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Rider: Carey Hart Photo: Tanner Yeager



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INKWELL

Ladies and gentlemen, rev up your engines, because we're approaching the starting line of the 2019 moto issue. From Harleys, to Cadillacs, to 18-wheelers, we're celebrating the best, boldest, and most badass industry figures from every pocket of the globe. And of course, we cannot forget the tattooed babes, whose curves atop an old school chopper make our engines roar.

It's our honor to introduce one beauty in particular to the pages of INKED, our 2018 cover girl contest winner Brooklyn St Patrick. Brooklyn beat out thousands of other tattooed women for the top slot and she's making her debut alongside the other contest finalists in a seductive centerfold spread.

From beauty to brawn, NBA Denver Nuggets' point guard, Isaiah Thomas, takes center court and shares going from the draft's last pick to getting All-Star, Top Five, and MVP voted. Thomas talks tattoos, trading controversies, and his takeaway as an eight-year NBA veteran.

After a long day spent on the road, there's nothing better than sharing a meal with friends and family. And when it comes to sharing good eats, no one does it quite like Chris Santos. The New York based chef and "Chopped" guest judge opened the doors of his exclusive LES restaurant, Vandal, just for our readers and is ready to share his story of success in the culinary industry.

Moving off road and onto the race track, Carey Hart speaks on immersing himself into his tattoo and clothing shop, Hart & Huntington, after a near fatal crash on an action sports tour; sharing the road and racetrack with wife, Pink, and their children; as well as his adventures that came with being on the ground level of creating freestyle motocross. As the "Hart Attack" says, "we rode hard, and partied even harder."

Speaking of voyages on hogs and hyperbikes, Keino Sasaki, esteemed custom bike builder, opens up about leaving Japan to work for Indian Larry in New York City; Keino Cycles and what makes "the perfect bike;" and his experiences with Japanese culture's view on tattooing.

Whether you're an adrenaline junkie or a casual car enthusiast, this issue fuels the journey you're on. After all, life in the fast lane is much more fun.

Enjoy the ride.

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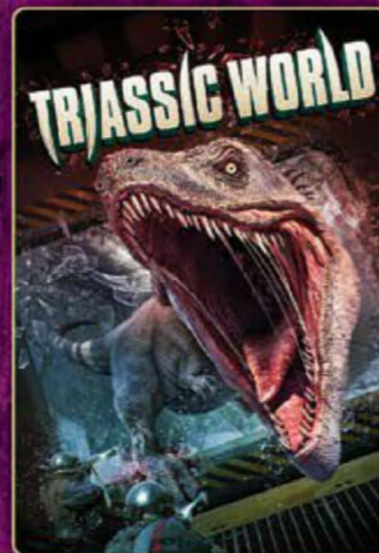
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THE CANNABIS ISSUE

"After years of Julia Michaels being a behind-the-scenes songwriter, seeing her thrive being on the frontlines... and the cover of INKED magazine, is amazing. *Inner Monologue* has saved my life, and hearing the inside exclusive with her has solidified my love for her even further. Hearing about Julia's tattoos is such a treat, and an intimate part of celebrities that fans don't usually get to be a part of. That's where INKED comes in. Keep it up!" —Stacy Ivanov— Davenport, IA.

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TOMMY CHONG

Pete Wilson— Laughed out loud through the Tommy Chong feature! To hear my comedy idol recall his time on *That 70s Show* and his favorite celebrity smoke-sessions was so, so cool. Thanks

HAWAII MIKE

Stephanie Barnes— I have GOT to spring clean all the recipe books in my kitchen and swap in for cannabis-infused menus. As a foodie, what Chef For Higher is doing is even sweeter knowing what they stand for.

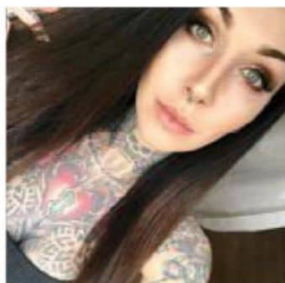
SUPREME PATTY

Jonah Day— This fucking dude. When I first heard about him I hated him. Thought he was just some millennial kid squeezing lemons in his eyes for Instagram. But then I followed him and loved the new-age *Jackass* feel I got from his vids. He owned it in his interview, and in my book, beats all Instagram influencers.

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photo by peter roessler

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STRIKE OIL

Meet David Uhl, Harley-Davidson's first licensed oil painter

words by devon preston

In 1988, David Uhl purchased his first motorcycle and 30 years later, he's created hundreds of oil paintings for Harley-Davidson. Pulling inspiration from bikes past and present, Uhl captures the spirit of the open road with each careful stroke. Uhl takes black-and-white photographs, some of which haven't seen the light of day for decades, and brings them back to life on canvas. His timeless approach to artistic application blended with an all-American composition makes the work of David Uhl stand the test of time, in more ways than one.

How did purchasing your first bike in 1988 inspire you to start creating paintings featuring motorcycles? I can remember loving the feeling of acceleration more than anything. If there was something that ignited any artistic inspirational thoughts, it would have been being exposed to the whole riding culture and capturing that lifestyle. I translated my creative impulses into T-shirt designs at that time.

What led you to then begin working with Harley-Davidson, first creating apparel and then becoming a licensed oil painter?

I really wanted a Harley, but couldn't afford one back then. At that time, The Motor Co. was flying high and anything with a bar and shield required getting on a waiting list, especially bikes. I figured I should apply all my artistic talents to getting their attention first. I initiated that by flying to an international dealer meeting in Boston with a portfolio. A local dealer took me up to meet all the top brass, and I ended up coming home with a t-shirt design contract with their most popular license: Holoubek.

After 500 t-shirt designs, I got quite bored and decided to try my hand at oil painting. My first painting depicted an old black-and-white snapshot from the early '40s. I created a large oil of this image and flew to Milwaukee to show it to the licensing dept. They said it was epic and granted me a license to continue. Getting their blessing also included access to their extensive photo archives. So I was off to the races. Feeling ecstatic, I was officially the archival oil painter of the rich history of one of the most recognized brands on the planet.

How do history and the bikes of the

past play a role in your paintings? I've always been a bit of a historian, so this new project bolstered my enthusiasm. I would fly to Milwaukee and spend days hidden in the archives, digging in deep, and eventually surfacing with amazing and incredible black-and-white jewels. I discovered that Harley-Davidson was integral to describing the early American enthusiastic relationship with the internal combustion engine.

Which fine artists helped to shape the style you work in today? I was so motivated to make my paintings reflect these timeless snippets of history, I was hell bent on painting them in a style that complemented the historic nature of the pieces. I went to museums and bought tons of art books. I focused on the masters from 1860 to 1930. This included such names as John Singer Sargent, Anders Zorn, and Joaquin Sorolla. My whole intent was to do paintings that would stand the test of time. I wanted my work to look as though it could have been painted a century ago. The opposite of falling prey to any of the current trends and then the subsequent demise of going out of style.

What type of bike is your favorite to paint and why? I'm not a fan of painting sparkly new anything, so I tend to be drawn to knuckleheads, pans, and earlier bikes. I can paint chrome as well as anyone, I just find it a bore. I liken it to painting an old beautiful patina on a door from Santa Fe as opposed to a brand-new aluminum one from Home Depot. So anything with some character and provenance get my brushes vibrating.

What does riding mean to you and how do you reflect these emotions in your paintings? When I find time to get out and ride, I always come back inspired and ready to throw some paint down. When out on the road, I'm always seeing potential paintings fly by, so I slow down a bit. This can cause problems when I'm in a group that's trying to break speed records. Many times I will keep a camera in the saddle bag and record what I see for later applications.

Your work is frequently recreated in tattoos. If you had to choose one of your paintings to be on you forever, which would it be?

Yikes, that's a tough one. In fact, one of





my main reasons for abstaining from tattoos thus far is that at some point, I get fatigued at looking at any of my paintings. It doesn't matter how much I like it. Tattoos are so permanent that I'm worried that I would get sick of it and not be able to remove it or paint over it. I love having the option of putting my painting in the closet. That being said, I'm at the point in my life now that I'm considering getting some major tattoos. I think I've found some ancient imagery that is profound enough to be buried with.

What is "The Women of Harley-Davidson" and how do these women represent the iconic motor company?

Twenty years ago, when I first started painting, I found an "Enthusiast" cover from 1926 in the archives. It depicted a flapper lighting up a smoke. She was such a wonderfully rebellious young lady for her day, I had to paint her. I called the piece "Ruby." It was my third painting ever and has since turned into one of the most iconic pieces of my entire body of work. It was the inaugural "Women of Harley" work that started the series. I do one every two years, and "Bootlegger Betty" is the latest, she's number 11.



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LUCY SPRAGGAN

photo by peter roessler words by tess adamakos

Lucy Spraggan was the first contestant in "X Factor"'s history to score a Top 40 single, and independently-released album, "Top Room At The Zoo," before the live shows even aired.

This unprecedented success for the folk-pop singer has led to three Top 20 albums in the UK — two of which were self-released. Before turning to music and after having her leg crushed as a demolition operator by 1.4 tons of slate from a cherry picker crane, Spraggan originally planned to become a firefighter. A former magician and self-proclaimed "bike purist," Spraggan grew up listening to Dolly Parton and Joni Mitchell, but also Blackalicious and Tupac. The four-time UK Top 40 artist just released her fifth full-length album, "Today Was A Good Day," via Cooking Vinyl Records. Spraggan and her wife, Georgina, have been married for three years and foster children in their home, where Spraggan says she feels, for the first time in her life, "settled."

What was your experience like on "X Factor"? It was a very strange thing to happen. The reason I went onto "X Factor" was because I'd been speaking to a couple of big, major labels before it. One wanted me to lose 30 pounds and change my name to Lucy Diamond, and another one wanted me to wear a top hat, a princess dress, and Dr. Martens boots while I was playing, and I was just a bit like, 'Yeah, I don't want to do any of that. I want to do what I'm doing.' The opportunity came up to go on "X Factor" so I just went for it. Having overnight fame in the UK was mental. Pretty hard to deal with, coming from being a street salesperson to this insane change. It's not something the human brain can process, really.

For your newest album, how did you pick the title "Today Was A Good Day"? So one of my favorite songs on there is called "Today Was A Good Day" and the album is written about my wife, but as I've always been really open about my struggles with mental health, that song is about acknowledging when today is just good, or today was alright. That for me is important because I often have to remind myself, 'Today wasn't shit.'

The album starts upbeat, but becomes reflective and vulnerable with "Breathe," and ends with an honest, melodic, acoustic ode to your wife with, "Thanks For Choosing Me." What was the creative process behind this album? This is my fifth album and to be honest, it's been the hardest for me. Just creatively, I really struggled to think of things to write about because almost every song has a different topic. So for me, it was just getting those songs down and sitting in a room with my hand on my head, like 'Hmmm.'

Along with "Today Was A Good Day," my second favorite song is "Connie's Bar." I wrote that about a biker woman who worked behind a bar in North Florida. She was amazing, fully tattooed, drinking a beer at 10 o'clock in the morning, while making some burgers with a cigarette in their mouth.

How was being in that space suit for the "Lucky Stars" video? For the "Lucky Stars" video, there was an issue with the space suit because loads of people had taken all the space suits in the UK,

like 'Shit, we have to do the video, what are we going to do?' So we got this one, and it was pretty good, but a lot of people had been in that space suit. It had not been dry-cleaned in a long time, it was vile. It looks good on the video, and I like that it's got an American flag on there. I want to live here. Every time I come to New York I love it a little bit more.

Having top albums self released, and now moving to a label, are there any things you miss about working independently? I had another label sniffing around for a bit. I would go into meetings with them and it was just a bit like, 'I'm not doing this again.' Having all these A&R guys saying, 'Let's do this and that.' But with Cooking Vinyl, they're a really relaxed indie label, and they like me as an artist so they just want me to be me, which is imperative. I have to do loads less work, so that's great.

Who would you say are your musical parents that you're a cross between? I get a lot of comparisons to Ed Sheeran sometimes, but I would say early Kate Nash and Lily Allen. Gay moms.

You and your wife, "G," are foster moms together? We foster emergency and short-term placements, so like children that might have come out of an abusive household or their foster carers might need respite. We were watching the local news and it said that a load of Syrian kids are being dropped off around Manchester and we were just like, 'If we can help them, we should.' We went down to social care and there were so many kids, I think it was 250 UK children at any time need somewhere to be. Not even just Syrian kids, all kids. So we thought, we have enough room. We don't really have enough time, but we'll try. It's been really good, we've had 14 kids in and out of the house. The youngest has been 18 months and the oldest was 16.

Which is your favorite tattoo? It's hard to pick a favorite, they've all got different meanings. Like this is my Boston Terrier, Steven. It's hard to be away from him, so that's one of my favorites because I get to carry him with me all the time. My first one is the one behind my neck, I put a mandala over it, but underneath it I got 'Proud' in really bad Old English writing. I was 15 and I went to a pride event and I loved it. It was amazing. Like I wanted to get a tattoo because it was my first liberating experience. My mom told me I would regret it, but now when I see her and she asks me, I'm like 'NO! I love it.'

You're a bike purist. What do you ride? At home I have a Kawasaki Vulcan. I love riding. It's probably my second passion to music, being on a motorbike. I've been riding since I was 18 but I passed my full license in December because you can't get a full big engine unless you do three tests, and I had some time off and I did it, so now I have this big beefy bike. I got into it coming from a hilly, middle-of-nowhere town. However you can get out, you do it. Being in a helmet and staying alive, and getting that lean on the corner is really therapeutic to me. Once you get on two wheels you can't go back to any more. I wouldn't ever stop biking.





BLAYZE WILLIAMS

words by tess adamakos photo by kaine crowhurst

Less than one in five truck drivers in Australia are under 30. Only 3% are female. Blayze Williams, part glamour model, part horse-racing competition winner, stands out among the minority with blonde hair, blue eyes and an immutable ambition for pushing her limits. As Williams says, "Anytime I do something, I just go flat-out in it." Whether it be bouncers who don't believe her trucking license is real, or pushing for female uniforms, the tattooed 26-year-old, 22-wheel driver is making changes in the Australian trucking industry.

What was your first drive like vs. now being able to breeze through a drive from South Australia to New South Wales? I sort of "bunny hopped" the prime mover around, because I'm short, I can't always reach everything properly. I was pretty useless at first. The first day I ever went out on the road by myself with a trailer I absolutely crapped myself. I thought it was the stupidest thing I'd ever done. My hands were like steel around the steering wheel. I thought the road wasn't big enough for a truck to drive next to me. I was just terrified. Now I drive it more comfortably than my car and can drive up to everything except for road trains and B-doubles.

Did you feel any pressure to "be as good as the boys?" I do just as fine as the guys can, even better than even some of them. And then it sort of works in my favor as well with them underestimating, because then if I do stuff up, they kind of are expecting you to not be able to do it anyway. ages after.

What kinds of tattoos do you see on the other truckers? I see a lot of old-school tattoos that they got years and years ago. Sometimes you still see awesome ones, but you know, I find that they sort of just get what they like and then just put it wherever, whereas for me, I try and plan mine and feed them together better. My first one I got on the back of my neck when I was 18, I've got my last name. In the dots of the "i's" for Williams it's got a little S and a C. So that was for my dad, Steven Charles. I got my hand before my sleeve, but I always loved hand tattoos and I just went on. But that's the thing with truck driving and the freedom, I could tattoo my face if I wanted to, and they're not going to really care. If I worked in an office I would never be able to have some of my tattoos. The guys have neck tattoos and ink all over their bodies.

What changes would you like to see in the industry? Some places want you to wear the proper uniform pants, but they don't actually have women's pants, so there is still massive bits of the industry where they're not actually prepared for women to come and work there. They're still just set up, frankly, for only men. But for women in the industry, I'd like to see more women just take that plunge and just do it. I want to see more women actually give it a go. The industry does need more women to lighten it up in some ways. And then I feel the industry is good for a lot of women because I feel like a lot of women need to toughen up in some ways and get their hands dirty and do things like this. It's fulfilling and going to help you grow.

DAVE DELZIO

photo by peter roessler words by devon preston

How did you get your start in nightlife? I started working at the Limelight, I want to say that was 1993. I started promoting parties and doing things over there.

How would you describe New York City nightlife? It's definitely changed over the years. When I started, it was definitely more big-club oriented. You had clubs like Club USA, the Limelight, Palladium — people were going for that. I feel that now, nightlife is more promoter-driven and about table service. It's getting back to a club level with the EDM movement, but the whole scene has changed. New York went from big-club level stuff to more bottle service, loungey experiences. Now nightlife is moving into luxury hotels with rooftops and clubs that are really putting in an effort to make a nice environment for clients.

What do you think caused the change in NYC nightlife? Back then, it was Giuliani and a lot of these clubs that were doing things that weren't necessarily legal, that pretty much ruined everything. So people started moving away from that and into smaller venues.

What's the recipe for a great bar or club and why do so many businesses fail in NYC? Decor, talent and a good crowd. And if it's a restaurant, obviously you have to have a beautiful environment, but also exquisite food. New York is a very hard market to break into because there's so much competition and there are so many good chefs. It's so hard to stand out when there are so many good offerings.

What's surprised you the most about working in nightlife and what are some of the most common misconceptions about this industry? That it was more corporate than you might think. When I first started, I was young and thought, 'Oh, I just get to go out and drink free booze.' Then I learned what actually goes into the process and how much it takes to run a business. As far as misconceptions, people think that I have the best job and all I do is go out and party. Instead, I get to my office at eight o'clock and stay until seven o'clock and I don't really go out that much.

What do you wish you'd known about this industry before becoming involved and what's the best advice you can give to aspiring professionals? How to trust people. I was too trusting in the beginning and there are a lot of snakes in this business. So being able to read people now is one thing that I've learned very well in this business.

We've talked about how the nightlife industry has changed since the start of your career, but where do you see it heading? I'm not sure where it's going, to be honest with you. I can see a lot of things happening, and right now, there's a certain model that's working for a lot of people — which is a little mix of everything and a full entertainment experience. There are some really beautiful night clubs out there offering a full-level experience.





ROBERT CHAMPION

photo by stephen moberg words by devon preston

When did you first develop a love for cars? My earliest memories of playing with cars start around the age of four, but it'd be safe to say since birth.

What is it about Subaru that made you fall in love with the brand? There's something unique about the driving experience and capabilities of a high-performance Subaru. When you start to find friends that share that same excitement, the love deepens. This started 17 years ago with my first Impreza 2.5RS. Before I knew it, I was getting waved at by fellow enthusiasts and finding myself in conversations with people who would later become friends that I still have to this day.

What is SubieEvents LLC and how did you create this company?

Going into 2010, a friend offered me the opportunity to acquire the rights to WBM for pennies on the dollar. The event was the largest in the nation and gathered 1,500 enthusiasts. Fast forward to 2018 and SubieEvents LLC played host to 26,000 Subaru enthusiasts across six Subaru enthusiast festivals in different regions, each under their own brands: Boxerfest, Big Northwest, Rocky Mountain Subaru Festival, Subiefest, Subiefest Midwest, and of course the biggest of all, Wicked Big Meet.

How has your life changed in the 10 years you've put on events

for Subaru enthusiasts? I've grown to realize that gathering community is my life's calling, be it a sushi night for friends at my house or hosting 8,000 Subaru enthusiasts at a race track in Connecticut. It's easy for adults in this day and age to live unhealthily in isolation, but the Subaru community has provided me with some lifelong friendships and community. My purpose within these events is to pay it forward indefinitely.

How would you describe a Subaru enthusiast and how do they differ from other gearheads? I notice substantially less ego and a huge emphasis from most on the word 'community.' There's an old saying that still rings true: 'Come for the cars, stay for the people.' No one is trying to be better than someone else – they just want to be with their own kind.

What does your typical day look like and what percentage of your year is spent on the road? I'm pretty much glued to my laptop writing software updates or on the phone with any of our 200 event sponsors, either at the office in Denver or in a coffee shop in some city, somewhere. Given that the events are all over the U.S., it's easy to live the digital nomad life. During the summer, we're basically on tour with events two to three weeks apart, so sometimes I'm only home for a week at a time.

Artist Recommended

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BACK ON SCREEN

Keanu Reeves as Super-Assassin is back, to follow up the John Wick film series. John Wick: Chapter 3 – Parabellum is the must-see action-thriller of the month. Directed by Chad Stahelski, and based on a story

by Derek Kolstad, the neo-noir film also stars Halle Berry, Laurence Fishburne, Mark Dacascos, Asia Kate Dillon, Lance Reddick, Anjelica Huston and Ian McShane.

LEATHER LUST

The Polo Ralph Lauren Men's Classic Leather Driving Gloves are designed with intricate perforations and snapped tab closures that ensure a comfortable, no-slip fit. Ride in style with these supple driving gloves and enjoy the cutout detailing along the knuckles, and a keyhole at each cuff for comfort.



RIDE LIKE A PRO

With the Automatic PRO AUT-350 Connected Car OBD II Adapter, you can decode your check engine light like a pro, keep you and your loved ones safe via crash-detection emergency services and know where your car is at all times. Connect to your Echo and Alexa products, as well as your smart thermostat, to make each mile on the road a breeze.



MARVELOUS METAL

The incredible work of James Corbett is the perfect gift for all car and art enthusiasts. Corbett has been creating his Car Part Sculptures since late 1998, but has now gained an international following as a highly collectable and sought after artist. Corbett says, "I'd like to think that well into the future my work will be regarded as both a pleasing sculpture, and as an intriguing time capsule from the era of the motor vehicle."



COLOURS
COUTURE
ALTERNATIVE CLASS
TATTOO SHOW
& COMPETITION

5/18 & 19 - TUNICA, MS
HORSESHOE CASINO

6/14, 15 & 16 - CARLSBAD, NM
TATTOO SHOW & COMPETITION

6/27, 28, 29 & 30 - LANSING, MI
COMMON GROUND MUSIC FEST

7/25, 26 & 27 - EL DORADO, KS
DAM MUSIC FEST

8/23 & 24 - COLUMBUS, OH
BREAKAWAY MUSIC FEST

8/29 - SEP 1 - CARLSBAD, NM
HAWGFEST "THE NEW RIDE" HAWGFEST

9/21 & 22 - SAN ANTONIO, TX
RIVER CITY ROCK FEST

10/11 & 12 - NASHVILLE, TN
BREAKAWAY MUSIC FEST





BAD TO THE BONE

When you're on the open road, there's no question debris will be flying. However, with this stylish yet functional motorcycle mask, you won't need to worry about swallowing any flies on your next ride. Made from a comfortable, machine washable fabric, this skull face mask is perfect for a multitude of outdoor activities, including hiking, skiing, and cycling. And at just \$9.95 on the Inked Shop, there's no way you'll regret snagging this accessory.



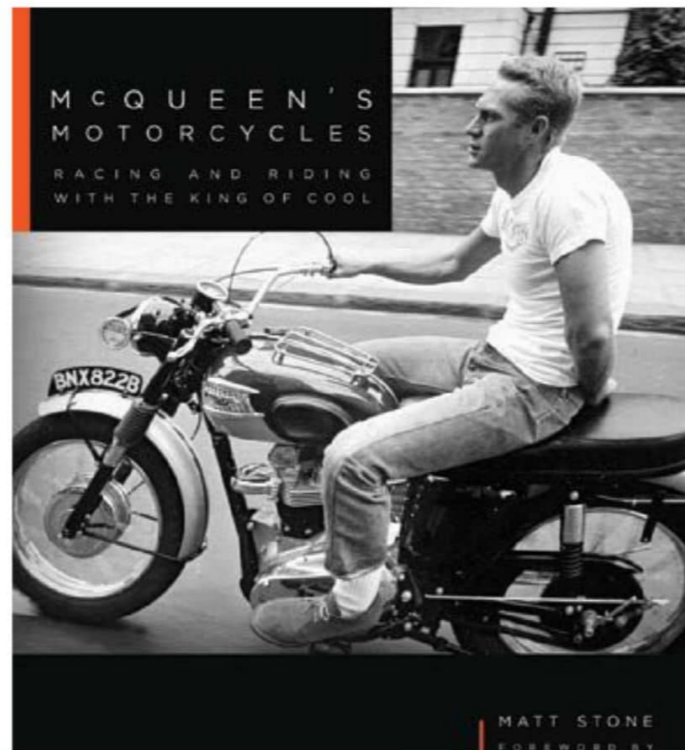
APOCALYPSE NOW

While the season finale of "The Walking Dead" premiered on March 31st, fans don't need to wait too long to get their post-apocalyptic fix. On June 2nd, the fifth season of the award-winning prequel series "Fear of the Walking Dead" comes back to AMC. Based on the comic book series of the same name, this show brings fresh faces to America's favorite zombie phenomenon.



FUTURE SHOCK

For the past several months, Tesla has been in the process of creating their first pick up truck. While the company is still in the early stages of developing this revolutionary product, it has led many artists to create renderings of what the Tesla pick up could look like. And while Tesla may unveil the first few models of their truck as early as 2021, gear heads could be waiting years to get behind the wheel of one of these babies.



LEGENDARY RIDES

While Steve McQueen may be known as a legendary and, at times, controversial actor, he was also recognized as an avid motorcycle enthusiast. In this 160 page coffee table companion, author Matt Stone takes readers on a tour of McQueen's baddest bikes. From Harleys to Indians to Cyclones, the King of Cool was one hell of a gear head. Take a look at his greatest rides in full historical context and with stunning photography to boot.



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HEAD SPACE

Motovloggers, this one's for you. Meet the Sena 10C Pro Bluetooth Headset and Camera, which comes with 1080p:60fps video, time lapse video, and compatibility with the Sena Camera App. Enjoy four-way communication for up to 1,600 meters with 4.1 Bluetooth technology. Ride and record in rain or shine, as this headset is water resistant and has a charging time of up to 3.5 hours. For quick shooters, the Sena 10C Pro can adapt to shot, burst, and timelapse functions—making anyone an expert. Snag yours for just \$349 on Revzilla, Cycle Gear, or Amazon.



EASY LISTENING

AirPods may be a meme, but these wireless headphones are a movement. The Bang & Olufsen Beoplay E8 2.0's provide superior sound quality and an innovative wireless charging experience. Crafted in four cutting edge colors, these headphones are made to match any aesthetic and deliver the best sound experience available. And at just \$350, you're walking away with one hell of a bargain. Grab yours in either Indigo Blue, Natural, Limestone, or timeless Black.



Built For The Voyage

Atwyld, the women's motorcycle gear and apparel brand, is "inspired by the void and built for the voyage." Atwyld is not just a passenger on your journey but an integral part of your riding experience. Founded by female, tattooed moto enthusiasts, Atwyld focuses on fashion and function. With their gear, the transformation as you unite with your machine changes you into a new version of yourself.

Espresso Express

Gone are the days where you have to stop your roadtrip for that coffee fix. The Handpresso Auto Hybrid brews Italian-approved espresso in two minutes — from your car. This nifty little machine plugs into your 12-volt cigarette lighter and fits in your cup holder, to easily convert your vehicle into an espresso-stand on wheels.



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Stencil images shown demonstrate Tattoo Stencil app and Photoshop filter images used to create a variety of stencil styles from the same photographic image.

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Carey Hart

words by tess adamakos photos by peter roessler

With a legacy larger than his “Hart Attack” nickname, he now shares the road and racetrack with wife, P!nk, and their children.

Carey Hart was on the ground level of creating freestyle motocross, being amongst the first group of riders to compete in freestyle motocross in 1996. Hart has not only endured incredible injuries through his love of riding, but has etched an extraordinary mark in the moto world.

When was your first ride? My first ride was at four years old. I got a motorcycle for Christmas that year. We lived in Seal Beach, California at the time, so my first riding experience was on the sidewalk in our neighborhood. It was early on Christmas morning and while all the other kids were outside on their skateboards and bicycles, I was ripping the neighborhood on my dirt bike! I actually learned to ride a motorcycle before a bicycle. Guess I was better with the throttle than the pedals!

Being a third-generation motocross rider, will you speak on growing up with riding in your family? My grandfather rode, both uncles, and my Pop. None professionally, but the four of them did it as a hobby when they were younger. My uncle John still races to this day. I tried traditional stick and ball sports, but I'm not much of a team player. I started racing at five and I was hooked. It was amazing for me and my entire family because motocross racing is a family sport. My Grandpa went to every race with my Pop and I until I turned pro at 17 and started traveling the circuit. It was also a great tool for my Pop in keeping me in line and focused on school. If I didn't have A's and B's on my report card, my bikes were parked until the next report card. It only happened once when I was in 6th grade and it never happened again. I graduated high school with honors, a 4.0 GPA. Those tools and work ethic to balance motocross and school set me up for later in life with my professional career and businesses. I was raised by a single father who worked 60-hour weeks. But on the weekends we traveled and raced, and it created a closeness that most people don't get to experience.

Will you speak on the trick that has dubbed you as the “Hart Attack”? At the time that I came up with that trick, FMX was in its early stages. One of the best things for my freestyle career was doing the Warped Tour from 1998-2000 because we did three demos a day, six days a week. Basically, it was paid practice. It wasn't something that was set out, it just evolved from a Superman seat grab. I started to kick my feet higher and higher until I was doing a handstand on my motorcycle in air. The first contest I competed

in and did that trick for the first time, the commentator on tv said, 'Wow, that trick about gave me a heart attack!' I wasn't too into the name at first, cause I thought it was lame to name a trick after yourself, but it just stuck from there. Shortly after, that was my nickname for many years and still is with my old riding buddies.

What keeps you riding, even through the falls and broken bones? Riding for me is therapy. When I'm on my motocross bike, mentally, I haven't aged. I focus and think about the same thing as I did in my youth. It keeps my brain sharp and my body strong. I think what separates action sports and motocross from most traditional sports is that when we started doing this as kids, it wasn't for a paycheck. There weren't fans and fortune in motocross like baseball or football. It was about passion, lifestyle, and progression. When you do that your entire life, it's almost impossible to quit. I'm not sure if Joe Montana plays flag football on the weekends, but I will ride motorcycles until I'm no longer breathing. When you are laying in the dirt with a bone sticking out of your leg you can't help but to think, 'Ok, I'm done with this shit.' But as you heal and the pain goes away, that urge to get back on the bike grows.

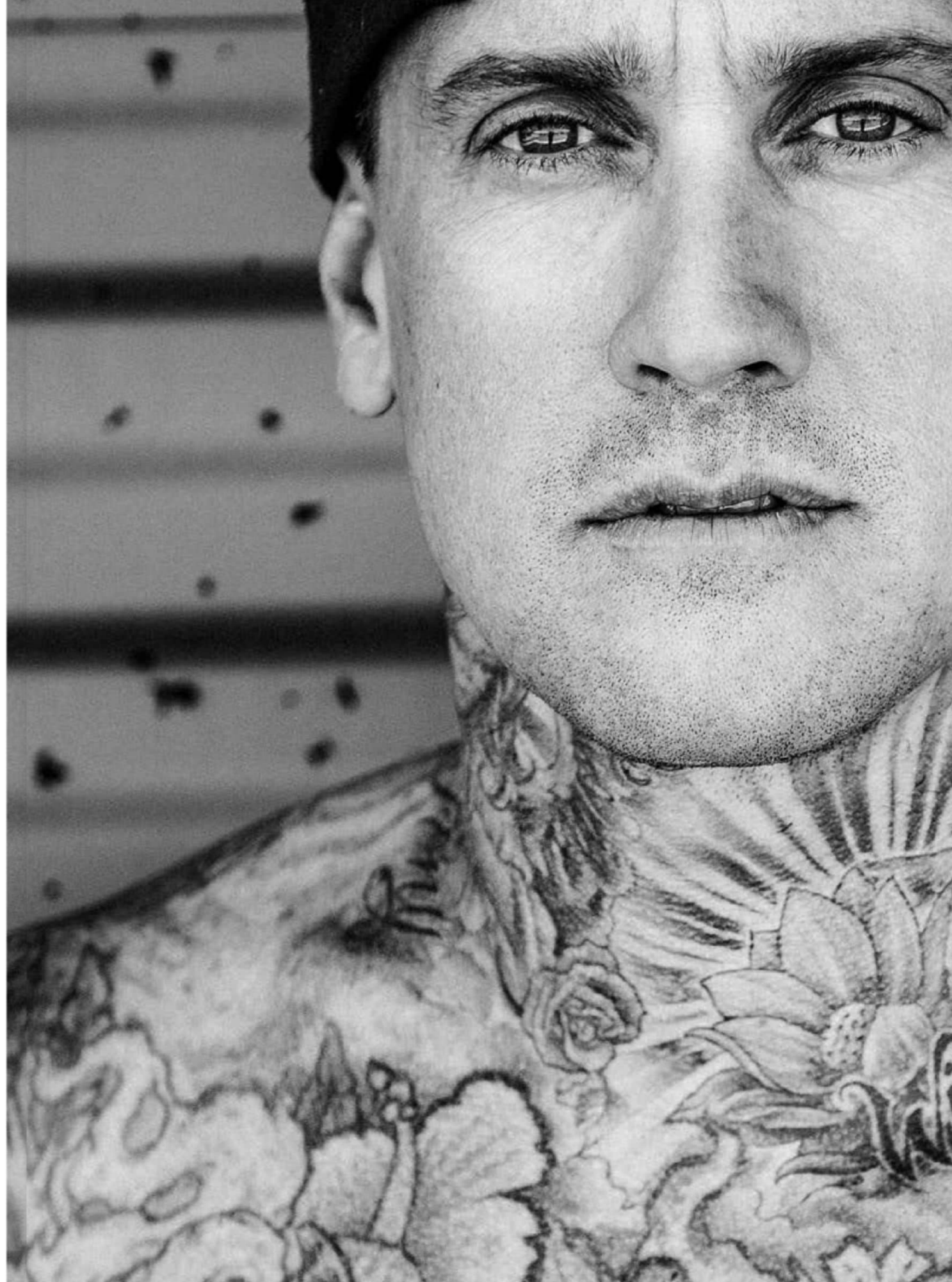
You were amongst the first riders to begin competing in freestyle motocross in 1996. What was that scene like, and how has it evolved? I refer to that time as the “good ol' days.” I was 21, broke and doing what I loved. At that time, we were basically copying freestyle BMX tricks. So the early group of us were inventing new moto-specific tricks every week. It was a pretty small group of us and we were all pretty close. Also, with the overnight popularity, motocross race promoters were flying us all over the world to jump and do tricks in between races. The danger level of tricks at that time wasn't that high, so we rode hard, and partied even harder. I'm very thankful for the timing of it all. The times and experiences off of the bike were just as exciting as on. Since then, the sport has gone through a huge popularity and progression spike. I couldn't imagine being a 20-year-old kid having to learn flip combos, double flips, and 360s. Athletes have to take it a bit more seriously than we did in the beginning.

What is Hart & Huntington's mission? Because of the perception of tattoo shops at that time, it was to create something high-end, change the perception of tattooing, and create a “first time”-friendly environment. I remember my

first few tattoo experiences and they weren't very pleasant. Cold shops, artists with attitudes, and mediocre work. We wanted to focus on the experience, customer service, and great tattoo work. We wanted people to come back, not leave with one tattoo and a bad taste in their mouths.

Give us a tattoo tour. Pop wasn't too big on tattoos, so I had to wait until my 18th birthday to get one. I got a flaming skull with my race number, 111, on my chest. I got it in my buddy's kitchen by his dad for 100 bucks. Moral of the story? You get what you pay for! I eventually covered it with a koi fish when I did a Tiki chest piece. My most meaningful tattoos are the pieces on my neck. I have an angel for my brother Anthony who died racing motorcycles, and an angel for my daughter, Willow. I have my wife's name under my chin – most painful spot I've been tattooed – and my Pop on the back of my neck in a sacred heart. My left sleeve is a collage of hotels in Vegas, and the 'Welcome to Las Vegas' sign. I'm hoping to have Nikko Hurtado do a motorcycle-themed sleeve cover-up for my right sleeve.

You and Alecia are both rebel icons in your own world. Being two tattooed powerhouses, how do you find the balance between business, family, and the spotlight? Well, it's not easy, but honestly, we do our best. On tour, I'm the stay-at-home dad. On both show days and days off, we do activities and spend time with our kids. I get up with the kids, eat breakfast, play in the hotel, and take them for walks. My wife spends every moment she isn't on the stage with them. Every spare moment while on the road, it's about our kids, and experiencing the world and culture with them. One thing about us is, P!nk the singer and Carey Hart the athlete are just our jobs. We punch the clock and at home around our kids, we live a normal life. We purposely moved to a small country town to raise our kids with the small-town feel. No one cares what our day jobs are at home, and our kids are treated just like the rest of them. My wife is an amazing mother, and does all the “normal” things, like school bake sales, gymnastic classes, cooks dinner with the help of the kids and I, and hosts sleepovers with Willow's friends. I have a clubhouse, toys, bicycles, kids' motorcycle track, BMX pump track and a play structure at my shop. So the kids are always hanging with me and my buddies while I do builds. We are very fortunate to have the large lives that we do. And while on tour, we expose them to the cultures that the world has to offer, but at home, we are a simple, small family.





Yamaha PW50

"My daughter's first motorcycle; she is graduating to a Husky 65 this summer, so my son will start riding this motorcycle. I will keep this bike forever, along with my back-flip bike."

'18 INDIAN SPRINGFIELD "KING KILLER"



"King Killer is the most ambitious custom build I have done. I turned this bagger into a road-race bike. After suspension testing, I plan on racing Pikes Peak in 2020."

'19 INDIAN CHIEFTAIN



"This is my daily rider and the bike I log the most miles on. I ride it daily when I'm home or en route to rallies, even when we are on my wife's world tour."

1979 SUZUKI RM50



"The RM50 was my first motorcycle and the bike that started it all."

'19 HUSQVARNA FC450



"This is my work horse bike. I'm still technically a professional rider and this is my bike of choice. Whether it's racing or hitting jumps, this bike can handle it all."

'87 HARLEY DAVIDSON



"This is the first custom motorcycle I built, and what started me down the career path as a custom builder. The bike won the FXR show at Born Free."

'01 HONDA 250



"This is my first backflip bike. I still own it and it is hanging upside down from the rafter in my shop where I build. I've had collectors offer me a lot of money for it, but I will always own it."

'16 INDIAN SCOUT



"One of the most fun motorcycles I own. I converted mine to a flat track 'hooligan' race bike, but I also take it on off-road trails near my house."

'02 TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE



"This is the first street bike I bought my wife, and the bike that started her love of motorcycles."

'17 Indian Springfield B-17 Bomber

"This custom bike I built with a sidecar that won Hot Bike Tour in 2017. I built it for my son to ride in, and we will start riding it once he is 2 1/2."



photos by matt wallace



“KEINO” SASAKI

words by tess adamakos photos by peter roessler

Custom bike builder and seasoned mechanic, Keinosuke “Keino” Sasaki, was raised in Fukuoka, Japan — where, through his father — he lived, breathed, and bled motorcycle appreciation. Now, he carries that legacy out of his shop in Brooklyn, New York, where the baddest bikes are born.

At six years old, Sasaki had his first ride on the back of his father’s Yamaha XS650, recalling that it was “horrifying” not being able to see the road in front of him, and only being able to hold onto his father tightly.

When Sasaki was 13 years old, he took his first ride in the driver’s seat, where he and his brother shared a hand-me-down Yamaha TY125 dirt bike their father used to ride.

At first, Sasaki thought he wanted to pursue a career in history. With a desire for adventure, he left his hometown “to see a different world,” where he eventually chased his passion of working with custom bikes, and graduated from the Motorcycle Mechanic Institute in Arizona. Finding himself in Brooklyn, New York in 2000, he worked at Indian Larry’s shop the next year, where Sasaki swept floors, pushed bikes, and handled

oil changes. Specializing in vintage custom bikes, Sasaki soon made a name for himself in the moto world, continuing to push his custom bike ideas and projects, and finally opening Keino Cycles.

Sasaki is one of few custom bike builders who offer service repair and rebuilding through Keino Cycles. Sasaki’s fervor, work ethic, capabilities and credentials allow him to take on new challenges and jobs that other shops might shy away from.

“I want to keep moving up. I don’t want to be known for a certain style as far as aesthetics go,” Sasaki said. “I want to move onto different things and keep experimenting with my ideas or a customer’s ideas. If I have a style I would want it to be known for that, and I think that comes out in my work.”

What was your experience like coming from Japan to New York City?

Everything was big; the skies were big, and I remember noticing how there are all kinds of people. Where I'm from, everybody looks Japanese, you know? If you see white people, black people, or whatever the type, in Japan, that's a foreigner. But over here, that's America. Everyone is different and everyone is acting normal about it. Nobody's looking at you any differently.

How did you meet Indian Larry, and what was it like working in his shop?

It was a coincidence. I didn't know him back then. I mean, he was a famous in a certain world, but I didn't know where he worked at. When I first moved to New York, I had a job at a small dealership in Brooklyn, but I wanted to get into a custom motorcycle shop. So I just made an appointment with a bunch of custom bike shops in the city, and I didn't have a computer back then, so the Yellow Pages, you know? I made a phone call and appointment and just from my resume, one of them called me back and said 'Come work for us.'

The first day Larry was there, and I introduced myself and he said, 'Indian, very nice to meet you.' In my head I thought, 'He doesn't look like an Indian. Totally white and Caucasian guy, whatever.' Then I saw his bike and I said, 'You know what, I remember this bike in a magazine.' It wasn't an 'Oh, that's the guy' kind of thing. It was intense and fun. I learned a lot. You know, sometimes he had mood swings and whatnot. I mean, it's a working environment. It's not like a school. So he's doing something else and I'm doing something else at the other side of the shop. It's not like we were working side by side and he was showing me things. Also, I was young and didn't have much experience, so I didn't get to do cool stuff. I was just doing the regular, simple stuff. But little by little, I was accepted, and the environment got me into more interesting stuff. It was little by little, step by step.

What is Keino Cycles' Goal & Mission? I love what I do. I wake up in the morning just looking forward to coming to a shop. This is what I love, other than my wife and kid. I don't have employees, so I am by myself working and doing everything I can. So this is like my 'me' time, everyday.

So my goal is to keep doing what I'm doing, keep doing what I love to do. That's my mission, personally. As far as the motorcycle world goes, I get to turn my vision into reality, and do something I enjoy the most without sacrificing anything that is important. So I had to find a balance to keep doing what I'm doing.

Will you speak on Keino Cycles' motto: "Pushing Forward With a Love of the Past?" I came up with this tagline to keep moving. I don't want to stop. To me, if it's like, 'I'm the best. I know everything. I could do everything,' and I stop, there's no room for improvement for the future. I'm a perfectionist. If I felt I made this perfect bike, there's no more than that. Certain people will be that way. It's confidence, but it's almost like an arrogance, you know? I don't want to be like that, I want to keep going every time.

Every bike that I finish, next time, I want it to be able to do this, or do that. And I wanted to keep having that desire to do better, or newer, or do something else better. But at the same time, that's based on my past and my experience and mistakes. That's what I tried to say in that tagline. I cherish that experience with [Indian Larry] in that shop. At the same time, it's safe to say I am better than who I was back then. That doesn't mean that I hate the past, but I wanted to be better. I wanted to do more. So that's what I mean by moving forward, pushing

forward the concept of the perfect bike.

Do you think there is truly a perfect bike? I don't think so. I mean, it's all a personal thing. Internal discipline, I guess. If you think it's perfect, there's nothing more than that. Good for you, good for you. But I don't feel that way and I try my best. I'm not the best, but I want to do my best and I want to keep doing and pushing. It sounds cheesy, but I think a creator needs to keep creating things. You can't stop. You can think your bike is a perfect masterpiece and be satisfied with that, and that's good for you, but not for me.

Why did you decide to host workshop classes out of your shop?

Every once in a while I would have people wanting to learn, intern, or whatnot. But I don't really teach them right away in that kind of environment. If you want to intern, you've got to do other stuff. Other stuff that you get to witness a little bit. But just because you're working for me doesn't mean I'm going to side by side show you. That's not why I came here. If you want to learn from me, you have to pay your dues and to see and learn.

So people wanted to learn, so I thought I might as well create the workshop and organize my thoughts and methods, and I might as well make a living as well as pass it onto other people that wanted to learn, so I can more focus on one day. My passion is sheet metal right now, and I want to do more, but I teach the basics and the 'this is how you do this and that,' and what I think they should be doing.

Give us a tour of your tattoos! Well, I only have two sleeves. The left is Diego Mannino from Daredevil Tattoo in the city, and the right side is Troy Denning from Invisible, and he did my chest, and I've just started my back with Tebori. I was always into the Japanese style, even though where I grew up, the Japanese traditional-style tattoo brings the idea of the Yakuza. Hardcore gangs. But at the same time, I always loved those Japanese-style paintings and all that stuff. Something about it I admired.

Do you come from a tattooed family? No. My parents kind of knew that was going into it, especially when I moved to New York. When my dad was around, he and my mom came to New York to see me, and I took them to my shop. Everybody had tattoos, so they knew this is how I was going to get someday. I was pretty old to get into tattoos, I waited and waited because I didn't want to make a mistake, and I didn't have much money anyways. So I started big with my Diego [Mannino] arm, 10 years ago.

Do you think the Japanese culture's view on tattooing is changing for the better? I've been living in the states the past 20 years, so I can't really tell what's going on in Japan. I don't know much, but I noticed that a lot more people — or younger people — have tattoos. Especially in visible areas. I think it's getting to be more accepted there, but only in city areas. But if you go to a less-crowded and less-populated area, they're not used to tattoos.

A few years ago, I went back to my hometown and met up with a friend and went to a restaurant. It is not a city area, it's more suburban. My friend and I walked into the restaurant and the restaurant is empty. It was the summertime so I'm wearing a t-shirt, and they said, 'Sorry, reserved. Private party today.' We went to the next one. Same thing. I realized, 'Right, maybe I should have worn the long sleeves.'



ROAD TO GLORY

MEET THE FINALISTS OF THE 2018 INKED COVER MODEL CONTEST

photos by christopher kolk





2ND PLACE: JASMINE SOLAPERTO



Chainmail headpiece on Jasmine by Laurel DeWitt



3RD PLACE: BRITNEY LEE

4TH PLACE: CHEROKEE SAVAGE



5TH PLACE: MARIANNE WILLIAMS



6TH PLACE: COCONUT KITTY



TABLE TALK

CHOPPED'S CHRIS SANTOS SERVES UP HIS SUCCESS STORY
AND PHILOSOPHY ON SHARE-CENTRIC DINING

photos by peter roessler words by devon preston

For the past 30+ seasons, Chris Santos has served as a recurring guest judge on Food Network's "Chopped." However, this is far from his biggest claim to fame in the culinary industry. For the past several decades, Santos has owned and operated some of New York City's top-rated restaurants. We sat down at his latest launch, the Lower East Side's street art-inspired Vandal, to learn about his entry into the culinary arts and how he built a restaurant empire in the most competitive food city in the world.

How did the food you ate growing up inspire a passion for the culinary arts? Well, it didn't. My passion for the culinary arts started from my first night working in a kitchen when I was about 13 or 14 years old. The chef quit in the middle of my first shift and pandemonium ensued. My recollection was that it was a complete disaster. But the adrenaline rush of everyone moving as fast as possible and trying to salvage the night somehow grabbed me by the teeth and sunk into me. Soon after, they hired a new chef and that chef took me under his wing. Then I started paying attention to food. Up until that point, I was a TV dinner kid. My mom was working multiple jobs and I had to fend for myself. But once I started working in restaurants, my eyes opened wide to everything that was out there. Then after culinary school, I spent a significant amount of time backpacking through Europe and eating. That's when my full-blown love affair with food really started.

Despite attending culinary school, you've described yourself as self-taught. What does it mean to be a self-taught chef? Typically speaking, the 'proper career path' would be after culinary school, to do a bunch of stints under world-renowned chefs to be mentored and taught. It's a great path, but it's not the path that I went on. After culinary school, I basically stepped out into the world and got my first executive chef position, which I was completely ill equipped for. I had no idea what I was doing, so I learned on the job. That's what I mean by being self-taught, I never had a true chef mentor.

What don't they teach you in school that you find valuable in your career? The hours are brutal and if you don't truly love what you do, this isn't the right industry for you. It can be really hard on relationships because you're not around a lot and there are long shifts. But it's also incredibly rewarding. The bonds that I've formed with people who have chosen the same profession are lifelong bonds.

Upon graduating from culinary school, you moved to New York City. Why did you choose New York? Well, Sinatra said: 'If you can make it here, you can make it anywhere.' Also New York being — some other cities may disagree — the foremost food city in the country, if not the world. Certainly Paris, San

Francisco, and a multitude of other cities around the world can lay claim to it, but I'm still loyal to New York. Coming out of culinary school, I felt that New York was the biggest mountain to climb. Although I will say that when I moved here, I was 21 and I had a nine-year plan. I was going to do three years in New York, three years in New Orleans, and three years in San Francisco — which would bring me up to 30, and then I'd decide where I wanted to be. But here I am, 26 years later. I think it's the most challenging place in the world and Sinatra was right.

Between 1999 and 2000, you traveled to 14 countries and visited over 40 cities. What were the most valuable skills that you picked up during that time? Believe it or not, nothing technical. It was really more about developing my palate and introducing my senses to just how complex food is and flavors are. It was eye opening, whether it was walking down a street in France with a baguette or having an ahead-of-its-time molecular gastronomy dinner in Spain. It was an unbelievable educational experience, eating more than actually cooking.

Before turning 30, you opened your first restaurant, Wyanoka. What led you to open a restaurant at such a young age? What led me to open up a restaurant at such a young age was foolishness. I recalibrated my nine-year plan soon after I moved to New York. One of the things about New York is that the greatest restaurants in other cities rival the greatest in New York. But what other cities don't have is the fact that there are great restaurants on every block in New York. I fell in love with that and I fell in love with the city, specifically the Lower East Side. I knew that around year three, when I should have been shipping off to New Orleans, that I wasn't going anywhere. So I recalibrated and said, 'Now I want my goal to be opening my first restaurant before I'm 30.' Which I did when I was 28 and it put me on the map. I got my first *New York Times* review, I got great press, and it opened doors to where I am today. If you traced back all the steps, none of this would have been possible without that restaurant. But I didn't know what I was doing, so I was losing money as fast as I could make it and not being very efficient. But I wouldn't trade the experience for anything.

Five years later, you opened The Stanton Social. How would you describe the atmosphere and how did you develop the signature style of that space? Stanton Social was the first place where I truly cooked the type of food that speaks to me. I had been letting my brain lead me up until that point, and I then started letting my palate and my stomach lead me in the right direction. I also knew that I wanted to bring back the Convivio family-style concept of



dining. I intentionally set out to be a restaurant that was a big group kind of celebratory spot where people would come for birthdays, bachelor/ bachelorette parties, and anniversaries, but be encouraged to share food. I mean, I have a cookbook called "Share," it's kind of my whole thing. Up until this point, I hadn't done that and I'd worked in the traditional appetizer, entree, dessert system of restaurants. Once I broke out of that and started making food more interactive, there's an energy in the room that creates a buzz and excitement that I found lacking before that.

Then we have Beauty & Essex. What went into curating this space and creating a multi-layered dining experience? Essex street, it's not the prettiest street in New York City. So we knew we were going to build this beautiful restaurant that had a secret entryway. Not to be a cliché sort of speakeasy, but to provide a transportive experience where you would go in and then open up the doors into this grand space. I had partners and we'd dabbled in a few different ideas, but once we came upon doing a jewelry-inspired pawn shop, it made us go back to the drawing board and we designed the restaurant with jewelry tones everywhere. Once that happened, everything fell into place and I think it's one of the most beautiful restaurants on Earth. I know that I'm biased, but it's just so beautiful. Then I took the Stanton Social concept of shareable dining and elevated the cuisine. Where the Stanton Social has fun and inventive versions of corn dogs, Beauty & Essex is a little more refined.

Last, but not least, we have Vandal, which takes inspiration from street art. What set this establishment apart from your other restaurants? Vandal has creative, globally-inspired cuisine with street art from around the world. We have an incredible collection of street art, both framed pieces and actual installations. We pair these great street art murals with really inventive, creative cuisine that also draws inspiration from all over the world. Vandal takes inspiration from both Stanton Social and Beauty & Essex, in terms of having higher-end items and fun, everyday food too.

What are your thoughts on how tattoo culture and tattoos have infiltrated the restaurant world? I mean, it's almost a cliché now, right? I think chefs are a little tired, myself included, of being lumped in as bad boy chefs

because we have tattoos. But it is part of the fabric of kitchen culture. Why that is, I couldn't necessarily speak to the sociological reasons for it, but there is a pirate-type of lifestyle back there. You work 12 to 14 hour days, six days a week, weekends, holidays, and happy hour is at 2 a.m., not 6 p.m. It's an alternative lifestyle to be a chef, and I think what often goes along with alternative lifestyles are tattoos.

Your cookbook "Share" revolves around communal-style dining. What's your favorite memory of sharing a meal? I don't get to cook much more as a chef, my role has changed into running restaurants, managing teams and developing new concepts. So my cooking time becomes less and less every year, but the holidays bring my family and my fiancé's family together. I go to Kansas and cook this big, lavish dinner for 20 people. Everyone gets involved and that's my favorite time of the year.

Having worked in New York for several decades, what are your top 3 underrated spots in the city? Macondo, on First Avenue and East Houston. It's a great little spot that doesn't get a lot of play in the press, but it's great for tapas and reasonably priced wine. Then there are the ABC Restaurants: ABC Kitchen, ABC Cocina, and ABCV. I feel like ABC Kitchen and ABCV get a lot of attention, but ABC Cocina is one of the best Mexican restaurants in the city. Third, the burger at the Dram Shop in Park Slope, Brooklyn. It's maybe the best burger I've had in New York City and we always get lists of the best burgers but they're not on it. And a fourth one, is Don Pepi, a hole-in-the-wall pizza shop in Penn Station, of all places. You would never think you'd be able to find really good food at Penn Station, but Don Pepi's pizza is my favorite place in the city.

What's your biggest piece of advice for aspiring chefs and restaurateurs? I would always advise young aspiring chefs and restaurateurs to, before they go to culinary school and make that commitment, spend a year working in the industry. It is very rewarding but it does take a lot of hours and sacrifices for many years. So I think that you need to spend a year working in a restaurant or kitchen just to see if you can hang with that. Then, after a year, if you feel good about it and you still love it, by all means, pursue your dream.

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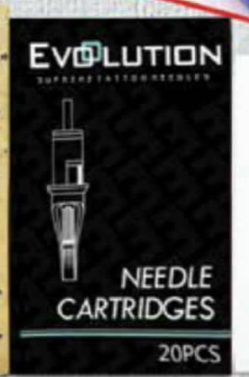
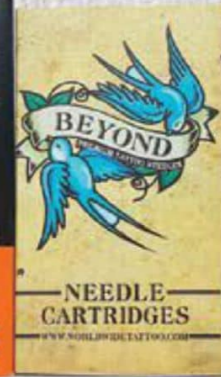
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Vinicius Sosa, better known as SosMula, met Junius Rogers, professionally known as ZillaKami, on his first day out of jail. The pair were put together thanks to Zillakami's older half-brother Righteous P, the CEO of the music label Hikari-Ultra. Once they started creating songs together, the music scene was injected with a strong dose of raw violent venom that City Morgue's wardogs (fans) happily devoured.

Sitting with New York's demented duo clad in crust punk pants ("Missing Since Thursdays"), we talked music, mosh pits, and genital tattoos.

Coming off your sold out European tour and more recently, the Thrasher show in Austin, Texas, what would you say the biggest difference is between your European fans and your American fans?

ZillaKami: Well, we haven't completed a solo headliner tour in the U.S. yet, so I can't comment on America, but I can say the Europeans are absolutely crazy.

SosMula: The European tee up crazy. They are hardcore for real. Not to say what we saw of the U.S. isn't crazy. Our show at St. Vitus in Brooklyn was wild.

Zilla: That was one of our best shows to date.

I was at the St. Vitus show and the crowd was absolutely off the wall. At one point, Zilla, you jumped into the fray as the song "In Heaven" by Lynch's Eraserhead started to play. Sos, you managed to quell the pit up front. How do you control such a wild crowd with such ease?

Sos: Simple — We talk to them.

Zilla: As the artists, we take the role of group leaders. So it's our responsibility to manipulate the energy. Luckily, we have a fucking crazy yet loyal fan base, so 99% of the time, they're gonna follow our lead.

Was there ever a City Morgue show where you thought, "Oh shit, this is really getting out of control?"

Zilla: In Amsterdam, someone threw a bottle at us and I stopped the crowd and asked "Who threw the bottle?" A fan pointed to a kid and then he promptly punched him in the face.

Sos: They ran him out the joint fast.

Zilla: In Poland, we knew it was going to be hell. The venue oversold. Even after it was sold out, they kept letting people in. The barricade went down and some kid's leg was caught in it and snap — his leg got broken. That was our first show of the European tour.

Sos: At one point, virtually the entire crowd was made up of a shirtless mass of sweaty bodies. It looked they had been possessed by some primal energy.

If you had to pick one song that represents the vibe of City Morgue, what would it be?

Zilla: "Shinners13." It's like our anthem. (Zilla sings) "One for the gang, two for the fame, three for the name, four to the grave." We are doing what we want till we die like the phrase, "Death or glory."

Sos: That's a good question. I'm trying to separate my feelings between songs I like best and one that best fits our vibe. But my favorite songs would honestly be our Soundcloud shit... especially "Bukkake." It's a classic.

In past interviews, you have cited you've been influenced by the likes of DMX to Slipknot. Are there any artists you guys are compared to that you feel is not accurate?

Sos: I can't think of any examples of people comparing us, but every rapper goes through that dumb shit in the beginning. "Oh,

you sound like him" or, "Oh, you dress like him." We know that soon people will try to compare us, but our real fans know that's it's almost impossible to compare us to any other group out there.

Zilla: Ain't nobody doing something like we are.

Sos: We are the trendsetters for this shit.

The name "City Morgue" fits the band's aesthetic perfectly. However, were there any other names considered prior?

Zilla: There was a point where we really didn't have a name.

Sos: We were just gonna use our own names, but we always knew we needed something.

Zilla: When it came down to it, we immediately chose City Morgue. We felt that fit us best.

Onto the tattoo questions. I gotta ask the obligatory, "What was your first tattoo?"

Sos: My hands. It says "Issac Boyz," and it's a reference to my block. It's just one of those young, dumb, hood tats-type of shit.

Zilla: "Riot" across my stomach. P did it. Same day Sos got some new ink and I thought, 'I might as well get a tattoo, too.'

Do you guys still feel passionate about those pieces?

Sos: It's tough, because it documents a chapter in my life, but honestly, I wish I got something way better. But, you know, I feel you gotta go through the process of getting some mad, wack tattoos.

Zilla: I like mine, but I sometimes think I could have done something way better with this space.

That goes right into my next question. What tattoo would you say you regret the most?

Zilla: I don't like the scythe on my face because it doesn't even look like one. Everyone thinks it's a question mark. There is a lot of fan art depicting it as a question mark. Good idea. Bad tattoo.

Sos: My galaxy sleeve. Fuck that shit. It doesn't even look good compared to other ones. My plan is to black it out. However, I am not saying anymore just in case someone tries to steal my idea.

Going into face tattoos — were you apprehensive about getting your first one?

Zilla: Oh no, not at all. My first was the scythe.

Sos: Well, I realized once I got them, I ain't getting a job, so I knew about the repercussions, but it didn't bother me, I mean, I'd been getting tattooed forever and at the point I was pretty much inked everywhere but my face. Therefore, I knew I wanted to get one even before it was cool. But I just happened to get mine when it was trendy.

Zilla: No RAEGRETS.

Rumor has it, Zilla, that you have a tattoo in a pretty private place. Care to elaborate?

Zilla: Hahaha, I don't really think it's that's crazy, but I've got spider webs by my crotch. Right on my penis, it says, "Toxin" down my shaft.

Righteous P: They had to find a special tool to tattoo that one.

Zilla: Yeah, it was tweezers.

What's next for City Morgue?

Sos: Mad shit. Two eps, an album, and our solo tapes.

Zilla: Expect mad new music and tour dates we ain't talking about yet, but soon. We just gotta get the dates locked in. Also P has nipples tattooed on his butt cheeks.

CITY MORGUE

THE AIR IS THICK WITH "FORMALDEHYDE"

WHEN ZILLAKAMI AND SOS MULA DISSECT THE NYC RAP GAME.

photos by peter roessler words by anthony gambino

BACK IN BLACK

words by devon preston photos by peter roessler

ANDY BLACK TALKS BLACK VEIL BRIDES, GOING SOLO AND HIS SECOND STUDIO ALBUM

Like a phoenix from the ashes, Andy Black broke out of his shell as the lead vocalist of Black Veil Brides to become a successful solo artist. Now, he's fresh off the release of his second solo album, "The Ghost of Ohio" and has proven he's not a one-trick pony. We sat down with Black at our New York headquarters to learn more about his new music, as well as his impressive collection of tattoos.

Your newest album pays homage to your home state of Ohio. What about Ohio has made such a lasting impression on you personally and as a musician? I think if you're from a small place, it sounds almost cliché to say, but those things become ingrained in you. There's a mentality, both positive and negative, from being in a place where people are born and die in the same five-mile radius. Everyone they know is everyone they've known for their whole life. People's lives tend to be at a slower pace and other things that could be negatives, but it's also easy to romanticize them for a person that's from those areas. This is one way to live life and it's not necessarily the path that I took, but I have such an affinity for the reality of the town that I'm from.

I think it's built something in me that I wasn't necessarily aware of when I was a kid. A lot of who I am is shaped by where I'm from, and

as I've gotten older, I've realized that more and more. It was important for me to write about this because sometimes as an artist, you build a version of yourself that you'd like the world to see and sometimes it can overtake the reality of who you are. And for a long time, I felt that I was putting out a version of myself that was still true to me, but it was more of a pose. I wanted to be more honest about my upbringing and from an ethical standpoint, what shaped my moral compass.

In the 13 years that you've been in the music industry, you've gone by many names. Take us through your different stage names and where you were in life when you went by each of them. My first stage name was an accident. I didn't ever intend on being called Andy Sixx. Like many people in their mid- to late twenties, the first social media that I was ever involved in was Myspace. I didn't know that if you called yourself something on one of those sites, it





would become your name. To me it was like a screen name, we had AOL instant messenger and you could change your name all the time. I went by like 30 different names on Myspace. I used Andy Sixx as one of my screen names because I loved Mötley Crüe and somebody told me that I looked a little bit like Nikki. Then people started calling me that and it kind of snowballed. I realized 'Oh crap, I have someone else's stage name as my name.' It felt bizarre and by the time we did the first Black Veil Brides record, I had made sure the name was changed to the number six. And then by the time we did the second record, I established it as my own last name (Biersack).

For a while, it was kind of confusing because people would call me both and you can tell when someone got into the band by what name they call me. Then later, when I did the solo project, I wanted to differentiate it from everything else. So having a different name felt like the right thing to do.

What personal significance does bullying have to you and what message do you hope to send to your fans about it? I think my perspective on bullying comes from growing up and being the subject of people's ire. But, by the same token, as a kid I took that and let it create a sense of revenge in me that I'm not fully comfortable with now. I lashed out a lot more as a high school kid because of people's treatment of me that I almost became a bully in my own right. I would engage in fights because I wanted to defend myself and I had such a chip on my shoulder that I carried into the early part of the band.

I was notably starting fights on stage and yelling at people — a lot of that came from feeling that it was unjust that people were treating me this way or saying things about me. When I wrote, I wanted to convey that message but in a way that was more positive than I was capable of being. Even in the early days, I wrote about standing above these things and not reacting to them. And then I would go out and do them wrong, even though I'd written the song. It was about building up an opportunity to be a better version of who I was.

In many of your music videos, nonconformity plays a major role. What did it mean to be nonconforming when you began your career in 2006 and how has that changed in 2019? I remember when there were so many visual signals that you could give to show the things you liked and listened to. It was funny because jeans, like the ones I'm wearing, or Converse were almost like a flag that you wore to say 'I listen to punk music.' Now it's really ubiquitous and it's probably cooler this way that there doesn't have to be so much division in terms of genre or people wearing certain clothes. Sometimes people get frustrated when hip-hop artists wear metal shirts and I think it's the dumbest thing. Because to me, if art, whether it's tattoos or clothing, is so common and can reach everywhere, it only stands to help every one of those subgenres.

I will say that it's weird with tattoos, how commonplace they are. I started getting tattooed when I was 16 and it was still an aggressive statement in a way. In high school, people would be uncomfortable because I had a bunch of tattoos. Now, I was literally just in an elevator at my hotel this morning and the bellman goes 'Sick ink,' and started talking to me about my neck tattoos. I don't dislike it, but it's such a change for me in the last 10 years how acceptable tattoos have become.

In 2014, you announced to *Kerrang! Magazine* that you would be pursuing a solo career. Five years later, you're about to release your second album as Andy Black. How have you changed as a musician in this time? Well, I hope I've gotten better. That's always the hope, that whether people like a new record more than an old one, the goal of every artist is to improve your craft. I think that a lot of times artists are better songwriters and musicians, but their early work speaks more to people. My goal with this

has been to give people another style of music because it isn't my goal to constantly try to make the same record over and over again. I feel that would be boring and I'd be missing the point of the opportunity I've been given. People allow me to make records and a certain number of people want to hear them, why not do everything in the window of time when people give a shit?

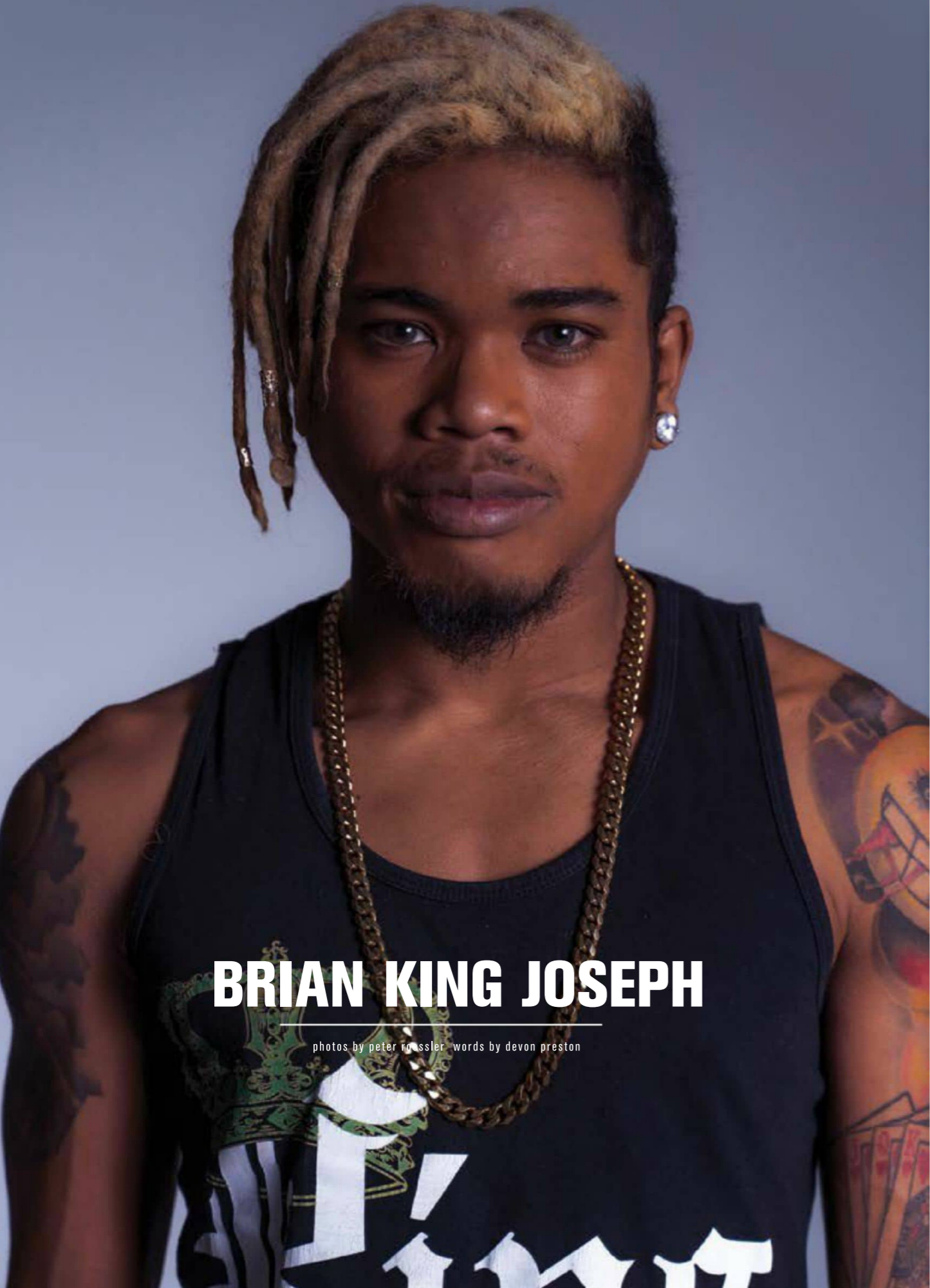
What's the biggest difference being a solo artist, as opposed to part of a group? What do you miss the most about BVB? It's a very different experience. When I started Black Veil Brides, it was essentially a revolving door of people back in Cincinnati. It wasn't until 2009 that I was living full-time in LA and met the members that we turned it into a band. We split everything evenly and would make the same amount of money. I'd experienced two versions of being in a band, where it's a band with me and people, and then the version of the band where five people have the same goal. It's certainly a whole different animal for me to go solo and it's essentially just my project. I certainly respect the musicians that I've hired to play with me, but it's not a band. We can have fun and jam, but it's not the same thing.

I would say that the biggest difference for me is being able to go on tour and be able to do whatever I want on stage. Selfishly, I think it's a lot of fun to do that. But there are certain things about being in a band that you can't really replace. The feeling of, particularly when you're first starting out, that you're in this together and all have this common goal. But at this point in my career, I don't think that I have a preference. I can enjoy them both for different reasons.

As this is INKED, we're here in part to talk about your tattoos. What was your first tattoo, your favorite tattoo, and your most recent tattoo? My first tattoo was the Alkaline Trio logo with the skull on it. I got that when I was in high school and my dad signed the waiver for me to be able to get a tattoo when I was 16. And then my favorite and most recent tattoo are the same. For Valentine's Day of last year, I got a comic book-style portrait of my wife as Sailor Moon on my arm. This girl in Eastern Europe did this amazing portrait of her as Sailor Moon because that's her favorite fictional character. I thought that was the coolest thing and I had the girl send in a high resolution photo of it. A week before Valentine's Day, I was in Baltimore and this tattoo artist that my security guard knew came and did it in my hotel room. I had to keep it a secret and because I'm on stage every night, I started wearing a big, black arm band to cover it up. It was getting pretty gross underneath that but I couldn't have any photos taken with it because I wanted to surprise her. It was not the way you should treat a new tattoo but I had no choice and it actually healed amazingly.

What is your most memorable tattoo experience from your time on the road? Oh my God, I got tattooed on the road so much. I have so many silly tattoos that I got on the road, like 9/10ths of the ones I got are something dumb. I have "FP" tattooed on my knuckles to represent what we thought my genitalia looked like in leather pants. My tour manager and I used to call it front poop because it kind of looked like a big pile of dog shit. So we would do front poop checks before I went on stage because I'm not interested in the eighties hair metal guy showing off his junk, I thought it was inappropriate.

The silliest tour tattoo I have is the sentence, 'Guns are for soldiers,' on my back. And it sounds like a cool statement but in reality it came from watching the third direct-to-video "Lost Boys" sequel. In the film, they go close into Corey Feldman's face and he says 'Boats are for sailors, guns are for soldiers.' We laughed so hard and my friend Jessie who tours with us was like, 'We should get that tattooed,' and we did. I was somehow able to convince him that we each get half of the sentence and he has the words 'Boats are for sailors' tattooed on his back.



BRIAN KING JOSEPH

photos by peter rossler words by devon preston

Every season, NBC's "America's Got Talent" introduces the nation to dozens of talented acts across music, magic and comedy. And during their 13th season, we were introduced to 27-year-old electric violinist, Brian King Joseph. Not only did Joseph impress the judges with his incredible musical abilities and megawatt smile, he won over audiences with his inspiring story of struggling with neuropathy. Joseph stopped by our studio in Los Angeles' fashion district to discuss his introduction to violin, his shocking medical diagnosis and his experience performing alongside Lindsey Stirling.

When did you first start playing the violin and when did you decide to pursue music professionally? I started playing the violin at the age of four. Around eight, I started playing in churches with my sister and then went on to do national competitions. At that time, I couldn't read music, but I could play a lot of songs well above my age level. Playing from week to week felt so natural and it was always there as a potential career choice, but I wasn't sure how that would happen or what type of music I wanted to play.

During your time at the Berklee College of Music, you were forced to leave the program due to a shocking diagnosis. What was that diagnosis? Once I got into Berklee, I was so happy and thought that this was where the rest of my life begins. But I remember over Thanksgiving break, the day I essentially lost control of my body and was sitting there with excruciating pain, trying to figure out what was going on with me. For a few months, I went next door to the Harvard Medical Center and just confused the doctors. Some of them thought that I had acute rheumatoid arthritis, while others thought that I had spinal problems. I'd been through all of these tests and finally, I'm in a room with about 12 different neurologists.

The head neurologist says they think I have neuropathy, and they were going to test for that. They didn't think I had it because I was too young, but they were going to start poking me to see how much feeling I had. About 10 minutes into it, I started getting annoyed and I'm really tired of being at the hospital, so I asked the doctor if we can start the test. Everyone in the room stopped and the doctor said, "We've been doing this for 10 minutes already, you definitely have neuropathy and it's severe." He told me that I'd lost most of the feeling in my feet and my hands. I was 22 at the time and he told me that I had about eight years left to keep walking on my feet and possibly less to continue playing the violin. The motor skills to play the violin are a lot more complex than to just walk with one foot in front of the other.

At that time, I was completely devastated to hear this, and I'll always remember the way that doctor looked at me. It was such a heavy day but I think that it was also the day that helped to change things around. Having a doctor tell you that you're not going to be walking by age 30 can have two different effects — you can either be incredibly sad and accept that fate, or you can say 'Screw you, no way.' As soon as he said that, part of me thought that there was no way that I was going to let things go down like that, and at the rate I'm going, at 30 I'll still be walking and playing.

How does neuropathy impact your day-to-day? Neuropathy has been a driving factor in my life since I've had it. I feel like I haven't slept since I was diagnosed, which was almost six years ago. Having neuropathy, you're woken up by pain so deep that you can't make it go away, and having it there all the time puts you in a state of perpetual tiredness. That's one of the factors that

mattered to me in continuing to play because pushing through that pain while continuing to play makes it feel so worth it. That's why I've turned to violin so much while I've been sick because it's more important to me than what I'm going through. If I can cast away that pain -- if only for a few minutes during a song -- I can turn that pain into something completely different. That's a big reason why I smile when I'm playing because it feels so cool to take what I'm going through and cure myself in that way. It's a temporary feeling and everytime I play, I have to deal with the physical consequences of that later on. Especially on those nights where I've performed for a bunch of people, those have been my roughest and most painful nights, but I'm so happy. It's better than the nights where I'm not feeling as bad because of that feeling.

What led you to audition for "America's Got Talent" and what were your expectations going into that experience? This is America, we grow up watching talent shows. I remember watching talent shows on Saturday nights with my mom and sisters, and part of me was thinking that I could do it. I've always believed in myself and wanted to show the world what I can do. Being on "America's Got Talent" was an opportunity to show everyone what I'm doing, and as someone who does something like me, it's very hard to go out and get a record deal. It's not a proven thing that a violinist can hit the charts and spark the interest of America. But I believed in myself and thought that I belonged on that show.

After I auditioned, I got the callback and the producers said they were thinking about putting me on the show. But then a few weeks went by and I didn't hear from them. So expectation-wise, I thought that they didn't want me. I knew that there was a timeline on producing the show and I thought that if I were going to be on the show, I'd be on it already because they'd have to start filming. During the next week, I get a phone call at 10:30 p.m. and they were like, "Hey, we're doing our very last round of auditions in front of the judges. One of our guys dropped out, can you come at 7 a.m. tomorrow morning?" It was all last minute, I didn't even have a song or an outfit ready. But I did it and everything happened because I picked up the phone late at night.

How did the competition setting and the pressure to perform impact you both mentally and physically? By nature, I love to compete and it drives me. There's something about the seriousness and being in the thick of it that makes me so much better. On the other hand, I was pushing myself so hard that I got into this one-track mindset. Doing a show like this can be stressful for anyone, but for someone like me, dealing with the pain and the exhaustion, it was grueling. It's hard work because we're all fighting for that one chance to give the world everything we've got and be appreciated for it. I don't mind busting my butt for a week just to play for four minutes, as long as those four minutes are glorious and magical.

For me personally, there were a lot of challenges physically going through it. One time, during the dress rehearsal the day before the finals, I was practicing with Lindsey Stirling for our duet. We ran it once and it was great, but we wanted to run it one more time just to make sure. And in the middle of the song, I've never felt all four of my limbs refuse to listen to me at the same exact time. I was on stage playing and then I was on the ground unable to move. I had to be wheeled up to my hotel room and rested for about an hour before I went right down to finish the day. And then I went out and performed that night. It was between the span of four hours that I'd been paralyzed and then playing. It was one of those moments that showed me there was nothing that could stop me.

Wanderer

PROFESSIONAL ADVENTURER KALEN THORIEN SHARES HER LOVE FOR THE OPEN ROAD

photos by kalen thorien words by devon preston

For Kalen Thorien, having a normal life and career was never an option. Straight out of high school, she moved to Alta, Utah and just two years later, she became a professional skier. However, Thorien's love for adventure didn't stop on the slopes. Today, she's known as a professional adventurer and travels the globe exploring new places, whether by plane or by Harley. She's a wanderer to her core and has no plan to settle down in one place anytime soon.

How did your childhood help foster a love for the outdoors and what are some of your strongest memories of being in nature as a kid? I was lucky to be in the pre-smartphone generation. The outdoors were our iPhones, so whether it was sneaking into construction sites to play in mud, climbing trees in my backyard, or swimming in the local river, it was just second nature to be outside. My passion for exploration and adventure didn't come until my late teens. When I started skiing at 16, that was the catalyst for all things in the mountains. Besides sliding down snow, I wanted to roam the wilderness whenever possible. Wake up in a tent every morning. Go further into the unknown. Outdoor domino effect, you could say.

What led you to become a professional skier and how did that lead you to become a four-season athlete with Salomon? I never thought I'd be a pro-skier; the odds weren't in my favor. I started late, never had formal training, and didn't grow up in a hardcore skiing family. My intentions for skiing were doing it as much as possible and I'd work whatever odd jobs I had to make it happen. I moved to Utah after high school and got a job at Alta Ski Resort flipping burgers and washing dishes. Not the most glamorous work, but it got me out skiing everyday. Trying to keep up with the boys pushed me, and my abilities increased rapidly. I started to get recognized by photographers and magazines, which led to me getting published. When I landed the cover of *Powder Magazine* (skiing's biggest publication), things really started to take off. I picked up brands but got caught in the flux of being a sponsored skier. I joined a wildland fire crew in 2012. It was tough work, but I was able to make enough money every summer to take my winters off, focus on skiing, and actually feed myself in the process.

A gamble is what eventually landed me Salomon. I was planning on becoming a wildland firefighter full-time. It seemed like a smart move,

working for the government. Before I dove into that commitment, I needed one summer for myself to have fun and explore. I had just enough money saved, so I bought a camera and made a promise to myself to wake up in a tent as much as possible. I documented this journey and my social media took off in the process. Salomon was looking for a four-season female athlete that summer and my name came up. Being four-season means I not only promote the brand in the winter through skiing, but also the rest of the year with their other products (hiking, running, backpacking, etc). This concept wasn't common so it gave me the edge over other potential candidates and in July 2015, I signed with Salomon. I said goodbye to firefighting and flipping burgers, I was now able to work as an athlete full-time and actually make a living.

What does it mean to be a professional adventurer and how does your lifestyle differ from your average 29-year-old? It's still a funny title, adventurer. For me it's finding new places to explore, document, and share those stories with others. Inspiring people to challenge themselves, discover our world, or simply step out of the office on occasion. It makes for an unpredictable life, though. I find myself on the road substantially more than at home. I ended up living in a camper for a few years so I didn't have to deal with a permanent residence. Relationships are not easy. Friendships are even trickier to maintain. I'm alone a lot. You have to be confident in yourself and not fear the unknown. The road isn't always easy to maneuver, but trusting the process and knowing great things are always on the horizon helps keep me motivated and moving.

What does it mean to be known as "The Wanderer," and what led you to get this word tattooed on your knuckles? It was the acceptance that I'm never going to be 'normal.' As I got older, there was the itch of having some regularity in my life. Settling down, finding a significant other, traveling less. But that was short-lived and I quickly became unhappy being tied down. I had to recognize that I just wasn't — nor will I ever be — designed for a normal life. That my place is being in motion; on the open road, in the wild. If that means having to sacrifice some things, then so be it. I got 'Wanderer' tattooed to remind myself this is who I am and will always be.

What inspired you to purchase a Harley-Davidson and how





has riding impacted your life as a professional adventurer? I've always been a motorhead. My dad and I would fix cars together when I was young and I secretly wanted to be a racecar driver. I always loved motorcycles but could never afford one, especially when every penny I was making was going towards my blossoming skiing career. The final straw was when I was riding on the back of a guy's Dyna. I was staring at this head in front of me and so badly wanted to see the road. I knew I needed to be riding one of these. But I was still hesitant, it seemed like such a huge journey. I had never ridden a real motorcyc- cle before. Where do I even start?

Well, right after that experience, I set off on an 18-day off-trail traverse of the Sierra Mountains in California. I had a lot of time to think, with a large part of that head-space taken over by the thought of riding a Harley. After accomplishing what was the hardest hike of my life, I gained a newfound confidence and knew that if I could walk 270 miles by myself, riding a motorcycle was nothing. I scoured the internet for over month and finally found Blue, my 1993 Harley FXR. She was perfect. I drove through

the night to Denver, loaded up the bike, took my rider's course the next week, and the rest is history.

Riding has impacted me to a degree I wasn't expecting. It's consumed my life. Every waking hour I'm thinking about riding. Where to go next. How far I can push the boundaries. There's a beautiful symbiosis with adventure and riding. The ability to suffer, handle situations with a calm head, push through exhaustion and being okay with being uncomfortable were all lessons I learned as a traveler and firefighter. It's helped me significantly in my riding. What's really interesting is the lessons I've learned from owning a motorcycle. I've always been an independent person. I don't like relying on people. I do most things solo, and with that, I gained a somewhat selfish attitude. I figured everyone needs to handle their own shit. Deal with their own problems. I never asked for help nor would I offer mine. Once I started riding, I noticed the tight bonds people have in the community. The brotherhood. People drop what they're doing to help a fellow rider out. Loyalty and family is a keystone to the community and I formed friendships with people that were stronger

than anything I had in my life. It made me realize that I can still be the lone wolf I've always been, but having love for others and taking care of my new family was just as important.

Which of your tattoos are related to riding motorcycles and what's the meaning behind them?

I have three. One is a heart that's fused with an Evo motor and says 'Live to Ride, Ride to Live' (classic). My Evo had become my heartbeat and I knew my bike was the love of my life. I got a gumball machine tattoo from Oliver Peck at the HD-115 after maybe having one too many beers. You spin a gumball machine and whatever pops out is what you get! It was cool to talk with Oliver about his million bikes and all the crazy shenanigans he's gotten himself into. The most recent one was inspired by my Lords of Gastown family. It's a vintage-style tattoo. The face of Vivian Bales with "Freedom is a Full Tank" tattooed around. She's been a massive inspiration (first woman to ride cross country on a Harley), and freedom truly is found with a full tank of gas and nothing but open road ahead.

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TATTOO LOUIE
"I got my first tattoo when I was 10 years old...One of my friends did it out of a garage with a homemade machine."

FACE VALUE

Meet the tattooers of Los Angeles' Cryptic Tattoo
PHOTOS BY PETER ROESSLER



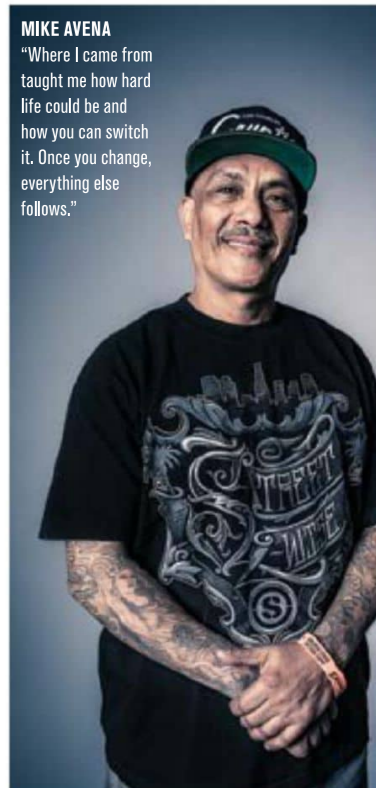
SAM TREVINO
"I wanted to be better. I had a choice whether to give in to everything that was going to ruin me or straighten myself out."



CARLOS MACIAS
"I saw my dad getting tattooed in the kitchen when I was a kid. I made a machine that night and tattooed myself."



RUDY BERBER



MIKE AVENA
"Where I came from taught me how hard life could be and how you can switch it. Once you change, everything else follows."

PEDRO RODRIGUEZ

"I had a brand new car, my own apartment. But I gave everything up to learn how to tattoo. I lived off nothing."



LDS



An advertisement for Tommy's Supplies, set against a dark, textured background. The ad features various tattoo supplies and a collage of images. At the top, the logo "Tommy's Supplies .COM" is written in a stylized, gothic font. Below it, a banner reads "QUALITY TATTOO PRODUCTS". The collage includes: a gold rotary tattoo machine; a yellow bottle of "ScarDriest Good to Go BUTTER TM" tattoo cream; a photograph of a tattoo artist working on a client; a vibrant, colorful illustration of a vampire-like character; a green bottle of "HELIOS" tattoo cream; a red and yellow "bullet" tattoo pen; a box of "HELIOS" tattoo needles and cartridges; and an orange bottle of "ScarDriest Good to Go FLESH TM" tattoo cream. At the bottom, the text "TOP QUALITY SUPPLIES" is displayed, along with the website "WWW.TOMMYSSUPPLIES.COM" and the phone number "34 EGYPT RD SOMERS, CT (860) 265-2199".

BEST BIKES

words by charlie connell

Harley-Davidson LiveWire

The very concept of this bike is hard to fathom—a Harley-Davidson with a near silent motor. The LiveWire is Harley's foray into an electric bike, so the engine will sound more like a Prius than what you've come to expect from a motorcycle. But don't let all that silence fool you into thinking it won't be powerful. The LiveWire will be capable of going 0 to 60 in three seconds. With a range of 140 city miles, the LiveWire's battery can charge fully in an hour. A look at the possible future of motorcycles.

INDIAN FTR 1200S

If you are looking for the perfect blend of retro look and modern technology, look no further than the Indian FTR 1200S. In addition to the iconic style we've come to expect, the FTR 1200S is packed with state-of-the-art features, starting with a 4.3" customizable Ride Command touch screen. The gas tank is located underneath the seat to give the rider even more control, which is always nice. Sport, Standard and Rain modes help you adapt to whatever conditions are thrown your way. Indian has perfectly tailored their race-inspired design to suit all of your riding needs.

HONDA CBR500R

This is one of the most popular street bikes out there. At INKED we usually encourage you to stand out from the crowd, but this is one time where we make an exception as the Honda CBR500R is popular simply because it is a phenomenal motorcycle. Some of the new innovations in this year's model include the slipper/assist clutch, digital instrumentation and a reprofiled transmission. This is the Goldilocks of motorcycles—a perfect blend of performance, versatility, affordability and style. Everything is just right.



Harley-Davidson Livewire



Indian FTR 1200S



Honda CBR500R



Triumph Thruxton TFC



Royal Enfield INT650

TRIUMPH THRUXTON TFC

If you are one of the lucky few to actually get a chance to ride the Triumph Thruxton TFC—only 750 will be made—you are going to be blown away. In this iteration Triumph has increased the peak performance power while decreasing the weight from previous Thruxton models. Not only does the TFC look stunning, but it makes a beautiful sound as well thanks to the one-of-a-kind exhaust system including Vance & Hines titanium mufflers.

ROYAL ENFIELD INT650

Hopping on a Royal Enfield Interceptor is like taking a time machine back to California in the 1960s, at least when it comes to style. On the other hand, the 648cc engine and precise Bosch fuel injection system use the latest technology available. This is the first bike made by Royal Enfield that includes a six-speed gearbox, a development created to ensure a perfect ride in any conditions. Novices and expert riders will all enjoy the INT650.



Lincoln Continental



Cadillac CT6-V



McLaren 720S Coupe



Aston Martin Vantage



Mercedes EQC

Mercedes EQC

Mercedes-Benz is fully embracing the electric revolution with this jaw-droppingly gorgeous SUV. With an interior that looks more like a shuttlecraft from Star Trek than an automobile, the EQC is truly cutting edge. The all-new MBUX media system responds to voice commands, and learns over time. Yes, you heard that right. This is basically KIT from Knight Rider. Beyond all the futuristic bells and whistles, the electric engine delivers 400+ horsepower, making sure that the EQC still does everything you've come to expect from a Mercedes SUV.

Lincoln Continental

Are the coach doors on the 80th anniversary Lincoln Continental a bit of a gimmick? Most definitely. Does that make them any less badass? Of course not! This model is the perfect homage to the car that brought the idea of driving luxury to the streets of America. While the doors may be a throwback to times gone past, the interior design is state-of-the-art. Most notably, for the personalized rear suite console with wireless charging. This might be the only car where you'll be fighting friends to sit in back, not shotgun.

CADILLAC CT6-V

Cadillac has been synonymous with class for as long as any of us can remember. Honestly, how many times have you described something as being the Cadillac of its sphere? The CT6-V wants to show you that class can also go pretty damn fast. The Blackwing Twin Turbo V8 is a beast that provides all the power you could possibly need. The interior is sleek and luxurious, as one has come to expect from Cadillac. The CT6-V takes the beloved brand into the future.

MCLAREN 720S COUPE

McLaren refers to their 720S as a "super-car," the kind of braggadocious statement that would normally get a person laughed out of the room. Remarkably, the 720S actually lives up to the buildup. Instantly recognizable, thanks to the twin-hinged doors and sleek body, it is the stuff you can't see that makes this car a true stand-out. All the power in the world doesn't matter if you can't control it, and the Proactive Chassis Control II system makes sure that the 720S handles like a dream, no matter if it's on a mountain pass or city street.

ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE

If we ever get a new James Bond movie, the 2019 Aston Martin Vantage will likely be his car of choice. We can easily imagine the world's most famous spy tearing down the streets of Monaco in this sleek machine. Inspired by jungle cats just as much as race cars, the Vantage is incredibly light, and has a near perfect 50:50 weight distribution, which means that it will handle perfectly, no matter the conditions. The interior looks as much like a fighter jet as a car, and it will definitely inspire you to do your best driving. This is a car you'll want to be seen in. That is, if they can catch up fast enough to get a glimpse.

BEST CARS



JASON ELLIS

THE FORMER PRO SKATER TURNED SIRIUSXM HOST TALKS ELLISMANIA, OZZY OSBOURNE AND HIS FAVORITE TATTOO

photos by steve edwards words by devon preston

Crikey, we've got an Aussie in our midst! Jason Ellis spent two decades riding half pipes as a professional skateboarder, but in 2005, his life took a different course when he was approached with an opportunity to host his own radio show. Now, almost 15 year later, Ellis continues to dominate SiriusXM and interviews big-name talent such as Kevin Smith, Ozzy Osbourne, and Joanna Angel. We sat down with Ellis to learn how he became the host he is today, his favorite interview so far, and what's the deal with EllisMania?

Prior to hosting a radio show, you moved to the United States at 17 to become a professional skateboarder. What did the skating world teach you about success and failure? Skateboarding taught me everything about success and failure. I learned that determination, hard work, and the passion to keep it going made for an unstoppable force. You can pretty much get anything you wanted in life, if you're willing to put in the work and take the pain.

What led you to leave skating and become a radio host? Radio was an accident. Tony Hawk got offered a show on SiriusXM and asked me to be a co-host. Apparently he knew I'd be good at it before I did. So the first day I started on Tony's show, I started talking into that microphone and I could tell the SiriusXM people were impressed with what I had to say — so much so that by the end of that show, they were offering me a job to be a DJ there. And at that point, I had so many skateboard injuries that I never properly dealt with, so I could tell my paychecks were about to start shrinking. My girlfriend at the time had just gotten pregnant, so I decided to go for it, move up to LA, and become a professional radio host, just like Howard Stern.

Who are your most memorable interviewees that you've had on your show and who's on your bucket list? The best interview I've ever had was with Ozzy Osbourne because he's the Prince of Darkness. And I'm some shithead skateboarder from Australia, who's interviewed the Prince of Darkness. But I would love to interview Bruce Willis or Arnold Schwarzenegger.

What is EllisMania? EllisMania is comedy boxing with a BDSM kick to it. There's music and comedy the night before, then Saturday is the funniest version of boxing the world has ever

seen. Every event I try and come up with at least a few new fights that have never happened before, but we have staple crowd favorites like The Blindfolded Dog Collar fight, where four people are blindfolded with electric dog collars on randomly shocking them. The Piñata fight has become a staple crowd favorite, where three pro fighters defend a piñata against four very unprofessional, very untrained fighters. The entire event is like nothing else. I always fight at my event, lately it's more about, 'Can my opponent not kill me?' as opposed to me actually beating them. One year, I decided to have ten one-minute fights against mystery opponents, most who turned out to be pro fighters, some of them even from the UFC.

EllisMania was created to give regular people a chance to experience being in a real fight, without getting seriously hurt.

What's the symbolism behind your knuckle tattoos? What was your first tattoo, your favorite tattoo, and your most recent tattoo? My knuckles say "Fire and Rain," it's a song by James Taylor. When I heard the song after my little brother passed away, the lyrics became mine instead of James Taylor's because I've seen fire and I've seen rain. I'd seen sunny days and I'd seen rainy ones because I used to get paid to be a professional skateboarder but now my little brother has died. My first tattoo was 'Metallica' on the side of my leg by Hanky-Panky in Amsterdam. He rolled up a magazine and said if I moved he was going to hit me in the side of the head with it. I thought he was very funny. Twenty years later, I took a piss next to him in a bathroom in LAX and he didn't recognize me. My favorite tattoo is the tattoo that isn't finished yet. I just want it all to be one piece. My most recent tattoo was by Norm at Love Letters tattoo here in LA, he put "Hail Satan" on my neck.

What's up next for Jason Ellis and what will you be working on for the rest of 2019? I have a new Podcast with Mike Catherwood and my wife Katie Ellis called "High and Dry." I'm working on private EllisManias exclusively for social media and preparing for 2020 at the Virgin Hotel in Las Vegas for EllisMania 20. I'll be doing four EllisManias this year, plus we're adding fake wrestling to it. I also have a YouTube show coming out with Hoonigan this year.



WINTERSTONE

words by devon preston



Love you always



As a tattoo artist, the fastest and best way to put yourself on the map is to tattoo an influential public figure. And having inked top-tier celebrities such as Miley Cyrus, Demi Lovato, and, most recently, Lady Gaga, we'd argue that Daniel Winter, aka Winter Stone, is the next big thing. His fine-line craftsmanship is breaking new ground among Hollywood's elite, and we can't believe he began working in the industry at the age of 30. Take a look how, in a few short years, Winter has managed to appear on everyone's radar and see how he's approaching the future of tattooing.

When did you first develop an interest in tattooing and how did you go about starting your career? The idea of getting my first tattoo started when I was 17. After the first time I got tattooed, I knew at some point in my life I would become a tattoo artist. When I was 30, I picked up the machine and fired away into the crazy world of tattooing. I was shown the ways with the guidance of a few respected artists here in LA, whose names I will keep private.

What led you to fine-line tattooing and what are some of the biggest misconceptions about the style? Fine-line tattooing was always the way I was tattooed, so naturally I was intrigued by the style for its precise lines and different look from a traditional tattoo. As a child, I always drew with a .03 lead pencil and knew I would like the finer of lines in the tattoo world. The biggest misconception is the longevity of a fine-line tattoo. In my opinion, they last just as long, if not longer than the bolder tattoo if done correctly.

Why do you think that fine-line and micro tattooing has become a popular trend? Fine-line and micro tattooing has become so popular due to its unique style and delicate appearance. The fine-line allows the client to have a very small, meaningful tattoo that doesn't need to be a major commitment. For me, simplicity is key as to why it upholds this trend.

How would you describe the LA tattoo scene and how do you fit into it? The LA tattoo scene runs deep with its style and forward trends, fine-line and single needle started out here on the West Coast. The scene varies from all spectrums of the world. I started my private studio to stay out of the scene and be more on the low-key side of things.

Who was the first celebrity you tattooed and how were you approached by stars like Demi Lovato, Sophie Turner, and Lady Gaga? The first celebrity I tattooed was Miley Cyrus. I was introduced to Joe Jonas and Sophie Turner in New York by a mutual friend and Lady Gaga came about through an old friend from middle school, actually. Demi Lovato saw me tattoo a few of her friends and reached out via Instagram.

Where do you see the future of tattooing going? The future of tattooing, in my opinion, is going in a modern direction, with newer higher quality machines and technologies that are allowing artists to go way beyond their limits.

As a collector, how does the work on your body differ from the work you create on your clients? As a tattoo collector, my work is mostly fine-line with shading, from various well known artists. My work is different in the way I do minimal shading and much smaller tattoos.

Which artists (tattoo or fine art) inspire you? Tattoo artists such as Andrew "The Kid", Chris Garver, Freddy Negrete, Mark Mahoney, Scott Campbell, Jason Stores, and many more. These artists stand out to me in many ways. My top fine artists that inspire me include: Dali, Picasso, Matisse, Gustave Dore, and van Gogh.

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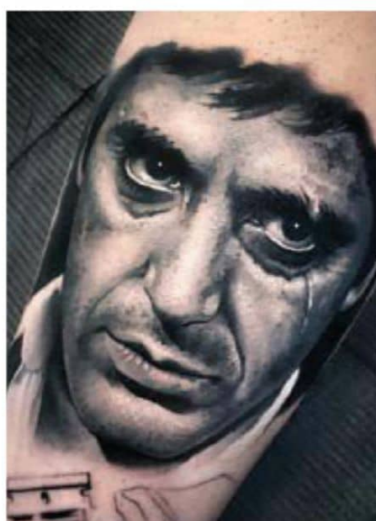


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KHAIL AITKEN

FOLLOW: @KHAILTATTOOER



From an early age, Australia's Khail Aitken was influenced by art and shortly after finishing high school, he began his tattoo apprenticeship. Today, he's known around the world as a standout realism artist who continues to push the boundaries with jaw dropping displays of tattoo talent. In 2018, two of Aitken's tattoos helped to put him on the map as an international innovator: the first being a stunning memorial portrait of the late Mac Miller and the second simply entitled 'Cokemon.' These two tattoos have shown that Aitken possesses incredible versatility and can seamless transition from serious realism to comical cartoons. We sat down with the Jack of all styles to learn the story behind one of his viral designs and his own thoughts on the future of the tattoo industry.

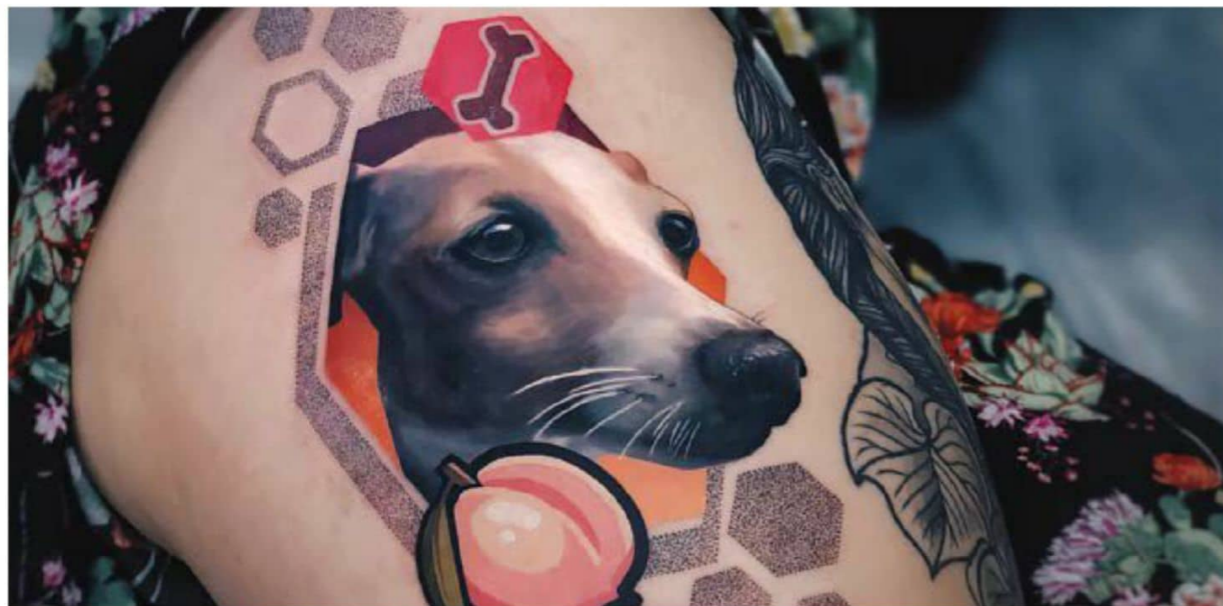
When did you first pursue a career in tattooing and which artists were influential in your decision to become a tattooer? I grew up in a household of artists, so it was a natural progression for me. From an early age, I was interested in art, especially drawing. My earliest memories were of attending art exhibitions and painting in my dad's studio. I started my tattoo apprenticeship at 17 when I finished school. It was not quite the job my mum intended for me, but what kind of son would I be if I made her life easy? It enabled me to grow as an artist and pursue tattooing as a career. From the very beginning of my journey as a tattoo artist, I was heavily influenced by artists like Beny Pearce, Bumer, and Benjamin Laukis. These Australian artists were constantly pushing the boundaries and working in their own unique styles, so from a young age, I gravitated towards their work.

How would you describe your signature style and how have you developed it over time? To be honest, I really like working in a lot of different styles, but it came to a point where I wanted to separate myself from everyone else. I was drawn to realism because it was more of a challenge and it kept me learning and developing. I consider my style to have more of a hyperrealism aspect with punchy colors, and I'll often exaggerate the vibrancy. This approach always takes time, involves research, and lots of preparation.

Your "Cokemon" tattoo went viral in 2018. What's the story behind that tattoo and what went into creating the design? A buddy of mine — who may or may not be a drug enthusiast — had been stewing for a while on a leg sleeve that involved a series of childhood cartoons that included explicit drug references. I found this combination hilarious and brave, so I jumped at the opportunity to create something unique. I was interested in pushing the boundaries and the concept of using known icons juxtaposed with drug references, which clearly adds a comical aspect to the concept.

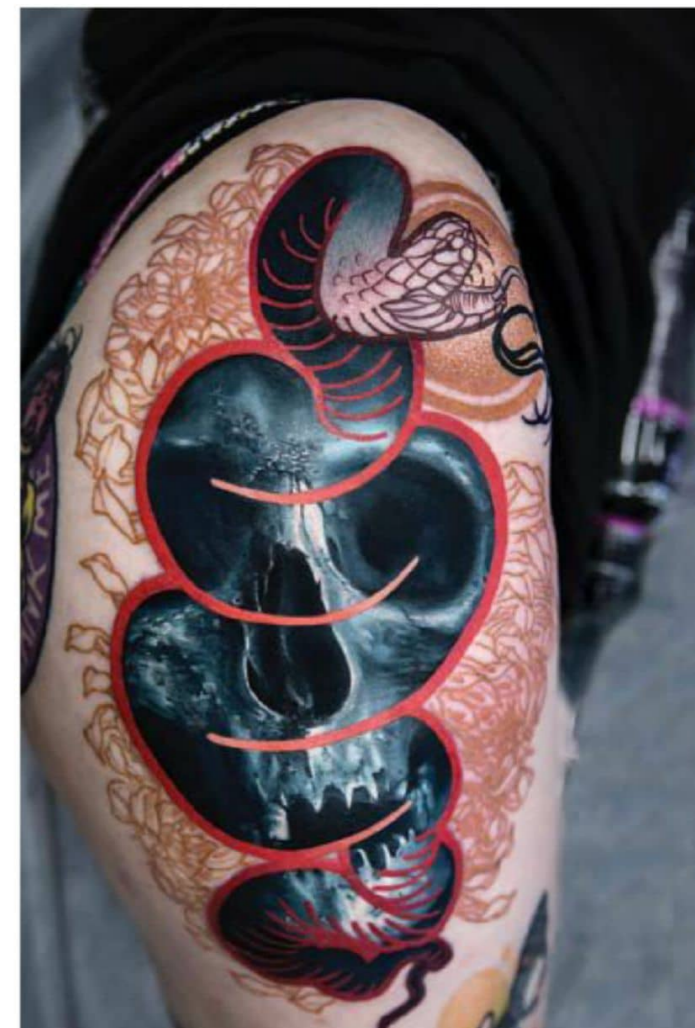
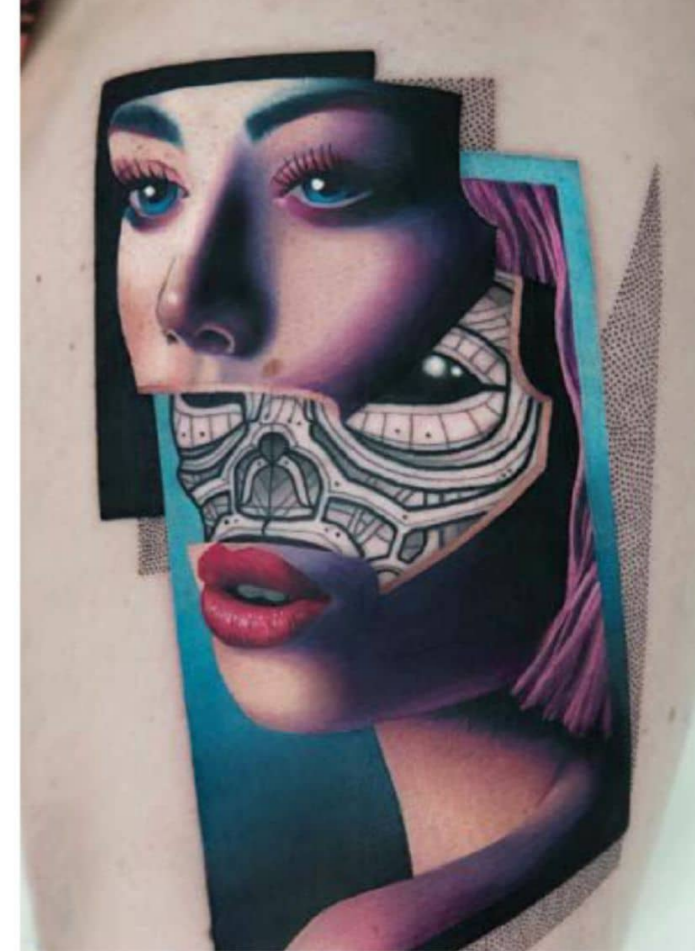
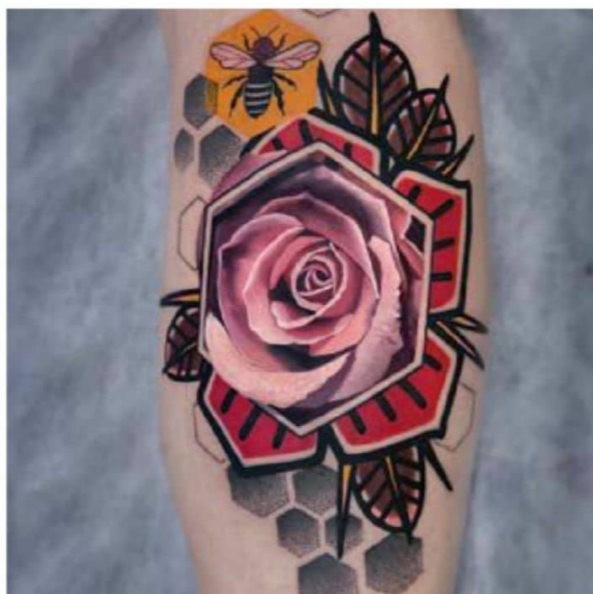
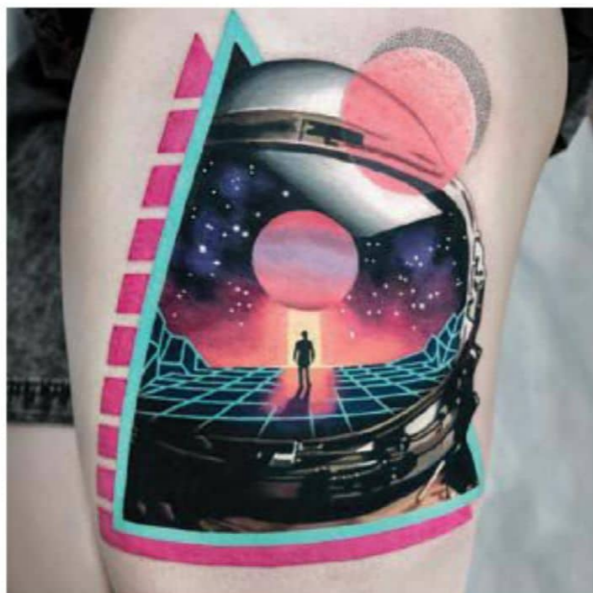
What comes to mind when we say the phrase, "The future of tattooing?" Tattooing is progressing really quickly, not just in terms of standards, but also equipment and aftercare. Machines have interchangeable parts to adjust to the way you personally want to tattoo, inks today can be extremely vibrant and solid. Educating people on how to look after their skin and tattoos has a massive effect on how the artwork holds and lasts throughout the years. The tattoo industry, for a long time, I feel, was not accepted, and to get tattooed you had to be a specific person. Now it's more acceptable than ever, which is great for the industry's growth. Throughout my time of tattooing, there have always been phases in styles floating in and out of the industry, attracting all different walks of life, and that's what makes tattooing so diverse — it will continue to grow and evolve.





CHRIS RIGONI

FOLLOW: @CHRISRIGONITATTOOER



While you may not recognize his name, you've certainly seen his work. Chris Rigoni is a Perth-based tattooer who's one of the leading mixed style artists in the world. Having mastered a handful of diverse styles, including but not limited to, realism, illustrative, geometric, and traditional, Rigoni crafts one of a kind designs with a multi-dimensional flair. And while today, he's an international powerhouse that's sought after by a growing pool of clientele, he wasn't always the forward-thinking innovator crafting viral tattoo designs. That's right, like every artist who's achieved success by finding a niche, he started off as a dime a dozen tattooer looking to make an impact on the industry. And we got the chance to learn how he became the creative mastermind he is today and his best advice for artists looking to mix contrasting styles into a cohesive tattoo.

How would you describe your signature style and how has it evolved over time? A few years ago, I decided I wanted to find myself as a tattooer as a way of keeping myself from getting lost in the crowd. I also knew I needed something that would keep me challenged or I would get bored. So I decided to focus my energy on realism. I was interested in breaking it down and finding my own way of developing it, so it would heal cleanly, solidly, and age well. This is something that is still and always will be an ongoing process. And to define it as my own, I needed something simple that I could carry through all the tattoos to make them easily recognizable as my own. Something that was contrasting to the muted, more organic color and shape of realism. Sharp angles and solid blocks of bright color. Geometric patterns. Texture with dot work. It has just been an ongoing process of trying to reimagine things while keeping the fundamentals of the tattoo healing as saturated and clean as possible with strong contrast to define areas I want to hold up over time.

What made you decide to mix styles in your work and were you met with any resistance from old timers in the industry? It wasn't something I was seeing much of at the time, realism mixed with contrasting styles. And I felt like there were already a really strong group of extremely talented realism artists and I wasn't ever going to be one of them. But if I were to compile ten images of realistic tattoos, you probably wouldn't be able to tell who did what easily from a glance. I wanted to be able to do something that quickly and simply made it recognizable as a Chris Rigoni tattoo. I've had a lot of great support. I've mostly worked with younger tattooists, so regardless, it's been a supportive community for sure.

What are the rules for mixing styles and where do other artists go wrong when attempting it? I definitely am not an authority on mixing styles, but I think every apprentice should focus on trying to make themselves a well-rounded tattooist for the first part of their career. Don't worry about focusing on one thing, don't be about the trend. Become a tattooist, not a one-trick pony. I had this pushed on me heavily by my bosses and I'm really grateful for it now. I was able to somewhat get a grip on traditional, dotwork, greywash, neo-trad, and even a small amount of new school, etc. So I could come into developing a style with that to fall back onto. I've met 10-year tattooists that don't put greywash in their designs because they can't do it.

RICH HARRIS

FOLLOW: @HARRISTATTOOART



Looking for three words to describe Rich Harris' tattoos? How about, big, bright, and badass? Harris is a UK-based tattooer who believes in bold designs, both in size and color palette. He's not afraid to shy away from vibrant hues and is recognized for taking a reference photo to the next level with precisely layered design elements. This approach for creating dynamic tattoos makes Harris' work undeniably unique and is why he's currently booking appointments in cities around the globe. However, becoming a tattoo artist wasn't always in the cards for Harris and it's hard to believe that he's only been in the game for seven years. That's right, at the age of 33, Harris made the move to become a professional tattooer and in that time, he's achieved what many artists work a lifetime for. Take a look at our interview with the talented tattooer and find out how Harris developed his signature style.

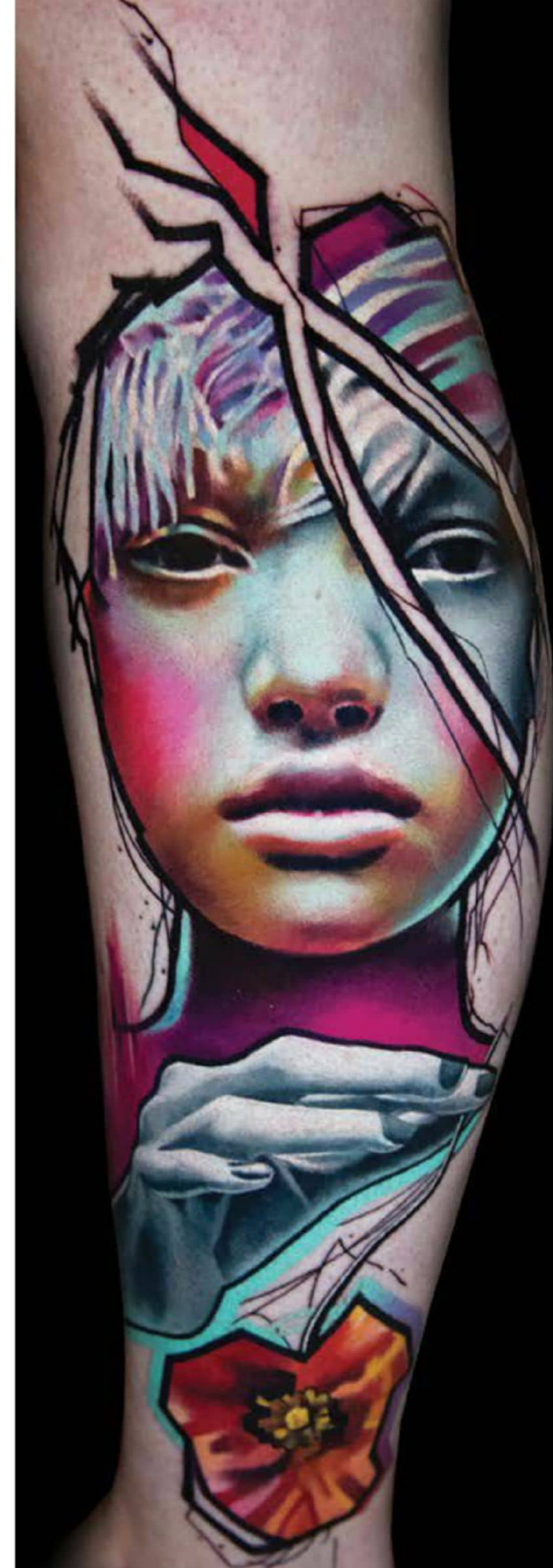
When did you first pursue a career in tattooing? It was 2012 and I was 33 when I decided to become a tattoo artist. I'd tried so many career paths and I was at the stage where I just wanted to be happy. I think having a drawing background from an early age gave me the confidence that I could do it.

How would you describe your signature style and how have you developed it over time? It currently has a mix of realism, graphic, thick line work, vibrant colors, and a touch of abstract or avant garde. I just put in whatever I enjoy or inspires me the most at the time. I guess it's developed from all the influences I've surrounded myself with over the years: artists I follow on social media, artists I get work from, artists I collaborate with, and general everyday life, travel, and the people I meet. It's something that comes slowly over time, but if I learn anything new, I'll put it into action the next day by experimenting with new colors, themes, and being confident with designs.

Color theory plays a pivotal role in your tattooing. If you could create your own ink line, what kind of shades would it include? I already have a palette that I currently use. It includes a primary red, blue, and yellow along with an olive, pink, yellow ochre, brown, green, cool mint, and grey. I'm currently trying to stick to this palette and just mix to get the different colors that I need. This also helps with conventions so I don't have to take a full set of colors.

As someone who mixes different tattoo styles, what is your advice for creating a tattoo with diverse elements, but that has flow as a unified and cohesive design? Firstly, I would suggest putting in many hours with the design, not just the night before. You need a few weeks so you can fine-tune and even do several versions. All this work is never wasted, as it'll come in handy for future projects. I've found that the more hours you put in, the better your designs get. I always use an actual body part picture to work on top of as a layer, this way you can create better flow and get a feel for the size of the imagery. The piece has to look good and be clear from afar, so I'd suggest constantly checking that part. If you ever get stuck, have several go-tos ready to help you out of your rut. For example, a folder of other artist's work that inspire you or even look through your old work and pick out a killer design you were happy with. Recycling past ideas into new projects is a good thing. Finally, get advice or critiques from your colleagues or friends, as someone even without a creative background can come up with an amazing idea or addition.

If you were forced to choose, would you rather only tattoo in cool tones or warm tones? Warm tones. I'm not a fan of the cold, after cleaning windows for 14 years in the UK, I think I'm done with my British winters.





NBA'S FINEST

DENVER NUGGETS' POINT GUARD, ISAIAH THOMAS, TALKS BEING TRADED, HIS TAKEAWAY AS AN EIGHT-YEAR NBA VETERAN AND GETTING THROUGH LIFE'S HARDSHIPS ON THE COURT.

photos by peter roessler words by tess adamakos

It's laughable that Isaiah Thomas was once the last pick in the 2011 NBA draft. The point guard went on to be a two-time NBA All-Star, a three-time NBA Player of the Month and five-time winner of the Player of the Week Award. Averaging over 22 points per game and celebrated for his career-high 28.9 points per game with Boston, Thomas was traded to the Denver Nuggets after 15 games with the Cleveland Cavaliers.

As a young kid, after seeing tattoos on the court for the first time on his favorite basketball player, Allen Iverson, Thomas was interested in getting ink. After getting his first tattoo at 16 years old for his hometown of Tacoma, Washington, Thomas was hooked. While his most meaningful basketball memories lay on courts across the country, his most meaningful tattoos are always carried with him on his back. These include pieces for his grandfather, who passed away in 2006, and for his younger sister, who passed away in 2017. Along with the ink for his sons, he says he will always cherish the art he carries.

You were named after the Detroit Pistons player, Isiah Thomas? Yeah, there's actually two sides to it. My dad's side of the family is from Los Angeles, California, so my dad was a big Lakers fan growing up. He made a bet with one of his close friends that if the Pistons beat the Lakers, he would name his son Isiah Thomas. My mom liked the name, but she grew up in church and wanted it spelled the biblical way, so that's why it's spelled differently than the older Isiah Thomas.

At any point, did you want to be something else when you were growing up, or was it already laid out for you? Ever since I could remember, I loved basketball. While it happened to go with the name, it was just something I always loved doing.

You are outspoken about being a proud father before a great basketball player. I just think it's important. I've got two boys and a newborn daughter. Having my oldest kid during my last year of college made me grow up a little faster than normal. The boys, eight and seven, have seen it all. I just knew what it took for my parents to raise kids, and I knew how important it was to them. You can just mold them into whatever you want them to be, and I want them to be respectable young men and young ladies. And I take

that very seriously. I think it's more important for me to be a father than it is to be a basketball player. I know there's so many young kids in the world that look up to me and watch my story and watch my career. So I try to show them that I'm more than a basketball player; I'm a father first and foremost.

You were traded to Cleveland after three seasons with the Celtics, even through the injuries, your best basketball year and the passing of your sister. It obviously came as a shock to fans, but what were your feelings surrounding that? I just tried to get my mind off of it. I mean, it was definitely the hardest time in my life, but basketball has been that outlet, that no matter what I was going through in life, I can go to a basketball gym and get that off my mind. I still deal with it to this day, but at the same time, basketball has helped me get through it, as well as my family and friends. But it will be something I always have to battle. At the same time, as long as basketball is here and I'm able to get to a gym and play ball, I will be able to deal with what I'm dealing with at that point in time.

Moving to the Nuggets, how are you settling into Denver? I am definitely happy to be in Denver. We are the third best team in the NBA and we're having a hell of a season, and I can't wait to get on the floor and help my team out. Especially during the playoffs. The reason I went to Denver was that the head coach [Michael Malone] coached me when I played with the Sacramento Kings in my earlier years in the NBA, so I'm very familiar with him and he's familiar with me. I know he's going to give me the opportunity to go out and showcase my skills. We're most excited about getting to the playoffs and making some noise.

Being an eight-year vet, what's your biggest takeaway from your overall NBA experience? Being the last pick in the draft, coming into the NBA and not really playing at the beginning of my career, to becoming a starter and later becoming All-Star, Top Five, and MVP voted... and then getting hurt and traded. It's been an up-and-down career. But I wouldn't trade it for anything. Everything that's happened in my career has taught me a lesson, and it's made me cherish every moment and situation that I've been in. The ride has been great and I've had a lot of people following my story, which has been an inspiration. To me, my job is to just to keep going, and don't let anything stop me.

battle of the sexes

COACHES KELLY DOTY, JOSH PAYNE, NIKKI SIMPSON, SARAH MILLER, SAUSAGE, KATIE MCGOWAN, DUFFY FORTNER, AND JIME LITWALK DISCUSS SEASON 12 OF INK MASTER

words by devon preston

Like its predecessors, season 12 of Paramount network's *Ink Master* brings an exciting twist to shake up the competition, and entice audiences to tune in week after week. This go around, the name of the game is *Battle of the Sexes*, and for the first time in the history of the series, the competition will be split evenly between men and women. In prior seasons, only 15 to 30 percent of the show's contestants have been women. However, now it's time to see what happens when the genders are put head-to-head. And to fit the show's pattern of bringing back former contestants, season 12 will host a different set of coaches every single episode. That's right, many of your favorites will have the opportunity to lead the contestants to victory, or at least, keep them out of the dreaded bottom four. We had the pleasure of catching up with eight alumni who will be returning to coach this season, and learn what they really think of *Ink Master: Battle of the Sexes*.

How has the treatment of female artists in the industry changed since you started tattooing? "I feel like being a woman in the tattoo industry isn't as much of a novelty. I remember when I first started, on a good day, people would come in and say, 'Wow! You're a tattooer? Good for you!' They'd be really surprised that I wasn't just working the front desk. Somehow, I put on shoes and I crawled my way out of the kitchen, then found my way to a tattoo studio. On a bad day, I had people say, 'I'm not going to get tattooed by a bitch,' or they'd throw my portfolio or they'd laugh at me. In one instance, I remember a guy looking at my drawings before his tattoo, and then taking them over to my male coworker, asking him if he could vouch for me that I could actually do the tattoo. Coming from that when I first started, to now having a successful career; having been able to prove myself in front of such a huge audience; and seeing other women showing what their road was like—that's amazing. It's like night and day from when I started." *Kelly Doty, Season 8 and Angels*

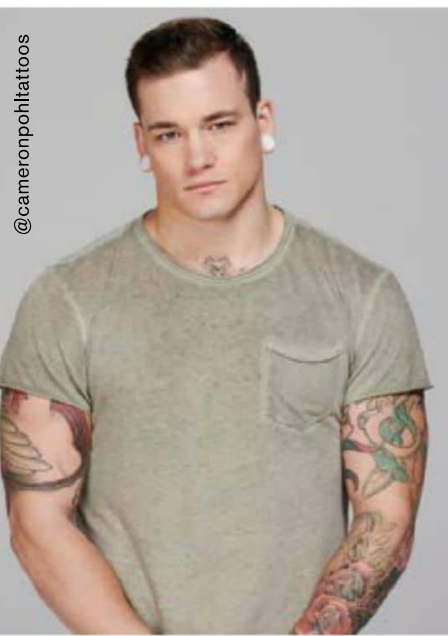
Were you surprised by the level of talent you saw as a coach this season? "I'm lucky enough that young in my career I was blessed to work with a female artist named Sarah Peacock. She was one of the early women that found their way through this industry, and paved the way for female artists to be accepted in our industry. So me having that insight and being able to work underneath someone as amazing as she was, allowed me to see that there really is no difference between a man and a woman in the final product. There was no big surprise, I never thought 'Wow, these women are better than I imagined they could be.' It was just awesome to work alongside such energy and so many outgoing people that were really hungry." *Josh Payne, Season 10*

How does social media positively and negatively impact female tattooers? "At the beginning of my career, I wasn't well known and Instagram wasn't a huge thing, so your

image wasn't as important or exploited as it is now. Because now, we can share the way we look all over the world, and people have really loved the idea of a beautiful woman doing tattoos, no matter how the tattoos look. If you're going to be really successful, it's a lot easier to do it if you're really attractive. There's always going to be a stigma where women have to come off as being presentable in a certain way, to be appreciated as beautiful. It's been an interesting ride balancing appearance and career, because the more time goes on, the more people focus on appearance, and that shit's fucking annoying. It really doesn't matter, because at the end of the day, no one is looking at me. They're looking at the tattoo that's going to be on them for the rest of their lives. Our beauty will fade, but my tattoos won't." *Nikki Simpson, Season 8 and Angels*

What are the major differences between male and female tattoo artists? "When I grew up, I was more of a tomboy, so I never quite understood the girly girl thing. I think I fit in a little bit differently than a lot of the women who're getting into the industry, but I think overall, girls are a bit more open to learning or asking for advice, listening, and applying it. I feel that if you have drive, ambition, and talent as a woman, if someone sits down and shows you something, you learn a little bit faster. I've noticed guys are a little more do it yourself; they do trial and error. They'll ask for advice and then, as you're answering, they'll answer their own question. That's not typical across the board for everybody. There's such a broad sampling of different personalities, learning abilities, and talents in this industry, and it's very interesting to see where people fit in." *Sarah Miller, Season 2 and 7*

What were your initial thoughts on the theme for season 12? "I think when you watch the earlier seasons of *Ink Master*, you see that it was very male driven. And it wasn't until season eight that you saw that there was a strength in the female artists out there. I think that what you're going to see with *Battle of the Sexes* is exactly how strong women can be, and that [tattooing] isn't a completely male-driven art form. The ladies out there are just as strong as the guys, even though the guys have had control over it for quite some time now. I think what this season has to offer is something that we haven't seen on *Ink Master* before. I think we've seen a battle of the sexes in a way, but to really make it men against women is awesome. What you're going to see on this season is that you think you might know how it's going to play out, but it's completely different. The challenges are super difficult, it will be a fight to the finish, and for those who make it to the end, the win



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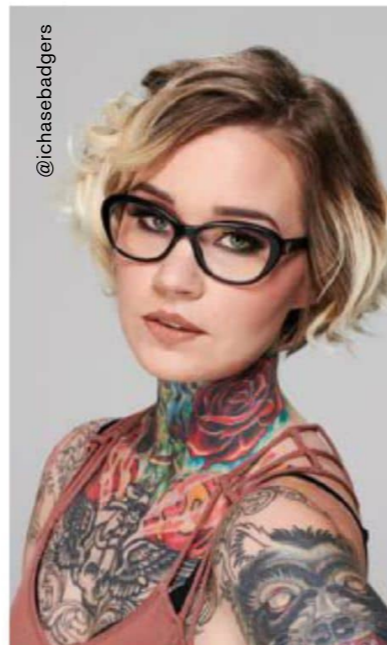
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will be well deserved." *Sausage, Season 4 and 7*

"The tattoo industry is really male-dominated and I feel that the amount of women that have been on the show each season reflects how much of a boy's club it really is. It's not fair, but it's reality. So I love the idea of having half female and half male competitors to give women more of a voice on the show. We really are a rising chunk of the industry, we have a voice and we have an opinion. Getting to provide that platform for so many women that come on is a really smart move for *Ink Master*. There is still an issue with women, especially women tattooers, being objectified and judged by their physical appearance first. Then someone will look at their portfolio and decide, 'Wow, she actually is talented.'" *Katie McGowan, Season 6 and 9*

How did growing up with a mom who's a tattoo artist make an impact on you? "[Growing up with a mom who was a tattooer] set the tone for my entire life. I was six when we started our business. It's funny, because whenever I tell someone they're

like, 'Wow, that's really cool.' It's just my life, it's what I grew up knowing. All I've known was the tattoo industry and the tattoo world. I grew up as a little kid watching her tattoo and then I started tattooing, doing conventions, and developing my own life in the tattoo world. It was definitely cool to watch her, and it put me where I am today. Who knows where I would be? Would I be a tattooer if it weren't for her? Probably not." *Duffy Fortner, Season 6*

Why should audiences tune in for the premiere of season 12 of Ink Master? "With every new season, there's such an amazing batch of new tattooers that people might not have had the opportunity to see or hear of. Every one of these guys is almost the underdog, they're all trying to do their best, and show what they're capable of doing. Seeing that 'coming from behind' story is really going to show this season. I think anyone who's a fan of tattooing, and a fan of the underdog, should definitely tune in and watch." *Jime Litwalk, Season 3 and 7*



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