

THE UK'S BEST SELLING TATTOO MAGAZINE



SKIN SHOTS

THIS MONTH THE LOVELY

SABINA

KELLEY

JOINED US FOR LUNCH

AND ON THE WAY HOME, DISCOVERED THE VERY COOL **ELLEN GREENE**. JET LAGGED BUT SMILING, WE LANDED AT THE **AMSTERDAM CON** BEFORE WHIPPING BACK INTO THE **FAMILY BUSINESS** TO WRAP IT UP WITH **MO COPPOLETTA**.



LATER, WE SHOOK A TREE AND FOUND **DAVID CORDEN** AND **NICK WHYBROW** BEARING MUCH VALUABLE FRUIT. WE THEN VISITED THE **BOURNEMOUTH CON** AND **ICELAND** BEFORE FINISHING UP WITH THE AWE INSPIRING **ETTORE BECHIS**.

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ISSUE 201 | AUGUST 2011
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Hoodoo Ink by Jake Granger

AND ON THE EIGHTH DAY...

This afternoon I received an email that had me reaching for the Bible. Everybody should have a Bible in the house in case you need to dive into it to prove somebody wrong or quote like Samuel Jackson in *Pulp Fiction*. It said "Someone may have pointed it out to you already. Found an error on the cover of *The Tattoo Bible*. It should be *Revelation*, being that it was revealed to John once."

So I thought, in a word, shit. We were so careful, especially with the covers. So I checked and saw it was fine. The subhead says 'From Genesis To Revelations'. Which is what it was supposed to be... then I realised that what he was actually saying was it should have been *Revelation* in the singular. I checked, and there it was in the Good Book. *Revelation*. I never knew that

before. I wrote back and said thanks for pointing it out and just for the record, there's nobody called John that works here. I'm not sure that arrow would quite hit its target as intended but still.

I CHECKED, AND THERE IT WAS IN THE GOOD BOOK. REVELATION. I NEVER KNEW THAT BEFORE. I WROTE BACK AND SAID THANKS FOR POINTING IT OUT AND JUST FOR THE RECORD, THERE'S NOBODY CALLED JOHN THAT WORKS HERE. I'M NOT SURE THAT ARROW WOULD QUITE HIT ITS TARGET AS INTENDED BUT STILL.

Anyway, there are worse crimes I think, but none that make my heart skip a beat quite like that. What I haven't said here is that the email actually started with the words "Hi Soon...". I assume this was an attempt to address me by name. How can you get that wrong when the guy probably had to look it up in the first place? Not

that I mind too much. It's pretty much a daily thing. I blame my parents.

Which leads me nicely onto another email I received that said something along the lines of: "Why does it say Mister before

your name next to your picture?" And I must apologise. I assume that everybody else has also been brought up watching Basil Brush.

For those too young/too old/too far away to have witnessed this slice of '70s nonsense, Basil Brush is a fox glove puppet and used to call his, er... comic human foil by their first name preceded

by Mister. Such as Mister Roy. A six-year-old me thought it was hilarious. So I figured, nobody can spell my name, nobody can pronounce my name, there's not many easier names to remember than 'Mister Smith' out there. Let's do it.

...and it says that in the Bible too. Not that Bible. The other one.

Sen



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& WORKSHOPS ⚓ ART GALLERY ⚓ TATTOO MASTERS BALL
⚓ AWARDS ⚓ TATTOO MUSEUM ⚓ FUN FAIR

303 ARTISTS CONFIRMED SO FAR...

Adam Caudill
Aimee Lou
Alan Hale
Alan Turner
Alec 'Phatt German'
Aleksandr Obuhov
'Sass'
Alex Kelly
Alex Rattray
Alvaro Diaz
Amanda Ruby
Amanda West
Ami Williams
Amy Kinsell
Amy Nicoletto
Anabi
Anders Aagesen
Anders Isso
Trondsen
Andreas Ramstedt
Andy Bowler
Andy Mcdonald
Andy Walker
Angry Panda/ James
Ania Jalosinska
Anth Edwards
Aron Szabo
Astrix
Bartosz Panas
Bastian Sommer
Becs Holley
Ben Hamill
Ben Humphrey
Benjamin Ormerod
Billy Hay
Brendan Mudd
Cammy
Capex
Carl B
Cesar De Cesaro
Cesar Mesquita
Chantale Coady
Charissa Gregson

Charlie Jones
Chin N Ink
Chris 51
Chris Crooks
Chris Jones
Chris Lowe
Chris Moss
Christian Banks
Crispy Lennox
Dan Banas
Dan Gold
Daniel Watson
Danilo Pini
Danilo Sini
Danny Stoner
Darius Niewczas
Dariusz Binienda
Darren Hubbard
Dave 'Buddha'
Ashton
David 'Alex'
Alexander
David Barclay
David Corden
David Watt
Davide (True Cat)
Deadi
Derek Nelson
Deryn Stephenson
Diego Morales
Dirk 'Derek' Bauwens
Don Porto
Drewski Elish
Ema Sweeney
Emil Tattoo
Eze Nunez
F Cheung
Fabio Giovannoni
Fat
Fil Norman
Gary Parkinson
Gary Stanley
Gaston Siciliano

George Mavridis
Gerry O'donnell
Geza Ottlecz
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Helen Brown
Henrik Gallon
Henry Pyykko
Hexa Salmela
Horacio Gonzalez
Ungaro
Hue Nguyen
Jack Ankersen
Jacob Pedersen
Jak Connolly
Jakub Kujawa
Jamie Macdonald
Jammes
Jaroslav Baka
Jason Adkins
Jason Birks
Jason Birks.
Jason Butcher
Jason Ling
Javi Lee
Jef
Jeff Gogue
Jelle NelemanS 'Soos'
Jeremy Miller
Jerry
Jesse Smith
Jimmy Lajnen
Joao
Joao Bosco
Joe Bristow
Joe Carpenter
Joe Ellis
Joey Hamilton
John Anderton
John Lewis
John Treharne
Johny D Matthews
Johny Starte

Jon B
Jon Quinlan
Jonas Pederson
Jonny Adams
Josh Bodwell
Josh Grable
Josu Franch
Julie Clarke
Julie Richards
Juliet 'Artycow'
Preston
Justyna Obwojska
Kai Faust
Kali
Kari Kjelskau
Karl Fletcher
Kat Fink
Keith Sherratt
Kel Violet
Kelvin Slack
Keng
Kerry Irvine
Kerry-Anne
Kev Close
Kevin Aerga
Kevin Carlin
Kiran Parmar
Kosa
Kostek
Kurt
Kris Vangeel
Krizsán Zoltán
Lawrence Ah Ching
Lee Biggs
Lee Clements
Lee Denham
Lee Mallett
Lester Little
Lianne Moule
Little Kris
Live2
Liz Cook
Lord Montana Blue
Lorenz Odermatt
Lorenzo Provvedi
Louis Molloy
Louis Santos

Luca Lazzerini
Lucky
Lisa Priestley
Luke Whitehurst
Mac Mccarthy
Marc Wagstaff
Marcin Ptak
Marcin Surowiec
Marcos Attwood
Marek Skalny
Mariusz Ekstowicz
'TattooMan'
Mark Bailey
Mark Poole
Mark Wallace
Martin Couley
Martin
Crosthwaite
Mason Stoner
Mat ReesMan
Matias Gonzalez
Matt Cooley
Matt Difa
Matt Faulkner
Matt Hart
Matt Hunt
Matty D'ariento
Matyas Halasz
Michael Philp
Michal Kotarski
'Meehow'
Michele Turco
Mick Tomo
Miika Eronen
Mike Herwin
Mike Nomy
Mike Smith
Mirek Vel Stotker
Morten Overlie
Mr Rzymysky
Musa
Neil Dransfield
Neo
Nick Baldwin
Nick Cook
Nick Whybrow
Nicklas Andersson
Nicola Cassidy

Nigel Kurt
Nikko Hurtado
Noon
Norbert Halasz
Pablo Garcia
Rodriguez
Padz
Pam Green
Patrick
Huettlinger
Paul Humphreys
Paul Saunders
Paulo Madeira
Pawel Stroinski
Pecka
Pedro[Soos]
Pero
Peter Klegues
Phil Butterworth
Rachel Mccarthy
Rakhee Shah
Raquel C. T.
Raymond Johnson
Remis
Reno Sammut
Riccardo Riccobono
Rich Pearson
Rich Smith
Rich Warburton
Rob Ratcliffe
Rodrigo Souto
Rogal
Roman Abrego
Ruben Van
Houwelingen
Ryan Davies
Sabado
Sam Bowyer
Sam Boyce
Samez
Saz Saunders
Sean Dowdell
Sensi Sarmo
Sean Vasquez
Serpetti Valerio
Sharron Caudill
Simon (Cookie) Cooke
Simon Ashley

Simon Caves
Sonya Trusty
Stephen Speirs
Steve Hartnoll
Steve Prizeman
Susanne Winther
Sway
Sweet Laraine
Szabi
Soren Granhof
Schjott
Taco
Takami
Tattooguru
Tattooish
Tattoos By JJ
Terry Fuller
The Cupcake Club
(Help For Heroes)
Thomas 'TJ' Page
Tom Ruki
Tomasz Czekaj
'Tommi'
Tommy Lee
Wendtner
Toni Moore
Tony Evans
Tony Mancia
Tony Unwin
Tracy D
Tutti Serra
Twinkle
Victor Policheri
Vincent C.
Voodoo Body
Piercing
Walter 'Sausage'
Frank
Wayne Green
Whitney Lenox
Wille
Xemilx
Xico
Xoil
Yoshio Honjo
Zelena Andras

ARE YOU READY FOR...

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SEVEN Seas



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Saturday 6th August is the 200th Issue party for the UK's biggest and best tattoo magazine! With incredible live music, burlesque performances, tattoo awards, a REAL fun fair and free cake, everyone is invited to help us celebrate this wonderful event in true Tattoo Jam style!

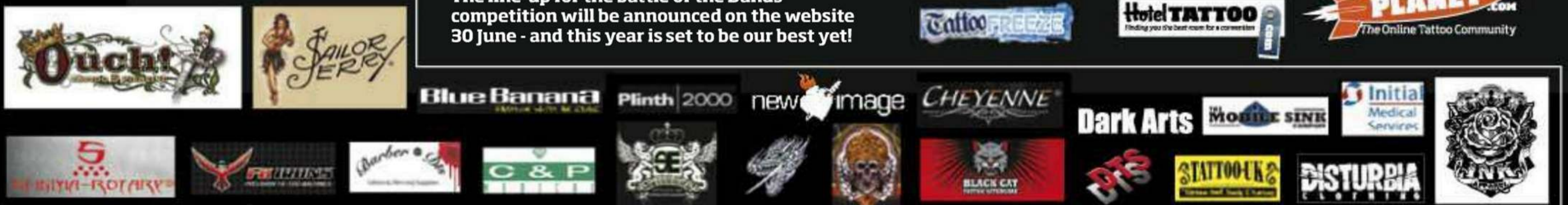
The line-up for the battle of the Bands competition will be announced on the website 30 June - and this year is set to be our best yet!

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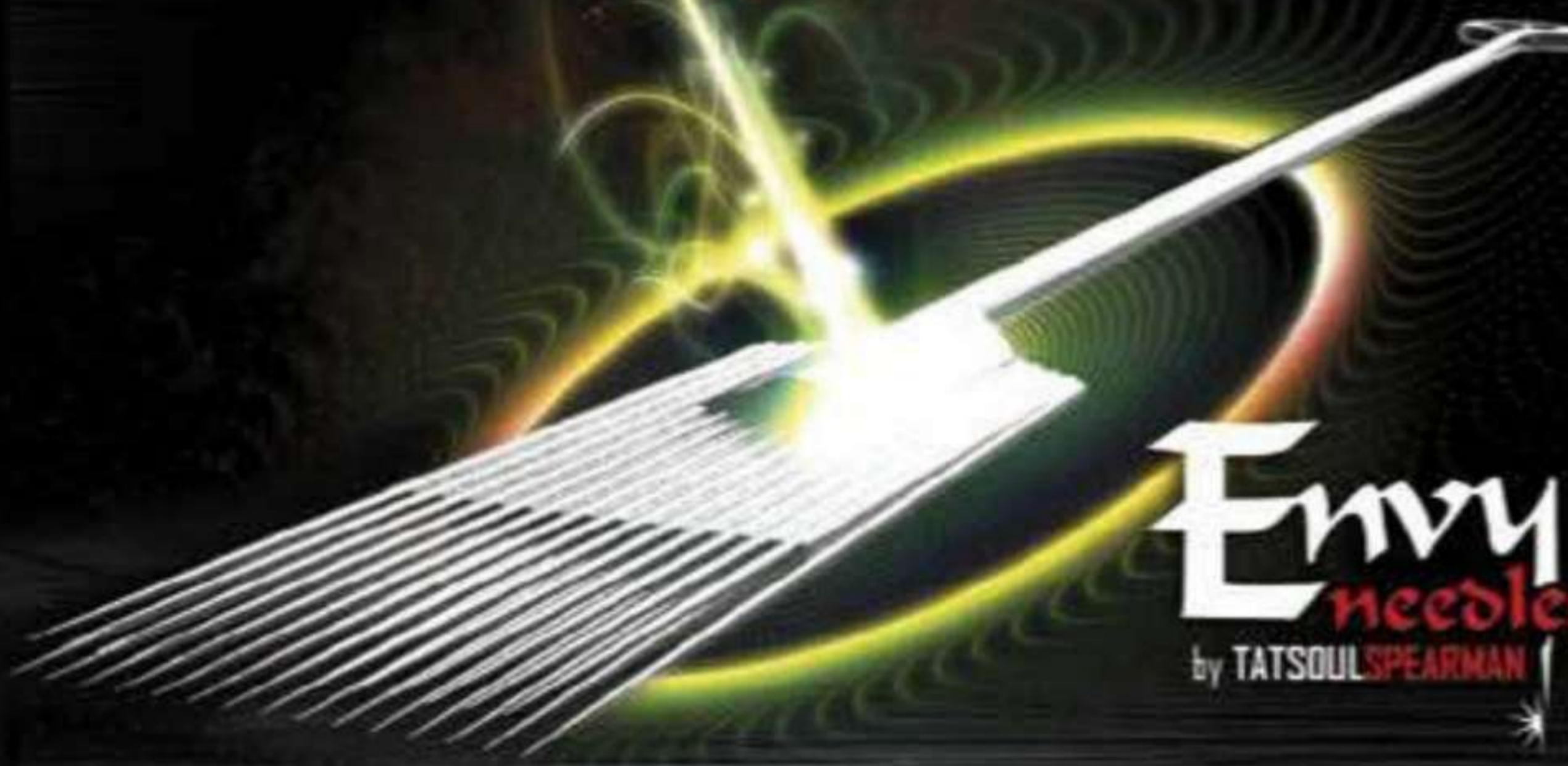
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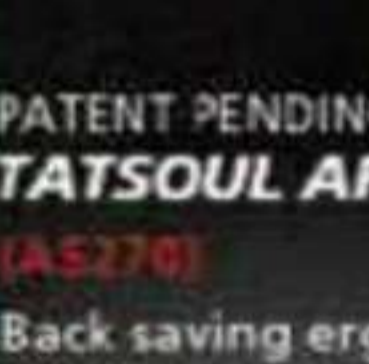
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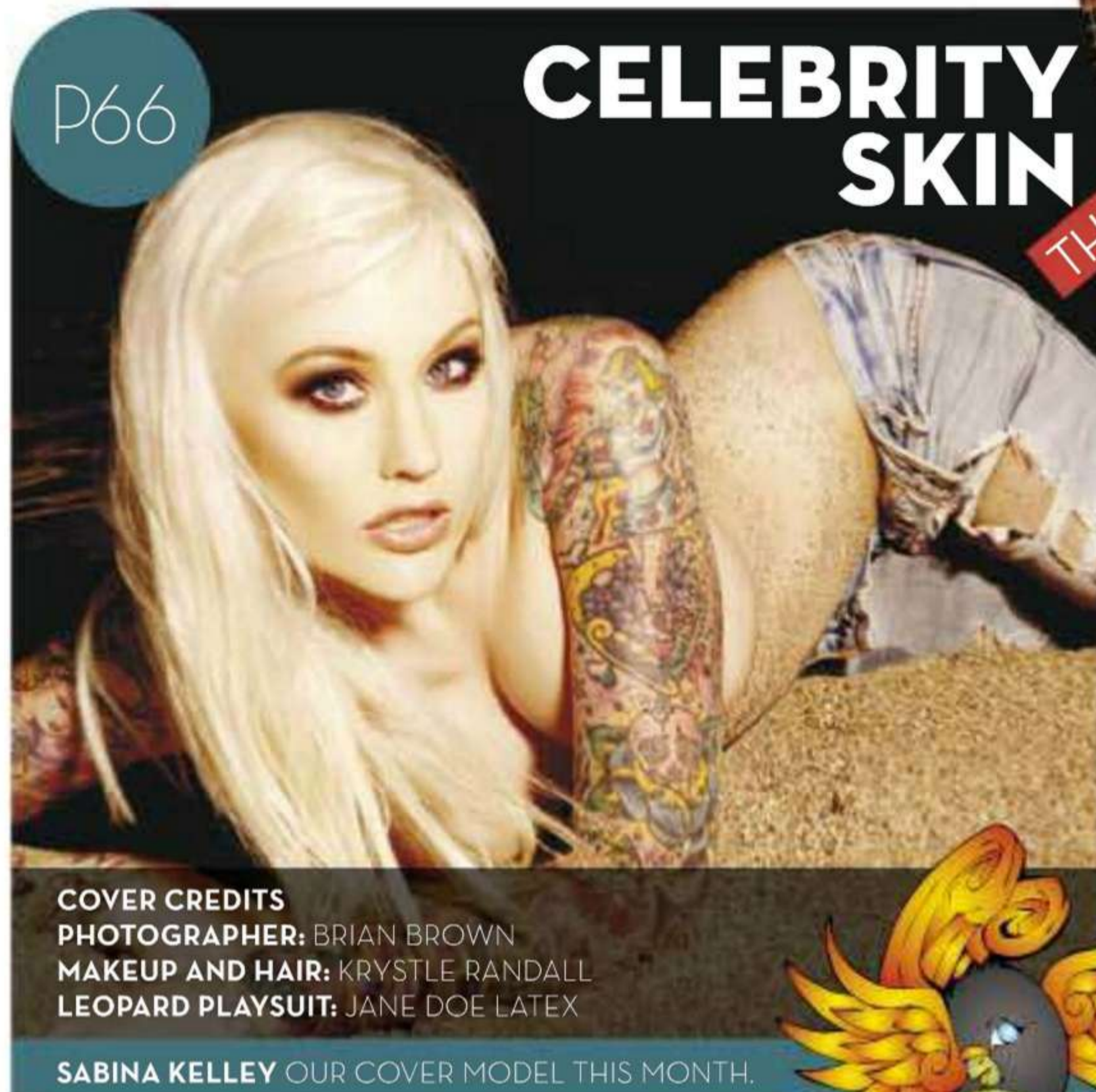
ETTORE BECHIS



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ELLEN GREENE

OUTSPOKEN AND OUT OF THIS WORLD... YOU WILL WANT SOME OF THIS!



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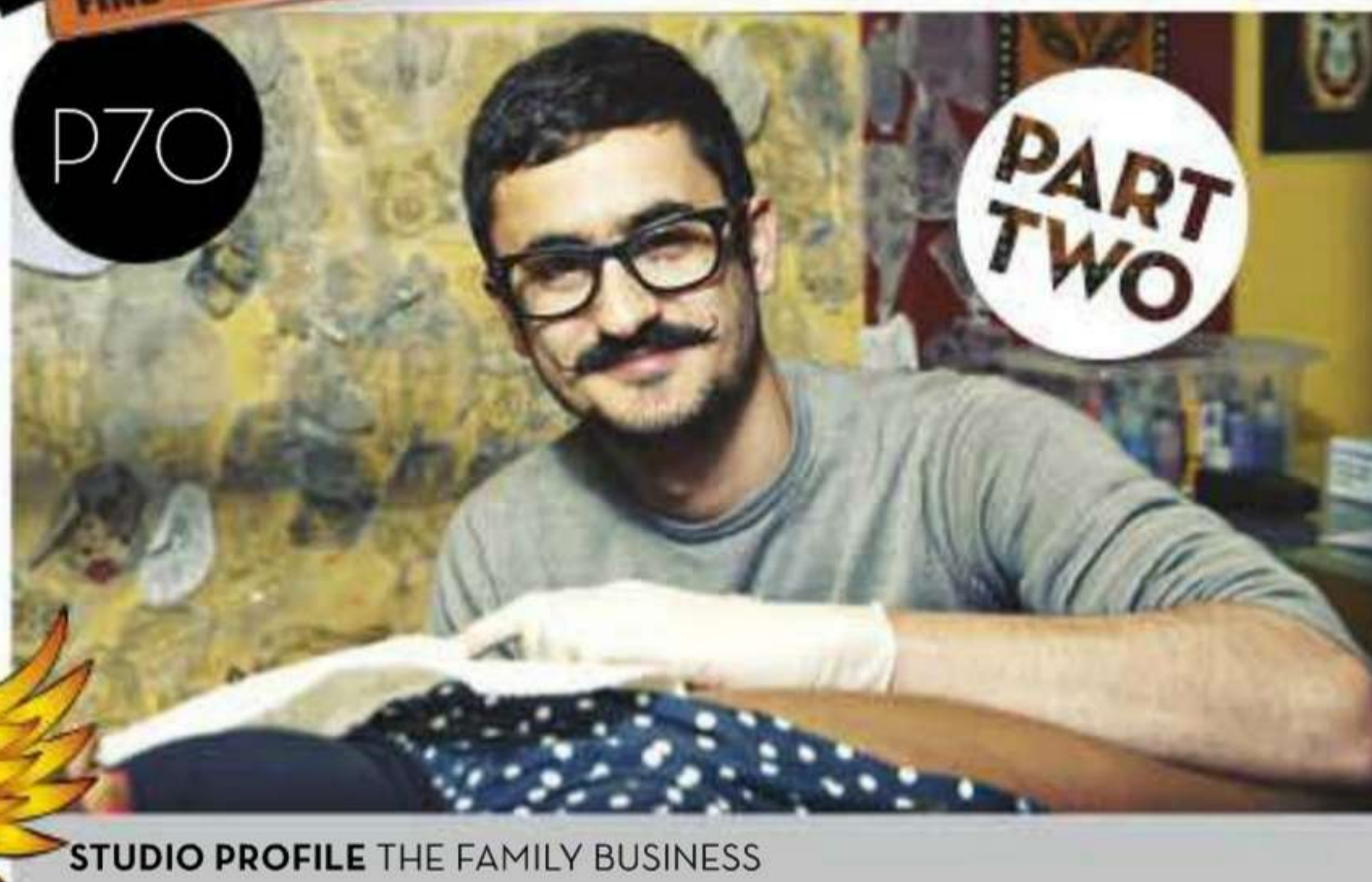
CELEBRITY SKIN

COVER CREDITS
PHOTOGRAPHER: BRIAN BROWN
MAKEUP AND HAIR: KRISTLE RANDALL
LEOPARD PLAYSUIT: JANE DOE LATEX

SABINA KELLEY OUR COVER MODEL THIS MONTH.



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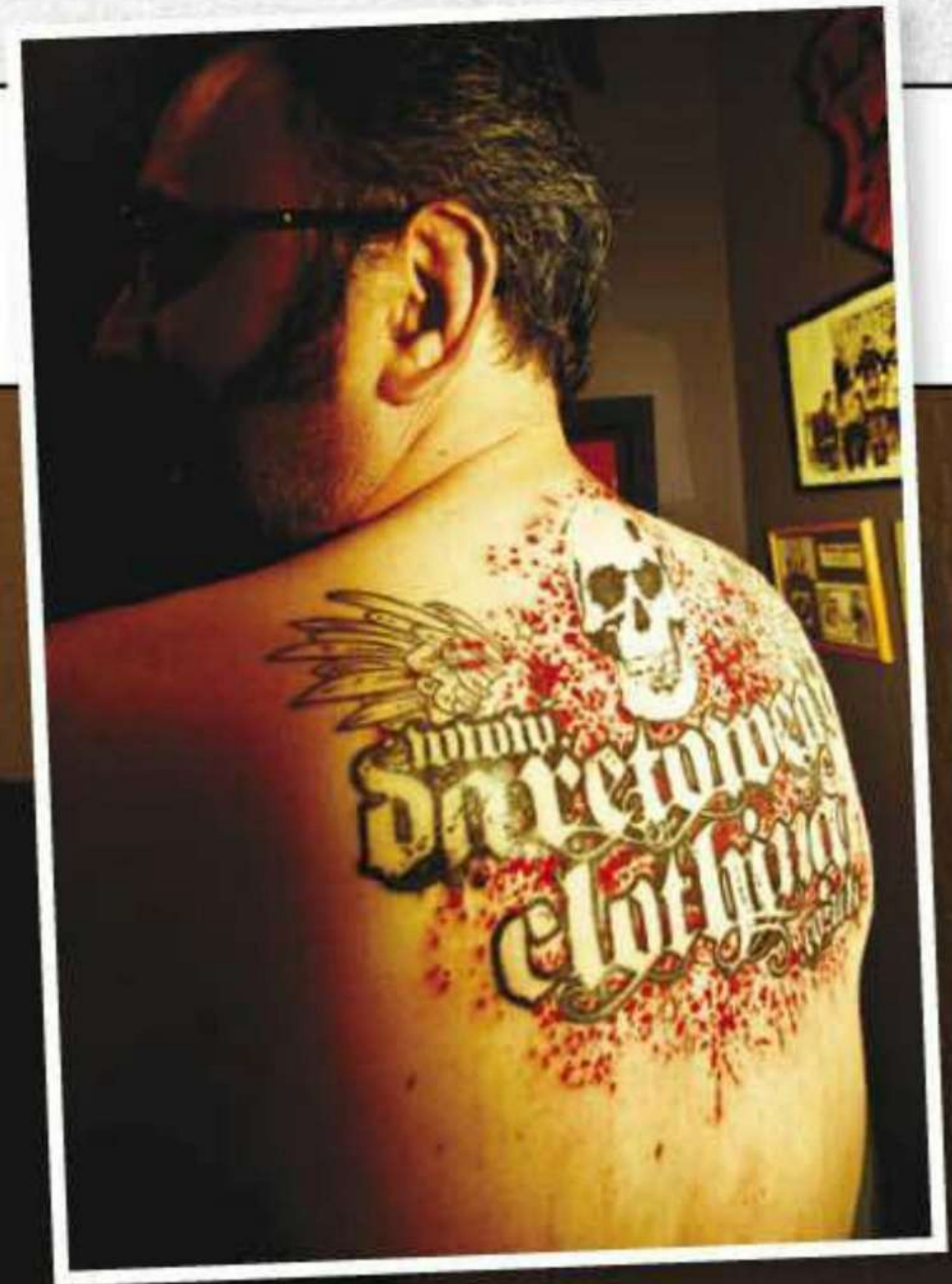
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Sleeve Notes

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ALL SUBMISSIONS TO SLEEVE NOTES GRATEFULLY RECEIVED. BE IT NEWS, AN EVENT, NEW MERCH, A STUDIO MOVE... WE'LL DO OUR VERY BEST TO LET EVERYBODY ELSE KNOW ABOUT IT TOO. EMAIL: EDITOR@SKINDEEP.CO.UK OR IF YOU WANT TO BE ARCHAIC ABOUT THE WHOLE AFFAIR: SKIN DEEP, THE OLD SCHOOL, HIGHER KINNERTON, CHESTER CH4 9AJ. BRING IT.



DARE TO WEAR

Dave Dent was in for a surprise when he posted the new logo, for his Dare To Wear clothing range, on Facebook! Along with all the positive comments, there was one from Anth Osbourne saying that the design, "...would make a cracking tattoo!" Initially Dave laughed at the suggestion but then curious as to what the reaction would be, he then posted an invite asking who would like the tattoo done – paid for by him, along with free Dare To Wear t-shirts and hoodies. Anth, a loyal customer and friend, responded saying he was up for it and a few coffees later, the two were planning a tattoo. Step in Allan Lowther, Northside Tattooz, long time friend of Dave's. Allan studied the design, suggested a couple of changes and it was game on. Three sessions and eight hours later, Anth had his brand new wings, Dave had a walking advertisement and Low had another excellent tattoo to add to his portfolio.

LATE VACANCY

Rude Boy Studios in Norwich, are now in their 10th year of trading and are looking for a new tattooist to join the team. All round skills and shop experience essential but before you ask, there's no position for an apprentice. The studio is a busy and professional studio in the city centre, so you'll need an attitude to suit! Get in touch here: 01603 664644. 15A Orford Place, Norwich NR1 3RU or rudeboystattoo@googlemail.com

NEWS IN BRIEF

ROCK HARD

For the third consecutive year, The Rock Collection will be exhibiting at the Norwich Body Art Festival. The trade stand will be in the entrance of the main hall where a wide range of tattoo influenced clothing and accessories will be available including Lucky 13, Ironfist, Disturbia, Miami Ink, Spiral, Hellbunny, UL13 and Demonica Shoes amongst many others. Their store is also just a short walk from the festival so if you'd like to see the full range of alternative clothing and accessories, get along to the shop based at 14-16 Lower Goat Lane in the Lanes area. Anything that doesn't fit in the

store, you can find online at www.rockcollection.co.uk or call on 01603 625055. Open 7 days a week!

BODY PIERCING COMES TO POISON INK

Poison Ink down in Basingstoke are pleased to announce that Stacy Ballard is now on board as their new body piercer, currently working every Monday and Saturday,

She has over 8 years experience and is well known in the local area as professional,

friendly, up to health and safety standards and council registered. Poison Ink, Studio 49, Basepoint Enterprise Centre, Stroudley Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG24 8UP. Any enquires contact 01256 406688.

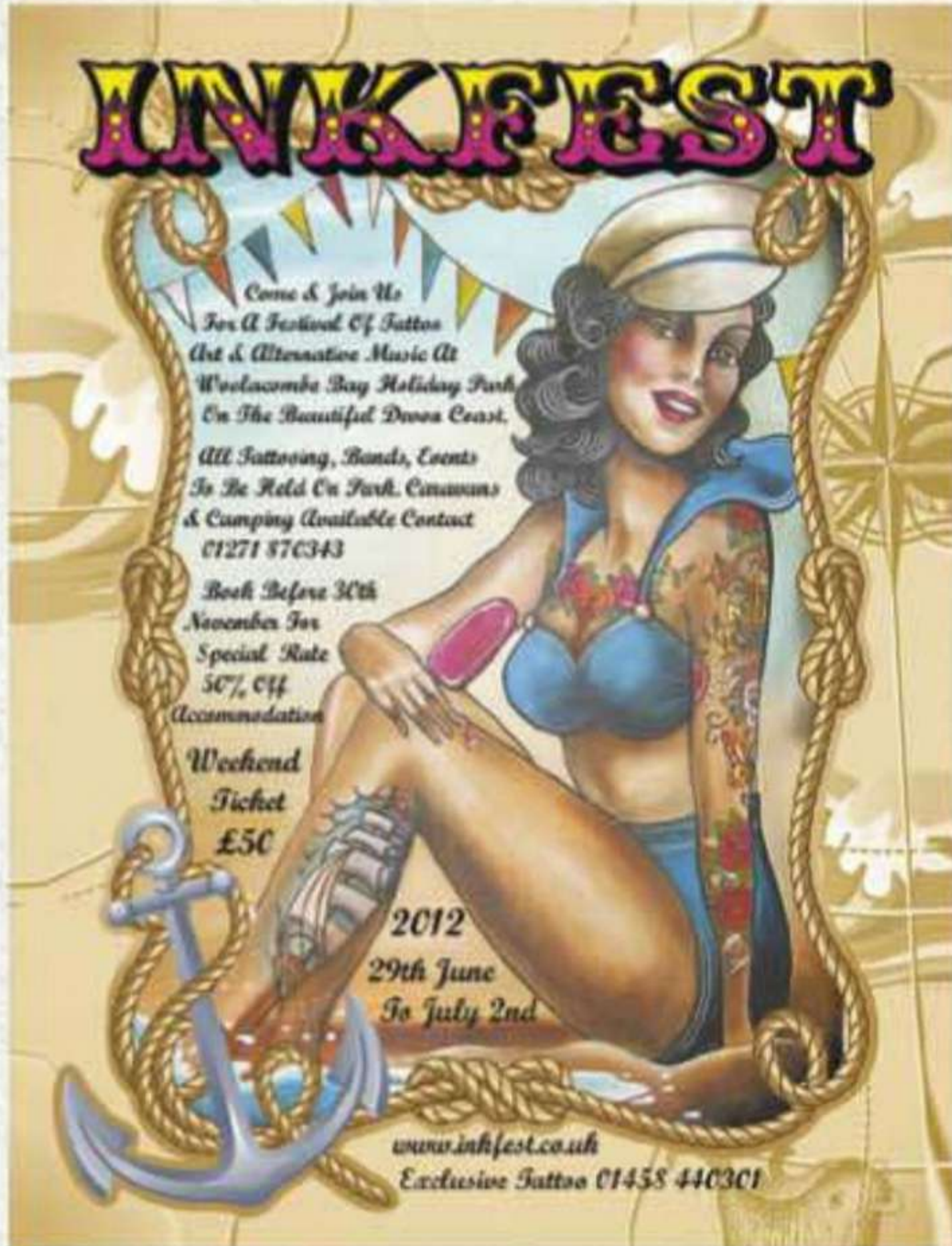
NATURAL THING

A new organic and vegan aftercare line has recently been introduced onto the market from Natures Garden Therapies - all the info you need is here: naturesgardentherapies.com let us know what you think

NEWS IN BRIEF

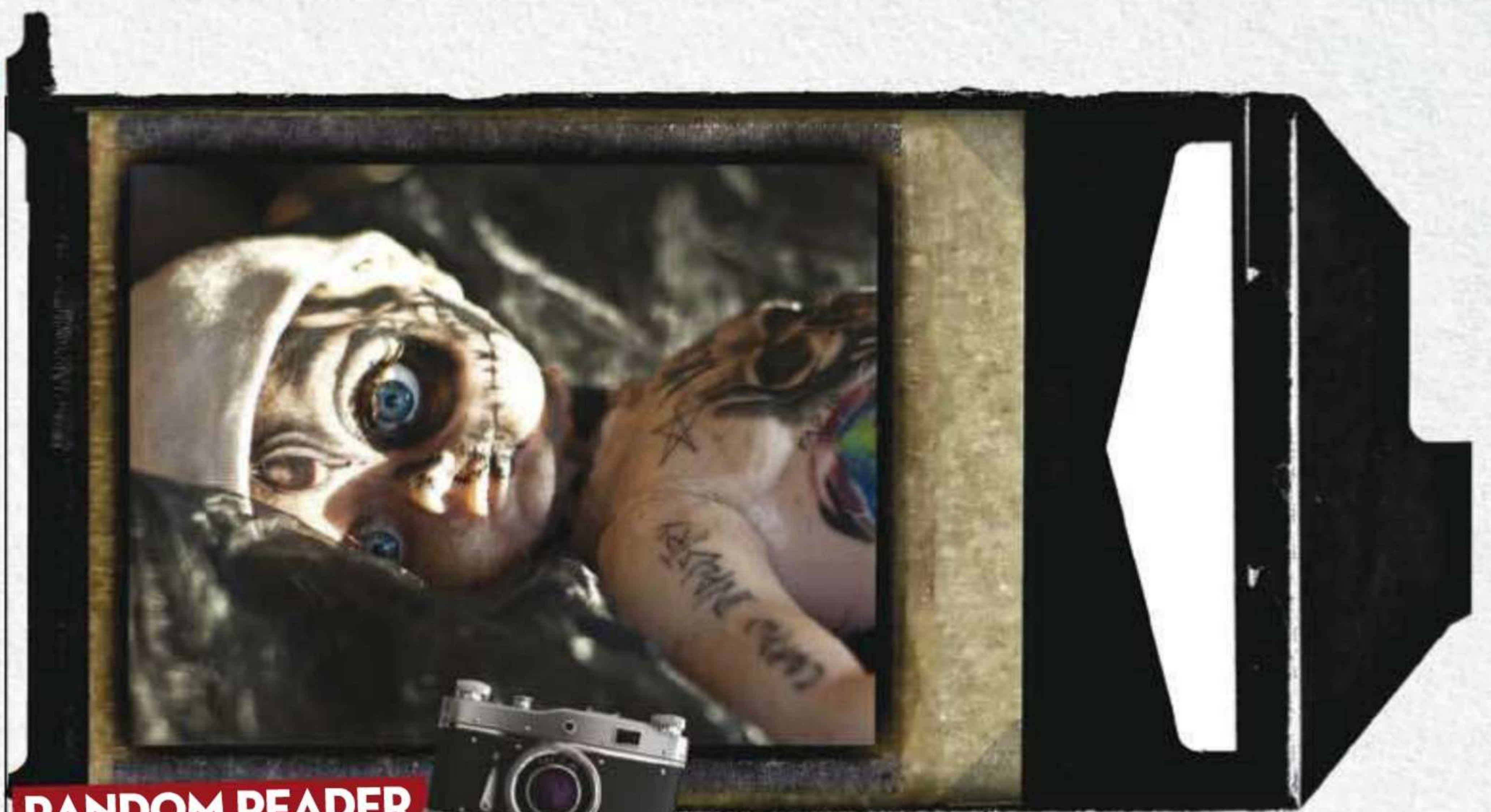
HONOUR IN PVC

If you're looking for clubwear with a twist, then at honour.co.uk you've found the right place! They have an unbelievable range of fantasy fetish clothing, erotic toys and accessories. Whether you're an adept dominatrix or a naughty novice there's something for everyone. Their online shop and London store are packed with stacks of PVC, leather and latex rubber clothing, corsets, wigs, shoes, saucy lingerie, sex toys, bondage gear, burlesque bits and much, much more besides! Exclusively at honour.co.uk you'll also find a new latex clothing collection by designer William Wilde, hand-made in London, that you can't buy anywhere else! Already popular with stars including Rihanna and Paloma Faith, his unique clothing will ensure you stand out from the crowd...



INKFEST UK

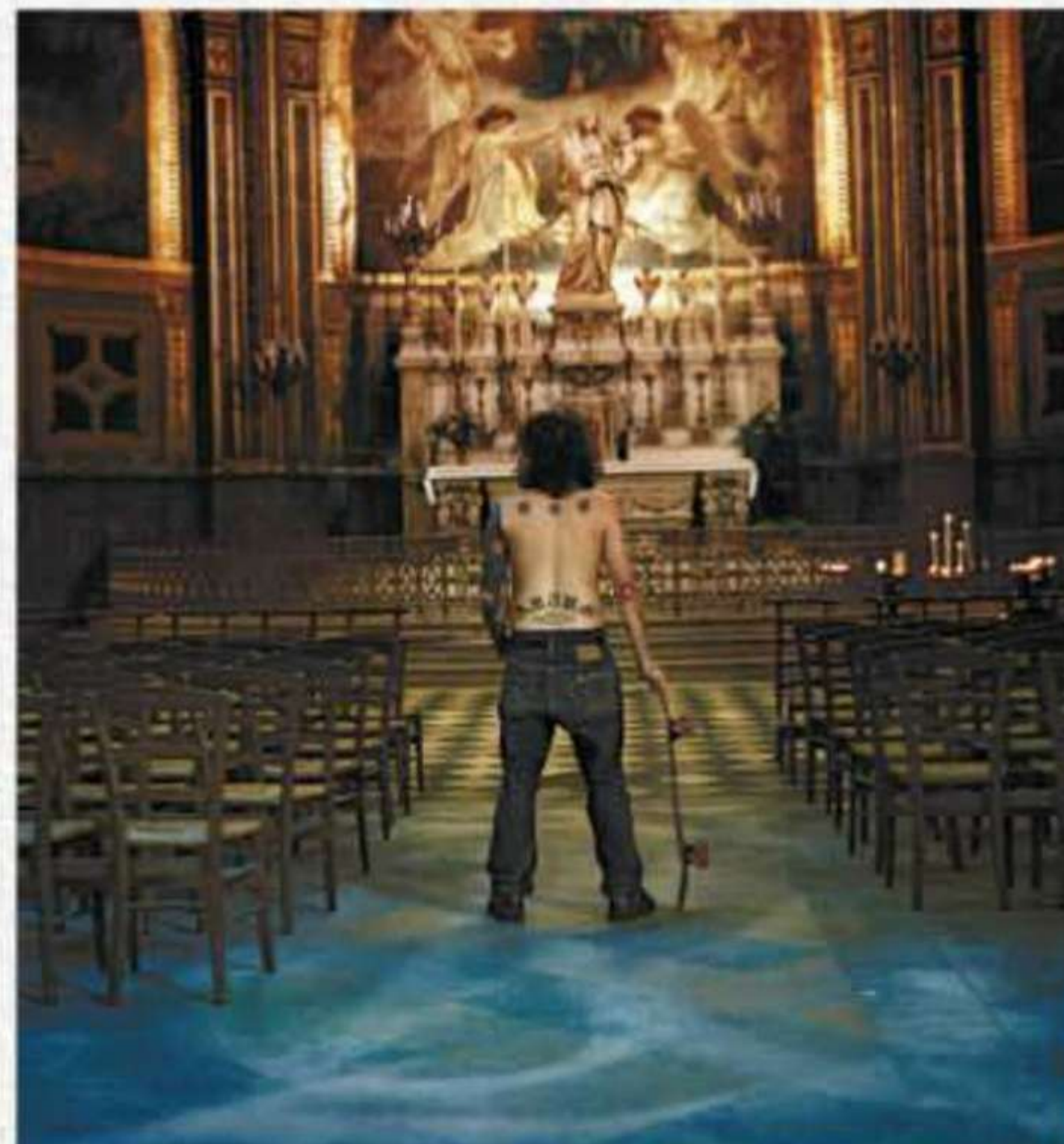
A new show appears in the UK next year. InkFest - a "festival of tattoo art & alternative music" is set to be held at Woolacombe Bay Holiday Park on the beautiful Devon coast from Friday, 29 June 2012 - Monday, 02 July 2012. For the total line-up of artists and bands, keep checking in on www.inkfest.co.uk for more details, but the reason for such advance notice is that pre-booking is available now for accommodation where you can get 50% off your rooms - that's a different link here: www.woolacombe.com/inkfest - and if you've got any queries after you've been to all of those places: stuart.lanning@btconnect.com which includes queries about trade stands.



RANDOM READER

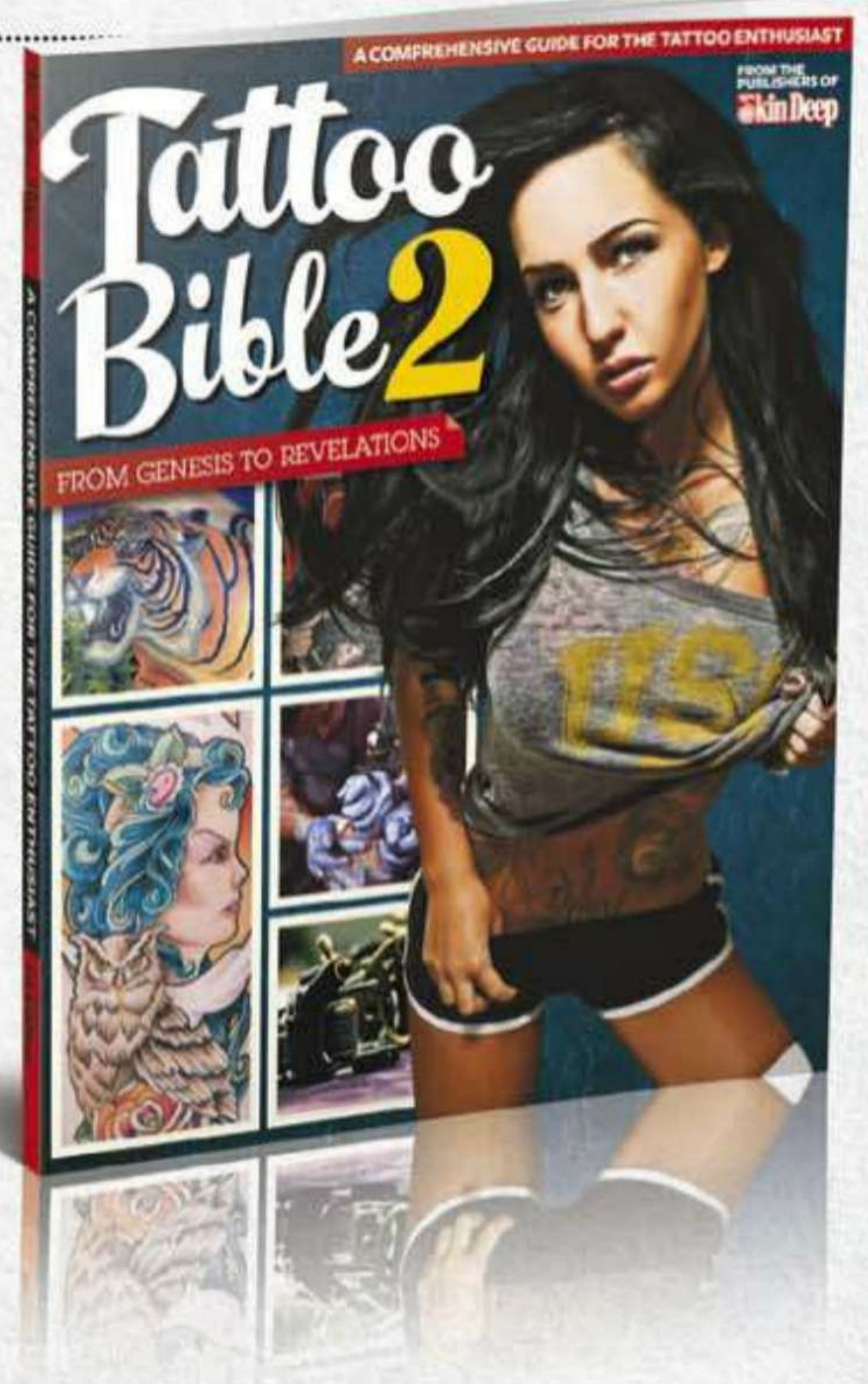
PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MONTH

This beautiful baby was shot by p-mod during the Belfort Tattoo Convention back in April at the Hôtel Atria. Are we seeing the hottest Christmas gift on the market or is it just a phase we're going through...



SMILE FOR THE CAMERA...

The uber-talented French photographer Julien Lachaussée has spent six years compiling a firecracker of a photography book featuring tattooed people and artists (natch). The book is called "Alive: Tattoo Portraits" and is available on a pre-sale special edition through Eyrolles. Here's how it works - if you like what you see, you buy a copy up front and when the required amount is reached, the book goes into print and you get something very special for your money. They're nearly halfway there now and I reckon with some Skin Deep readership behind it, we can push it to the presses faster than you can say "can you dig it!" You know what to do: www.ulule.com/alive-tattoo-portraits/



TATTOO BIBLE 2

Prompted by the first edition of the Tattoo Bible totally selling out, this month sees the release of the highly anticipated Tattoo Bible 2. Updated and with new content throughout, it features everything from getting your first tattoo, right up to conventions, the recent spate of tattoo popularity in the media and interviews with some of your favourites and a whole lot more...

If you have this magazine in your hands, it will already be on the shelves in all the usual places.

Conventions

All details correct at time of going to press.

July 16-17

STATE OF THE ART TATTOO

Body Art & Music Festival
The Assembly Rooms, Derby, England
www.tattoo-2001.com

August 5-7

TATTOO JAM

Doncaster Racecourse
Doncaster, UK
www.tattoojam.com

August 5-7

TAIWAN INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION

National Taiwan University
Sports Centre, Taiwan
www.tattoo.tw

August 12-14

SEATTLE TATTOO EXPO

Seattle Center Northwest Rooms,
Seattle, WA 98105, USA
www.seattletattooexpo.com
info@seattletattooexpo.com

August 12-14

TRANSILVANIA TATTOO EXPO

Sibiu, Romania
www.tattooexpo.ro
adda@transilvaniatattoo.ro
0040 746 162 633
ovidiu@transilvaniatattoo.ro
0040 722 400 406

August 13-14

NORWICH BODY ART FESTIVAL

St Andrews Hall, Norwich, Norfolk, England
www.norwichbodyartfestival.co.uk

August 19-21

4TH STYRIAN TATTOO & HOTROD-SHOW

forumKloster Gleisdorf, Austria
info@styriantattooshow.com
www.styriantattooshow.com

August 25-28

RICK'S 14TH INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION

KI Convention Center/Hotel Sierra
1-800-236-3330 - For Discount Room Rate
(book under Rick's Tattoo Convention) Green
Bay, WI U.S.A. www.tattoosbyrick.com
rick@tattoosbyrick.com

September 10-11

COVENTRY INK TATTOO CONVENTION

AT7 Centre, Bell green, Coventry, England
01604 949958

September 15-18

PARADISE TATTOO GATHERING

Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort, 37 Corey Road,
Hancock, MA 01237, USA
www.tattoogathering.com
gabe@tattoonow.com

THE DEVIL'S PARTY

Dan Henk is a man who knows how to bring himself to the party. A tattooist with a global reputation, he not one of those who likes to stand still for too long and if he finds any more pies to dip his fingers in, he's going to need more hands...

His latest project - **By Demons Driven** - is a fine slice of weird fiction, but no sooner have we begun to talk about it than it becomes apparent, this particular work of fiction is no easy ride:

"By Demons Driven took me five years to write. During that time my computer crashed, my second one was stolen, I totaled three consecutive motorcycles and my car, and lost my wife in a hit and run. All this dramatically slowed the process down, but I never gave up. What you go through makes you who you are, and gives you a different insight into life."

The project originally started out as a proposal for a graphic novel. Both Paradox Press (an imprint of DC Comics) and Kitchen Sink Press were interested, but both went belly up.

"I insisted on doing a painted front cover, a painted back cover, and eleven full page interior illustrations. I was determined to have complete control over it, something that has cost me several publishers. I've pitched the story as 'Predator mixed with Mad Max, as written by John Steinbeck'".

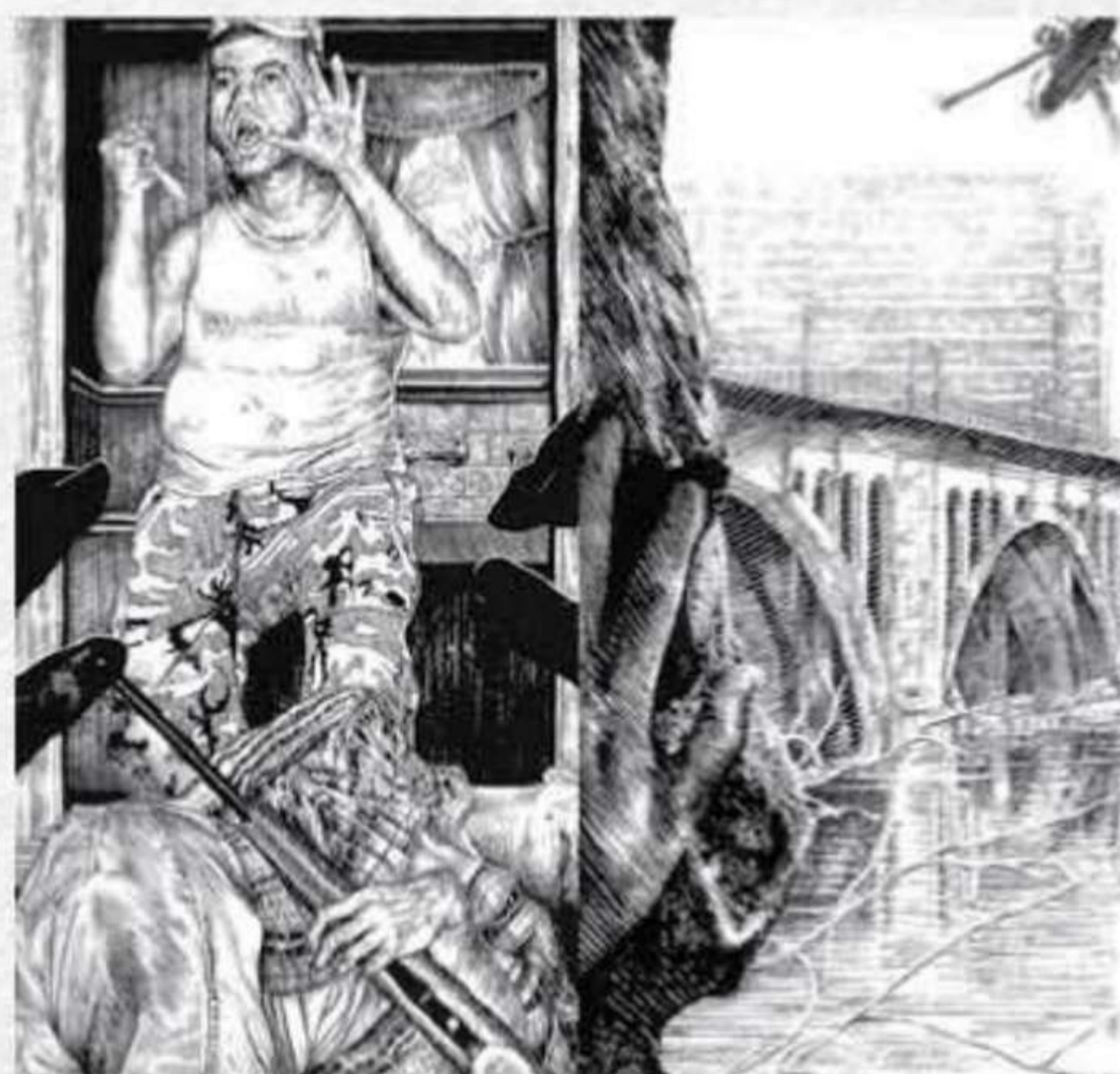
What we then end up with is a first person thriller that involves elements of science fiction and horror, and centres around a lone



protagonist. Working for the military, our anti-hero stumbles across a life changing discovery. Pulled off the project, he returns a year later in a theft that turns into a bloody coup, and he flees with the military in hot pursuit.

"I went down to Mexico for a week to research this, and bugged way too many people in professions related to those used in the novel. The book is 94,015 words, and has turned into just my first writing project, as a book of short stories is on the way. I appreciate all the support I've gotten so far, and hope to add writing to my list of ongoing projects.

By Demons Driven is available for the Kindle on amazon along with his short stories; 'Dr. Seuss is Dead', 'The Beauty of Ignorance', 'The Skyscrapers Look Like Gravestones From Here', and 'Dying Felt So Goddamned Good Today'. Paperback versions will be along soon - keep an eye on Dan here to find out more: www.danhenk.com





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Conventions

All details correct at time of going to press.

September 23-25

THE LONDON TATTOO CONVENTION

Tobacco Dock, Porters Walk,
London, E1W 2SF
www.thelondontattooconvention.com

September 23-25

INKED OUT NEW JERSEY

Meadowlands Expo Center Secaucus, NJ, USA
(201) 342-4446, info@inkedoutnj.com
www.inkedoutnj.com

September 30 - October 2

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Mirage Resort & Casino
(201) 342-4446,
info@lasvegastattooshow.com
www.lasvegastattooshow.com

October 1 - 2

ST GALLEN TATTOO CONVENTION

Fürstenlandsaal, 9200 Gossau, Switzerland
www.tattoo-convention.sg.ch

October 9

1ST ANNUAL FEMALE TATTOO ARTIST SHOW

The Assembly, Spencer St, Leamington Spa, England. 50 of the UK's best female tattoo artists come together for the very 1st time.
www.facebook.com/pages/Uks-1st-Annual-Female-Tattoo-Artist-Show/212251892134100
Tickets are on sale at leamingtonassembly.com

October 14-16

BRUSSELS TATTOO CONVENTION

Tours & Taxis, Brussels, Belgium
www.brusselstattooconvention.be

October 15-16

SZOLNOK TATTOO EXPO

Szolnok City, Tiszaliget Sport Center Of University, Hungary
szolnoktattooexpo@gmail.com
www.szolnoktattooexpo.com

October 21-23

OTTAWA-GATINEAU TATTOO EXPO 3

Hilton "Casino" Lac Leamy, 3blvd du Casino, Gatineau, QC, Canada
ottawatattooexpo@hotmail.ca
www.ottawatattooexpo.com

October 29-30

HALLOWEEN TATTOO BASH

The Racecourse, Newton Abbot, Devon, England
www.myspace.com/halloweentattoobash

November 12 - 13

EAST COAST TATTOO EXPO

Highfield Holiday Park, London Road, Clacton, Essex, CO16 9QY, England
Info: Sudbury Ink, 01787 464946 or Red's Tattoo Parlour, 01206 395262
eastcoastexpo@hotmail.co.uk

SMALLMAN SYNDROME

By the time you read this I'll be in Edinburgh performing at the Fringe Festival. Is all very exciting, especially as I get to talk about tattoos for an hour (mainly mine). Over the past month I've done a load of interviews about my show, including getting the chance to go on Radio One and talk to Nick Grimshaw. I think the end result of that interview was that he'd get tattooed with me when he is up in Edinburgh during August.

I've entered into a bet with the fabulously tattooed and very funny Martin "Bigpig" Mor during the Fringe: Basically, whoever sells the least tickets has to get the other one tattooed on him. I wouldn't mind having a tattoo of him, he's got an excellent beard. This month I've been tattooed yet again by the wonderful Miss Gemma Osborn. As a reformed alcoholic I wanted to have something that shows that side of my personality with the bad side, so she created two girls: One good, holding the can of coke that straight-edge me is often seen drinking; The other with a bottle of whiskey. She's clearly bad – not just because of the booze, but also because she is clad in very little. The slattern. I think they look very good the either side of my Mr Halbstark heart, especially as they could be fighting over it.

You may remember I asked a couple of months back if tattoos started hurting more the older you get. Georgina Roberts from Worcestershire has emailed me telling me that she is 27, her Dad is 60. For his sixtieth her dad designed a tattoo of his life and had it on his bicep. Georgina – who started getting tattoos at 18 – was in the process of having a sleeve completed. They were both tattooed at the same time and whilst Georgina was in agony, her Dad barely even noticed.

It gets better: Valerie from Valonia Tattoos in South Shields got in touch to tell me all about Kathy, who is 74 years young. She turned up at their studio on a mobility scooter and demanded her first ever tattoo of a troll that she'd seen on the internet. She sat

fine through it and was then back a couple of days later to add to it with a picture of a witch for her other forearm. I salute you, Kathy. Apparently she sat with no bother at all, the only drawback was that she wouldn't accept the nice redrawing of the pictures that Valerie came up with... what Kathy wanted, she got. I bet she's the coolest granny ever.

So then, it seems that my theory has been firmly disproved. Curses. Still, I know now



that I can rely on all of you wonderful Skin Deep readers to answer any tattoo related questions that I may have.

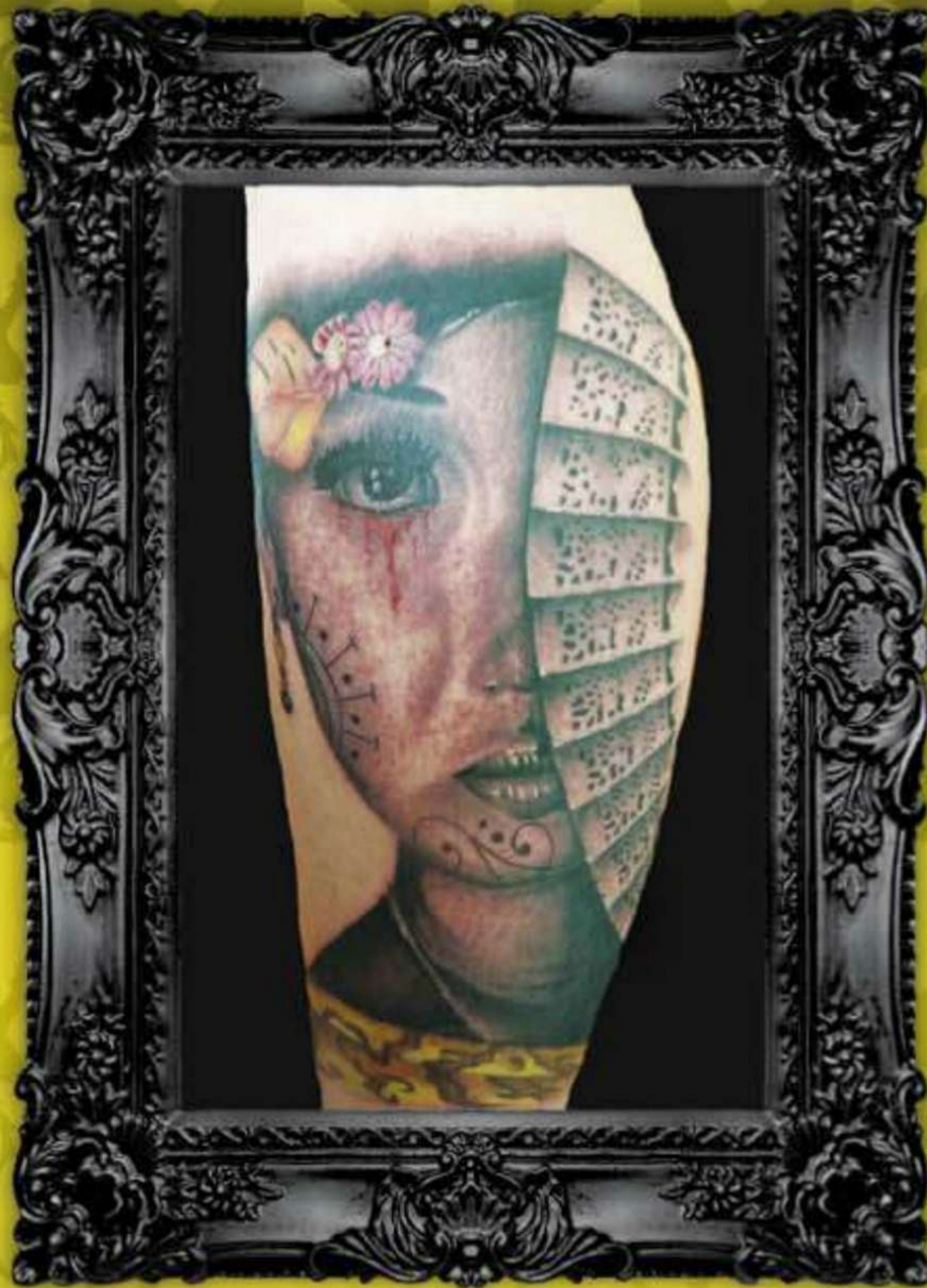
Feel free to drop me an email this month to suggest something comical for me to have inked onto myself to celebrate another Fringe Festival completed. Last time it was Ron Burgundy, lets try and outdo that. I'll have the most foolish etched onto my skin somewhere, I promise...

And if you're in Edinburgh during August, do come see my show "Tattooigan" at the Gilded Balloon, 7.45pm from the 3rd to the 28th (excluding the 17th). Make sure you stick around for a chat after if you do!

TATTOO UK

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PART EIGHT

PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK

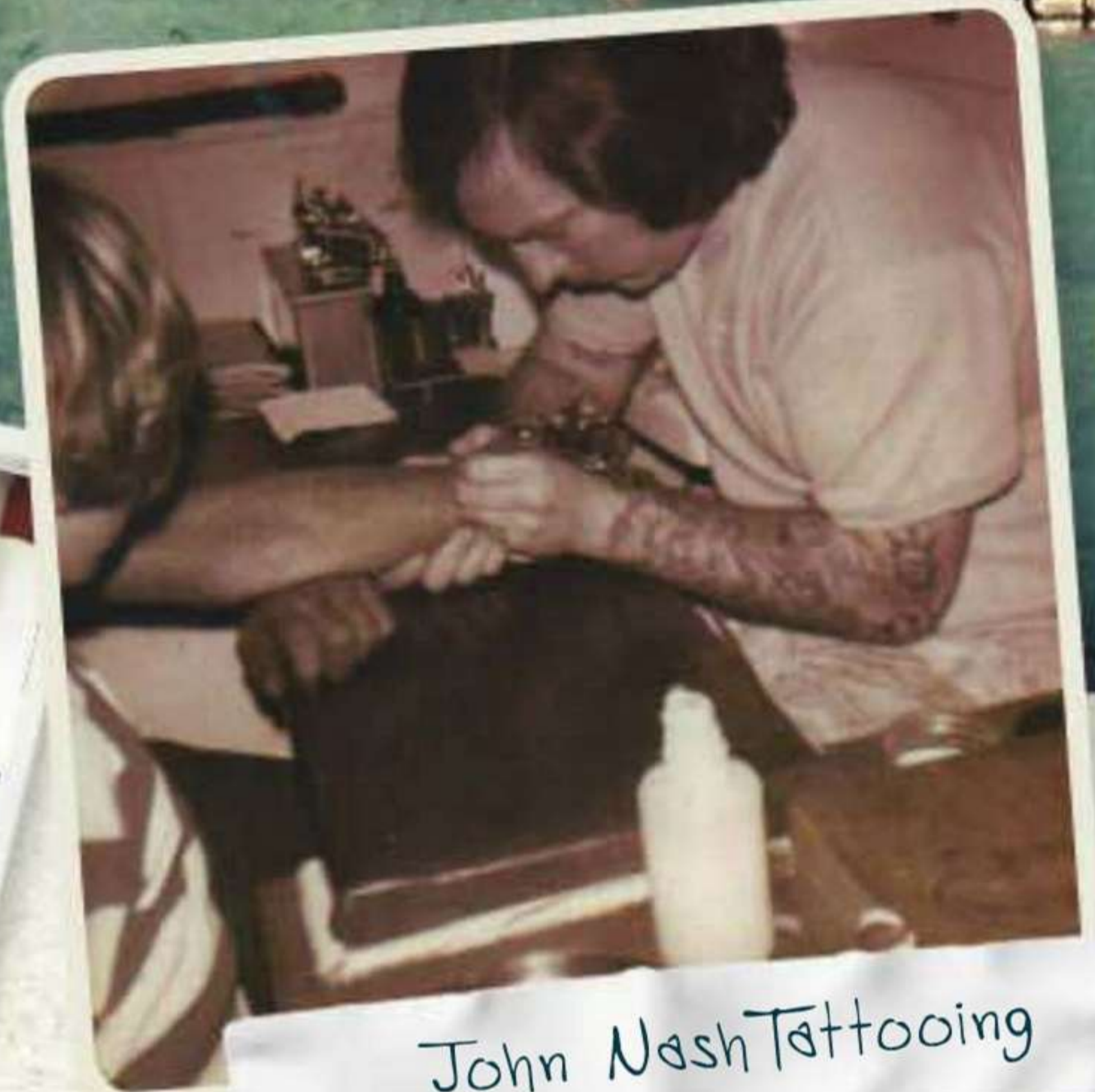
What it is about Brisbane that I love so much? I can't quite put my finger on it but if I was asked to stay in Australia this is where I would settle down.

The art museums, art house cinemas and suitcase markets (where you sell any art or handmade items so long as they can fit in a suitcase) boast the creative-cool of Melbourne but without any of the pretentiousness. Ten years ago there were some eighteen tattoo shops between the Gold Coast, an hour south of Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast, an hour north, today there is an estimated ninety-eight. With that kind of boom a lot of great talent has emerged and there is a lot of choice but for every good shop there are a handful of bad ones cashing in on the tattoo industries recent popularity.

John Nash has seen the change over the years, as his studio is one of the oldest running shops in the area. John moved to Brisbane in 1976 to work for well-known tattooer Dutchy, in Fortitude Valley in the heart of the City. Dutchy's shop was probably



Me with John Nash



John Nash Tattooing



John Nash tattooing 1960's

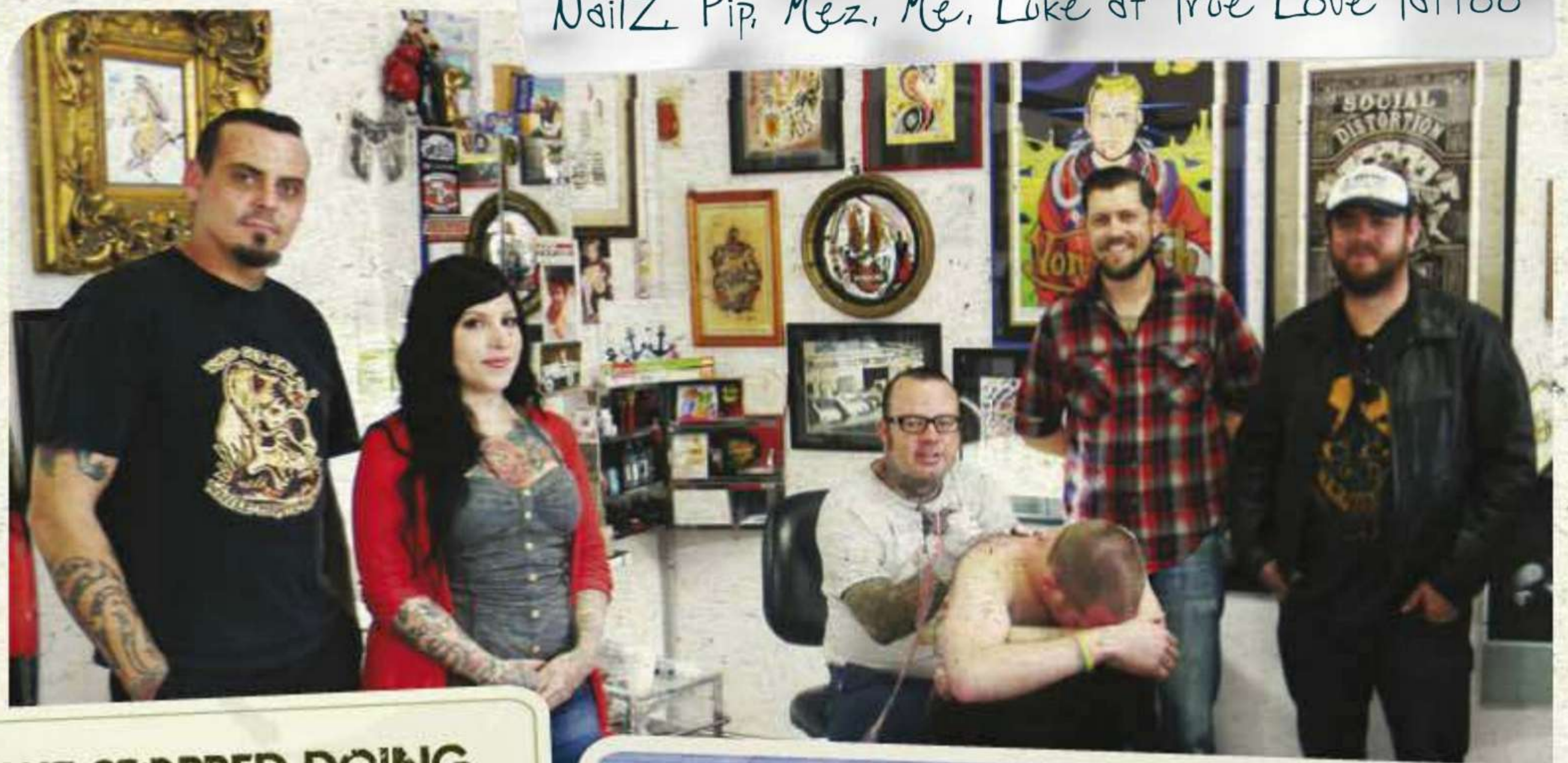
Queensland's first professional tattoo studio. "I moved up because of the busy workload. There used to be people queuing outside the shop and down the street waiting to get tattooed. I'd tattoo twenty red back spider tattoos in a day for a dollar each. It was so busy, the machine would get really hot, the solder would melt and bits would pop off while you were tattooing, so you'd have a soldering iron next to you so you could stop to fix your machine!" Inevitably the plethora of shops

means you rarely see a queue outside tattoo shops these days with the exception of one place - True Love Tattoo in Sherwood where on Friday the 13th you can get a small tattoo for 13 dollars, which results in a crowd of excited regulars and Brisbane's avid



Craigie Lee

Brisbane River
and Story Bridge



Nailz, Pip, Mez, Me, Luke at True Love Tattoo

IF WE STOPPED DOING WALK INS, I'D MISS ALL THE CHARACTERS AND BANTER YOU GET MEZ



"If we stopped doing walk ins, I'd miss all the characters and banter you get" Mez tells me and I think he is right, you never know who is going to walk in and that's the fun of it. A lot of people forget tattooing is a service, something that you are providing for someone that is personal to them, "I think with a lot of well known shops there is a lot of tattoo snobbery," AJ adds. "Tattooing has always been a working class art, and that's what I love about it." Affordable, accessible and down to earth, True Love keeps those values at its core and will continue to thrive.

At the other end of the spectrum, there are a handful of 'appointment only' private studios in the city - small creative environments behind closed doors and away from prying eyes. Seventh Circle in the "Gabba" is one such shop. When I arrive at the studio it is easy to walk past: a black door, blacked out windows and no sign. There is a knocker with a sliding hatch above, it reminds me of a secret speakeasy and certainly gives arriving customers a sense of adventure. Inside is tastefully decorated with walls covered in framed artwork and dark wood furniture. This is home to Loz, Brendan, Ryan and Peta. Loz opened the studio eighteen months ago having worked as a tattoo artist for fourteen years, he wanted his own space to work. "I got tired of walk-in shops, I wanted to work

somewhere I could concentrate on my tattooing and not have to stop to talk to people coming in the shop all the time, tattooing is not a spectator sport." Most of the other artists agree that there is less pressure in the studio, they can take their time and not worry about their next tattoo. Brendan adds "I can give my tattoos one hundred and fifty per cent and I don't worry about walk in customers sitting in the shop waiting to get tattooed, that stress has gone."

Being able to give their art that amount of concentration sees the guys and gals here being able to



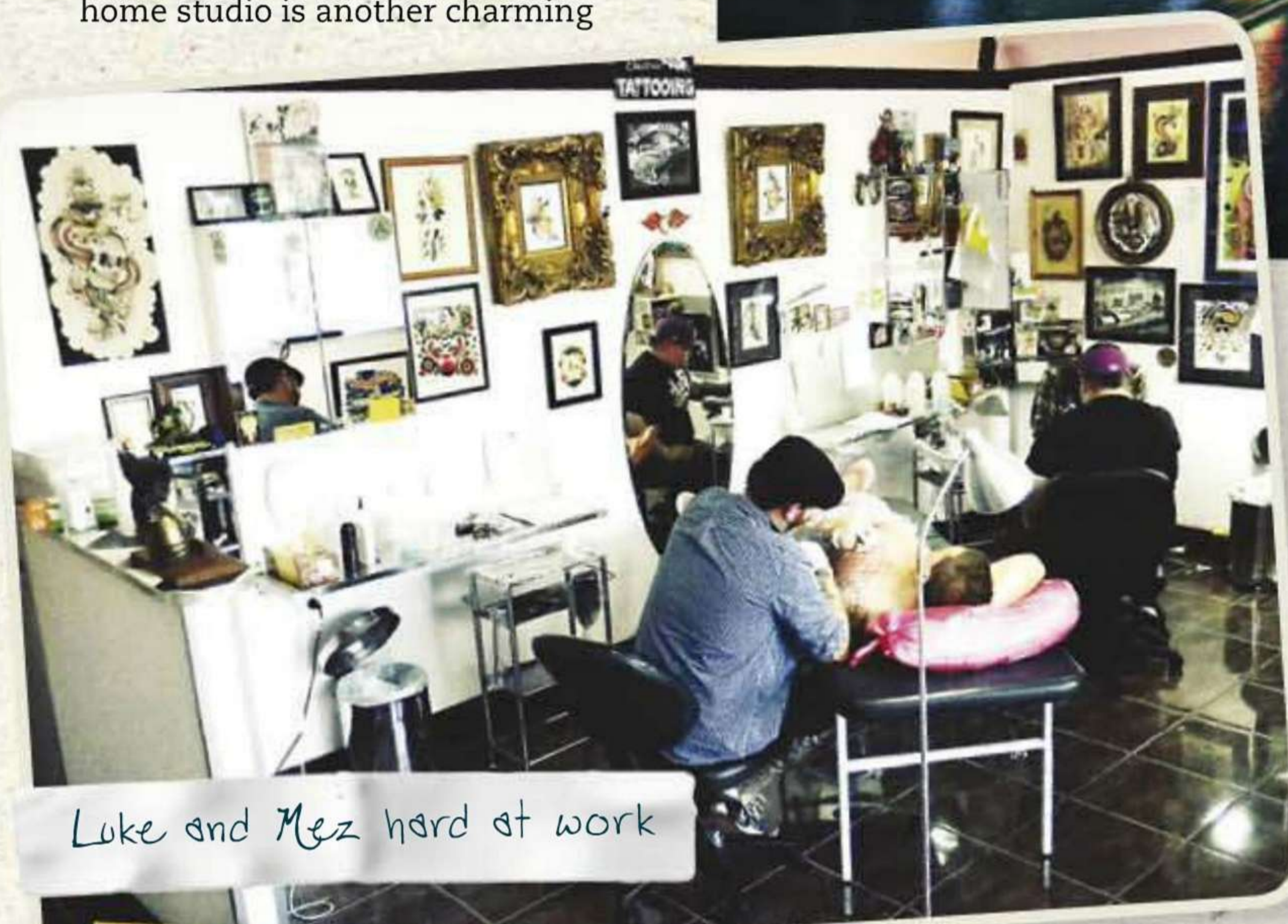
tattoo collectors forming outside the shop before the doors open.

True Love has been established for six years and has built up a strong reputation for putting out good clean traditional artwork. There are six full time artists working here and the vibe of the shop is like a constant party with laughter and plenty of banter between the artists and customers from open till close. The ringleader for most of the antics is tattooer and shop owner Mez, with his accomplices Luke, AJ, Nailz, Dave and Pip. The shop has an American old time feel, with prints, original paintings and skateboards decorating almost every space of the walls. One of the regular characters who frequents the shop is seventy five year old Carl who got his first tattoo at True Love when he turned seventy three and proceeded to get tattooed by AJ and Dave every week for an entire year, never missing an appointment. As studios earn a reputation they take on more custom work and a lot stop taking walk ins, but True Love is keen to keep its friendly easy going attitude and takes walk in appointments everyday.

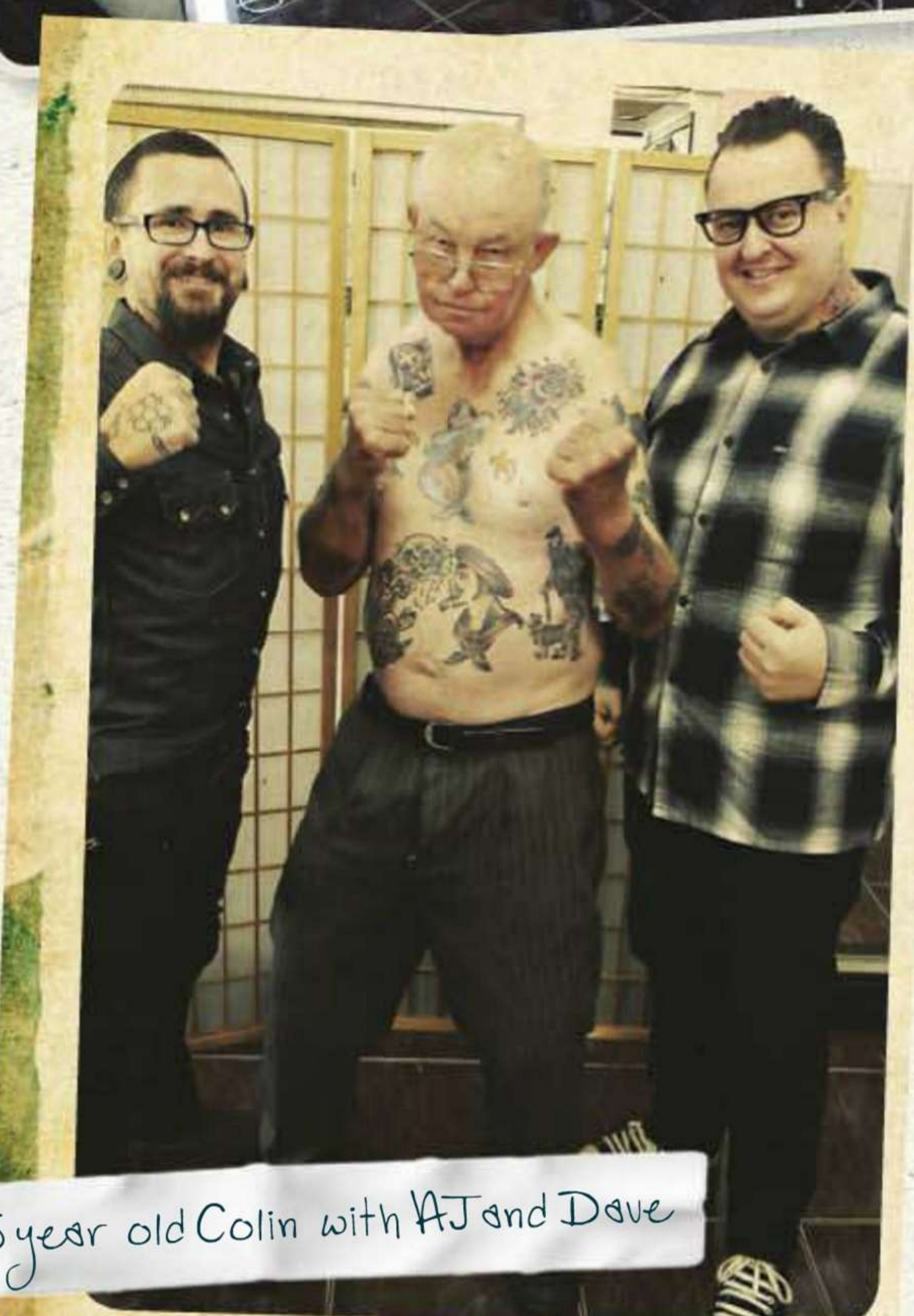
Mimsy's trailer at Sydney Expo



specialise in what they love and the rewards for customers are awesome work. Someone else hitting that level is Mimsy at Trailer Trash Tattoo, another appointment only studio but set up for different reasons. Mimsy worked in the city for ten years but becoming a full time mum meant she wanted to spend more quality time with her family. She is often seen at conventions tattooing in her vintage 1950's style caravan and customers getting tattooed get the full kitch experience - it's a lifestyle and her home studio is another charming



Luke and Mez hard at work



75 year old Colin with AJ and Dave

CUSTOMERS LOVE THE LAID BACK FEELING I HAVE CREATED HERE, USUALLY I DO TWO OR THREE TATTOOS A DAY SO I CAN MAKE SURE I AM CREATING ONLY MY BEST WORK MIMSY

environment to get tattooed in.

"Customers love the laid back feeling I have created here, usually I do two or three tattoos a day so I can make sure I am creating only my best work." Although

an appointment only studio may be daunting for some, she enjoys working alone and readily admits that she gets extremely nervous working around other artists. Perfecting what she is doing without that pressure means she can really create her best work and things, it seems, have worked out well for Mimsy "When I first opened I only had a weeks worth of bookings and I wondered if I was doing the right thing, but now I have more work than I can do!"

Though she has a waiting list most artists strive for, it does, she admits, bring a few downsides. "I do wish I had more time to paint and do other artwork. I'm taking on an apprentice soon, so I would like to get to a point where one day I am creating more art and less tattoos."

Tattooing used to be just a job but that doesn't cut it anymore it has to be a passion, from the likes of John Nash who freely admits when he picked up a tattoo machine at 16 he

couldn't draw and still can't, to the intense talent I have been so lucky to work with over these past months, Australia's tattoo industry is only going one way, upwards. 🐾

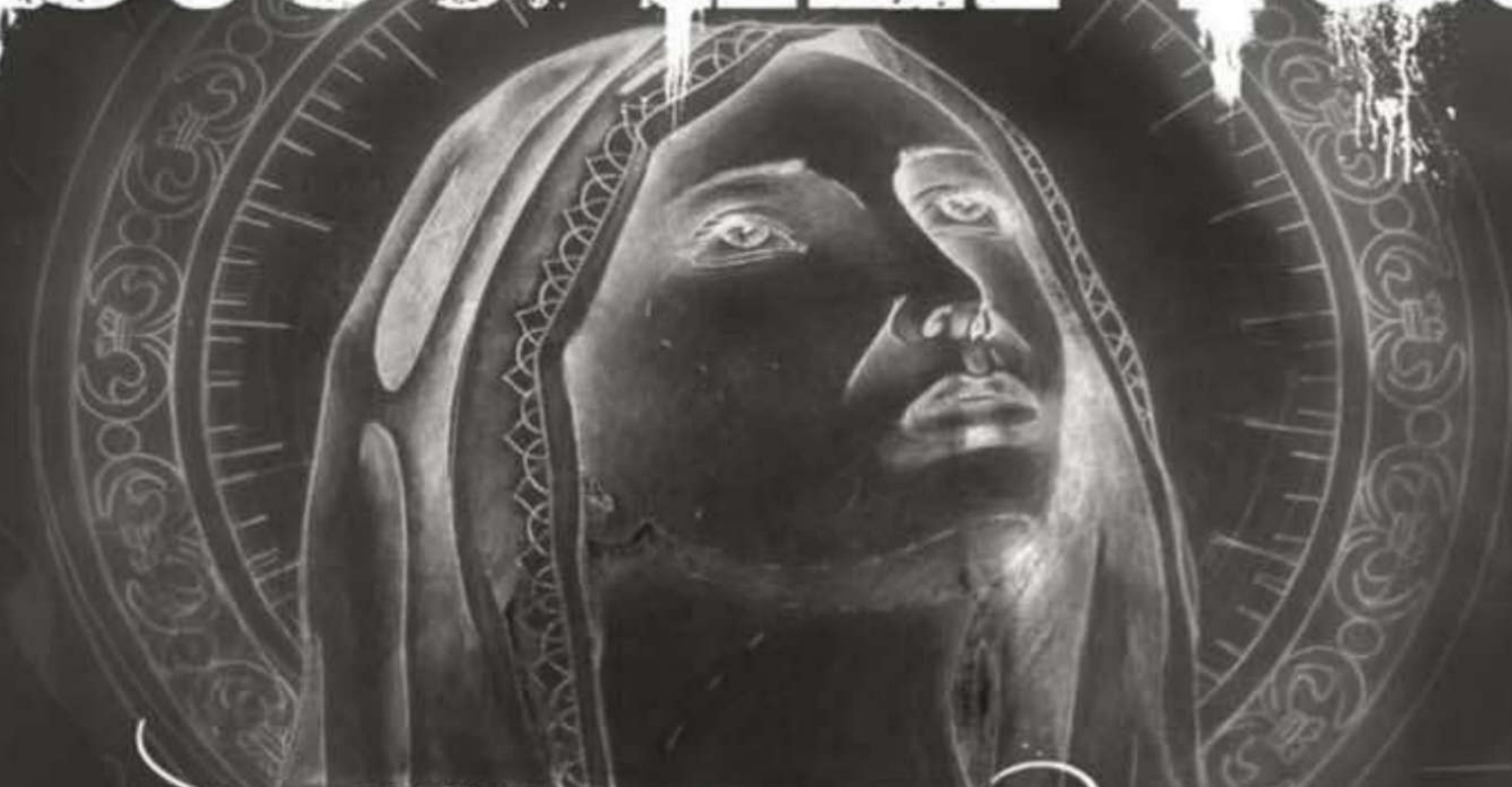


Me with Mimsy



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Darren Smith

There's no better kick than being able to let a reader tell their own story. That becomes even more of a good thing when you can use your influence to give something back to the people who make this world a better place to live in. This month, I'm handing over the pens to Darren Smith



STUDIO
Pleasure Or Pain Productions
26 Cardiff Street,
Aberdare
CF44 7DP

CONTACT
01685 875 252

My son Jordan has had to make some big decisions in his life. Born with his bladder outside his body, he has already faced a series of grueling operations to correct his rare birth abnormality which affects just one in 40,000 children born in Britain each year.

But while most boys his age would have cried the house down at having to spend weeks away from their home to have life-changing surgery at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital in London, he has never been one to complain and has always taken the daily turmoil connected to his condition in his stride; and Jordan recently faced up to another major operation to treat his condition.

He has been in and out of Great Ormond Street since the day he was born, and unlike other boys his age has been unable to enjoy spending as much time as he would like playing with his pals back home in Pontarddulais, Swansea.

In May 2010 we had a week-long break to Majorca with other families and their children who have been treated at Great Ormond Street. All the families spent the week in the sun and we all watched our children make new friends and learn to smile again as they played games and swam in the pool, and at their hotel in Palma

where we met celebrities including EastEnders star Steve McFadden and Coronation Street actress Sue Cleaver.

All of the families on the trip were also treated to a special night at a pirate-themed party on the island and it was at that point that I decided it was about time I gave

logo tattooed on my arm under sponsorship but this idea quickly evolved into something much bigger.

As the theme of the week was pirates, I decided to go with that theme for my tattoo. After talking to my friend and tattoo artist Leigh Rees of Pleasure or Pain Productions in Abadare, South Wales, we started developing ideas for the tattoo. We had lots of pictures of the main characters from the show so they seemed like a good place to start. I decided to include Lord Mellion, Jaques Lafette and Sir Henry Morgan, and the ship from the show, La Hispaniola, and of course the Great Ormond Street logo, but apart from that I left it all up to Leigh.

The support I have had from Pleasure or Pain is amazing – Leigh didn't take any sort of payment for the tattoo, so all the money I have collected so far will go directly to Great Ormond Street. So with the agreement of Shaun Maddy (the owner of the studio), we started our 28-hour tattoo marathon. I'd be lying if I said it didn't hurt, but no matter how uncomfortable the four-hour sittings got I always kept

in the back of my mind that it was nothing compared to the pain Jordan has endured during his surgeries, and he never complained once.

The doctors knew something was wrong as soon as Jordan was born and after I cut his umbilical cord, but they had no idea what the problem was. They were really puzzled and told us they had not seen anything



something back as a small thank you for the amazing work they have done in treating Jordan – there was lots of talk from the other dad's on the trip about various ways of raising money for GOSH, most of which involved running. I get out of breath running the bath let alone running a marathon, so I started throwing the idea around of getting the GOSH



like it before. My wife, Melanie, just lay there after giving birth as the doctors and nurses at Singleton Hospital in Swansea phoned other hospitals trying to find out what could be wrong with Jordan. It was a very worrying time as we were in the dark too and did not know what was going to happen next, and as doctors tried to diagnose the abnormality, little did we know that just a few hours later we would be rushed 300 miles to Great Ormond Street where Jordan faced a six-hour operation to have his bladder inserted back inside his tiny body.

We had no option. Melanie had just given birth but the doctors in Swansea told us that the best treatment for him would be available at Great Ormond Street. So just a few hours after his birth we packed our bags and headed to London by ambulance.

The following hours were crucial as doctors performed delicate surgery to ensure Jordan's bladder was placed back inside his body. It

was a very worrying time for us all. We could not believe that we were suddenly in London with Jordan, just hours after he had been born. He endured a six-hour operation and we were given no indication by the doctors how things were going.

Anyone who has been in our position knows that doctors just walk through the wards with expressionless faces and we did not know what to expect. Thankfully, Jordan pulled through but later that night we faced further agony after one of his lungs collapsed – that was when we all began to panic. At that time, Melanie and I both thought it was the end of him. We must have walked 100 miles around the hospital that night as we prayed for him to pull through and we spent the next month in hospital with him as he recovered.

Jordan is more or less back to normal now – or as much as he can be. He loves playing with his brothers, Ashley and Callum. He roughs them up and they rough him

I'll never forget the day we took Jordan home or how much we owe Great Ormond Street, so whilst this tattoo was painful and time

up as if nothing has happened. That trip to Spain lifted Jordan's spirits immeasurably and being in the sun made a world of difference. We want to thank Great Ormond Street so much. They need to raise £5 million every year to help treat and save the life of children like Jordan, and without GOSH, we truly believe that he wouldn't be with us today.

He met other children on the trip who have all received treatment at Great Ormond Street and he has made many friends and not once did Jordan ask what was wrong with them, he just took them for who they are. It is amazing how resilient kids are – and I can't let this opportunity go by without also thanking our parents who rallied around and looked after them while we were in London with Jordan.

consuming it was nothing when you compare it to what Jordan has been through.



You can show your support for Great Ormond Street by visiting www.justgiving.com/tattoo4gosh Please dig deep – I know times are tough but so are 6-hour operations, so please help if you can.

WHERE'S YOUR HEAD AT?

This issue, we ask the eternal question – who owns the heart of tattoo? There are probably far too many strands to this question to pull them all into one article, but the question bears asking all the same – and then it's up to you to decide where you stand...

In the early 1970s, Jamaican immigrant Clive Campbell, aka DJ Kool Herc, began throwing dance parties in New York City's Bronx borough. Campbell's parties and innovative mixing techniques gave a creative outlet to the local disenfranchised and poverty stricken black youth, who found that rather than following the lure of crime and gang involvement, battles could be waged on the dance floor via breakdancing. Unbeknownst to anyone at the time, these parties formed the basis of Hip Hop culture, a culture that would eventually include MCing, breakdancing, DJing and graffiti tagging. Hip Hop moved swiftly from this point forward, transforming practically overnight into different variations, all the while maintaining and promoting its core concepts of positivity, community and self-expression.

Today, what began as a humble form of expression in backyard parties and dancehalls is now a multi-million dollar industry. Its principal artists have amassed the majority of their fortunes not with their music, but with the products they attach their names to. Everything from energy drinks to cologne is out there for brand hungry consumers. A 2011 report by Forbes magazine found that rap mogul P.Diddy's net worth stands at \$475 million, with Jay-Z in a not too distant second place at \$450 million.

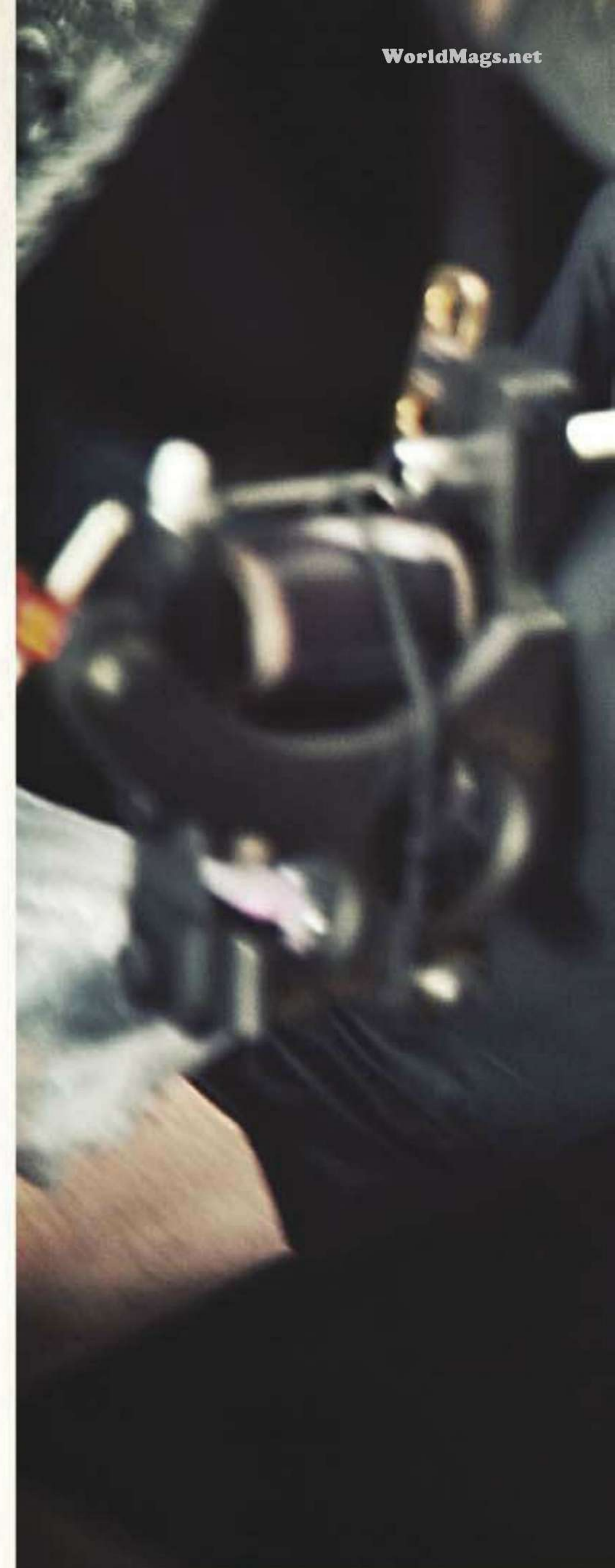
Hip Hop's co-opting can be taken as a valuable lesson for the tattoo industry or as incentive to follow in its footsteps.

Similarities between the two art forms are surprisingly close. First and foremost, tattoo also comes from humble beginnings intended to help a small group of outcasts and social misfits find their niche, sometimes turning them away from a life of crime, other times simply allowing them to recognise their talent in an art form that so few understood. A 2006 study by the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology found that 1/4 of American adults aged 18-50 have a tattoo, while the BBC now states

IF REALITY TV HAS PLAYED A ROLE IN INCREASING THIS POPULARITY, THEN IT CAN'T PLEAD IGNORANCE ON ANY NEGATIVE INFLUENCE IT HAS ALSO HAD

that 1/3 of British adults have been inked. Celebrities flaunt their tattoos to the media who duly eat it up; reality TV suggests that anyone with a television can instantly understand what the tattoo industry is all about; and even British Prime Minister David Cameron's wife, Samantha, is tattooed. For some, this inclusion in everyday regular life is one of the greatest things that has ever happened to tattoo. For others, mainstream success sounds a warning alarm. Is tattoo officially cracked wide open? Is there anything left to salvage?

Dating back as far as 4,000 years, tattoo's success certainly didn't occur overnight. Its origins were in cultural traditions and rites of passage, but by the 19th century, one country's cultural traditions became another country's status symbol. Japan had opened up to wealthy Western tourists who soon discovered traditional Japanese tattoo. Eager for something exotic and new, these vacationing Westerners began getting small, expensive tattoos from Japanese artists, which were flaunted as status symbols upon their





return to Europe and America. By the commencement of World War I, the appeal of tattoo began to find its way to enlisted soldiers. Slowly, what had originally been an exclusive club of the tattooed wealthy elite was now putting down roots amongst the working class.

Naturally, the early tattooists did

not face the same issues of media as their modern counterparts do. This is not to suggest that publicity did not exist, though it was hardly at the level it currently is today. One of the first tattooists to feel outright disdain for the spotlight was the legendary American tattoo pioneer Norman K. "Sailor Jerry" Collins. To suggest that Collins was as rough and tumble of a bastard as the old school industry he helped to form is an understatement. Collins was old school tattoo through and through, from his earliest days tattooing in the bustling mob run neighbourhood of Chicago's South State Street.

By the time the Americans joined World War II, Collins was already settled in the midst of Honolulu's

Chinatown, in the sleazy Hotel Street district where soldiers indulged in drugs, drinks, sex, gambling and of course, tattoos. It was a world completely different than that which the regular citizenry understood or ever experienced and yet at the same time, it was as close to mainstream as Sailor Jerry would ever want to be.

These histories and steep lineage are exactly what reinforces the protective element in today's industry by artists who don't wish to see their art form succumb to the lure of corporate cash-ins and celebrity posturing. Tattoo has spent the vast majority of its lifespan thus far firmly removed from the spotlight – often not by its own desire and 🌸



Norbert Halasz, Skin Workshop Tattoo, Hungary



Scott Mustapic

as a result, it has learned to be completely independent of the need for the general public's acceptance. With what has practically been an overnight rise in tattoo's popularity, the longing by many within the industry for a return to the past is rapidly being buried by glam and glitz.

There are numerous theories as to when the spotlight really became fixated on tattoo, but it's arguable that American tattooist Lyle Tuttle's work on musicians like Janis Joplin and the Rolling Stones in the '60s and '70s had an impact on the celebrity culture that would play a major role in the art form's future. Regardless, the eventual celebrity love affair with tattoo was not enough to bring things to the current level of exposure. That would require a far more pervasive method, one by which millions could safely observe tattoo from the comfort of their own homes.

Television's Miami Ink really set the standard for the tattoo reality TV programme, leading to London Ink, NY Ink and of course, most notoriously, LA Ink. With their slick

production values, cheeky editing and emphasis on daily dramas in and around the tattoo studio, tattoo reality programmes took the rebel image and scored big, diluting it just enough for family friendly viewing and securing a devoted fanbase. Unfortunately, these programmes are all too often a mere glimpse into the tattoo industry, with producers going more for the manufactured drama than actual substance. There's a rather strong air of image building here, on one hand erasing the negative stereotypes of tattoo, but replacing it instead with something far more fickle and dubious.

This sort of exposure to the tattoo industry has helped to create a definite boom in tattoo, but if reality TV has played a role in increasing this popularity, then it can't plead ignorance on any negative influence it has also had. The levels to which DIY tattoos have risen are yet to be measured, as no official figures currently exist. However, a recent article on the BBC news website insists that professional tattooists are increasingly being sought out to do cover up work on bungled amateur tattoo jobs. Add that to the fact that DIY tattoo kits are easily procured on the Internet for as little as £30, and the components of image, easy access and demand all mix for a problematic situation.

Modern society's need for instant gratification clearly does not mesh with the time honoured and

painstaking process that is tattoo. As any tattooist worth his or her salt can tell you, a tattoo is not a decision to be taken lightly. For the modern, media darling image of tattoo however, having to actually contemplate a tattoo is a rather annoying roadblock. In order to successfully navigate this hurdle, the tattoo removal industry is doing its damndest to innovate and create products that make tattoo removal as simple as removing a bandage. According to a 2007 article in the Smithsonian Magazine, a company called Freedom-2 has developed tattoo ink that can be removed with a single laser treatment. Freedom-2's CEO Martin Schmiege says, "The number one reason people don't get a tattoo is permanence. When you remove that issue, we believe there will be a natural growth in the number of people getting tattoos." Yet there's something soulless about tattoos that can be gotten and removed on a whim, without so much as a thought regarding the time and effort that the artist put into it. This relegates tattoo's place as an ancient art form to a mere passing whim, eradicating the value of its intimacy and permanency while disregarding the inherent commitment involved in the process.

It would seem that in this situation, where an industry's soul is at stake, that guidance could be found in the veterans of tattoo. In many cases, this can still be true, but in the case of Ed Hardy, his rise to international

MODERN SOCIETY'S NEED FOR INSTANT GRATIFICATION CLEARLY DOES NOT MESH WITH THE TIME HONoured AND PAINSTAKING PROCESS THAT IS TATTOO. AS ANY TATTOOIST WORTH HIS OR HER SALT CAN TELL YOU, A TATTOO IS NOT A DECISION TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY

stardom is perhaps one of the best examples of tattoo going from humble beginnings to mainstream glam. Hardy's beginnings were indeed at the basis of an industry that was still far from being socially acceptable. Mentored by an aging Sailor Jerry, Hardy contends in Erich Weiss' 2008 documentary, *Hori Smoku Sailor Jerry*, that the "dark side" which tattoo embodied in the very early days of American tattoo was all "part of the fun of it". Oddly enough, if Hardy himself contends that the dark side of this industry was part of the fun, why then did he help to shift its focus to the exact opposite of that?

As of April 27, 2011 Hardy has sold 85% of the master license for the Ed Hardy brand to Inconix Brand Group for \$55 million dollars. The remaining 15% of the company still belongs to Hardy. Iconix expects the brand to generate \$15-16 million a year in royalty payments. Hardy's sole connection to his clothing and product lines is the licensing of his designs to French designer Christian Audigier, who then places them on apparel and everything from shirts, to hats, to computer cases and even

condoms. Hardy's transference of tattoo into a commodity is a complete 180 for someone who once held the legends of tattoo and the process itself in such high esteem. If these are the examples that young, up and coming tattooists have to look up to, the prospects for an industry that chases more than money and glamour is indeed grim.

Despite all this negativity however, there is without a doubt a very dedicated and hardworking core in this industry, doing everything it can to keep tattoo on the level. The battles they face are steep, and in addition to first and foremost maintaining focus on their work, there's the additional concept of image constantly rearing its head, confusing the matter. Speaking in *Hori Smoku Sailor Jerry*, tattooist Keith Underwood said: "... what kind of always made me love tattooing was that sort of criminal aspect, you know, like all the being real legitimate now is not... I don't necessarily think a great thing, you

know, I mean, I really like the rough and tumble tattoo shop image..."

This is of course, completely understandable. The longing for a previous time is only natural given what often feels like corruptive forces at work within the industry. It's a continuous desire to rebel against the accepted notions of status quo. But is this fascination and longing for image any better if it is applied to the past rather than the present? Whether it's a flashy image or a rough and tumble one, shouldn't it all be about more than just an image? Shouldn't the integrity and commitment of an artist be enough to keep the heart of this industry intact?

In 2008, tattooist Johnny Anderson was denied the right to open a tattoo studio in Hermosa Beach, California on the basis that the city does not permit tattoo studios within its limits. Anderson sued, arguing that his First Amendment rights to exercise artistic expression were being denied. He lost the first case, then appealed the

THERE IS WITHOUT A DOUBT A VERY DEDICATED AND HARDWORKING CORE IN THIS INDUSTRY, DOING EVERYTHING IT CAN TO KEEP TATTOO ON THE LEVEL

Sasa Aleksandar, Orca Sun Tattoo Studio, Croatia



verdict to a federal appeals court, where in September of 2010 he won and was awarded the right to open his studio. This wasn't done for publicity, nor was it done for an image. These were the acts of an artist demanding the right to operate a business in order to perform the art form that he loves and to make a living doing it. It's hard to imagine a purer example of what tattoo could mean to someone. Acts such as these push the industry forward, but not toward the spotlight. People like Johnny Anderson are fighting the battles that no reality TV star will ever have to fight. And Anderson is just one of many artists quietly dealing with more day-to-day reality than any reality TV programme could ever hope to experience.

In addition to this, the industry is also currently in a position in which it can rework the mainstream success of tattoo to its own advantage. The city of Toronto, Canada recently made news when its health department decided that it would begin regulating its tattoo industry. For the first time ever, Toronto's tattooists will require

a license and their shop's existence will be kept on the books for yearly inspections. In the UK, registering studios with the environmental health department as well as yearly inspections are all par for the course, but many countries, provinces and states still have no regulation. Though sometimes costly, regulation can only benefit the industry, eliminating shady, corner cutting shops. If image is indeed an important aspect of tattoo, then the image of tattoo studios as clean and responsible places of business surely isn't a bad thing. Concern over the rise in DIY tattooing has lead British MP, Madeleine Moon, to campaign for tougher controls on DIY tattoo kits purchased over the Internet. If the mainstream is listening, isn't it the tattoo community's responsibility to tell them what's wrong? The more voices raised in concern over issues that affect them, the more likely that things will change. Certainly the bandwagon jumpers and corporate vultures are not about to do anything more substantial for the industry than

commission another reality TV show or link a product tie-in of some sort, and there will always be those artists who claim to care about tattoo while doing everything within their power to cash in. There's no getting around these truths, but the sooner that the tattoo community can abandon the concern over image in favour of a focus on the art form and its processes (and many tattooists already do this, make no mistake about it), the less marketable it will be to those whose number one concern is a cash grab.

Yes, the heyday of Sailor Jerry and others like him produced an underground subculture that was perceived of as dangerous and rough. The lessons that time period taught can be salvaged, but unfortunately not its zeitgeist. As filmmaker Woody Allen recently said when asked if he would prefer to live in the '20s, when life was simpler: "It's a big trap to think living in an earlier time would be better.

TODAY'S ADVANCEMENTS IN THE INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE CAN'T BE IGNORED AND EMBRACING THESE ADVANCEMENTS DOES NOT HAVE TO MEAN SELLING OUT.



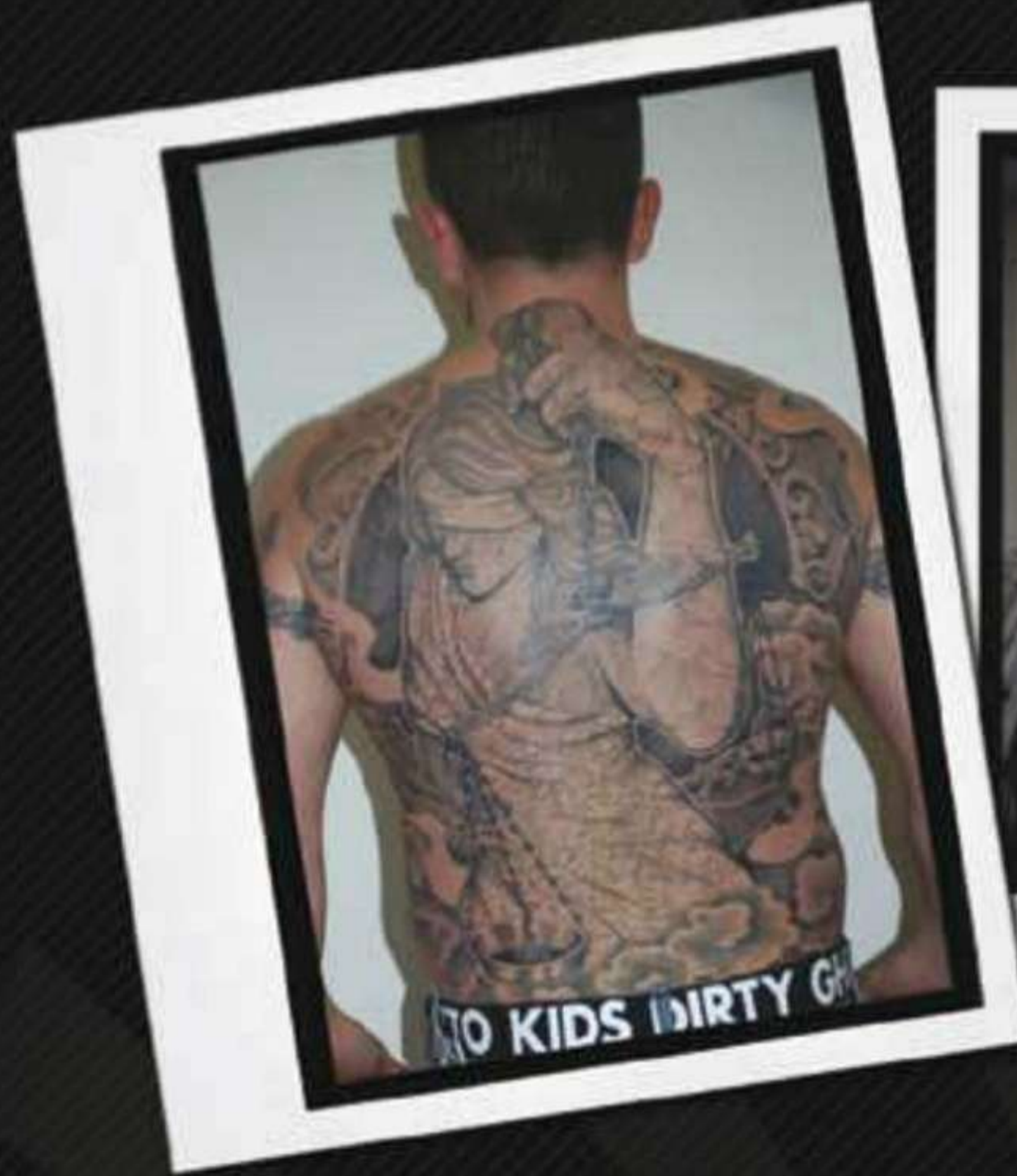
Norbert Halasz, Skin Workshop Tattoo, Hungary



You only extrapolate the nice things." Today's advancements in the industry as a whole can't be ignored and embracing these advancements does not have to mean selling out. Whether chasing a glamorous or rough and tumble image, the tendency to be caught up in either concept is both a disservice and a distraction. Beneath all the glitz and glam of this new industry, there is still an old, beaten up and crotchety heart. It's there for whomever wants it and as absent as it needs to be toward the undeserving. It may take months or even years, but when the bandwagon finally fills up and breaks down, the true core of this industry will still be there plugging away, asking for nothing in return but the respect its traditions rightly deserve. 🐉

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THE MECHANIC

Realism specialist David Corden was a ventilation engineer for 15 years before taking up the needle under the supervision of Jim Gambell at Ritual Art Tattoo; and for most of that time his inner artist had lain dormant, until an offer from his future boss changed everything...



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Russ Thorne David Corden

When is a tattoo artist not a tattoo artist? When he's a ventilation engineer, of course. Don't worry, this isn't an attempt at humour or a demented bit of pseudo-science where needles are essential for 'aerating the body' – it's biography.

"Nine years ago I took a design I had done myself to Jim to have it tattooed on my arm," David explains. "During the course of getting the tattoo done we realised we had a lot in common and shared a lot of the same likes and dislikes artistically. After the tattoo was complete Jim asked me to bring in my portfolio."

Sounds simple, right? Not quite. David did indeed take in his portfolio, but it took him a little while. Four years, to be exact. "I thought his interest was purely artistic," he says, "I had no idea his intentions were

to offer me a job." But by chance Jim was tattooing David's cousin, his name came up and the request to see the portfolio was made again. "Call it fate or whatever, I was off the day my cousin called to say 'chuck some work in a portfolio and come down'." By the end of the day, he'd been offered the apprenticeship. Does he regret the wait? "No. I don't think the timing was right for either of us back then. But once I'd got my first tattoo, like a lot of people, I started paying attention to everyone else's ink. I started to pick up tattoo magazines

and think 'bloody hell, I didn't know you could do that!' So when the job offer came along four years later I realised what an opportunity it was."

Once he'd been given that opportunity he jumped to it and started work at Ritual Art. It was an old school apprenticeship – months of "turning up every day and doing the grips, making the lunches and the tea and so on, just watching Jim work and asking lots of questions" – but he was more than happy to take his time. "Being older (he was 34) I knew how serious it was to put

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN QUICK TO TRY NEW MACHINES OR NEW NEEDLES WHEN THEY COME ALONG, EVEN IF I'M COMFORTABLE WITH THE SETUP I ALREADY HAVE. YOU SHOULD NEVER BE CLOSED TO TRYING NEW THINGS BECAUSE MAYBE ONE OF THOSE THINGS IS ALL THAT'S STANDING IN THE WAY OF YOU BECOMING A GREAT ARTIST

needles and ink into people's skin. I wanted my first tattoos to be good, and I thought if I knew how the machines worked and how to put the ink in I'd do as well as I could."

Ritual Art's focus is on custom work and he was encouraged to steer clear of flash; so what did he use for inspiration in the early days? "In the beginning it was Robert Hernandez's work," he says. "Up until seeing his art I hadn't realized just what was possible with a tattoo machine. He's probably still my biggest hero today."

With the engineering tools safely gathering dust, David could focus on developing his signature style of inkwork. He's all about the realism, and always will be – "it's all I've ever wanted to do and I can't imagine it ever changing." As for honing his technique and improving as an artist,





the steady stream of customers at the studio soon saw to that, and he tightened everything up with constant repetition as well as keeping an open mind. "I've always been quick to try new machines or new needles when they come along, even if I'm comfortable with the setup I already have. You should never be closed to trying new things because maybe one of those things is all that's standing in the way of you becoming a great artist."

As time has passed, has he discovered any quirks to the way he works? Some artists prefer a brutal heavy metal soundtrack, for example, while others like things a little more mellow. "There's always music on in the studio so that if a client is shy, they don't feel compelled to talk,"

he says. "Having said that, I'm very sociable and love to spend the day talking and having a laugh with my clients." A self-

confessed "pretty slow worker", it's probably helpful to be a people person while the time ticks by; his reputation for a gentle touch when tattooing also comes in handy. It must work: "Some great friends have initially started out as clients!"

KEEPING IT REAL

So how does he like to work when it comes to starting a new piece? "I quite often find that people bring in a very exact image that they would like me to work from, anything from a portrait to a pic of a family pet," he says. "Although sometimes they'll bring me several images to give me a feel of where they would like the design to go and they leave me to come up with something original for them. I'm happy to work either way." He does have an in-built quality control standard – once an engineer, always an engineer – that means he'll turn clients away if the images they provide are in bad taste, or "are of such low quality that I can't do anything worthy of being a tattoo from it." This doesn't mean he'll 🍌

**THE FIRST TATTOO**

David did his first inkwork on his cousin, who kindly volunteered his skin. "A few days before we did it he said he wanted it to be a portrait of Jack Nicholson in 'The Shining'. I thought, 'you wanker!'" he laughs, "but alright then, let's go." It came out better than I expected. "But it turned out my cousin had very good skin and I was lucky; my next three or four were a nightmare!" Although he'd always drawn portraits, David hadn't worked on anything for several years before he started tattooing. "I knew I was wasting a talent, but I didn't know what to do with it. I never thought it would be tattooing, but now of course it's a credible art form and it's getting better all the time."

(Check out David's Facebook profile to see his first tattoo. It's in the 'portraits' section, and unbelievably good for a first attempt.)



IF YOU JUST COME INTO US BECAUSE YOU WANT A NEW TATTOO BUT HAVE NO IDEA OF WHAT YOU WANT THEN YOU'LL BE TURNED AWAY.

unceremoniously hoof them out the door, of course – he'll usually recommend an artist who he feels is better equipped for the job in hand.

If turning away work sounds like a luxury... well, it is, and he acknowledges this. "We do have the luxury of being busy, so we never have to take on any work that we're not passionate about doing. This may not mean that your idea is necessarily a bad one," he adds, diplomatically, "it could simply mean that in this instance we're not the right artists for you."

Ideas that work are vital if you want a tattoo from David and his colleagues. If you're going to see them you can expect a few things – a nicely lit studio, a relaxing atmosphere – but you should also expect to do some research before you arrive. "We do ask that clients do their homework before coming in to see us," says David. "If you just come into us because you want a new

tattoo but have no idea of what you want then you'll be turned away."

You get full marks for your homework if you bring plenty of reference material that will let David come up with the right design for you. What you don't like can be just as helpful as what you do, he says: "If people are very clear about what they don't want, we sometimes ask for examples to prevent any wasted time during the design process." David's a relaxed chap to talk to, but he and the Ritual Art Tattoo team take their art seriously, so if a client comes in with an idea deemed 'stupid', they can expect to be told about it. "We want to put everlasting artwork on skin, not jokes that are funny for five minutes and regretted for years," David explains. "But by the same token if someone has an idea that's on the right tracks that we feel could be developed into something far better, we'll always say so."





THE REAL THING

Which leads us to the slightly murky question of what 'something far better' might be – what does make a really great tattoo? What are the key ingredients? “To come up with an idea that's truly original is seemingly impossible nowadays,” says David, “or you can have a great idea but can ruin the tattoo with a poor understanding of the human anatomy. A tattoo has to fit, flow and compliment the body part it's on.” It's like getting your outfit wrong, he explains – the wrong outfit on the wrong person won't look flattering, and nor will an otherwise great tattoo that's been badly positioned. It will lose its impact. “For me, the best tattoos are those that make the wearer look better. Something that doesn't just fit the body but actually enhances it. It doesn't matter if it's colour or black and grey, it just has to be something with that wow factor. It's not always something you can quantify but you know it when you see it.”

Working in the weird, unquantifiable twilight zone that is artistic taste has its creative freedoms, but also its downsides when clients don't take well to having their designs turned

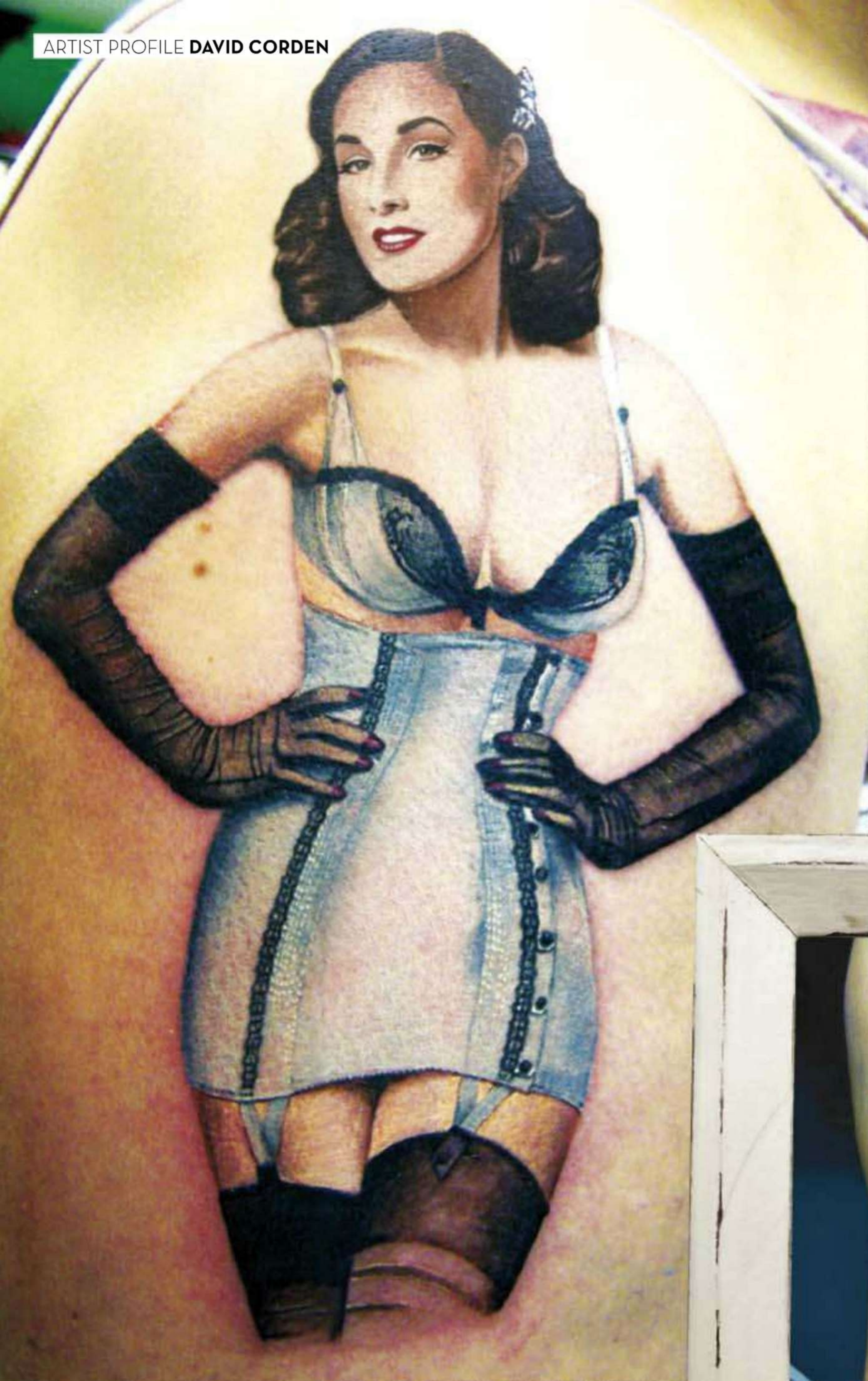


THE RITUAL ART TATTOO EXPERIENCE

“Our studio has a very clean and modern look. It's all stainless steel and natural wood with bright lights in each work station. It's very spacious, so there's no feeling of being cramped which, I think, helps both clients and staff feel relaxed. It's very important to us that the client feels they matter; we don't want anyone to think that they're just that day's money.”

away. “One of my biggest pet hates is when someone brings in a design and thinks we're legally bound to do it as tattoo artists,” says David of these occasional conflicts, “and who are abusive when we turn them down.” And then there are those who break the 'good tattoo not cheap/cheap tattoo not good' rule with the error of haggling over price (for shame!) – “the only thing that will achieve is pushing the price up and making their tattoo more painful. FACT. Haha!” 🌻





Presumably he doesn't try to beat artists down on price when he gets new work done himself, then... and when he does go under the needle, it's with artists whose style is very different to his own. "I want tattoos from people that I admire, because of the way their minds work; that is, differently to mine," he says. "I don't see myself as very creative – rightly or wrongly – I just copy things. What others do amazes me because of their ability to create something out of nothing."

Getting a new piece also changes his own tattooing. "Having new work done gives you an appreciation of what you're doing," he says. It also

THE ARTIST'S ARTISTS

Who does David rate at the moment? "Damn... the list is endless. Internationally the artists that I follow most closely are Elvin Yong, Teneile Napoli and Jamie MacKay. On the British scene Jason Butcher and Jo Harrison are still at the forefront but I also follow the work of Matt 'Oddboy' Barratt-Jones, Leah Moule and Emma Kierzek. "But the person whose work blows me away at the moment is Markus Lenhard. The way his designs fit the body and the amount of depth to his work is astonishing. I'm very jealous of his talent."

WE JUST DRAW ON PEOPLE, AND IT'S WICKED; WHAT'S NOT TO LOVE? I'M HAPPY EVERY DAY!

helps him remember that some people are coming to him for their first tattoos, "and I don't think that's a bad thing."

With a solid work ethic he ascribes to his years spent working on building sites, David Corden is clearly a man who loves the unexpected path his career has taken. He's at the studio an hour early every day and is always happy to chat to clients

and other artists, trying to improve his tattooing. It goes to show that patience – all four years of it – can be a virtue, and it's safe to say he's happy with the way things have turned out. "It comes down to the fact that we draw pictures and get paid very well to do it," he laughs, almost in disbelief. "We just draw on people, and it's wicked; what's not to love? I'm happy every day!"

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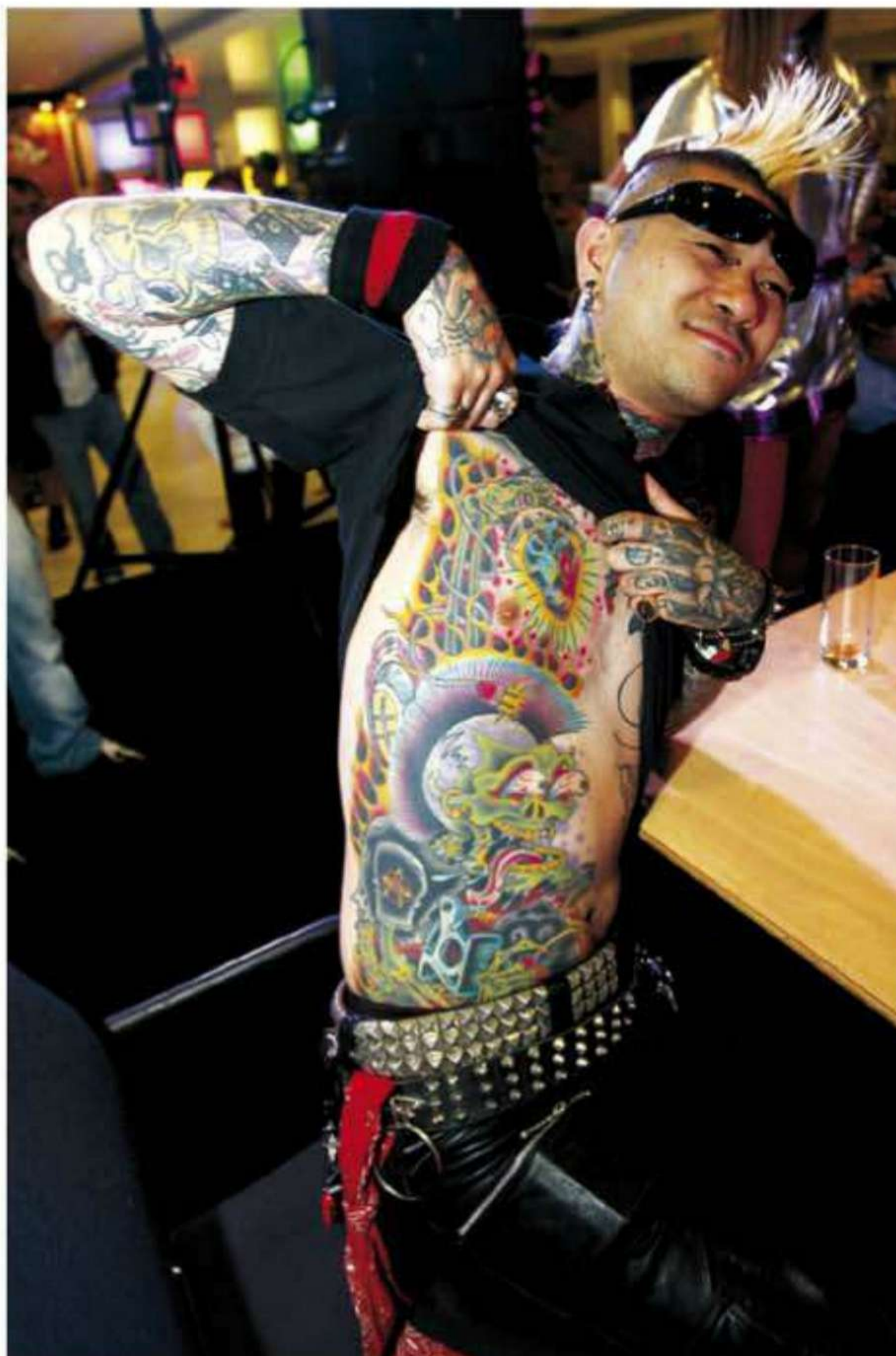


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Photography & Design: Kristen Corona
Model: Miss Sarah Christine

CAFE SOCIETY..

There are many tattoo conventions in The Netherlands but all of them fade in the light of The International Amsterdam Tattoo Convention



The event, with its three days, is slightly longer than we're used to. Most of the tattoo expos are one-day events with few lasting for the whole weekend. One of the organizers Marten Mulder tells us that the duration of the event is very important for this convention. We chose deliberately for three days because the audience and most importantly the artists come from all around the world. The length of the event makes it worthwhile for international artists to come. It's not the only thing that attracts foreign visitors, Mulder says, "The international atmosphere is important too and lets not forget about the city itself with its coffee shops and red light district. You can't find it any where else in the world. We are very proud that famous artists keep on coming back to Amsterdam and its amazing atmosphere. They return thanks to the experience that we gained throughout the years".

The organization of this event took almost a year. It's not very surprising when you look at the event's busy program. It is an extremely varied event with artists from as far apart as Russia and Argentina. The booths are spread onto two floors and different rooms, which at first is slightly confusing, but thanks to many maps displayed and program booklets everything becomes clear.

The slogan of this year's expo is 'The World and Beyond', but the cosmic theme is nowhere to be found. The artists are not dressed up nor are the performances linked

THOSE FAMOUS RED LIGHTS

De Wallen, also known as Walletpjes or Rosse Buurt, is a designated area for legalised prostitution and is Amsterdam's largest and most well known red light district. This neighborhood has become a famous tourist attraction. It consists of a network of roads and alleys containing several hundred small, one-room apartments rented by 'sex workers' who offer their services from behind a window or glass door, typically illuminated with red lights. Probably not the greatest of things for a city to be famous for, but better than not being famous for anything at all...

THE DUTCH CAPITAL IS WELL-KNOWN FOR ITS INFAMOUS COFFEE SHOPS AND RED LIGHT DISTRICT, BUT THE TATTOO CONVENTION JUSTIFIABLY SHOWED THE ARTISTIC AND PROFESSIONAL SIDES OF THE CITY

to the celestial, even though the yearly Halloween convention in Purmerend proves that it can be done. The tattooers in Amsterdam are mainly concentrated on their own illustrations. Many of them have weekend specials, often with Amsterdam themes. The ready-made drawings are, however, not very popular and since many of the artists still look for clients, visitors can get a last minute custom work appointment. Most artists are keen to reserve some time later on the weekend too. This easy-going vibe makes this the perfect event to

walk from booth to booth and browse through the portfolios of the many international artists, before choosing one.

The most eye-catching and awaited individual on the convention is Aman Durga Sipatiti. The 38-year-old artist is visiting the convention in Amsterdam for the second time. His presence is especially notable because he hardly ever shows his face outside his parlour. "I visit just a few conventions across the world. I made an appearance at the Sydney Tattoo Convention twice and other than that just Melbourne Tattoo Convention, Ireland Traditional Tattoo Festival and Tattoo Expo in Indonesia." we hear from the mysterious artist. He is the founder of Durga Tattoo in Jakarta,

Indonesia and is now in Europe for two months. Besides the Netherlands he will also be traveling to Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, Germany and Poland. "I wish we had reserved two years for this trip! We came to Europe to practice the traditional hand tapping only. We will be doing a lot of Mentawai and Dayak Borneo tribals, but also some custom artworks highly influenced by Indonesian tribes."

The biggest celebrities of the convention are Dan Gold and Phill Kyle: "The Amsterdam Tattoo Convention is certainly one of the top events in my tattoo agenda. 🙌"



Tattooer at work



WorldMags.net

Shin from Sabado, Eccentric Super Tattoo, Nagoya, Japan



Xandy Bee
bodypainted by Monique, Body Art



Tattooer at work



Tattooer at work



Mick by Gerrit from Tattoomania, Apeldoorn, Holland



Luc by Sascha
from Dragon Tattoo, Eindhoven, Holland



Vatea Dance Group



René by Ron Rijks
from Alkmaar & Remy
Deinum, Hoorn, Holland



Performance Hannya door SANxxxx



Janya by Victor Policheri from VIP Tattoo, Seattle



Lyz by Gerrit from Tattomania, Apeldoorn, Holland



Veronica by Miquel Bohiques from V Tattoo, Valencia, Spain



Lizandra by Diogo Quadro from Casa de Leoes, Porto Allegre, Brazil



I WISH WE HAD RESERVED TWO YEARS FOR THIS TRIP! WE CAME TO EUROPE TO PRACTICE THE TRADITIONAL HAND TAPPING ONLY. DURGA

Many conventions call themselves international, but in Amsterdam they really mean it! Tattoo artists come from every side of the world for this weekend," Dan Gold tells us. In Amsterdam he is representing his 13 Ink Tattoo Studio, whilst Phill Kyle came with Magnum Opus Tattoo.

During the three days of the convention the visitors saw everything that is linked to the tattoo lifestyle. A large amount of styles were represented this year, from traditional, maori tribals to old school sailor tattoos. The visitors were proudly showing their pieces too, be it cartoon characters, realistic portraits

of loved ones and celebrities, full body suits or colourful painting-like back pieces.

The Dutch capital is well-known for its infamous coffee shops and red light district, but the tattoo convention justifiably showed the artistic and professional sides of the city. Of course the Amsterdam party spirit is well represented at the after party where the artists can finally give in to the free drinks and dance while the DJ is spinning some records. Amsterdam is heavily influenced by different cultures and it's beautiful to see all these influences come together at the convention. People of all skin colours and backgrounds gathered together sharing their love for body art. The International Amsterdam Tattoo Convention proves once again that the human skin is a perfect canvas for tattoo art. 🐞

THE WINNERS

Best of Saturday

Riet - Sir Lexi Rex, Spidermonkey Tattoos, Olympia, USA

Best of Sunday

Cyro - Ueo, Ueo Tattoo, Como, Italy

Best of Show/Best Black and Grey Large

Veronica - Miquel Bohiques, V Tattoo, Valencia, Spain

Best Color Big

Luc - Sascha, Dragon Tattoo, Eindhoven, Holland

Best Black and Grey Small

Hans - José Lopez, Lowrider Tattoo Studios, USA

Best Color Small

Lyz - Gerrit, Tattomania, Apeldoorn, Holland

2nd Color Big

Janya - Victor Policheri, Vip Tattoo, Seattle, USA

2nd Black and Grey Small

Giorgio - Brent McCown, Tattoo Tatau, New-Zealand

2nd Color Small

Rosa - Thanassis, Erevos Creations, Greece

3rd Black and Grey Large

Stanislav - Bartosz Panas, Caffeine Tattoo, Warsaw, Poland

3rd Color Big

Megan - Sir Lexi Rex, Spidermonkey Tattoos, Olympia, USA

3rd Black and Grey Small

Julien - Brent McCown, Tattoo Tatau, New-Zealand

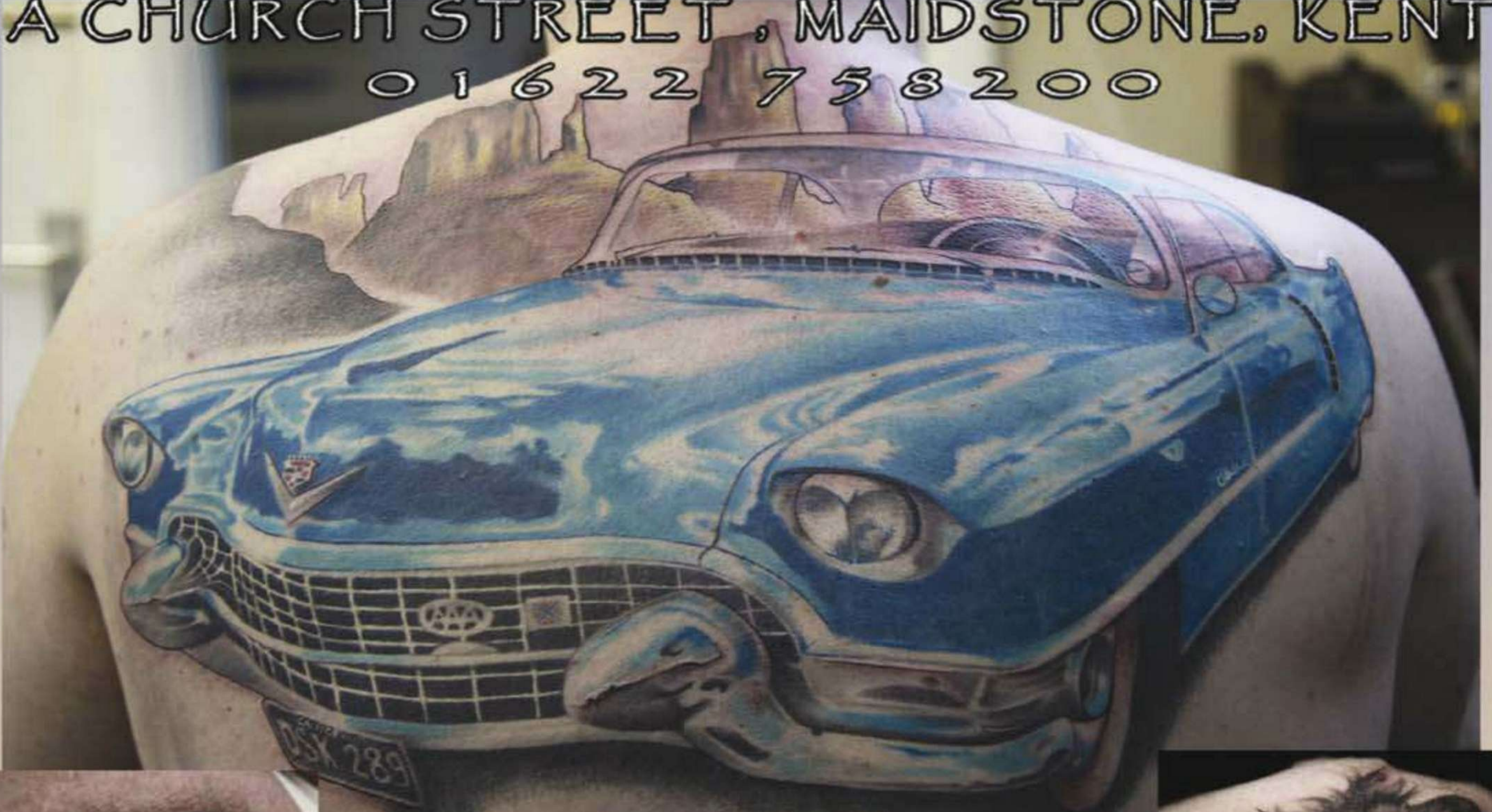
3rd Color Small

Wesley - Johnny, Dragon Tattoo, Eindhoven, Holland

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THE GLOVES ARE OFF!

With all the tattoo related products available to the 'consumer' these days, it is always a moment of pure joy when you come across something that is original and fresh. Recently, I had one of these moments when I first saw the art of Ellen Greene. Ellen falls into the category of collector and lover of tattoo iconography, rather than tattoo artist, and her work is heavily inspired by the tattoo world, specifically the flash of the old school tattooists



Ellen was born and raised in Lawrence, Kansas. "A town," she says, "full of contradictions. Frat boys, Christian evangelists, ex-hippie hobos, gutter punks, artists and rock stars all called Lawrence their home. From tattoo culture and punk rock to new wave feminism, mysticism and fashion - each subculture carved deep aesthetic grooves into this red-headed misfit who understood that creating art could help me cope with a world wrecked with anxiety."

After graduating from the Kansas City Art Institute, Ellen set off for Chicago and it is from here that she now runs her art studio. When you look at Ellen's artwork, it is easy to see her influences and passion in life; tattoos. "Universally recognised iconic imagery forms the foundation of traditional tattoo art. No one needs to explain what a heart or a star means. These symbols have been drawn the world over and speak deeply to humans throughout civilization."

A POTTED HISTORY

According to some translations of Homer's *The Odyssey*, Laertes is described as wearing gloves while walking in his garden so as to avoid the brambles.

Other translations, however, insist that Laertes pulled his long sleeves over his hands. Herodotus, in *The History of Herodotus* (440 BC), tells how Leotychides was incriminated by a glove full of silver that he received as a bribe.

Traditional American tattoos are ultimately connected to sailor culture and acted as talismans within that culture. Clipper ships ensured a safe homeward journey, a Hula girl was for your time in Hawaii and sparrows were put on your chest when you had completed so many miles at sea. The power of the tattoo rested in their symbolic function more



than their fashion or aesthetic. Tattoos are an essential expression of our humanity, reminding us of our unique and universal feelings of love, fear, sadness, defiance, desire and joy that we all experience in our lives.”

But as with all truly original artists, Ellen likes to take stereotypical images and twists them to reflect changing societies or to bring out deeper meanings that lie beneath them. “We project ideals of masculinity upon the soldier. He should be tough, he should be brave and he should be handsome. He is our

archetype of a hero. These masculine ideals are reflected in the macho images used in military tattoos. I am particularly intrigued by the sailor tattoos. Clipper ships stand with an erect mast on a courageous voyage home. The bald eagle, with its talons spread, is an aggressive predator. The stars and stripes, symbolising a homeland where a sweetheart waits piously until her hero comes home. These are ideals I look to twist and distort in a search for an authentic voice. Just as I use terms like ‘slut’ or ‘whore’ over aggressively feminine pin-ups, I use terms like ‘faggot’ or ‘sissy’ in banners with images of

NO ONE NEEDS TO EXPLAIN WHAT A HEART OR A STAR MEANS. THESE SYMBOLS HAVE BEEN DRAWN THE WORLD OVER AND SPEAK DEEPLY TO HUMANS THROUGHOUT CIVILIZATION

sailors and boxer boys with rosy lips and cheeks.

“This is not shock for shock's sake. It's about the way images and words are used to control people's sexual expression and create cultural gender norms. These are the archetypes of male and female in our culture that I look to undermine and create anew!

“I'm fascinated by building on an older style, like the pin-up, who many say was perfected by Sailor Jerry, who mixed skull, dagger and snake motifs together with a busty beauty. He combined both masculine and feminine icons to create pin-ups that were bordering on dangerous. ‘Man's

Ruin' was a common banner placed across an ample butt. I like to push this hybrid pin-up one step further and draw deeper, darker, more overtly sexual figures evoking a dark goddess figure who are life-givers and life-destroyers, not merely sexual toys.

"The punk rock feminism of the Riot Grrrls was an early influence on me. There exists an aggression and anger in my pin-ups that reflects these

principles, as well as from my own personal experiences. I was such a shy and soft-spoken 'good' girl reared on Midwestern '80s pop culture. But what I was drawn to as an adolescent; the freak scene, the art kids, the queers and losers; put me on the outside of 'normal' in my Kansas hometown. The music and DIY aesthetics of bands like Hole, Bikini Kill and The Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black, gave me courage to carry on. I still tap this vein of emotion when drawing my pin-ups. They dare you to call them a bitch!"

Ellen's latest creation to combine all these influences and

ideas, are her gloves. But they are not just gloves; they are brilliant pieces of art that catch your eye the minute you see them, forcing you to look at tattoo iconography in a completely new way. "My work explores the contrast between two opposing traditions. White gloves have long been known as an article of women's clothing, while the art of tattooing has been regarded as traditionally a male pursuit. The white gloves evoke a sense of purity and of formality, while the art of tattooing may suggest carnal sexuality and rebellion. The tension between the two helps define my personal aesthetic, as well as my original tattoo-inspired designs which adorn these vintage gloves.

"I bought my first pair of gloves purely out of a sensual longing. The leather

I'M FASCINATED BY BUILDING ON AN OLDER STYLE, LIKE THE PIN-UP, WHO MANY SAY WAS PERFECTED BY SAILOR JERRY, WHO MIXED SKULL, DAGGER AND SNAKE MOTIFS TOGETHER WITH A BUSTY BEAUTY.





I LIKE TO PUSH THIS HYBRID PIN-UP ONE STEP FURTHER AND DRAW DEEPER, DARKER MORE OVERTLY SEXUAL FIGURES EVOKING A DARK GODDESS FIGURE WHO ARE LIFE-GIVERS AND LIFE-DESTROYERS, NOT MERELY SEXUAL TOYS

was so buttery and smooth, a slight beige colour with only a faint indication that they had been worn. My imagination ran wild with all the people and things these gloves must have touched. These gloves, I knew, were worn for special

formal occasions like weddings, funerals and dances. Certainly these gloves were present at rituals tapping into the strongest human emotions.

"I didn't paint on the gloves immediately; they hung around my studio as odd objects often do. It was much later that I was overcome with an urge, not a thought or concept, but an urge, to paint on the gloves. I was immediately shocked and pleased by the way the image changed the gloves from a recognizably wearable item into something else. They transcended their objectivity; they spoke about the emotion that I felt was inside them when I first held the gloves.

"I see the gloves more as paintings than fashionable – they aren't wearable. They come beautifully

framed in a way that the gloves are not glued or pinned in, thus keeping the glove as an object intact. The frames are designed and fabricated by my husband, David. My studio is right above my husband's custom metal design shop so we get to collaborate on a lot of my projects. I do paint wearable gloves but they will all be very limited in their editions and the first ones will be available only through my solo show in September here in Chicago. The show is at Firecat Projects. Firecat is Tony Fitzpatrick's new gallery. Tony is a well-known artist who wanted to showcase new talent in what was once his storefront studio. He was the first one to really push me to do the gloves. I had always made them, but I felt they were kind of secondary to my paintings. Tony was the first one to say, 'You've got to make the gloves your focus – make MORE gloves!' And when Tony Fitzpatrick tells you to do something, it's good to listen.

"I have tattoos and love it when a tattoo artist digs my work but I define myself as a painter. Tattoos, history, folk art, Riot Grrrl, circus freak shows, fashion; these are all points of inspiration for me, with tattoos being the most obvious because I explore all these other

ideas, through the language of the tattoo imagery. I like the freedom of painting vs. doing tattoos on clients. In the paintings on gloves I can imagine a tattoo no one in their right mind would ever get, in a place that cannot be hidden – the hands. It's this tension between the formal fashion and the sexual deviant truths of tattoo imagery that really keeps me fascinated!

"People are often surprised by my work because I seem so 'nice'. But you know, it is very much an artistic expression and not who I am. That line gets so easily blurred! However my work does come from experience and personal internal work, so in that case I contradict myself! I am my art!"

Ellen's work is controversial and there is no doubt that it will offend some people, but they are beautiful works of art. And is it not the role of the artist to mix mediums, push boundaries and challenge how society looks at itself? Either way, love it or hate it, there is more to Ellen's work than shock value, there is a love and passion for tattoos and its history and iconography, and it is these values that keep her work fresh and original.

Ellen's show opens September 16, 2011 at Firecat Projects in Chicago.

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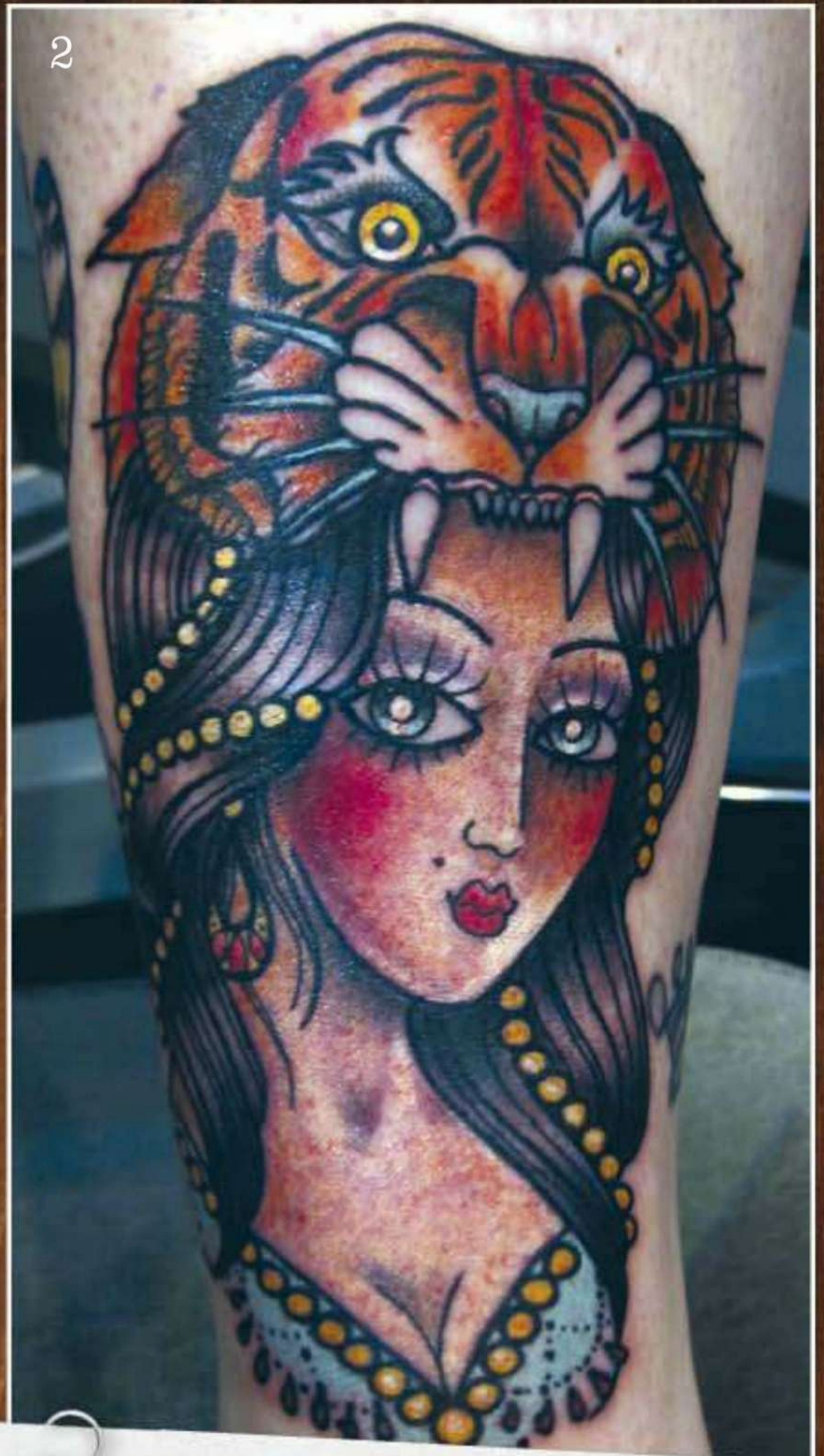
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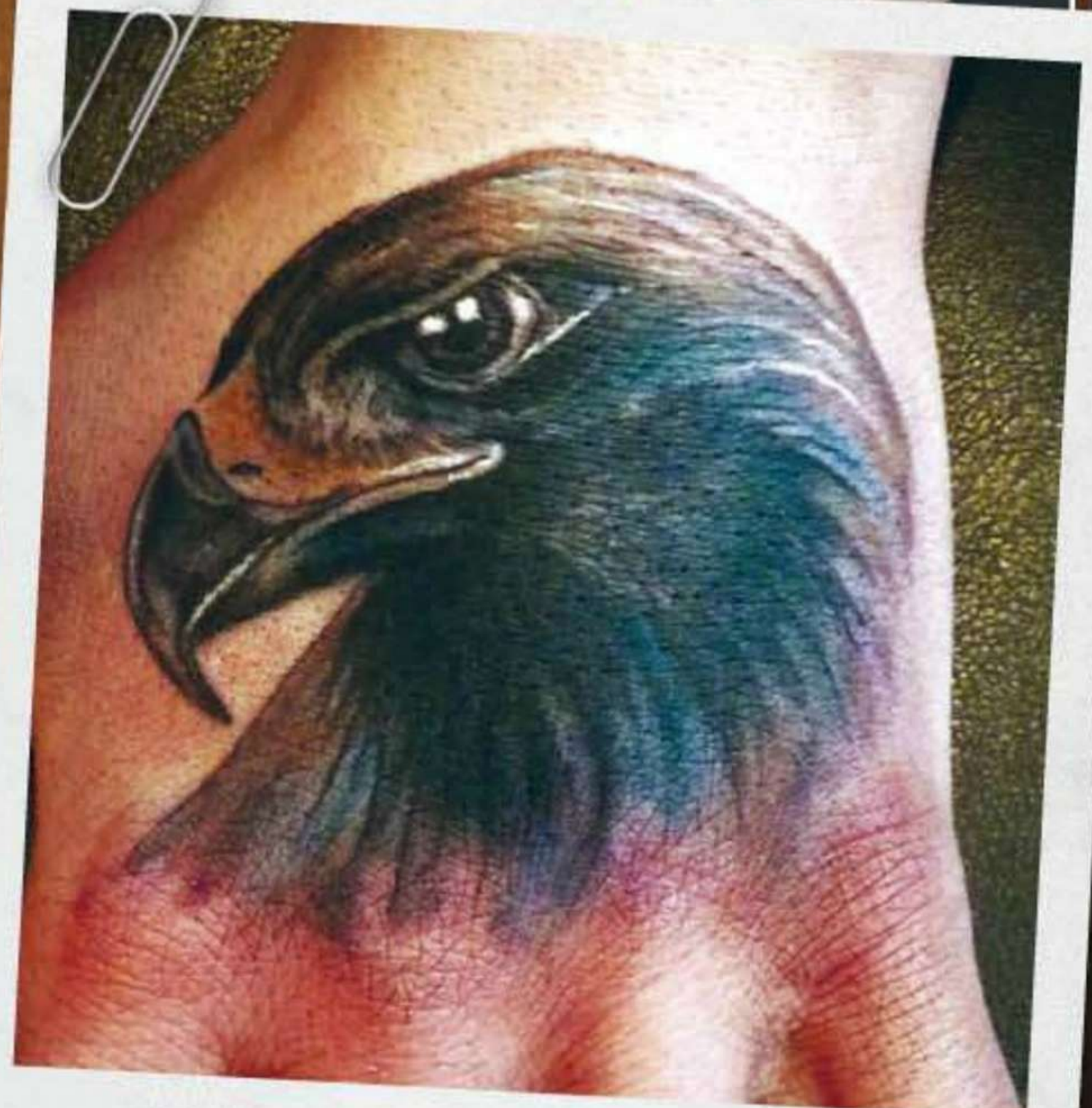
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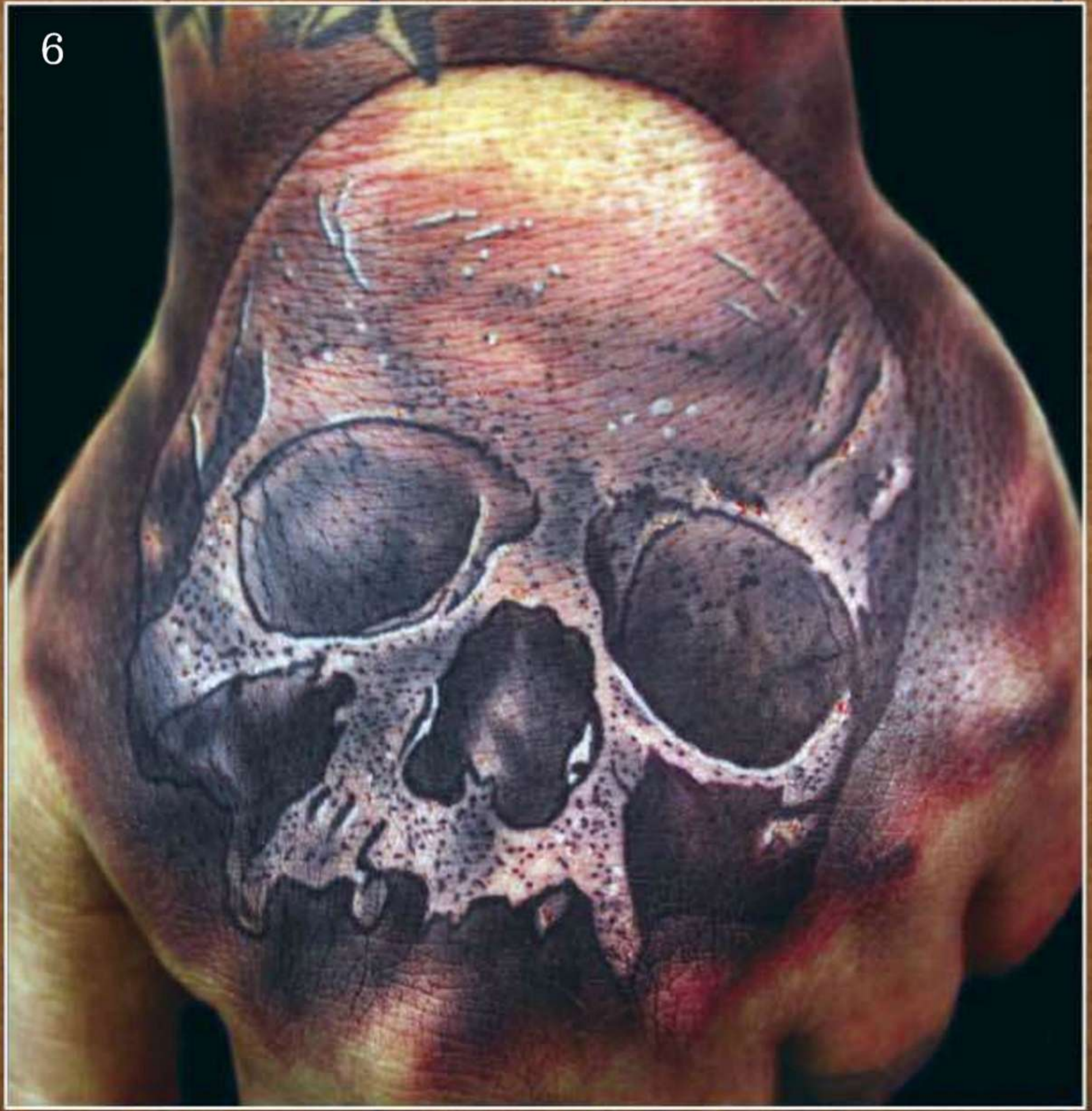


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Eric The Viking, Divine Canvas, London

- 1 Pinky Darling, Cosmic Tattoo
- 2 Rachel McCarthy, Modern Body Art, Birmingham
- 3 Daryl Gates, Diamond Jacks, Soho, London

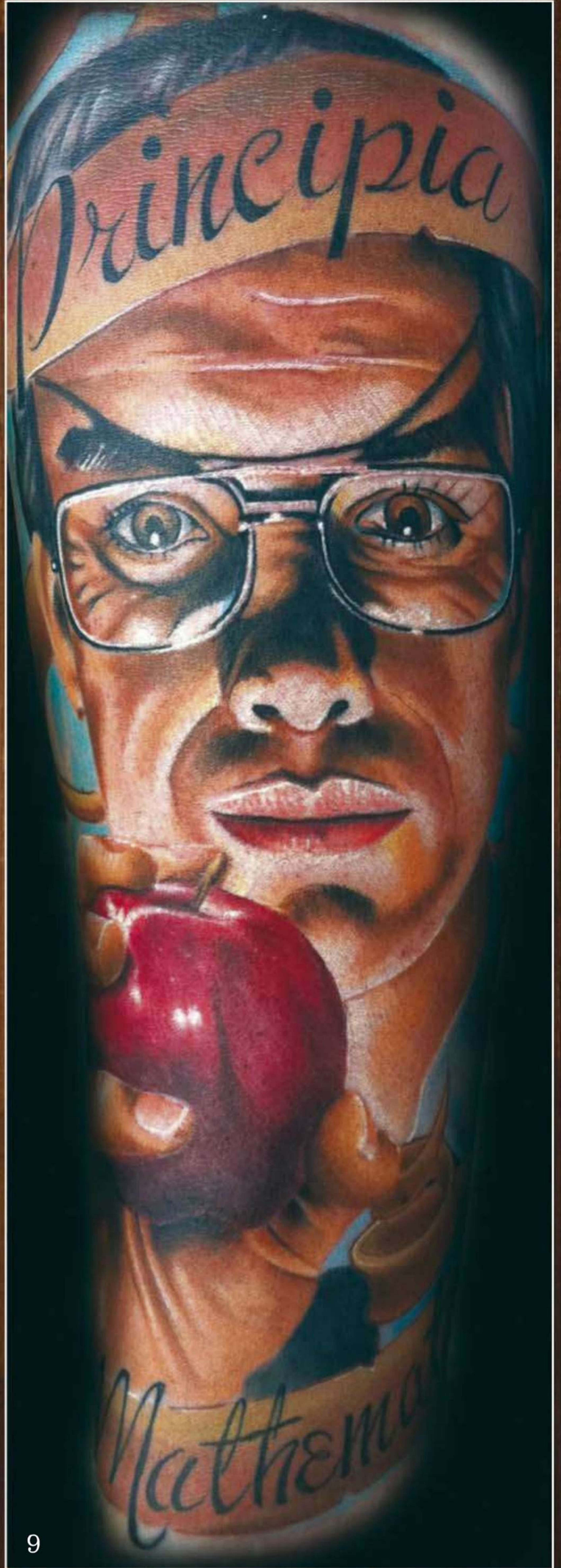
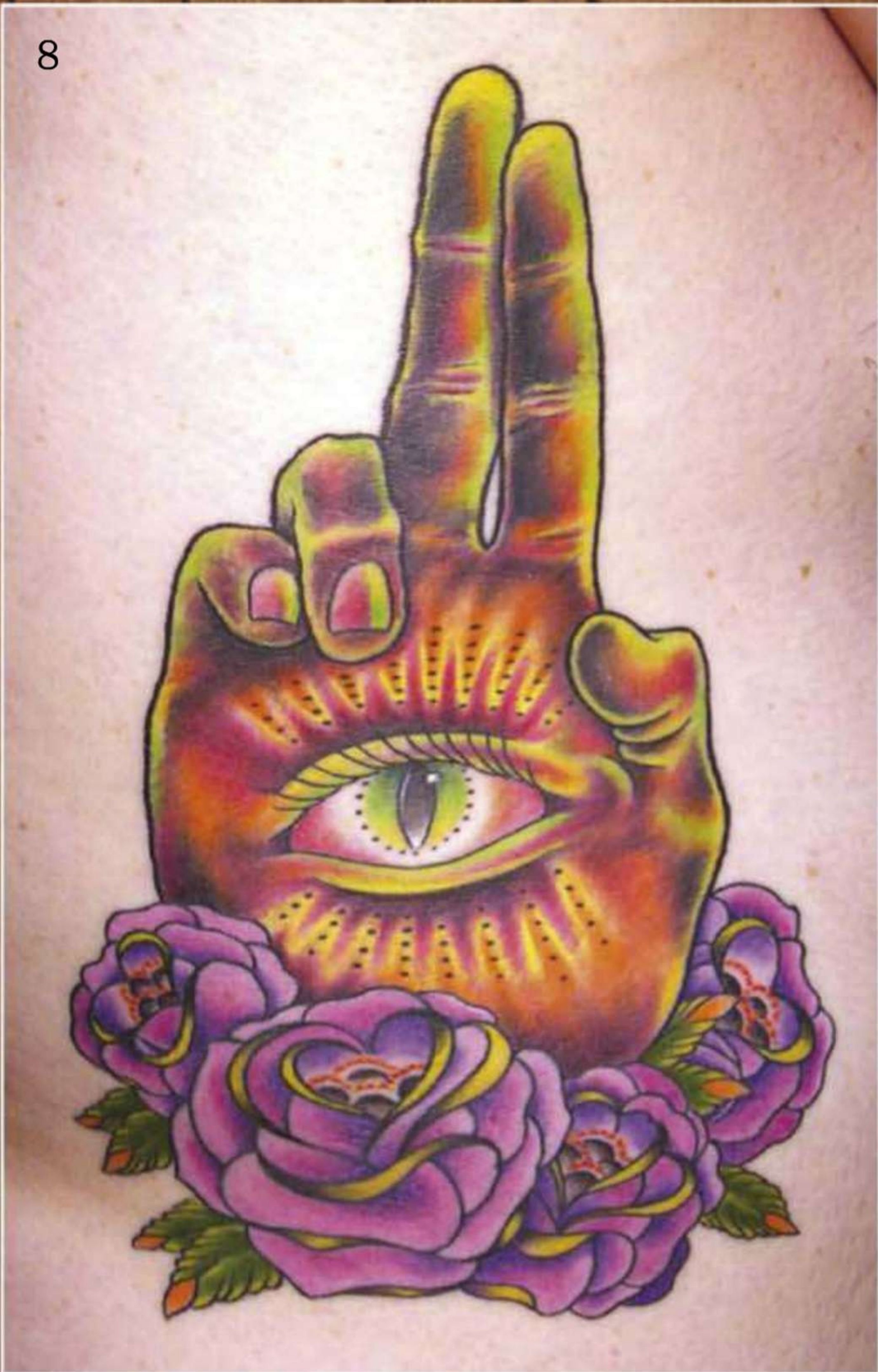


4 Jerry Magni, Jerry Tattoo, Italy
 5 Paul Fuller, SharpSide, Seaford
 6 Michael Rose, Michael Rose Visual Art, Herts
 7 Anth, K2, Yorkshire
 8 Aviv Rotshas, Psycho Tattoo, Tel Aviv
 9 Chris Jones, Physical Graffiti, Cardiff

7



8



9



- 10 Joey Hamilton, Club Tattoo, Las Vegas
- 11 Levi, Oh My God, London
- 12 Matt Rhodes, Pins And Needles, Ashton Under Lyme
- 13 Joe Wong, 8 Volts, Singapore
- 14 Darecki, Darkness Tattoo, Poland
- 15 Gareth 'Big G' Unwin, True Colour, York
- 16 Dan James, Maverick Tattoo, Tenby
- 17 Jeremy Miller, Screamin' Ink Tattoo, New Jersey
- 18 Gary Stanley, Stigmata



15



16



17



18



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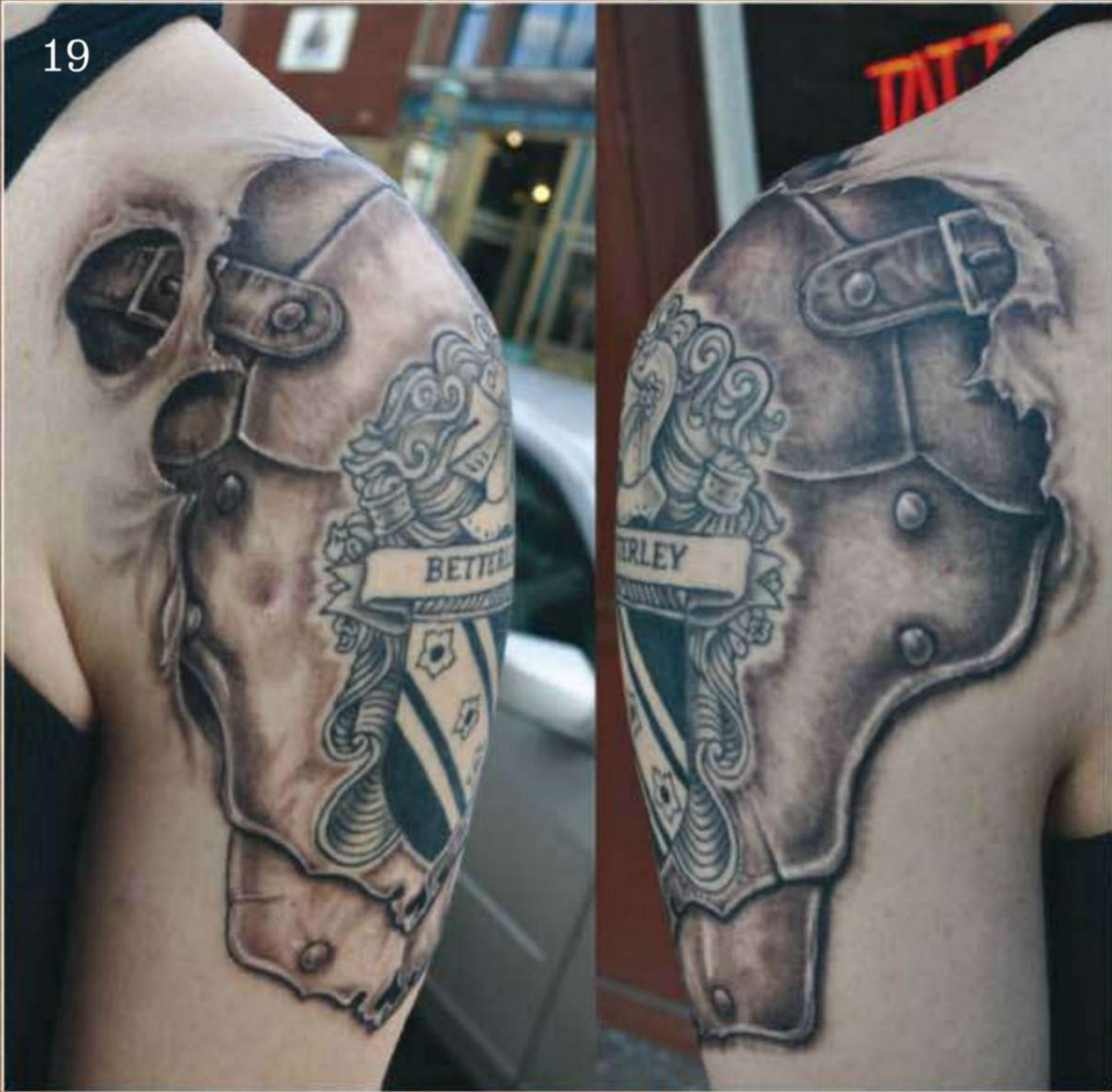
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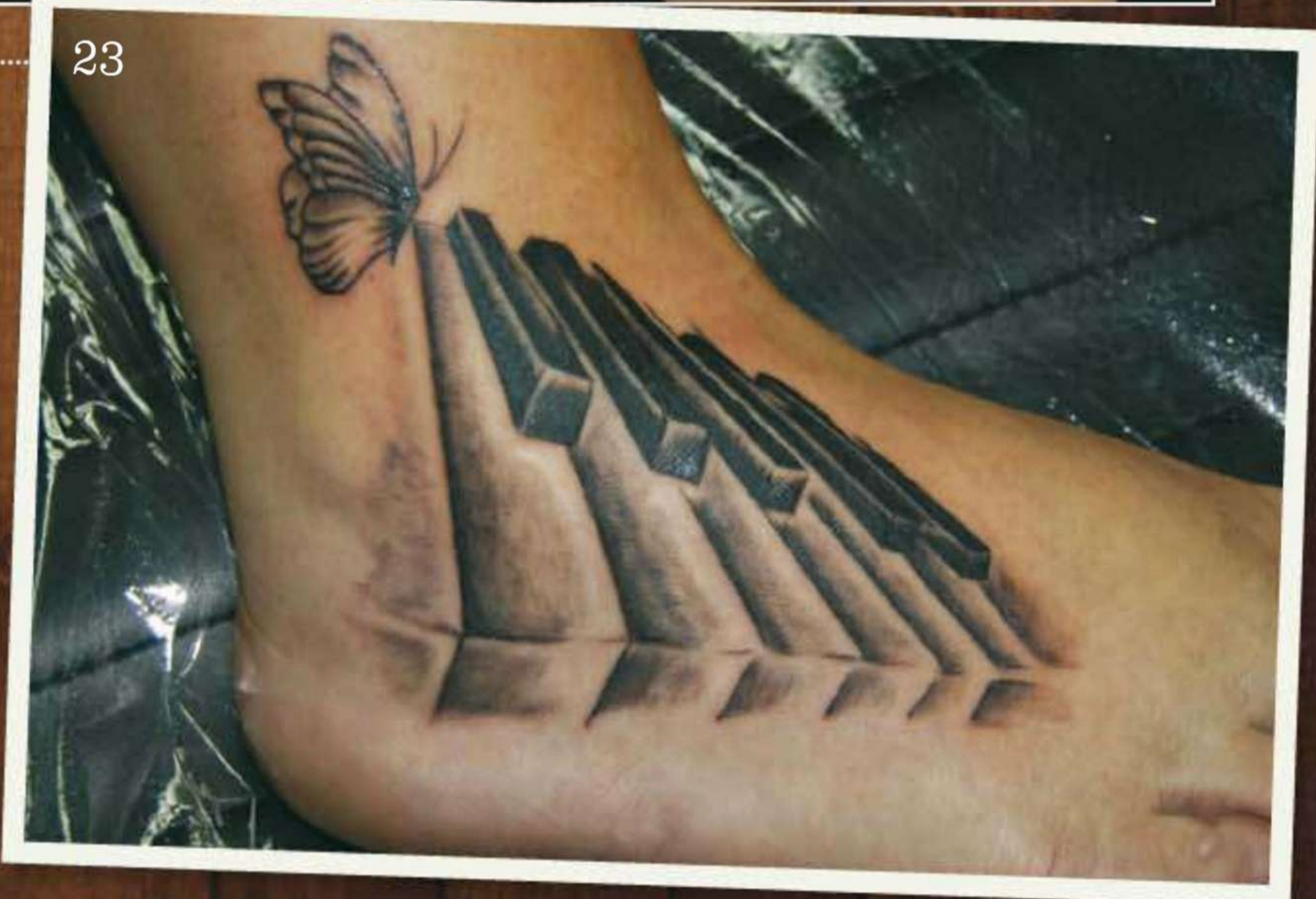
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23

19 Roly Viruez, Tattoo Technique, TN
 20 Ray Hunt, Diablo Tattoo, Rochester
 21 Martin Crosthwaite, Flaming Gun, Colchester
 22 Mega, Skill On Skin, Portugal
 23 Mega, Skill On Skin, Portugal

Editors Choice



- 1 Arad Bert, Kipod Tattoo, Tel-Aviv
- 2 Matty D'Arienzo, Self Sacrifice, London
- 3 Jerry Magni, Jerry Tattoo, Italy
- 4 Norbert Halasz, Skin Workshop Tattoo, Hungary

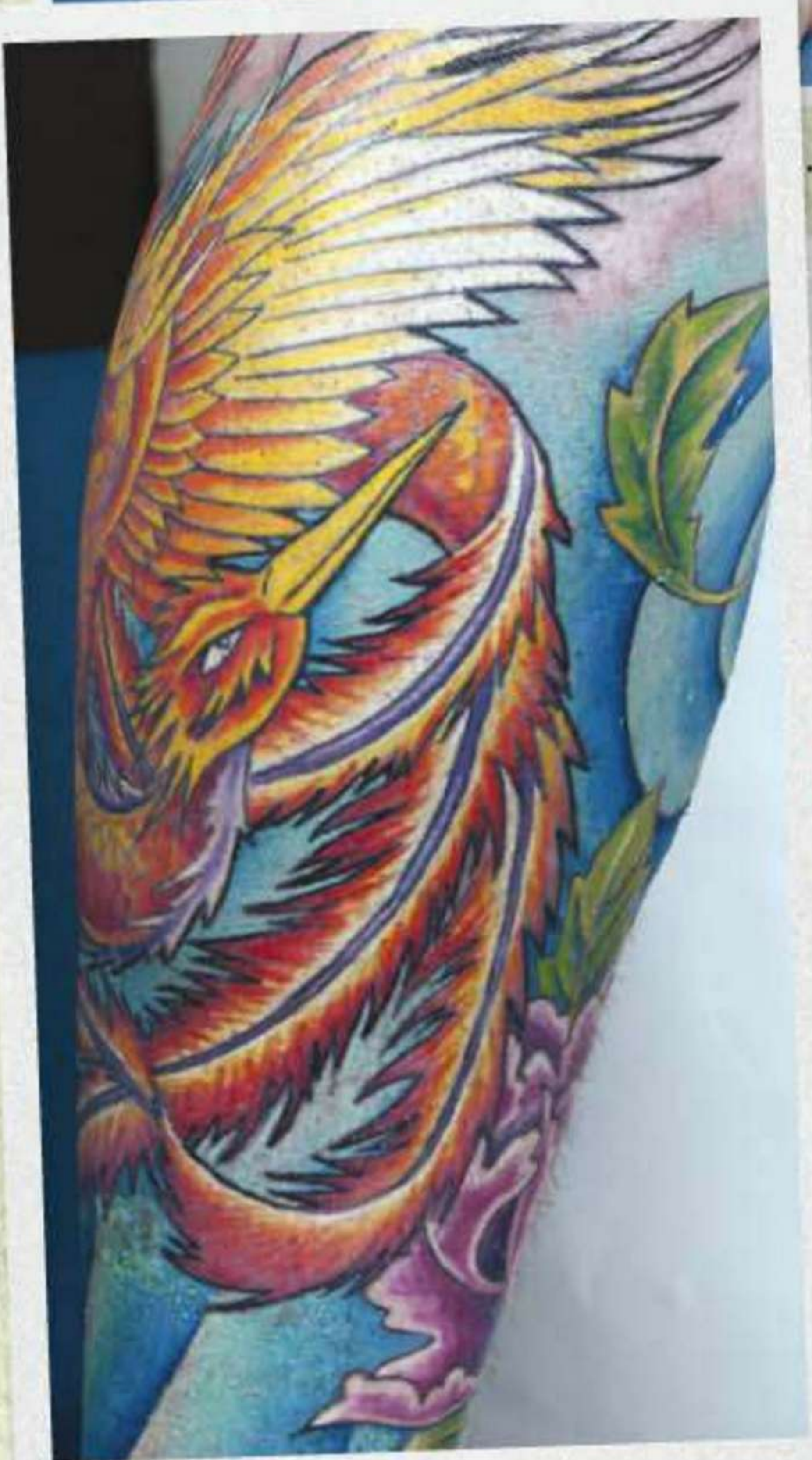
- 5 Jesse Smith
- 6 James Robinson, Nine Boyces St, Brighton
- 7 Roman Abrego



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APPEASING THE GODS

The first time I met Nick Whybrow, he was in the middle of his winter hair growth. Sporting a mop of unruly hair and a beard/moustache combo that would make ZZ Top proud, I was relieved to find that Nick was less intimidating than his appearances first led me to believe...

Coming up for eight years on the tattoo scene, Nick has certainly paid his dues. Nick is a champion of the old school style but rather than letting it remain stagnant, he is throwing his own ideas and influences into the mix, producing a fresh and exciting new look to this timeless school of tattooing.

"I primarily like to do old school but with more of a kind of realistic twist to it. Maybe take some realistic reference and redraw it in that kind of traditional style. I respect the fact that a lot of people who like old school want to do it exactly as the old timers used to, which is fine, that is

really cool. It's just not how I like to work. Say for example when I do a woman's face, I take a photograph of a woman's face rather than an old piece of flash and redraw that. I use the photograph as the reference to draw.

"I like to be able to do most things; I like to be an all-rounder. I personally think that it gets to a point when some people specialise too much; especially with old school because it has enjoyed a bit of a boom in the last few years. There are tattooists, who have started in this boom and that is pretty much all they can do. The thing is that, this boom, soon it is going to die off a little and when this happens,



there are just going to be the people who are really great who survive it. If you are an all-rounder, when the industry changes and evolves, as it will, you won't be left behind. I think it is important to carry on evolving."

And just like that, we are straight into one of the biggest debates about the current state of the tattoo world – has it become a monster of its own making? One thing about Nick is that he doesn't beat around the bush. He is a straight-talker and this, mixed with his love of the world he has chosen to work in, pushes him to continuously question himself, as well as the industry.

"The trouble with the tattoo world is that it is becoming mainstream in an unrealistic way. I think that it is great that there is more featuring of tattooing in the media but it gives people the wrong idea of what tattooing is all about. It's that kind of thing when you get a guy walk in the studio and he just expects that he can come in off the street 🙄"

SACRIFICE

The practice of sacrifice is seen in the oldest records. The archaeological record contains human and animal corpses with sacrificial marks long before any written records of the practice. Sacrifices are a common theme in most religions, though the frequency of animal, and especially human, sacrifices are rarely performed today. Literally anything of some value may be a sacrifice in some religion's practices. Commonly, the most valuable sacrifices have been that of lives, animal or human but then again, they didn't have local council's watching your back and it was easier to get away with.

"IF YOU ARE AN ALL-ROUNDER, WHEN THE INDUSTRY CHANGES AND EVOLVES, AS IT WILL, YOU WON'T BE LEFT BEHIND. I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO CARRY ON EVOLVING"





than it actually is. When I was an apprentice, I had to work really really hard; cleaning toilets, cleaning the shop, doing all the shit work and it was because I respected that guy and the fact that he knew more than I did. And that he was going to teach me. And eventually he did, you just have to show that you really want it. Another issue that seems to be growing, is people who come into the studio, who want to start learning to tattoo and go, 'I can draw'. Then you look at their drawings and it's more like, 'No you can't!' Sometimes I feel like it is becoming a bit like that X Factor thing where people go on the show thinking they brilliant because their Mum has told them they are an amazing singer and they'll go on the show and be told, 'Look you're rubbish! Go away and do something else'. Then they'll stand there and say, 'No! I am going to be the best in the world because my Mum said so'. And it is getting to that point in tattooing."

While Nick is on a roll, I ask him about the other big debate in tattooing, scratchers. Are they all talentless money seekers or is there a pool of them, who really do want to learn and better themselves?

"I am kind of in two minds about home tattooists (aka scratchers) because I personally know some brilliant tattooists who have learnt from home and have taught themselves. But that was years ago and it was hard to get hold of equipment and they did it because they love tattooing and had dreams of opening a shop not doing it at home forever because they can't get in a shop. It seems there are a lot of people who can't get apprenticeships because they are not good enough and then will go, 'Right I'm going to tattoo from home' and that's what is killing tattooing because all those people who are doing it from home, don't have the overheads of shops etc. I don't own the shop (Self Sacrifice) so

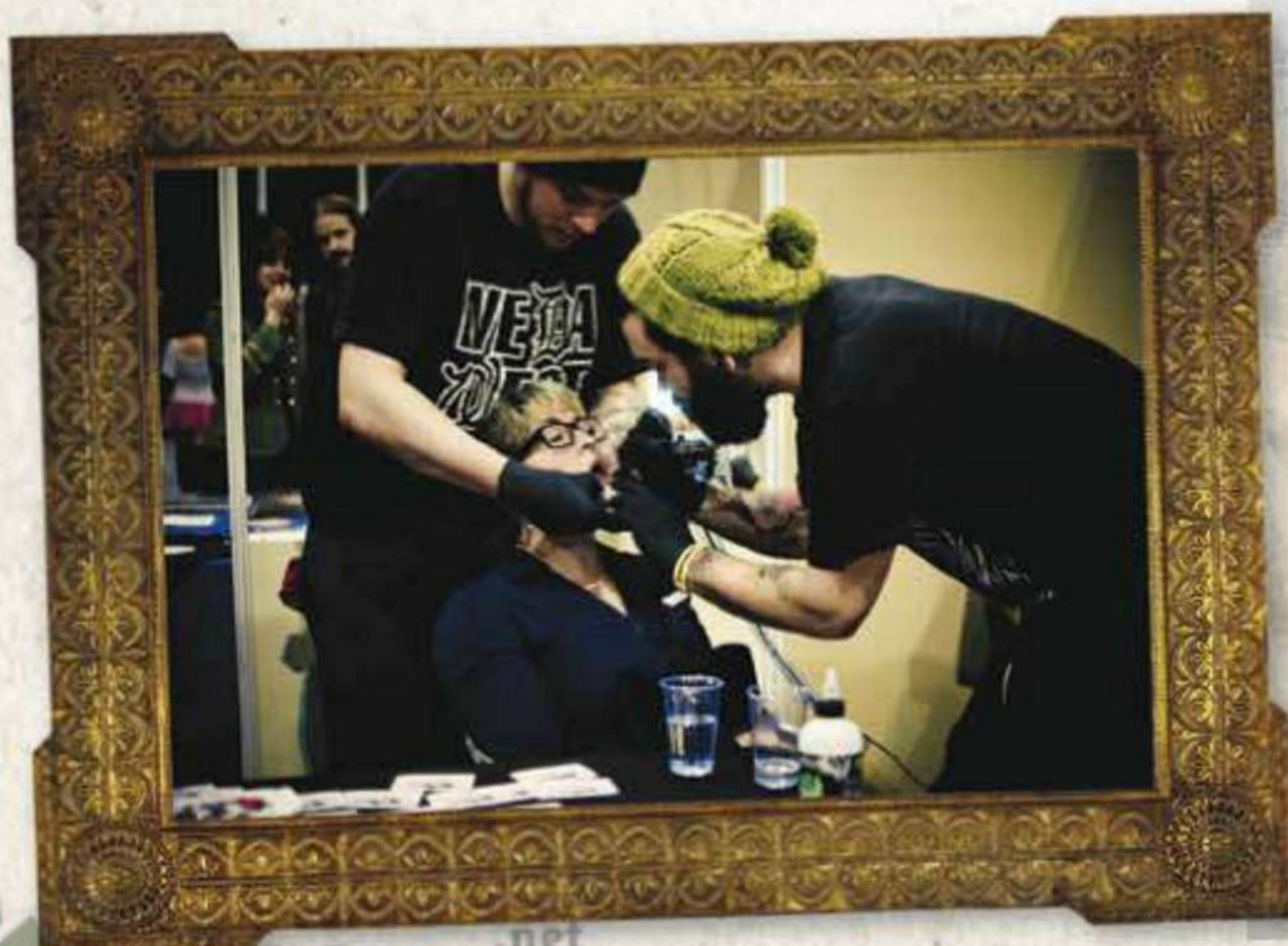
SELF

The spiritual goal of many traditions involves the dissolving of the self or ego, allowing self-knowledge of one's own true nature to become experienced and enacted in the world. This is variously known as enlightenment, nirvana, presence, and the "here and now". The same enlightenment can also be achieved on your average Saturday night just down the road from where you live.

with a design, that he's drawn up, and that you're going to do it right there and then. These people don't realise we take it home and redraw it in our own time because we like to get reference and we like to figure out how is the best way to do it. The problem with the same process on the TV is that that person has already planned to come in and they know exactly what is going to happen. I think there are a lot of misconceptions about what tattooing is all about."

"There seems to be a lot of people who want to get into the industry and who think it is a lot easier

"ANOTHER ISSUE THAT SEEMS TO BE GROWING, IS PEOPLE WHO COME INTO THE STUDIO, WHO WANT TO START LEARNING TO TATTOO AND GO, 'I CAN DRAW'. THEN YOU LOOK AT THEIR DRAWINGS AND IT'S MORE LIKE, 'NO YOU CAN'T!'"





I don't have those overheads, BUT I do have to pay to work in the shop. So these guys can charge £20/hour and people who don't really care will go to them and then you have good tattooists not doing very well.

"Tattooing is that kind of thing where if you want a good tattoo, you got to pay good money for it. People don't see it in the same way as paying £200 for a pair of trainers or £500 for a coat which is amazing because you are going to have it forever. And that is another by-product of tattooing being in the media because it becomes such a mass market thing, people expect to be just like any other mass market product. They expect it to be like going to a supermarket where you can price check one against the other. And it's not like that because in tattooing, one tattooist is never going to be the same as another. So the important thing to do is find someone whose work you like and go to them."

All of these points Nick has raised, are all relevant and he is not the only one out there who sees it or to some extent suffers from it. I have heard it from many different sources. But what are we to do about it? Do we tighten up tattooing laws and procedures, make it stricter to become a tattooist and then continuously regulate the industry or do we let 'nature' sort it out itself?

"It is a hard thing to sort out because I don't want a tattoo police and I really am beginning to think it can get to be at that point soon. One of the reasons I think is because there are some people in the industry who already seem to think that they have a control over it. The thing is, it can all go one of two ways; we can get really lax and no one really cares and it ruins everyone's world and then you could also go the other way where it is really strictly policed and it is all a bit Big Brother. I personally want to put the work I like on people and



get that to as many people as I can, so that if some one sees it and likes my work, they come to me. But it is difficult sometimes."

Issues aside, does Nick see a light at the end of the tunnel?

"Yeah! I'm really pleased with some new comers making it in the industry. For example, I have friends who have only been tattooing for a year and a half and have so much heart and so much love for the industry that they soak up information like a sponge. They also have that respect for tattooing."

"IF YOU EVER GET TO THE POINT WHERE YOU THINK YOU'RE WORK IS BRILLIANT AND YOU DON'T NEED TO DO ANYTHING - THEN YOU SHOULD STOP BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT PROGRESSING."

HOPEFULLY THE PEOPLE WHO ARE JUST IN IT BECAUSE THEY WANT TO BE A ROCK STAR WILL LOSE INTEREST AND GO FIND SOMETHING ELSE TO DO.



But, like everything else in life, there are always the ones who will ruin it. And it is sad because there seems so many more people who just don't have the respect for it, compared to the ones who do.

"There is a guy who I tattoo who also tattoos himself. I think he has been tattooing for about a year now and I think he has just finished his apprenticeship. He came in the other day and we were talking and what he has come to realise, as he said to me, is the person he works for, he doesn't consider to be that good. This guy has learnt a lot more about tattooing from actually doing it. So now what he is doing, is trying to go around and get as much information off of tattooists he likes and to also try to work for them to get more information off of them. All this work to keep on learning. And I think that is really good because it shows a want to progress and a good attitude. People who really want to tattoo and who love their craft are really critical of their work. Everything I do I am really critical of. There will not be one tattoo that I will look at and go, 'I'm finished'. You know, I'll look at it at the time, when it is done,



and go, 'That's the best that I can do!' and a week later I will look at it and go, 'You know what, I want to change this and do that and maybe try something a little different'.

"And that's the way that you progress. That's how you get better. It's not that the tattoo is bad or that you have done it wrong, it's that you strive to learn from it and you strive to do better. If you ever get to the point where you think your work is brilliant and you don't need to do anything – then you should stop because you're not progressing. You are not going any further. Though I am pleased with all the work I have done and all the work in my portfolio and at the time it was the best that I could do, now I have learnt more because I have progressed, I see where I can get better.

"Hopefully, the people who love tattooing, and are doing it for the right reasons, will be the ones who survive when the bubble bursts because it is due a kind of decrease in numbers. There will be people who are tattooing and are barely making money to survive, but they are the people who love it and hopefully they will come out on top and hopefully the people who are just in it because they want to be a rock star will lose interest and go find something else to do."

And you only have to look at



Nick's portfolio to see what he is trying to say. Every new tattoo that he produces is clean, fresh and striking. He is continuously striving to better himself and the world he works in. And when that wave, that is looming around the corner, breaks – I personally think that Nick is going to be one of those artists, riding it out into the sunset. 🌅

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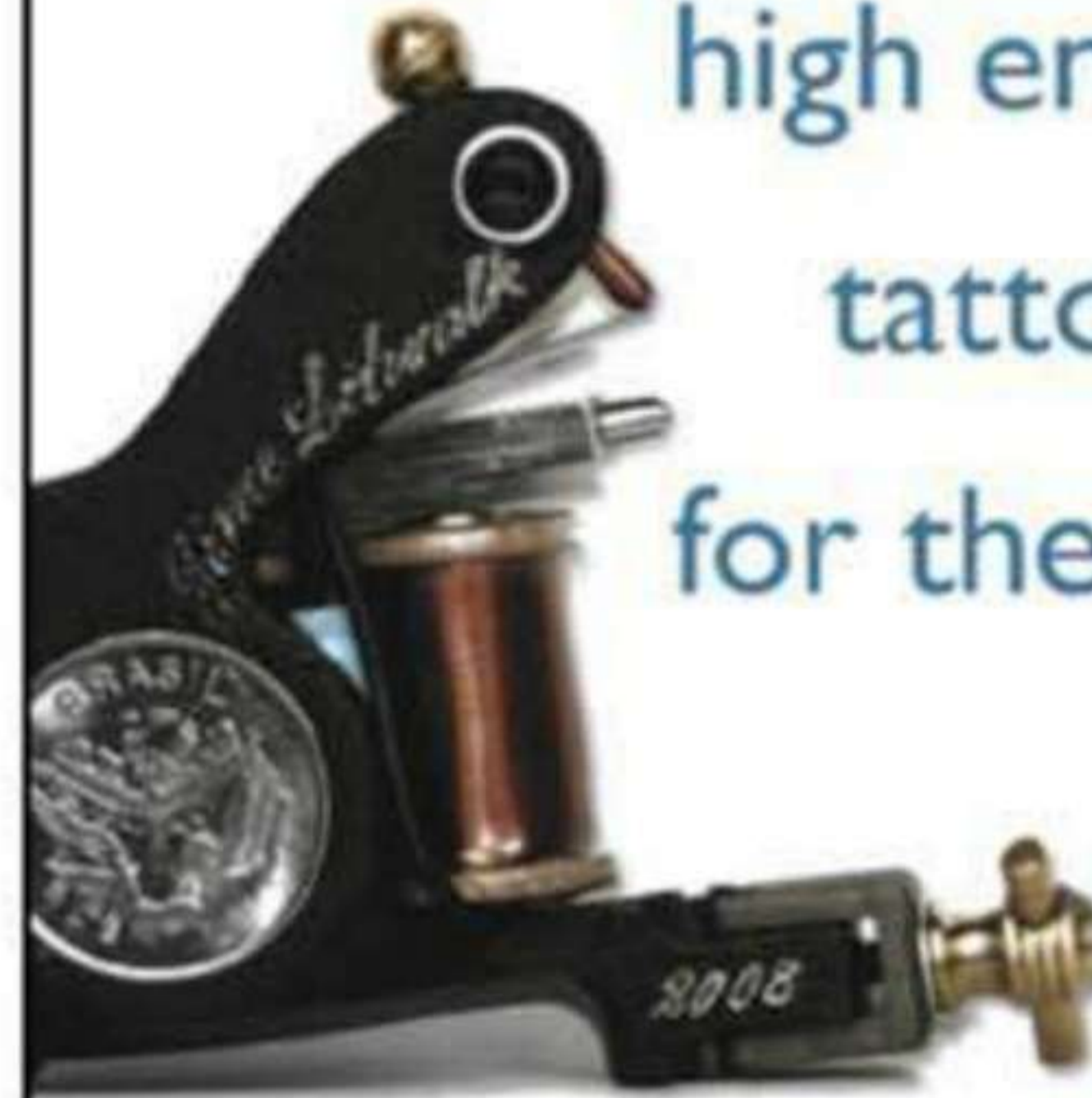
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Photographer: Wayne Daniels
Makeup and Hair: Jennifer Corona
Bra: Cameo Intimates

The Muse

Sabina Kelley is an icon. There is no doubt about that statement. We have also discovered that for those wishing to tread in the same steps, she is very wise. Stick around - you might learn something...

With her stunning sleeves and distinctive modern take on the classic 50s pinup look, Sabina Kelley is inspiring artists and photographers all over the world. The star of our special edition covers managed to find some time in a somewhat insane schedule to tell us about being a model, a mum, and a wounded mermaid...

WHAT'S IT LIKE HAVING ARTISTS CREATE DIFFERENT IMAGES OF YOU, LIKE THE ONE ON OUR COVER? IT MUST BE INTERESTING TO SEE YOURSELF THROUGH SOMEONE ELSE'S EYES...

I love the cover image Tyson McAdoo did of me. It's such an honour to have incredible artists be inspired by me, and it's really cool when people even go as far as getting one of those images tattooed on them.

Sometimes I'm surprised by the versions of myself that I see. It's really funny when people try to recreate my tattoos in their artwork; sometimes it's not even close to what I have and sometimes it's right on!

CAN YOU TELL US WHAT YOU'VE BEEN UP TO RECENTLY, TO GIVE US AN IDEA OF YOUR WORKING LIFE?

I have a pretty busy schedule. I'm always on the go, either taking care of my kids, travelling for work, doing photoshoots, answering emails and doing interviews, or doing laser tattoo removal. For example, in the last two



Photographer: Lesley Brown
Hair and Makeup: Your Beauty Call
Dress: Wheels and Dollbaby



TYSON MCADOO

Did you pick up our limited edition cover with exclusive art by Tyson McAdoo? This isn't the first time Tyson has worked with Sabina. Check out more of Tyson's work at tysonmcadoo.com - we're thinking a feature is totally in order. Stay tuned...

MY KIDS LIKE MY TATTOOS, BUT THEY'RE SO USED TO THEM. THEY ALWAYS TAKE SHARPIES AND DRAW TATTOOS ALL OVER THEIR BODIES, OR WEAR THE FAKE TATTOOS.

days I've done two photoshoots a day - the kids actually came to one shoot with me and I had to juggle watching them and shooting. After that I came home and fed the little ones, got all dressed up and went out with my girls. My life is busy and hectic, but I wouldn't want it any other way.

HOW ON EARTH DO YOU FIT IT ALL IN?

I have no idea! I just don't get any extra free time to myself.

WHAT DO YOUR CHILDREN MAKE OF YOUR TATTOOS? AND WHAT REACTIONS DOES YOUR INK GENERALLY GET?

My kids like my tattoos, but they're so used to them. They always take sharpies and draw tattoos all over their bodies, or wear the fake tattoos. My ink sometimes gets me attention, but I really don't pay attention to that; if I did, it would bother me. I usually get a very good response to

MORE SABINA?

Find out more about our fair lady from sabinakelley.com, or follow her on Twitter (@Sabina_Kelley). You can also check out her studios: Staytrue Tattoo Parlor in Las Vegas, and Bombshell Tattoo Removal at Hart and Huntington (Carey Hart's shop).

my tattoos, although occasionally I do get the "You're so beautiful, why would you do that to yourself?" thing.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE MODELLING BUSINESS?

I started when I was a showgirl in Las Vegas in the show 'Jubilee'. I did the billboard shoot for the show and realised that I was really good at it and that I liked it, so the progression from my dancing was modelling.

I also started getting tattooed when I was a showgirl, but you're not allowed to have tattoos - I would have to hide them. Then I quit dancing and started getting heavily tattooed and that's when I found my niche of being a pinup model and creating my own style of being a modern day tattooed pinup.

HAS IT EVER BEEN HARD TO GET WORK AS A TATTOOED MODEL, AND HAS THE INDUSTRY CHANGED AT ALL**WHILE YOU'VE BEEN MODELLING?**

It's totally been hard to get work as a tattooed model - having tattoos doesn't make it easier in the slightest. The industry has changed a little in favour of tattoos since I started, but for the jobs I want in the fashion world, tattoos are still not acceptable. I love breaking boundaries and doing shoots with magazines and big time designers who don't normally work with tattooed girls.

Photographer: Wayne Daniels
Makeup and Hair: Jennifer Corona



YOU SEEM TO BE VERY CLEAR ABOUT THE KIND OF WORK YOU WILL AND WON'T DO. DO YOU THINK THAT'S IMPORTANT?

Yes, I'm very clear on the work I will and will not do, and nobody will change my mind. It's very important as a model to have limits because photographers and companies will push you and you don't want to do something that you'll regret. I'm always offered jobs

that are very well paid that I say no to, but that's because they want nudity and I won't do nude shoots. If you do nude shoots and then decide you don't want to any more, those images are everywhere on the internet for life and could easily get a legit job taken from you further down the road. The only nudity I would do is for art shoots like David LaChapelle or Playboy. Other than that, no way!

DO YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF IN THE MIDDLE OF A SHOOT - LIKE THE ONE WHERE YOU WERE DRESSED AS A MERMAID - AND THINK 'WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?' OR ARE YOU JUST USED TO IT NOW?

I'm usually used to it, but yes, sometimes I do - especially when I did that mermaid shoot. First of all it was freezing outside and the water was freezing too. I was laying in the sand getting bitten by sand crabs

I WAS LAYING IN THE SAND GETTING BITTEN BY SAND CRABS THE WHOLE SHOOT. THE PHOTOGRAPHER DIDN'T BELIEVE ME AND THOUGHT I WAS JUST BEING A BABY, BUT I WAS PICKING THEM OFF ME AND THROWING THEM

the whole shoot. The photographer didn't believe me and thought I was just being a baby, but I was picking them off me and throwing them - when I stood up one whole side of my body was pouring blood. It sucked really bad. I have horror stories from all kinds of shoots - being a model is not always glamorous.

OUCH. AND SPEAKING OF PAIN, DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST TATTOO?

Yes, I was 20 years old and my boyfriend at the time did it for me. I put it on the back of my neck, so I could hide it with my hair if I wanted to - and I thought since I was a showgirl that it would be the easiest place for me to put makeup on to cover it. I was so excited about it that I don't even remember it hurting! I had a horseshoe with a dead swallow in the middle with flames and flowers around it and the number 13.

YOU'VE SAID IN PREVIOUS INTERVIEWS THAT ALL YOUR TATTOOS HAVE PERSONAL SIGNIFICANCE AND YOU DON'T TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY MEAN. YOU MUST GET ASKED ABOUT THEM A LOT THOUGH, DOESN'T IT GET ANNOYING? EVER FEEL LIKE MAKING UP A HISTORY FOR EACH ONE AND PUTTING IN ON YOUR WEBSITE, SO PEOPLE STOP ASKING?

All my tattoos do have personal meanings, and I don't talk about it because it would take too long. I get asked about my tattoos all the time and yes, sometimes it's especially



Photographer: Wayne Daniels
Makeup and Hair: Jennifer Corona





Photographer: Bobby Ruiz
Hair and Makeup: Red Dodge
Top: Tribal Wear

annoying when people come up and start touching your tattoos or asking dumb questions like “are they real,” “do you draw them on you every day,” crap like that. I’ve never thought of posting all the details of my tattoos on the website... maybe someday when I do a book, I’ll add that in. If you’re lucky!

FOLLOWING ON FROM THAT, IS IT IMPORTANT TO YOU TO HAVE TATTOOS WITH A PURPOSE OR PERSONAL MEANING BEHIND THEM?

Yes, they’re a part of me forever. I always think long and hard about my ink - I could easily get tattooed for free any time I wanted when I work at tattoo conventions or from one of my friends, but I don’t because I’m really picky about what I get and the placement.

SO HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT GETTING A NEW TATTOO? DO YOU STICK WITH FAVOURITE ARTISTS AND THEMES?

I figure out what I want and where I want it, and then I find the perfect artist. I collaborate with the artist and get something specifically drawn up, just for me. Then I run around with the pic for a day taped on me to see if I really like it, and if I do, I get it

tattooed. The whole process can take a day or sometimes even up to a year to be perfect.

AND HAVE YOU SET YOURSELF A LIMIT TO THE AMOUNT OF COVERAGE YOU’RE GOING TO HAVE?

I don’t have an exact limit, but I really do take my time. As of right now, I don’t want any tattoos on my chest or legs, because I think those are very beautiful parts of a woman’s body. I could change my mind though, we’ll see. But right now I’m just focusing on getting my back finished.

DO YOU THINK YOU’RE IN A UNIQUE POSITION, MAKING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS OUT OF TATTOOS AND TATTOOING - AMONG OTHER THINGS - WHILE NOT BEING A TATTOO ARTIST YOURSELF?

Yes, I do think that I’m in a unique position. Being married to a tattoo artist helps, and owning a tattoo shop, modelling and being heavily tattooed and being successful at that has helped too. I studied tattoo removal as well and now do that as my plan B for when I can’t model any more.

HOW IS THAT GOING, DO YOU THINK

I HAVEN’T REMOVED ANY OF MY TATTOOS - DON’T EVER GET A TATTOO WITH THE THOUGHT IN YOUR HEAD THAT YOU CAN JUST REMOVE IT IF YOU DON’T LIKE IT.

IT’S GOING TO BE BIG BUSINESS IN THE YEARS AHEAD?

Tattoo removal is going great, I really only do it one day a week if I’m in town. I definitely think it’s going to be big business, especially since the tattoo TV shows are so big and everyone and their mum is getting tattooed. I think many of them are getting ink because they think it makes them cool, and they’ll regret it in the future. I haven’t removed any of my tattoos - don’t ever get a tattoo with the thought in your head that you can just remove it if you don’t like it.

YOU OWN A COUPLE OF SWTUDIOS, TOO. ANY DESIGNS ON TRAINING UP AS AN ARTIST?

No, I draw like a two year old! I’ve tattooed twice: a stick figure with big boobs on two of my friends. It was pretty funny, but now I seriously get people wanting me to tattoo them - they call and email me for appointments... 🤪

MO COPPOLETTA

THE GODFATHER

PART TWO



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AI Overdrive

Last issue, we talked to Mo Coppoletta about all manner of goodies. One such as he doesn't talk openly too often, so given the chance, we dug some more - and then some more and thus, we bring you part two of our epic:

After a digression into the parallels of the similar dilemma that photographers have when considering editorial exposure versus commercial client fee's, the conversation returned to the root of all evil: money.

IF YOU WERE GIVEN A BLANK CHEQUE AND TOLD YOU HAD AN UNLIMITED BUDGET TO TAKE THE FAMILY BUSINESS IN ANY DIRECTION YOU WANTED, HOW WOULD YOU SPEND IT?

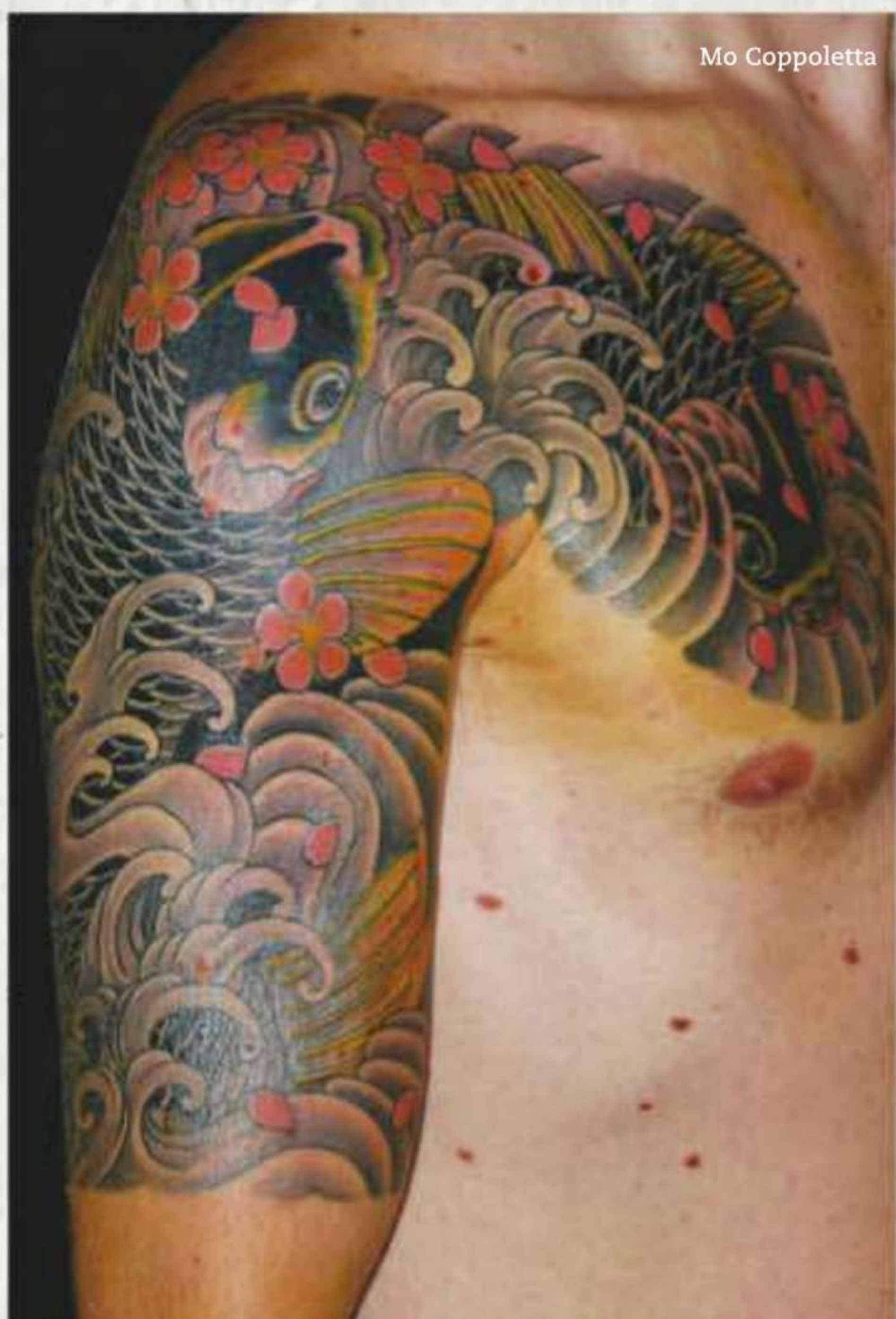
"I'd probably expand the premises. As much as you expand you always find that you could use more space. There is no such thing as too much space. I would like there to be an area where you can just draw and research, where there are several different drawing stations and books

everywhere where everyone can not only draw for tattooing, but also mingle around; a social space to create a group of people, almost like a workshop. Obviously in London that would cost a lot of money, more than a tattoo shop can afford. That would be the fantasy. I wouldn't want to change this studio, maybe bigger premises but with the facility to welcome people."

After observing how the reception staff (David and Ola) interact with the waiting customers while managing the tattooists and their workloads, you'd be hard pressed to find any other way to describe the feeling of The Family Business than 'The Family Business'. It truly has the feel of an old family-run business, where all the staff have their roles and everyone is focussed on the same goal. Mo expands on 🌻

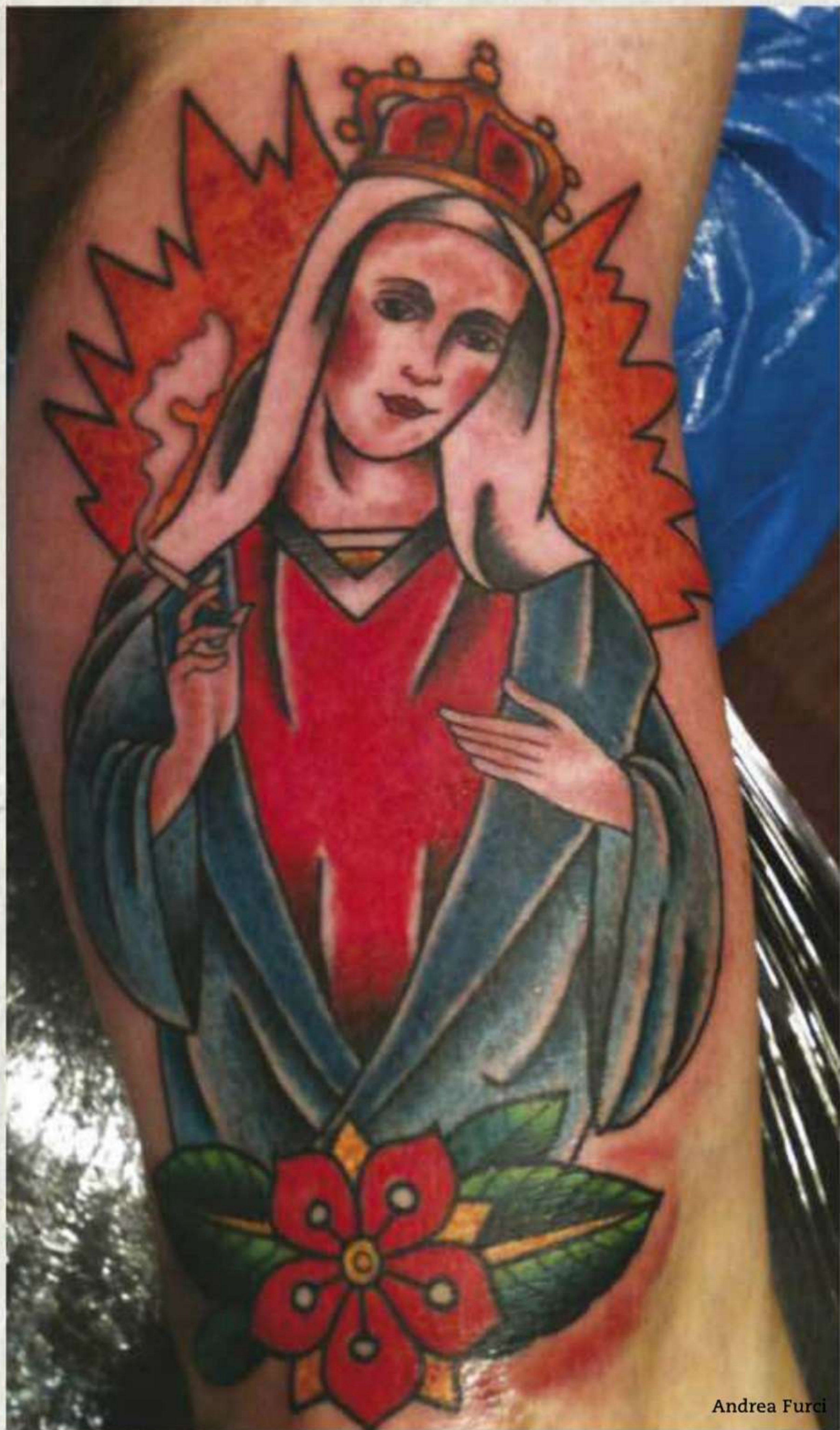


Mo Coppoletta

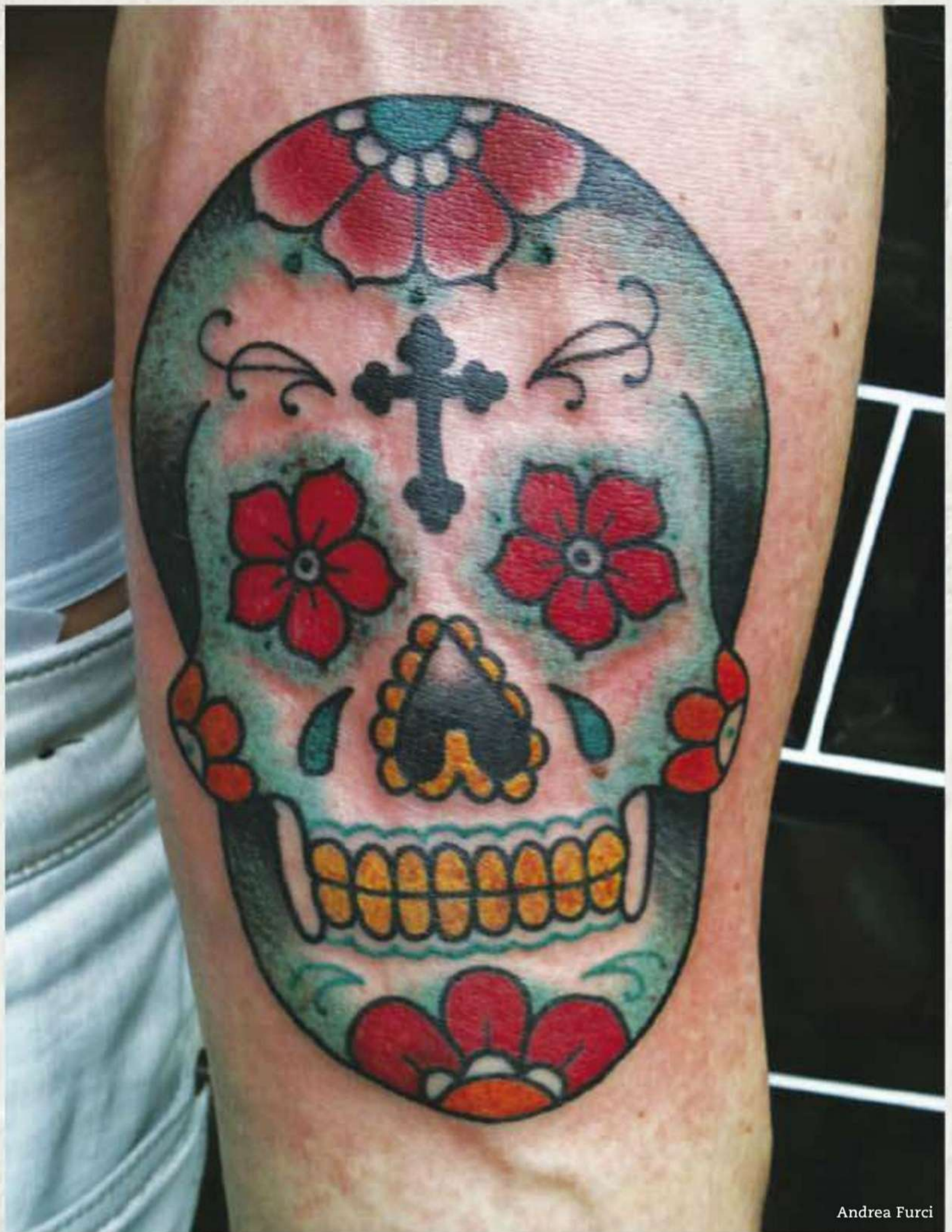


THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS TOO MUCH SPACE. I WOULD LIKE THERE TO BE AN AREA WHERE YOU CAN JUST DRAW AND RESEARCH, WHERE THERE ARE SEVERAL DIFFERENT DRAWING STATIONS AND BOOKS EVERYWHERE WHERE EVERYONE CAN NOT ONLY DRAW FOR TATTOOING, BUT ALSO MINGLE AROUND

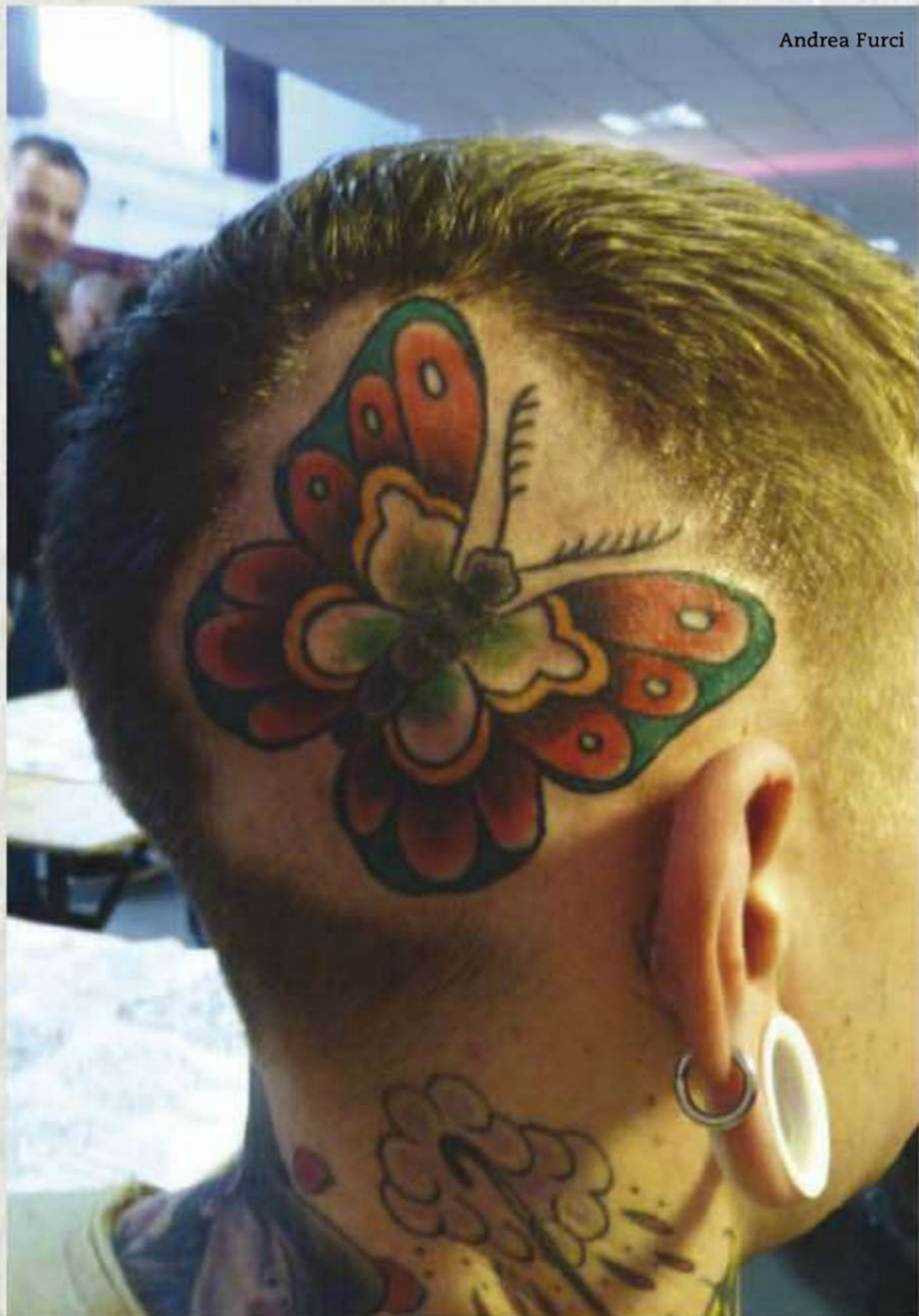




Andrea Furci



Andrea Furci

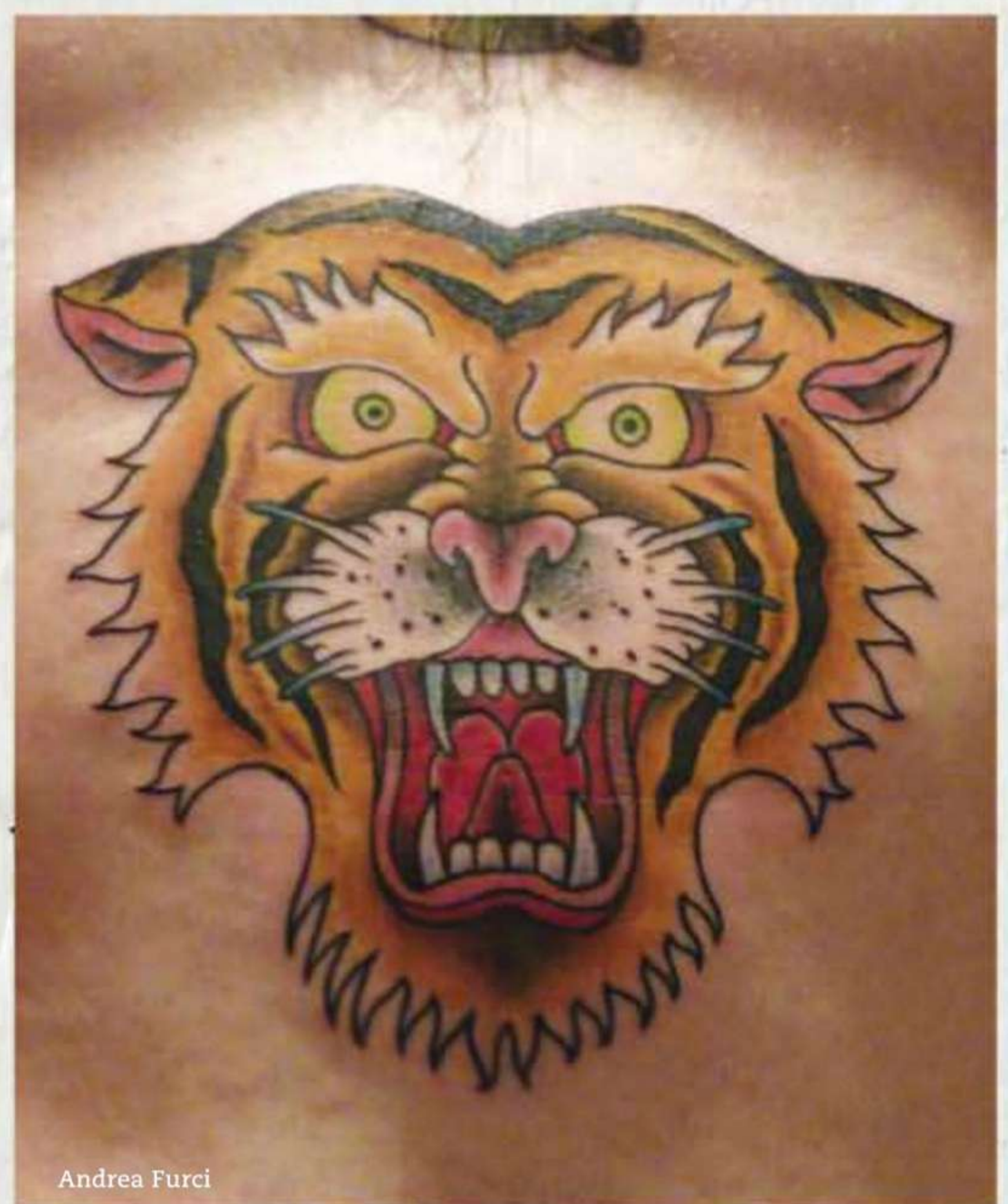


Andrea Furci

EVERYTHING HAS TO BE GOOD, NOT JUST THE DESIGN, IT'S THE COMFORT OF THE SHOP. LIKE IN A NICE HOTEL, IT'S NOT JUST THE BED YOU PAY ATTENTION TO, IT'S EVERYTHING ELSE TOO



Andrea Furci



Andrea Furci

ANDREA FURCI

ANDREA FURCI
How long at Family Business?
 "Two years."

Speciality?

"I really like doing old school traditional, not super super old school, but I'd love to start doing more Japanese, because I've started painting a lot. And there aren't many people working in this style."

What drew you to the Family Business?

Basically three years ago I moved to London from Italy - I come from Sicily - I was going to stay for six months, learning then go back to Sicily. But I went all over the place looking for a job but couldn't find one. In the last few days I went just for a visit to the most important shop in London and I just asked. In the beginning I was going to ask here but it just seemed at too high a level. They took my details and I went back to Sicily then after six months he called me. It was for me a really good chance."

What's special about Family Business?

"I see this as a great shop that's really professional with a high level of quality. There's all different styles because there are lots of different artists, so you can easily find they style of the tattoo artist who can help you do something really nice. There are ten artists working here and we have no problems between us. It is like a family. We all work in the same room, it is like a mini-convention every day. We help each other, suggestions and stuff. You can improve your quality and grow as an artist."

his philosophy behind the studio:

"That was my agenda at the beginning, the whole process needs to be about customer care. We are paid to do designs on people. Everything has to be good, not just the design, it's the comfort of the shop. Like in a nice hotel, it's not just the bed you pay attention to, it's everything else too."

The internet has become a

massive part of most business now, even tattooing. Customers are now able to view a wide range of world class tattoos, and in many cases, make the initial contact with an artist via social networking sites. It has become increasingly easy to book an appointment with an artist in a different country and plan out most of a design before setting foot in the artist's studio. Some argue

that the nature of the tattooist-client relationship itself is changing. Until it is possible to be tattooed via a remote control machine, people will still have to come into physical contact with their tattooist to get their ink. One clear benefit of the changes is that clients are becoming more educated about what makes a 'good' tattoo and are less likely to accept sub-standard work.

"Definitely. People are way more educated, and thus more demanding too. Their knowledge has grown a lot. So it's a real pleasure to tattoo people these days. All our customers are very educated, know what they want, and we give them freedom to explore their ideas."

Andrea Furci



WOULD YOU SAY THIS IS A GOOD THING THEN, THAT THE INTERNET IS BENEFITING TATTOOING ?

"I don't know if it's a good thing or not. I suppose it's good because it's what people want to do. It's a sign of the times. Being completely negative about it will put you outside of this reality, so we have to welcome these things and make the best out of them. I suppose as long as the relationship is healthy, the artist 🌻"

MILES MONAGHAN

MILES MONAGHAN
How long at Family Business?
 About six months.

Speciality?
 Traditional Japanese tattoos.

How long have you been doing them?
 Since I started I've been trying to push the Japanese work but in the last three years I've started to do a lot more of it. It's one of the reasons I moved over here, to start doing larger work.

What drew you to the Family Business?
 I was actually on holiday and I showed Mo my work, then asked if I could do a guest spot here. I was here for three months and he said yeah you can have a guest spot. After being there for a while he told me if I wanted something permanent I could have a job. So I moved everything over from Australia and here I am.

What's special about Family Business?
 Well I think the thing that makes the shop special, of such a high standard - apart from Dave the counter-man [he jokes as David walks past us doing the interview] - is that you can get anything tattooed from tribal to nice scripts, realism to Japanese, American traditional, whatever it is, there's always someone in the shop who can cover it. So it's really important. And if you get a tattoo but want a different style, they'll send you to someone else in the shop who can give you a better tattoo. It's not all about making money, it's about giving good tattoos. You do what you can and if there's a guy across there does it better you get them to do it basically. Just watching Mo for years, through magazines, he has such a good reputation and he's created an environment where anyone who comes in here is going to feel comfortable. It's a nice atmosphere. There's none of the old school tattoo shop biker bullshit going on. It's very welcoming which is important as well.

is able to give what the customer wishes, to meet their expectations and everyone is happy. A welcome new strategy. I'm not someone who embraced using the internet for [tattoo] business at first. I was probably a bit more old fashioned about it a few years back, but I have accepted it now. You have to be very careful and vigilant about the new science of the world. I'm from a changing generation, I'm not the upstart anymore, someone else is the upstart. You see other people coming in and you have to be always vigilant, watch what happens and adapt to new techniques and new things. That is how business works. It's the only way to age gracefully, otherwise you end up being that sour man who complains that the music is too loud."

IS THERE A RISK THAT THROUGH ONLINE 'EXPERTS' AND THE LACK OF QUALITY CONTROL ON THE INTERNET THAT THERE COULD BE SOME DAMAGE DONE TO THE ART? THAT SOME PEOPLE MIGHT FIND IT HARD TO BE HEARD ABOVE THE NOISE?
 "At the end of the day, the quality is there and the right eye, the eye of the connoisseur, will always be able to tell quality. So that's what you have to aim for. Aim for the

best. Not everyone will have the same standards as you, or notice the same things as you do. The bigger it gets, the more criticism it's going to get and the more people come into tattooing. Thousands. A few years ago it was hundreds, maybe just ten. That's a big change. It's too big to self-police.

"Tattooing has fully reached the masses, it reaches everyone. It attracts attention everywhere. Being a tattooist in business is like being a lawyer, or investment banker, it's saturated. At the end of the day, this is your own world, the shop is your world. You keep an eye on what's happening outside, but it's up to you, to make the standard or not."

SO IT'S IMPORTANT TO SEE WHAT OTHER PEOPLE ARE DOING BUT KEEP FOCUSED ON WHERE YOU ARE? IS THIS A MOTIVATION FOR THE FAMILY BUSINESS TO KEEP A PRESENCE ON THE CONVENTION CIRCUIT?

"Always be very careful to pay attention to what happens out there, because losing touch with the world is a very dangerous thing to do. Conventions are a good way to be seen and to see what is happening. I have been going to conventions for a long time, nowadays I let the younger tattooists here go out to

them instead. It is their turn to go out there and work, to be at the forefront and see what is changing and what direction tattoo styles are turning to."

HAVE YOU SEEN ANYONE'S WORK AT A RECENT CONVENTION THAT HAS MADE YOU WANT TO TRACK THEM DOWN AND GET TATTOOED BY THEM? IS THERE ANYONE AT THE MOMENT WHOM YOU WOULD LIKE TO GET TATTOOED BY?

"For me, the urge to get new tattoos went a little bit for me. Every now and then, I sort of feel like getting some more tattoos, but less so these days. But there are still people, so many, that are good out there who I would like to be tattooed by. I'm not desperate to get covered. If anything, I will choose the right person to do one bit and get on with that. I kind of enjoy being able to go out and have the option to show my tattoos or not show my tattoos."

WHEN PEOPLE FIRST MEET YOU, OUTSIDE OF THE TATTOOING COMMUNITY, IT IS NOT OBVIOUS THAT YOU ARE A TATTOOIST. IS THIS SOMETHING YOU LIKE TO PLAY WITH? HOW DO YOU THINK PEOPLE PERCEIVE YOU?

"Often when people meet me and 🍷"



Miles Monaghan



Miles Monaghan



Miles Monaghan

NOT EVERYONE WILL HAVE THE SAME STANDARDS AS YOU, OR NOTICE THE SAME THINGS AS YOU DO. THE BIGGER IT GETS, THE MORE CRITICISM IT'S GOING TO GET AND THE MORE PEOPLE COME INTO TATTOOING



Miles Monaghan



Miles Monaghan

ANDREA GIULIMONDI



WITHIN TATTOOING, SOME PEOPLE MAY THINK I AM COLD, OR DISTANT, BUT I AM JUST A BUSY MAN WHO IS FOCUSSED ON HIS BUSINESS, I AM NOT SO INTERESTED IN GOSSIP OR DRAMA

ask what I do as a job, I tell them 'I am a tattooist and own a tattoo studio', they usually laugh and ask me what I really do as a job. Within tattooing, some people may think I am cold, or distant, but I am just a busy man who is focussed on his business, I am not so interested in gossip or drama. It is a tiring and hard job – we need distance at times to recharge ourselves and to keep being able to be creative without losing the passion.”

WHAT DO YOU DO TO RECHARGE YOURSELF AND TAKE A BREAK FROM THINKING ABOUT TATTOOING?

“I play the guitar, acoustic guitar. What else? I have a passion for good watches, watches are my passion.”

YOU'RE A BIG COLLECTOR?

“Yeah, I attend events. And cooking. I cook a lot. I do a lot of things.”



HOW GOOD A COOK ARE YOU?

“I learned from my mum and when you learn from somebody like my mum, cooking comes easy, you have no choice but to be a good cook.”

WHAT FINAL WORDS DO YOU HAVE BEFORE WE CLOSE THE INTERVIEW, ANYTHING YOU WANT TO ADD?

“There are many issues that people never talk about. We could talk about it forever. The tattoo scene has been a happy island and everyone on it is incredible. The truth and peoples true opinions will



never be too important because of the nature of the medium. Also, because of the closed nature of the tattoo scene, everybody's a friend of a friend. So everybody's great, everybody's amazing. It's like an art form. It should have credits at the end. We know it is not that easy, we shouldn't criticise for the sake of it. But there are many aspects of the tattoo world that need to be talked about, some that we've talked about in this interview. That's why it's more interesting than others, so thank you.” 🐾

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AN ALIEN IN

NEW YORK



It seems, that the days of getting an apprenticeship being the only route in, has well and truly gone – these days a passion to tattoo, determination, hard graft and most importantly an ability to draw artistically can get you far. And in the case of Ettore Bechis, it seems it can get you *very* far

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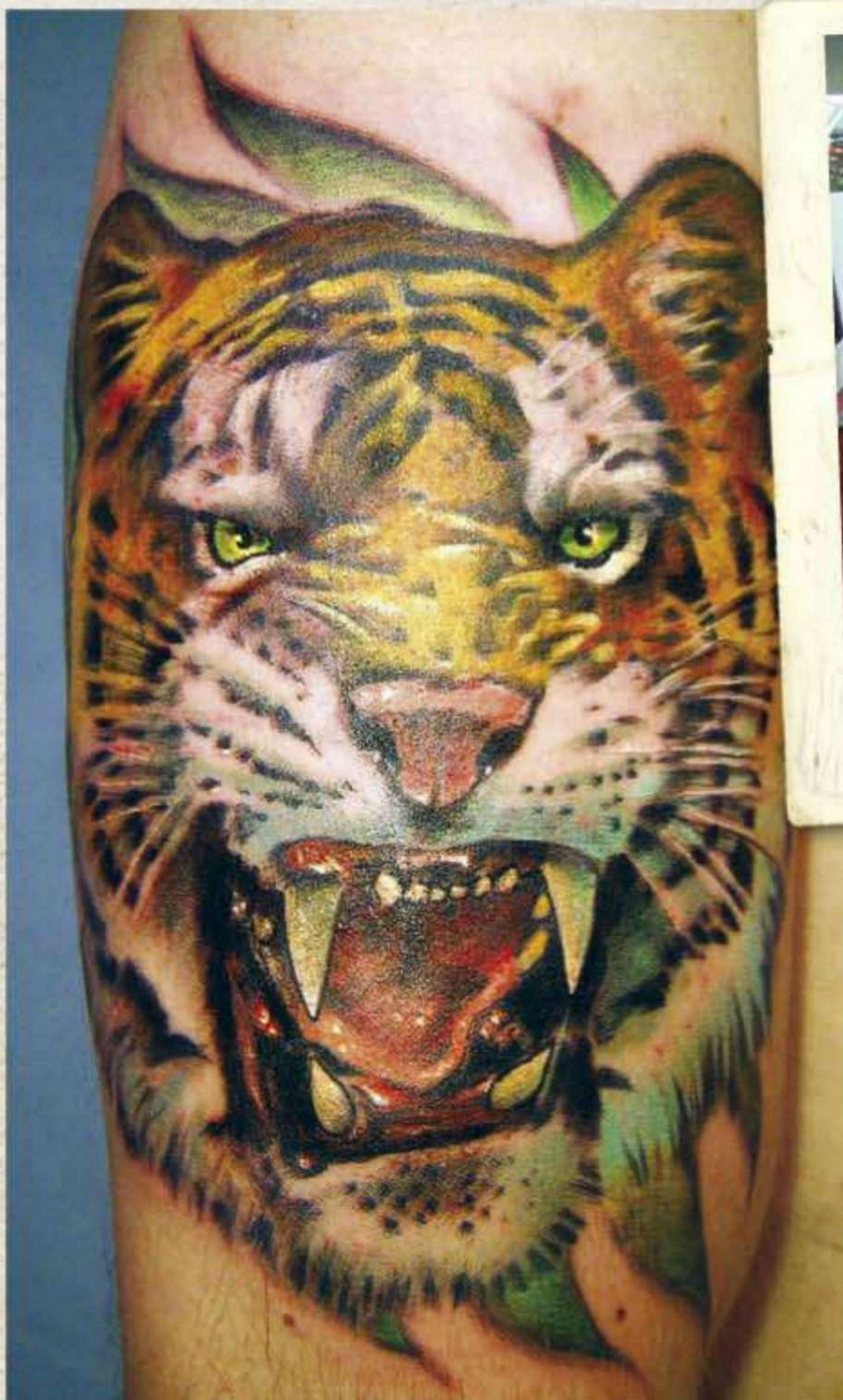
Every time I interview a tattoo artist, I seem to find yet another story of how a fresh young artist first got into the tattoo world. From humble beginnings in Turin, to Miami via Brazil, then back to Italy again, Ettore has had a crazy ride to the top.

“I started tattooing in Brazil in 2002. The first time I went to Brazil, I was there for about three months. I was in Pernambuco with my

girlfriend Sara. I was there to make all the sets for the resort theatres. We went back to Italy for two weeks and then returned to Brazil again for four months. This time we were in Recife, in Alagoas. I was doing the sets again while Sara was making all the costumes for the theatres. It was while I was here that I saw an advert in a tattoo magazine selling basic tattooing kits by mail order. I was curious and so I ordered one.

When the parcel arrived, a Brazilian painter/tattoo artist showed me how to put the machine together and fix the needles. He just showed me how to assemble the machine

Trent Aitken-Smith © Ettore Bechis



SLIGHTLY WEIRD
 In Miami, a unique accent, commonly called the 'Miami accent', is widely spoken. It developed mostly by second- or third-generation Hispanics whose first language was English. It is very similar to accents in the North-east, but contains a rhythm and pronunciation heavily influenced by Spanish. However, a Miami accent is not Spanish-accented English, as many Miami residents who are not Hispanic, or do not speak Spanish, speak with the Miami accent as well.

“I WAS IN NEW YORK IN NOVEMBER AND BUSINESS WAS VERY SLOW SO AFTER TWO WEEKS, WITHOUT EARNINGS AND WITH A LOT OF SNOW, I DECIDED TO HEAD FOR THE WARMTH AND MY GIRLFRIEND, SO I TOOK A PLANE AND HEADED OUT TO MIAMI. THAT WAS ABSOLUTELY ONE OF THE BEST DECISIONS OF MY LIFE”

but not how to use it, that I had to learn on my own. It didn't take long and I was inundated with requests from the staff (bartenders, waiters and so on) to tattoo. So I started tattooing for free. They were happy and I got some practice.

“I did my first tattoo with my mentor watching, but it didn't go very well. I did all the lining and when I came to clean the tattoo, there was nothing but a thick bloody line. Thankfully the tattoo was on the customers back so I had time to step back, take a breath and then carry on until it started to take shape and look good. All this without worrying the customer.”

With his passion for tattooing ignited, Ettore headed back to Italy to see if he could find a teacher to help him along his tattooing path. It was here he met Alessandro Doria and things really started taking off.

“Alessandro was the one who really taught me the basics of tattooing, I absolutely consider him as my teacher. He even gave me my first grips and tips for free and he really helped me to make my first steps in tattooing. When I returned to Italy I didn't know anyone in the field, but I'd seen his work in a magazine and really liked it. His studio was also really close to my house so I went to see him. That first meeting

was not very pleasant though. I actually thought that it would be the first and the last time we would meet. But I'm really stubborn and so I kept at him, insisting, till he gave me an opportunity. I worked at his studio for quite a few months and, thankfully, he was a really nice guy – unlike the first impression I had of him.

“I learnt so much in that time; about traditional tattoos, Japanese styles and lots more. But the truth 🍷



was there was not a lot of work for both of us in the studio, so I began to look for other studios to work at. After a long search I found a little studio in the centre of Italy. It was quite far from my house but I really wanted to have a career in tattooing and I needed to gain experience before going to America, which was my plan. But Alessandro and I have been friends ever since and his advice has really helped me to improve my style and technique.

"After a year and a half, I decided that it was time for me to go to America and so I contacted a tattoo studio in New York. This was to be the beginning of an awesome adventure! When I arrived in New York, I immediately realised that I loved this country. But the surprise was not over, not yet. I was in New York in November and business

was very slow, so after two weeks without earnings and with a lot of snow, I decided to head for the warmth and my girlfriend, so I took a plane and headed out to Miami. That was absolutely one of the best decisions of my life. The best thing about working in America was that it allowed me to do the kind of tattoos I love; realistic pieces, portraits and beautiful subjects – which is usually impossible to tattoo here in Italy. What is brilliant about America is that people seem to co-exist with tattoos; it is not just a fad. In America, people love big bright colours and the old school style like Davy Jones and this gives you the opportunity to learn so much more about tattoo art.

"But tattoos and tattooing aside, the beauty about living and working in Miami is that it is exactly how you



"YOU THINK THAT THE MEDIA EXAGGERATES EVERYTHING WHEN IT SHOWS THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE BUT IF YOU GO THERE, YOU UNDERSTAND THAT EVERYTHING IS REALLY AN EXAGGERATION ITSELF. FROM THE GIRLS WITH BIG BOOBS TO THE INNUMERABLE LIMOUSINES - EVEN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT SIREN IS EXAGGERATED!"



see it on TV or in the movies. You think that the media exaggerates everything when it shows the American way of life, but if you go there, you understand that everything is really an exaggeration itself. From the girls with big boobs to the innumerable limousines... even the fire department siren is exaggerated! One day while I was at the gym I met Hulk Hogan and another time we had Jim



Carrey at the Salvation tattoo shop. It was all a bit crazy!"

After spending some time travelling around America, Ettore decided to move back to Italy and open his own studio, Absolution Tattoo Lounge, on Valentine's Day 2010.

"I opened Absolution with my two business partners, Simone Cassinelli and Francesco Ferraiolo. I first met Francesco at a tattoo convention and when I went to work at Salvation Tattoo Lounge in Miami for six months, I got him to come over to America for a couple of weeks to share that amazing experience with me. Simone ended up coming over with him and that's how we came up with the idea to set up a studio together."

Even though his first tattoo might have been a trial by fire, it has paid off for Ettore and since opening the studio, he has gone from strength to strength. And with heroes like Nikko Hurtado, Mike deVries and Jeff Gogue to look to for inspiration, he is making waves in the field of realism.

"I love realistic style tattoos and I think light and shade, and if possible colour, are essential. For example, if I have to do a Japanese dragon it will never have flat colours as tradition would



"IF I HAVE TO DO A JAPANESE DRAGON IT WILL NEVER HAVE FLAT COLOURS AS TRADITION WOULD DICTATE, BUT IF POSSIBLE THERE WOULD BE HIGHLIGHTS AND STRONG SHADED CONTRASTS. I FEEL THIS REALLY MAKES IT AS THREE-DIMENSIONAL AS IS POSSIBLE"

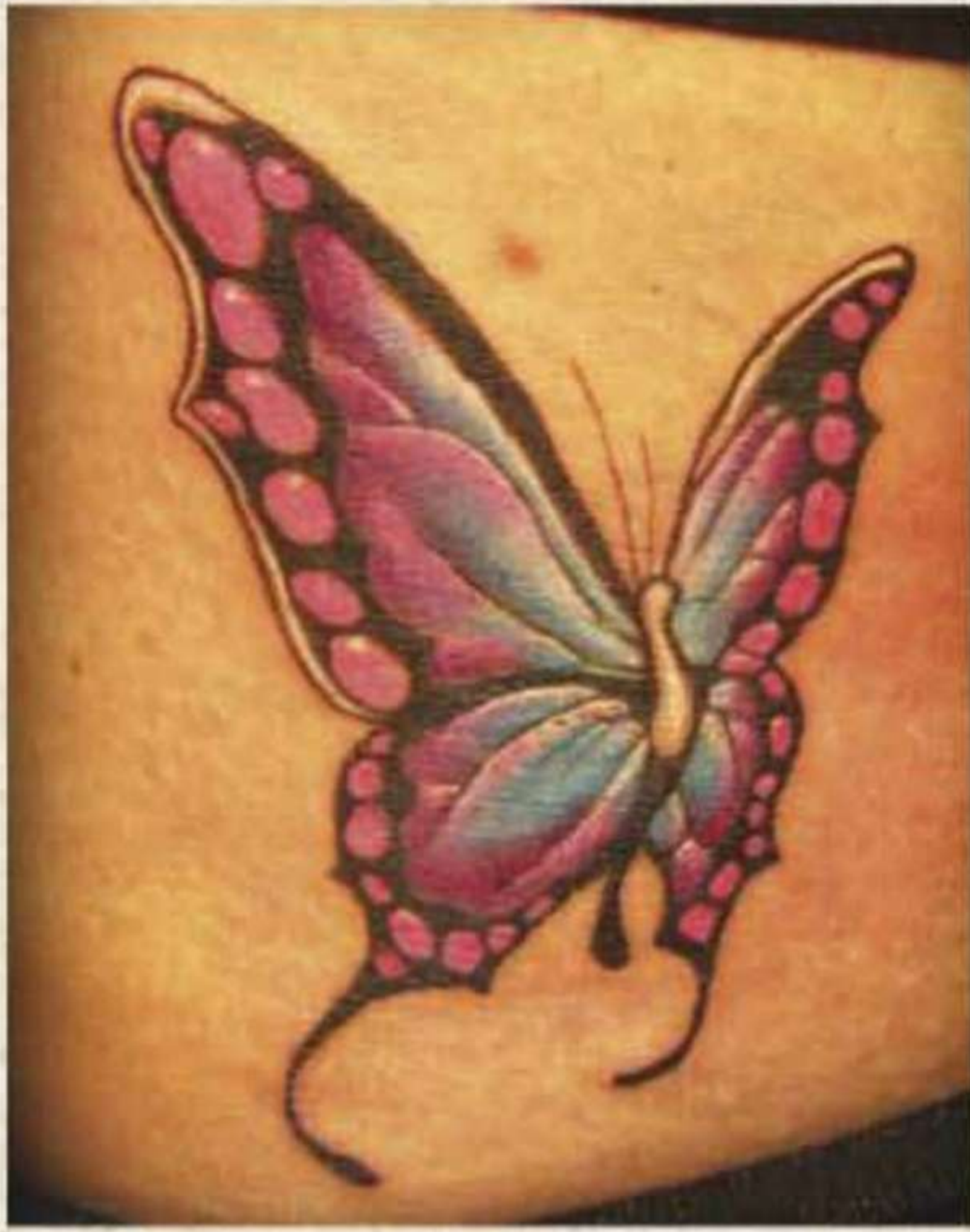
dictate, but if possible there would be highlights and strong shaded contrasts. I feel this really makes it as three-dimensional as is possible.

"Let's take, for example, a job that I did not long ago. The client wanted a portrait but the subject was completely flat, there was no shading because it was a photo taken at night with a flash! Then I remembered seeing a gorgeous portrait of Elvis Presley with perfect light and shade. At that point all I had to do was apply the atmosphere of the Elvis painting to the tattoo in hand. Recreating the same light, shade and colour isn't easy but in the end it gives you such satisfaction. I think it's essential to have references and pictures at all times so you can go back to them when you prepare the design. I never leave things to chance. 🍀"

RANDOM COLOUR FACTS!

Color is the perceptual characteristic of light described by a color name. Specifically, color is light, and light is composed of many colors – those we see are the colors of the visual spectrum: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. Objects absorb certain wavelengths and reflect others back to the viewer.





"I THINK I HAVE PAINTED ON EVERY KIND OF SURFACE YOU CAN THINK OF. I FEEL THAT IF YOU ARE A PAINTER AND A TATTOOIST, THE TWO MEDIUMS THOUGH SEPARATE, COMPLIMENT EACH OTHER"

"When I first started tattooing, I approached in a very traditional way; shadows with black or sumi and lights with white. One day I watched a Joshua Carlton and Mike De Vries DVD and instantly I understood that I can use many painting techniques in tattoo art as well. Funny enough, recently I have been doing the opposite, using tattoo techniques in painting. I guess you could say it is never over, the learning and evolving.

"I love to paint. I've always done it since I was a child and I always try and paint when I have free time. I think I have painted on every kind of surface you can think of. I feel that if you are a painter

and a tattooist, the two mediums though separate, compliment each other. Saying that though, for me, it is still a completely different approach even though the end product might be the same.

"In painting, you've got more time to think what to do or how to do it and you can go back, but for tattooing, I try to plan everything before starting. This is a little bit more difficult and time consuming, but if I'd have to choose, I prefer to tattoo. Maybe one day, when I am a very, very good tattoo artist I'll think about changing my job and concentrate on painting but for now, I am very happy."





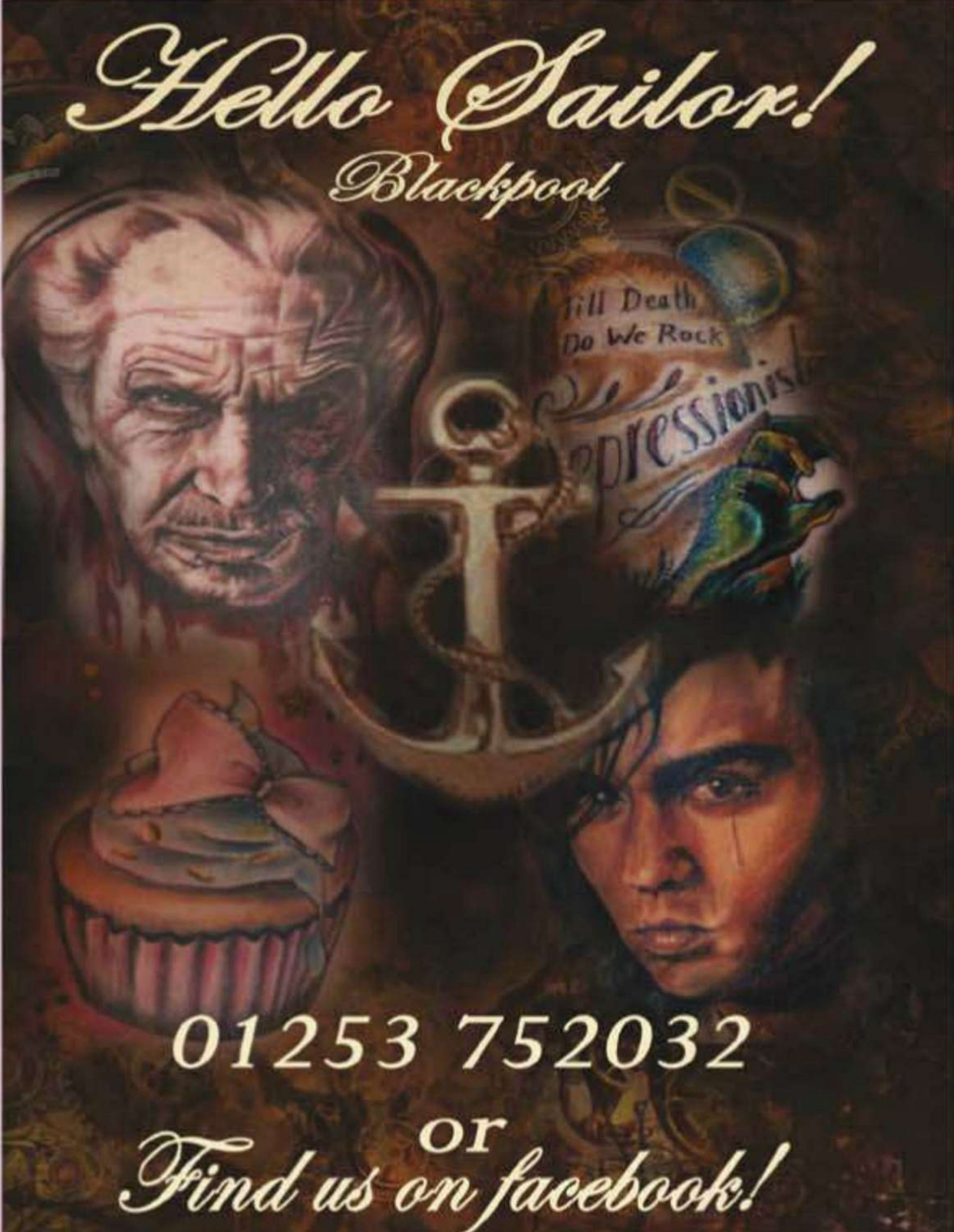
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Stroll through any city or town in the UK and you'll easily find a selection of studios that are more than likely just a small selection of what the place has to offer. It makes the contrast with Iceland's capital even more remarkable. With five studios, all situated on two neighbouring streets, Reykjavik makes for a totally different body art scene. We decided to see what was going on

This island is not your average hill with a palm tree on the top. The country is half the size of England and its whole population is ten times smaller than that of London. Iceland has the lowest density of all European countries and is situated somewhere between Greenland and Europe's mainland. Sadly, the island is mostly known for its bankruptcy and the volcanic ash cloud that paralyzed the air traffic around the globe, but Iceland's tattoo artists are ready to make the Icelandic body art scene famous.

Marcel Kamphuis
Tess Renkens, Anne Knispel and Jón Páll Halldórsson

One of them is Jón Páll Halldórsson: "I started out with the fine arts and attended a course in graphics. It was the beginning of the '90s and tattoos started to become more and more popular. I was traveling across Greece where I met an artist from Athens. He taught me the basics of tattooing and the rest is history. My dream is to travel through Europe once again, but my wife has a company here and we have two young kids. I couldn't leave my studio behind either. I'd love to work in Amsterdam for a while though, the city seems really interesting and me

and my wife love it there. Don't get me wrong, it's not about the drugs, like it is for many tourists. It's just a beautiful city and it seems like there is always something going on."

There are many tattoo conventions in the UK, but even a small country like Iceland has its own event. The yearly Reykjavik Tattoo Convention (aka Icelandic Tattoo and Rock Festival) is very popular and shows great Icelandic talent. "It's a small scale event, 20 artists in a pub. Worth a visit, that's for sure," says Jón. The laws considering tattooing





are pretty much the same as in the UK. The legal age to get tattooed is 18, younger teenagers, even with parental consent, have to wait until they reached this age. The prices used to be similar to those of the UK and other Scandinavian countries. However, because of the low exchange rate today you get more ink for your money.

The Icelandic alphabet is similar to English, even though it has a couple of special characters. Many clients choose an English text for their body. "Personally I find it a bit strange when Icelandic people choose an English phrase. I mean it's obvious for song lyrics or a quote, but I can't think of any other reasons. You also see a lot

I FIND IT A BIT STRANGE WHEN ICELANDIC PEOPLE CHOOSE AN ENGLISH PHRASE. I MEAN IT'S OBVIOUS FOR SONG LYRICS OR A QUOTE, BUT I CAN'T THINK OF ANY OTHER REASONS



THE LITERARY SCENE

Iceland's best-known classical works of literature are the Icelanders' sagas; prose epics set in Iceland's age of settlement. The most famous of these include Njáls saga, about an epic blood feud, and Grœnlendinga saga and Eiríks saga, describing the discovery and settlement of Greenland and Vinland (modern Newfoundland). Egils saga, Laxdæla saga, Grettis saga, Gísla saga and Gunnlaugs saga ormsstungu are also notable and popular Icelanders' sagas.

of people with their own name inked on their body. It's a bit weird. It's like they can't think of anything original. If I have to be honest I think it lacks inspiration and is slightly egocentric."

Tattoos have a long tradition in Iceland, mostly because of its many sailors and fishermen. "Fishing used to be the country's main income source. After a good catch, it was a tradition to get drunk in one of the big European harbours and for the whole group to get inked together afterwards. Body modifications used to be popular

among special social groups, like bikers and sailors. Nowadays we do all kinds of tattoos, but many of my clients are interested in big pieces; be it realistic or Japanese, both black and white and in colour. I noticed that sleeves are becoming very popular especially with a matching back piece. I hired an extra employee specialized in typography, cause it's not really my thing."

The 36 – year-old artist, Jón Páll works at his own tattoo and piercing studio Íslenzka Húðflúrstofan. This, he





tells us, is the only shop that provides only individual custom work. Every employee has an artistic background, so they are able to come up with interesting designs. Jón Páll respects artists from the other parlours and acknowledges their skills. "At the moment we're too busy to think about the competition, but it doesn't mean that we don't know who they are. We are friends with a couple of them and the others we ignore. I like to know other artists and to compete with them. It keeps you focused and motivates you to improve your work. We also tend to exchange clients. I, for instance, am not really good in



MEET THE LOCALS

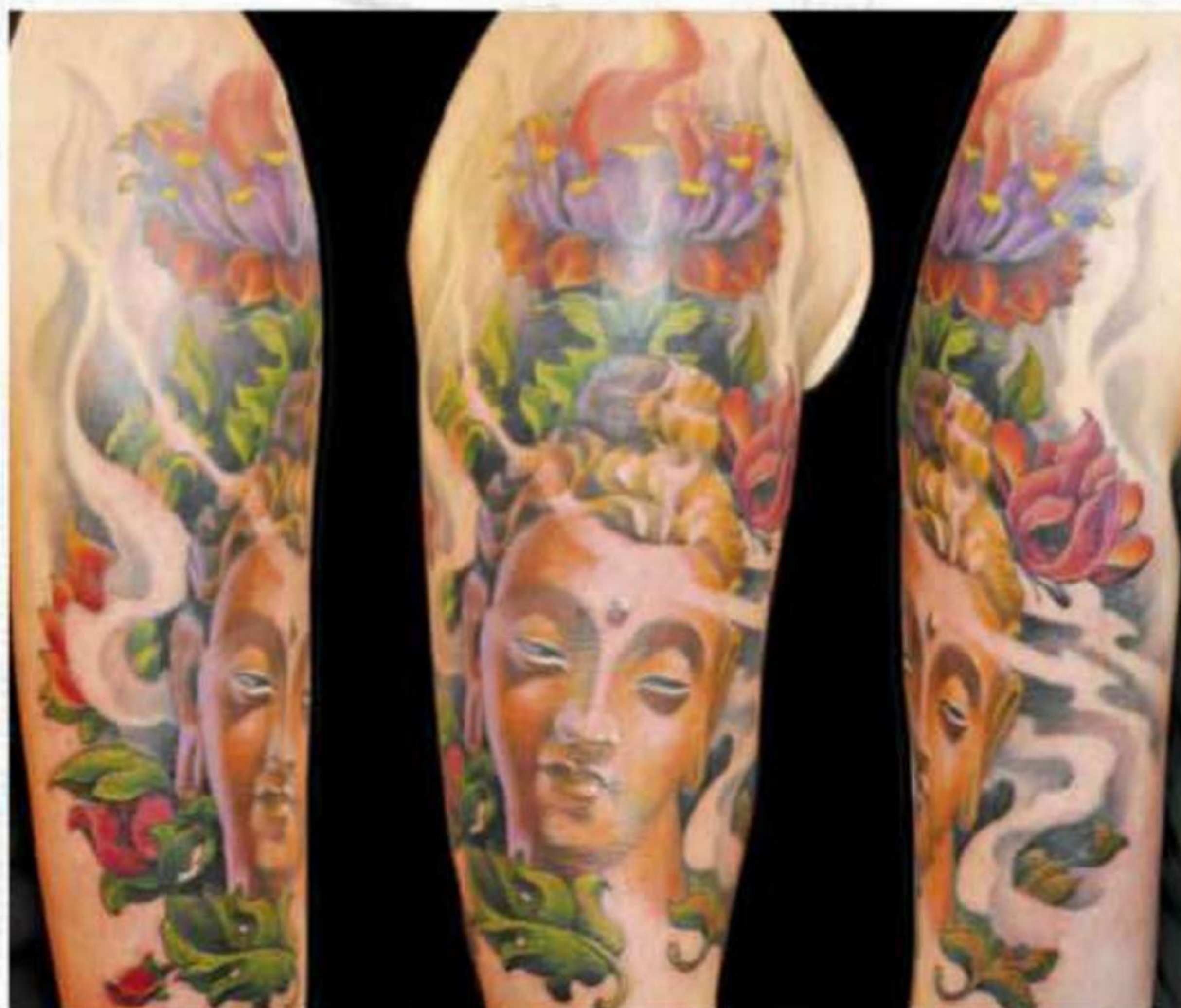
Recently archeologists have found the ruins of a cabin in Hafnir on the Reykjanes peninsula (close to Keflavik Airport). Carbon dating reveals that the cabin was abandoned between 770 to 880 AD, suggesting that someone had come to Iceland well before 874 AD.

The perfect spot to check out the ink on bare skin is Bláa Lónið (Blue Lagoon). This touristic attraction is the place to be for relaxing and showing off body art. The famous resort is situated on the lakeside in the middle of a lava field with the temperatures ranging from 32 up to 62 degrees. The water and the saunas aren't the only attraction. The guests make sure their skin will stay smooth with the special cleansing cream from one of the buckets alongside the huge tub. You can be sure that some of the cream covered faces in the Blue Lagoon are clients of Jón Páll Halldórsson. 🐾

THE ICELANDIC SKIN IS PERFECT TO WORK WITH, IT'S EVEN AND EXTREMELY SOFT. THE INK LASTS LONGER AND THE COLOURS ARE REALLY VIVID THANKS TO THE VERY BRIGHT SKIN TONES

old school ink, that's why I prefer to send my clients to someone that specializes in this style. I feel like our friends do the same.

"Most of the clients are locals with now and then a tourist stopping by. I definitely think that Icelandic people have a lot of tattoo ideas, so there is enough work for all of us. Because of the small population, the trends tend to spread quickly. The Icelandic skin is perfect to work with, it's even and extremely soft. The ink lasts longer and the colours are really vivid thanks to the very bright skin tones," we hear from Jón.



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Last month we were at **BOURNEMOUTH INK**

It's cool to bring a different story to the table when doing a show write up sometimes. It was a cracking show for sure but being as you all know the drill by now, we thought we might take a shot at bringing you some behind the scenes action from this top flight event:

Once again, the Bournemouth Tattoo Convention went down a storm last month. Not only was the convention centre packed to the rafters with out of this world entertainment, the organizers made sure that they had the cream of the tattooing world attending. But there was a little story behind the convention that caught my eye and demanded a little further investigation.

Three weeks before the convention was due to open its doors, Martin Welsby (machine builder and tattoo lover) opened up his Inbox, to find an interesting request from Ester Gill, the convention organizer.

"Ester, the lovely lady that runs the Bournemouth Tattoo Convention, knew I made tattoo machines in my spare time. She had sent me an e-mail, asking if I could make twenty-six tattoo machines, to give away as prizes at the convention. I had to read the e-mail again, I just couldn't believe it. Twenty-six machines in three weeks! Considering all my machines are hand made, three piece welded mild steel frames, it was a non starter. That amount of machines, from nothing to finished running machines, would take me a couple of months at least. I replied to Ester saying sorry, but I couldn't possibly do it.

"The next day, I check my e-mails again and Ester has e-mailed me asking for fourteen machines this time; seven for Saturday and seven for Sunday. I thought hard about it and in the end I decided to take on the challenge. Ester and I chatted via email and came up with the idea of twelve white machines and two gold machines; the two gold being for best of day and the white being for best in category."

"The next day, I took myself to my little old work shop and set about

AND HERE'S WHERE ALL THOSE MACHINES WENT

SATURDAY WINNERS & RUNNERS UP FOR 2011

Small B&G

Ian Macey - Chantal
Cody

Large B&G

Sebastion - Marcin
Mikos / Tattoos By
Design

Small Colour

Nick thompson -
Chantal Cody

Large Colour

Chris Stellina - Joseph
Gellar / Gellar Tattoo

New School

Volio - Ben Hamill
/ Ink Studios

Tribal/Abstract

Toby Staunton - Patrick
Huettlinger / Sakrosankt

Best Of Day

Michael Collins - Coral /
The Gallery

SUNDAY WINNERS & RUNNERS UP FOR 2011

Small B&G

1. Daniel Milbourn -
Steve A / Indelible
Tattoo

Large B&G

1. Daniel Milbourn -
Steve A / Indelible

Small Colour

1. Pshemek - Eugene
Tattoos By Design

Large Colour

1. Scott Guildford -
Derek Campbell /
Ultimate Tattoos

New School

1. Kelsey Mercer - Urban
Vigilante / Forever
& Ever

Abstract/Tribal

1. Alan Chisholm - Alex
Hennerley / Adorned

Best Of Day

Mark Harvey - Ben
Hamill / Ink Studios

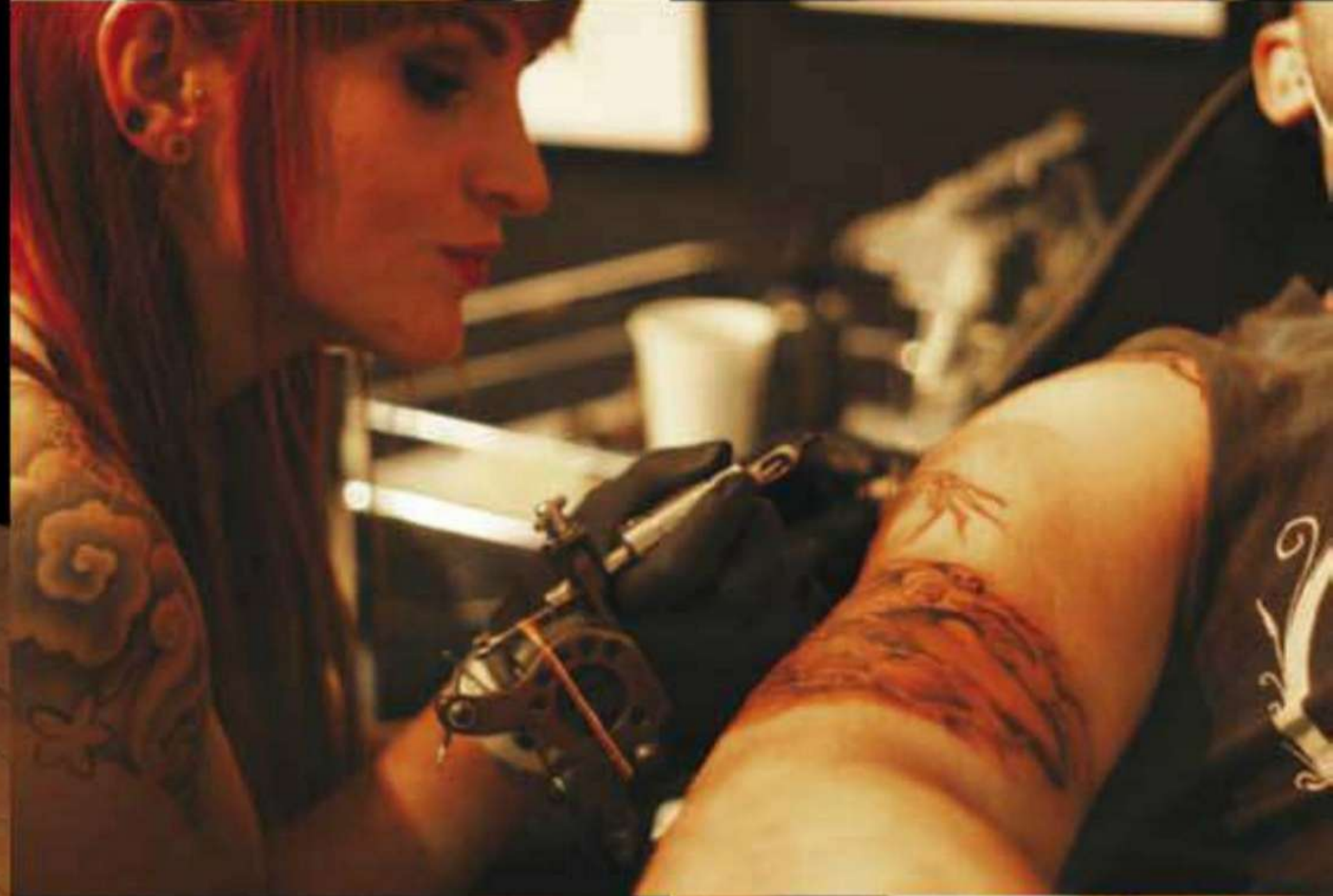


ESTER AND I CHATTED VIA EMAIL AND CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF TWELVE WHITE MACHINES AND TWO GOLD MACHINES; THE TWO GOLD BEING FOR BEST OF DAY AND THE WHITE BEING FOR BEST IN CATEGORY.


trying to create some of the best machines I've ever made. I spent the next few hours sitting thinking, 'What the fuck am I going to do to please Ester and give the winning artists a machine that they will like?' I decide to make fourteen full size machines in the Walker frame style. I kept thinking, 'I have three weeks to complete and deliver these machines but I don't want to cut corners because they have to be perfect as they are all going to end up in the hands of some of the country's top artists.' So the pressure was on to get this right."

Three weeks later and it is the Friday morning, my time is up. I have fourteen machines in a box, on the front passenger seat next to me, as I set off on my five hour drive

down to the show. I finally arrive at my digs, right near the BIC, book in and find my room. A quick freshen up and of I go to find Ester. I get into the BIC and as I am wandering, I begin to think to myself, 'I thought I had a challenge but to put on a convention as good as this one must be a nightmare!' Looking around, I can see Ester is doing a fantastic job and eventually I track her down, going 100mph, dealing with traders, artists, staff and visitors. I grab her attention, it wasn't easy, and we get back to her office. Nervous, I show her the machines and thankfully, she is very pleased with what I have made. The last touch, we put them on the polished stainless steel plinths, Ester has had made, and they look fantastic." 🐼



Slip of the Tongue



You think it's a good idea at the time: "Let's get a tattoo artist to write a column and give the magazine another dimension for people to chew over." Yeah, let's see how that pans out shall we...



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Welcome to the devilishly weird, pink diesel powered rocket ship to other worlds that I call home. I bring to you a dose of sleaze and bling as an antidote to the usual chemically induced fun that you would normally anaesthetise yourself with when faced with the cardboard coloured world that some folk want to ram down your throats. Nobody will be happy that you have read this and as something for your consumption this article will give some people indigestion. The tattoo universe should, as far as I can tell, be a place inhabited by the coolest people on the planet, but these days I'm beginning to question whether this is now true. In my earlier life, a tattoo was way outside of most people's box. Tattoo art is supposed to get up people's noses. It is not supposed to be liked by your Mum...

At the age of 45 and with half of those years spent in the profession of tattooing, I have finally broken off the shackles of general conformity out of the realisation that I don't really need to measure up to the standards of others or even look to see what those standards are. A great part of my new-found freedom comes from the fact that in tattooing I am seen as reasonably successful because in a notoriously difficult career to survive, in I have managed to do so. It is great to be wearing some of the wildest tattooing known to man, whilst knowing that the critics have nothing material to carp about and that if I irritate them then that is

their problem. No, I don't regret my tattoos, even though they shock the hell out of people. The respect that I get despite the outlandish tattooing that I wear comes from the fact that I do not seek approval for what I have done and I do not seek permission for what I am planning to do. I have no desire to do anything else except live in the strange alternative netherworld that is tattooing, where I can speak and behave honestly and freely without any deliberate attempt to damage others, and create art that some individuals enjoy whilst mixing with people who seek Agents Of Change (us tattooists) to help them in this direction too. In this, I can find a direction that means that I am not ramming my personal codes down others' throats or placing them as obstacles in anyone's way, unlike those inhibited individuals who would retard your progress out of sheer bitterness.

My tattooing is the sort of stuff that will get me arrested and this year I intend going out of my way to do so since I suspect they won't, like every one else, know what the hell to do with me. In the event that I provoke the powers that be into taking me into custody, I suspect that I will be causing them a greater headache than will be of benefit to society. I am looking forward to

the next few years where I can lead the sleaziest and wildest punk rock and roll existence. Kind of out of control in a special place where the rules don't apply to me. I intend mixing with some of the craziest people on the planet, wearing mirror shades and joining in with other like-minded people, artists, creators of the bizarre, photographers, musicians and poets to collaborate on the elaborate and generally get in the way of an ordered society that leads a timetable existence tied to monotony.

Tattoo art will free you. There is awesome creative potential wrapped up in my studio for tattoo artistry. The freedom of expression that the highly talented zoo of creatures, my crew, have at their disposal, means that every day, fresh new ideas emerge that become a collective pool to feed off in order to enjoy a lifestyle with our customers that is humorous, upbeat and that nobody that visits us will forget. We are the Agents Of Change that will break down, slowly at first, your limits as



we reshape you and allow the real you to escape. You will eventually be free to move forward with your own talents towards a future which guarantees colour and light will be shed into the dreary existence that the rest of the world seem hell bent on putting up with purely because they are afraid to advance their identities for fear of criticism. The creative core of my business, my huge crew, have reached a calmness with their potential and I am pleased to say that we have risen above the usual problems associated with tattoo artistry like drink, drug or attitude problems.

Don't hold yourself back because as time marches on, the changes around you that seem so frustratingly slow are still allowing for a future where what is not acceptable now is going to become

where you, the reader, can indulge with me the idea that everybody has something to share. For this I have created a Batphone, the number for which is listed below, and I invite you to text in your most creative, funny, upbeat, sleazy, creepy anecdotes and stories. The phone will take messages for three weeks from the date of publication only. If you are imaginative enough, your anecdotes will be printed as a part of my future articles; and the best story wins a set of my cast iron spurs as modelled on the high heel shoe of the lovely Hannah here at my studio. We will have a different peculiar prize each month. By the way, abusive texts will only waste the time of the person who sent it as it will be canned. I know that you will have some great stories of how you have successfully created a small oasis of groovy tattoo fun that the rest of the world

LIKE ME YOU WILL FIND THAT IT IS THE GREATEST FUN THAT CAN BE HAD. IF YOUR JOB WON'T ALLOW IT THEN FIND A DIFFERENT JOB AND MIX WITH POSITIVE PEOPLE (THEY ARE OUT THERE IN ABUNDANCE AND IN ALL FIELDS)

so in the future. By holding back you collude in slowing down the future potential so frustratingly for everybody around you. Have that sleeve, have that backpiece. Like me you will find that it is the greatest fun that can be had. If your job won't allow it then find a different job and mix with positive people (they are out there in abundance and in all fields). If your family won't allow it then it is time that they realised that there is really nothing that they should be so afraid of, and the autonomy that you will be asserting will prove that you have matured, even if they haven't.

This article space was given to me so that I could write interesting stuff about the inner mechanisms in the professional tattoo world and this I will do. But let us get really refreshing and open up a conduit

should know about.

And since these days I am way too busy fitting in a glamorous life of bondage, discipline and assorted S&M (*M&M more like! Ed.*) scenarios between a world of strange rock and slime, I am afraid that it is unlikely that I will be able to answer queries. On the other hand if you are really mischievous, I may be compelled to.

Can't you just tell that I was born with Mars in Aquarius, huh?

I am looking into doing some fun stuff this year which may be way too outlandish, plain silly or totally unworkable. If you have any

such schemes in your world then let me know, because if there is one thing I love, it is a great idea. Photographers, musicians, film people, poets, whoever, lets get together for some sleazoid activity. What say you? Text: 07743474567.

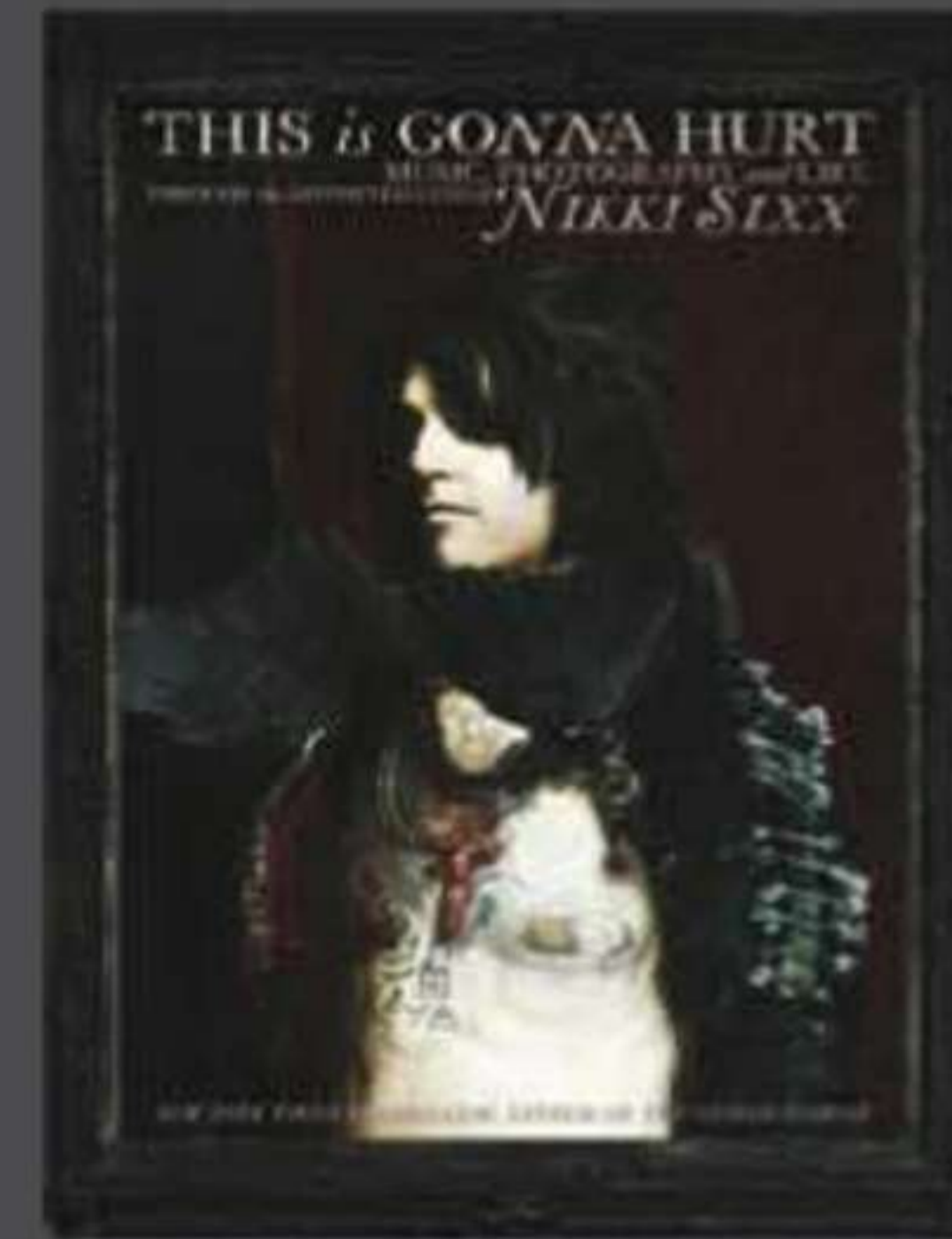
If you are imaginative enough, your anecdotes will be printed



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Reviews

IF IT'S A FEAST FOR THE EYES AND TATTOO-RELATED, YOU'LL FIND IT HERE UNDER THE MICROSCOPIC GLARE OF THE REVIEW PAGE. BE THEY BOOKS, DVDS OR VHS ARE ALL WELCOME AT SKIN DEEP WHERE JUDGEMENT SHALL BE PASSED UPON THEM... AT THE VERY LEAST, WE'LL TELL YOU IF THEY'RE ANY GOOD OR NOT



THIS IS GONNA HURT

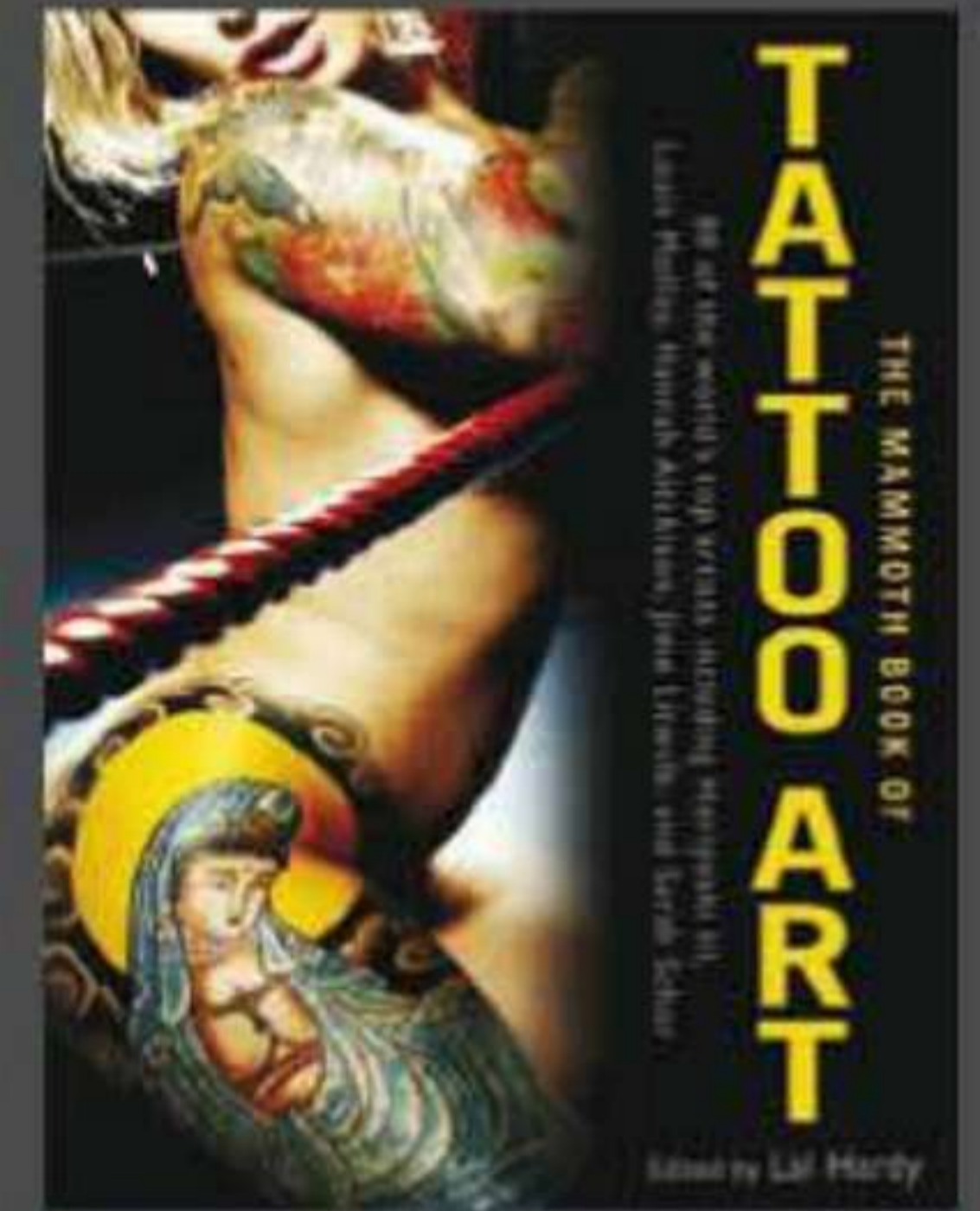
Music, Photography and Life Through the Distorted Lens of Nikki Sixx
Nikki Sixx
Pages: 224
Publisher: William Morrow

Sure, his first book landed on the New York Times Best Sellers list, but you can't blame me for wondering - could Nikki Sixx do it again?

With the release of *This Is Gonna Hurt*, the rockstar/ bestselling author/ proud father/ all around inspiring artist takes readers (once again) on an insightful journey into the greatest depths of his being. Filled with journal entries that are powerfully raw and thought-provoking, lyrics from the Sixx:A.M. album of the same name and unconventional but always eye-catching photography, *This Is Gonna Hurt* is an absolute must for all Nikki Sixx fans and for all human beings open to challenging and uprooting the unfounded conventions that are so often laid out by society.

"I remember as a kid looking through old photography books about sideshows and circus performers and wondering why people thought them so odd," writes Sixx in the book's first chapter, setting the tone for what's to follow. "Maybe we're the ones who are ugly."

Wonderfully designed, the fonts, colors, graphics etc. add to the book's authentic journal-feel, which is created by Sixx's honest words. There are no ghostwriters here. There is just Nikki Sixx. And this is gonna hurt.



MAMMOTH BOOK OF TATTOO ART

Lal Hardy
Pages: 448
Publisher: Robinson

This second book of the art edited by Lal Hardy is a sheer joy to read and look through. Top flight production values and an expert eye to keep everything in check makes this one of the more essential books to get your hands on this year

Featuring over 700 images from - unquestionably - the greatest artists working in the field today, nobody in their right mind can argue the fact that it's not value for money at this price. But there is a bigger game at play - and that is one of expectation. What should you expect from a tattoo in 2011? The answer is this. The images in this book are what you should be aiming for when it comes to quality whether it's your first or your last tattoo. Now that there is so much choice out in the world, the more books that are available that feature the very best in the world, the more it will become the norm.

Couple the concept with the experience and love that Lal Hardy puts into all his work and you'll find yourself wishing you had more room just about anywhere on your body - and those are just a few reasons in this small space that makes *The Mammoth Book of Tattoo Art* a complete no-brainer for any tattoo aficionado. You know what to do...

Classifieds

WHETHER YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AN ADDITIONAL ARTIST FOR YOUR STUDIO, A HOUSE MANAGER OR ARE SELLING AN ESTABLISHED BUSINESS LOCK, STOCK AND TWO SMOKING BARRELS, THESE FREE STREAMLINED CLASSIFIEDS OUGHT TO GET THE BALL ROLLING. SEND YOUR NEEDS TO THE OLD SCHOOL, HIGHER KINNERTON, CHESTER, CH4 9AJ OR EMAIL THEM INTO: EDITOR@SKINDEEP.CO.UK

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We are looking for an experienced tattoo artist for our tattoo studio in Sardinia (Italy). The ideal candidate would be experienced in most styles (blackwork tattoos, cloured tattoos, portraits and realism) and would have worked in a professional studio for at least two years. Please send CV, covering letter and some examples of your work to: tattoomexicanfamily@gmail.com

Studio For Sale Skin Illustrations Canterbury, Kent. Has been trading for over ten years now, for sale due to change of plans. Price £18000 ono. Please call Rick on 07970976704 for the full story, No Time Wasters or Dreamers, only serious enquiries.

Tattoo Apprentice wanted for a new tattoo studio in Alresford, Essex. Good attitude and friendly personality are a must, and a portfolio of artwork is required. No time wasters. If you have any enquiries or would like to apply, please contact Laura on 01206 824438 or 07547610471, or you can email happytats@hotmail.co.uk.

Tattooist wanted. North Star Tattoo, Harrogate, North Yorkshire is looking for a new artist. Busy, modern, well established, spacious studio in a central location. Applicants must be talented and enthusiastic, and capable of doing custom work as well as flash. Strong portfolio and studio experience essential. Great opportunity for the right person! Get in contact- donnorthstar@hotmail.co.uk

24 year old male in Dundee, Scotland, desperately seeking an apprenticeship in a tattoo studio. I need to direct my creativity towards tattooing and just need someone

to give me a chance. I have a very friendly and polite nature and would work very hard for your studio. I have a portfolio of creative work with a personal sketchbook of designs. If you would like to get in touch, please call 07506679048 or email ryanmeldrum96@yahoo.co.uk.

Tattooist wanted: we are looking for an experienced full time tattooist to work in our established shop. No drug/alcohol or attitude problems, must be polite and friendly. Must have full portfolio and references. For more details contact boothill on 0208 7510666

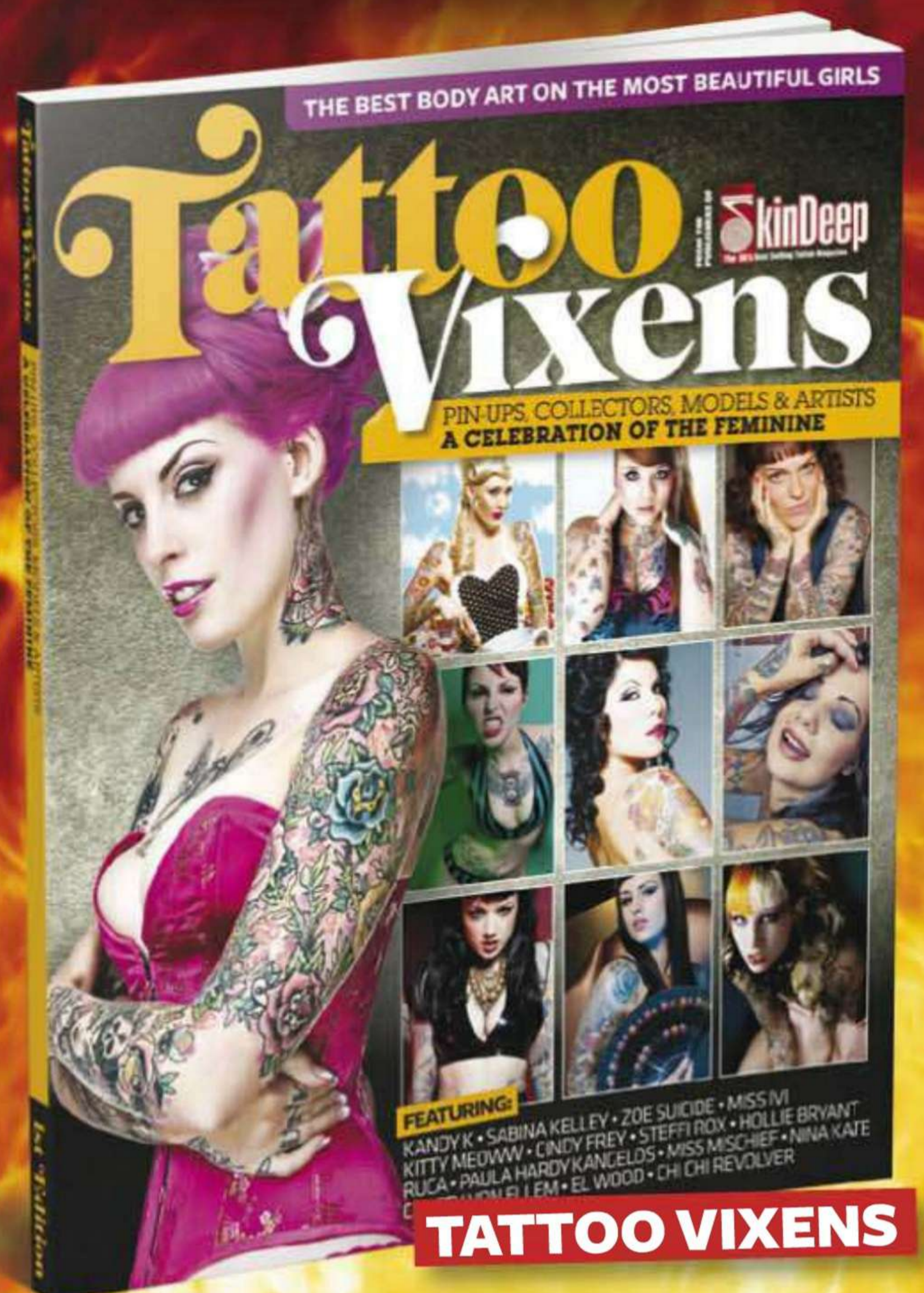
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Apprentice Required. For new studio in Leicester, age/sex unimportant, nobody with drink/drug/attitude problems need apply. The ability to draw is a must and portfolio required. You must be ambitious and eager to learn, this is an exciting opportunity for the right person to join our studio. To apply please send your C.V to: Absolute Art Tattoo's 225-227 Saffron Lane Leicester LE2 6UD.

Pro tattoo artist required in Worcestershire for long established custom studio. Minimum five years studio experience required, must be able to do all aspects of art, freehand, cover up and flash. Portfolio and checkable work history required. hygiene in work and person is a must. No drug, alcohol or personal dispositions. good sense of humour. Contact Dean - 07971585024.

Reliable, good artistic skills, tattoo artist with three years shop experience looking for work. For more info and my portfolio please contact me on 07749685263.

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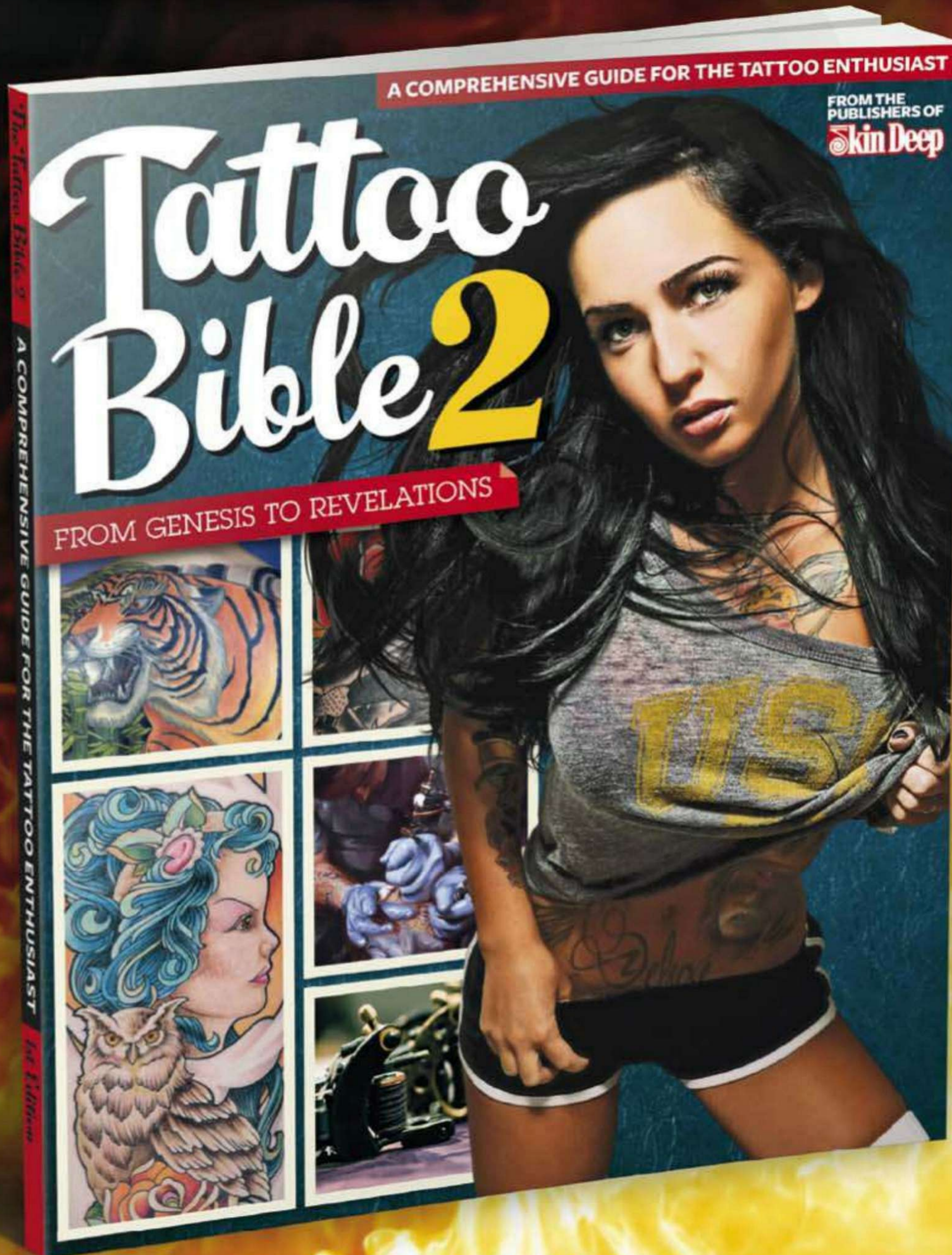
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When we published Volume One of *The Tattoo Bible*, tattooing was at a point of immense popularity. Who would have thought twelve months on that its popularity would grow into an even bigger global phenomenon? It is as much a part of popular culture today as our favourite TV shows, films and musicians. Along with that popularity comes a thirst for knowledge and a need for a respected source to answer those questions.

In this – *The Tattoo Bible 2* – we once again bring you the essential information you need to make good decisions when it comes to getting your first tattoo. You'll also find great advice from respected writers and tattoo artists. We look at everything you need to know if you're a tattoo virgin thinking about your first time, right across the board to how to get on the road to becoming a tattoo artist yourself and the right way to go about it.

We talk to respected international tattoo artists, look at the role the media has played in the sudden growth in popularity, arm you with a history of the art and discuss the different schools of tattooing. We look at the best in aftercare advice, give an overview of the international convention scene and how you can use it to your advantage and lift the lid on cover-ups. Of course - it wouldn't be a Skin Deep spin-off if we didn't lavish it with some outstanding photography and drop in a few of our best ever features to make this volume an even more collectible edition than the first.

Ultimately, *The Tattoo Bible 2* presents you with a fantastic worldview on the industry as it stands today. Just because we're having fun doesn't mean we're not taking it seriously!

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An Eye is upon you

T.L.N.D.

I had my first tattoo at 21 and by the time I met my husband I had the grand total of two. Two teeny, girly, discretely placed tattoos, tattoos that were deemed normal, tattoos that I had mostly forgotten about



Paula Hardy-Kangelos

Affairs of the heart are never a simple matter and the tattooed heart certainly makes love more complicated. By the time we were actually wed, my dormant interest had awoken and I walked down the aisle with the outlined beginnings of my first larger scale piece – my left calf – more public, but still unnoticeable in a wedding dress. Four years and around 100 hours of ink later, my husband told me that he, "had fallen out of love with me" when I had my throat tattooed, that it had "changed the angle of my face" and that the woman he married was no longer recognisable; the woman who had left the house just hours earlier, filled with anticipation and excitement for her tattoo appointment and who had returned to find the end of her marriage. My story is not an uncommon one – tattoos have been the cause of tension, arguments and sadly, break ups all over the world, but why?

I suppose it can come as surprise, even a shock to our loved ones, after all, the phrase 'I've always fancied a tattoo' does not generally conjure up ideas of sleeves, back pieces and body suits – indeed, large scale coverage is not usually a considered plan, set out before embarking on the journey, but a previously unnoticed desire that appears revelation-like after we have already travelled some distance down the path.

We've all heard statements from people keen to profess their dislike of tattooed bodies, but it's not often



purely aesthetic matters that affect a pre-existing relationship dynamic, instead it's the subtle, symptomatic differences that cause problems, differences that may be real or may be falsely perceived and needlessly feared. For example, our partners may feel apprehensive about something that appears concrete, such as financial costs, they may worry that money spent on something so resolutely individual must always be at the expense of a relationship. Or perhaps the trepidation originates from something more conceptual, like the damaging idea that tattoos are 'addictive', and to become tattooed is

THE CHANGING OF OUR SKINS CAN MAKE US FEEL LIKE A CATERPILLAR EMERGING FROM A CHRYSALIS TO DISCOVER ITSELF A BUTTERFLY AND THIS POSITIVE DISCOVERY OF THE SELF BRINGS WITH IT A NEWFOUND BODY CONFIDENCE

an uncontrollable compulsion that will be pursued at any cost, regardless of harm to those around us.

It's undoubtable that becoming tattooed is a transformative process. The changing of our skins can make us feel like a caterpillar emerging from a chrysalis to discover itself a butterfly and this positive discovery of the self brings with it a newfound body confidence, not unlike the enormous shift in self-perception that can follow significant weight loss. This confidence may beget attention that can feel threatening to the more static partner, especially if the attention opens up or is initiated by new social circles.

So it is not surprising that we are told

"no more" or instructed not to tattoo a particular body part, or told to cover up in certain situations. Our loved ones create barriers seemingly for us, but actually for their own reassurance.

A tattoo may not be immediately comparable to the kind of betrayals that more often signify the end of a marriage or partnership, but nonetheless can provoke similar feelings. The emotional responses of those around us must be considered, even if we ultimately choose to travel in an oppositional direction. So, what of my post-marriage story? After a disastrous date with a non-tattooed person – a blankie – an

actor who grandly and patronisingly told me that it was OK, because he had "come to terms" with my tattoos, I discovered the importance of sharing such a life altering

activity with someone who had also experienced it first hand.

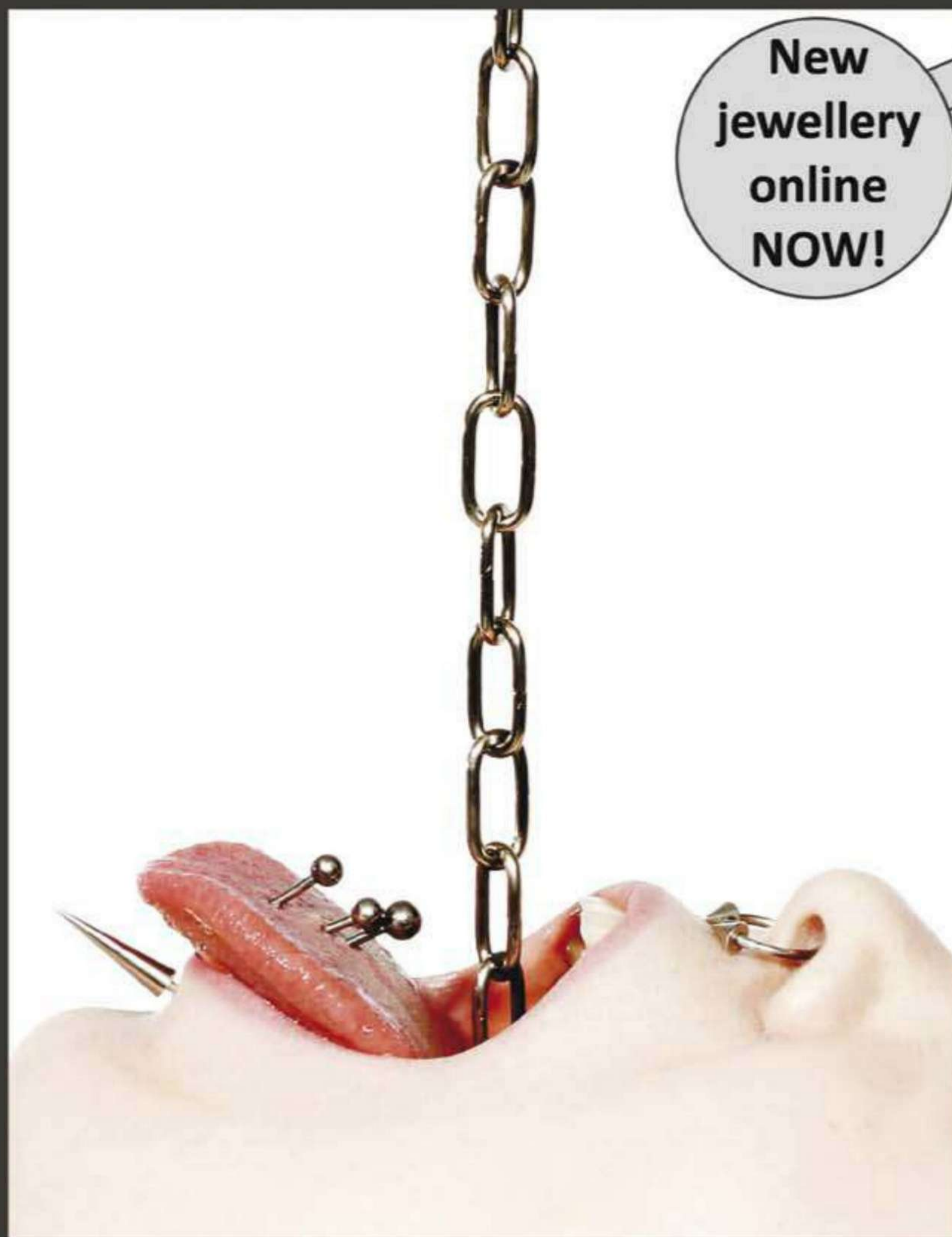
I'm pleased to report that my tattoo journey led me to another love, a love who as of June this year became my new husband – a man who will never question my motivations, or afford attention to the many glances that come my way, a man who prioritises the tattoo budget over the cars, foreign holidays and big sofas that enthrall the masses, a man who shares my passion and love and is my passion and love.

I am a very lucky girl. Paula Hardy Kangelos, tattoo philosopher, writer and fine artist married Daniel Morris, tattooer, on 11th June 2011 in a Welsh cider orchard. 🍷

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