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Model: Jenn Taiowa, photographed by Richie Bulldog in NYC

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When surrounded by Playmates at *Playboy's* 25th Anniversary, my old boss Hugh M. Hefner told them, "Without you, I would be publishing a literary magazine." Those words aren't lost on me as we put together this Inked Girls issue of *Inked*. Without you wonderful tattooed women we would be publishing a tattoo art magazine.

As *Playboy* has returned to embracing their identity and brought nudity back to their pages, we have decided to increase the amount of models in this issue and skin on our new platform. Introducing *IsMyGirl.com*. This is our new website where you can see more of your favorite girls. As you can see across our pages, websites and social media networks we often dangle over the line of NSFW. We grew increasingly frustrated over censorship and created *IsMyGirl.com* so you can see photos too hot for the newsstand and Instagram as well as interact directly with the women of your dreams. To celebrate the *IsMyGirl.com* community, and give you a taste of pics to come, Angrymoon (3) shot Alesandra Nicole and Dallas while Jordyn Ryder (4) of our Facebook feed's wildly popular "Mondays with Jordyn" pens a piece about how it feels to be the girl in front of the webcam in *#Unfiltered*.

Another woman you will be hearing from, in her own words, is the incredible Ryan Ashley Malarkey—*Ink Master's* first female champion! She sat down with Devon Preston (2) to talk about the taping, her art and the empowerment of women in the tattoo industry. We have become mesmerized by a series of graffiti murals that are an amalgam of female faces, the woman behind them, Elle (6) also presents her powerful pieces.

Great art has the potency to move and inspire. With that power, Jon Palestini felt great responsibility. Palestini is the founder of the Painted Prosthetic Project, an initiative that puts old plastic appendages into the hands of artists, after which their creations are auctioned off with proceeds going to wounded and homeless veterans. Our favorites were photographed by Evan Kaucher (1). Our Icon this issue is Jess Yen, one of the foremost living tebori (Japanese hand-poke) tattoo artists. Jeff Forney (5) photographed Yen while he spoke about the importance of maintaining the classic art form. Akin to tebori, we at *Inked* appreciate the timeless expression of pin-up. In every issue we feature a new classic cheesecake photo by Robert Alvarado (7), this time we paired him with fan-favorite Riley Jensen for a gorgeous five-page feature.

We had more features slated for this issue than we had room. I internally wrestled with running a mildly uplifting profile of another subject instead of Riley's pictorial in this installment—my thinking was that even though her feature was superior, and this is the Inked Girls issue, maybe we had too many sexy shoots. But then while at the Golden State Tattoo Expo I met Ellie Rayne and Yeonji, two models who are now on *IsMyGirl.com*, and they explained how *Inked* has inspired them. "It is the goal of a tattooed women to get into *Inked*," Ellie said. "You made a lot of the tattooed world more beautiful, accepted as elegant and classy." "You make it easier for us to be ourselves," Yeonji added. "As a tattooed woman in 2017 *Inked* helps me feel powerful."

Rocky Rakovic
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LETTERS



YOU CAN SHOP FOR EASTER ON YOUR KEISTER. Every day letters, e-mails, direct messages and smoke signals (though those may be the dudes a few floors below us toking on the fire escape) pour into our office asking where people can get Inked swag. While we aren't in stores (though, when's the last time you stepped foot in a mall?) you can cop all things Inked at InkedShop.com. There we have clothes for anyone from your girlfriend to your best friend (they better not be the same people, those whose wedding vows include "I'm marrying my best friend!" make us sick) to your cool baby niece—if you haven't seen our tattooed onesies get ready to lose your tough guy persona and melt for a minute.

EMILY SHEPHARD

Henry Hawkes This is freaking awesome

Jo Trinidad You're perfect

Charlie Baltimore It is high time that Inked celebrated the true art of burlesque. There are so many so-called "burlesque dancers" who are nothing but women who think it would be fun to strip in front of a crowd. Emily Shephard is a true burlesque artist and I applaud you and she.

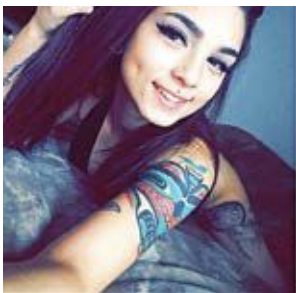
RAQUEL REED

Dama Severus From my eyes, you are perfect

Abbey SoanSo Just so you know, your boobs are my boob goals and I am showing them to my plastic surgeon when I tell him what I want

Raquel Reed I heard two women in the beauty store yesterday say, "Hey I know her, yeh it's the girl with the feather fans." Ha, ha, that's apparently what I'm known as now

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TATTOO OF THE MONTH



BY: ALEXIS GINEZ @ALEXISDEDICATEDART

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MY FAVORITE

INK

photos by Brad Kingett





Farrah DeMorte

My favorite tattoo is my back piece. I look at it every day before and after the shower. I've always been drawn to back pieces. It's the largest uninterrupted canvas on the body in my opinion. Even though I'm tall, I have a small frame, so certain pieces wouldn't work in many places on my body. This was one location I could really do something and not lose translation...and I wanted to cover up my tramp stamp from the late '90s!

My back was done piece-by-piece. Mike Oliver and I would discuss our next option while working on the current piece. It started with Boris Karloff and Elsa Lanchester (Frankenstein and Bride); then the *Psycho* house, "Mother" and Janet Lee; then Edgar Allan Poe, followed by Bela Lugosi and Helen Chandler (Dracula and Mina).

My favorite part would have to be the Poe piece. I would say my favorite story of his is probably "Hop-Frog." It's the ultimate story of revenge against a bully king. I suppose it resonates with me since I had a brief portion of my youth when I was teased and bullied by "the cool kids." And in this story, he wins with death and embarrassment for his enemies!

My other favorite tattoos are my *Evil Dead* piece "groovy" with the chain saw and shot gun on my belly, my forearm is the Lament Configuration (the puzzle box from *Hellraiser*). Those and my Bride of Frankenstein thigh piece were all done by Shane Munce and I love my Lady Death thigh piece by Lara Slater.

I think you can see my love for horror and the macabre. I express myself through modeling and my cover band called Mischief Night. But if there was ever an opportunity to be in a scary movie I would love to be Lady Pinhead!

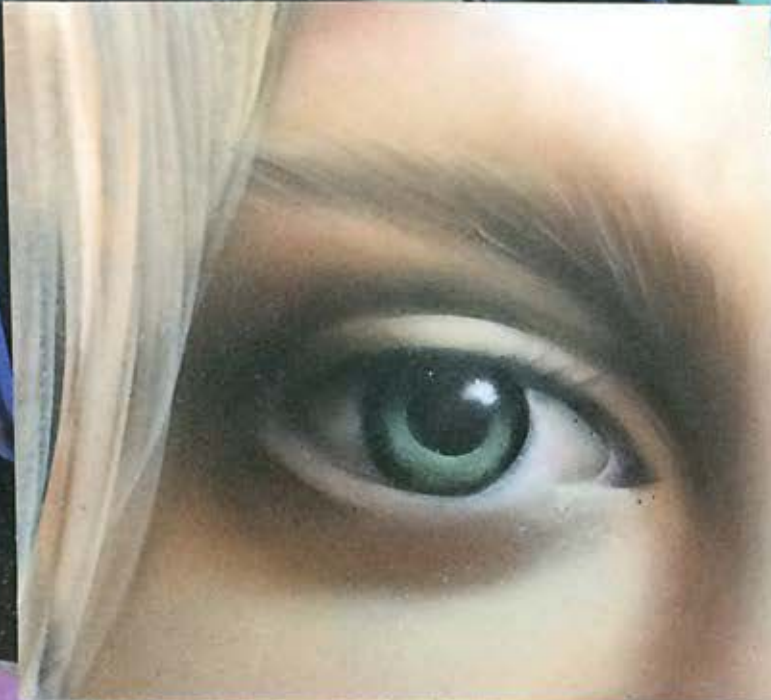
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ELLE OF AN ARTIST

What's a nice girl like Elle doing in a place like this—six stories above the ground, at 2 AM, with a five-gallon paint can at her feet, hanging over the side of a tenement building, holding a paint roller in the roughest part of

"I decided to scale a billboard in Brooklyn. I knew it was tall, but I didn't realize quite how tall it was until I was on it," Elle recounts. "I had to climb an existing ladder—which was all rusty, and missing screws. The building next to me was 6 stories tall and the billboard went up above that. It was absolutely terrifying. After reaching the top I just lay there for about 15 minutes with my eyes closed. I finally got my breath back enough to stand and paint the roller piece. I don't know that I'll ever try to climb anything that high again... not worth dying for."

Like so many artists who cut their artistic teeth creating street art, Elle honed her craft without any formal art education. "My real training is still happening. I'm always exploring [she was born in the Bay area but now splits her time between Brooklyn, Miami, Malaysia, Germany, London, Santo Domingo, Melbourne, Canada and countless other locales in between] and experimenting...with my own work and checking out the work of other artists. I love viewing the classics as just as much as scanning the streets for a great piece of graffiti. If I see a really great spot like a bus shelter that would look dope with art in it, then I'm motivated to put up something."

She is conscious not only of her surroundings but the community landscape. "I like to incorporate the local culture into the work—this way I feel much less like an intruder," Elle says. "In Penang, Malaysia I was meeting all of these beautiful people from so many different cultures. I had expected there to be more fusion between the groups. However, I was told that they were all very separate and there were rifts between some. With so many rich cultures and religions living in such close proximity to each other—Indian, Thai, Muslim, Chinese and more—I decided the mural to be a flock of birds, each depicting their respective religion: the crane, the peacock, the phoenix etc. The birds were flying together across the wall in harmony."

When it comes to tattoos, Elle is a minimalist at heart and explains the who, what and where of her body art. "I have only stick and poke tattoos. One is by my friend and artist Gaia. I have one on my wrist that was tattooed by my four siblings. We all hiked up to Machu Picchu together and sat under the Southern Cross star formation while we tattooed each other. I have a small Basquiat crown that my friend Cat King tattooed on me. It's the symbol for our crew called G'army (Girly Army). The G'army represents a bunch of kick ass women from all over the globe. I also have a tattoo of an eye on the side of my hand that my sister and I tattooed on each other. Lastly, a few hurricane rings on my fingers that I have given myself, and my friend Ayo gave me, during hurricanes' Sandy and Irene. "

The future is certainly bright for Elle and in typical Elle style she sums up her immediate future like this: "Who knows. I'm sort of falling in love with Melbourne right now, so perhaps I stay out here for a bit. I'll just continue making things and see what happens! That vagabond lifestyle." —Paul Gambino







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Model: Miss Kitty

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WHAT DO CUSTOMERS SAY ABOUT YOUR TATTOOS?

My tattoos are always a subject of conversation. Luckily for me, our clientele is very open-minded, so the conversations tend to lean towards the complimentary and collaborative. There is always the threat of the ever-obnoxious arm-grabber who sees your tattoos as more of a cry for attention, but that's just the price we pay for self expression, no?

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE PIECE?

My favorite piece was taken from the Marseilles tarot deck. It's La Force. La Force is a woman holding a lion in submission. Though instead of her holding the lion with physical strength, she has tamed him through her inner strength and poise. Jodorowsky has a great interpretation where a lot of her strength comes from her sexuality and her confidence in it. My good friend Benjamin Haft from Allied Tattoo in Brooklyn put her on my hip. She's sexy and strong and I definitely identify with that.

WHAT IS IT LIKE MANAGING A BAR?

I absolutely adore bar management. It adds a lot of creative freedom. Managing can be intense and stressful, but I luckily have the best damn staff working with me, so I get to focus on the fun stuff, like recipes, events, DJ nights, and I've been holding lots of benefits at the bar lately as well.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE SONGS ON THE JUKEBOX?

We unfortunately had to retire the jukebox (RIP) and made way for a vintage photo booth. But with our staff's impeccable taste in music, no one really missed it. I pay homage to my favorite songs and artists through my cocktail names. Right now we have the Dream Baby Dream, in homage to the late great Alan Vega and Suicide, and the Crazy Rhythms, in homage to The Feelies. back represents strength.





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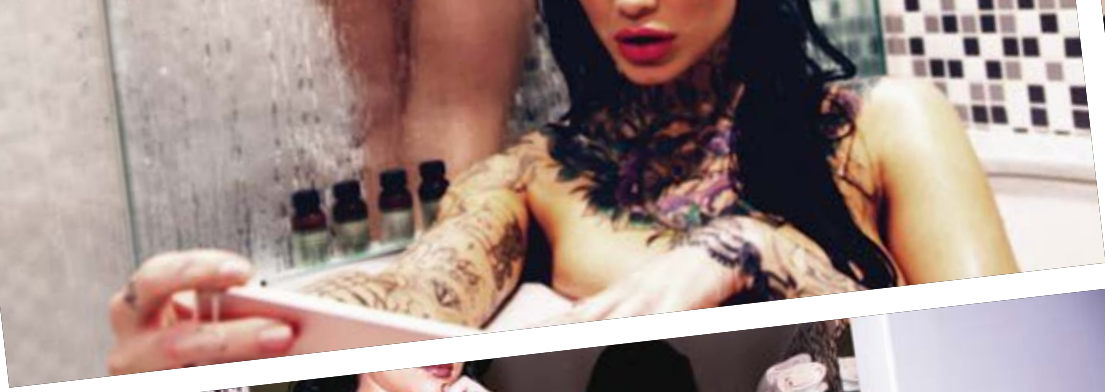
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TWO

Alessandra Nicole and Dallas invite you to be a fly-on-the-wall in their bedroom
Photos by ANGRYMOON Makeup by Amanda Thesen using Mac Cosmetics Hair by Bina Babic

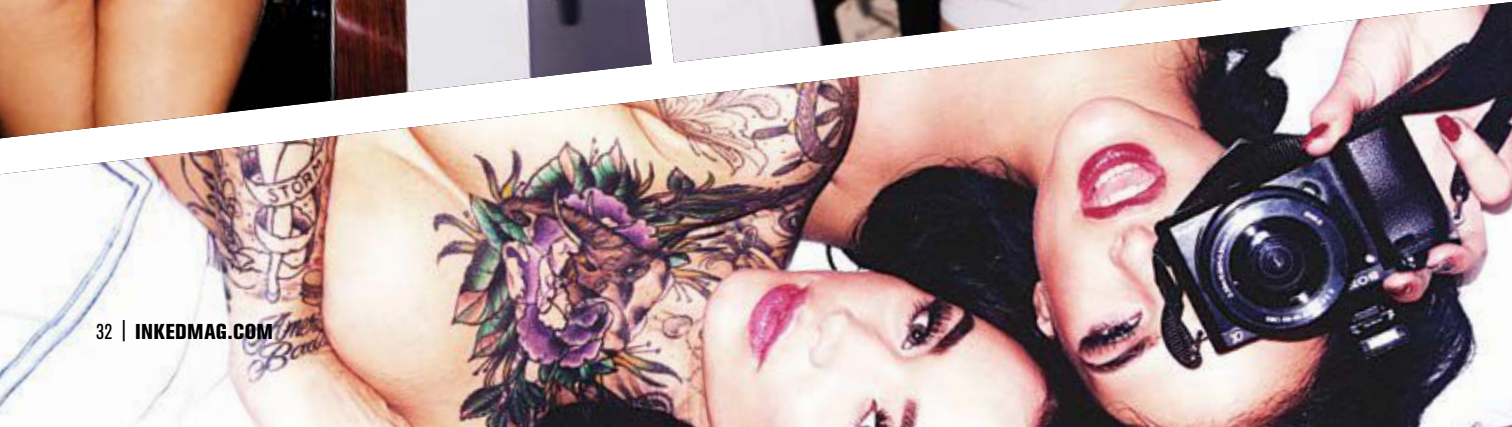
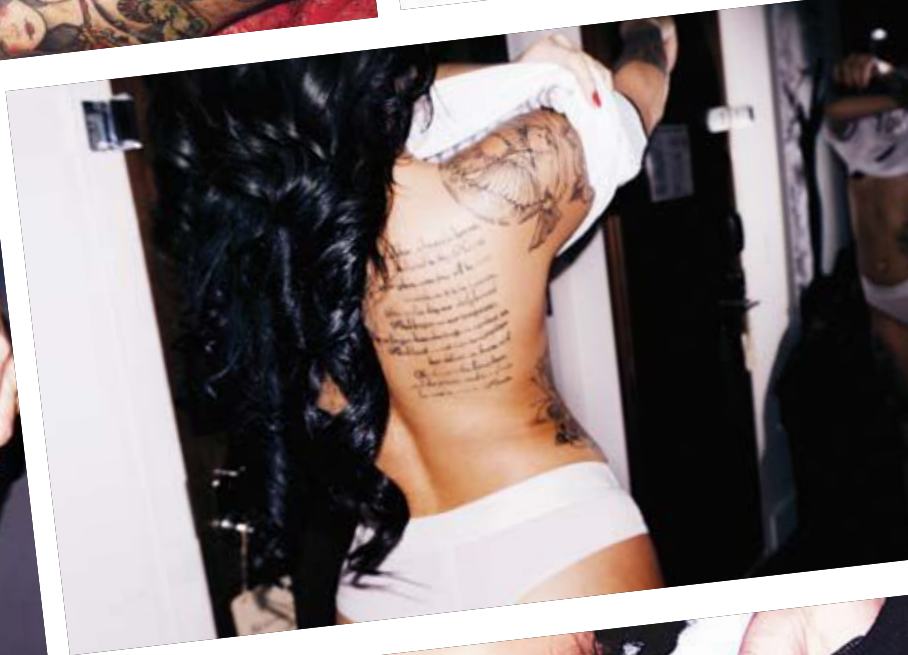












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THE PAINTED PROSTHETIC PROJECT

photos by Evan Kaucher





The Painted Prosthetic Project is an incredible endeavor that displays talent, altruism and quirk. The creativity seen across the following pages is up for auction online, go to the paintedprostheticproject.com to bid on them and more with proceeds going to help "veterans and homeless veterans get back on their feet!"

Jon Palestini, who founded the project, gave a host of talented artists a prosthetic, six months and free reign. Here is the origin story: "I collect oddities and curiosities, and knowing that, I would have clients and friends give me old prosthetics they found as tips and gifts. Prosthetic legs aren't really an oddity to me, and it got to the point when I had more than 10 sitting around my house that the idea of using them in art appealed to me.

"I love using nontraditional materials in my own art, and knowing how expensive getting a basic image printed on a prosthetic can be, I thought it would be cool to see what different artists would do with the prosthetic.

"Additionally, prosthetics count as prescriptions and can't be used by someone else in the USA. Newer ones can be donated to help people abroad, but older ones are usually just thrown out. So instead of them being trash, I figured we would use them to raise awareness and to help a good cause."

The art project resonates with us on many levels, and we are drawn to the execution of art onto contours of the body. "Apart from the legs that are more sculptural, I can't think of a leg that wouldn't also be a great tattoo," Palestini says. "Part of the acceptance of being an amputee and adjusting to prosthetics is making it represent you, and not be so sterile. I would wear so many of these legs if I could!"



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Model is wearing :
E392 Nocti-Dame Ear-Wrap
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Model : Elisanth - www.elisanth.com
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GHOST IN THE SHELL

Finally, 22 years after the critically acclaimed Japanese anime flick came to be, we're getting a high-budget, Hollywood adaptation starring Scarlett Johansson the ass-kicking female role. She plays The Major—a unique human-cyborg created to lead Section 9, which is an elite task force that

takes down criminals of the worst kind. Rupert Sanders (*Snow White and the Huntsman*) directs this stylish looking sci-fi/action flick that seems to have dazzling visuals and fight sequences all set in a futuristic world that reminds us of the sets from *Blade Runner*. We can't wait. —*Gil Macias*

MAJOR LASER

After spending years in the visual effects world a husband and wife quit the smoke and mirror to burn designs into wood. Spitfire Labs is on their shingle in Brooklyn where they laser-etch skateboards, plaques and wooden replica NES controllers and cartridges. As you may infer from the fact that they pay homage to video gaming from the '80s their visuals range from *Star Wars* and *Day of the Dead* to Ganesh and *Back to the Future*.



NOW THIS IS ONE COOL BOSS

Red Robin's CEO Denny Marie Post is smiling because her managers stepped up to her challenge. She told them that if they improved their overall Net Promoter Score she would get a burger tattooed on her body. A woman of her word, when the progress came in she went to Hart & Huntington Tattoo Co. in Las Vegas and had Jesse Mora ink the burger. Will next quarter earn a full sleeve?



KONG IS KING

The producers of the recent American *Godzilla* reimagining are reviving yet another classic monster property—the one featuring a beloved giant ape. Yep, *King Kong* is getting a reboot, and it has no ties whatsoever to the over-bloated 2005 Peter Jackson remake. In *Kong: Skull Island* a team of scientists, soldiers and adventurers explore the mythical Skull Island and encounter a plethora of gargantuan creatures, including the titular Ape-God. The star-studded cast includes: Tom Hiddleston, Samuel L. Jackson, John Goodman, Tony Kezzell, Brie Larson, and John C. Reilly to name a few. Rumor has it that this is set in the same cinematic universe as the recent *Godzilla* flick, paving the way for the two to eventually duke it out. —*G.M.*

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Paint the Town Red

We all see our cities in different lights. For Paolo Pettigiani he envisions New York City in infrared. "I am fascinated by NYC and since I arrived here I fell in love with Central Park, it's majesty and the contrast of nature included in the famous Big Apple's skyscrapers, so I decided to create this new personal project, to highlight this contrast using the infrared photography inviting viewers into a new world unseen," he says. "Plants that have chlorophyll, such as grass, leaves and trees, strongly reflect this invisible infrared light. The Chlorophyll is reflected by plant for the 20% on the green, visible to the human eyes, the other 80% is reflected on the infrared spectrum that we can't see." Check out more city sights from the #INFRAREDNYC collection at paolopettigiani.com.

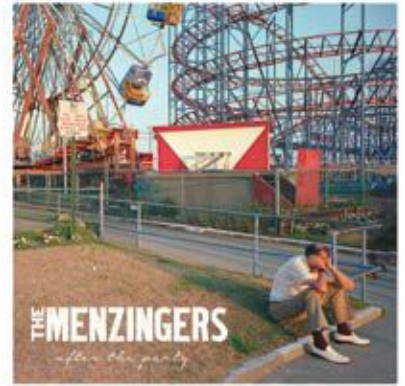
DISNEY SHOWS SOME INK

It's pretty rare that we here at Inked go nuts for animated family movies, but damn, Disney's *Moana* features some of the most stunning animation we've seen in years and it has bucket loads of heart, laughs, action and even tattoos. Sporting authentic Polynesian designs that Disney animators thoroughly researched for the movie, the cocky Demigod Maui (voiced by Dwayne Johnson) is Disney's first fully-tattooed lead hero. His "mini-Maui" tattoo even comes to life, acting as a sidekick, and provides some comic relief. But no one brings more laughs than Heihei, Moana's dimwitted chicken. Get the Ultimate Collector's Edition 3D Blu-ray, available now. —G.M.



LOGAN'S NEW RUN

Hugh Jackman once again returns as the adamantium clawed mutant, in what's said to be his swansong as Wolverine. It's hard to believe he's played this guy 9 times since the first *X-Men* movie dropped in 2000—that's a whopping 17 years! Set in the future in what seems to be a loose adaptation of the "Old Man Logan" storyline from the comics, an aging Logan and sickly Professor Xavier (Patrick Stewart) are on the run and come to the aid of a mysterious young mutant. The Professor says to Logan, "She's like you. Very much like you." Could this be X-23? We will have to see. James Mangold (*The Wolverine*, *3:10 to Yuma*) directs. —G.M.



THE PLAYLIST BY JONAH BAYER

"AS WAS" Black Anvil

If you thought black metal didn't exist in NYC, this will prove otherwise.

"IMOGENE" Cory Branan

Our favorite Southern troubadour returns with another timeless track.

"CHALICE HYMNAL" Grails

Grails get trippy but keep it tuneful on this jazz-tinged, post-everything soundscape.

"BRUSH THE WILD" Grandaddy

It's been over a decade since their last release but you wouldn't know it judging by this fuzzed-out anthem.

"WITH YOU" Dave Hause

Hause bridges the gap between Lucero and the Loved Ones on this instantly infectious rocker.

"AN ANSWER FOR EVERYTHING" Tim Kasher

Cursive's frontman returns with this painfully honest, orchestrally tinged ballad.

"LOOKERS" The Menzingers

Philly pop-punkers craft an instant classic with this nostalgic slice of musical gold.

"INVISIBLE" Minus The Bear

Guitar tapping and sublime syncopation drive this dance-friendly indie rock jam.

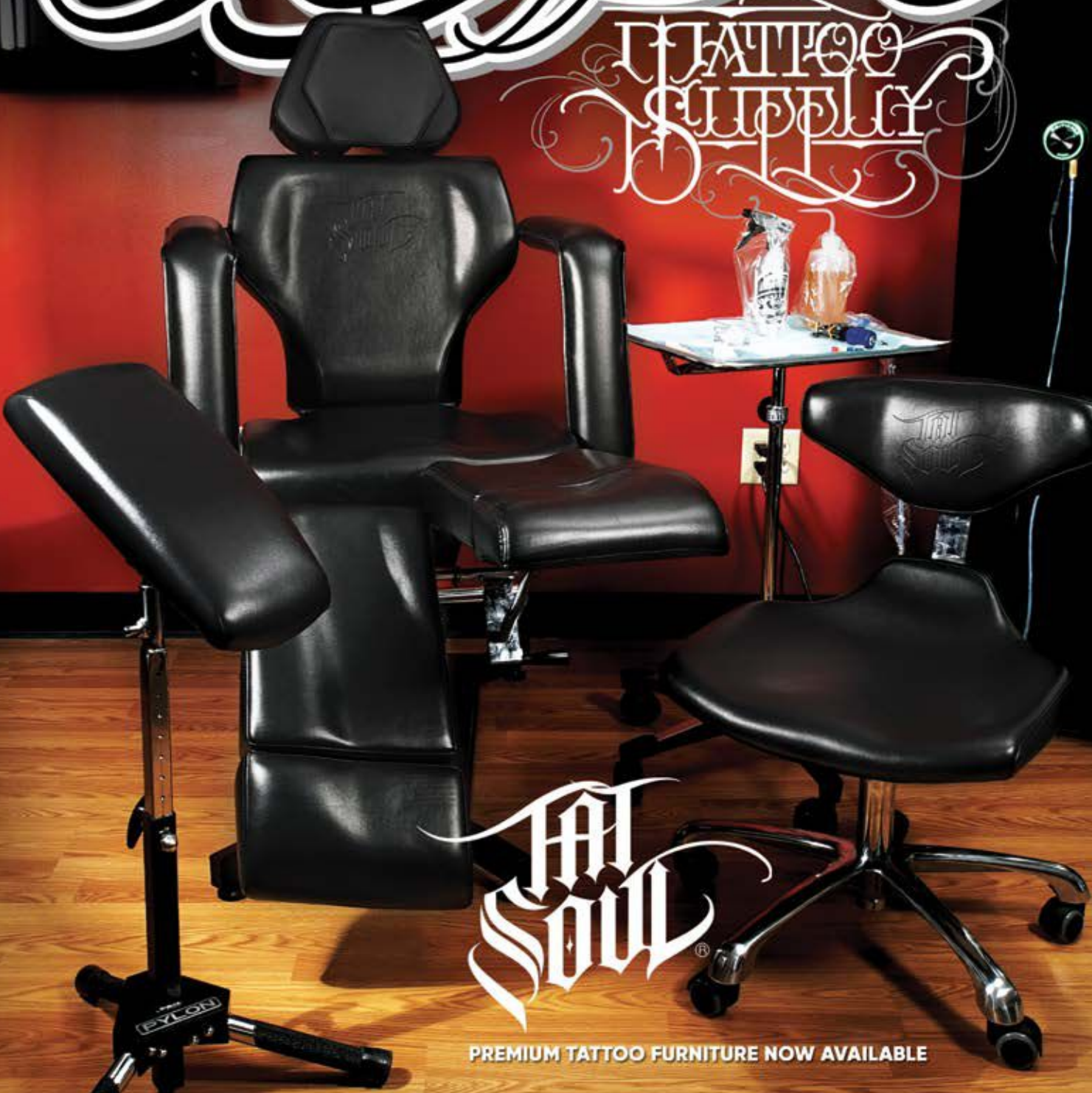
"WHOSE GOD?" Open City

Members of Paint It Black form another furious hardcore project that reminds us of the genre's eighties heyday.



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THE FATE OF THE FURIOUS

Universal's undying, box-office juggernaut franchise doesn't seem to be going away any time soon and it just seems to be getting bigger and bigger and now three newbies (including two Oscar winners) are joining in on the vehicular shenanigans. Charlize Theron, Hellen Mirren and Scott Eastwood join the ever growing cast which already includes: Vin Diesel, Dwayne Johnson, Jason Statham, Michelle Rodriguez, Tyrese Gibson, Chris "Ludacris" Bridges, and Kurt Russell. The team's world is disrupted when a mysterious woman (Theron in villain mode) seduces Dom (Diesel) into a world of crime and betrayal. F. Gary Gray (*Straight Outta Compton*) directs. —G.M.



WORST. HERO. EVER.

We are picturing Barbie's head to the right of this picture! Yes, Harley Quinn is one of the baddest bitches to ever hit the pages of comics, the screen and, this summer, collectors' shelves. This *Suicide* siren comes replete with her choker, satin jacket, "good night" bat, revolver and—of course—tattoos. Pre-order two from Mezco Toyz so you can keep one in the box and have one to make out with your Joker figures.



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.

I want to get my nipples pierced and I know you've had them done. Do the piercings increase the sensitivity or add anything to your sex life? —Sarah

They're purely decorative—at least in my experience. They look pretty kinky and they're fun to play with, so if that's what you have your heart set on I say go for it!

I have to travel a lot for work, sometimes for weeks at a time. Is it a good idea to get some sex toys for my wife for when I'm away? —Tony

Uh, yeah, if you want to be replaced. Kidding! I'm sure your wife has her own stash that you may not know about. If a woman wants toys to play with, she is going to go down to the toy store herself. It would be pretty sexy of you to leave her one without saying anything, though.

I'm a virgin and I'm planning on having sex with my boyfriend for the first time but I'm scared it will hurt. Do you have any advice to make our first time more enjoyable?

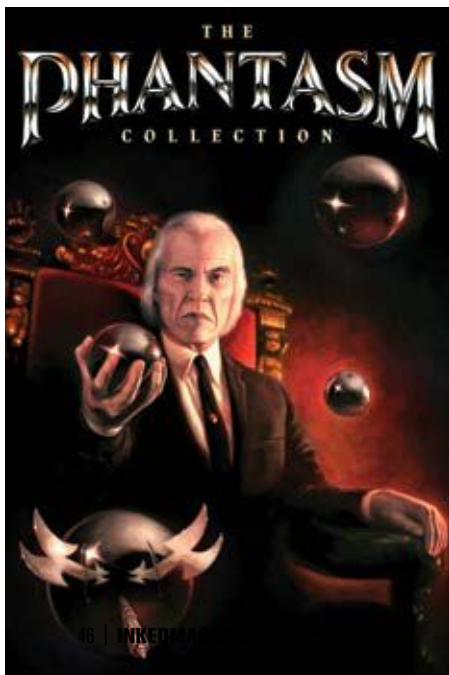
Assuming it will last more than 30 seconds, I don't think you have to worry about it. Sex with your partner gets better with time. You learn what you like and what they like with lots of practice.

My neighbor—a woman in her 40s and I'm 27—flirts with me when we cross paths. Is the age gap between us too big to try anything? —Michael

You mean you haven't earned your cougar badge yet? I think that between two consenting adults there's never anything wrong. And an experienced woman might even pack you a lunch after!

My mom is always trying to hook me up with girls and get me to settle down. I've gone on some awful dates. How do I get her to stop? —N

Ask your mom about one of her girlfriends next time she has one over and tell her to set you up. I think she will back off after that. Or you're in for one hell of an awkward date. Good luck!



MALEVOLENT

This bizarre horror franchise *Phantasm* spawned back in 1979 and is well known among horror fans for its iconic floating killer spheres that dominated the series' poster art. While the first two films were released theatrically, the franchise was kept alive during the '90s thanks to DVD and the passion and dedication of creator Don Coscarelli (*The Beastmaster*, *Bubba Ho-Tep*) who, after a long hiatus, finally gave fans the fifth and final film, *Ravager*, in 2016 (the only film in the series he did not direct). Well Go USA has, for the first time ever, nabbed the rights to every film of the series, and is bringing them together in this first ever 6-disc Blu-ray collection. —G.M.



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Riley Jensen
Photos by Robert Alvarado







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#NOFILTER

JORDYN RYDER AT HER MOST RAW. THE WOMAN WHO HOSTS INKED MAGAZINE'S WILDLY POPULAR FACEBOOK LIVE SHOW "MONDAYS WITH JORDYN" AND ONE OF THE MODELS WHO LAUNCHED ISMYGIRL.COM TELLS YOU HOW IT FEELS TO BE THE PERSON ON THE OTHER END OF THE SCREEN.







“You have zero respect for yourself #trash.” “Are you surprised when guys send you dick pics? You are basically asking for it.” “Put some clothes on fat ass.” “You can’t get pissy at guys making comments like that when you post this shit.” “You like to dress [promiscuously], but yet you get upset when you get the attention [you’re] wanting.” “Slut.”

I’m not trying to make this article about how people should feel bad for me when I receive rude comments, about how all women should feel comfortable showing off their bodies online or to prove some sort of false reality of how my life really is. The truth is, I chose to make my image on social media a certain way, originally to gain a following that meant literally nothing to anyone but myself. Over the last year, social media has been both a curse and a huge blessing on my character and personal life. It has given me a positive platform and a new motivation to take on challenges with a fresh outlook on everything in my own and other people’s lives. In today’s society, we only see what people want us to see about them online. We have this preconceived notion that everyone’s existence, surroundings and situations are better than ours because that’s exactly how it is meant to seem. I want people to know who the girl is behind the social media platforms, just me, without any type of filter, telling my experience.

Social Media

Some would think that working from home and being on social media all day would be a dream job. What most of my followers don’t realize is that I’m not technically employed by *Inked* magazine nor any other social media platform. I’ve always had a dream of being on the cover of one of their issues (which is still very much a goal of mine [editor’s note: we see you, Jordyn]) but truly, almost everything I do with *Inked* is because I want to prove that I have what it takes to be in this industry and I enjoy it. I get the narrow-minded individuals on my live show or on Instagram who assume I am “only doing this because I get paid.” The fact is that I do not get paid directly from social media. I honestly love the tattoo industry and the amazing people I get to interact with on a daily basis through social media and especially “Mondays with Jordyn.” Obviously, the internet has become such a gigantic influence on how companies run their business;

it has become the norm when it comes to advertisement and marketing tactics. “Mom and pop” companies that have been around for years have had to jump onto the social media bandwagon because they would potentially suffer otherwise. In my case, for my—I guess in the parlance of the times—“brand” it has been fantastic to get my name out into the world, but at what risk? Half of my photos are not appropriate for a family Christmas card, and as soon as I had my breast augmentation, almost every picture revolved around my new chest. I was discovered by websites like theCHIVE and *Inked* magazine, but I became a person online that I no longer recognized. Would one assume that these “fans” know that I have a degree from Texas A&M, love antiques, talk to my family every single day or that my favorite movie is *The Breakfast Club*? Of course they don’t know. Because who wants to follow a non-celebrity who posts “boring” things like that? Men and women follow “Instagram models” for very different reasons, but they still follow nonetheless. True, I could have continued to post photos of my food, dog and flowers, but then who would have discovered me? I want to kick myself for thinking that way sometimes, but at the end of the day, that is just the cold hard truth of today’s society: sex sells. In my last year or so of college when I had my first photo shoot, I started tagging tattoo social media pages and using obnoxious hashtags to gain the attention of followers. I had this dream of being discovered by *Inked* that quickly fizzled out with graduation and my move back home. I could have used my college degree to get a normal 9-5, but then what? I saw myself slipping into a boring routine like so many of my colleagues who feared to break the mold of a life society had expected from them. After losing an internship with an event planning company when they discovered my tattoos, I moved to Austin, TX with no job, no a real plan. This was probably the most significant turning point when social media became a greater aspect in my everyday life. Everything I posted online always revolved around sex in some shape or form. If someone were to meet me in person, they never would have guessed that I was the same girl from my Instagram. Looking at my own photos, I saw a woman who wanted attention for the wrong reasons, someone who probably couldn’t hold an intellectual conversation, and a person who didn’t necessarily lack respect for herself, but maybe who just didn’t care. Life became all about gaining a

following, drawing traffic to my website and getting posted on popular forums. I never realized how much my life would be influenced so heavily by social media in a negative and then a positive way.

Websites

For the last year or so I have been making a living from posting photos on a website where individuals pay to become a member. Each “model” has her own app where she can upload provocative photos and videos a couple times a week. These photos can be as risqué or as tame as the model wishes them to be; it is totally up to the model’s discretion when it comes to posting the type content on their app. I will admit, when I first became a contributor to this particular website, I felt that I would not become successful if I did not show more of my body. Because of the platform I have built for myself on Instagram and “Mondays with Jordyn,” I later realized that I could afford to tone down my content drastically. The site has absolutely been a blessing to me financially, but at the same time, advertising for my content on social media did cast a shadow on the way fans saw me. Every time I would upload a new photo set on my website, I would post a “teaser” photo on social media. In my mind, posting these sexy photos was the only way to get my name/site out into the world. I never wanted to be one of “those girls” that only posted pictures of that nature for attention. I hated how young girls would comment #bodygoals on my photos. I didn’t want the woman on Instagram to be someone they looked up to, I wanted them to look up to me as the person I am on my live segment, the real me. I would try to validate my posts by reminding myself that I was all about business and this was a “temporary job”. Other days I would tell myself that I was being a voice for those women who weren’t confident with their sexuality or their body. Sometimes I would post a “trashy” picture and think about how I was at least getting paid to take them when so many other girls do it for free. There were days when I wanted to post something funny or inspirational but with the audience I built with those types of photos, I wouldn’t have gotten nearly as many Likes. We are more concerned with the amount of Likes on the photo than if we actually love what we posted. I probably wouldn’t have stopped feeling this way or strove to become something more without *Inked* giving me “Mondays with Jordyn.”



Mondays with Jordyn

When I was first approached by Inked about doing a live Q&A on their Facebook page, I had assumed that it would be a one-time occurrence—an easy way to get my social media platform out to several thousands of people. The live feed was about what I had expected: lots of tattoo questions and even more men telling me to “jump” (so the “girls” would bounce). I was actually instructed to wear something more revealing because unfortunately “sex sells” and that was the only way to get a substantial amount of views. I wouldn’t say that the experience was a negative one, but if you were to tell me I would be doing it every single Monday, I would have told you to take a seat. The only reason I went on a second time was because someone had canceled and the time slot needed to be filled. This was very last minute, I hadn’t done my hair or makeup and I hadn’t picked out a sexy outfit. Needless to say, I panicked. I was nowhere near prepared to go live in front of several thousands of people being totally natural in glasses and my pajamas. The outcome from this particular feed is what truly started what is now called “Mondays with Jordyn.” People seemed to relate more to this natural version of myself, a person who didn’t just sit there and smile, someone who fought back a bit. Obviously, I had the jerks, religious fanatics and extreme feminists chime in their opinions, and they still do to this day, but the vibe was absolutely different from the first show. Even with the great feedback, I just assumed that it was a lucky day and I would not be caught off guard with my appearance on the next show. I tried to figure out what type of pattern the live show had in regards to what I wore, my demeanor and the topics discussed. During some of the segments sex really did sell—I only reached a million views in an hour if I had on less clothing, or if I became super sassy and talked like a sailor. Other weeks I would just sit on the floor in my jammies being super calm and collected, gaining the same amount of views. So what did people really gravitate towards? I was answering most of the same tattoo questions a countless amount of times, telling the same stories and giving people the same reactions to negativity...so what kept a million people coming back every week? I think once I found my flow and discovered a happy medium with how I dressed/presented myself, viewers saw me as a normal person they could tune into every week. Mondays suck anyways, so having something or someone familiar to watch/listen to on a lunch break must be somehow comforting. I still find myself wondering why so many people watch the show every week, but then I think about the same reason I watch YouTube videos or other live feeds...there is just something relaxing about the voice of the person and the routine they provide. I really didn’t realize the impact my show had on people until I started getting the messages on Instagram and emails. I don’t see myself as a saint by any means, but to only get recognition for the “sexy” photos on social media then suddenly be appreciated for being myself...really started to feel gratifying. I have gotten countless messages from men and woman stating that “Mondays with Jordyn” is the highlight of their week and that they feel like they are spending an hour with a friend. I have been floored and humbled by the young women and single mothers that contact me saying that I have given them the confidence to stand up for themselves, to not be ashamed for being comfortable with their bodies and that I am a role model to them. A role model...I never would have imagined anyone saying that to me after this “character” I created for myself on social media. Someone who had given off this persona of sex and shallowness shouldn’t be a role model. Obviously, the way that I make money does rely heavily on the advertisement of sexual imagery to an extent, but that was really all I focused on in the past. Having my live segment has given me a chance to show so many people who I really am; it has inspired me to start posting images and context not as an “Instagram model” but content that mirrors who I am as a person!

Relationships

2016 was absolutely a year of growth and self-awareness. I became extremely independent, I began to branch out and travel a bit, I realized what my full potential could amount to, I discovered who and what is meant to be in my life. I fell in love and I had my heart broken. I often get asked how my family and my boyfriend, now ex-, responds to my "social media presence" and my website. When it comes to my family, I have always kept a lot of what I do for a living hidden. Of course parents want to know where their child is getting money from when they don't have a conventional job, but sometimes I had to tell them not to go digging if they didn't want to find out information they wouldn't like. I don't receive them as often as I did in the past, but I would get comments from people asking "are your parents proud of you for posting this kind of stuff?" or, "you must have daddy issues." On the contrary, even though I didn't talk about work much before, I am extremely close to my family. It took them years to finally let me live my life as an independent adult to make my own choices without bombarding me with questions. I do ask that my parents do not follow my social media platforms that involve "inappropriate photos," but my dad actually does enjoy my live segment (besides the cursing), which makes me extremely proud. When we were together my ex-boyfriend was never a fan of my social media presence or my website, but I didn't realize how opposed he was to the whole thing until a year later. He always seemed to be content with the idea that my job was only temporary and that I would eventually become something greater. He saw a potential in me that I didn't always see in myself but he just couldn't look past the competition he had with my phone and my fans/subscribers. If I could say one thing to a woman in a similar

profession as mine, please know when to separate your work and personal life and always remind the person you are with that they matter. I wouldn't say I put my "fans" above my relationship, but as he saw my following building more and my involvement with *Inked* growing, he got to a point where he simply didn't want to be a part of it. At the time, "Mondays with Jordyn" was just starting



out and he only saw it as another way for men to stare at my chest, which to be honest, is what it was in the beginning. Even though I am still involved with the same type of websites and other social media platforms, I am finding myself again and I feel good about it. Obviously it would take a confident person to date someone in my position, but at the same time, I have honestly acquired so much insight from another's point of view that I will take with me to my next relationship. I am gaining the confidence to put my body out there and not feel ashamed

of it because of how others feel about it. How can I be a voice for people who are afraid to challenge the norm when I myself have been hiding behind this bold woman I portray through my photos?

Bullies

Post tits and the creeps will come. It really shouldn't be an expectation to have to deal with the douchebags and weirdos online when a woman posts a sexy photo, but unfortunately it can be. I am often asked why I call out the rude people on Instagram and my live segment, and I am pressured to not feed into their comments because they are just trying to get a reaction out of me. If they want a reaction, I am damn sure going to give them one that not only makes them feel stupid, but shows other people how to not to just sit ideally by and take abuse either. If you follow my Instagram, (@Jordyn_Ryder) you know that I often post screenshots of the jerks that send me horrific and offensive messages. I have no problem at all with calling out these idiots, even if it is for just a few minutes. With these posts I obviously get the morons that come at me with the "what did you expect with the photos you put up?" This topic always seems to be what most people do not understand, it's not that I don't expect it the reactions, I just refuse to accept them. Do I get paid to post photos "not safe for work" on a private website? Absolutely, my app is for people to pay to see these images and the rest is up to them. Do I deserve disgusting comments and photos thrown at me personally through social media? No. Needless to say, since I started blasting comments and direct messages, the negativity severely slowed down. When it comes to "Mondays with

Jordyn," I have stated this before on the show and I still stand behind it—if people watch because it makes them happy, great. If they watch it because they need to bitch at a stranger because they are unsatisfied with life and they are having a bad day, so be it. If I can help one person out by giving any type of advice, by being a motivator or a punching bag, at least I can say I made some sort of difference at that moment.

Jordyn.IsMyGirl.com

With as much as I talk about the negativity of posting sexy images online, I still have a place in my heart for sites that allow girls to take control of their finances and sexuality without having to get involved with actual porn. I was recently sent to an adult convention by *Inked* to represent their new website called *IsMyGirl.com* and was introduced to a very different world. The website that I have been working through is very private and I can take photos of myself from the comfort of my own home, but these women at the convention were accustomed to something more intense. So many women think that this type of industry is only revolved around actual porn, but with *IsMyGirl.com* women will be able to submit their own content at their own discretion and have the potential to make thousands of dollars a month just by taking selfies. The sex industry is changing and molding into something that is more accessible to the everyday woman who wants to either make extra money or potentially create a career. I would have no problem whatsoever encouraging another woman to join a site like *IsMyGirl* because it does not have to be about actual porn. I know women who do not even show a nipple and they are very successful regardless. This site is about taking control of our lives, our finances and our body. *Ismygirl* will probably be another path for negative comments and judgments from people who don't know the real me, but then why should they matter? I am by no means a feminist, let's make that very clear, but I am all for women doing whatever they feel comfortable with when it comes to their body and how they display it. I refuse to let another person make me feel bad about what I do for a living just because, and I quote, "[They] can't make their problems go away just by taking [their] shirt off." When we start to allow others to dictate how we see ourselves and how we choose to live our life, we forget who we really are. This industry is not my life nor is it my future path, but I will be damned if I don't take advantage of the platform I have created to help out whoever I can, emotionally, personally or financially.

Current and Future Goals

I no longer feel ashamed to make money the way that I do, nor for the fact that I don't have a specific plan for my future. I am 26 years old and the possibilities are truly endless. Because of this new platform that may or may not continue to grow, I have been approached by a company to be the face of their brand that does so much to keep kids off the streets and away from gangs. They appreciate the fact that I can communicate with men and women with a confidence and relatable demeanor while still having the look that they were searching for. I always told myself that social media was temporary, but why should it have to be? I just needed to find my niche and some type of purpose and cause. I decided over Christmas that I would start a separate Instagram, one where I could post exactly what I wanted, not what was expected of me. I called it *@just_jordyn_ryder* because that is exactly what I wanted it to portray, a display of my love for sad poetry and simple images. I wanted a place where I didn't have to worry or care about the amount of likes or new followers, an obsession that I am sad to say often overcame me. For business purposes, I will continue to advertise myself in the same way I have been, with provocative photos and other posts, but I will not make that my main focus. I have a new drive to grow as a person and to help others grow in whatever way they may need it. What is the point of having a large social media platform when no one truly benefits from it at the end of the day?

Direct Message

If you made it this far, I truly appreciate that you did not just glance at the photos and continued to look on—thank you for hearing me out. I value your time so I'll keep my summation brief, in fact I'll do in the metric of social media at 140 characters: What I do can be wildly fulfilling or soul-crushing, social media has given us "trolls" but also connected you to interact with the real me. Thank You.







Remember Tom from MySpace? He wasn't as sexy as these women,
and they'll be your best friends when you sign up for IsMyGirl.com



BONNIE
ROTTEN

"I HAVE DONE OVER 250 MOVIES, AND WHEN I'M OUT IN PUBLIC OR AT AN APPEARANCE NOTHING THRILLS ME MORE THAN SOMEONE APPRECIATING THE HARD WORK I PUT IN."



CHANDRA
THIRTEEN

"I'M A RAD, RESPONSIBLE,
PUSHING-THE-LIMITS
TYPE OF CHICK."

photo by Karla Lambert



FALLON
VENDETTA

"I AM INTRIGUED BY
THE UNUSUAL AND
FINDING BEAUTY IN THE
UNCONVENTIONAL."

"I FIND IT REALLY SEXY IF SOMEONE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT SOMETHING; PLAYING THE GUITAR, COLLECTING BOTTLE CAPS, ETC. I ALSO FIND A NICE SET OF HANDS REALLY ATTRACTIVE AND IN THE BEDROOM I'M REALLY INTO DIRTY TALK."

photo by Nikki Hearts

LEIGH
RAVEN

APRIL 2017 | 65

YEONJI

"I HAVE TO ADMIT, HAVING PEOPLE LIKE ONE OF MY PHOTOS OR VIDEOS IS ONE OF MY GUILTY PLEASURES. NOT IN A SELF-RIGHTEOUS WAY, BUT I AM AMAZED EVERY DAY HOW MUCH LOVE AND SUPPORT IS OUT THERE! I WANT TO GIVE EVERYONE A GLIMPSE INTO MY LIFE THAT THEY HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO SEE ANYWHERE ELSE. YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED!"





TIGER
LILY
TAYLOR

"I LIKE SOMEONE WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY WANT AND STILL CAN PLAY WITH ME. I MEAN, WITH MY WHIPS AND ME."

photo by Justin Swain



"I'M A WEIRDO AND A BIT OF A PERVERT, BUT I ALSO HAVE THIS DEEP AND MEANINGFUL SIDE OF ME."

KARLA
LAMBERT

photo by Ryan Guzzetta

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HEIDI
LAVON

“IT SOUNDS ODD BUT I AM
TURNED ON BY MEN IN
SLACKS. IT IS ARGUABLY
THE EQUIVALENT TO
MEN LOVING YOGA
PANTS. HOWEVER,
#PANTSAREAPRISON.”

TANK

“EVERYTHING YOU WANT
ALL IN ONE ADORABLY
WEIRD PACKAGE!”





ELLIE
RAYNE

"MY TURN-ONS, WOULD
HAVE TO BE INTELLIGENCE
AND PEOPLE THAT ARE
PASSIONATE—WHO HAVE
A FIRE IN THEIR EYE."

photo by David Art



Charlie the Raven is a perfectly spooky cuckoo, always watching from his tower window

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chocker, ring and bracelet by nOir, vintage Negligee, fur by Barney New York and pumps by Vince

T H E F I R S T



Ink Master finally crowned its first female, the well-deserved Ryan Ashley Malarkey

by Devon Preston photos by Mark Man styled by Stephen J Cucci
hair by Butch Feist makeup by Ryan Ashley Malarkey



LEFT: Fox Vest by Barneys New York, brief by La Perla, bracelet and necklace by nOir, bangles by Lux | RIGHT: rings by nOir



Bow in the presence of greatness. Ryan Ashley Malarkey became the first female winner of Spike's Ink Master after eight seasons and succeeded at what dozens in her position had hoped to attain on the preeminent tattoo competition show. Before she won over America and legendary tattoo artist, Oliver Peck, Malarkey was a fashion designer and the owner of the Strange and Unusual Oddities shop with a mere five years of tattooing under her belt. However, despite the odds posed against her, Malarkey used raw talent, fearless ambition and what proved to be the unstoppable power of an all-female alliance to prove to the judges, as well as the nation, that she was the top tattooer of Season Eight. Malarkey is an artist who has shown that she can adapt in any situation, which is why the tattoo industry and fans alike should stay tuned to her next tattoos and moves.

How does it feel to be Ink Master?

Of all the words, I could use to describe this feeling, I would have to say "honored" would be the most accurate. It's crazy to believe I ended up winning this game, considering how many insanely talented and diverse artists competed this season. *Ink Master* is an insane, multifaceted, triathlon obstacle course of tattooing—but in the end, it is ART. Art is so personal and so subjective, and in this instance used in a competition game, where one artist fights their way to victory. And though I ended up victorious, I've got to recognize the skill level of so many of my competitors and acknowledge that the game could have gone so many other ways—and many other "winners" would have been equally as deserving.

How was your experience on the show?

Even before the finale, I knew for certain my life was changed forever because of this experience. Despite a few pretty tough physical and psychological hurdles throughout the taping, I can confidently say it was one of the greatest opportunities I have ever been a part of. I learned so much about art, tattooing, friendship, and myself. I picked up some amazing tricks, tested my own limits, and made an entire group of lifelong friends. It was challenging on so many different levels, but truly an honor.

What made you decide to go on the show in the first place?

I went on to grow as an artist and become a more rounded individual in general, and to test myself. I figured that I would give it all I had and come out proud of the art I've done and be grateful just for the opportunity to compete. I honestly never went into this whole experience with expectations of being the last one standing. I just realized that this was a once in a lifetime experience that happens to a select few people and I couldn't justify not taking it.

What was it like being mentored by Oliver during your time at *Ink Master* and how did it feel to be his first pick of the season?

I couldn't believe Oliver chose me as his first pick of the season. The entire time we were standing there waiting for it to happen, I just kept hoping I wouldn't be the LAST one picked and I kept having visions of elementary school dodge ball. From worrying about not even being picked to being picked first was a major whiplash! But it couldn't have worked out better. It was an honor being on Team Peck, both because Oliver was an extremely involved, insightful team leader, and because most of my team mates were an absolute joy to work with.

How does it feel to make history for female tattooers?

It feels indescribably surreal to be categorized with other female tattooers—or with tattooers in general that have made history. But I am not the first, or the last, so I try to remain grounded and always remain thankful by remembering all the tattooers before me who paved the way to make this opportunity possible for my generation of artists.

Did you expect things to turn out the way that they did?

Absolutely not. I remember on day one, when all 30 of us were unleashed to meet each other and scope out the competition. I thought then while looking around that just maybe I had a chance of making it far into this competition—midway at least, maybe even to the final five! And then walks in Kelly Doty, and I was like, "Dear God, we haven't spoken in awhile, but, please don't let me be the first one to be eliminated!"

Why did you, Kelly, Nikki, and Gia decide to form an alliance?

We didn't have any sort of premeditated intention of creating an "alliance" between the

girls. Before I left to compete, I had all these crazy ideas in my head that I was going to be sleeping in a room next to a psycho super-competitor who was going to put urine in my shampoo and cut off my ponytail in my sleep. But apparently, the other girls had similar paranoid ideas, so we were all immediately relieved to meet each other and all shared an immediate admiration and mutual respect. We helped each other, we supported each other, and as we grew stronger as a unit, the bond transferred into the competition.

What obstacles have you faced as a female in a predominately male industry?

In many places today, being a female tattooer is still a novelty sort of position and with this notion a lot of people feel the urge to judge us on a million other things aside from our work alone. The thing about being a female in this industry is that everyone has some opinion about you. Our appearance, our weight, the way we dress. It's unfortunate that the way we look must affect our tattoo ability. Now this isn't true for everyone, but I can speak for myself that no person, male or female, should be pressured to look any certain way to feel validation as an artist.

How do you think that the industry will advance in terms of gender equality as time goes on?

People everywhere are slowly changing as the times are changing. I'm noticing that the same bracket of elderly people with old-fashioned ways of thinking, who would at one time comment about how it's a "sin" that such a pretty girl would ruin her body, are now approaching me to tell me about their daughter or granddaughter with a tattoo and they're connecting with me on that level. Since everyone is getting tattooed in our society, these old school thinking types of people all have a tattooed loved one or friend who allows them to see tattoos as art, instead of body defacement.

I understand that before becoming a tattoo artist, you worked as a fashion designer. What made you transition from a career in fashion to a career as a tattoo artist?

I've been artistic for as long as I can remember, but my interest has always been focused on human anatomy and the flow of the body. I wanted to go into a career that allowed me to decorate the human body and use the shapes, flow and curves of my canvas to adorn fabric. But after about six years in the industry, I realized that my true calling wasn't for fabric—it was for skin. So at 24 years old, I left my awesome design job in NYC for the next chapter, hoping that tattooing would bring the fulfillment I was lacking... and I was right!

Did you bring any of your skills from fashion into your tattooing?

Absolutely! SO MANY of my skills, aesthetic, work ethic and vision in tattooing come from my previous life in fashion. During the last three years of my career in design, I was mostly assigned to create all of the intricate adornments on the garments we created. I was designing bead work, appliqués, lace details and embroidery, so when I began to tattoo, those interests translated directly and I slowly started to tattoo more and more intricately. Now my tattoo designs consist mostly of flowing jewels, beadwork and lace detail.

As many people know, in addition to being a tattooer, you also own The Strange and Unusual. What made you decide to open an oddities shop?

Thanks to my antique-collecting Mom and tchotchke-collecting GMalarkeya, I have been going to yard sales, flea markets and estate sales since I was a toddler. It's always blown me away to see what people throw out and consider garbage. Collecting these small objects led me to start repurposing items as DIY projects and eventually revealed an entire network of "treasure seeking" people who mutually appreciate the "strange and unusual" things in life.

Besides your former career in fashion and your shop, where else do you draw inspiration for your tattoos?

I try to draw inspiration from unexpected places and stay away from Google as much as I can. Whenever I design filigree, I look at all the scroll work on Victorian furniture. Whenever I design beading, I look at chandeliers or bridal accessories. For animals and birds, I have a collection started of vintage illustrated wildlife books.

Do you think that your tattooing has changed since the competition began?

Not only has my tattooing changed since the competition, but my overall outlook on tattoos has changed. I normally work by myself in my little private studio and rarely ever have any outside influence, advice or critique. It was very hard at first to hear some of the brutally blunt critiques on my work, and it took me awhile to realize how valuable they were and to simply listen. But instead of pretending my work was perfect and ignorantly defending the imperfections, I took every bit of critique and improved. I let my ego get broken down enough to build myself back up with this new knowledge that I am so grateful for.







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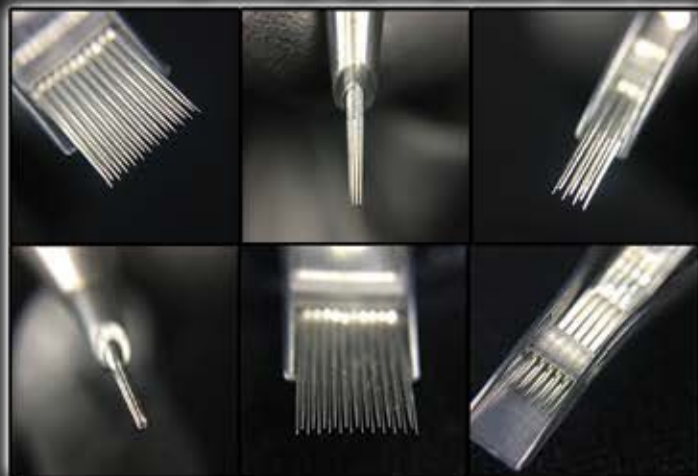
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JESS YEN

By Devon Preston
Portrait by Jeff Forney

My Tattoo
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Jess Yen needs a bigger trophy shelf. After collecting over 300 awards, the Taiwanese tattooer probably needs to build another house just to store his accolades. Not that he spends much time at home—Yen is constantly globetrotting from one tattoo convention to another where he draws crowds to watch tebori (Japanese hand-poke) tattooing in action. While the trophies and plaques are well-deserved, it is the awe of the crowd that validates Yen's confidence in his artistry.

When did you get started in tattooing? I started tattooing in 1985. That was the very first one, but it was just tattooing some of my classmates. It was just for fun, but I wouldn't say that it was professional. I did very simple traditional style, although at the time I probably wouldn't have called it traditional because I wouldn't have known what is traditional and what is fantasy. It is a sewing needle tied onto a bantu stick, it is a very old way to poke the skin and leave the mark. I don't know if you can say that was the correct way to tattoo traditionally, like the Samoan or the Japanese tebori—but that's my first experience. After that I went to a professional tattoo artist under an apprenticeship in 1989 in Taipei, Taiwan.

Did you start tattooing exclusively in the Japanese style while you were working in Taipei? No, when I started, actually, I would do flash. Back during that time, I would do flash on the wall and all kinds of different flash for clients. People would walk in and they would say they like one piece of flash and we would tattoo that one. The flash was typically old time styles and we would try to make the customer satisfied. We would do any kind of styles, it would just depend on the customer. I hadn't set up my style yet at the time during the 1990s. I started the tebori style under my apprenticeship in 1989 and until today, I still do tebori. I still mix. It really depends these days because machines are so fast and save a lot of time. I charge by the hour, so not everyone requests tebori. Sometimes a client does not request tebori hand-poked, but I still will offer one hour free or two hours free so that they can try it out and have the experience. But at least 50 percent of people request tebori and they want to have that experience or some part finished by hand.

At what age did you know you wanted to be a tattoo artist? I wasn't sure I wanted to be a tattoo artist, because in 1985, it was just for fun. In 1989 I was someone's apprentice for a short period

of time. Then in 1992 I started charging people. It was not serious, but it was a job. I started to work from home and take clients. But I would say that I had no doubt that I really wanted to be a serious tattoo artist after I came to the states. In early 2001, when I established My Tattoo Family, I started taking students, and I realized that I wanted to do this kind of thing for life. I really became a tattoo artist with no doubts in the early 2000s—say 2001—around that time.

At that time, what artists influenced your artwork? At that time, the only person I knew was Horiyoshi III. In 1989 when I asked for an apprenticeship from a tattoo artist who taught me in his studio, I saw a person who had a tattoo on his head, he had a body suit, and everyone has their whole body all tattooed up. I saw these photos and I thought that it was quite interesting that a tattoo could be over your whole body and I was kind of surprised and shocked. I have a strong memory and impression of that person. So in the 1990s, past my apprenticeship time, I saw books of Horiyoshi and that's when I started to have no doubts about tattooing. I think the only person [who influenced my artwork] was Horiyoshi III.

What kind of an impact did he have on your tattooing? At the time, he had so many books, so when I started My Family and I needed some ideas for oriental work or bodysuit tattoos. I always used his drawings and paintings as a reference. He has a very strong impact on me through composition, body flow and bodysuit ideas.

You had mentioned that you will be doing an exhibition with Horiyoshi III later this year in Japan. What will your collaborative exhibition with Horiyoshi III be about? It is in Harajuku, Tokyo, and the concept from what he's told me, is all about inheritance. Inheritance means a generation passing to generations. This year, 2017, is going to be the fifth art exhibition for Horiyoshi and for me. Each of the exhibitions is done by different

artists, but they are not tattoo artists. They are painters, airbrushers, paper cutters—artists in different industries. I met with Horiyoshi III in 2016 and he just pulled me outside and told me that he wanted to do the art exhibition with me next year. So first of all, I felt that I am not on that level yet, but he told me that this was his wish. He wanted to have tattoo artists do the exhibition together. Also, he is 70 years old and his vision of the world is in Asia from his generation and he wants Asian tattoo artists who live in Western culture to see other visions of the world and the tattoo industry. So he wanted two different generations to show different angles of the art. He wanted to do the exhibition with me as an older-generation tattoo artist and a younger-generation tattoo artist with different views, that's his idea.

During this exhibition, will you be working in the traditional tebori style of tattooing or will your work be a mix of old and new styles? No, it will pretty much be a display of all different kinds of paintings. Horiyoshi III is going to do a silk painting and I do rice paper, which is a big scroll that I have been preparing. I've been drawing and painting 12 hours per day and I canceled most of the tattoo conventions. I even delayed a lot of my clients so I can focus on this art exhibition. We're not going to do tebori in exhibition, but we do have a tebori set for selling during the art exhibition. Our tools have to be made by ourselves, so it's carving and decorating the stick, everything is made our own and it's a kind of handicraft. We will sell these during the exhibition and people will buy them. Maybe they don't know how to use them, but they can display them as decoration in their houses or their studios. I'm pretty sure people know that Horiyoshi III is a tebori artist and some people know that I'm a tebori artist, but we're not doing the actual work there because in Japan doing a tattoo in public is illegal. That is a big difference compared to the States or Europe. In Asia, somehow tattooing is still under the table and it's not legal to display in public.

Do you think that meeting Horiyoshi III and visiting Japan over the years has changed the way you tattoo today? It's a long story, but I will cut it short. When I started with the tebori, I did very traditional because I still lived in Asia. After I came to the States, I had a strong



influence by all different kinds of tattoo categories. I didn't know there was such a big market for tattooing, which is so free for tattoo art. So when people would come to my shop in the States or come to me, they would have different requests. Maybe they would want Tinkerbell, they want a butterfly, they want people's portraits—every customer comes to me and I would have to study those kinds of styles. After that, my style developed into one with more Asian culture and influence. Then I started to meet with Horiyoshi III and when I went back to Asia every year, I started to feel that my style was changing to become more traditional again. But when I started in traditional, it was very traditional, and as I have been changing, my artwork has become more more realistic and illustrative with a strong three-dimensional perspective. I won't say that the realistic style is over because people in Western culture like to see more realistic styles. They like to see the tattoos exist. But with Oriental styles, that you can see from Asian paintings, it's more feelings and abstract. When I stay in the States for a long time and have the strong influence of Western culture, you can see through my dragons that there are real animals like a dragon, but a dragon does not exist in this world and I try to make a it with textures and shadows in a realistic style. But since I have gone back to Asia and I'm back to working between illustrative and traditional, it's just about right.

What separates your tattoo style from other Japanese artists and other tattoo artists from Asia I think that I have a bigger market, more than many Asian tattoo artists, because I live in the States. We have strong entertainment, lots of people look up to Hollywood movies, they look up to our comic books and they look up to the freedom of what we believe in. I am an Asian-American and when I go back to Asia, they don't really see me as Asian, they think that I have loyalty to the United States of America because I have changed my nationality and I do not live in Asia anymore. They see me as a frenemy, they see me as a friend and an enemy at the same time. They look up to me somehow because I have studied and learned more from Western culture, so I have much more advantage than artists in Asia because I have met more styles and more people. They like me because I can share so much stuff with them and I can tell them about new machines and technology. Every time I go to Asia I bring some type of new information, but I think at the same time when I go over there and I feel that I have fulfilled the energy, fulfilled the chi, and fulfilled the culture of the art. I say [to students] that if you want to do the Japanese style, you need to go to Japan to drink the water, to breathe the air, and to shake hands with the people, because you are exchanging the chi and the energy. You are exchanging the energy and you bring it back with you to create something. You can't just read a book, check on Instagram, and say that you

have learned a lot about Japanese culture. You need to be there. Just like, say, I want to draw from Tibetan style, I need to travel there, talk to the monks, talk to the people, and feel how they feel. Going back to the initial question, I think there is a strong influence in America, like realism, fantasy styles, even dark image, and in Asia you don't see these kinds of images. I think that I am unique because living in the States has given me much more opportunity to meet different people and see different styles. And when I go back to Asia, I want people to see what they can't see.

Earlier you mentioned that you look to realism, fantasy and dark imagery for your tattooing. What are some of the styles that you often look to for inspiration for your pieces? There are just so many styles in the States: watercolor, illustrative, fantasy, realism—there are just so many different kinds of styles, but I think that I like realism where you can make your own creations. Realism is based on photos, it is based on what we can say, like, say, someone's grandmother's photo that we tattoo on their body. Whatever you do looks so real and you make details that use a copy technique. But something that I am interested in is taking something that does not exist and making it exist. Say, I can draw a beautiful lady without a photo by creating a new character. Kind of like creating your own position and adding different kinds of environments to help the creation of your character.

What style of tattooing would you work in if you were not doing Japanese? If I didn't do Japanese style, I would love to have done fantasy. Such as female warriors who wear different kinds of armor. I would like to base it on realism but a creation realism based on fantasy books. Something from the imagination, but something that people can recognize right away. For instance, you design an animal but it is an animal that you would never see in a zoo, but it looks so real. Just like the people who made *Jurassic Park*, we have never seen dinosaurs, but they made dinosaurs look so real. That's what I am really interested in, doing stuff like that. Or say, a girl who has the wings of a crow but it still looks like realism. I don't want to do portraits of Marilyn Monroe or Elvis, I don't want to just use photos to create an image but instead I want to think of an image in my mind and use the realism texture, shadow and light for it to look like real life.

Where do you look for inspiration for your tattoos? Reading books to get reference is very necessary. I have a large collection of books of different kinds of artists and whenever new books come out I always try to get them. The other thing that I think inspires my tattoos is traveling. I have traveled to more than 30 countries, over 100 cities. And when I am not traveling or not using the books, I just stare at the wall. I look at the wall because sometimes the images will pop out of it. You don't necessarily have to





stare at a wall, that's just an example, but if you stare at one thing for awhile you will start to see the image come out of it and then you begin to sketch that image out right away. Or, for example, you could stare at the water or the clouds, like we would do when we were kids and the clouds would turn into, say, a rabbit. When you see the clouds and see that they have been changing to different forms and you see something that you really like that you can use it for an image. I've always thought of these ideas like a God's whisper and if you don't write them down you will forget them. When these images pop out, you need to make a record and keep them down for inspiration.

What type of process do you go through when designing a tattoo?

If we are using the art exhibition as an example, I have a notebook where I write down all of the ideas that I want to draw and design, I write down all of the details. These days I just put it down on a phone and I write down what it is going to look like—if it is going to have colors, if it is going to be black-and-grey, or if it is going to be black-and-grey with color, and I write down all of the details. Sometimes if I have brought a sketchbook with me, I will begin to sketch the tattoo out. I first sketch out the rough idea on tracing paper and then after I need to use another piece of tracing paper to clean up the lines. Because when you do the sketch it is kind of messy and you need to keep layering the different pieces of tracing paper before it is finished. Pretty much every tattoo, I will be drawing it four to five times before putting it on the skin.

What is your "dream" tattoo?

I like to do the larger-scale tattoos. They can be on a back, legs or arms—and each different body part has its different challenges. Like, an arm is 360 degrees, so we have to think about how to put the image on the body and consider how the arm will move. I don't really have a favorite of what subject to do, but I like to do tattoos in the oriental study because I have studied this style and I know the story line, the background and the traditions. I know how to finish and end up with a design. I like to do these kinds of styles because it's not a patchy style, it focuses on a flow, composition, storyline, culture, and the background. I like to do those kinds of styles, but I don't prefer, say, dragons or tigers over koi because

each subject can have a different creation and a different way to do it. I like to do larger scales, tattoos that have a storyline, and ones that have a lot of meaning to the client. I respect the clients with whatever they want, but if they come to me and say that they want Tinkerbell playing with a butterfly, I will say that I don't know much about this and that Tinkerbell does not have the storyline for this type of tattoo. The interest must be something like a warrior or a samurai, some type of fighter because at least I know that I have studied that and it's history. It doesn't even have to be Oriental, if they want to do Tibetan or Mongolian instead—it's the larger-scale tattoos that have a culture behind it that I enjoy doing.

Where do you see yourself as an artist in 10 years?

I don't really see myself in 10 years or even five years later, I just try to get better every day. I try to do my best every day, in every moment. I think that changing now will be changing your future, so I can't foresee myself in 10 years, but I can see now and I can see that if I put effort into my work, tomorrow will be better

Is your work in painting different from your tattooing?

I think that the procedure is very different. Sometimes there are different steps, for instance, when you tattoo you put down the dark colors before the light color. Because if you do it the other way, then the tattoo will be a big mess. The process and procedures between tattooing and painting are different. One thing that is the same is that when I do paintings, especially doing the rice paper scroll paintings, the paper is so fragile and you can't make even one mistake. So if I make a mistake, it has to become a beautiful accident. You have to think if you can make this mistake pretty and let it become something else. So don't ever think that if you make a mistake, you can save it because in paintings and tattoos you can't save it. If you do a sketch, you can erase it, but if you use a pen on a scroll you can't erase it because the paper will break. You can only do one stroke and you have to finish that stroke. In tattooing it's the same thing, there's no "whoops" in tattooing. However, when it's handmade it happens and you have to make that little whoops become something else instead of trying to save it. I call that a beautiful accident.





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So tell us a little about yourself?
I'm from the UK and I'm also known as The Scientist. I am the lead artist at NR Studio (No Regrets) in Exeter and I also travel around Europe and other countries exhibiting what I do and competing at many different shows.

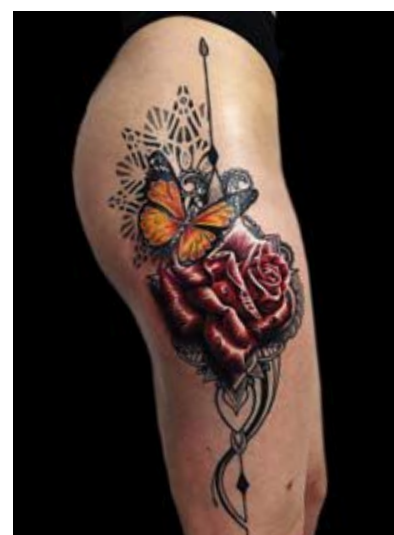
May we ask why you're called The Scientist? I'm called The Scientist because of my reputation of mixing styles and ideas together. I love the fusion, and this year I'm looking to be doing quite a few collaborations with other artists. I'm very rigorous in the way I learn and research. I used to produce music as well so the nickname slightly comes from that too.

How do you describe your style?
Ornamental Realism: a mixture of realism, pointillism and ornamental style pattern-work.

What is the trickiest part of your tattoos for you? Probably the compositional work I would have to say—making sure it fits nicely on the client's body. Sometimes I can't have a "design ready for inspection" for a client to see beforehand because I do so much freehand and compositional work on the day, that it requires a large amount of trust and patience from the client while I create.

Do you spend more time on the realism facets of your recent tattoos or the blackwork touches?
I guess it depends mainly on the complexity of the piece but generally yes, the realism segments of my designs can take the longest, but sometimes, those dots.

You use whites expertly what advice do you have to tattooers who are trying to work more white into their pieces? I get asked a lot about the white. I think people think I have some secret ink that I use! As I say to everyone, I just put it in the skin properly and saturate it just the same way you would black. The white I use is World Famous "White House."



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You are newly on the radar where have you been? I'm from Ukraine. I've been in US for a few months now, which I really like.

How does tattooing in the Ukraine differ from here? The tattoo industry in the Ukraine is very small and in the US it is big. It is very different. People in the US love my creepy tattoos and my dark stuff, people in the Ukraine get mostly realistic animals like lions and wolves.

You do have a lot of dark stuff in your recent portfolio, what are your thoughts on color? A few years ago I did only black-and-grey, but for me it is more interesting to tattoo in color, because it is more difficult to work in all of the colors.

Do you have a traditional art background? I went to painting school and university 16 years ago and then after that I started tattooing.

What to you makes a good tattoo? For me the best is the realistic stuff, but it can't be just a copy. I love when the tattoo artists creates something in his or her own style but within the realism category. For me, I change colors and I change composition so that from one image I create different tattoos not just an exact copy of the reference image.

What is the most important part in designing a tattoo? I need to think about composition, how it looks on the body, leg or arm. Though it may be a small detail, where it lays is very important.

What is your favorite part of the body to tattoo? I actually hate doing backs. I think it is a painful place for people to get tattooed and the shape of the back tapers down the bottom so the composition of the tattoo have to work in that V shape. I like doing hands. I know alot of tattooers have a tough time with hand tattoos but they are my favorite.

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You have an interesting eye toward tattoos, how did you develop this unique style? I started doing portraits before I did [American] Traditional tattoos. I take Traditional flash and add realism. I really try to look at portraits and understand the shape and structure then blend it into skin. Using the line-work of Traditional tattooing makes them hold up.

Do you think that the new style of lighter tones in realism that are currently popular on Instagram will fall out in the future? I think about the structure of a tattoo first. I know the kind of tattoos you are talking about and I am not sure how they will look in 10 years—I think only a few people are doing it right. I am approaching realism in a new way, I guess actually an old way, with the Traditional touches.

What colors are you into? I like the way greens look on the skin. It shouldn't work naturally so it has this cool effect.

Whose work are you digging at the moment? The painterly effect in the tattoos of Nikko Hurtado and Carlos Torres are incredible.

Do you paint outside tattooing? I've done watercolors and painting—dabbling into oils and acrylics—but I am thinking about stepping into graffiti. I'm in Philadelphia where it is a whole new ballgame.

How would you compare Philly to say Los Angeles in art? Philly is more about the arts; LA is more about the image, primary black-and-grey. Philly is all Traditional or realism in tattoos and all about growing the art whether it is music, tattoos or graffiti.

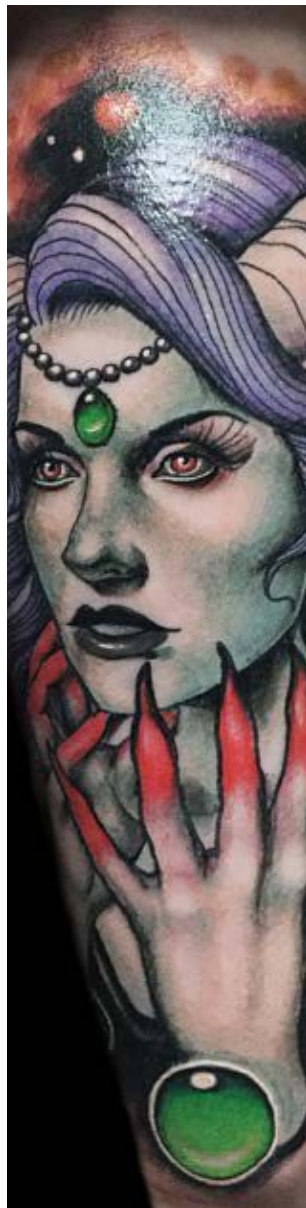
Is your art evolving? Yes. I do a lot of portraits of women but the clientele's taste for tattooing could change tomorrow saying, "We hate these lady faces." Then what am I going to do, quit? You have to be able to evolve.

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