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CONTENTS

lauren sanderson	30
snooki & nico	34
ryan ashley & arlo	46
2018 gift guide	60
first class tattoo	78

G-SHOCK



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INKWELL



A nation divided on so many social and political issues. The MeToo movement. Endless scandals and devastating natural disasters. Unfortunately, the list could go on and on. Looking back, this has been a pretty darn tumultuous year, and, as it comes to a close, we hope that all of you came through with minimal battle scars.

Okay, now that all those nasty bits are out there, let's start to look on the bright side of things. We made it through the storm known as 2018, and it's time to take a deep breath, hang with family and friends, celebrate whatever holiday you choose and maybe... get some new ink. And what better way to get inspired about a new tattoo than by enjoying the copy of INKED magazine you hold in your hands right now?

As the world gets smaller and smaller through the ever-expanding social media presence in our society, we felt this issue should reflect some of the wonderful diversity of this great planet of ours. This issue's Inked people can be summed up like this – from Hobos to Hip Hop to Hoops and everything in between. Then get ready to see two of the most beautiful and talented tattoo artists to ever put needle to skin – Ryan Ashley and Arlo – like you never have before, in an exclusive INKED magazine photo layout. Plus, an interview that holds nothing back!

What do Avenged Sevenfold, Limp Bizkit, Insane Clown Posse and a Christian rock band have in common? Well, one of the world's most famous Christian rock bands, Skillet, was on tour with this unique group of bands. We caught up with John Cooper in Camden, NJ (which just happens to be the most dangerous city in the United States) and found out what it's like to be on tour with these "bad boys."

Plus, there's a whole lot more, including Amber Nash from the show *Archer*, Austin Rivers from the Washington Wizards, and Nicole "Snooki" Polizzi and Nico Tortorella, hosts of MTV's show, *How Far Is Tattoo Far?*

Then, if you haven't completed all your holiday shopping yet (And who has?) check out our famous annual gift guide. Everything from the hippest phone case to the latest giant screen TV is taken for a test run, so you can find that perfect gift for that perfect someone.

Not enough for ya? Well, don't worry, there's even more, but you'll have to turn the page to find out.

Happy Holidays
Paul Gambino
Editor-in-Chief
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INKED FOR A CAUSE

The world of tattoo culture has a reputation of being comprised of a bunch of badasses. Well, like any subculture, it has its share of hardcore dudes and dames that will look to throw-down at the drop of a hat. However, with a tattooed population that now comprises almost 50% of the people living in the United States, we now have representatives from virtually every facet of society... and that includes people who were struggling, are struggling and may be on the path to dealing with a host of mental and physical issues. This issue of INKED was our way of giving back and extending hope and inspiration to all who need it...in fact, we all need it.

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DAVE NAVARRO

Christine Cooper – I didn't know that Dave was in a band. I only knew him from *InkMaster*, so it was fascinating to hear about his music career and moving to hear about his struggles with depression and drugs.

Pat Vermalian – I have been a fan of Dave's since he was in *Jane's Addiction*. That interview really got him to open up. Great job.

KELLY EDEN

Raven Johnson – Please. Please. Just give me a minute to be in the same room with her. She is the most beautiful tattooed model ever. I LOVE Kelly Eden!

EILEEN VS. ARTHURIST

Emily Krenson – I just want to tell that girl, she is an inspiration to all of us who have a chronic and debilitating disease. Keep kicking ass, sister!

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DAMSELS WITHOUT DISTRESS

Painter Kurtis Rykovich Brings New Life to Old Fairy Tales

words by devon preston

Las Vegas is the home of many beautiful women; however, none are quite as magical as those created by Kurtis Rykovich who pulls his inspiration from fairy tales, horror, comics and the furthest depths of his imagination. However, while his Damsels are the focus of his career as an artist, there's more to Rykovich than just the dozens of beautiful women he's brought to life. Take a look at how this painter found his footing in the art world, why he chooses to live in a fantasy universe and which leading lady will become his next muse.

When did you first develop an interest in art and do you have a professional education in painting?

I've had an interest in art for as long as I can remember. I was always drawing, painting and creating in some form. When I thought of the title "artist," it is the only thing that stood out in my mind as something that I wanted to be. I really didn't give myself a second choice. I grew up in a small town four hours from Las Vegas and I was so excited to attend college to focus on painting.

How would you describe your signature style and how has it evolved over time?

My signature style has always been figurative and narrative. During my earlier years, I really wanted to perhaps branch out into fashion design, so a lot of my figures were pictured in more avant garde outfits and there was always a lesson to the piece.

Growing up, I loved fairy tales, anything magical or impossible. My mom was always introducing me to new aspects of fantasy, unfortunately she passed away when I was 17. Her death affected my style for a good four to five years, but then it clicked. I wanted to create worlds and characters full of energy, spirit and, perhaps, a dash of darkness, since no life is perfect. So this passion for fairy tales and beauty has led me to where I am now and will definitely continue to evolve.

Why do you primarily paint women and when did you first develop an artistic interest in the female form?

I grew up around strong women and idolized them from a young age. I was a misfit in most parts of my childhood. I was never very

"masculine" or interested in what typical boys in small country towns should be interested in. So, you could only imagine what kind of attention that gained, and as a result, I related more to female personalities. As I've progressed in my career, my Damsels have turned more into creatures — they represent beings with impossible beauty and always have a good dose of magic and darkness to them — that makes them seem inhuman. I have always wanted to be something unique, magical and rare, in a way, the Damsels are doing that for me.

What led you to develop work inspired by popular culture and so far, who has been your favorite character to recreate?

About five years ago, I really started to ponder what made me an artist and why I started painting. I realized pop culture was a huge part of that, so I started to revisit some of my favorite fairy tales and icons when I was growing up. By far, my favorite pop culture subject I could revisit and paint over and over again would be Alice from "Alice in Wonderland." I've painted different renditions of her quite a few times and there will probably be more to come in the future. She represents being lost then, at some point, finding yourself and to me, this is fascinating. I believe we all do this many times in our lives, at least I know I have. We all fall down the rabbit hole every now and then, and must find our way back. It is the journey in between those two events that pulls at my heart strings and inspires my different renditions of Alice and the creatures she runs into along the way.

If you had to pick, would you rather paint Disney or comic book characters?

Disney, hands down. I relate to the way they have been able to make fairy tales so relatable. They are nostalgic and have helped create our morals and lessons on life. I love to explore the juxtaposition of their interpretation and original orientation of the fairy tales. A lot of these tales were originally not so lighthearted and had a helping of darkness that helped teach a lesson.





Which pop culture character have you yet to paint but plan to in the near future?

I don't have just one, but my next would be Sleeping Beauty, a.k.a. Briar Rose. I've painted her once, but it was many years ago. I've since read the original fairy tale again and I'm itching to get another chance to create her. The image keeps rolling around in my mind and waiting for the right time to be created. There's something about this fairy tale; perhaps it's the beauty and helplessness of an endless sleep. There's so much angst and dynamic feelings, when you read this tale that has not yet been portrayed in pop culture. With all the deadly spindles, thorns and dark fairies—how can I resist?

What's up next for Kurtis Rykovich?

I hope, in the near future, to do some larger pieces and create larger environments that expand beyond the portraiture of the Damsel. I want to give you a peek into their world, just like if you happened to be a fly on the wall in that moment. I also want to further look back into my past and pull inspiration from different areas of folklore and mythology. My Damsels have become such a key part in representing feeling in my work that they will continue to take the main stage, but I will be looking into their lives and expanding the lens to unveil a little more of their world. It's a challenge I am ready for.

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TYLA YAWEH

What was the inspiration behind the name Tyla Yaweh? I was looking for a name that really represented me. I looked up the Yaweh and it stands for the first breath of air that created life. I feel like my music is a fresh breath of air.

What was the catalyst that made you pick up and head to Los Angeles? I grew up in Florida and life was crazy. I was selling drugs, getting into trouble and just needed a change. I chose to take my music seriously and thought, what better place to pursue your dreams?

What was life like the first year in California? It was fun in the beginning. I experienced so much stuff. The vibes, the people, being able to walk into a store to buy weed... it was new and hip to me.

What do you see is the biggest difference between the music scene in the South and in Los Angeles? They're pretty similar. Florida has had a crazy wave of artists breaking through. In LA, the vibes are amazing and everyone is out here hustling.

Why did you choose Los Angeles and not New York or Atlanta? LA feels like the birthplace of the American dream for me, in terms of music. Everyone moves to LA.

What strikes you the most about playing gigs with people like Post Malone? Watching the preparation and execution from someone at the top of his game.

What was your first tattoo? My initials and I didn't even finish it. It's still not finished. I got a T on one shoulder and half a B on the other

one. I was so young and my shoulder was shaking. I was like, "F*ck it..."

Would you ever get your face heavily tattooed? I don't know, I got a few on my face now and when I was super drunk one night, I ended up with Yaweh on my head and I was like, "Yeah, I'm done."

What's your favorite tattoo and why? I got a hangman that spells out Yaweh. My tattoo guy, Parley, pulled up to the house and just tattooed me all day.

Do you regret any of your tattoos? Nope, I love them all, even the ones not finished.

What's your next tattoo? I gotta finish this Jim Morrison tattoo I'm getting, and I might also finally finish those initials.





DON BENJAMIN

How did your childhood in Minnesota shape your career today? I was born in Chicago, then moved to Minnesota at age five and spent the majority of my life there until moving to LA after graduating high school. It was cool, but cold as hell in the winter. But the cold kept me out of trouble and locked in the gym.

When did you first start getting tattooed and what led you to become heavily tattooed? I got my first tattoo at 15. I went to get a basketball and since I was under age, they would only allow me to get something religious. So I got a cross on my left bicep. After my first one, all I could think about was what I'm getting next. I knew I wanted to be covered.

What's your favorite tattoo and what are your future plans for tattoos? My favorite tattoo is on my calf and it is a picture of

me seeing my Pops off to heaven. He passed away last year, so that piece means everything to me.

What made you decide to go out for America's Next Top Model? At that moment, I was pursuing music heavily, but got a call from a friend saying that they were having guys on it and said I should go out. I didn't have much going on, so I figured I would give it a try, not realizing it would be the break I needed.

How has your life changed post-show?

My life changed drastically after the show. I can do what I want now entertainment wise and I have a better platform to chase my dreams.

How were you able to accelerate your growth on social media? My followers grew super fast from posting modeling

pictures and getting in with my group of friends shooting comedy skits.

In addition to modeling, you're also a rapper and now host a cooking show. Are there any other projects you're not telling us about? Yes, I'm working on a ton of things. I've been working on a couple new TV show ideas—both scripted and non-scripted.

Where do you hope to be in one year, five years and 10 years? I plan to be a very established actor and musician. I'd also like to produce TV and film projects as well.

What's up next for Don Benjamin? Next up for me is just continuing to grow. Building myself and my career path along with giving my knowledge to people that are trying to get where I am. I'm going to be giving modeling tips out soon to aspiring models.

AMBER NASH

What are the stories behind your snowflake and star tattoos?

Growing up my dad traveled a lot and he would always bring us gifts when he came home. He got me this mobile that hung in my room for a long time and I decided to get the star from it. As for my snowflake, my husband and I both got tattoos after we got married. He's a really big fan of Buddy Wakefield, and one of our friends did a reading of a Buddy Wakefield poem during our ceremony, and in the poem there was a quote that mentions a snowflake living with a fingerprint, and I thought that was such a sweet way to describe two different people.

What would it take for you to get Pam

Poovey's back tattoo? It's so funny, we get a lot of Archer swag and people will give me Pam T-shirts and I want to wear them, but I feel like such a dick! Like, 'Hey guys, did you notice what I do for a living?' So I'm not afraid of the size of the tattoo, I'm more afraid of what it would say about me as a person.

Pam Poovey has been claimed as the real hero of Archer, would you agree?

I do agree. Everybody is a terrible person on the show, but everybody has redeeming qualities, but I think Pam's got so much heart and she loves people so much that I believe that's why she's so wonderful.

How has Pam evolved with the show? When Pam was first introduced the script says, 'Pam Poovey, the mousy director of HR' and

nobody would ever say that now, you know? In the beginning she was more like the butt of the joke. And I think Adam [Reed] continuously needed somebody for a certain skill, and he kept giving it to Pam. So now she's an underground street fighter and a drift car racer, and she can do everything.

Pam has worn so many hats throughout the seasons. What is your favorite version of Pam?

I think the first time we saw her change, and everybody on the show change, was Archer Vice. And you know, it wasn't a savory situation because Pam had a cocaine addiction, but it was the first time we got to see her and Archer's relationship really blossom. But I also loved doing Dreamland where Pam was gender neutral, and Danger Island Pam, because she was so gigantic and ripped.

Do you ever channel Pam Poovey in your real life?

Honestly, people wouldn't realize this, but I do get nervous being in front of crowds. So, if I have to do an audition or something, I do try to [be] like, 'what would Pam do in this situation?' and be just a little stronger. She's never scared of anything and she doesn't care what anybody thinks.

Like Pam, you also wear many hats, especially in the world of theater. When not voice-acting, you are a performer, teacher, creator, and director. What drives and motivates you?

Before I became an actor, I was always like, 'Man, I want to just do what I love for a living,'

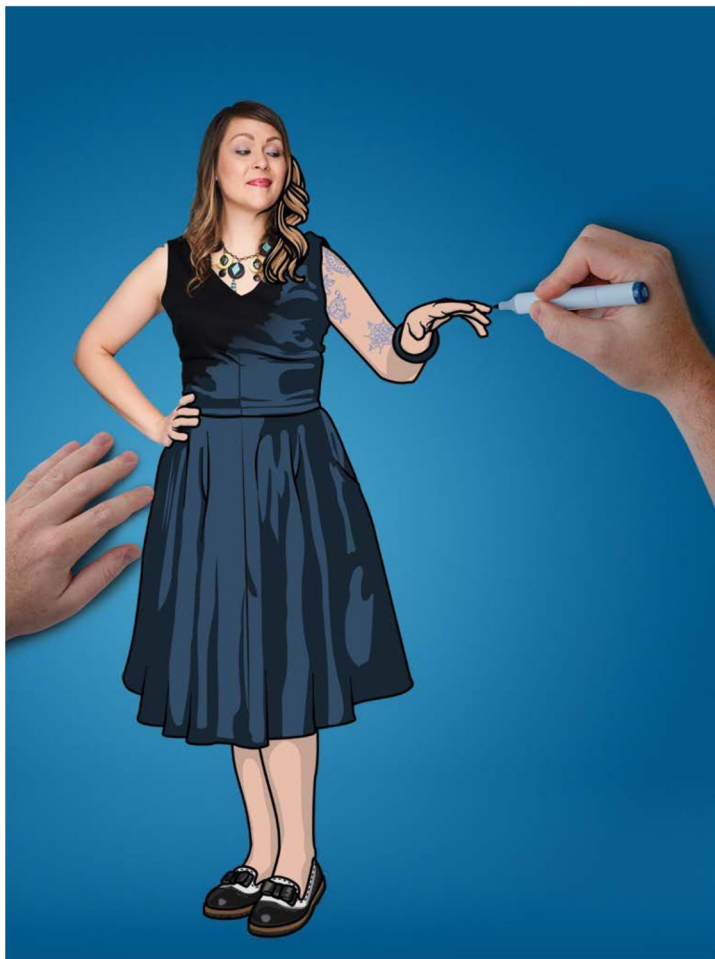
and then when I was able to start making money as an improviser and a performer, I have been so grateful that I get to be these things for a living.

You graduated with the degree in psychology. What stirred the change to improv and TV work?

I was studying science and I just needed a creative outlet. I didn't realize at the time that I was a creative person, I just knew that I needed something different. Then I found Dad's Garage and I saw a few shows there and was like, what is this magical thing that people are doing there? So, I started going there regularly as a hobby and then one day I was like, 'I'm gonna do it, I'm going to quit my job and become an improviser full time,' which is even worse than telling your parents you're going to be an actor because they don't even know what an improviser is!

How has Dad's Garage led to your work with Archer?

Dad's Garage is an improv theater in Atlanta, where I started basically performing. I started there in '99 just as a volunteer, like cleaning toilets and bartending and stuff. And then I took classes there. Christian Danley was an animator for Archer and he also worked at Dad's Garage, so they would sometimes come to see our improv shows. They saw me in a show and when Archer came along they just gave me the job. Dad's Garage has been a really important part of my life since I started. It's really like my creative home.





JP HARRIS

photo by jac justice

I was born shortly before Valentine's Day in 1983 in Montgomery, Alabama, to a small town, southern woman and an Air Force brat-turned-handyman.

I left home at the age of 14 on a Greyhound bus in the middle of the night. Believe you me, one of the first things I was going to do when I got off a few days later was find a way to get a tattoo, come hell or high water, to solidify my new independence. My first was bestowed to me shortly thereafter in a park in California, traded for a pack of GPC Menthol 100s. A wingnut named Izzy, wearing purple-lensed shades, suit pants and a fireman's raincoat gave it to me with a homemade machine, run off a 9V battery, with guitar string needles... "a fresh one for every customer," he bragged.

I never did cover it up. And just a few months later, at age 15, I found myself in a living room in Oakland letting an apprentice tattooer start practicing on me under the auspices of free work from her boyfriend in exchange. They broke up shortly after and there sat the scarred, blurry bulsh*t on my arm, but I wore it with pride.

I came up in a culture where the quality of tattoos didn't matter so much as the meaning, or simply having them at all. This was the mid-90s, well before kids born in the 90s started getting their faces and throats done before they hit 25. This was back when the term "job-stopper" (hand or face tats) actually held true; older train-rider punks I knew got their faces done so they could collect Social Security income, as almost nobody would hire you. Equal employment laws regarding tattoos weren't even a conversation yet.

More than just thinking we were badass, these tattoos were identifiers for my crew at large, whether or not you actually knew each other: punks could scope Nazi skinheads across a parking lot at a show. Anarchist squatters could spot drunk-punks likely to steal your backpack in a park, and so on and so forth...sometimes the lack of tattoos was enough to signal that someone was an undercover cop, or just simply didn't belong at a given place.

And so, many years ago, I adopted the sarcastic slogan "never trust anyone

without a few bad tattoos." Not that I've got something against people saving their money, putting real thought into what they want, and patronizing quality tattooers. Lord knows, I'm glad that the standards have risen in the last three or four decades. But a couple of scrawled, blurry lines tell me of a right of passage, of a time in someone's life where an ideal moved them so firmly that they cared not for the permanence of its visual representation.

The essence of "tattoo culture" itself, to me anyway, involves a statement to the world. A statement saying, "f*ck you if you don't like it. F*ck you if you think it's ugly. F*ck you if you won't hire me because of it. F*ck me for not giving a f*ck and permanently marking myself. Because in case it ain't clear, I don't give a f*ck."

And, at the very least, this statement says, "Question your eagerness to judge based on my appearance. Because I might actually be a nice young man after all." We exist in a society of first impressions, and tattoos to me aid in shattering that stigma.

DAV



E EAST & SHAKIN' STYLES P THINGS UP

photos by evan kaucher words by dove clark





Sit with people over 35 and people under 30 in the same room together, and chances are you'll have a full-scale argument on your hands in any given conversation about Hip Hop. Even if there is an agreement on lyrical skills, there continues to be a maddening debate about what is musically valuable to the culture. While Styles P was celebrating the release of The Lox' debut *Money, Power & Respect* album in 1998, Dave East was barely 10-years-old. By the time Styles hit the scene with his official solo debut *A Gangster and a Gentleman* in 2002, an adolescent East was preparing himself for a potential career in basketball.

In 2018, as Styles P released his ninth solo album, *G-Nost*, still riding high off of The Lox' 2016 album, *Filthy America... It's Beautiful*, Dave East was painstakingly preparing his official debut album on Def Jam. And then, all of a sudden, the two men united to bring the world *Beloved*, a surprise collaborative project that transcends the Gen-X / Millennial generation gap, both lyrically and sonically.

Dave, Styles comes from an era where trading bars is a normal thing for him, where you come from the time of spitting a hot 16 and moving on. How did it come together as far as you switching up your style to trade bars? Dave East: Honestly, I was thirsty to do that with him. Just being a fan of him and Kiss doing it. I didn't want it to be a traditional 16, hook, 16, hook. One of the elements of his career that always stood out to me was his back and forth, in and out. So, I said I wanted to do that sh't, too. It just came out. Each beat we were getting on it was natural, fluid.

What about you Styles? Did you feel like it was something that would naturally happen? Styles P: Everything just really fell into place organically. We got in there, just said we're sparring, and we were just focused, zoning out and having a good time and the music was coming out a certain way. Once you start something and the bar is set, and then you do it again and again, there's no up and down, it just goes up. It was fun because he is the new face of what we do. He's the face of street MCs, especially on the east coast. It's like playing with the young baller in the league. I'm the old vet. Then it's like we're trying to put on for our city, too. We are just trying to put on for our craft and our city at the same time. It was super-organic and flowed very smoothly.

How do you feel you were able to bridge the gap between the generations? Styles P: It's a respect and a craft. We share the same craft. Usually, when you and a person share the same craft, it means you're passionate about it and go hard at it. Whether it's sports, white collar [career], blue collar, music, poetry, film, journalism, whatever the field of work is, there's something about respecting the craft where a true craftsman doesn't look at age. You just look at your craft. As an older craftsman, everything is a young man's sport and you want to make sure you make your statements and put your foot down when you're saying something. I think when you just really stick with the craft and to what you do and focus it all pans out. **Dave East:** I feel like when the focus is the actual craft, the age doesn't matter. I can't tell no difference in him from back in the day to now. I can't be like "Oh, he sounds older now. Hell, nah." There's no difference. I don't think age has anything to do with it.

What do you feel is so important about New York Hip Hop right now? And what do you want people to take away from this project? Styles P: I think the project is New York Hip Hop. I think when you hear and listen to it, it's all-around Hip Hop, but it's definitely New York Hip Hop. With that being said, we set the new bar and precedence for no matter what the age group is. Get

your money and do whatever you want in your time, but if you ever have that feeling in your gut to where you just want to represent your own, that's cool. Hip Hop in 2018 has been a pretty dope year in general from East to West to South. People have been putting out real banging projects in 2018. I think what you tell people is stick to your gut and make your sound. I think it [Hip Hop] is in a great place and could go only go up. **Dave East:** One-hundred percent.

Do you feel like Tekashi 69 saying he's the King of New York put the city in a competitive mind state? Dave East: I'm not gonna say he single handedly did it. I feel like he has a lot to do with the younger people feeling that way. I feel like it's always been differences in rap in New York. You had The Lox and you had Onyx. You had different energies, dudes rapping dope, telling stories, and there were different lanes in it. I feel that's what dope right now, that everybody's not just saying, "To be a New York artist you have to rap this way." I feel like it's dope that it's being spread across the board right now. If you don't log into Instagram, you won't see him saying that. You gotta go online to see and hear these things. I feel like those are two different worlds. You gotta mix 'em because we live in an Internet world. But, with me, I like to stand on what I stand on and represent what I represent. *Beloved* is a testament to that with me and him. We both caught that wave and just ran with it.

There is definitely a resurgence of great brands you guys are affiliated with, like Def Jam and Roc-A-Fella. Do you feel this new era is creating more longevity for them? Styles P: I believe there's a chance for it. I feel like there were stronger crews back in the day. You had Ruff Ryders, Murder Inc., Roc-a-fella. They were a part of the label, but they were their own crew. I feel like now there are a lot more independent artists who don't have to depend on the label. With you knowing that, I feel like that takes from those labels being the dynasties they might have been back in the day. But for the people who are on the labels waving that flag and going hard, they can have them. They can come back around. **Dave East:** My answer is kinda weird. I feel like that's a good and dope thing only if they are gonna respect the artists' brands. If they aren't going to do that with building their artists' brand and looking at it as a brand partnership then it's a waste of time. RocNation is not an old one. I like them because their system is not integrated, it's up to date. There are a couple of places in the industry where things are moving kind of fast and more up to date. Every label out there from old to new to independent, should just respect the artist's brand, too. Especially if you got a good, talented, intelligent artist. Even if he's not as hip on his game as he should be, respect and look at him as a brand too that you're doing business with. I think what hurt a lot of labels before is the way they started treating artists like microwaves. They start throwing anything out there. No A&R is behind it, no story in it, and no care to the package or artist. If its gonna get back to that...we don't need it. But if it's gonna be where everybody's getting smart and respecting brand partnership, perfect.

Dave: Speaking of old to new...are there any old lattoos you regret getting? Styles P: Not really. I do have, "Hoop for the best, and expect the worst." I don't expect the worst, I just expect life. I don't regret getting it, because at the time it fit perfectly. **Dave East:** Nope, because when I look at them they all bring me back to a time in my life. I might have waited, because I got a lot of tats when I was dead broke. I had to mess with the tat dude around the corner and the work he had and when I got a couple dollars I could get some official tat people. So I might have waited. I would've waited until I got a dooper tattoo artist.





LAUREN SANDERSON

From motivational speaker to R&B songstress, LA-based rapper is shaking up the music scene
photos by evan kaucher words by tess adamakos



The incredible 22-year-old Lauren Sanderson started as a YouTube personality sensation and motivational speaker out of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Her love of presenting brought her to the stage, where she delivered a TEDx Talk, spreading her message to "stay positive 'n' stay you", at the age of 19. While wanting to continue to broadcast her message, she knew she wanted to incorporate her love of hip hop, as well as the love of being untethered to any rules. So Sanderson transformed her speeches into raps, and since her strikingly unique and raw musical metamorphosis, she hasn't looked back. Before being signed by Epic Records, she fearlessly managed herself under a fake name for five years. Booking her own shows, she sold out an 18-city tour, and gained almost 100,000 Instagram followers. There's not much Lauren Sanderson can't do. It's a matter of whether she wants to or not.

Your music has always been open and honest do you think that comes with having a YouTube personality background? I think I'm just an honest, open person in general. I've always been that way. The only way to inspire people, for me, is to be my real, raw self.

You started as a motivational speaker before music. What motivates you? What motivates me is creation. Pure creation and the freeness of it. The idea that you can literally go anywhere with art is super inspiring to me. For example, if I'm in a sad mood, I can literally create a song, a piece of clothing, or a video that depicts that emotion. Same with happy, excitement, blah blah blah. Somehow, it all means different things to different people. I think that's insane.

Which of your tattoos is your favorite? I think I like my neck tattoo, "don't panic." It symbolizes the anxiety that I used to have, and is kind of sarcastic poke at myself. Like, when the whole world is against you, don't panic!

How did you pick the EP title "Don't Panic?" I actually got "don't panic" tattooed on my neck way before I knew it was going to be the title of my EP. I got it right when I moved to LA, signed to the label, and started feeling the pressure of being in the industry. It was just a reminder that everything will always be alright, always. It's cool going to gas stations and sh*t and the cashier will see it and kind of laugh to themselves like, "yeah, you're right."

How do you feel about fans getting Lauren Sanderson-inspired tattoos? I love it. I think it's f*cking sick when I see my lyrics and sh*t tattooed on people. Super surreal to be honest.

"Don't Panic" opens with the desire to be disconnected from the stressful lifestyle of a musical artist. How do you disconnect from it? Feeling the stress from the industry kind of goes in and out all the time. My mentality and attitude really directs that energy and pressures from the outside-world though. If I wake up and I'm like, "I'm gonna have a good day," most of the time I do. I don't think there's a way to FULLY disconnect from it. I just gotta remember to have fun with it and be myself. That's all.

In what ways would you like to help shape the music industry better than you found it? I want to make the music industry a more real place. Be more real with your fans, be more real with your art, and be more real with yourself. Music right now to me is boring. I'm tired of hearing the same style and the same lyrics from so many artists. Tell your REAL story the way YOU want to tell it, and stop keeping yourself in some made-up box. Be more you.

As for female empowerment, who is your icon? Ooooh, my icon. I feel like right now it's Lady Gaga. I think this would really surprise my supporters but, the more I get into the industry, the more I realize females are NOT being their true selves. I love that Lady Gaga has always been raw, and weird, and done crazy sh*t like meat dresses and crazy makeup and that kinda stuff.

If you had to get a portrait tattoo of someone, who would it be? Abraham Lincoln.

How do you feel about "significant other" tattoos? Do you have any tattoos dedicated to a love? Significant other tattoos are cool. I have a tattoo with one of my ex-girlfriends but I'm not really the person to regret that kinda stuff. I'm more like, 'yeah that happened, and even if we're not together anymore, I appreciate that part of my life.' By the way, they're cool unless you get each other's names. Even then, whatever. Get whatever you want, we all die anyway.

Your EP ends with, "stay true to who you are and don't do it quietly." What is your advice for best achieving this? For me, before I do anything, I always think, "Do I REALLY want to do this? Will this make me happy? Do I only want to do this because other people think I SHOULD?" I think a lot of us get stuck in the pattern of doing things we don't actually care to do, or do things that make us unhappy because we feel like we can't do what WE want. For whatever reason, I just follow my heart and my gut and do that.

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INSIDE How Far is Tattoo Far?

photos by peter roessler words by tess adamakes

America's favorite "meatball" on Jersey Shore, Nicole "Snooki" Polizzi, and TV Land's *Younger*, Nico Tortorella, host MTV's show, *How Far Is Tattoo Far?* At nine pm on Thursdays, better known to Jersey Shore fans as "Jerzdays," you can watch Nicole drink wine and Nico tease guests under the needle, fueling the anticipation for blindfolded "victims" to wait out the surprise tattoo-choice that friends, couples, family members, and frenemies pick for one another. The US adaptation is based off the the UK's hit show, *Just Tattoo of Us*, and is already currently casting for a possible second season.

The two bond over coming from big Italian families, loving tattoo culture, and the opportunity to be able to share the intimacy of two people picking surprise tattoos for one another. The perfect pair even finish each other's sentences. As Tortorella said, "Nicole and I together are the perfect combination of drag queen and Jersey Shore."

Polizzi started her tattoo journey on her 18th birthday, when her dad let her get wings on her lower back. Polizzi loves what she fondly calls her "tramp stamp." Nine tattoos later, she regrets none of them. All of them were done while drunk. "They hurt so bad, I have to be drunk or I cry," Polizzi said.

While many of the the Jersey Shore cast's tattoos are religious, a majority of Nicole's art is done in the name of motherhood. She has a squirrel for her son,

Lorenzo, whom she called "Squirrel" when he was little, as well as a "mommy tattoo" on her right arm, and her children's initials, "G" and "L."

On *Younger*, Nico Tortorella plays Josh, a tattoo artist, and says that there is some overlap in playing that character and hosting *How Far is Tattoo Far?* "I feel like a lot of me is in Josh and obviously all of me is in what I'm doing on the show," Tortorella said. "Hosting a show like this requires it to be all you and is just our hearts across the board."

Tortorella was first called to be the host of *How Far is Tattoo Far?* "We started floating names around for the co-host and Nicole's name came up," Tortorella said. "I've been just a huge fan of hers for forever and it was a no-brainer," he said.

Polizzi adds, "It's like we've known each other our entire lifetime, if not more."

Tortorella's first tattoo is on their back, and while they has plans to get it covered up, they doesn't have any regrets. Tortorella does, however, admit that they wish they had spent more time looking for an artist.

"At the end of the day, our bodies have been really important journals to us," Tortorella said. Having no say in the tattoo artist for participants, let alone the tattoo itself, on *How Far is Tattoo Far*, Polizzi and





Tortorella feel a sense of relief for the guests, as the show's team of tattoo artists are all extremely talented. The team of tattoo artists include: Courtney Raimondi, Tiffany Perez, Melody Mitchell, Dollarz Tatu, Kevin Laroy and Travis Ross.

"They always make the tattoos beautiful," Polizzi said. "Even if it's something gross, they always make it look pretty good."

"A beautiful penis," Tortorella adds.

For both Tortorella and Polizzi, the most impressive part of hosting *How Far is Tattoo Far?* is "learning more about trust than tattoos" and how the connection between two people going through this experience, can be just as permanent as the ink on their bodies.

Tortorella said, "I learned more about the way people operate as a whole, shooting this show for two weeks, than anything else I've ever worked on."

Polizzi adds, "There are so many personalities and so many different ways to react to a situation." Being put through the ringer of trust is something these hosts don't even think they could endure. However, if having to pick a co-star that could choose the surprise tattoo, Nicole, without hesitation, elects Jenni "JWoww" Farley.

"We are best friends. We would tease each other that it's terrible, but I think we would do something very motherly and nice to represent our children," Polizzi said.

"Imagine f*cking Ron picking a tattoo for you," Tortorella teased. "You know it'd be a horse penis coming out of my butt," Polizzi said. "I'm not kidding. He would massacre me."

As for a *Younger* co-star that could pick a blindfolded-surprise tattoo for Tortorella, Nico praises Molly Barnard, who plays Lauren Heller on the show. "She's just hyper-intelligent and really sweet, and would pick something political and sentimental, all at the same time," they said.

Tortorella reflects on being thrown into the emotional whirlwind that the participants go through. "I've never seen one person go through so many emotions in one day than the people that come onto the show," he said. "And ourselves included. Nicole and I are empathic; we feel everything and absorb everything."

Polizzi adds that they cried and laughed "more than some of the people on the show."

The hosts note that if the emotional rollercoaster does turn south, security is on set. Tortorella and Polizzi also make sure to separate themselves from the "tattoo blame" when it comes time for the reveal.

"Every time, we're like, 'Just remember this wasn't us, your friend picked this for you, and we're just here to host the show,'" Polizzi said. "I feel like we have to remind everyone, like, I'm not apart of this..."

"...Even with ourselves," Tortorella adds. "Because, I'm a theater-trained actor. Like what am I doing? I'm like f*cking signing off on all of these tattoos, saying, 'How did I get here?'" However, even with the separation that the hosts happily impose, there is a part of the intimacy that the two do share with the guests.

"Honestly... this show delivers such an important sense of

humility, especially in my own life, that I think that we need it in 2018, given this political and social landscape," Tortorella said. "And, we get to show up to work and be ridiculous with each other and put silly tattoos on people and share that with the world. People may think it's low brow, but it's really important to get some of that in every once in a while."

For Tortorella, as *How Far is Tattoo Far?* serves more value than just filling a slot on MTV's schedule, they are thankful for the show's strong "representation and visibility of the queer community."

As the show is a fun and uplifting break from TV drama, Polizzi also feels its stressless mood has helped her transition from reality TV star to tattoo show host seamlessly. "It's loose. It's not like you're hosting the news, you know?" Polizzi said. "It's not like it has to be structured a certain way. We get to be ourselves and we get to be goofy. It's so natural and easy."

While the duo help foster the spontaneity in tattoos on the show, Polizzi feels that tattoos should always tell a story. "I feel like there should always be a meaning, not just, 'Oh, I just got this flower to get the flower,'" she said. "Obviously the tattoos on the show are a customized telling of a story, and how people feel about each other. These tattoos are like telling secrets, getting stuff off their chest that they can't normally communicate."

As for upcoming tattoos, Tortorella wants to keep working on his sleeve, and wants to get his legs and stomach done. He also has a big back-piece planned.

Most of Tortorella's work is done by tattoo artist Po "Po Po" Zhang at Inked HQ. His left-arm sleeve is dedicated to his family, whether the art is conceptual or actual portraits. On his inner bicep, Tortorella has a mother lion holding a lion cub for his own mom. Tortorella also cherishes his portrait of his grandmother on his forearm.

"She's a f*cking asshole, but I love her so much," he said.

Polizzi says she definitely wants to add to her leopard and zebra galaxy tattoos that run all the way around her back, but jokes that for any more tattoos, she has to get them approved by her husband.

Both Tortorella and Polizzi come from big Italian families, and love spending the holidays with them. Tortorella said, "A main holiday tradition for the Tortorella family includes playing poker every Thanksgiving and Christmas."

"My uncle would show up with \$100 in singles for each person. We would play poker all night long until somebody would win it all. Good old Italian family. Lots of alcohol and cigarettes," Tortorella said.

While Polizzi's family doesn't do any traditions, she says they do the holidays huge. "At my house, there's tons of food, tons of presents, and a lot of people," Polizzi said. "My mother-in-law does the Seven Fishes, unlike me. I'd do, like, pizza." Polizzi laughs, "Yeah, here's your fish."

Being pregnant with her first child, Lorenzo, around Christmas-time had added to the holiday magic for Polizzi.

"I think it was New Year's Eve I conceived," Polizzi laughed. "Wasted".





JOHN COOPER

Dad, Husband, Metalhead, Christian, and Skillet's frontman, John Cooper, has found that faith centers everything he does in life. Whether it is through his business or his art, "everything I do is an offshoot of my faith." Including his love of comic books.

photos by chine villatoro words by tess adamakis

"I remember when I was getting signed by Lava Records, Jason Flom said, 'What does it mean to be a Christian band?' And I said, 'Well you'll never hear stories about Skillet not showing up to a concert because someone was too wasted,'" Cooper said.

"People always say, 'You guys are always on time for interviews and dependable.' And I'm not saying anybody that's religious is punctual. I don't mean that to say that, but for me, it's been very much about keeping your life in order."

Cooper said art can speak religiously to him, even if it wasn't intended that way. The vice versa is how Skillet has reached so many listeners, especially those outside of the Christian community.

Without having Bible-verse lyrics, the band's faith does come through in Skillet's music. In fact, the Christianity in Skillet's music is so broad, that some Christians are offended about the band's lack of the "wholesome look." The band's faith thematically shines through Skillet's lyrics. Principally, through the theme of hope.

"Even when we sing about dark things or struggles in life, there is always a bit of hope, and it can hopefully inspire people to see the brighter side of life, and see their worth as a person," Cooper said.

Cooper noted that the term "Christian music" means different things to different people, and he feels he has spent a lot of time "over the last decade" trying to explain that Christian music doesn't have to just be for Christian people. "You can still relate to a Skillet song if you're not religious in some kind of way." Even atheists have come up to Cooper to tell him they "get his music."

Other than lyrical themes, Cooper said the main difference between Christian rock and rock is the band members' lifestyle.

"You can listen to Skillet and never have any idea that it was Christian music. But if you were to see Skillet perform or see the way we interact with fans, there would be a noticeable difference," Cooper explained. "There aren't very many rock shows where there's not a lot of cursing or sexuality and promiscuity. Those kinds of things are probably what people would notice even more than the lyrics."

However, Cooper said Skillet doesn't feel out of place touring with bands who do behave in the "typical" rock and roll light.

"I've been lucky to have a lot of friends that paint me with the same respect of, 'Hey we're not a Christian band, but we don't care what you guys believe, we're going to bring you on tour anyways,'" Cooper said. "I don't expect other people to live the way that I live, and I don't judge people for what they do. But I always respected the people that took a bit of a risk on Skillet like that."

For Cooper, it's about the music. "That is why we go out with other bands even though they think something different than what we think. It doesn't matter. They get to sing what they want to sing and we get to sing what we want to sing," Cooper said. "Music should bring people together, really."

Cooper recalls falling in love with Michael Jackson's music at a young age. "My mom was a piano and a voice teacher, so I didn't know that I wasn't allowed to listen to rock music," Cooper said. He, of course, heard



The King of Pop at a friend's house.

"I was singing 'Beat It' when I came home and my mom gave me the holiest butt-whopping for singing the devil's music," Cooper laughed. When Cooper was in fifth grade he heard Metallica's *Master of Puppets* album for the first time, and admits, "it was just all over." The heaviness was exciting and freeing, and "something I never heard before."

At 15-years-old, Cooper started writing music and learning how to perform while playing in all of the coffee shops that would listen, with his first band, Seraph. While his parents wouldn't have approved of his musical tastes, his faith was still very much a part of him. "I wasn't going to strip clubs, but I still liked Mötley Crüe," Cooper teased.

Originally, Skillet was a three-piece band. Fittingly, it all started in a small church in Cooper's hometown in Memphis, Tennessee. The original members were in different bands, but Cooper's pastor suggested the soon-to-be original Skillet members meet. "My pastor said, 'hey, I think you would do good writing music with this other guitarist. Why don't you start a side project?' And somebody said, 'Yeah call it Skillet. It'd be like cooking, taking ingredients

out of different bands and throwing them together,'" Cooper said. "I never thought it would last, but that's how it went for two, three years."

As the years progressed and the others wanted to get off the road, Skillet had continued to evolve. Alongside John Cooper as lead vocals and bass, Skillet rocks Jen Ledger on the drums, Seth Morrison on lead guitar, and, now wife, Korey Cooper, on rhythm guitar. Skillet has released ten albums and has been awarded two Grammys.

"A part of what I think is really cool about Skillet is that we're definitely very much a mesh of different kinds of music: rock and metal, even pop and electronic and industrial rock," Cooper said. "After 20 years of it, we aren't afraid to try new sounds and write in a different way."

New sounds, meaning Cooper's new metal side-project, Fight the Fury. Fight the Fury isn't a Christian band, but includes Skillet guitarist, Seth Morrison. Signed with Atlantic Records, Fight the Fury also includes drummer Jared Ward and guitarist, John Panzer III. The band has recently released its debut EP and is touring Russia.

Cooper started Fight the Fury to stick to his metal influences. Fight the Fury explores the darker side of Cooper's music, and reverberates metal powerhouses like Iron Maiden, Metallica, and Korn.

Cooper feels liberated with this project, and is excited to break out of the boxes Skillet might have put him in. "Sometimes, it is helpful for people to have labels for something, so they know where to file it. However, Fight the Fury is just about the music and it's really just about cutting loose."

To fans asking Cooper if by starting this non-Christian band, he is straying from his faith, Cooper says: "I am still a Christian, and that is never going to change."

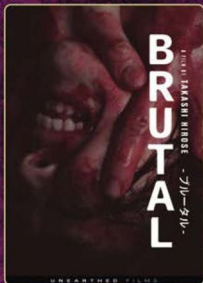
Although not your first impression, Cooper said he is very conservative about "the way he plays his life." He had waited until he was 30 to get his first tattoo, which is the "Forgiven" tattoo on his forearm. "I thought, if I could make one statement to the world that sums up how I feel about life, it would be that statement. It is about my faith and about just being happy, and that I've been forgiven, with a clean slate."

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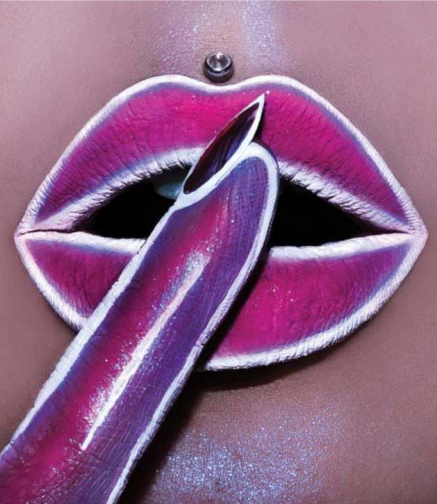
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With over 1.2 million followers on Instagram, Jazmina Daniel has the most famous pout on social media by a long shot. Born in Australia and discovered in Los Angeles, Daniel has quickly become a household name in the world of Instagram makeup. However, there's far more to this influencer than meets the eye. At the age of 14, Daniel was diagnosed with a brain tumor and put her life as a normal teenager on pause. But instead of letting her condition get the best of her, she took the time at home to develop her work as an artist and soon develop a fierce love for beauty. Today, her work has been seen by millions online and she's lent her lips to major cosmetics companies such as Jeffrey Star, Gerard, Ofra and Coloured Raine Cosmetics. We had the opportunity to sit down with the makeup maven to learn where her love for art began, which lip art put her on the map and what fans can expect in the New Year.



When did you first develop an interest in art and makeup? I always loved art—drawing and painting was something I did everyday. And then I developed a love for makeup in my early teens.

What inspired you to start creating lip art? I first started doing lip art after I was diagnosed with a brain tumor at 14 (which was removed at 16). I had to leave school and spent every day at home. I focused on art to help me through it all. Slowly I started experimenting with makeup in a more artistic way by painting scenes on my face. That turned into trying to paint on a smaller canvas—my lips.

What piece do you consider to be your big break and put you on the map as a makeup artist? I definitely feel like it was The Little Mermaid lip art piece, with a few others that followed. I had also posted a Titanic-inspired lip art around the same time, which became controversial as people were sensitive toward the tragedy. Those first few intricate pieces definitely were my big break.

What is your process for creating a piece and how long do they typically take? I usually try to plan out lip art, but as an artist, whenever the inspiration hits whether I'm working on something else or I'm watching TV, I straight

away run with the inspo and start working on my lip art. I try and eat beforehand, as some of my more detailed lip arts can take up to 8 hours. Sometimes, I might have to start over a few times as I'm using makeup, especially with liquid to matte lipsticks that can crack and flake with multiple layers. Like any artist, I like to try and get it perfect.

Out of the pieces you've created so far, which piece is your favorite and which was the most challenging to create? I really love the famous fine art-inspired lip arts that I've done. They have definitely been the most difficult because I really wanted to try and capture the artist's vision and feel of their pieces, but also have my own vibe to it.

In addition to being known as a makeup artist, you're also recognized as a plus-size model. What made you decide to make body positivity a priority on your social media?

I felt I was constantly hiding myself on social media because I'd see other influencers and makeup artists post photos looking completely flawless. I honestly felt like I didn't fit in and it got to a point where I really hated feeling that way because I've never been one to care about "fitting" in. I did, however, want to see more women who were my size and thought, if I felt that way, I'm sure many of my followers felt the same way. So I wanted to

help represent that all bodies are beautiful bodies.

When did you get your first tattoo and do you have any tattoos related to beauty? I got my first tattoo when I was 16 in Canada with my mum. The minute that needle hit I just remember thinking it was the most relaxing feeling. I have three beauty-related tattoos: I have lipsticks on my right foot, a woman's half face on my left foot applying mascara, and a skeleton on my right forearm applying lipstick, but its reflection is a beautiful woman.

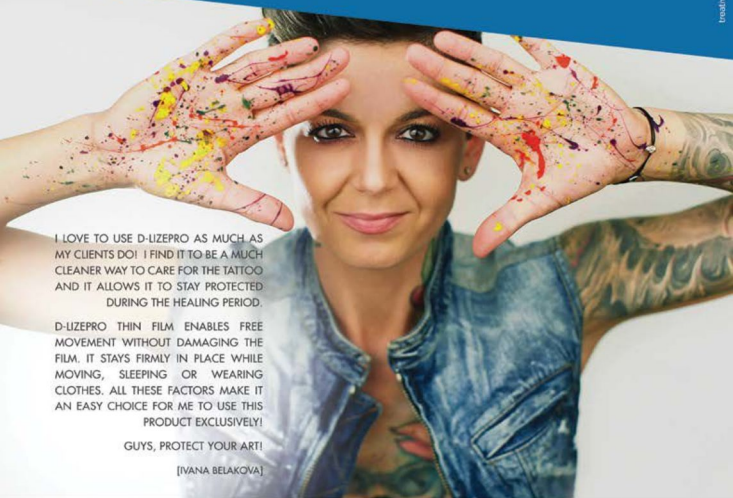
What is your favorite tattoo and what are your tattoo plans for the future? My favorite is an Audrey Hepburn portrait I got a few months ago. I watched all her movies on repeat when I was unwell with the brain tumor. I seriously love her. I really would like to finish both my sleeves and would love a leg sleeve and a back piece. I really like to think about all of my tattoos and have a meaning behind each one of them.

What's up next for Jazmina Daniel? I have some exciting projects coming up, especially in the New Year. I wish I could reveal more on those, but you'll just have to wait and see.

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ALL MY LOVE

Ryan and Arlo Talk Superpowers, City Life and the Future of Tattooing

When it comes to leading artistic innovators in the industry today, Ryan Ashley Malarkey and Arlo DiCristina are at the head of the pack. Despite only working in the industry for less than ten years each, they've helped to revolutionize their respected styles through meticulous technical application and cutting-edge artistic prowess. Not to mention, if the tattoo world had a Brangelina, it would be these two. And, if we're being honest, Rylo has a much better ring to it.

photos by peter roessler words by devon preston











How has your life changed post *Ink Master* as a tattoo artist, business woman, public figure and human being?

Ryan: To be honest, everything has changed. Every aspect of my life has done a 180 in the past few years, but I'm not sure if it's directly due to winning *Ink Master* or just growing up in general. But either way, one thing is for sure, the last few years have been a wild ride of facing many obstacles, experiencing new aspects of life and a crash course in becoming the woman I am today.

Before tattooing, a part of your life was spent in MMA. What lessons did fighting teach you that would help you to become a successful artist and business owner?

Arlo: Discipline and practice. You've got to do a bunch of stupid, simple stuff to build skills that you can use on big dope pieces. With any type of MMA, we drill very basic moves and they would translate into complex stuff down the road. You need to be able to break things down and sharpen those skills before jumping right into bigger stuff. And competitiveness for sure, but healthy competitiveness. You want to do better and it's not about wanting other people to do worse.

In the past, you've spoken at a number of seminars about the technology available to tattoo artists. How do you think the tattoo industry has changed in terms of sharing information and ideas between artists?

Ryan: Honestly, any change is always uncomfortable and progress is hard most of the time, but it's worth it. Progression in our industry has changed the game and allowed artists ability to gain time for their creative process, bringing on a quality of art that is debatably unparalleled. Tattooing is slowly moving into the realm of fine art and finally, with some thanks to technology, the artistry coming out of modern-day tattooing is among the most impressive art forms in the world. I'm so proud to stand beside so many artists and call them my peers, knowing that pieces being created today will someday be regarded as points of history.

Recently, you've uprooted your life and your business to live in New York City. How would you describe the tattoo community in NYC and the type of artists who thrive in this city?

Ryan: Coming back to NYC hasn't been that big of an adjustment considering I lived here for years before I tattooed. I went "home" to learn how to tattoo in the beautiful picturesque cocoon of northeast Pennsylvania, but coming back wasn't difficult because NYC has always been a second home for me. What's different about this chapter in life is that I'm finding myself surrounded by super-talented, ultra-inspiring artists I'm lucky enough to call my friends and it's pushing me to become stronger as an artist myself. But it's all about balance. In Pennsylvania, I'm inspired by the beauty of the landscape; in New York, I'm inspired by the strength of the artistic community, and while traveling, I'm inspired by the grandeur of the world and how both big and small everything becomes.

Today, would you describe tattooing as a service industry and why?

Arlo: When I started out tattooing, I feel like it was

more of a service job. At the very beginning, I was more so catering to people and what they wanted their design to be. But then, as I got established and people started coming to me for my art, I came to a point where I didn't see my career as a service job any longer more. I think once you develop a name and/or a specific style, then you get away from calling tattooing a service industry.

When someone says "the future of tattooing," what comes to mind in terms of technique, artistry and the industry at large?

Ryan: I know that this is a question that Arlo and I talk about all the time in terms of where the tattoo industry is going. I think what we would both like to see is for it to go in more of a fine art direction, where tattoos are considered designer collector pieces and regarded with more respect.

What personality traits or qualities do you believe a tattoo artist needs to have and why?

Arlo: I think it depends. I think the job of a tattooer is changing so significantly that the personality required is developing and changing as well. Tattoo shops aren't all like hardcore street shops where you need to be a badass and be able to defend yourself. You know, I think that personality is up for debate because people don't choose their tattooer based on personality, people choose their tattooer based on their artwork. That being said, I think in terms of longevity, keeping your clients for the long run and developing a good reputation as a respected artist, I think you need to be understanding, open-minded and willing to work with not only your clients, but with other tattooers.

As a shop owner, what advice would you give to other artists for opening and running a successful tattoo shop?

Arlo: If you're an artist, you need to get someone to be your right hand because you should not be running the shop. I basically had the pieces of the puzzle and helped put them together. But now it's someone else's and they're running it.

If you could have a super power to help your work as a tattoo artist, what would it be and why?

Ryan: I would want the ability to stop the clock. I could spend like 26 hours on a four-by-four area of the skin and not be worried about rushing it or have anxiety that your client may tap any minute.

Arlo: No, I put on headphones and ignore that sh*t. Like I just tattooed my boy and I didn't want to know what was in his mind because I know what he's vocalizing to me 90 percent of the time. Which is, "Ow, this hurts!" So if I were able to be in his head, it'd be even worse and I wouldn't be able to focus on anything else.

As an artist who works in surrealism, you're required to have a pretty expansive imagination. What's the last crazy thought or idea you've had, that didn't involve creating art for a tattoo?

Arlo: I really want to swim with whale shark. If I could go to Alaska, get a dry suit and be able to a snorkel by a whale, that would be awesome.







INDIA LOVE

The 22-year-old Rising Hip Hop Star Talks will.i.am, Instagram and Family

photo by anthony steven words by devon preston

At just 22 years of age, India Love has already accomplished more than most could hope for in their lifetime. She began her career as an influencer, amassing a staggering 3.7 million followers on Instagram and earning her very own television show on BET. Since then, she's made her debut as a hip hop artist under will.i.am's personal mentorship. And while Love has both fame and followers, she's managed to stay grounded and uses her platform to spread the messages of self-love and Black girl magic. We caught up with Love at will's Los Feliz studio to learn how the phrase "God's Will" has made a monumental impact on both her personal and professional lives.

Where did your career as an influencer begin and what was your kind of earliest claim to fame online? My earliest claim to fame online would be my Tumblr days. I would just go to grocery stores and take all of the bags of chips off the shelf, then take pictures with them. I felt like people would think that's creative and it started there. People really started gravitating toward me and relating to a lot of the things that I posted. I was just taking it with a grain of salt because I didn't know how much influence I really had. But knowing how much influence I have now, I would.

How do you think that your persona online changed over time? I think it changed dramatically over time, because it all came through life experiences, learning different lessons and growing through things that I didn't even know I had to go through. Just being a young lady in this industry, having the spotlight on me was very hard. All of my mistakes and all the things I was going through were put under a microscope unlike a regular girl my age.

What was your first tattoo and how was it received by your family? My first tattoo was hidden right under my armpit. I got it there specifically so that I could hide it from my mom. It says "God's Will 01/01/00." My mom had a baby in 2000, but he didn't make it and she named him Will. I felt like that was God's will and I've always had that in my head. I wanted that tattooed because I remember that day like it was yesterday. But I have my miracle little brother now who's 12, so I'm grateful for that.

Growing up to now, family plays a really important part in your life. What are the best and the worst parts of being in a family that's in the public eye? The worst part would be the expectations of others put on you. We did like reality show on BET, which was great, but now everybody's like, "you only did one season?" But it was our choice not to do another season, we wanted to take a more cautious route and keep our family bond without having it misconstrued in some reality show. And then the best part, it's our family bond in general. There's no slacker in the family. Everybody's on their own grind trying to hustle and mark our last name on this world.

As the youngest of four sisters, how have your older siblings helped you to become the woman you are today? My sisters had a lot to do with my confidence. My oldest sister, Brooke, was like my second mom. They all let me know my purpose, why I'm here, and they never

want me to slack off, and I do the same for them. They're the best motivators ever and it's incredible.

While you got your start as an influencer and a model, you've since become a rising star in hip hop. What made you decide to pursue a career in music? will.i.am presented me the opportunity after I did his music video, "Boys & Girls." That was our first introduction and then, weeks later, he sat me down and asked me to be the brand ambassador for his Apple headphones. He told me, "I see more in you than you probably see in yourself. I would love to bring that out of you if you trust me with this journey. I would love to try to help you to be an artist." After that, I took a step back because I'm very shy and it was hard for me to get behind the mic. Then, when I agreed, he put me in the studio literally 30 minutes later and I made my first song "Loco."

What makes will.i.am a good mentor? First of all, his life experiences; he is very wise. He's almost like a computer with all of the information that's stored in his brain. When he talks to you, you almost want to write every little thing down. I soak it all in like a sponge because I appreciate him having the patience and the time to be in the studio with me. He could put me in there with different producers, but he's the one who's behind the computer helping me and giving feedback. I always appreciate him taking the time for me, because I know he's super busy.

What has he taught you about maintaining a lasting career in music? Patience is huge, because in this generation everyone's attention span is short. People don't really have the patience to see the drawn out story. But will really instilled it in me that it's important as an artist to give them a buildup and to show them your development, rather than just trying to go for the hit every time. They need to see your growth as an artist to know that you're really trying to be a rising star and not just make it to the top; just be this whatever person.

What inspired you to talk about self love and self confidence in your song, "Talk Yo Shit?" I got bullied throughout elementary, middle school and high school—both on and off the Internet. It was very important for me to let others know because, like I say in my song, that was the most important lesson I've learned in my life. It's very important to have it rooted in your mind and in your heart that no one can tell you anything about yourself and that you're beautiful your own way. So this song is really about self motivation.

Coming up, what can fans expect in terms of future collaborations and new music? Right now, I'm strictly working with will as far as the collaboration thing goes. I'm still developing myself and I want to be confident in my own sound. will and I have a plan where I'm releasing a song and a visual every month consistently. There's never going to be a time where I don't have a visual with my single, because I just feel like I'm a visual artist. I don't want them to just hear my song, I want them to see it and feel it.



ADAM 22

Adam22 Talks Scouting Hip Hop Talent, the Future of Social Media and Face Tattoos
photo by scott marceau text devon preston

Adam Grandmaison, known the world over as Adam22, became one of the leader hip hop podcasters nearly overnight. He's recognized for scouting and profiling some of today's leading rappers, from Lil Yachty to XXXTentacion to 6ix9ine, right before they made it to the mainstream charts. However, while Grandmaison has had a love for hip hop since a young age, his success as a music interviewer occurred almost by happenstance after one of his videos went viral. Since then, he's continuously pulled in diverse talent throughout the worlds of hip hop, social media, streetwear, etc.—and he's only on chapter three of what we expect will be a long lasting career in content creation.

When did you first develop No Jumper? I first created a BMX blog called "The Come Up." I started out in 2006 and was basically the first BMX website that aggregated videos and news. And after doing that for like 10 years I started to get bored and I began creating more YouTube content in terms of making blogs and podcasts. I got really into the idea of social media and trying to expand like that. Then almost right away, one of the first interviews I did was with this rapper Xavier Wulf, who I'm good friends with, and it was so much bigger than all the BMX interviews I'd done at the time. So, it launched my entire career to a different level and got me really excited about doing more types of content. It wasn't really supposed to be a rap podcast at first, but it slowly became the thing I was known for and at a certain point, I had to double down on it.

Beyond Xavier Wulf, which other guests put you on the map as a podcast host? I remember there was a specific run, that if I were to go back into the playlist and look, I had the dude Zac from FTP, Suicide Boys and Lil Yachty right before he got signed. And then, I was starting to have more people reach out and, all of a sudden, it just became easier to get interviews. It's just been this snowball that just keeps gathering. Every time I do any kind of content that goes outside of the normal realm of what we do, it adds to the snowball of people knowing about No Jumper.

How has your channel evolved over time and where do you see the future for yourself as a content creator? At first, we were just doing these little interviews, then over time we started live streaming and then we started doing these eight hour long strings of the crazy stuff that happens. And uh, that has been pretty cool in terms of just like, I don't know, just sort of expanding it. And I have my own personal channel now, where I make a lot more videos of reacting to different things that are more topical and we just opened up a separate office space down the street so that we can start developing different styles of content. We're going to be doing more news content and trying to expand, trying to bring in more people who have different voices and develop the brand so that it's bigger than me.

How would you describe the YouTube landscape at the moment and where do you fit into it? It's kind of scary, because there's so much censorship that goes on with YouTube now and it does sometimes feel like YouTube is run by little kids. Anyone that makes content that is even remotely adult in nature is dealing with a lot of big issues. But, for me personally, I like being a weird live stream talk show. I've heard somebody say that, "No Jumper fans think that Adam is the new Barbara Walters" or some sh*t. And I was like, "These kids honestly do believe that because there's not many people who are able to do an interview with Bhad Bhabie, Ghostface Killah or Tana Mongeau." For a while, I was like "Oh no, I'm able to cover a lot within a very wide demographics." But I just like learning about different kinds of

people. I would love to interview like some golfers or something.

What concerns and fears you have for the next generation because of social media culture? I'm definitely worried because there's so much misinformation and the ability for kids to have their minds shaped by mass media and people who were trying to like put fake news out there. They're able to trick kids into thinking that these rappers have fan bases that they don't have because of fake plays and fake followers. It's an overall dumbing down that you see online where you see that this person is a popular YouTube because they do this, then somebody else comes along and is just a little bit worse. But, I feel that most of the time on YouTube, the most talented creators usually do rise to the top.

How would you describe the next generation in terms of music, tattoos and consuming content? Kids want stuff handed to them. They want it faster, in your face and from a reliable source. They don't care about most of the mainstream media institutions that I grew up on; kids would rather subscribe to a YouTube channel. In terms of tattoos and the rap kids that I know about, I mean sh*t, they just get their friggig favorite word tattooed on their face. For hip hop, it's gotten bigger and more varied in terms of approaches.

Do you think that people are getting better tattoos or worse tattoos because of social media and the music industry right now? I mean it should be that they're getting better tattoos. But at the same time, I feel like a lot of young dudes I know get tattoos by whoever will show up and they're not picky at all, which is probably a bad thing. I see a lot of people getting tattoos, but I don't really see much of a discussion of specific artists or a real appreciation for the culture. Hopefully that changes in rap to a certain extent.

Out of everyone you've had on your show, who has the most interesting collection of tattoos? That's a good one. Well, the other day, I had this guy, Jamie Kilstein, on my podcast. He has tons of vegan tattoos and he's not vegan anymore. He has "Tofu Warrior" with a picture of a cartoon brick of tofu on his hand. Another time, I was interviewing Key Glock and he has the NWA logo on his throat. But in his mind, he said it stands for "N-word With A Lot," instead of what it actually stood for it back in the day.

Face tattoos: Do you love them or hate them or do you feel indifferent towards them? I mean on a personal level, I like getting tattoos on my face. But, I definitely worry about some of the kids that I see who might be making poor decisions. I just saw a kid today who got the word "Lonely" tattooed on his face and then was trying to raise \$10,000 to get it lasered off because he realized he wasn't going to make it as a rapper. I feel like you're going to see more of that. Over the next couple of years, you're gonna see so much more tattoo removal because there are so many people with face tattoos that are going to have to get rid of them to get a job. I'm looking forward to that. I want to see the memes that come from people who're getting all their face tattoos covered up or removed.

What is up next for you as a content creator and podcaster? I'm just trying to expand No Jumper and make it more of an overall media company. Then just get my business more automated, make everything run smoothly so that I'm able to put more time and effort into making content and exploring different stuff that I can do on camera. I want to break young, new talented people who talk about what's going on. I want to run the best possible hip hop-based media company that I can.





JAY FARBER

When 2nd place still means you walk away with over five million dollars.

photo by keith selle words by amanda duckworth

Amanda Duckworth is a lawyer from New Jersey and friend of INKED. As the girlfriend of Kane Kalas, a professional poker player, she has learned a lot about the poker community the past few years. Given her familiarity with the sport, she sat down with Jay Farber, a 33-year-old professional poker player from Las Vegas, Nevada. He is probably best known for taking second place at the 44th World Series of Poker Main Event in 2013, earning a cash prize of \$5,174,357. His unique resume also includes working in a tattoo shop. Though mainly retired now, he still enjoys playing poker, but dedicates most of his free time to jiu-jitsu.

How many tattoos do you have? Nine, but a couple have been touched up or covered up.

Which tattoo was your first? The dragon and kanji on my left arm. A little ink advice, don't get tattooed at 17.

Which tattoo is your latest? The half-sleeve on my left arm which is going on almost 6-years-old now. The theme is derived from a Japanese legend revolving around a Samurai who saved his village from a tsunami with a single stroke of his sword.

Plans for a next tattoo? Going to finish the sleeve on my right arm, and then start a "Panda Playing Chess" piece on my leg.

Do you have any gambling-related tattoos? Nope. I honestly think they're corny.

Do you think being tattooed is helpful in poker (e.g. in "distracting" other players, creating a certain image, etc.) I think the image you put out there is very important in poker. How people perceive you and your ability to play off that perception can be a big advantage.

Your favorite tattoo? Left arm half-sleeve.

Any tattoos you regret? A sh'tty lotus, which has since been covered up and the dragon tattoo just because it's not a good piece. In addition to not getting tattooed at 17, don't get flash art.

Would you ever get your hands tattooed? No.

Worst tattoo you've ever seen and why? I've seen a ton. I used to work in a tattoo shop. It's hard to pick out an overall worst.

How did you first get involved in poker? I grew up in a pool hall, gambling on anything and everything. When Rounders came out it was the hot new thing for everyone, so I just picked it up and ran with it.

What type of games do you play the most and what do you prefer? I play them all. However, the only one I can say I'm competent at is No Limit Hold 'Em. PLO is more fun, though.

Do you travel far and often? For poker? No, unless it's a great game in LA. I have no reason to leave Vegas.

What other projects do you spend time on? Jiu-Jitsu takes up most of my free time, but I've got an e-commerce business I'm working on as well. Plus a few projects in the cannabis space.

Tell me about your biggest cash. I got second in the Main Event of the WSOP in 2013. That was a little over five million.

Do you think players develop certain reads on you based on your tattoos? I wouldn't say reads, but there is a perceived image that is derived from my overall physical appearance.

Do you feel any sense of comradery with other tattooed players? No, I don't really feel comradery or friendship toward anyone while I'm playing. Even if we're friends. I'm still trying to take your money and you're still trying to take mine.

Who do you look up to in the poker community? I look up to guys like Bobby Baldwin, Phil Ivey and Doyle Brunson. I admire and respect the skills of a lot of players. There are some great people playing the game today, but I look up to the all-time greats and the guys who have left a legacy off the felt.

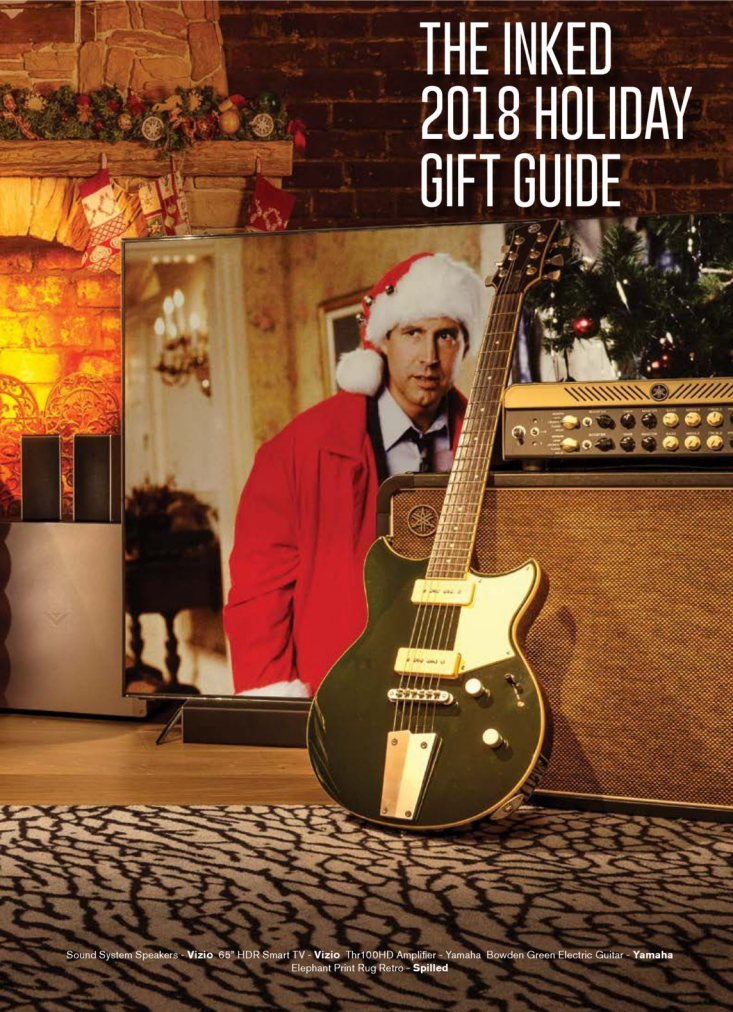
What would you say are the most important skills for a successful poker player to have? Bankroll management, table image and awareness, balance, consistency and having no fear.



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AUSTIN RIVERS

photos by peter roessler words by dante lenko





It was an unusually hot day in October as the photographer Peter Roessler and I raced down a crowded-with-tourist Seventh Avenue to one of the poshest hotels in New York City to grab some portrait imagery and a brief, but in-depth interview with Washington Wizard Austin Rivers.

The 6'4" point guard met us in the lobby as he was talking on the phone with his agent. We slipped into a waiting elevator and entered his room, where he graciously entertained our cameras and microphone on the night before he and the Wizards beat the Knicks by 12 points.

What kind of role do you think you want to have in Washington? I want to be in whatever role it may be, as long as it's a big role. Obviously, it's going to take me some time. I'm still adjusting right now. I'm still trying to find my rhythm. It always takes me a little extra time, but when it comes, I really take off. It's just a matter of time.

Do you feel like the Wizards have an edge over the younger teams, like Boston or Philly who have an overall average player age below 25. I think our edge can be that we are always underestimated. But you can't say you're underestimated and not win games. We have to talk the talk and walk the walk. So, if we feel disrespected, we need to prove them wrong. The East is wide open. I don't care what anybody says. The East is wide open

How do you feel about the whole "LeBron Legacy"? I don't know why they refer to that particular move as a "legacy" move. Any move he made would have been a legacy move. The dude is already a legend. If he would have went to Milwaukee it would have been a legacy move.

Switching over to tattoos. How do you weigh in on the whole J.R. and SUPREME situation? I don't think it's right that they've been trying to ban somebody from what's on their body. I mean, it's not that serious. I'm sure there are guys out on the court with tattoos that stand for things a lot "worse" than SUPREME.

Do you think they came down hard on J.R. because of the combination of tattoos and off court behavior? Trying to send a message to kids that tattoos are "bad?" It's possible, but my advice to anyone getting a tattoo is make sure it will mean something to you ten years from now, and you get what you pay

for. That doesn't mean you need to spend a fortune on your work, but always seek out a top-quality artist, guys like Freddy Negrete and Chuey Quintanar.

Where does the inspiration for your tattoos come from? I'm not an extremist, but I am a religious person. I have a lot of faith and a lot of my tattoos reflect that. I believe in Jesus Christ and this is my way to pay homage to him. Without him, I wouldn't be here today. There are a lot of tattoos dedicated to that. And then, I have a lot of tattoos about overcoming failure. I have an entire scripture about that. I got that when I joined the Clippers and was playing for my father. The pressure was incredible and I got the feeling then that everyone wanted me to fail. Then I found a way to break through and just understand that I'm gonna stop caring what everybody else thinks. I got that tattoo on my arm to remind me to never be frightened. To fear no man. I don't care what any analyst or anybody says about me.

And then I have a Martin Luther King tattoo on my arm, just because I come from an interracial marriage, you know what I mean? So, men like him and many others, paved the way for me to be in existence today.

All your work is black and grey. Your reason for that? The black and grey work on my skin is very reflective of my entire approach toward color in general. I am very much into black-and-white, whether it be in my choice of clothing, artwork or tattoos. I also feel that this type of tattooing intrinsically produces cleaner lines and gives a feeling of sophistication to the work. Something I personally feel can get lost with flashy color work. Overall, for me, I think black and grey work just has a cleaner feel.

Playing in LA you had a lot of press and social media "action." How do you feel about the media now? The media is so f*cking terrible right now. It's not about facts, it's about the kind of content that will get the most views, whether it's accurate or not. After how the media treated me when I was in LA, I don't even care anymore. I'm going to say what's on my mind. As long as it doesn't jeopardize the team or create drama within the team because the team means everything to me. So, as long as it doesn't do that, I will always speak my mind. I could care less if someone doesn't like me or like me because of what I had to say. I'm not that guy anymore.



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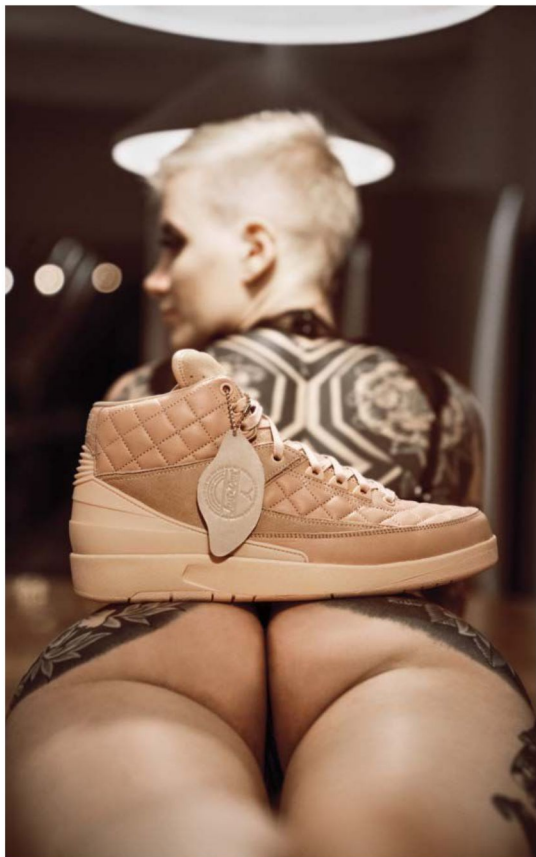
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photos by evan kaucher model octavia plach

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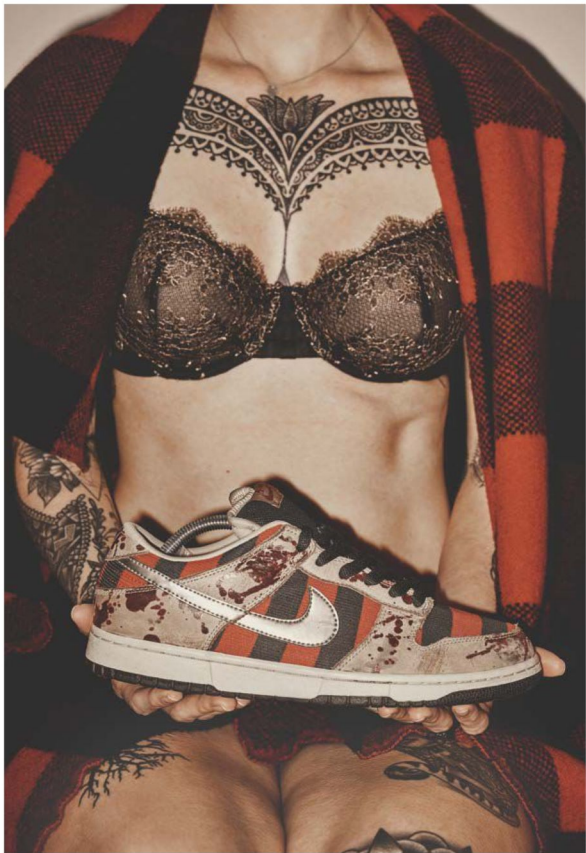


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group photo by double kill media portraits by cassie words by paul gambino

We sat down with Mikhail Andersson, the owner of First Class Tattoo, to talk about Moscow, "drunk" tattoos and what it takes to succeed in New York City.

What did you do before you starting tattooing professionally? I studied graphic design and advertising at college and then worked for government agencies and large private companies like Bayer, GM and Formula 1, designing billboards, business cards and websites. It was a good job, but very stressful.

When did you start tattooing? I started tattooing in 2008, but was still doing graphic design. I was new to the game and wasn't very skilled yet, so my client base was small.

How did you wind up here in NYC? I started out tattooing in Moscow. Then I came to the US and lived in Miami, where I tattooed full time. And then moved here to New York, where I worked in a few shops, but I wasn't happy with the environment – too much drama. That's when I decided to do my own thing and learn from the mistakes I'd seen in the other shops.

I'm particular on who I have work here. It's more about the vibe and having good, creative people to work with. If I find someone has an attitude problem, they don't stay here long.

What is your preferred style of tattooing? I love doing color, flowers, animals, nature, space. I don't really have a preferred style. I like trying mixing realism and abstract elements.

What do you find is the biggest difference about tattooing here in the states? When I was back home, I just took projects that inspired me since I didn't have to worry about paying rent or bills. So, tattooing two or three projects a week was fine.

When I started working in Miami, I had to take on everything because it's expensive to live. I wasn't really happy doing scripts and lettering all day. It would be one or two interesting projects a week and the rest would be "drunk" or spontaneous tattoos.

When I moved to New York, I returned to concentrating on work that inspired me – trying to push my own style. However, the clients here are a bit more controlling and some-

times they want work that really isn't doable or wouldn't look great in a couple years.

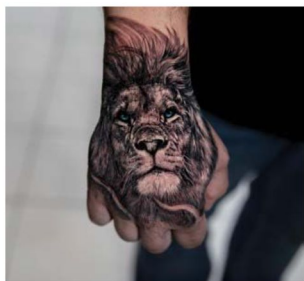
How do you choose the artists to work in your shop? I always look for someone who's humble, creative and wants to continue to grow as an artist.

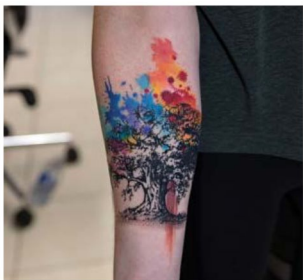
How would you describe the tattoo experience at First Class? It's awesome. People come here and have a great time. I call it ink therapy. They get some new work and talk about life. It's like going to a psychiatrist.

What's in the future for you and/or First Class? I personally want to grow and get better as a tattoo artist and take on less. I also want to get back into art.

For the shop and artists, I want everyone to get better and develop their own style. My goal is for First Class to be one of top five shops in New York. There's a lot of competition and this city attracts the best people, so it's hard to keep up, but that's what I want.









ANDREW BORISYUK

INSTAGRAM: @ANDREW_BORISYUK



When did you start tattooing? I started tattooing at an early age (2007), right after finishing pastry school. I got a job at a kitchen and worked there for two years, but I was learning to draw and tattoo at the same time.

Do you have an artist that you look up to? I love Mark Rothko. His work doesn't necessarily "work" within the conventional tattoo industry since it's more abstract. I also enjoy modern art and traditional oil paintings.

What is your preferred style of tattooing? I love doing nontraditional and believe it to be what I am best at — I feel very comfortable working in that genre. However, last year I got into doing abstract and graphic work, and I also like black and grey. Those tattoos heal well and stay sharp for a long time.

What do you find the biggest difference tattooing here in the states? In the United States, a lot of people are into trends and

they mostly get trendy tattoos that they saw on Instagram. In Europe, there are people that trust artists and their individual style. They come with an idea and have the artist do the rest.

What is the most difficult aspect of being a tattoo artist? The lack of stability. Tattoos are more of a "luxury" and during rough financial times, people will think about spending money on other things. You can especially see it now in Russia and the Ukraine. The biggest tattoo artists survive only because of their regular clients, otherwise it's been very tough. I want to thank all my clients for keeping me busy for all these years.

What's in the future for you?

Hopefully, I can spend more time doing what I like doing most, bringing my ideas to life. I have some big, tough projects. I would be very happy if it can all come to life.

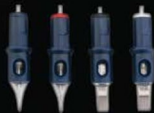





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HOW DID GROWING UP IN NEW ZEALAND MAKE AN IMPACT ON YOU AS AN ARTIST?

I grew up in South Auckland, a part of New Zealand that you could say was rough around the edges. This has made a huge impact on me as an artist, but also kept me humble. Where we came from, people like me didn't often make it out of the hood and we don't get featured in magazines, unless you're topless or holding a rugby ball, so I'm very blessed and honored to have this opportunity. If you want me to be the centrefold image topless let me know and I'll start my diet on Monday!

GROWING UP, DID MAORI TATTOOING PLAY A ROLE IN THE WORLD AROUND YOU AND DO YOU WEAR ANY OF THESE TRADITIONAL TATTOOS?

I do wear the traditional markings of the Pe'a — which is the half-body suit or "shorts", as some people like to call it. This is all done with the traditional tools called the "au" or as some people like to call "tap tap" style. It was one of the most painful experiences I've ever faced physically but I'll never regret it as it represents my culture, my family and my honor.

WHAT'S YOUR TATTOO PROCESS FROM SKETCH TO STENCIL TO SKIN?

It all starts with the client. While I love to do free reign, it starts with a compromise of what's achievable in the time frame and circumstance. We usually tattoo the next day, at 8:30 to 9:00 am. I set up, prep, print out stencil, size it up and when the client gets in at 10 am, I slap on the stencil, slip on the gloves, slam on some music and get this party started!

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CHRIS SHOWSTOPPR

FOLLOW: @CHRIS_SHOWSTOPPR



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WHAT FIRST GOT YOU INTO TATTOOING? I quit my job at a TV studio and decided to live for myself. When I returned home, I decided to order a tattoo machine from China. Next morning, while surfing internet, I realised that Chinese machines are not worth ordering. And by that evening, I had already had Kat Von D's machine, which I bought at a local market. Thus everything began.

WHO ARE SOME ARTISTS YOU'RE INSPIRED BY? I could enumerate dozens or hundreds of people, but the main artist who always inspires me is God. You come out and see the sky, stars, animals, plants, people. Can you imagine one's mind which invented all these! Nobody can ever make it out. We are simple imitators of His creation! He has already created everything and the future, too! He works wonders by our hands.

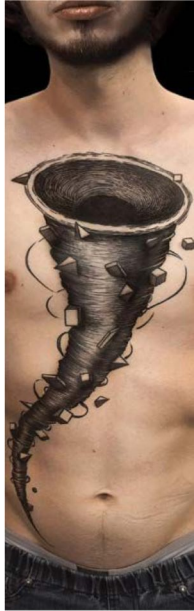
HOW HAS YOUR TATTOO STYLE EVOLVED AND DEVELOPED SINCE YOU STARTED TATTOOING?

Recently, I've clearly examined all stages of my development, which allows me to analyze my way. First, I started drawing old-school, but within a week I realized that it's a dead end. Then I took up graphic art, with dot work. I was working with a 3rl needle when I noticed that because of some specific features of our skin, all dots blend and become one big spot. I made the conclusion that I wasted a lot of time and effort and that I could simply have used classical shadows. The "Girl with a Pearl Earring" became the apogee of my work, which I tattooed for two days with 1rl needle. It was then I realized that I could combine graphic art and realism to everything I'd done before, but in a larger scale.

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JAMIE LUNA

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WHEN DID YOU DECIDE TO PURSUE TATTOOING PROFESSIONALLY AND WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST SHOP EXPERIENCE LIKE? I was a late starter in tattooing however, I was lucky enough to be introduced into tattooing by a friend who then introduced me to other artists and it developed that way. I very nearly gave up tattooing in the early days. The first shop I worked in didn't have a lot of walk-in business, which I needed back then having just started out. It was really tough. The last week at that studio I only made £25, so I very nearly threw the towel in then. Thankfully, I didn't because I couldn't see myself doing anything else other than tattooing.

JENNA KERR

FOLLOW: @JENNAKERRTATTOO

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR SIGNATURE STYLE AND HOW HAS YOUR STYLE EVOLVED OVER TIME? I've always loved art nouveau styles and baroque filigree, so these feature heavily in my pieces.

All my work has evolved mainly from pushing myself in what I can do and experimenting with new techniques. As an artist, there is no switching off. When I leave work, I'm still thinking about projects, drawings, ideas and I think that it's only natural that when you give something your all, naturally, you progress.

IF YOU WERE ONLY ALLOWED TO TATTOO ONE GEMSTONE FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, WHAT WOULD IT BE? It's funny that you should ask that because recently I feel that I've been doing just that with heart-shaped jewels. There's no doubt that I love doing them, though!

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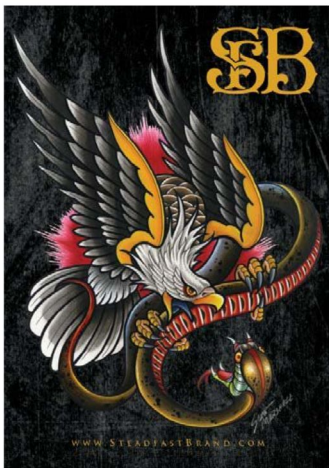
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