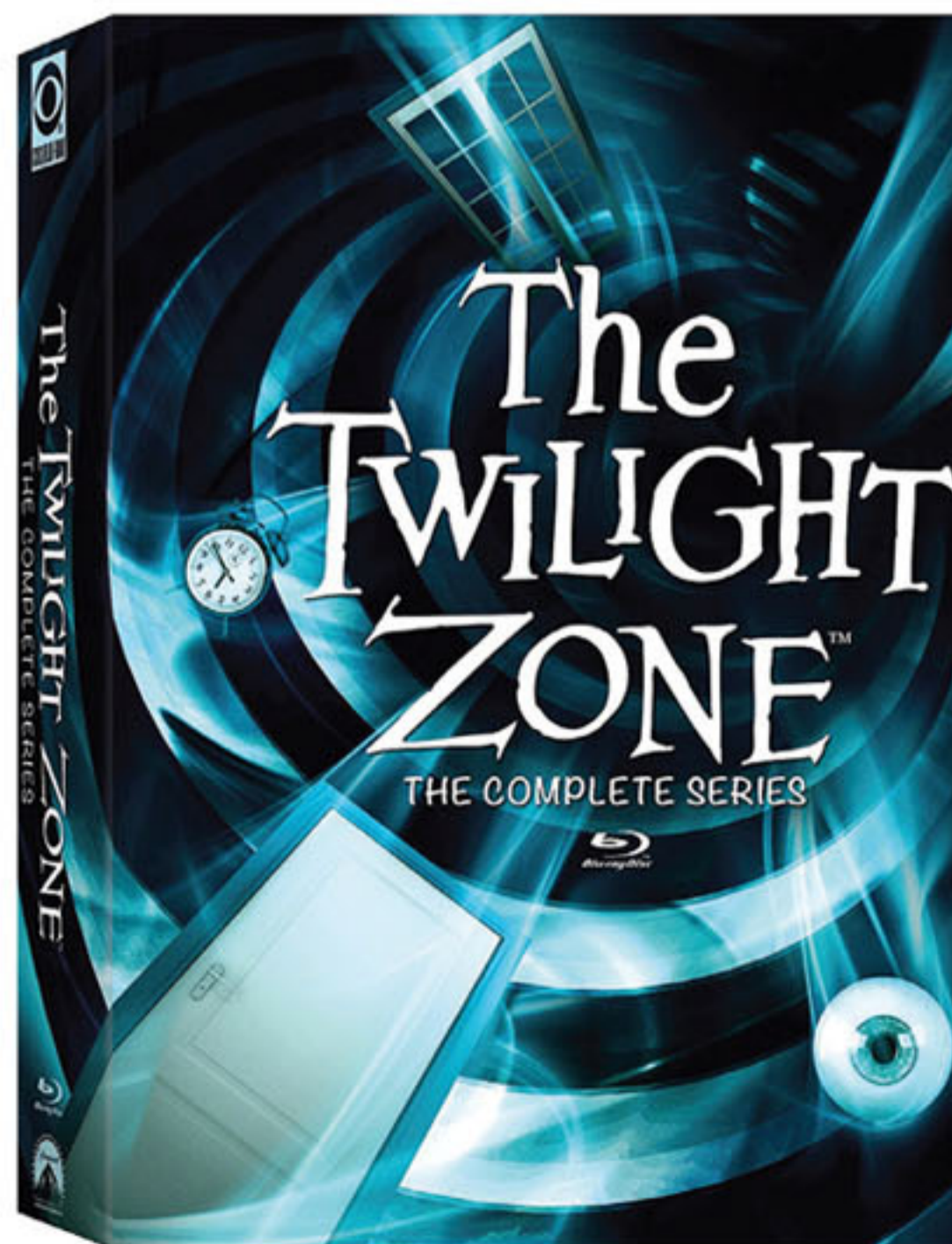
To Hell With You

When someone tells you to “got to Hell,” it’s usually a bad thing—but if Hell is anything like this all-new *Hellraiser: The Scarlet Box* set, well then, we’ll go with pleasure. This sexy set only contains the first trilogy of Hellraiser movies. That’s OK with us. Almost all the sequels after the one where Pinhead went to space were mostly crap. But the artwork alone is enough to make any Clive Barker fan drool. This is a must for any horror fan and tattoo shop, the visuals will inspire reference material for so much ink that the set will pay for itself by next Halloween. —G.M.



BACK IN THE HOBBIT

Clocking in with a whopping set of 30 discs, this gargantuan *Middle Earth 6-Film Collection* features the extended editions of every Hobbit and Lord of the Rings movie and countless hours of bonus features. *An Unexpected Journey*, *The Desolation of Smaug*, *The Battle of the Five Armies*, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* are all here in leather-like book casing complete with a wooden shelf. Hopefully, you’re immortal like an elf, because by the time you finish watching every feature in this set, you’ll be as old as Gandalf, ready to sail to the Grey Havens. —G.M.



GET IN THE ZONE

All 156 episodes of the spine-tingly Rod Sterling series *The Twilight Zone* are present and accounted for in this beautiful high definition set. Some all-time fan faves include: “Nightmare at 20,000 Feet,” (which starred William Shatner), “Eye of the Beholder” and “Living Doll” (the one with the creepy Talking Tina doll). You also get the rare, unofficial pilot episode called “The Time Element.” Bonus features include audio commentaries, interviews, isolated music scores and much more creepiness. —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.

The Dos and Don’ts of Online Dating.

Profile Pic: No shirtless mirror selfies, that is the biggest turnoff. But if you are into girls who would be impressed that you have a driver’s license and a credit card then maybe that is the right look for you. Basically all you have to do is not look like a douchebag.

Level 2: When chatting up your prospect you need to know a few things. Everything you say to this girl will be overanalyzed x 1,000. All of her friends know what you guys are talking about as she is screenshotting everything and sending it to them.

When you and the person you are talking to exchange social media information get ready for some deep fucking stalking. I’m not just talking about looking at every photo of you way back to 2010, I’m talking about looking at who you follow. If you follow like 500 hot chick accounts I am going to assume that you are a wannabe womanizer and I won’t want anything to do with you.

Congratulations, you’ve reached Level 3: The date!

Some experts say that you should do something exciting and special for your first date—something that will drive adrenaline. The thought is that she will feel the adrenaline and mistake that for butterflies in her stomach. But not with me, something like skydiving sounds like it will give me anxiety. Just take me to dinner. I would rather feel a full belly.

The goodnight kiss. At the end of a date always go in for a kiss. Just have a nice kiss to feel out the chemistry. Don’t go in for a sloppy boner kiss, nobody really likes boner kisses on the first date.





Good luck, I hope you find the least psycho hoe!



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The World is a Vampire

The undying vampire franchise continues and Kate Beckinsdale returns to once again don skin tight black vinyl and reprise her role as Selene in *Underworld: Blood Wars*. Still caught in the middle of a war between Vampires and Lycans, and betrayed by her own coven, her only allies are David (Theo James) and his father Thomas (Charles Dance), who you may remember from *Underworld: Awakening*, who warn Selene that a new Lycan leader named Marius (Tobias Menzies) is after her estranged daughter—making the war far more personal than before. —G.M.



JACKED UP

We've all been there. You are walking around a Target or Ikea or something like that with your ladyfriend and she keeps calling different pieces of furniture "cute." She's right. The furniture world is full of that but where is all the cool stuff? From street art to seat art! Dan Gold, the mind that melded traditional tattooing and graffiti imagery has joined forces with the hands of bespoke UK upholsterers Wish Interiors to bring you the Gold standard in home décor. For about \$2,500 you can sit on this throne. Yes, that's a lot of loot, but how many chairs are you going to buy in your lifetime? With velvet, skulls and studs, this handmade piece of sittable art provides luxury with an edge. Featuring the designs of the one and only Dan Gold and painstakingly stitched by some of the finest craftsmen from across the pond, you have to add this four-legged friend to your wish list and your tattooed ass will thank you come Christmas. —Nick Fierro



Pinteresting

"Create more, sleep less," is the mantra of design studio NoHours. Damn, that's like the "Hang in there" cat poster but for our lifestyle. So what does NoHours create? Dope-ass pins and patches. Yes, we know we highlighted pins and patches two issues ago but these are too cool not to share. As you can see above they make this wild hourglass pin and on their webstore nohoursbrand.com you can find other cool imagery like Pooh if he were a real bear, a rabbit missing his lucky foot and their idea of a woman with a "muffin top."



Pikachew

High five us on that headline! (Smack). Is the Pokémon GO thing still a thing? Well one thing it did was enervate the brand, leading to more Pokémon products like this here cookbook. So if you were already into Pokémon before you had to leave your house to enjoy it, you will have a glut of stuff this holiday season to satiate your fandom. Thanks people who only downloaded a Pokémon app because it was the cool thing to do!

BJ BETTS GETS TATTOO SOCKS

Stance, the awesome brand and Stalley, the sweet Mayback Music rapper wanted to put out a new collection of socks. Stalley, more of a lyricist than a visual artist, called his tattoo artist BJ Betts. Now, *blam*, the classic tattoo artwork of Betts is on a fresh pair.



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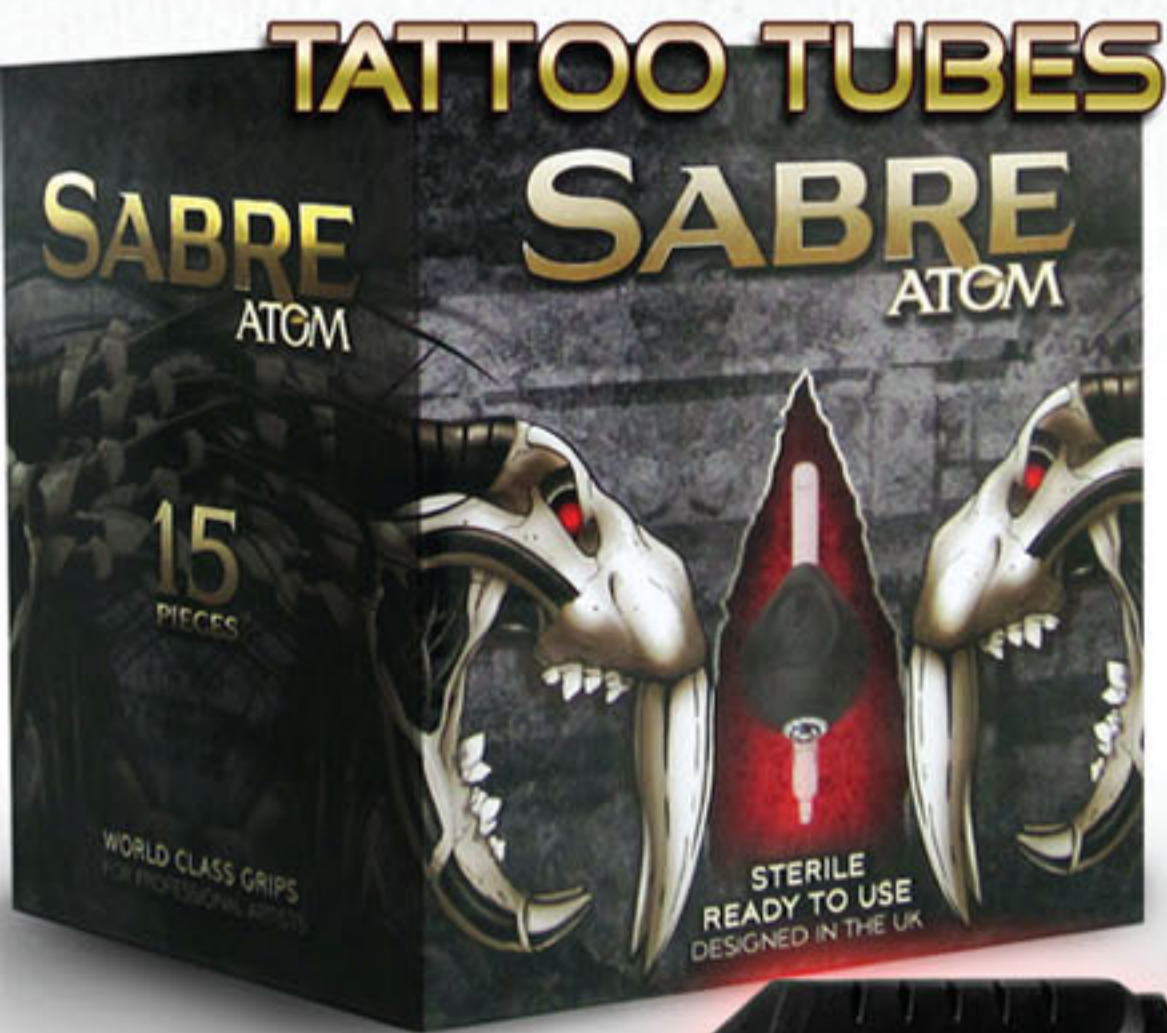
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Winds of Change

Alana (Potocnik) went from being a keyboardist for metal band Winds of Plague to becoming a girly pop queen. Check out her new look and sound.

Alana has always expressed herself as one part yin and one part yang—visually, creatively and musically. As a teenager, she rode the fine line of expected and unexpected by participating on the cheerleading squad and then wearing a death metal band T-shirt over her uniform. Perhaps this has always been part of who she is, however unconsciously.

In a former life, Alana was part of a pretty popular metal band—but like everything else in her seemingly split-personality life, if being in Winds of Plague was the “yin,” Alana has moved into the “yang” portion of her music career, as a rock-influenced pop singer. Her latest single, entitled “Black Magic,” included a video that was a pop song with a dark side—inspired by one of Alana’s favorite movies of all time, the 1996 cult classic: *The Craft*, and Alana’s favorite decade: The ‘90s.


Even her musical influences are on the outermost walls of genre differences, from Marilyn Manson to Britney Spears. When it comes to describing her music, Alana says, “I’ve always used words like ‘odd and dark’ because everything I’ve created growing up has always been in that dark realm. I think that just all comes from my rock background. The

‘90s influence is a big thing for me. We’ve been trying to make sure my music fit, what is true to me.” In her current musical incarnation, she can perhaps be described aptly as Katy Perry meets Lana Del Rey, trapped inside the body of Grimes.

Expressing her individuality in two halves seems to come naturally, if but by accident, which also carries over into her songwriting. “I’ll come to [producer Khris Lorenz] with all these chord progressions that he’s not used to. It wasn’t like a cookie-cutter ‘major, major, minor, major’ chord progression. I’m not going to write about being on the dance floor and popping bottles. I’m going to write [about] raw emotions and express it the way that I want to express it.”

Alana had to grow up fast, touring the world in her internationally known metal band — part of which contributed to her tattoo collection, which like everything else, appears only on one side of her body. Alana says she left one side as her “good girl” side, quite literally. “I only have them on the left side of my body because I always wanted to have a clean side of me. [There’s a] dark side of me and the super-clean good girl side.”





And even though she was very specific about where the tattoos could go, she never limited the artists she worked with by telling them what to put on her. "I would work with different artists wherever I would tour. I would be like, 'I don't care what I get tattooed on me, I want you to put your art on me.'"

Her collection includes zombie Mickey Mouse and Hello Kitty, in honor of time spent in Japan; "Only the good die young" on her wrist in honor of a friend who passed from a motorcycle accident; and "Unbreakable" on her hand which, to her, has the most meaning: "I got that after a point where I was really getting internet-bullied and cyber bullied for really dumb things. From joining the band, people called me fat, ugly—the whole nine yards. I fell down for a little bit and then when I picked myself back up I was like, I want to get a tattoo so that I can look at it whenever I ever feel like that again and know that I came back from that. I went down to the bottom and now I'm here and nobody can put me down."

She's a newcomer in the pop world, baring larger tattoos than the semi-antiquated sugary-pop stars who often only seem to get the "tiny tattoo" on hidden parts of their bodies, but Alana isn't scared to be herself both visually and musically. Though others would find it difficult to transition from the metal world to pop music, Alana isn't fazed. "I love to say [that I'm pop]. I pride myself in that because I love it. I don't have any shame in saying it. I don't need to beat around the bush—I'm like, I'm pop, that's it."

Alana's next song, called "Venomous," is set to hit in December, three months after her previous single, "Black Magic." Her full EP is set to be released within the next few months, and it will no doubt deliver both sides of Alana—from the dark, to the light.

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HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU PAY FOR A TATTOO?

The average American woman spends about \$125,000 on clothing in her lifetime, and while fashion comes and goes, a tattoo is a permanent style piece. As Sailor Jerry said: "Good work ain't cheap. Cheap work ain't good."

BY PADDY VIPOND | DESIGN BY KAVELLE LAWRENCE





If we were speaking of any other topic, the relationship between cost, permanence and visibility would be seen as positive. But when we speak of tattoos, all of these, for some reason, become lines of attack.

When we discuss cars, jewelery or technology, the price is often seen as a sign of quality, but this attitude is ignored when we talk about tattoos. The ink that we choose to put on—or should that be put under—our skin is dismissed or even criticised as a waste of money. People I speak to are shocked when I tell them how much money I have spent on this body modification—around the \$5,000 mark currently—but in the same conversation they are more than happy to announce how much they spent on Friday night in a club, or on Saturday afternoon at the shops.

Yes, tattoos are expensive, but as with anything else in this world, you get what you pay for. A poorly designed smudge could be as little as \$25, but when you are going to be carrying it around with you for the rest of your life, why not pay a bit more to ensure quality?

It is this combination of price and permanence that gives tattoos their true value.

My \$5,000 worth of ink is roughly a decade in the making, meaning that, on average, I am spending \$500 a year on tattoos. Though they may not be to everyone's taste, I doubt anyone could criticize someone for spending that much money on something they love over the course of 12 months. Whether you call it art or a hobby or even an addiction (in the best possible sense of the word), \$500 a year—all things considered—is a reasonable price to pay.

Now I must apologize in advance for the inclusion of some maths here, but the figures really help to demonstrate my point. My \$500 a year on tattoos is the equivalent of just over \$42 per month. And to put this into perspective, the average person in my home country of the UK spends \$50 on alcohol, the average dog owner spends almost \$200 on their pet, and it costs \$693.47 to own and run a car.

All of these things—alcohol, a dog, a car—have a limited length of life. Alcohol and its effects last hours; a dog is a decade or so (sorry!); a car is about the same. But the permanence of tattoos means that the \$42 I spend a month on tattoos is an investment for life.

Let's say I stop getting tattoos, and that the \$5,000 I have spent to date is all I will ever spend on inking my body. If I live to be 79.5 years old (the average life expectancy of UK males in 2015) then my annual average spend on tattoos is just \$63. If we see tattoos as a life's investment, then the longer you live, the cheaper they become. Unlike other hobbies or items, tattoos do not need to be replaced or upgraded (save a few inexpensive touch-ups here or there, if that is your thing).

As I said previously, the issues relating to the cost of tattoos, their permanence and their visibility do lead to questions and criticisms. There have been occasions whereby I have visited poorer countries, or walked past a charity worker or a homeless person on the street, and the thought strikes me, "What must I look like to them?" When I apologize for not being able to help them or give them money, what must they think when they see my body decorated in

such a fashion? For a time I thought it was vulgar to have this display of tattoos and this show of wealth. I thought that maybe I looked like a walking \$5,000 note (though discontinued in the US, it used to feature the smug visage of James Madison), more concerned with decorating myself than helping other people. But such thinking was a mistake.

The fact that we can carry our ink around with us anywhere and everywhere we go makes it unique to almost any other hobby or purchase. Yes, I have spent \$5,000 on tattoos, but this was over a period of a decade. If we continually carried 10 years' worth of purchases around with us, then I would stand out a lot less as the streets would be flooded with armies of coat hangers, salsa lines of shoes, and wheelbarrows of cigarettes.

In 2014, a survey conducted by Macmillan Cancer Support found that men in the UK spent an average of \$1,164 on alcohol each year. A decade of gin-and-tonics would be almost \$12,452 and would leave one a hell of a hangover.

Unsurprisingly, the National Health Service routinely attempts to alert smokers to the dangers they face, but they also provide an economic argument for giving up smoking. Even without the cost of lighters, matches, ashtrays, mouthwash and all the other externals, a 10-a-day smoker would spend roughly \$21,791 on cigarettes alone over the course of 10 years.

A 2013 survey found that on average women in the UK buy 13 pairs of shoes and spend \$710 on these purchases each year. A decade's worth of shoes would equal \$7,100 and 130 pairs. Shoes are a great comparison for tattoos or any accessory of clothing. Ink is essentially wearable art—style. Tattoos look cool (and like trendy sporting clothes are technically "sweat-wicking"). The average American woman will spend \$125,000 over her lifetime on clothing—buying more than 3,000 items including 271 pairs of shoes and 145 bags. Don't laugh, men: a 2016 poll by The Boutique @ Ogilvy says you will outspend her. What if I could sell you a purely ornamental piece of clothing, say a vest or a cap or a tie, that will last forever at an extreme cost break? That would be more popular than tickets to *Hamilton* or whatever the new Fitbit is going to be this holiday season.

Actually, an apt comparison for tattoos are engagement rings. *The Knot* says that American men spend an average close to \$6,000 on diamond rings for their fiancées, and not only are the prices of diamonds the most marked-up item in all of retail but tattoos outlast 50 percent of marriages (again, sorry).

It is when we look at the cost of tattoos in the right context, comparing them to other purchases and hobbies, that we begin to see their true value. Rather than being written off as a waste of money, it appears that tattoos are in fact one of the most undervalued purchases a person could ever make.

Every once in awhile someone who is not an ink enthusiast will approach me with a sneer and sarcastically ask, "What will your tattoos look like when you are older?"

My new answer: "A smart investment."

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Tell us a little about your last fight.

I felt great! It went as planned, from the first strike that I landed. I felt great after the fight, got back in the gym, and hopefully, the next fight will be in December for the title against Cruz.

How do you think the Dominick Cruz fight's gonna go?

Whether I knock him out in the first round or the fifth—I'm going to win that title.

Tell us a little bit about your tattoos.

I got "True Love" tattooed on my knuckles, because fighting is my true love, my passion. I got a grenade blowing up on my hand because I throw bombs. I can always count on my "bomb hand" to connect and knock someone out. I've got my neck tattoo with the wings and the diamond. I've got my area code tattooed on me because I'm very thankful for my roots.

You're from Ohio, right?

Yeah, Uhrichsville, Ohio, 922.

When did you start getting tattooed?

My uncle had these sketchbooks that he would constantly be drawing in. He tattooed my grandfather, my biological father, and my other uncle. They were all tattooed so I thought it was the norm. Growing up without too many positive role models, I would look up to the high school kids, the football players, wrestlers, most of them had tattoos and I just thought it was cool. That's where I wanted to be, so I got my first tattoo when I was 13. It's still there on my back. I haven't touched it; it's a cross with a ribbon. I've thought about getting a cover up, but it takes time, and tattoos hurt. I can probably only sit for three hours or so.

What hurts more, getting kicked in the face or getting tattooed?

I would say getting tattooed. If you think about it, you get kicked in the face and you're knocked out—it's done. Once you start getting tattooed, from that first line, you have to sit through that. You have to finish that piece. My buddy was tattooing my neck, and after a while he asked if I wanted to keep going. What am I gonna do? Walk around with a little line on my neck? So we blasted through it.

What was the inspiration for the neckpiece?

It has a couple different meanings. The "Self Made" logo reminds me that I'm responsible for what I am today. The diamond, well, diamonds are made under pressure, and I've conquered adversity. The wings, those were put on because the sky's the limit. I like all of that, and I've always wanted a neckpiece. Most people just see it as a neck tattoo, but it has meaning to it.

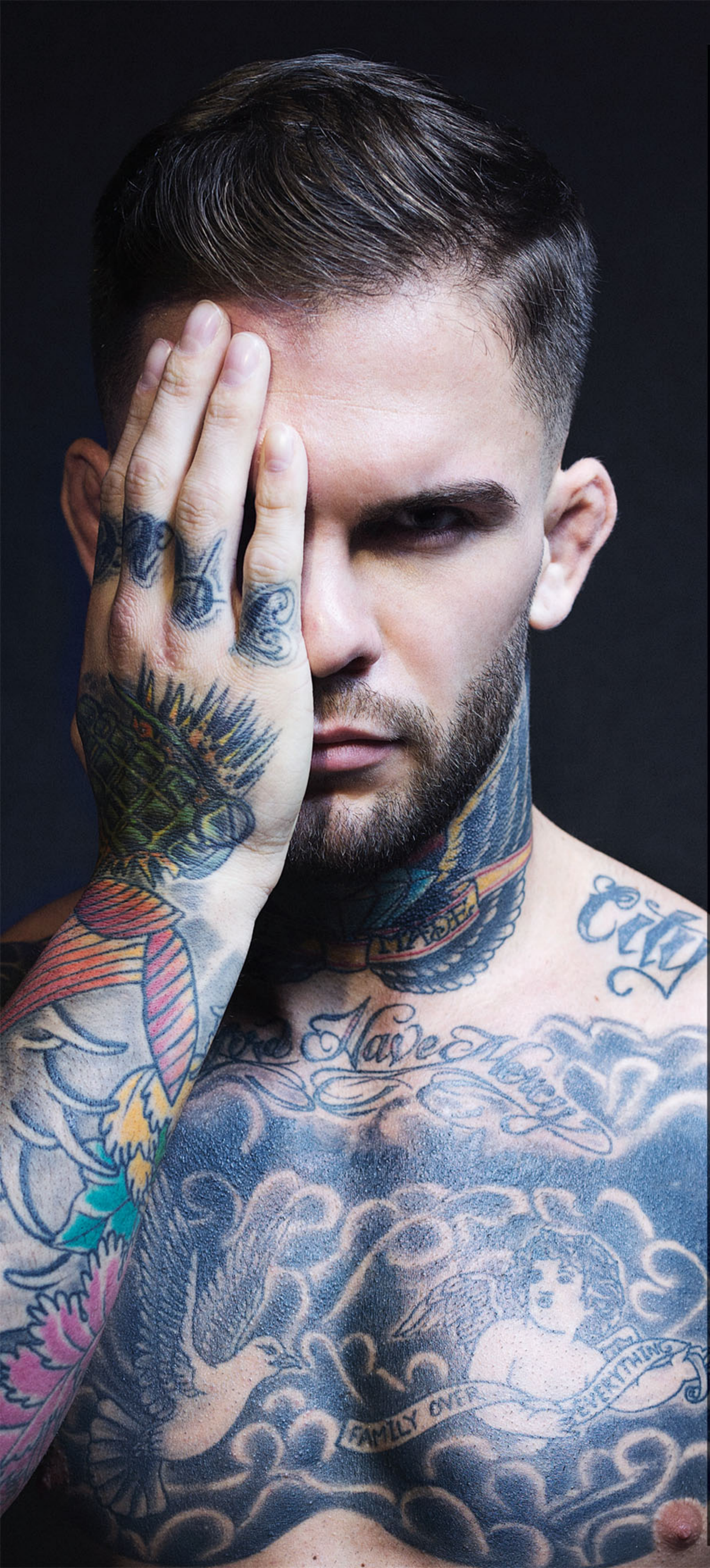
What got you into fighting?

I grew up fighting. We lived on the wrong side of the tracks and just grew up scrappin'. My mom put me in wrestling, and once my uncle got out of prison he became my boxing trainer and I started boxing. He's been my boxing trainer since I was 14 years old.

Who were the fighters that you looked up to as a kid?

My favorite fighter hands down, to this day is Chuck Lidell. His whole approach to fighting, working with





the media, being the champion, partying, he was the first one to really balance all of that. He was the first superstar of the UFC. I loved him for his style, you knew what you were getting with Chuck Lidell.

Anyone from the WWE that inspired you early on?

Macho Man Randy Savage, obviously Rick Flair WOOO! I'm a big Stone Cold Steve Austin fan, but Goldberg was badass. I would say one of my favorite wrestlers of all time is Sting. I remember wearing a Sting shirt the first day of second grade, and I met one of my best friends because we had the same Sting shirt on. We grew up together and been best friends since. I just loved Sting's intro, he was quiet, didn't talk. He was mysterious.

What did you see yourself doing before UFC?

I always thought I would do something like this. I was into boxing, I wrestled and I was always really competitive. When I was growing up, UFC was just starting out, but I visualized myself becoming a fighter since I was 11 or 12 years old. I've never imagined myself not being a fighter.

What are your thoughts on how the sport has changed?

I'm grateful for where the sport's at right now because there's a huge opportunity for fighters like myself. But the old school guys really paved the way, doing four fights a night to become UFC champion. Those days are long gone, but I would love an opportunity like that. Imagine maybe having the top four guys in a division fight over the course of one or two days.

Do you think the way UFC is scored makes it seem fairer than boxing?

If judges have a favorite fighter going into a fight, and want a specific outcome, than when it comes down to a decision you're more likely to have a tie. That kind of result is what produces lackluster performances. When boxing is flourishing it's because you have a Mike Tyson or a Muhammad Ali. With MMA, you have all types of martial arts, some kid who has been doing karate since he was three, he wants to do MMA, so you have the karate people, the jiu jitsu people, the boxers, the wrestlers, the muay thai guys. That's why it's expanded so much.

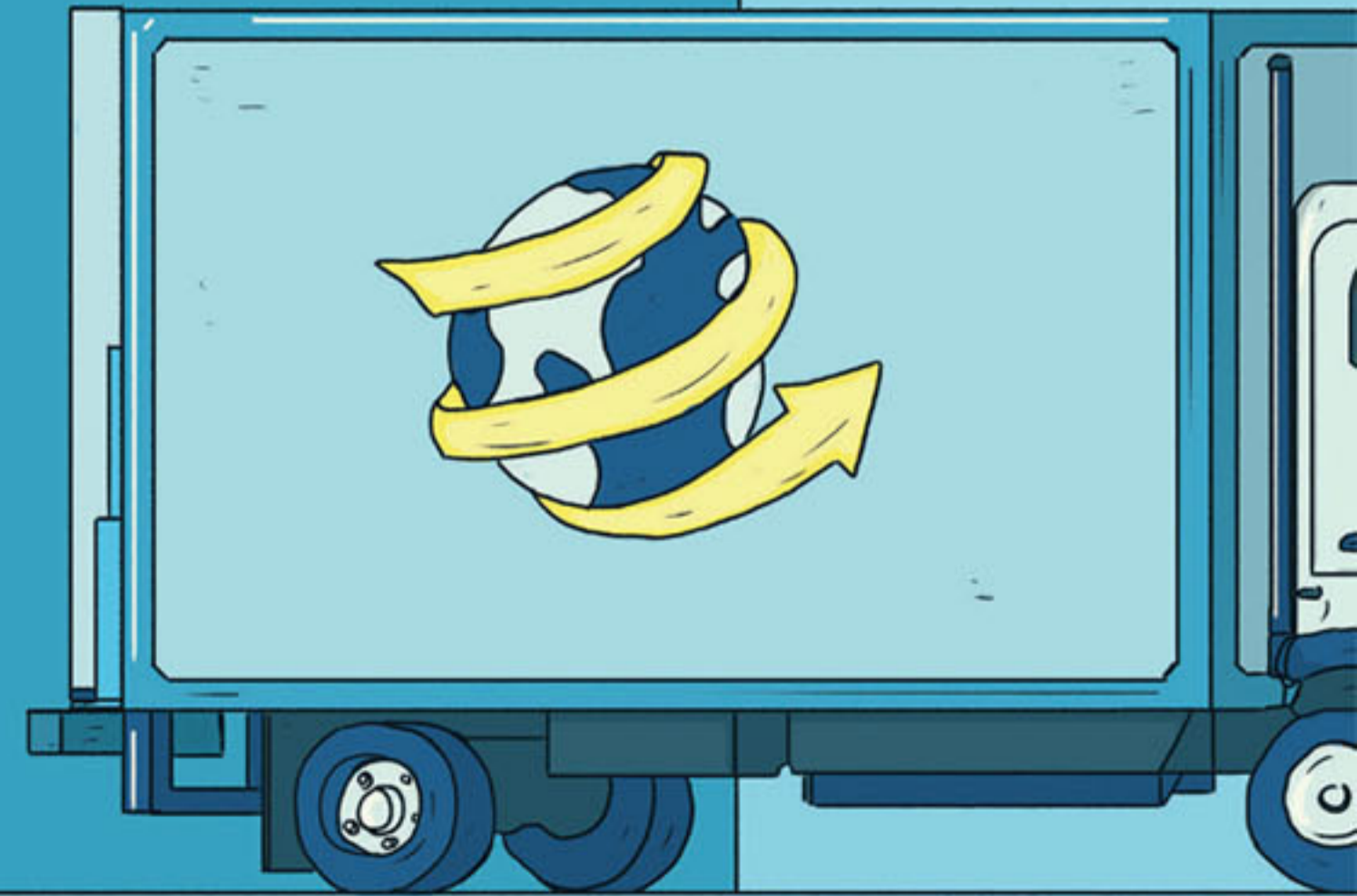
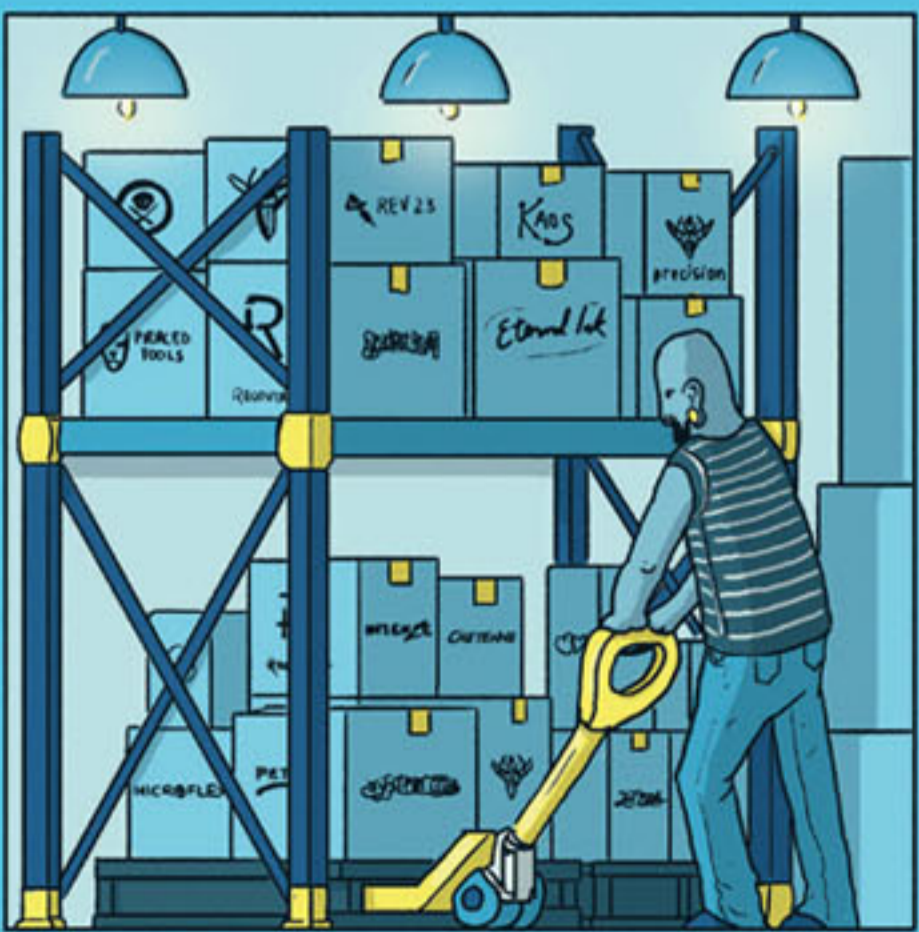
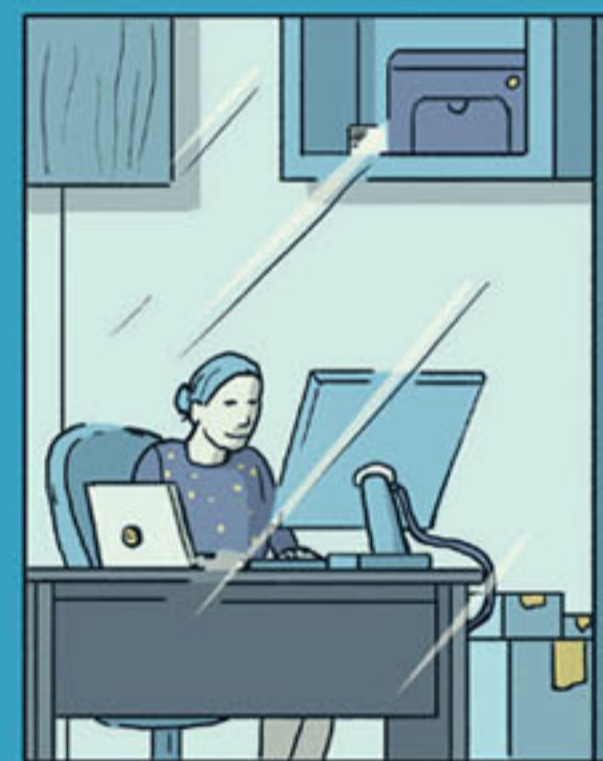
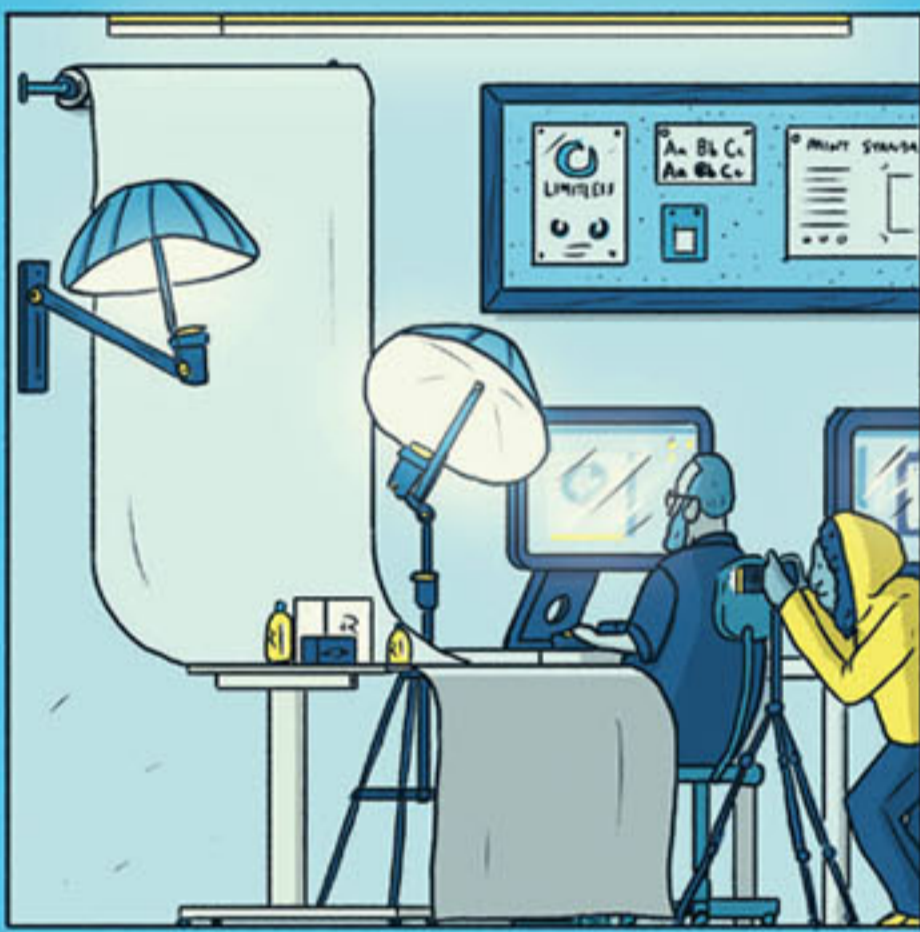
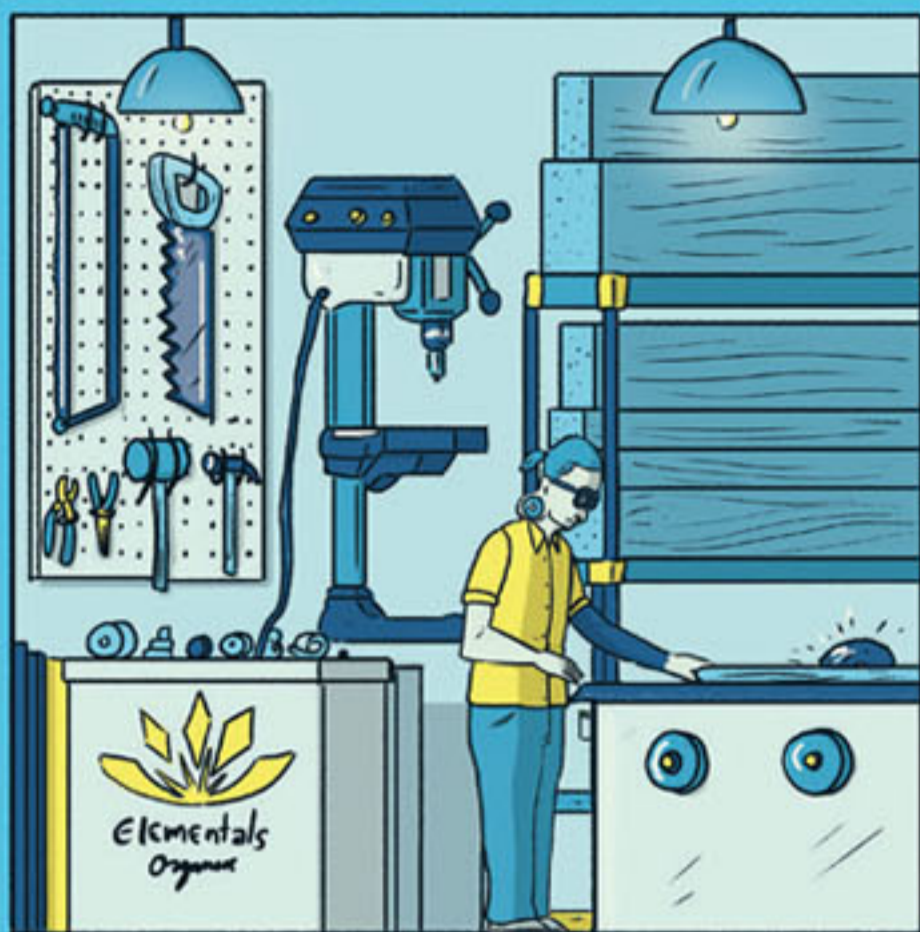
What was your toughest fight?

My toughest fight was my brother, I was 17. That was the last time we fought, definitely my toughest fight to date. We fought for a good 45 minutes to an hour. We drove out to a back road and fought each other.

Would you ever fight Conor McGregor?

Sure, but I have adversaries that I have to dispose of in my division, my focus is on Cruz and getting that title. I want to dethrone the bantamweight king, and then going up to fight Connor McGregor if he's still the champ in that division.

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Photos by Joshua Scott
Santa: Stephen Cucci
Ms. Klaus: Alesandra Nicole







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WHAT IS IT LIKE HAVING FACE TATTOOS?

By Doug Drucker Photos by Pookie



You may recognize this face. He's played a gang leader on *Law & Order: SVU*, been in films with Susan Sarandon and Taylor Lautner as well as music videos with Kid Cudi and Beyoncé. Hell, if you live in the New York City area you might even see him on the streets—it's tough to be anonymous with this much ink on your visage. Doug Drucker tells us what it is like to be recognizable in the city of anonymity.

When you have face tattoos, every time you walk down the street people stare at you. You can't get a regular job. Even trying to get a house is tough. But this is who I am now and I try to use the positives out of it.

I never thought about getting into acting, but people told me to go down to Central Casting because they might hire me for some roles like gangbanger or inmate. I never thought about getting involved in acting, but that's life.

Getting my face tattooed wasn't really the best decision, honestly. I was in the whole "fuck the world" mentality. I am not outgoing and, in a way, I was trying to express myself through a creative outlet. I see people and they all look the same but I wanted to be different. I had a really good friend who tattooed—I designed a lot of stuff on my face myself and we came up with different ideas. Every week we would get drunk a little and I just kind of got lost in it. It was like a puzzle. I wasn't planning on getting my whole face tattooed, but at that point in my mind I wasn't even sure if I wanted to live another five years. I thought of the ramifications but then I said, "Fuck the ramifications."

I still struggle with depression. People ask me if I would get the tattoos removed if I could but I can't even remember my face before the tattoos. This is who I am now.

The only time I forget I have tattoos on my face is when I am alone or walking around listening to music. It is hard to forget when people are staring at you. When I first got them around 2008 it was early to have face tats and people were really shocked. I had a confrontational mindset—when people feel that energy and it mixes with the visual of tattoos, the ink exacerbates that evil light.

I had to learn how to carry myself better. I've worked on having a "passive look." I don't want a lot of people coming up to me and taking pictures, but at the same time I don't want people to cross the street when they see me.

I still use my moodiness when I am acting. As a method actor I bring myself to a scary place for my menacing roles. I become the person I am playing so much that when filming wraps it is hard for me to get out of character. I have never been an outwardly aggressive person, but I've had evil thoughts that I can draw on.

The darkest person I had to embody was in *Ace the Case* with Susan Sarandon. I played a guy who was scaring a seven-year-old girl on the subway. It was difficult to do. Intimidating a kid is awful, so in my mind I had to imagine that I was intimidating someone else and I managed to do it.

I'm told you want to hear about my own situation that happened on the subway a few months ago. Well, I was on the E train going downtown to World Trade Center. This guy came in with cuts on his feet and he sat down next to me. Everybody else moved to the other side of the train, but because I am used to people being intimidated by me I didn't want to discriminate against him so I stayed where I was. I looked at his feet because the cuts looked fresh and bleeding and he caught me looking. He said, "What are you looking at?" I was very calm and said something like, "C'mon chill man."

Again he said, "No, what are you looking at?" Then he punched me in the back of the head.

Usually I am not scared of people and I try to always stay calm because if people sense fear or have fear it can get worse. So I acted like it wasn't a big deal and I walked to the other side of the train. Then he came at me with a knife. I tried to protect myself, so I put up my hand and he got it with the knife, then he stabbed me in the shoulder.

That's when I got scared.

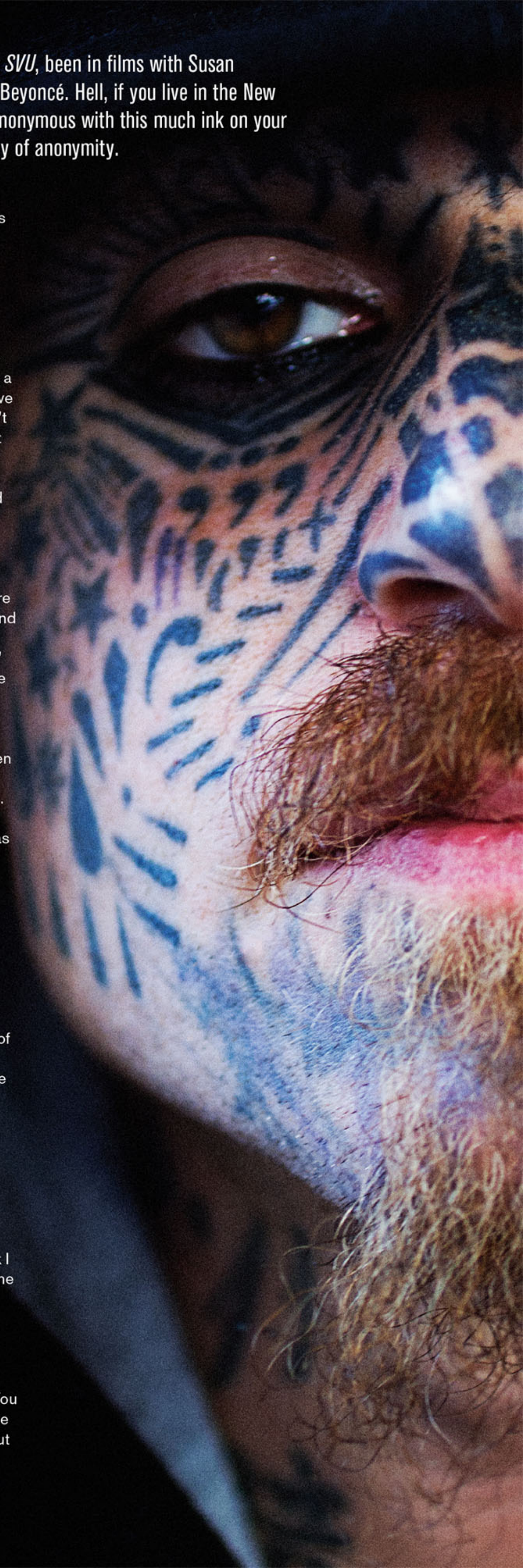
He came back at me again, but luckily the train stopped and when the doors opened he just ran away.

Everybody else flooded out of the train, but fortunately there was one really nice lady who...I wasn't going to tell the cops because the way I look they might think I instigated it. But this lady was very helpful and told them what happened, and she waited with me for half an hour until the paramedics showed up.

A lot of times I'm playing the bad guy—I understood where he was coming from in a way. Going through life with my face tattooed has helped me understand different types of people. I hear about groups of people being discriminated against for the color of their skin and I can relate to them.

The flipside is that if people are intimidated by me I can sympathize with them. You have to keep in mind people's perspectives. The tattoos have helped me become more open-minded. People might look at me first like I am crazy or something but then when they talk to me for a few minutes they will see that I'm a nice person.

Once you get to know someone their appearance is irrelevant.





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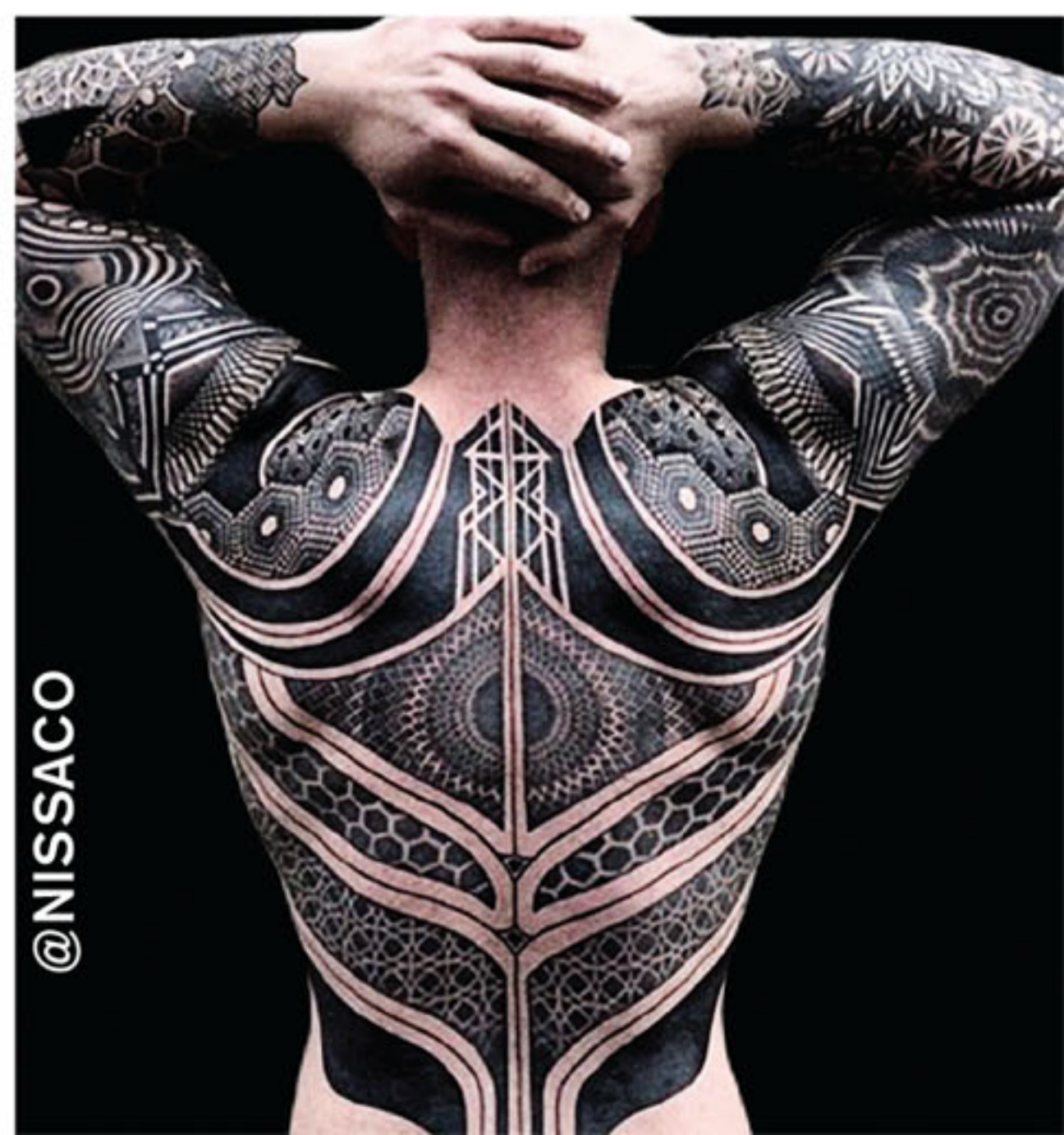
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By Robert McCormick

Having been enthralled by art since childhood, Yomico Moreno always knew that art was his calling. He had been drawing, sketching and painting since a young age, it was as a teen that Moreno would discover the art of tattooing when a tattoo shop opened up in his hometown of Puerto Cabello, Venezuela. Every day, Moreno stopped by the shop and became mesmerized by the artwork in the tattoo magazines he perused in the waiting area. And he was transfixed by seeing live tattoo work created by the artist at the shop. After countless visits to the shop, Moreno was convinced that he wanted to one day become a tattoo artist. And so, with this goal in mind, the budding artist left his *pueblo*—leaving behind his family and friends—and headed to the City of Valencia where tattooing was a bit more acceptable and accessible. There began the ink-filled journey for Moreno, who 14 years later is now part of the world famous Last Rites Tattoo Theatre, and of the tattoo world's most well-known and talented ink slingers.

What was it like coming up in the tattoo scene in Venezuela? Difficult. Now it may be easier because of all the information, but it's still difficult. In America, for most, it's easy because if you want to buy a machine, you search the internet, find a machine, and the next day you have your machine delivered. In Venezuela, it doesn't happen like that. The situation is difficult, politically and economically. It's difficult for artists to buy machines, inks and everything. But I think the bad situation enables the people in Venezuela to make do with anything. If tomorrow an artist there only has access to one machine and just one type of ink, they can do it, because we know what it means to have to make it happen with the little bit that we've had. Now Venezuela has a lot of awesome and great artists. If you look on social media, magazines are posting a lot of work from a lot of different Venezuelan artists.

How long after moving from Puerto Cabello to Valencia did you actually land a gig at a shop? I did kind of an apprenticeship in a small shop drawing and tattooing, sometimes. It was the beginning, and it was not easy. The artists were so closed off. Today, it's easy because you have more information—YouTube, magazines—but 14 years ago, no one told you anything.

Before the apprenticeship, did you try to go the self-taught route? It's crazy because some of my friends in the *barrio* let me borrow a homemade tattoo machine, and they said, "Try it on me!" I thought that was crazy because I had no idea how to do it. I said, "I'm not going to try it on you. I'm going to try it on myself

first." I did a tattoo on my leg, and I was like, "Oh, I like this!" I felt a passion for it, so I began tattooing my friends, and that was the real beginning. I had no idea, no stencils, and the ink was so bad. Now, 14 years later, I never imagined having a magnum. All I had was a liner made with my mom's sewing needle. That's what I was using. [laughs]

What type of machines and inks do you currently use? I like to use rotary machines, especially by Cheyenne. The Hawk Pen for me has been one of the best machines in the industry. Also, the cartridge tattoo needles have made a positive change in the industry because five or 10 years ago, if I had to do a tattoo, I had to use like five different machines. Now, all I need is one machine and five needles. I'm making my work easier for me. As for ink, I use Intenze. I always try different machines, inks and everything because I always want to see what will enable me to produce quality work in a way that's easier for me.

What made you gravitate towards the realism style? I remember in the beginning I had to do everything: lettering, stars, Japanese, traditional, everything. But one day, I realized that I really liked realism, because I remember that whenever I would draw or paint, my reference was always a photograph. When I decided to work on realism, I said, "I'm not tattooing any more stars or Japanese or lettering." I went a long time without work, but after some time, someone came to me for a portrait, and this portrait brought about more portraits. It was a sacrifice that I had to make many years ago, but now I know that it was a good

decision, because it was the only way that I was able to show people my style. I hear a lot of artists saying, "Oh, I want to work on realism, but people just come to me for stars and stuff like that," but I had to make a sacrifice. If you do nothing to transition to another style, then it's never going to happen.

You've been exploring surrealism lately as well. How long have you been doing that? Not too long — maybe like three or four years now. A lot of artists like sticking with styles they've perfected, and I respect them for that, but I like to evolve. Before, I was just doing realistic pieces, but now I try to create stories. I try to create a tattoo that when people see it they can also feel it. It's not just a copy of a picture. If you see the history for artists like Dalí and others, I think that normally happens with artists. They start making realism, and then they say, "I'm just going to change it up."

Do you see yourself diving into another style completely in the future? Yeah, I see myself doing that in the future. I like constantly changing. I remember working on color for a long time, and after I moved to New York, I was just working on black-and-grey. The people who come to Last Rites, and the people in New York in general, mostly like black-and-grey. Now, though, I've started to create more color work. I've been trying to mix realism and surrealism with color.

Can you tell us a bit about how you met Paul Booth and then ended up working at Last Rites? I met Paul through Darwin Enriquez who has been working at Last Rites for a long time. Paul was looking to make a new shop and was looking for artists, and they contacted me and asked me if I was interested in working with them, and I was like, "Of course!" [laughs]

What has it been like working at Last Rites? It's crazy because in the beginning, when I would look at magazines, I remember this awesome full back piece by Paul—it was like a Jesus Christ piece—and I was like, "Wow!" 14 years ago, to see a realism back piece like that, it was just... wow! Now, he's one of my biggest references in the world because, for me at least, I think he was the first artist to



“ANYBODY CAN BE A TATTOOIST. IF I GIVE A MACHINE TO MY MOM, TOMORROW SHE CAN MAKE A LINE. IF I GIVE HER THREE MONTHS, SHE’LL PROBABLY LEARN TO MAKE A STAR. SHE CAN BE A TATTOOIST BUT BEING A TATTOO ARTIST IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT.”

really give the first step towards what the realism style is today. I’ve been working here for almost two years, and Last Rites has become a big influence in my work because I understand now that we can do something more than just realism. This has given me a new direction in my profession. My black-and-grey has been affected because of working here since I see Paul every day working on black-and-grey. Also, I began painting more than before. Coming to Last Rites has been the biggest step in my entire career.

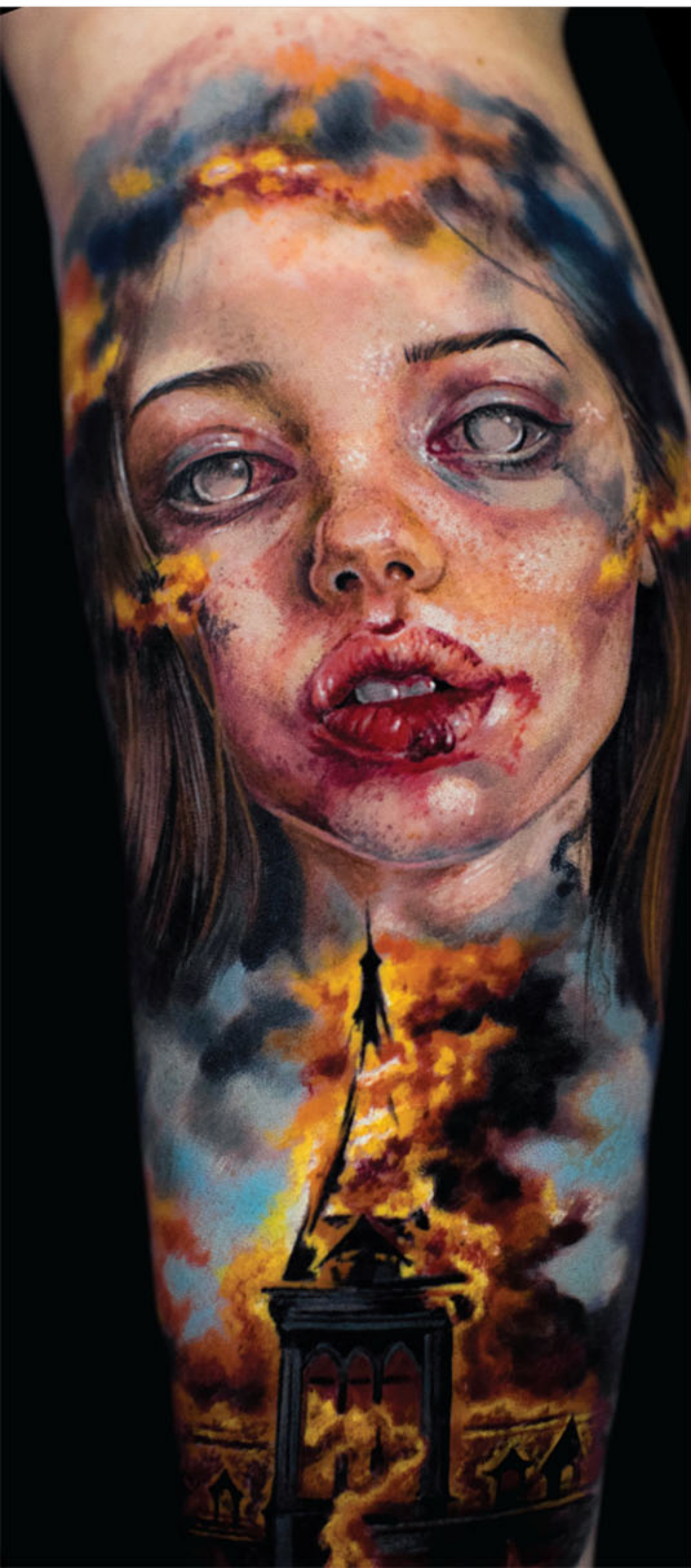
When did painting come back into play? After I began working here at Last Rites Tattoo Theatre and Last Rites Art Gallery, Paul always insisted that we paint. When you come to work at Last Rites every day, you see the influence. There are paintings around all the time. You see amazing artists who come here. Every month we have art fusions. It’s a new step, a new world, because before I used to paint just as a hobby. After I came here, I began painting to be a painter, and make it sort of like a second profession. Tattooing is my main job, but maybe 15 years down the line my body won’t be the same—my hand won’t be the same, my back won’t be the same—and I don’t want to leave the art world, so I think painting can possibly be my career in the future.

Do you think being skilled in tattooing better equips you for painting? Yeah. Ten years ago, I don’t think that anyone could imagine the tattoo world mixing with the art world, like with art galleries, for example. Years ago, the art galleries were closed off and only for painters. Now, you see that the galleries are interested in tattoo artists to be part of their painting exhibits. I think tattoo artists have an advantage when it comes to learning how to paint, because we do similar work every day. We understand the colors and how to work the light and everything. Maybe for someone who goes straight into painting, figuring out the colors might be a little difficult. I have to do all of that on skin. It’s more difficult than doing it on canvas. When we decide to go into painting, we have some direction.

What’s some advice you have for aspiring tattoo artists trying to get their feet in the door? Patience. That’s the first thing. I started this 14 years ago, and it wasn’t easy. I had to sacrifice everything. I had to sacrifice family, friends, everything to be here. They must also understand the true essence of being a tattoo artist. The real essence is not about being on a reality show or having a lot of followers on social media. Everything can come later, but the real essence is to be an artist. You try to find all of the elements that help you to become a good tattoo artist. I always say that anybody can be a tattooist. If I give a machine to my mom, tomorrow she can make a line. If I give her three months, she’ll probably learn to make a star. She can be a tattooist, but being a tattoo artist is totally different. I think that’s the real essence of this profession.

How about advice for folks looking to get tattooed? I always say there are two types of people: the people who buy a tattoo, and the people who collect tattoos. The people who buy a tattoo are the people who come to me like, “I want this right here like this because I’m paying.” I don’t need those kind of people. That’s not the way I work. The people who collect tattoos understand the artist. They just give me an idea and then let me be free. If you’re going to get a tattoo, try to think as a collector, and not like people who buy a tattoo.

Can you talk a bit about your project “It’s For Real” and what it’s all about? Darwin and I tried to make like mini tutorial videos. We tried to make something educational—something for the people to understand how we go about making tattoos. They’re just five minutes long as opposed to an entire hour. In the beginning, we talk about our style of realism, and later we talk about photographs and then about paintings, and the last one is about the tattoo convention experience. I think it’s really interesting, and the people really like it. It’s real work, it’s fresh, and it’s trying to show people how the process really is—to give people the real essence of tattooing.







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YOU'VE DONE COOL ARTWORK ON "POUND OF FLESH" SYNTHETIC TATTOOABLE SKIN. DO YOU PREFER WORKING ON THAT OR ON PEOPLE?

Nowadays I prefer live skin. Most people who reach me let me choose the project for them after they give me a theme for their tattoo. And I love to see the smile and sometimes the tears of happiness on the face of every person I tattoo!

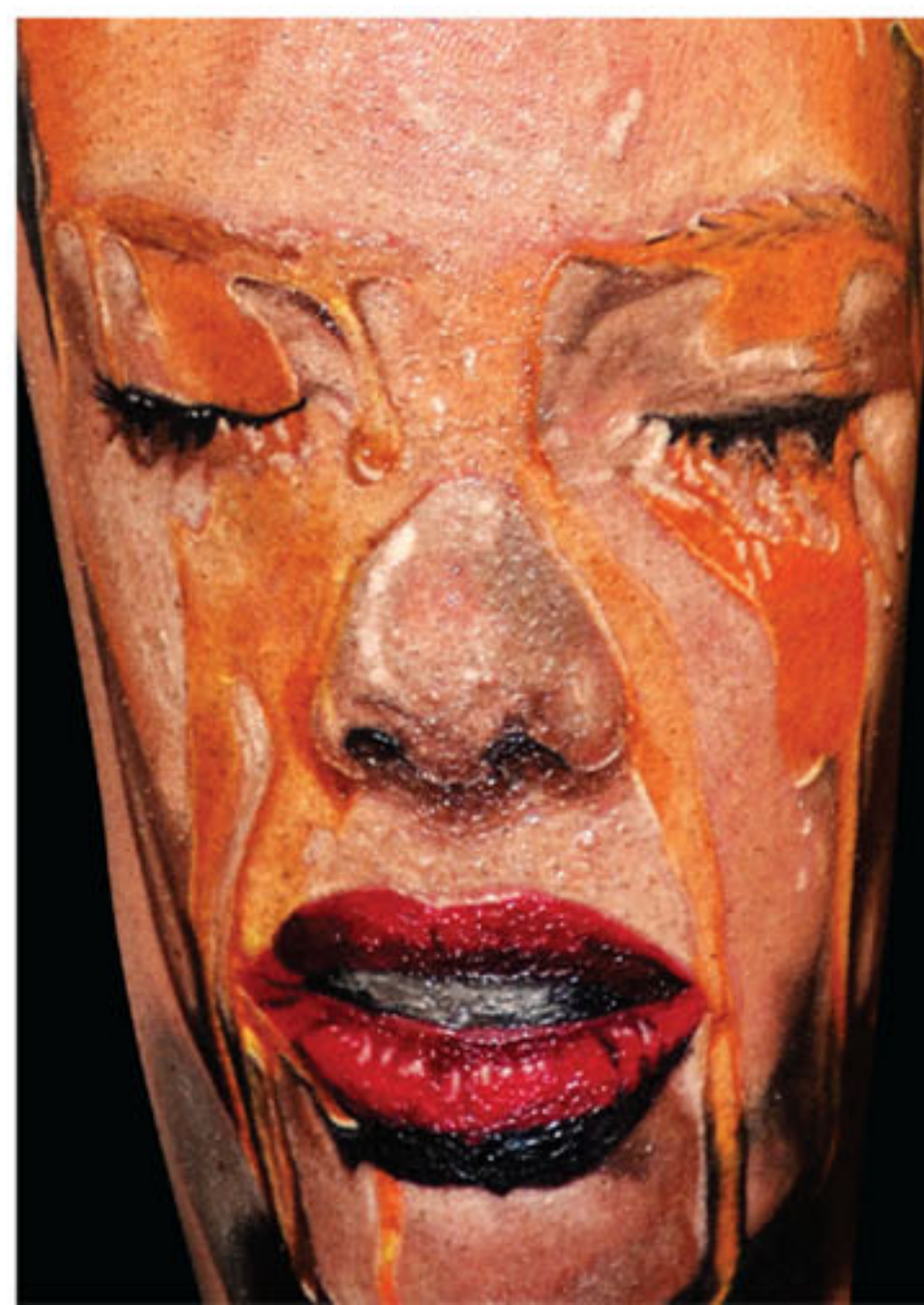
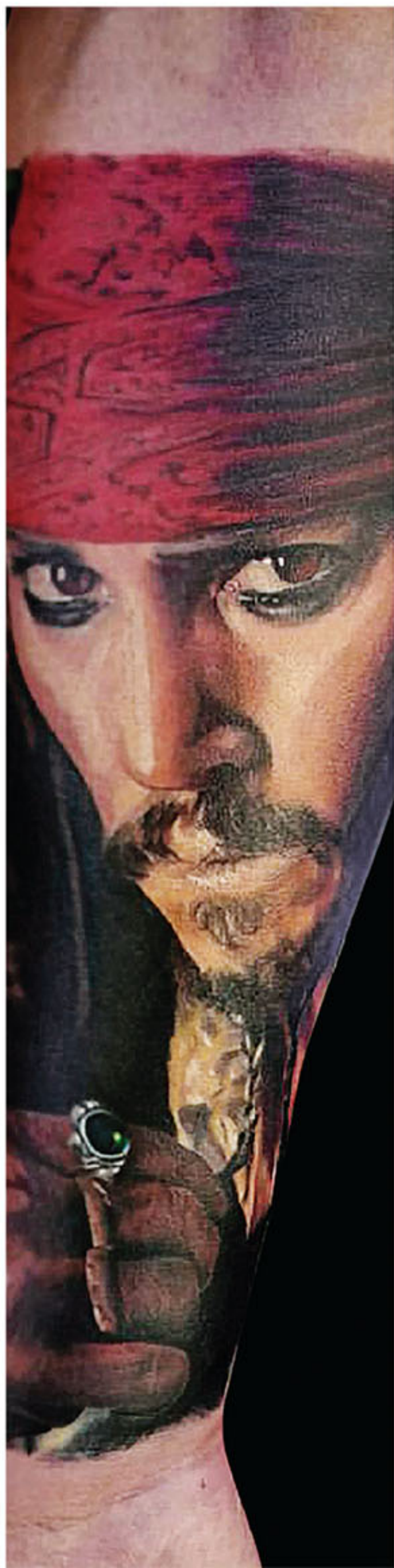
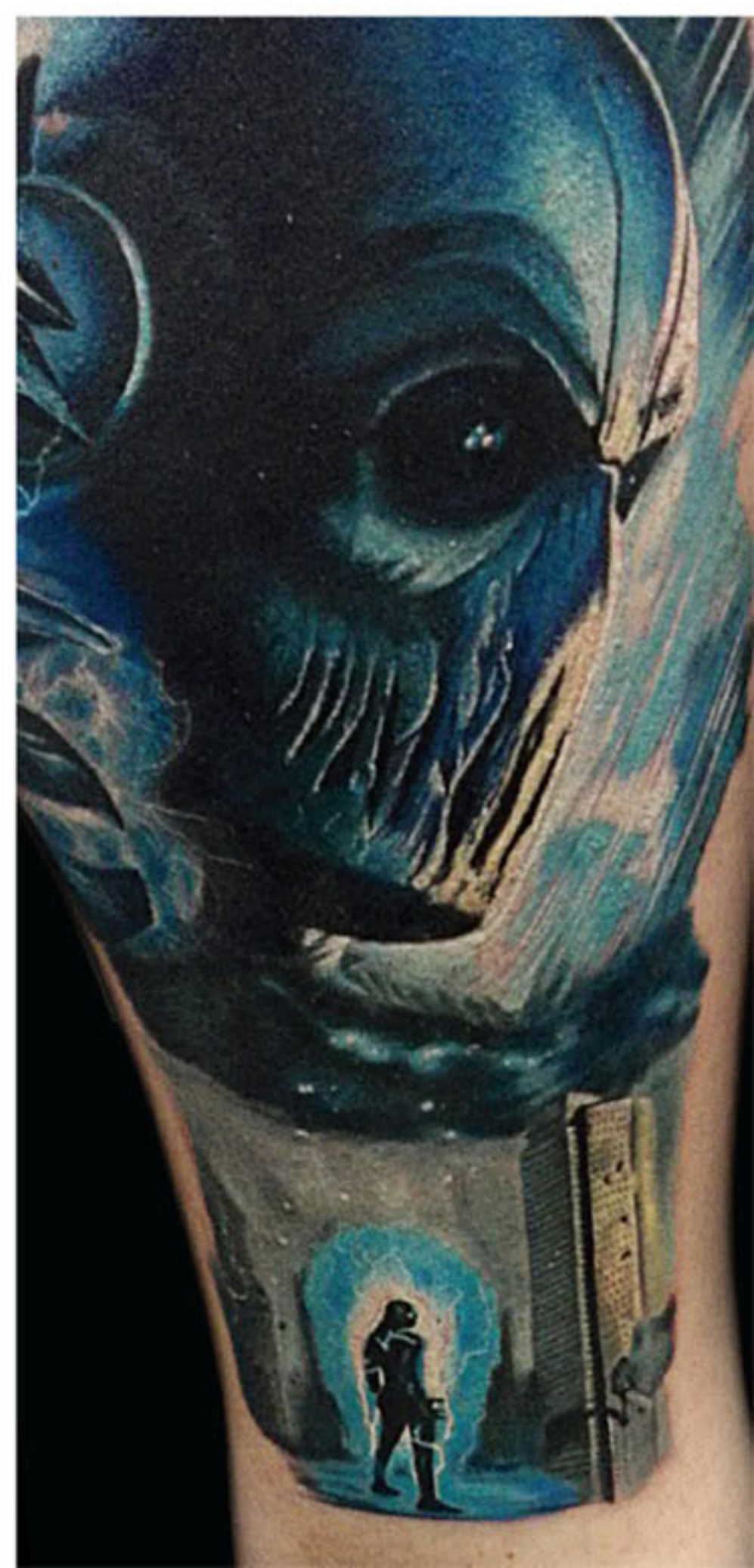
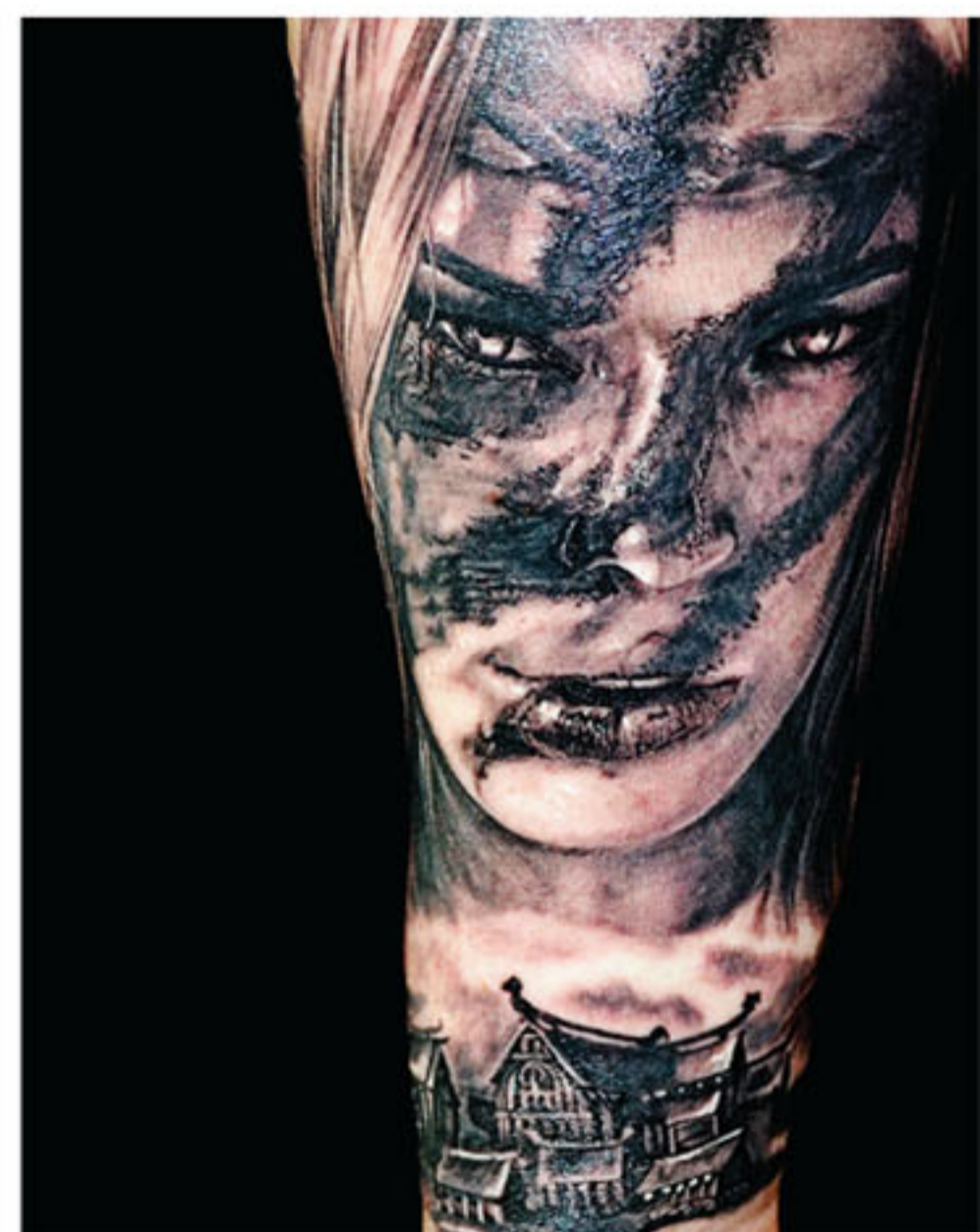
DO YOU HAVE A CODE OF WHAT CLIENTS ARE ALLOWED TO HAVE THEIR NECK, HEADS AND FACES TATTOOED? Somehow no one has ever asked me to tattoo their neck, head or face. But just like any other placement for any other project that I do, I always try to explain to the client what he or she will think and feel in the future as I try to see also the aesthetics of the body with the tattoo. I never do anything that a future son or daughter may dislike. There is nothing better than to have a nice conversation over a cup of coffee so I can understand what drives someone to make a tattoo in such placement.

WHO INSPIRES YOU? It is an endless list that is growing every day! Here's a few names Alex Grey, H.R. Giger, Mike Dargas, David Kassan, Eloy Morales, Colin Christian, Phil Garcia, my friend Dave Paulo, Paul Acker, Aleksandr O'Kharin and so many more!

IS YOUR CLIENTELE MORE MALE THAN FEMALE? Men win 70 percent to 30 percent. I can't complain—I've always got along better with men!

ARE THERE ANY TATTOOS THAT YOU REALLY WANT TO DO BUT NO CLIENT HAS ASKED FOR YET? Oh yes, I would love to do Amália Rodrigues (Late Portuguese fado singer), Portuguese metal band Moonspell singer Fernando Ribeiro and also the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa.

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Photo By Mike Welch



WHAT MADE YOU GRAVITATE TOWARD BLACK WORK? Truth be told, I wanted to free myself from stress and make my art more simple. I was tired of pouring up 20 to 40 different colors in cups and mixing them in the tube, giving me 100s of different colors in a tattoo and a lot of values to think about. Making my setup easier and stress-free, allowed me to have more fun and enjoy tattooing so much more. It has given me more power, more freedom and more lust to push my artistic skills.

MARK WOSGERAU

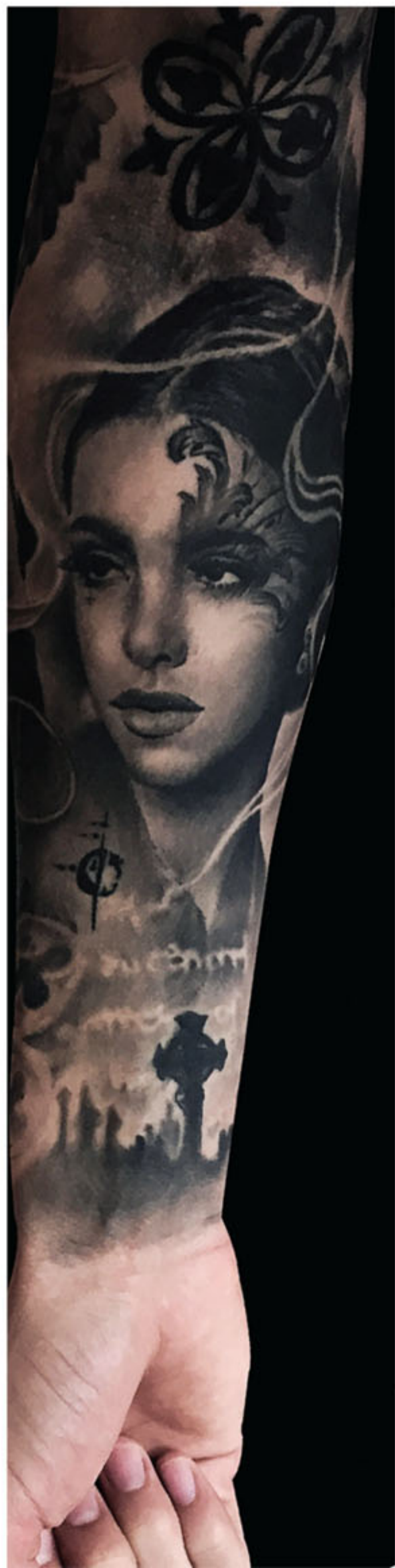
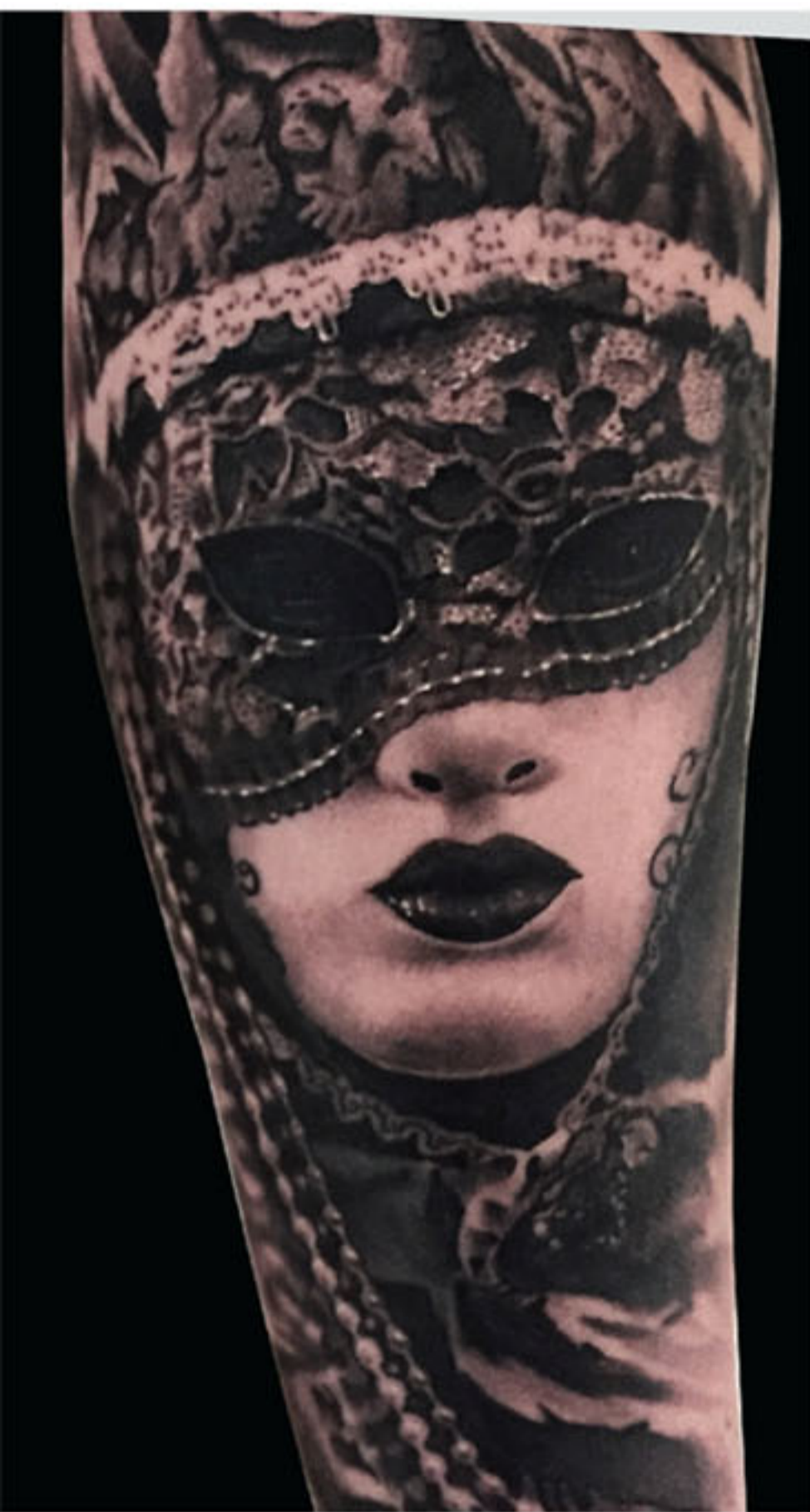
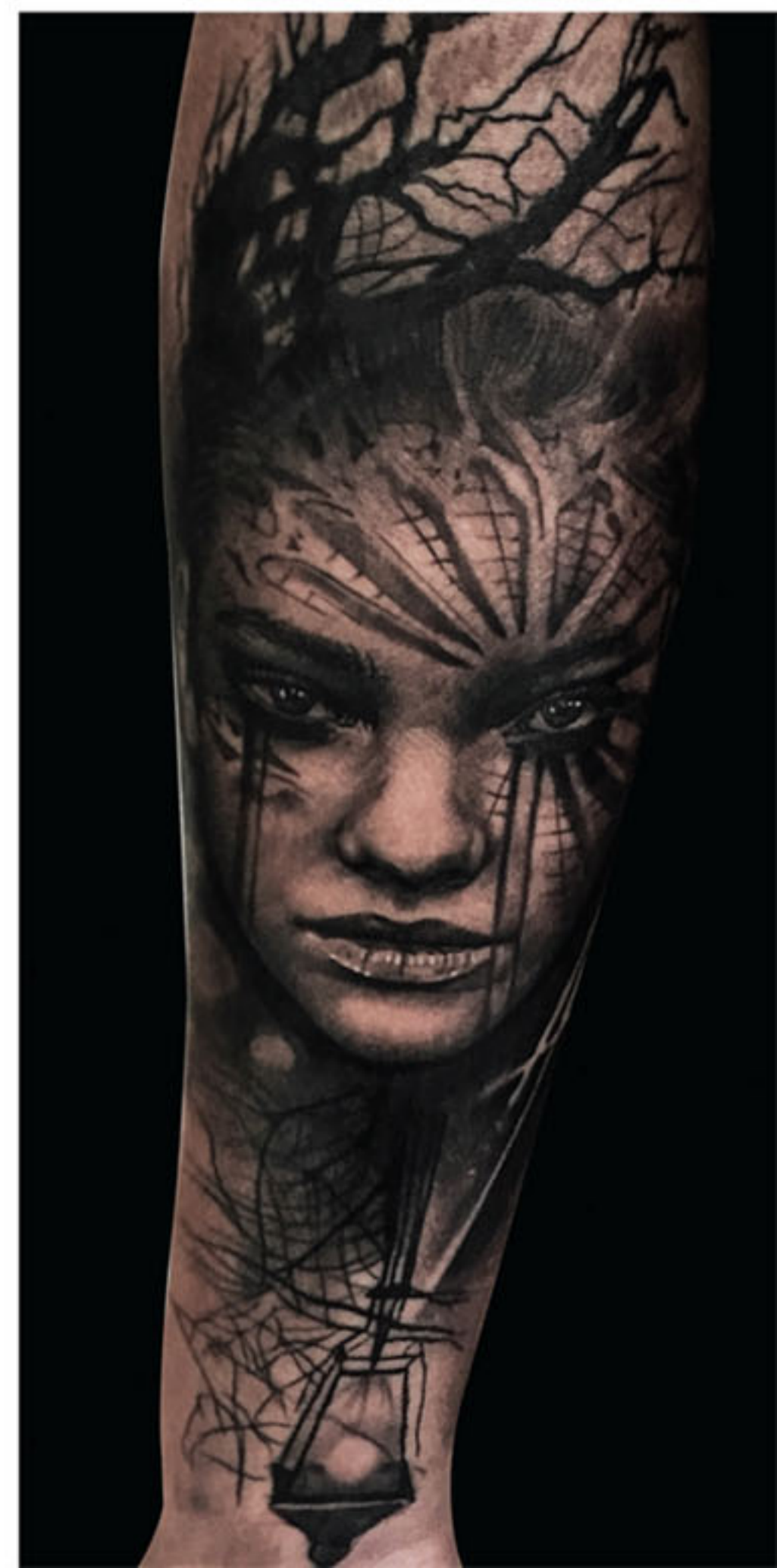
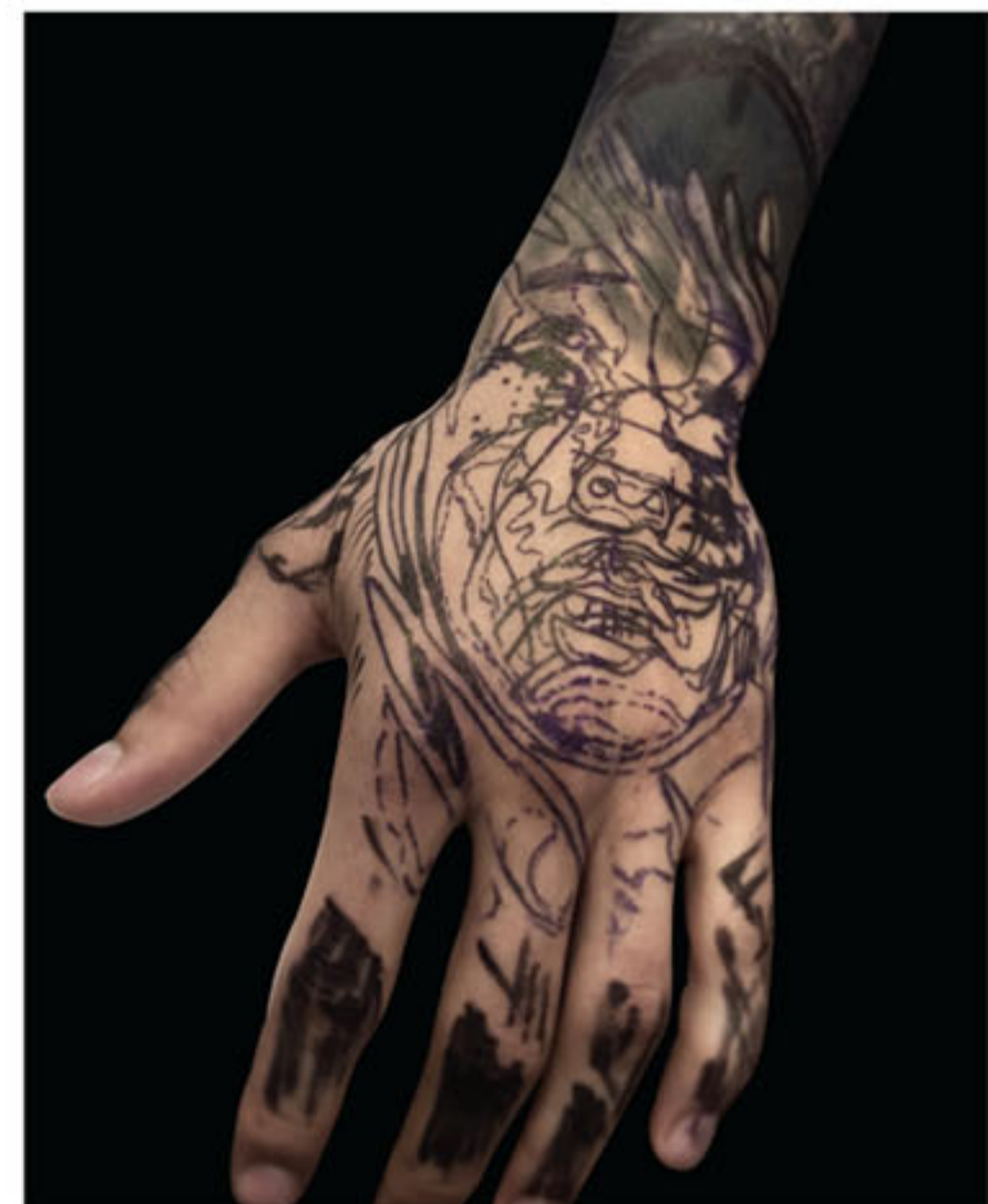
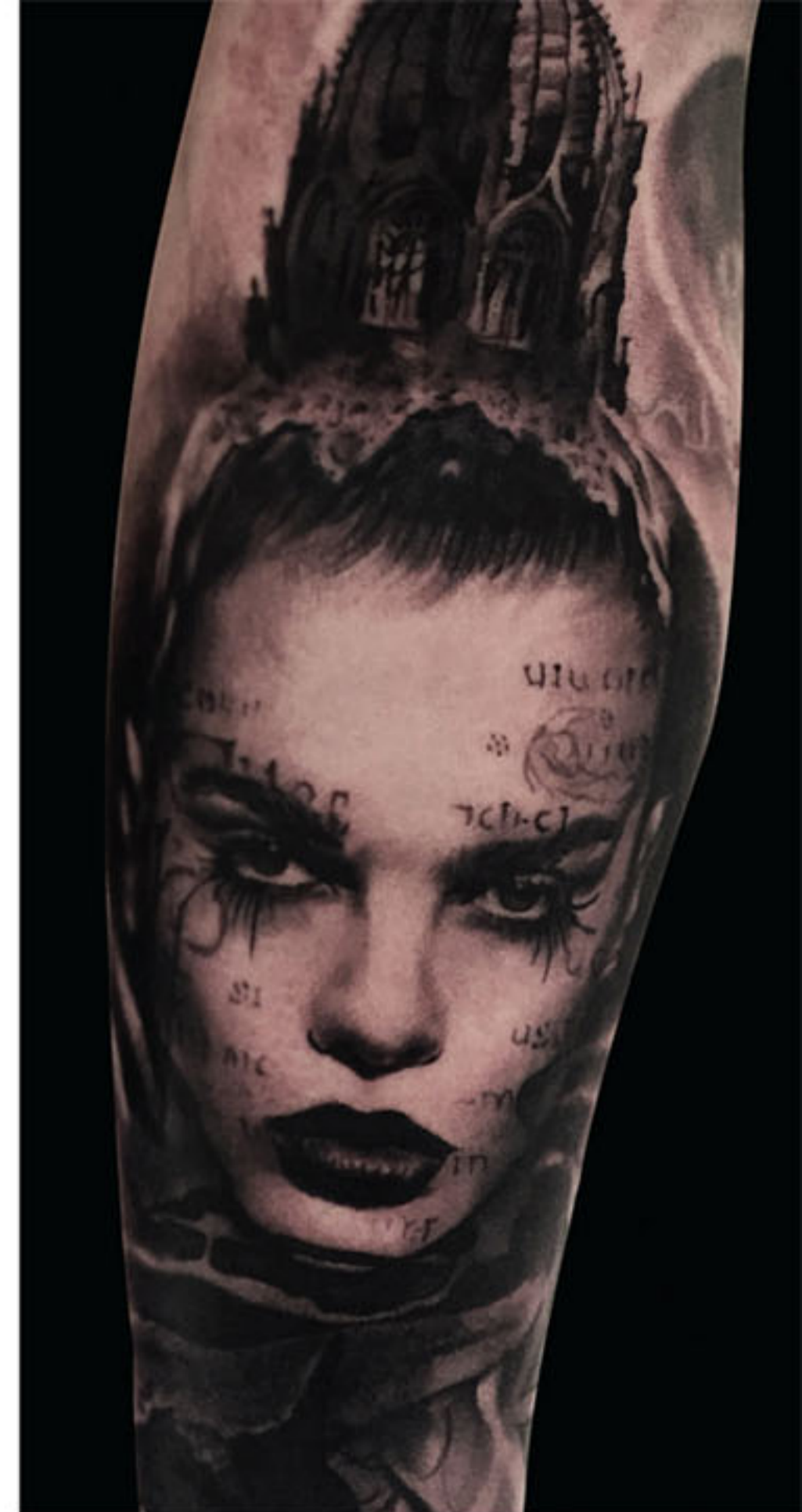
FOLLOW: @MARKWOSGERAU

WHAT TYPES OF SUBJECTS EXCITE YOU? I love to do cat-like animals. The texture excites me with the amount of hair structures, and other details to find in them. I love doing powerful female faces with a lot of expressionism, masks or geometric patterns. Everything that has a touch of dark romance and mystique.

WHERE DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION? I find inspiration in so many places, and I think to develop as an artist inspiration is one of the most important things to think about. Just as important as contrast, technique, compositions and so on. I get inspired by Gothic architecture, nature, other artists, Pinterest, photographs, books, Michelin chefs (specially those on *Chefs Table* by Netflix, they are incredible and so inspiring). I love traveling, seeing cultures, taking photos in cathedrals, eating great food, all these things allow me to distance myself from my work and it creates moments for creativity.

WHAT OTHER PROJECTS ARE YOU WORKING ON? I love sculptures, and they are a big part of my style. It can be really hard to find good references, so I got myself some great camera equipment and have been working on several volumes of sculpture reference books. Check out my Instagram for more information and photos.

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Tattoo Art by Jess Yen



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WHAT IS IT LIKE FOR MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TO HAVE SEEN YOUR WIFE'S BUTT? It was amazing for the design we put together, in the little town of Reading, Berkshire, to have even reached worldwide. For all of the millions of people that have seen it, I am the only one to be able to grab it, and that feels even better!

WHAT IS THE NUMBER ONE MISCONCEPTION ABOUT GEOMETRIC WORK? The biggest misconception I've come up against is that it originated from a hippy subculture and that it shouldn't be attempted to be practiced by anyone else in the normal mainstream tattooing world. Even going as far as being called a tourist in this style early on and now I have some of the most popular pieces of the year circulating.

DO YOU THINK EVERY TATTOO HAS TO HAVE A MEANING? No, I do not, but I do believe it should have a purpose. Placement is my trademark, I love symmetry and balance. From shaping the top of a man's shoulders to look more masculine to placing a tattoo lower on a woman's neck to make it look more feminine and supple, every part of the placement of the design is taken into consideration to make the very best out of that client's body shape. Tailoring the design to them, with every aspect serving a purpose. Taking the design wider on the shoulders and narrower at the smallest part of the back on a male helps resemble a wider, stronger frame. Lowering a tattoo on the curve of a woman's breast to compliment and accentuate the sizing and sometimes correct it's balance to help with an issue which attacked self-confidence. Every part is thought about and every part serves a purpose.

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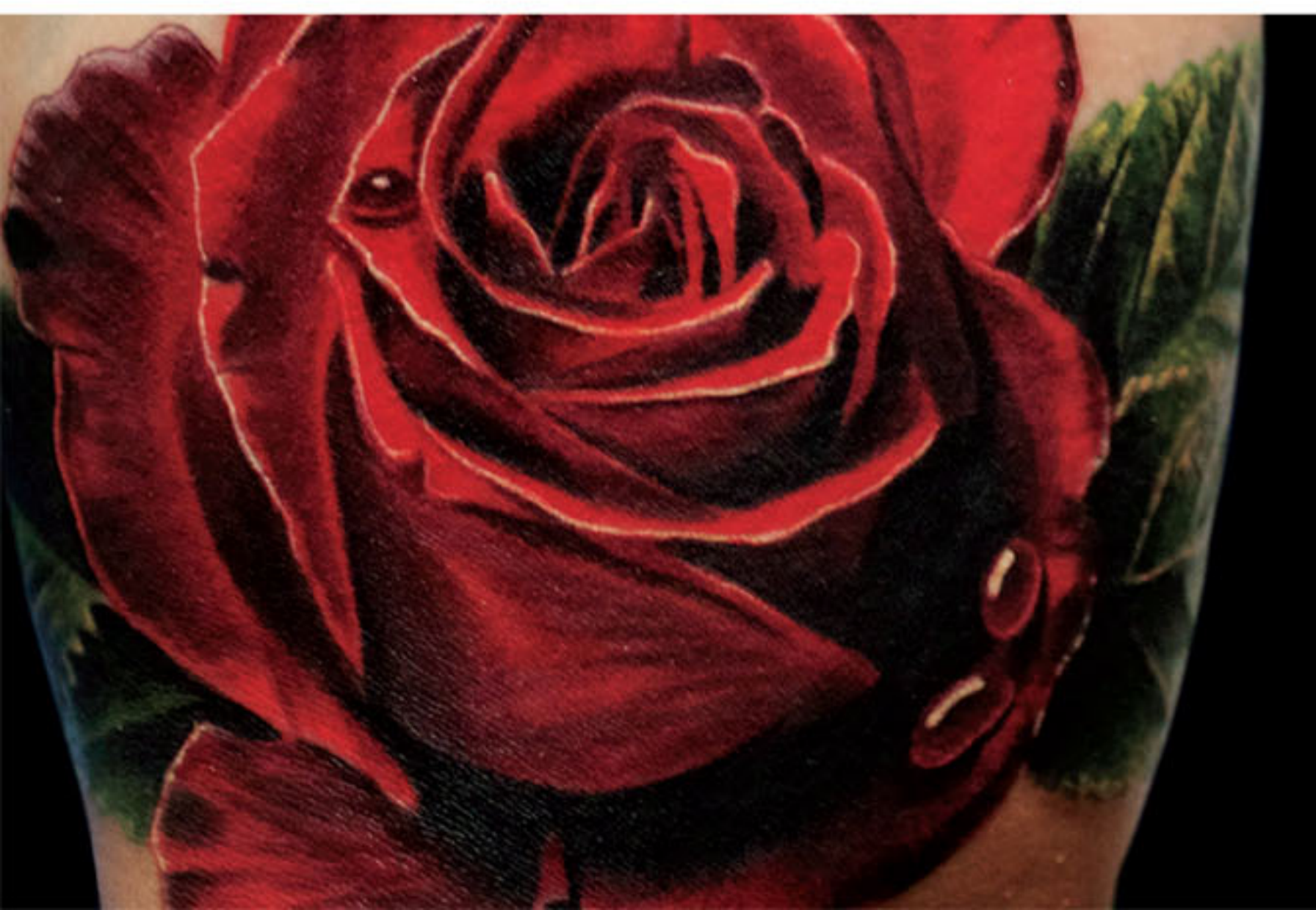
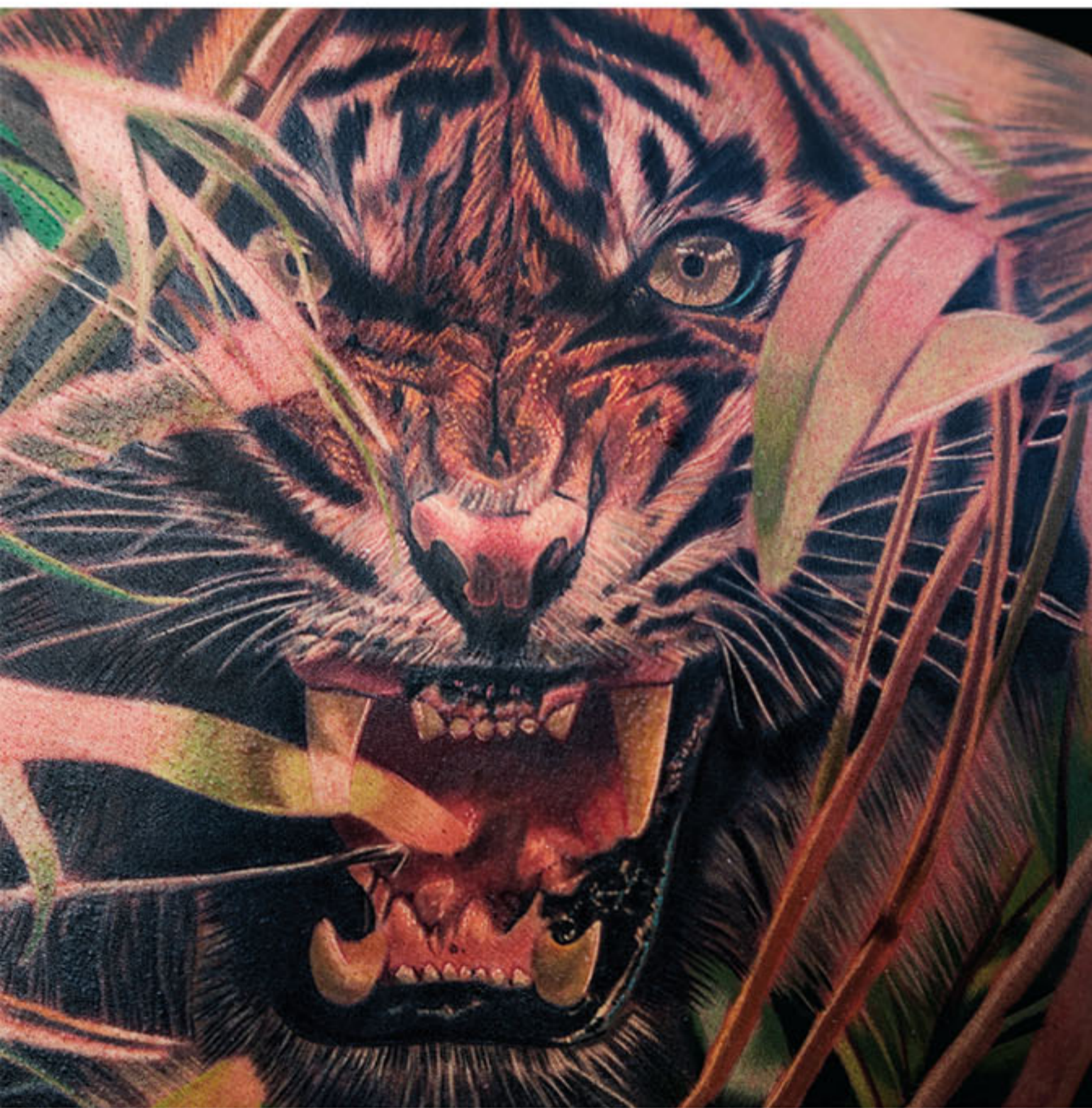


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VIC VIVID

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WHAT YEAR DID YOU START TATTOOING? I started tattooing in 2009.

HOW DID YOU GET INTO TATTOOING? Tattooing was something I never thought I would be doing. From middle school all the way through college I attended magnet art school. In 2008, I graduated college with a Bachelor's Degree in Automotive Design but, unfortunately, the industry took an economical hit that year which made it difficult to find employment. I stumbled into tattooing at that point. Some things really are a blessing in disguise

WHAT LED YOU TO WORK PRIMARILY IN COLOR? I've always been fascinated with color and its application because it allows me to explore value, tonality, hues, and saturation.

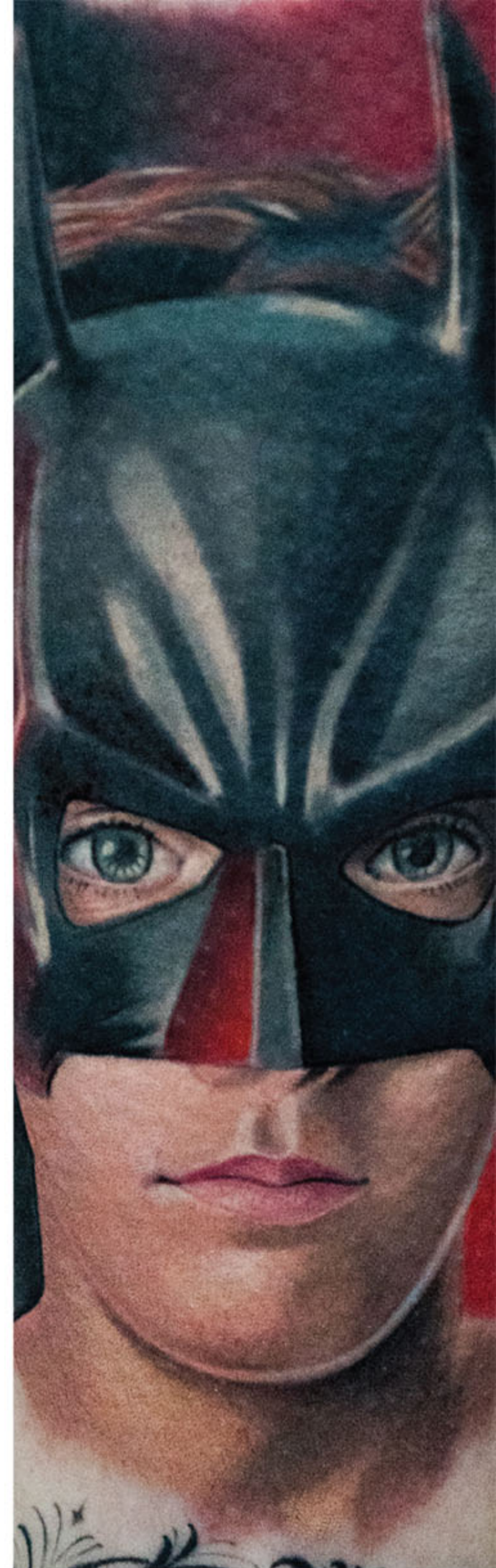
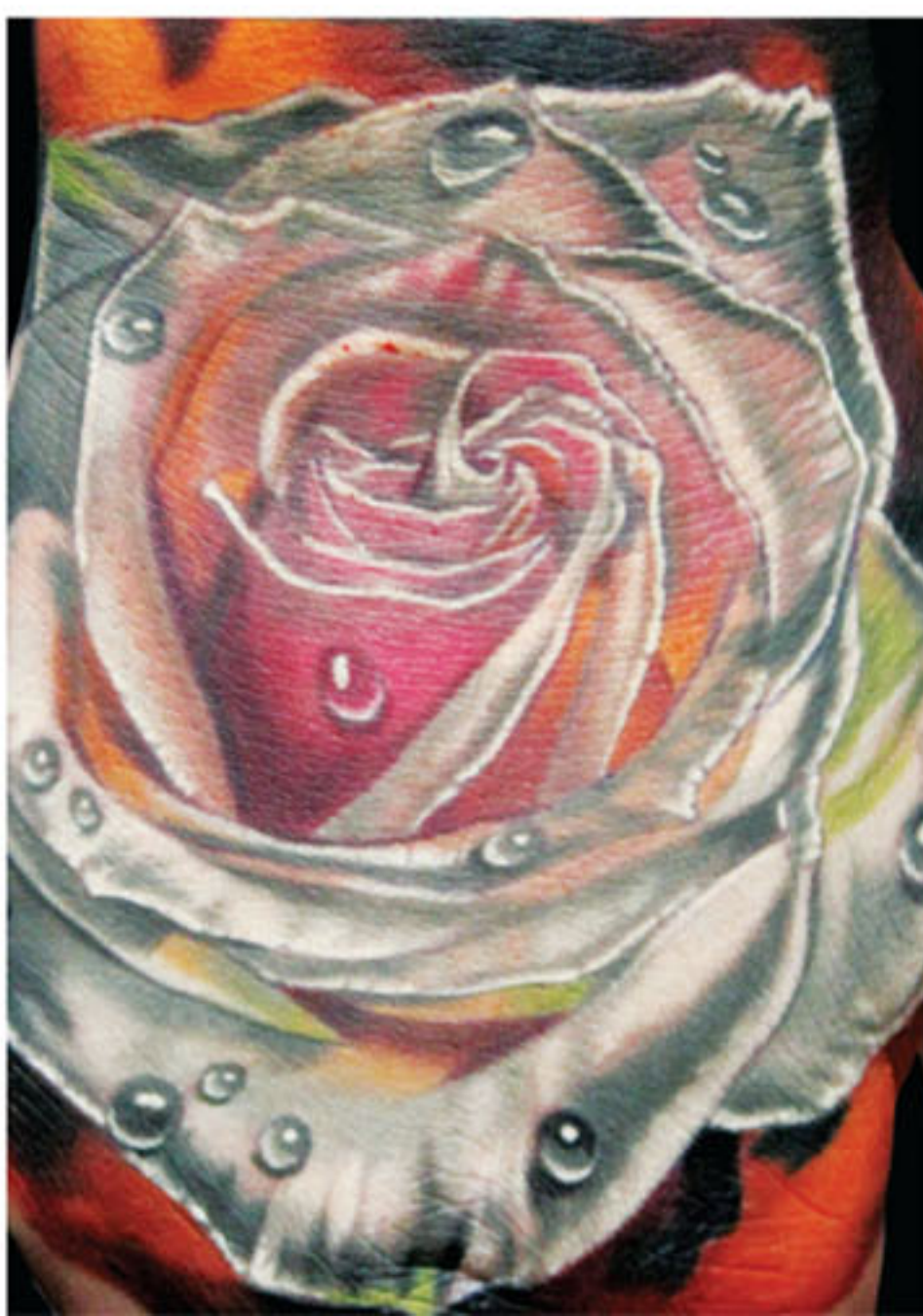
OTHER THAN THE OBVIOUS COLOR CHOICES HOW DOES THE TONE OF SUBJECT MATTER CHANGE YOUR APPROACH WHILE CREATING A TATTOO? The tone of the subject doesn't change my approach. Whether it's a rose, a portrait or a toy, tattooing to me is about focusing without rushing.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU AS AN ARTIST? I grasp inspiration from life, nature, creation, evolution and death.

WHAT TATTOO ARTISTS DO YOU ADMIRE MOST? Off the top of my head I would say Dmitry Samohin, Phil Garcia and Nikko Hurtado.

WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM OTHER ARTISTS? Art is in the eye of the beholder. Artists interpret imagery differently, what they choose to bring into focus in their art is what makes everyone of us individual. I don't cut corners—my focus is on the details.

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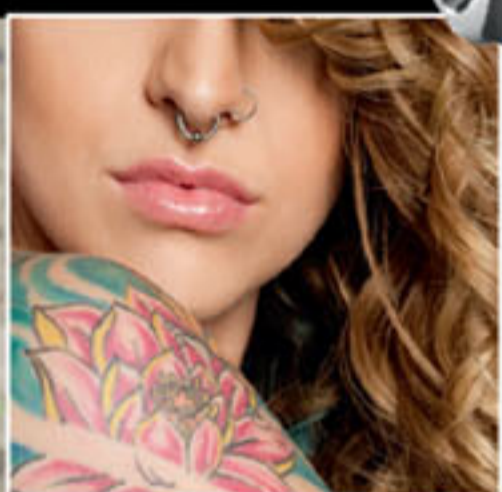
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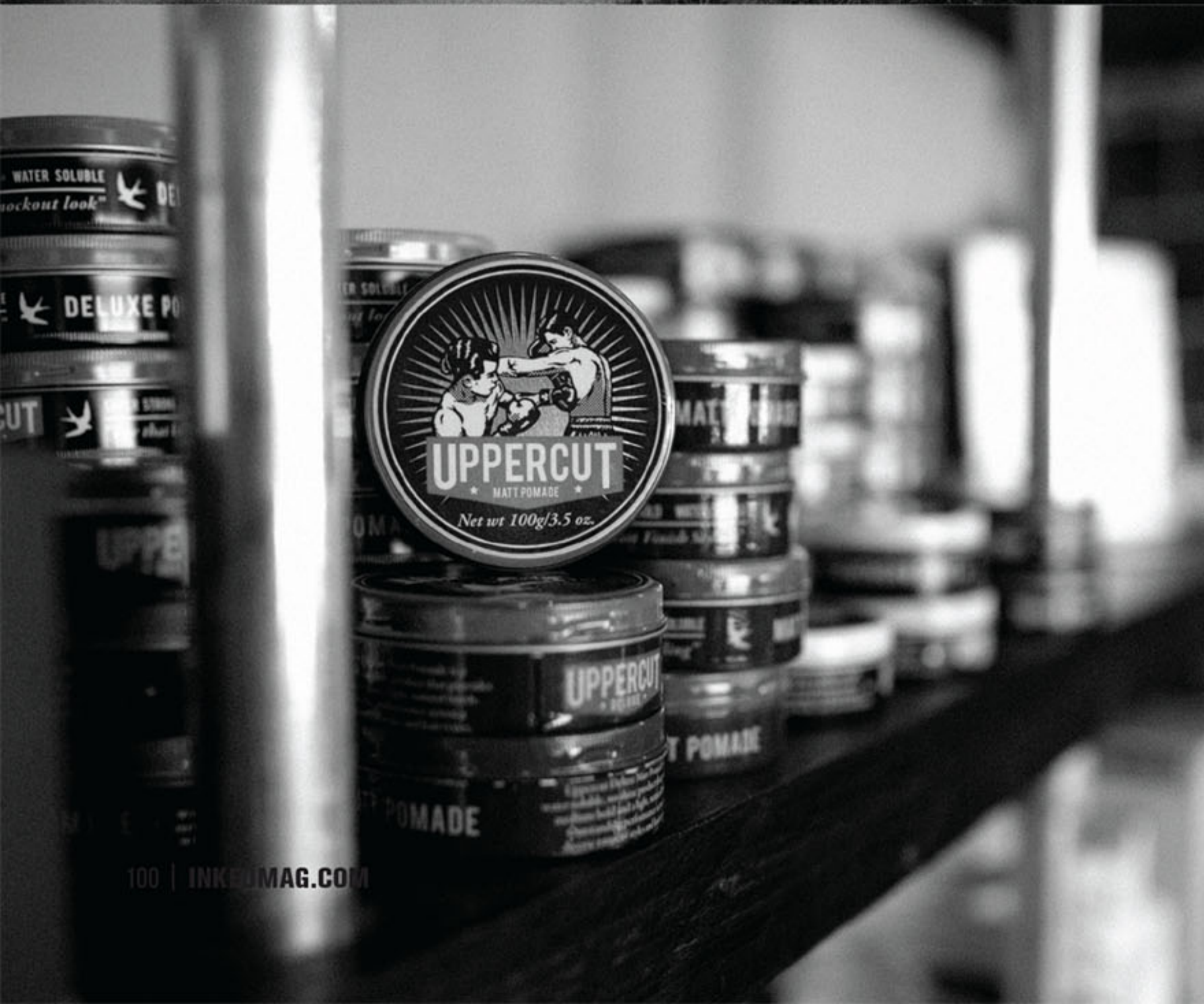
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