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TATTOO LONDON (II)  
**LAL HARDY FLASHBACK**

LAURIE LIPTON  
**DEATH & THE MAIDEN**

**ART IS ANARCHY**  
THE DARKER HALF OF TRAD

**SECRET DIARY  
OF A TALL GIRL**  
PAULA CASTLE HITS  
THE ROAD

**LEAH JUNG**  
TATTOOS AND  
UKULELES

**DOTWORK  
EXPLAINED**  
WITH FADE FX

**PLUS**

**13 PAGE  
SUPPLEMENT  
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PORTFOLIOS**



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MODEL: MELANIE IVY PHOTOGRAPH: SCOTT COLE



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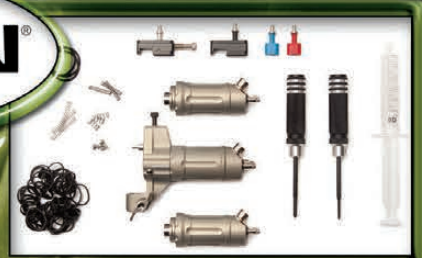
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Great British Tattoo Show  
28th / 29th May 2016



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# SELLING THE DRAMA

A serious observation this month: A couple of weeks ago I was out in Warsaw to check out a show that had just launched. I was also invited to do a spot of judging along the way which is always welcome—you should never say no to an opportunity to see fresh tattoos paraded in front of your face by the dozen... it's totally different to 'screen-work' that's for sure.

At the end of the weekend, with all judging done and dusted, there was a 'development'. One of the artists who had submitted his piece to be judged had missed his number being called out and was struck out as a 'no-show'. As we had wrapped everything up, handed awards out and drained the dregs of the coffee, there wasn't a whole lot that could be done about it, but the artist was insistent that something *should* be done about it.

Being as we (that would be co-judge Alex Rattray and myself, everybody else had been fired from a cannon to the bar) were doing nothing other than hanging around and shooting the breeze, we figured the least we could do was take a look—particularly as the guy was giving the organisational staff such a hard time over it.

So we looked.

Nice tattoo. So now what?

Further demands surfaced. He had spent all day on the piece, had worked hard on it, had travelled many miles to be there (from Estonia perhaps, I forget now) and finally, that we should reconvene the judging panel and do it all over again—this time with him included.

While we explained that we could tell him as much as we told any other artist about his entry (ie: nothing at all), it was also impossible to do what he was demanding because the show was actually done, dusted and many people (including Elvis) had left the building.

Still. Not. Enough.

Anyway, outside of this little soap opera was the guy who had been tattooed. Standing back from the drama, with his tattooed leg sticking out in front of him so his artist could point at different 'amazing parts of it',



**EVENTUALLY, THE ARTIST WOULD GET OVER IT, BUT THE OTHER GUY? HE WAS GOING TO HAVE TO CARRY THE DRAMA AROUND FOR A LONG TIME**



**SION SMITH • EDITOR**  
editor@skindeep.co.uk  
@skindeepmag  
@skindeep\_uk

I watched his face change like all the seasons of the year happening at once. Already busted from a full day on the couch, you could see the pride in his own tattoo start to disappear very, very quickly.

I took the artist to one side and explained what was happening—he may have spent all day working and it was unfortunate not to get judged with the others but the only thing that was happening now was his client was beginning to hate his tattoo.

Eventually, the artist would get over it, but the other guy? He was going to have to carry the drama around with him for a long time.

End result? A perfectly good tattoo spoiled by ego.

Great work is always welcome in all of our worlds, of course it is, but if we ever forget who actually owns that piece of work when the shouting's over and the fat lady is on the bus, we'll have lost the only thing that was ever worth shouting about. ▣



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**14 SECRET DIARY OF A TALL GIRL**  
*When we heard Paula Castle was hitting the road to work as much as she could at as many varied studios as she could find, it triggered that thing inside our heads that goes 'Hey, we could make a good feature out of that'. So, without much further fanfare, we unleash the hounds.*

**20 CONNECTING THE DOTS**  
*Many may regard dotwork tattooing as the new kid on the block but in truth the style has been developing for some time and its heritage dates back millennia. Fade FX explains.*

**24 LAURIE LIPTON**  
*Lipton's intense and wickedly wry work has been haunting galleries and*

*disturbing office spaces for over 30 years. It's also been the inspiration behind more than a few tattoos...*

**32 JOE CAPOBIANCO**  
*Last month, Joe Capobianco pulled up a chair at TripleSix Studios for a guest spot. We figured he couldn't be working for the entire 24 hours there are in a day, so occasionally chose to fire some fully loaded questions at him along the way. Brace yourself... Joe had so much to say, we actually only got through a couple of them. C'est la vie.*

**62 LAL HARDY**  
*Open until May 8th 2016, the exhibition 'Tattoo London'—at the Museum of London—aims to show the vitality of the*

*tattoo scene in the contemporary life of Londoners. This issue, we talk to the icon that is Lal Hardy.*

**70 BEHIND THE INK**  
*Hipsters. They took our beards and our lumberjack shirts and now they want our tattoos. There seems to be a lot of Victoriana ladyface and bearded fop tattoos of late, but is it just a fad? Wayne Simmons meets three of traditional's finest to find out.*

**76 ART IS ANARCHY**  
*There's nothing more exhilarating than creating art. Well, we think so anyway. We sent Beccy Rimmer off to interview two artists that have anarchy, individuality and determination at the heart of what they do.*

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# The Great British



# Tattoo Show

28th / 29th May 2016

ALEXANDRA PALACE | LONDON

[greatbritishtattooshow.com](http://greatbritishtattooshow.com)

TICKET HOTLINE 01244 881895





# Artists so far...

2 Guns Gomes

**AJ Richards**

Aaron Breeze

**Aaron Clarke**

Abbie Morpew

**Ad Van Thillo**

Adam Davey

**Adam Thomas**

Adam Williams

**Aitor Gazzoline**

Aga Mlotkowska

**Agata Wnek**

Aleksandras Kuznecovas

**Akos Keller**

Ale Final

**Alejandro Alba**

Alessandro Cecco

**Alessandro Di Rosa**

Alex Crook

**Alex Sacred**

Alex Underwood

**Ali Burke**

Alvaro Pruneda

**Amanda Ashby**

Amanda Greenidge

**Amandio Silva**

Anastasis Karydas

**Anatoli Todorov**

Andy MA

**Andy McDonald**

Angelo Netz Netto

**Ania Jalosinka**

Anna Iafaca

**Anthony Ortega**

Arfon Horley - Davies

**Armando Antonucci**

Arron Townsend

**Arturas Dirma**

Ashley Goldfinch

**Audrey Selva**

Bearta Nemes

**Ben Mercer**

Bernd Muss

**Billy Richards**

Brendan Holliday

**Brian Hepworth**

Bryony Holdsworth

**Butler**

Callum Hollinshead

**Carlos Aguilar**

Charlie Manger

**Charley McClelland**

Chris Alcalá

**Chris Burwin**

Chris Sims

**Chris Wright**

Christian Benzo

**Christopher Slapsin**

Craig Biggs

**Cris Baker**

Damien Wickham

**Dane Burton**

Daniel Cook

**Daniel Gram**

Daniel Illingworth

**Daniel McBride**

Daniel Park

**Danilo Pifera**

Danny Cross

**Danny Millbery**

Davey Sewell

**David Brace**

David Caravantes

**David Mujayo**

David Robb

**Daytona Williams**

Daz Darby

**Divine Macabre**

Darius Vidziumas

**Dominic Pirro**

Donatas Lasys

**Ed Zlotin**

Edgaras Tkcenka

**Edina Jaszberenyi**

Eddy Permanovis

**Elena Mameri**

Emil Supertramp

**Emma Bundonis**

Emma Mowbray

**Emma Willis**

Emrah Gulen

**Eri Tanaka**

Eric Borst

**Erikas Bulanovas**

Federico Amaterasu

**Fernando Galindo**

Gabbie Vasquez

**Gabor Zsofingecz**

Gabriele Chiarini

**Gabriele Lase**

Gareth Way

**Gary Chase**

Gavin Clarke

**Gavin Hackett**

Gavin Rodney

**Gaz Rushton**

Gemm Vero

**George Apostolopulos**

Gergo Augusztiny

**Gez Bradley**

Giangiacomo Radaelli

**Giles Jenner**

Gina K

**Giuseppe Romanello**

Gonzalo Cuesta

**Goorazz**

Griggy Smalls

**Graham Ware**

Guy Anderson

**Guy Fletcher**

Hannah Rose

**Hannah Ruth**

Hayley Price

**Hayley Spear**

Hiriam Casas

**Il Bue**

Inky Joe

**Ivan Yovkov**

Lizzy Curran

**Jacopo giff Menegazzo**

Jack Prince

**Jake Docksey**

Jake Galleon

**Jake Nipper**

James Brown

**James Cook**

James Taylor

**Jamie Blackburn**

Jamie Braund

**Jamie Jones**

Jan Sidirupoulus

**Jarek Slezak**

Javi Del Valle

**Jay Abbott**

Jay Watson

**Jean Carcass**

Jean Pierre Mottin

**Jeff Wharnsby**

Jenny Clark

**Jenny Gasser**

Jerry Burchill

**Jethro Bijlaart**

Joe Mullan

**John Lewis**

John Parker

**John Simkins**

Jose Carlos

**Josefin Jansson**

Josh Dixon

**Joshua Young**

Josie Sexton

**Joss Wilders**

Karl Cooper

**Keith Samways**

Kellz Morgan

**Kevin Dony**

Kimi Duck

**Koen Chamberlain**

Konrad

**Kostas Kotsidis**

Krzysztof Ozarowski

**Kyle Walker**

Kyra Bak

**Lauren Stephens**

Lauris Vinbergs

**Laura ' Larry Bee'**

Lauren Roberts

**Lee Dobbs**

Leeloo Deadmunch

**Lee Westwood**

Leigh Coombs

**Leseb Bing**

Lexx Black

**Lindsay Williams**

Lorenz Odermatt

**Lu Loram-Martin**

Lisa Elsom

**Luca Fedato**

Luca Scuro

**Lucasz ' Bam'**

Luke Cox

**Luke Rushton**

Maciej Gulak

**Mac McCarthy**

Marc Diamond

**Marco 'Cif' Bezzi**

Marco Matarese

**Marco Slo**

Marcus Stolz

**Marek Haras**

Maria Fernandez

**Marius Ciprian**

Mark Thompson

**Martin Marshall**

Martin Pautsch

**Mateusz Starczewski**

Matt Kaye

**Matt Pettis**

Matina Marinou

**Maya Vavoom**

Maz Arif

**Megan Louise**

Melina Wendlandt

**Mick Tomo**

Michael Gericke 'Haut'

**Michael Heal**

Mike Wilkes

**Milly Macis**

Mim Hennessy-Mann

**Miss Shiv**

Miss Sucette

**Mitko**

Mo Mori

**Moni Marino**

Monika Boo

**Moska**

Mowgli

**Nancy Johannson**

Nastia Zlotin

**Natalie Duffield**

Nathan Davies

**Neilo**

Niall Barton

**Nick Brace**

Nick Gill

**Nicky Van Minderhout**

Nick Testun

**Nicola Burini**

Nik Hylo

**Nik Moss-Glennon**

Nino Pasquarella

**Oliver Sims**

Ollie Smith

**Pablo Palacio**

Pawel Klaputek

**Ped Breaks**

Pedro Mendonca

**Pelletra**

PJ Reynolds

**Popa Viorel Catalin**

Przemyslaw Malachowski

**Rachel Green**

Rebeca Orts

**Riccardo Collu**

Rich Peel

**Roana Kundracikova**

Roxie Kirkby

**Ruairidh Von Linden**

Russell Johnston

**Ryan Lucas**

Ryan Scarpino

**Salem**

Sam Pearson

**Sam Rowan**

Samantha Stevenson

**Samma Charles**

Sammy Inks

**Sanchez Santi**

Sapo

**Sarah Aldridge**

Sarah Loskill

**Sasha Wilkinson**

Seb Kastor

**Sini Manu**

Slav Salata

**Sonny Mitchell**

Sonia Clarke

**Sonya Trusty**

Sorin Cacio

**Steve Andrews**

Steve Toth

**Stewart Ferguson**

Stewart Fish

**Stuart Clark**

Sven Rayen

**Sourgrapes**

Sydney Mahy

**Szillard Ritzl**

Szymon Gdowicz

**Szymon Garbacz**

Tasha-Leigh

**Tim Childs**

Tom Opilka

**Tomas Olsauskas**

Tommy Farrow

**Tommy Gunn Gray**

Tomy Starfire

**Toni Gwilliam**

Tony Covey

**Umberto Salvatori**

Vanessa Charmani

**Vasco Guerreiro**

Vesso Alexiev

**Vik B**

Vicky Lou

**Vid Blanco**

Virgulovic

**Will Gee**

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Skulls &amp; Orchids

**Slackjaw Apparel**

Starr Tattoo Supplies

**Stay Close Clothing**





## THE VALLEY OF THE ULTRA-VIXENS

**A model contest with a difference is set to return this April, in search of the nation's most unique and outrageous individuals.**

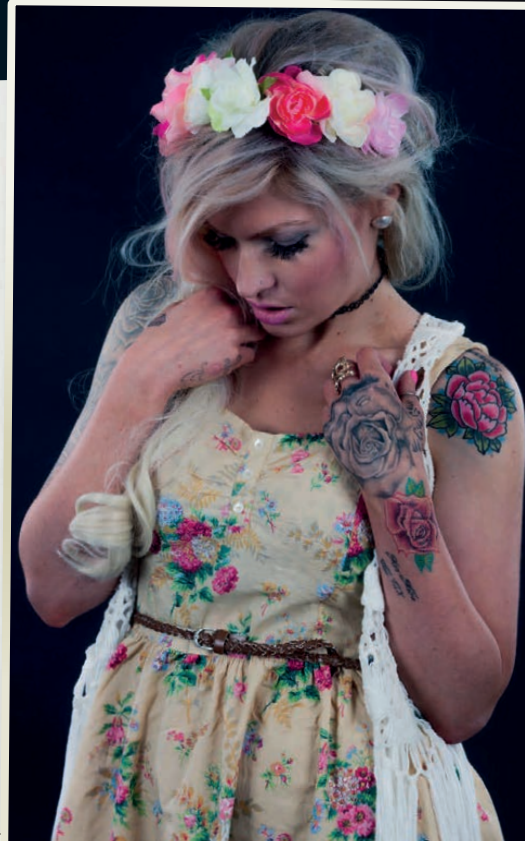
Alternative Model of the Year is not your typical beauty pageant, and boasts to replace the Prada with Punk, the Gucci with Goth and the Armani with Attitude. Organisers say "we celebrate individualism and diversity in the modelling world and break down the barriers in what is otherwise a competitive industry, welcoming everyone who stands out from the crowd and not afraid to break the mould".

Since launching in 2011 the event now tours 6 major cities including; Glasgow, Newcastle, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham and London and is the biggest contest of its kind in the UK—even featuring on a National Geographic Channel documentary back in 2014. Not only attracting the tattooed and body modified, the event has helped plus size models overcome any stigma and has been supporting the transgender community. The aim is to question mainstream views on true beauty and stamping out the prejudice that many face.

Entrants will be put to the test in a series of photo-shoot sessions for their chance to strut their stuff on the catwalk later this year as well as winning an array of prizes including a photography studio day worth £1000 and a model agency signing.

Regional auditions are being held monthly right up until September 10th. For more information and to apply visit: [www.alternativemodelling.com](http://www.alternativemodelling.com)

*Images: Glasgow Finalists from 2015. Credits: Stephen Martin, Photographer.*







**BURNING GIRAFFE**

Burning Giraffe Art Gallery in Turin will host our buddy Otto D'Ambra's first Italian solo exhibition. 'Ecce Animal'—Torino will be an extended version of the latest London exhibition enriched with a further selection of etchings and unpublished linocut.

The show in Turin is a unique opportunity to explore the imagery of Otto that through the combination of figurative elements, iconographic pictures and contrasts composes messages which ends are to unveil a metaphysical reality questioning the physical reality.

In other words... get yourself online and book yourself a nice little trip. Totally worth it. You can find out more here: [bugartgallery.com](http://bugartgallery.com)



**GBTS TICKET GIVEAWAY**

Concluding our ticket giveaway to our Great British Tattoo Show (London: Alexandra Palace), this issue we have our final five pairs of tickets to dish out. Simply send a blank email to [editor@skindeep.co.uk](mailto:editor@skindeep.co.uk) with the subject line LET ME IN—and we'll do the rest. The artist list is now also live at [greatbritishtattooshow.com](http://greatbritishtattooshow.com) Don't be square... be there!

**BERGEN TATTOO CONVENTION**

**06 - 08 May 2016**

Logen Teater As  
Øvre Ole Bulls plass 6  
5012 Bergen, Norway  
[bergentattooconvention.no](http://bergentattooconvention.no)

**AREL TATTOO SHOW**

**07 - 08 May 2016**

Hall Polyvalent, Parc des Expositions 6  
6700 Arlon, Belgium  
[areltattooshowbelgium.com](http://areltattooshowbelgium.com)

**LIVERPOOL TATTOO CONVENTION**

**07 - 08 May 2016**

Britannia Adelphi Hotel  
Ranelagh Place, Liverpool, L3 5UL  
United Kingdom  
[liverpooltattooconvention.com](http://liverpooltattooconvention.com)

**GREAT BRITISH TATTOO SHOW**

**28 - 29 May 2016**

Alexandra Palace, Alexandra Palace Way  
London N22 7AY  
[greatbritishtattooshow.com](http://greatbritishtattooshow.com)

**KERRY INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION**

**03 - 05 June 2016**

The Gleneagle Hotel  
Muckross Rd, Killarney, Co. Kerry  
Ireland  
[kerrytattooconvention.ie](http://kerrytattooconvention.ie)

**SCARBOROUGH TATTOO SHOW 2016**

**04 - 05 June 2016**

The Spa Scarborough  
South Bay, Scarborough,  
North Yorkshire YO11 2HD

**NORTHAMPTON INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION**

**04 - 06 June 2016**

Northampton Saints Rugby Football Club  
Franklin's Gardens, Weedon Rd,  
Northampton NN5 5BG  
[northamptoninternationaltattooconvention.com](http://northamptoninternationaltattooconvention.com)

**LEEDS INTERNATIONAL TATTOO EXPO**

**04 - 05 June 2016**

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Armouries Dr  
Leeds LS10 1LT  
[leedstattoexpo.com](http://leedstattoexpo.com)

**WATERFORD CITY TATTOO CONVENTION**

**10 - 12 June 2016**

Crystal Sport & Leisure Centre  
Cork Rd, Waterford,  
Ireland

**KRAKOW TATTOOFEST**

**11 - 12 June 2016**

EXPO Kraków, Galicyjska 9  
31-586 Kraków, Poland  
[tattoofest.pl](http://tattoofest.pl)

**YORK INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION**

**18 - 19 June 2016**

York Racecourse  
Tadcaster Rd, York YO23 1EX  
[yorkinternationaltattooconvention.co.uk](http://yorkinternationaltattooconvention.co.uk)

**17TH MIDDLETON TATTOO SHOW**

**24 - 26 June 2016**

Midleton Rugby Club  
Town's Park  
Midleton, Co. Cork  
Ireland





## IF YOU'RE GUILTY, YOU'RE DEAD...

...so maybe it would be a great idea to get your hands on some fine Dark Bunny Frank Castle/Punisher goodies this month? We've got a big package of punishment (all of which you can see here - but if the apron goes AWOL, it will be for a good cause) and we're wondering what in the world to do with it.

Do we keep it together and foist the whole lot upon an uber-fan or do we split it up and spread the swag to the four corners of the earth?

We can't decide - to enter, send an email to [editor@skindeep.co.uk](mailto:editor@skindeep.co.uk) with either KEEP 'EM TOGETHER or SPLIT 'EM UP as the subject line. Whichever we receive most of is what we'll do.

Dilemma's huh? Who'd have 'em...





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Artist: Jason Keene at Rawhide Tattoo Studio

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## THE POINT OF NO RETURN

**At the Great British Tattoo Show, there will be a screening of *The Point Of No Return – A Journey into the Ancient Past of Tribal Tattooing in Borneo*. Created by FADE FX and Film Director Tom Kelly, *The Point of No Return* is a documentary that follows Fade on her journey into the ancient past of tribal hand tapped tattooing among the Iban tribes of Borneo.**

The film will document the ancient tattooing technique of hand tapping which is unique to Borneo whilst delving deep into tribal art and its links to the Iban's ancient belief system. Along the journey Fade and Tom will highlight the plight of the Iban people whose way of life is under threat by the industrialisation of their world, and the aggressive logging which threatens to destroy it completely. The aim of the filmmakers is not only to document the almost-lost art of traditional Bornean Tattooing, but also to help raise a global awareness of the plight of the Iban Tribe. Throughout the making of the film, the Brits lived alongside the Iban People in the jungle, allowing Fade and Tom to get a deeper understanding of the tribe's history, art and customs through living, learning and tattooing with the Iban.

For tickets to the show, you know what to do.

**FOOTNOTE:** Back in issue 258 - page 80 - we mislabelled some work by Fade FX as that of Glenn Cuzen. Apologies to both. The guilty parties have been severely reprimanded with The Wooden Ruler.



# Flaming Art Tattoo



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# SECRET DIARY OF A TALL GIRL

*When we heard Paula Castle was hitting the road to work as much as she could, at as many varied studios as she could find, it triggered that thing inside our heads that goes 'Hey, we could make a good feature out of that'. So, without much further fanfare, unleash the hounds...*

All too often clients say to us, 'You must be loaded!' and 'You have my dream job!'. But what really goes on in the life of a tattoo artist? Namely this single, caffeine addicted 31 year old tattooer who is currently on tour.

Well, for a start, it's not a job. It's a lifestyle. It consumes every waking moment, every aspect of your life until you seriously wonder what other people fill their time with. Don't get me wrong, I'm in no way complaining. I absolutely love what I do, I feel incredibly fortunate and know I work damn hard every single day. Is it worth it? God yes. Take a step out on the tour with me and find out if it matches the illusion in your head. Meet the clients, the studios, see the sights and really understand what this life can be like.

I've been tattooing about two and a half years now. I recently left the studio I learned to tattoo in and decided to spend five months travelling the UK and USA, with a little bit of Europe thrown in for good measure. I'm not getting any younger, and at some point I'm going to have to settle down and be an adult or something—but that point is most certainly not now!

I would class my work as neo-traditional, often seen as



girly, but I very much enjoy doing more masculine work too. I'm known for my crystals, crystal animals and oddly enough, my leaves—not something I ever thought I would be adding to my list of strengths when I started out that's for sure.

Today, it's absolutely pissing down. I'm on my way to Newcastle—driving is horrible and having just left Leeds with a parking ticket, I've had better Saturdays that's for sure. That said, I'm on my way to guest with the guys at Cock A Snook Tattoo Parlour in Newcastle. Owned and run by one of my absolute

best friends KerryAnne Richardson (@littlekezz). I love Newcastle. It's loud, vibrant, architecturally breathtaking and the people are amazing. If you haven't been, then put it on your list.

You know that feeling you get when you're on your way to the airport to go on holiday? That's how most of the studios I visit make me feel. Home away from home, all are places I love to visit and hate to leave. On arrival, we're planning a night out, and that happens without issue—plenty of gin cocktails, lots of dancing and some horrendous attempt at vegan friendly drunken food before crashing out. Hungover, full of falafel wraps after ventur-





*I'm known for my crystals, crystal animals and oddly enough, my leaves—not something I ever thought I would be adding to my list of strengths when I started out that's for sure.*

ing to the local supermarket spending a few hours in the hot tub, bliss!

This makes it sound very rock and roll and completely and utterly enviable, and I won't disagree, but what should really be noted is that this is my first day off—with no actual work being done—in seven weeks. There's a week of incredible work ahead too, not just for me, but for the other guys who work at Cock A Snook. It's a fantastic studio, homely, well respected, well established, friendly and comfortable.

Decorated with taxidermy and curiosities throughout, porcelain heads, dolls heads and amazing flash and paintings are all over. The chandeliers give it a regal feel and the cherry on the cake is the word-search and other games available in the waiting area.

As a vegan tattooer, I get to tattoo a lot of fellow vegans, not always with that subject matter, but because they want to know that everything being used during the tattoo process is suitable for vegans and that I'm going to recommend a vegan aftercare product too. I love getting to talk about animal welfare, the latest vegan food finds, great places to eat or shop and even stupid stuff like the best ve-

gan cheese. If you were getting a large tattoo dedicated to your favourite geeky game or anime, you'd have a better time if the artist was also into it too, right?

The amount of time spent researching before you start to draw a piece is what I think most people wouldn't even consider. I average about thirty to forty minutes on each piece, then around one hour of drawing time on smaller pieces, right up to five or six hours on sleeve work. One piece I had this week was a back panel in full colour, with a stained glass window. I took the time to go to an amazing place for reference photos—Bath Abbey—and that's certainly something I think most people don't think any of us do either... or at least those of us that care enough about what we do.

I'm lucky to have wonderful clients and many return customers. One new client I met this week at Cock A Snook was Nicola. She is a student nurse, about to graduate and I'm tattooing a red rose on her foot which is one of my favourite things to do. It's classic, never goes out of style and is incredibly fun to draw and tattoo. It never ceases to amaze







Although tattooing is glamourised and often elevated into this rockstar lifestyle, it's really all about being part of a family, finding the people in the industry who genuinely love it like you do

me the different walks of life people are from who get tattooed. Every day I get to hear someone's story, or find out about something I didn't know about before. It just so happened that Steph (one of the apprentices at Cock A Snook) was tattooing a nurse at the same time, meaning we got to have some cross client conversation, which is what I love! Getting tattooed should be a fun experience, with great atmosphere, plenty of laughter and plenty of therapy.

Cock A Snook has a hidden treasure too. He goes by the name of Paul Fulton and he is one of the most technically accurate, and brilliant traditional artists in the UK. He will hate me for writing this because he likes to keep a low profile, but I can't write about my time here without mentioning his work. Check him out, @paulfultontattoo. As a collector myself, he's high on my list and not to be missed.

Talking of lists, I was getting a really big deal of a tattoo myself. Three actually. Kerry-Anne tattooed my face with a dagger and heart down the side of my cheek and laurel leaves on my forehead. Facial tattoos usually divide opinion, especially on women, but what most forget is that for tattooers, these are just normal everyday tattoos. Certainly not something to be done lightly by any means, but something I had thought about for a long while.

It's a real honour to tattoo somewhere as prominent as a face, and when you know it's on someone who will get seen by many of your peers, also pretty nerve wracking. I couldn't think of anyone better than Kerry-Anne. Her blackwork is clean, solid, heals well and she's a brilliant artist. I'm very happy with my new additions, and we celebrated afterwards with



Lebanese food at 'Chez Kezz' which is always where guest artists stay.

Cock a Snook also have two promising apprentices, Steph White (@wtcf.cas) and Adam Jensen (@uxtg) both of whom are lovers of popular culture and colour work. Being in an environment like Cock a Snook will certainly see them going far.

Alongside Kerry-Anne and Paul there is also Amy—@amybirdart—an experienced and well rounded artist with fantastic skills across the range of tattooing styles and a fellow vegan! I have to also mention Jordan, who is a fantastic shop manager, made sure i was well looked after.

Although tattooing is glamourised and often elevated into this rockstar lifestyle, it's really all about being part of a family, finding the people in the industry who genuinely love it like you do. The ones who would actually do it for free if it was viable and who really recognise that they are part of the ultimate service industry. ▣



**Next month: Dundee**



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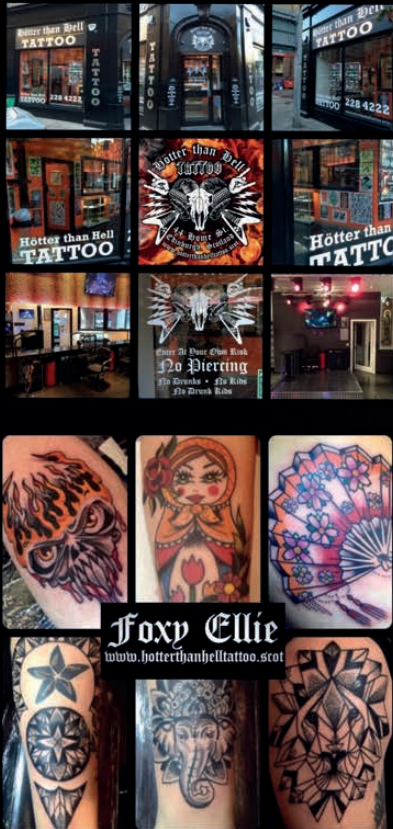
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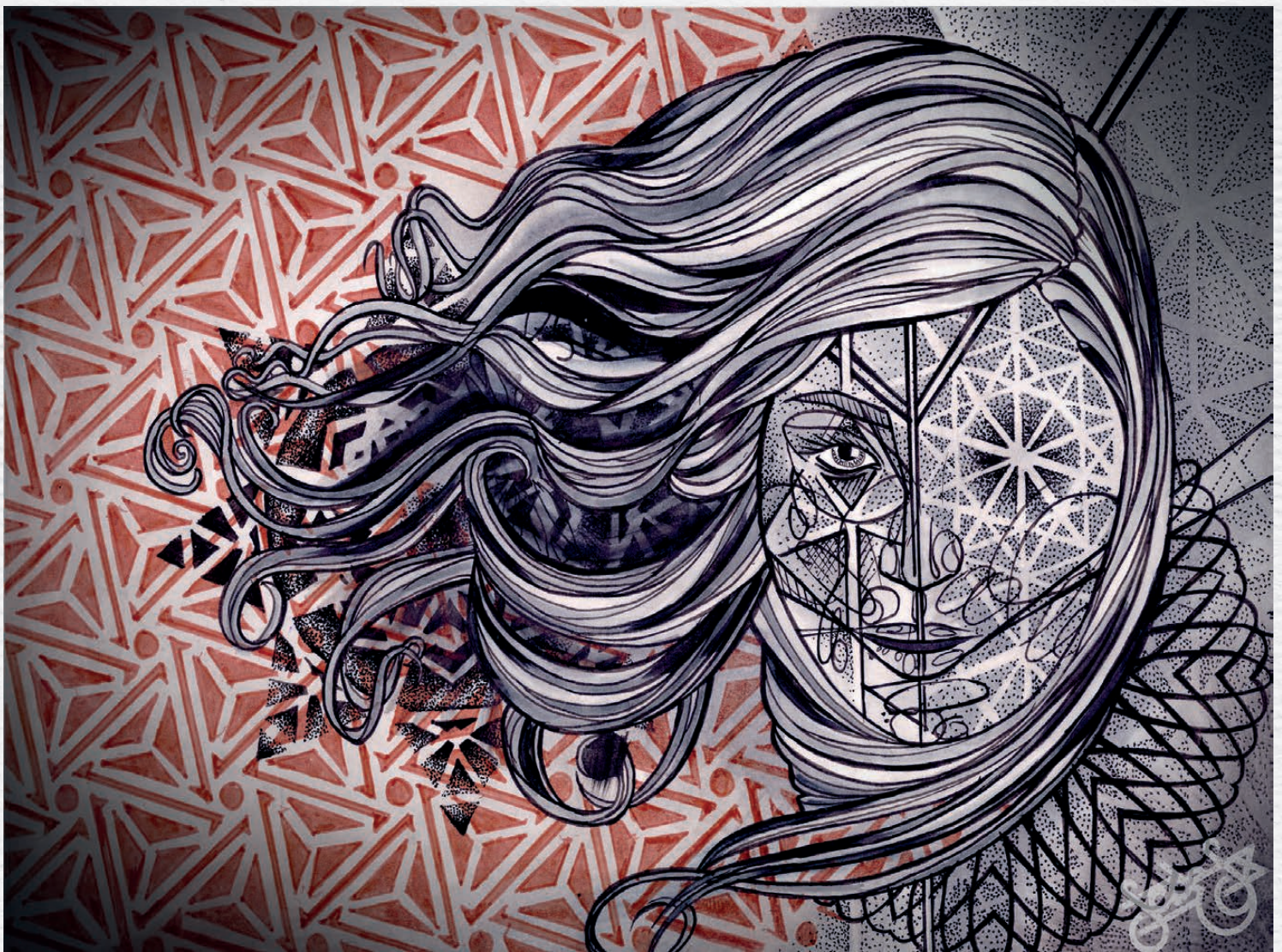


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## Award Winning Tattoos from Mild To Wild in All Styles!!!





# CONNECTING THE DOTS

*Styles of tattooing come and go following the ebb and flow of trends and fashions. Many may regard dotwork tattooing as the new kid on the block but in truth the style has been developing for some time and its heritage dates back millennia. Matt Haddon-Reichardt met up with dotwork specialist Fade FX to discuss the rise of pointillism, the complexity of dotwork tattoos and how technology is pushing the style forward*

“In the last 20 years dotwork tattooing has grown into a uniquely recognisable style,” explains Fade FX as she sits sipping coffee in front of her custom made geometric wallpaper that adorns the back wall of her Brighton based studio.

“People seem to be fascinated by dotwork tattooing and since specialising in this area I’ve been asked time and time again about its ancestry, origin and key influencers.

“Dotwork itself echoes an artistic drawing style called pointillism which solely utilises dots to build up an image’s texture and shading.”

Dotwork tattooing is a global movement but the lan-

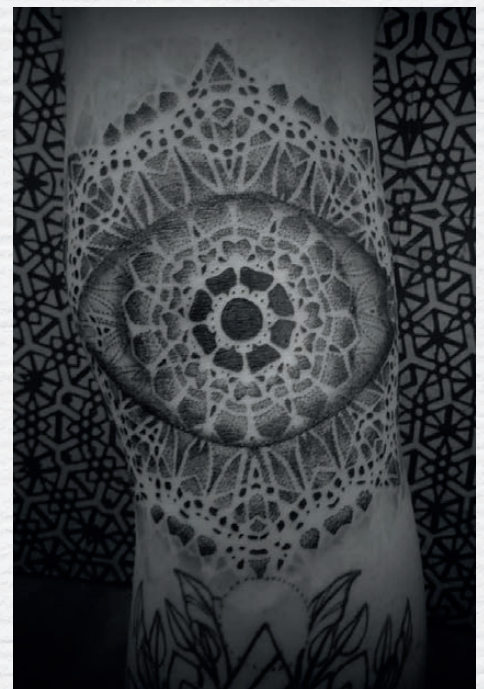
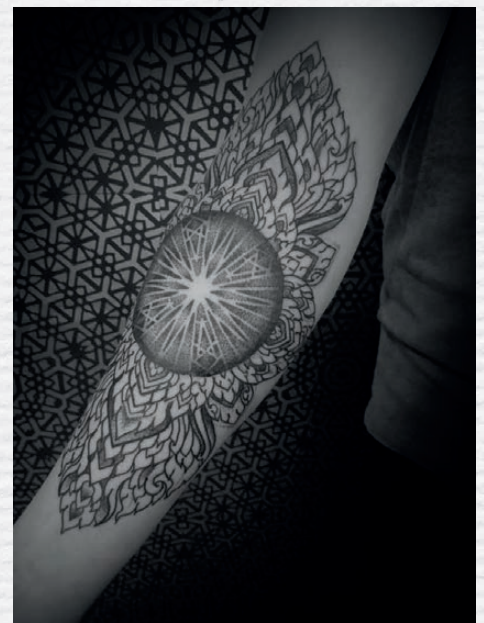
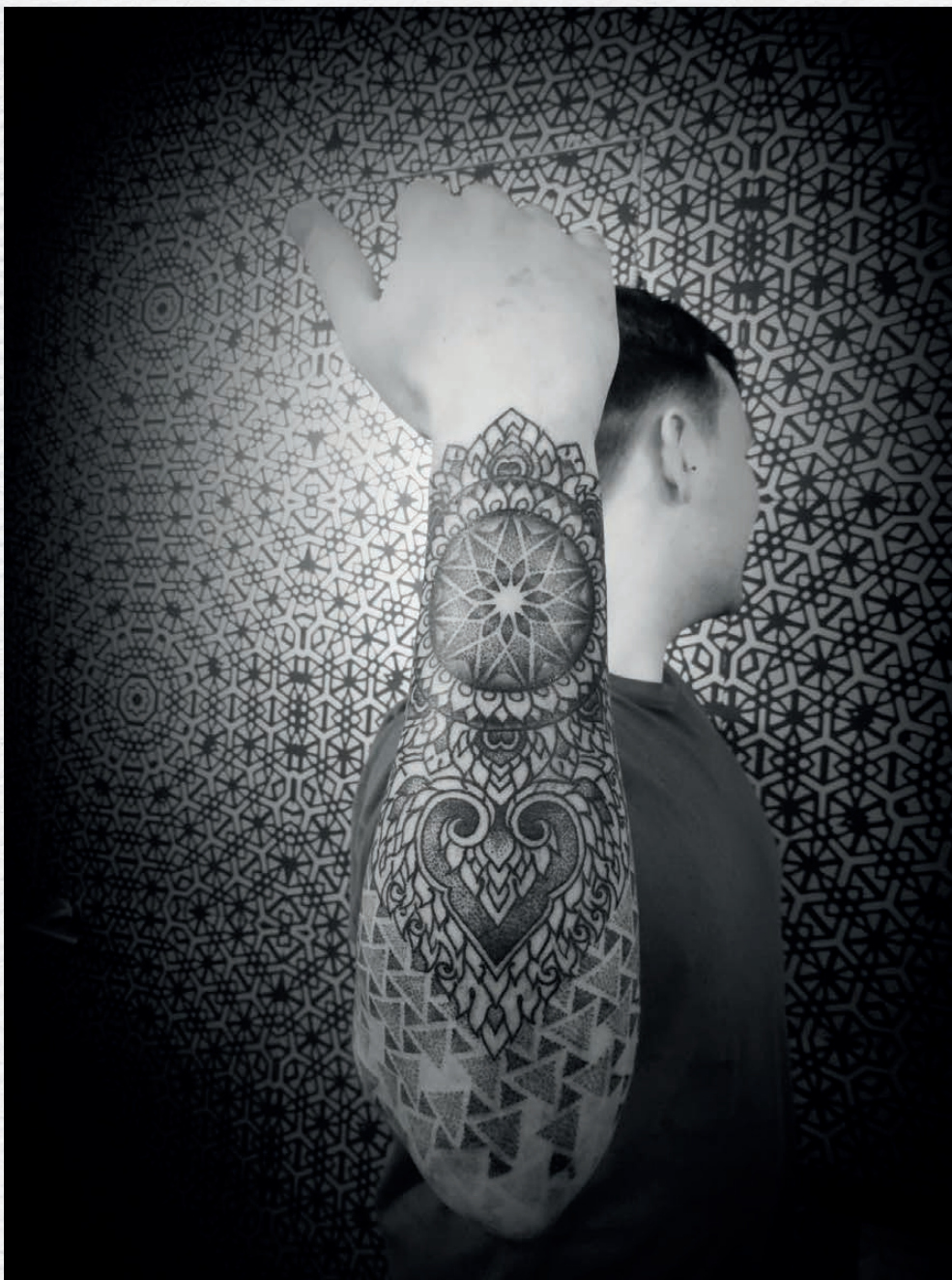
guage of the art differs across the world.

“The American and Australian tattooists I have worked with refer to dotwork as stippling.”

Fade explains that the dotwork style emerged at the beginning of the end of the last century.

“Xed La Head is recognised as a founder of the genre and I undoubtedly owe him thanks for kick-starting my favourite style but he wasn’t entirely alone. In the 1990’s many unconnected artists were experimenting with the style. It wasn’t until the convention circuit and the internet brought them together that the movement began to gather momentum.”





## ***Dotwork itself echoes an artistic drawing style called pointillism which solely utilises dots to build up an image's texture and shading***

“When I started tattooing in the late noughties no one had heard of this style and very few had actually seen it. At conventions I would often be the only one tattooing dotwork; now there are several artists per show. In these early days it was exciting to be breaking new ground. I looked up to Xed La Head, Jondix and Cory Ferguson and even managed to get tattooed by JDX and Cory.”

Being tattooed by her idols was a real learning experience for Fade and a great motivator to incorporate and innovate.

“Watching them tattoo me whilst still in the early stages of my career was a lesson in itself and I immediately applied what I’d seen into my own tattooing practices.”

A key part of the dotwork style is the mandala (which translates from the original Sanskrit as ‘circle’). A mandala is a spiritual and ritual symbol in Indian religions,

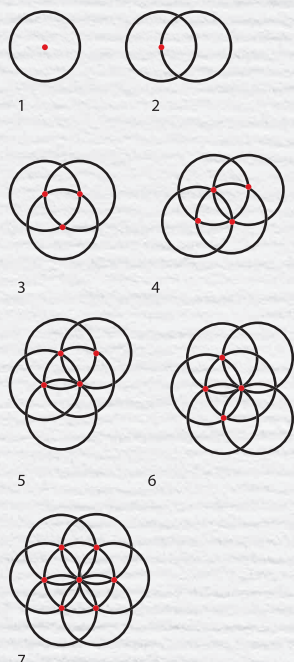
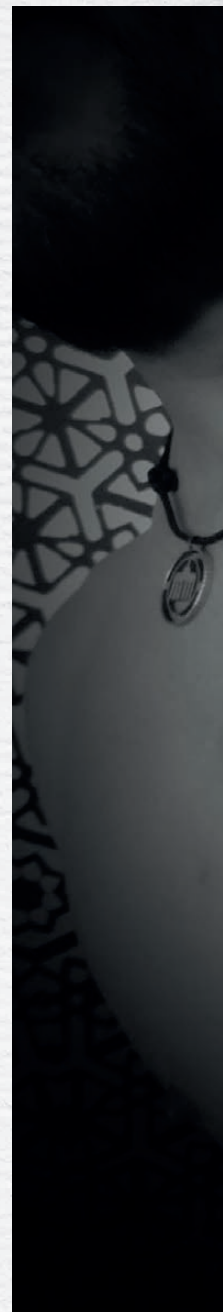
representing the universe. In common use, ‘mandala’ has become a generic term for any diagram, chart or geometric pattern that represents the cosmos metaphysically or symbolically.

“As a religious symbol a mandala represents a microcosm of the universe. In non-religious terms, it’s a circular geometric design usually resembling a flower.”

Mandala tattoos combine the artistic and the geometric and their complexity can pose challenges to the tattooist. Usually dotwork references complicated, tessellated patterns or circular geometric mandalas.

“As I began to specialise in this style the complexities of drawing intricate patterns and mandalas became increasingly obvious. I even tried working out mathematical formulas for drawing illusions using the golden ratio. The mathematical aspect and use of different line weight





**Sacred Geometry**

To draw a mandala with a compass, you first draw a circle. This is the beginning of the seed at the start of creation. You place the compass spike on the line you have drawn and draw another circle dividing the first. From these two circles you begin to repeat the process drawing circles on the points where the circles cross until you create the seed of life at the centre of the design. You then continue this pattern building up the design uniformly to create the flower of life. This can technically continue infinitely adding more and more complexity and detail to the design based on simple geometric repetition. From here you can customise the mandala by dividing the circles with straight lines and use this as a baseline grid to make your desired pattern or mandala. A mandala illustrates that from simple mathematic principles beautiful art can blossom.

**As I began to specialise in this style the complexities of drawing intricate patterns and mandalas became increasingly obvious**

needed to give these images a 3D perspective impresses me more than sketching in abstract styles. It takes a huge amount of precision to get it right.”

Dotwork tattooing has perfectly incorporated the ancient with the modern. The contemporary dotwork style fuses Tibetan, Indian and Thai ornamental patterns to create mandalas.

“I personally prefer Lai Thai which is the name given to Thai ornamental patterning as seen in their architecture and traditional clothing. I came across these particular patterns whilst travelling, searching Thai literature and studiously copying them down, they

remain a permanent inspiration to my mandala drawing.”

Aside from circular mandala patterns, dotwork designs incorporate a repetition of tile shapes and geometric configurations from varying sources as Fade explains.

“The tiles are not necessarily square. You can draw a pattern within a triangle for example and repeat that triangle so the repetition itself makes yet another pattern. You also see a lot of black and white optical illusion patterns in dotwork tattooing along with traditional Arabic and Japanese Sayagata forms.”

“I locked myself away for an entire winter



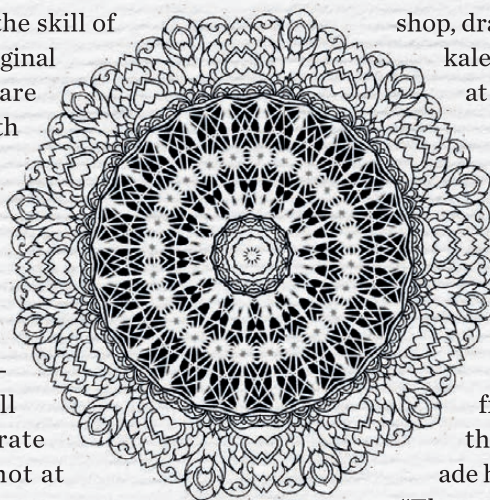


***I locked myself away for an entire winter and committed myself to learning the skill of drawing geometry so I could offer original custom tattoos every time***

and committed myself to learning the skill of drawing geometry so I could offer original custom tattoos every time. There are only so many tattoos you can do with the same unoriginal patterns and as an artist I don't want to keep repeating myself again and again."

Although physically drawing geometry by hand requires huge commitment and technical skill, there is software available that either helps the process or does it all for you. Fade is happy to incorporate technology into her designs but not at the expense of pens, pencils and paper.

"Some dotworkers drawing custom artwork use these tools. I think that's fair game if you can draw geometry anyway and just use it to speed up the process, as it takes even longer to draw than to tattoo a lot of the time. Whether this is duplicating and editing images in Photo-



shop, drawing vectors in Illustrator or using a kaleidoscope app to create your artwork, at least it's still a custom piece. I started out drawing everything by hand, so I am old school in that sense, but I do like being able to draw one half of a mandala and then flip it over in Photoshop, or to draw one section of a pattern and repeat it in Illustrator."

The software available to the modern tattooist is worlds away from Fade's apprenticeship. Fade feels the technological leap of the past decade has been a game changer.

"There are apps available now whereby you don't really need any skill to create mandalas. I don't like that myself but I think the software available is innovative and is actually what I always longed for when I was figuring out the manual traditional way of drawing geometry by hand." □





LOVE BITE ©Laurie Lipton



# THE QUEEN OF BONES

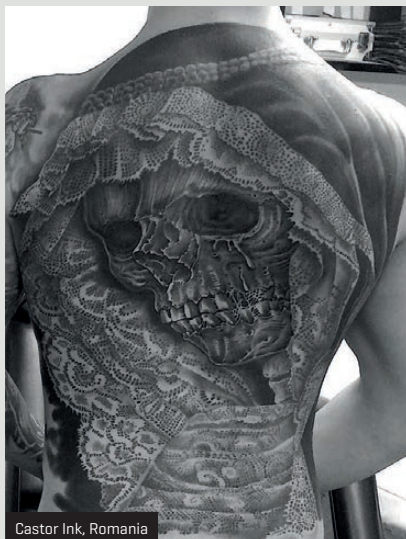
*When I ask Laurie Lipton if she's ever thought of trying her hand at tattooing she fixes me with an impish smile. "Maybe if I got my eye in ... But working on skin, I'd be so scared that I'd hurt somebody. I couldn't cause intentional pain. I'm a well brought up girl! I only do it psychologically—not physically."*

Lipton's intense and wickedly wry work has been haunting galleries and disturbing office spaces for over 30 years.

Born in New York in 1953, Laurie started drawing at the age of four. Her parents should, perhaps, have been concerned at the "horrible, angry, painful, drawings" their child was producing. Instead they gave her that rarest of things—encouragement—along with a set of Rapidograph pencils.

Inspired by the 16th Century Flemish Masters, she tried to teach herself how to paint in their style—and failed. Instead she settled for being the most Laurie Lipton she could be.

Art school followed before she could finally do what she always dreamed of: escape. In the 70s, she followed her art around the world. Always feeling like the outsider, she drifted through Holland, Belgium, and France before settling in London. It was there that she finally made her home and even now that she's living in LA, she still starts her day with Earl Grey tea and BBC iPlayer.



Curiously, it's not Britain but 50s Americana that seems to infuse her work. "One word", she says "that really describes the 50s is ipsy-pipsy. All the emotions were behind the wallpaper, everything was fabulous."

The 50s may have been a boom time for America but it was also the era of The Bomb, Valium, racial segregation, and female repression. It's that world behind the facade that stares out at you from Laurie's achingly black and white canvases. Why black and white? "It's the colour of ghosts, old television shows, memories, photographs, the past, longing. People say 'is colour

too much for you Dear?' But actually I find colour very easy and they don't like to hear that. When I wasn't making any money at all from my art, I would buy sable bushes and oils and paint and they would sell immediately. It got me really angry because I'm not a good painter, but I'm a fabulous drawer."

Tattooists may argue about it, but for Laurie, working in colour is a cinch. To create space and motion just using

**PEOPLE CAME TO MY SHOWS AND THEY USED TO DISROBE, BASICALLY, TO SHOW ME THEIR TATTOOS. A MAN ACTUALLY HAD 'LOVE BITE' ON HIS STOMACH—HIS ENTIRE STOMACH. IT'S AMAZING AND VERY, VERY FLATTERING**





Laurie Lipton



Lee O'Gorman of Black Oak Tattoo, Dover, New Hampshire

**I WANT TO LEAVE BEHIND  
MIND-BOGGLINGLY AMAZING WORK.  
I WANT TO FUCKING ASTOUND MYSELF**

**Drawings of Laurie Lipton**  
is published by Last Gasp  
(ISBN: 0867197846)

160 pages, Hardback, RRPE29.99

Lipton's work has something of a cult following and books about her sell out quickly. Fortunately, copies of Last Gasp's wonderful volume are still available, so grab one while you can. With full page illustrations, detailed 'zoom-ins' and text explaining the background and ideas behind some of these now iconic images, this superlative volume is more than just great reference. If you have a taste for the Gothic, macabre, weird, and wonderful ... Or if you just think that skulls are coo (and who doesn't), then *The Drawings of Laurie Lipton* is everything you need to inspire your own journey into black and grey.

grey; that's the trick. "The people who draw, know and understand the horror of what I do!" Laurie laughs.

**THINKING BIG**

Arguably no one has drawn more than Laurie Lipton. For 50 years she has drawn every day. "That's all I've done. I haven't made children. I've just drawn. It's all I do. It's all I can do."

Her work is not so much a labour of love as a labour of compulsion. This is something she has to do. Her canvasses have always been big but right now they're vast—six foot by nine. And every serenely seething inch is painstakingly built up, using thousands and thousands of cross-hatched lines. A piece can

take up to five months to complete and it's a painfully slow process. Past the point of no return, no amount of erasing will put things right should she make a mistake.

Seen on a computer screen or on the pages of a magazine, it's hard to appreciate the sheer, bloody graft involved. But, get up close and personal, and these beasts will take your breath away.

"I start," Laurie says, "by plotting out the forms and composition and then I go deeper and deeper, around and around. And the deeper I get, the darker I get. The more the details make themselves into something different. Although at the beginning I have an idea in my head about what it's going to look like, I hang on and go with it. I like when a drawing takes over. When it's nice, when it's predictable, I'm bored."

**DEATH AND THE MAIDEN**

There's certainly nothing predictable or boring about Lipton's art. Which is perhaps why she's been largely ignored by the mainstream art world.

"When I first moved to London," she says,





AUGMENTAL, @Laurie Lipton





Death and the Maiden, ©Laurie Lipton

Lipton

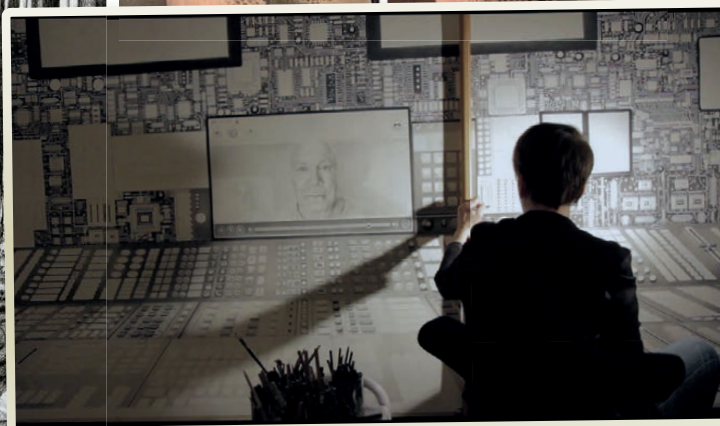




Laurie Lipton



Matteo Pasqualin



## IT'S THE COLOUR OF GHOSTS, OLD TELEVISION SHOWS, MEMORIES, PHOTOGRAPHS, THE PAST, LONGING...

"I wrote to the art critic Brian Sewell. He wrote back saying 'My dear Miss Lipton, you're obviously too good for an A List Gallery. You're too proficient at your craft.' When I read that, I thought Fuck You! But he was right. Absolutely right. All my life I've had people asking: Why don't you do colour? Why don't you paint? Why is it so disturbing? If I'd just thrown the graphite on the paper I would have won a Turner Prize!"

The art world has always been elitist and cliquy but since the Brit Pop explosion, figurative art has taken a bashing. The big money is in unmade beds and bisected sharks. Laurie: "When art critics want to be nasty they call me narrative. So were Van Eyck, Dürer, and Rembrandt. I'm just narrating what it's like being alive in the 21st Century."

Death, madness, obsession, greed, technology, celebrity; it's all there. "I'm just reflecting what's around me. I can't say what art should be because it's very subjective. But I need to show what I'm seeing and feeling. I need to speak out. Why would I waste my precious time on Earth on something that doesn't make me passionate?"

Laurie's art is the stuff of fevered dreams

and genuinely Grimm fairy tales. "Prime Time" features a couple tucking into dinner oblivious to the tsunami of skulls that flow from their TV screen. "Love Bite" shows a woman chomping down on a child's head, like Granny stealing the last apple and daring you to say something about it. That Renaissance favourite, "Death and the Maiden", gets a Lipton makeover with a family portrait of a child embracing a corpse. In "Off" a woman displays the contents of her fridge like some schmaltzy 1950s magazine ad. Only the faces are vacuous and the smiles desperate. Buy stuff and you won't die, it screams. Honest.

### JUST CONNECT

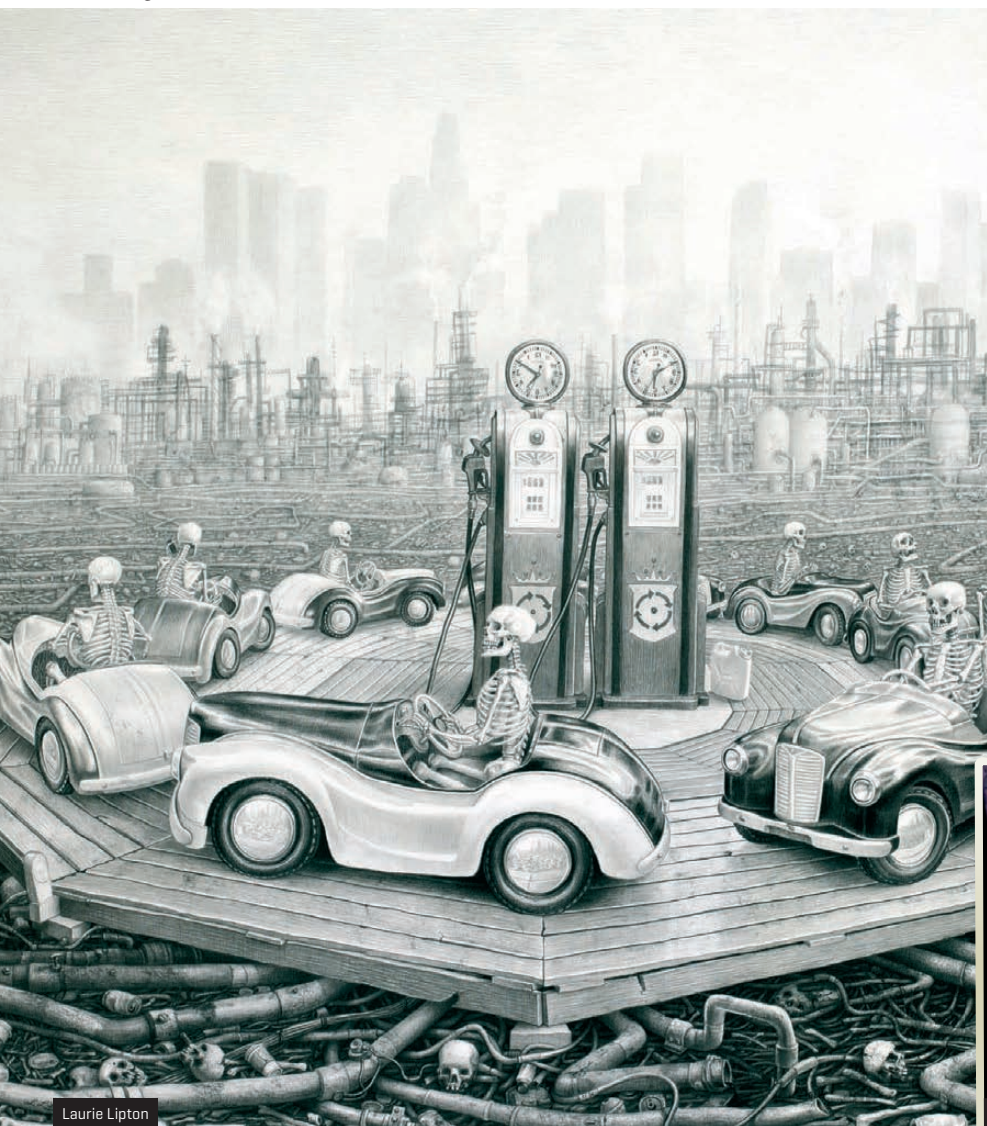
Naturally tattooists love Laurie's work but those who choose to have her art engraved on their skin are in it for more than just the pretty pictures:

"I chose the Empress of Death for my tat-

### Love Bite: Laurie Lipton and her Disturbing Black and White Drawings

BBFC Certificate: 15.  
Running Time: 34 mins.  
Release Date: TBC.  
Sundance award-winning filmmaker James Scott's documentary is the result of a four-and-a-half-year labour of love. Self-financed, with James as director, editor and cameraman Love Bite premiered in the documentary shorts competition at SXSW 2016 this March. As the film's subtitle tells us, Scott's subject is American artist "Laurie Lipton and her Disturbing Black and White Drawings". However, as his sensitive and compelling documentary shows, what compels Lipton is neither black nor white. A director's cut, featuring some for the people who chose to adorn their skins with Lipton-inspired images is in the making, for the VOD release later in the year.





Laurie Lipton



Laurie Lipton



Tattoo by LizaDutchTattooShop.nl

**I NEED TO SHOW WHAT I'M SEEING AND FEELING. I NEED TO SPEAK OUT. WHY WOULD I WASTE MY PRECIOUS TIME ON EARTH ON SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME PASSIONATE?**

too. Besides having a passion for grim black/grey art, I was connected to the drawing as a personal power statement. I think of Empress as a strong woman in control.” (Alison Wolfe Meikle, New Jersey, USA.)

“I picked Tête-à-Tête ... It reminds me of times I have felt love and loved. The care you feel for someone. The hand on the face. To me, it's about having love and losing it. (Michelle Madden, Wallasey, UK.)

“I was fascinated with the details she puts in her art work and I love skulls! But I picked Death and the Maiden because I had two of my sisters pass away and it reminds me about them. (Larry Cruz Correa, Winnipeg, Canada.)

James Scott is a documentary-maker whose feature, “Love Bite: Laurie Lipton

and her Disturbing Black and White Drawings”, has been four-and-a-half-years in the making. Like Alison, Michelle and Larry, James found himself captivated by Laurie’s art when a copy of “Señorita Muerte” locked

eyes with him across a crowded room. His documentary is an attempt to reproduce that same experience for the viewer.

However, as the friendship between the two grew, the intensely private Lipton opened up in a way that Scott had never anticipated, sharing stories and the childhood experiences that shaped her art. “You never know,” she says at one point, “what kind of gift comes out of suffering. There’s a very hurt child in all of my work... she’s alone, confused ... and she’s still in me.”

Despite that suffering, despite feeling like an outsider, despite spending much of her life at the drawing board, she’s not alone. We meet her in her art. Those pencil marks on paper? It’s all Laurie Lipton. □





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# SHIT TALKING WITH JOE CAPOBIANCO

*Last month, Joe Capobianco pulled up a chair at Triplesix Studios for a guest spot. We figured he couldn't be working for the entire 24 hours there are in a day, so occasionally chose to fire some fully loaded questions at him along the way. Brace yourself... Joe had so much to say, we actually only got through a couple of them. C'est la vie...*

**J**oe Capobianco is a man that needs zero introduction. His works stands as some of the best loved in any given year since he started tattooing—and for good reason. Along with being no slouch in the needle-work department, he's also one of the smartest, clued in and passionate tattooers you could ever want to meet. Thus, without further chicanery from me, let's get into the guts of this thing:

**OVER ON THE SHIT TALKIN' SECTION OF YOUR WEBSITE, THE LAST QUESTION YOU ANSWERED WAS ONE ABOUT 'FLASH VS CUSTOM' AND HOW YOU THOUGHT THAT MAYBE FLASH WAS SADLY BECOMING A THING OF THE PAST AS IT WAS BEING REPLACED BY 'CUSTOM' WORK. DO YOU STILL FEEL THE SAME ABOUT YOUR ANSWER?**

"I still think it's an absolute load of fucking bullshit. The fact of the matter is that flash has been around forever, I don't understand the mentality of the people that don't want to get something off the wall because they don't want to feel like it's flash and everyone's got it—yet they'll bring in a fucking cell phone with an image from Pinterest on it, which means they will get every bullshit trendy tattoo that everybody else has already got. They'll use that as their tattoo flash without knowing it or worse. You get these individuals that are coming in and they're getting these portraits of Michael Myers or Freddy Krueger, it's the same fucking thing except there's nothing classic or timeless about it.



"Tattoo flash is timeless. It's always been around and trust me, eventually someone is going to really hate that infinity symbol. Eventually somebody is going to hate those 'birds turning into feathers turning into birds'. Eventually, that stuff is going to look like dog shit.

"I think tattooers need to educate people when they come into the shop. The conver-





**...EVENTUALLY SOMEONE IS GOING TO REALLY HATE THAT INFINITY SYMBOL. EVENTUALLY SOMEBODY IS GOING TO HATE THOSE 'BIRDS TURNING INTO FEATHERS TURNING INTO BIRDS'. EVENTUALLY, THAT STUFF IS GOING TO LOOK LIKE DOG SHIT**

sation needs to be had: "The idea you have is fine but if you want to do something like that, it's gotta be redrawn as flash—it's gotta be redrawn as a tattoo," and they need to educate them in what makes a good tattoo over a bad one. What a good tattoo is as opposed to something that's gonna look like shit over time—and that's the problem. Most tattooers don't wanna listen to the client and the client doesn't want to listen to the tattooer. They don't realise the tattooer has a job and that job is to basically as a 'work for hire artist'. Your job is to take care of that fucking client whether you like it or not...and if you don't

is you do something over and over again. The best way to do that is by doing flash. You don't have to think. Someone comes in, they pick something and you fucking tattoo it. That's what you do to get better at something. So many people get into this business wanting to be a portrait artist, wanting to be a black and grey artist or a fucking dot-work artist. They don't ever consider the fact that in six months if that dries up, or you get bored with it, you have no other skill-set. Whereas, if you come in and you get an actual apprenticeship, learn the trade in a proper manner, dealing with clientele, cleaning up the shop and handling the general day to day workings of the shop. One day you'll be able to say "I did a rose, I did a panther, I did a portrait... I did all these different things."

"You may come into this industry wanting to be a portrait artist, but after doing it for six months and doing every portrait known to man,

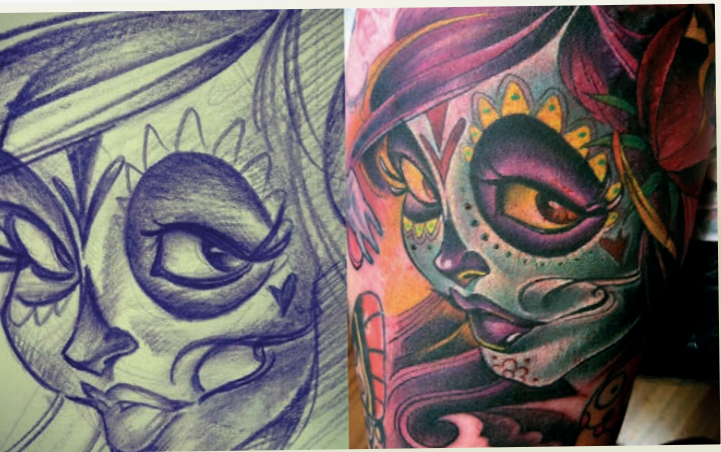
like it, maybe you should go and flip fucking burgers for a living.

"That's it: your job is to take care of the client."

**SO, IT WOULD BE PRETTY FAIR TO SAY THAT WITH ARTISTS MISSING OUT ON THE WHOLE 'FLASH PHASE' 'ARTISTS' ARE NOT AS ROUNDED AS PERHAPS THEY SHOULD BE?**

"Look, one of the ways you get better—and I tell people this in seminars all the time—





you might decide you really like doing traditional tattooing, or dotwork or tribal. There's so many aspects of this business that people completely paint over and walk away from just because they think that they're not going to be interested in it. They don't realise that this is a 'people person' business.

"The thing I enjoy about it is being able to sit down and meet different people and have a conversation. Are there assholes? Yes, but there are assholes in any business—but there are a lot of people I've also genuinely made friends with. Those are the reasons why I've been tattooing people for over 20 years—because they become friendly and they trust you. You lose all of that when you cut yourself down to one singular aspect of this business. From a job security standpoint, it's fucking ignorant if you don't know everything about the business. One day, you're shit out of luck with what you do, no one cares about what you do anymore or you're really not as good as you think... what do you do? You're screwed.

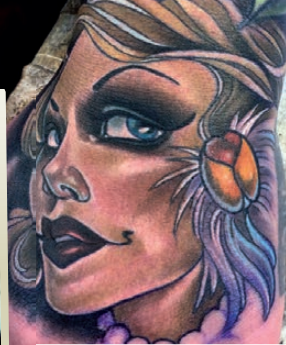
"I think that's one of the things a lot of people seem to forget because everyone just wants to be a fucking tattooer. I've been

**YOUR JOB IS TO TAKE CARE OF THAT CLIENT WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT...AND IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO AND FLIP FUCKING BURGERS FOR A LIVING**

asked dozens of times if I will take on an apprentice but I simply won't do it. People are like: "Why, you'd make a great teacher!" Yeah, I'd make a good teacher but the environment I tattoo in is not conducive to making a good artist because everything we do is fucking wrong!

"We're a custom shop. We do exactly what we want. I mean granted, I treat my clients the way I want and that's something I can't teach but the fact of the matter is, we





**THERE'S SO MANY ASPECTS OF THIS BUSINESS THAT PEOPLE COMPLETELY PAINT OVER AND WALK AWAY FROM JUST BECAUSE THEY THINK THAT THEY'RE NOT GOING TO BE INTERESTED IN IT. THEY DON'T REALISE THAT THIS IS A 'PEOPLE PERSON' BUSINESS**

don't have the right environment. We don't have people coming in and out of the shop throughout the day, we use all disposables now so there's never going to be an opportunity to clean up. Granted, it's a better way to be using nothing but disposables, but the fact of the matter is, you should learn the ins and outs of the trade. You should learn to use a rotary machine, then use a fucking coil—and learn the benefits of both. Again, you may learn on a rotary machine because it's simple but the fact is there are so many benefits of using a coil, so you should make those decisions for yourself on top of being taught.

“As an apprentice, you shouldn't just walk in to do your one tattoo appointment that day because that's not enough. You need

to do a lot... over and over. You need to train your hand to do these things and whether drawing, making stencils, creating tattoo flash, doing the actual tattoo, working with different line weights—keep in mind if you're one of these realism artists, you ain't never gonna use a liner. You're gonna use all the fucking shaders and mags! God forbid you ever have to do some fucking script under a tattoo. What are you supposed to say?

“Oh I don't do script.”

“Well I want in loving memory underneath my mum's portrait.”

“I'm sorry I can't do that you're gonna have to go someplace else.”

“I mean how fucking insane is that? It's just ridiculous.”

“Don't get me wrong though—if you get to a point in your career where you don't want to do that anymore, fine. That's great, you've built up a clientele, but that's not what someone who has been doing this for six months should be thinking.”





**DURING JOE'S GRILLING SESSION, ALSO PRESENT WITH US IS BEZ (OWNER OF THIS FINE ESTABLISHMENT), WHO INTERJECTS WITH A RATHER WELL TIMED: "DO YOU THINK TATTOOISTS' ATTITUDES OVER THE PAST 6 YEARS HAVE CHANGED?" IT'S A DAMN GOOD QUESTION...**

"Tattooing itself has changed dramatically but there's still a hardcore group of us that aren't changing and aren't going to change either. They're going to stay the way they are because if anything, we're pig headed fucks and we're in a trade where we can be that way and nobody can say anything about it.

"Whilst some of us have changed, a lot of us haven't but the attitudes of the old school guys has had to change a bit because now there's cliques—our business has always been made up of different groups of people but now it's so fucking 'cliquey', you got these old school guys who are not willing to learn anything else. They're not willing to see anything else. They're all loyal to the coil and all that bullshit. They don't want to change, and there's something to be said for that, but when young kids come up the fucking pipe and mow all over you and everything you ever believed in because you've become so pig headed... well guess what man, of course you got forgotten.

"The dinosaurs died out and if it weren't for people digging up bones, we wouldn't know dinosaurs even fucking existed. With the old school mentality it's their responsibility and it's all down to bad education. Same thing with the fucking television shows. Everyone's down on them but the fact of the matter is, if bad tattooers are the

**SOME OF THE OLDER CREW DON'T WANT TO CHANGE, AND THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR THAT, BUT WHEN YOUNG KIDS COME UP THE FUCKING PIPE AND MOW ALL OVER YOU AND EVERYTHING YOU EVER BELIEVED IN BECAUSE YOU'VE BECOME SO PIG HEADED... WELL GUESS WHAT MAN, OF COURSE YOU GOT FORGOTTEN**

only ones doing television shows, of course they're going to suck. Granted TV sucks in general and there's no controlling that but getting your face out there and shoving it up people's asses and breaking it off, they have to take notice. It's the right thing to do if you're good and you the opportunity comes along. Like I said, it's all about the education."

**WHAT'S INTERESTING ABOUT YOUR TAKE ON TATTOOING IS THAT YOU DON'T VIEW IT AS 'HIGH ART'. WHILE I CAN EASILY THROW THE 'HIGH ART/ FINE ART' TERM AT SOMEBODY LIKE JEFF GOGUE (AND MEAN IT), I SUSPECT THAT IDEA OF TATTOOING ACTUALLY BEING HIGH ART WAS HI-JACKED TO GIVE IT SOME KIND OF LEGITIMACY IN CERTAIN CIRCLES—**





**YOU HAVE TO LIVE THE REST OF YOUR LIFE WITH THAT HAND. DO YOU REALISE IT'S EVENTUALLY GOING TO STAND IN THE WAY OF A CAREER? I'M A TATTOOER AND EVEN I HAVE ISSUES WHEN I GO INTO A RESTAURANT OR PARTICULAR ESTABLISHMENT.**

**LIKE IT NEEDED DEFENDING WHEN THE MASS MEDIA STARTED WRITING ABOUT IT. WHAT'S YOUR TAKE? DID IT EVER NEED DEFENDING? THAT ALMOST SOUNDS LIKE SOME WERE ASHAMED OF WHAT TATTOOING ACTUALLY IS.**

"I don't consider tattooing to be fine art but I understand how a lot of individuals in the business do consider it to be fine art because they put that much time, energy and thought into what they're doing, but to me it's really just work for hire. I can't say I get offended about individual tattooers—this isn't going to make me friends is it—but they look at their clientele as 'you're my canvas, this is my art, this is the voice that I am speaking with and it's on you'. I have a problem with that.

"When you have individual artists that respond with: "OK, you want a piece on your upper arm? Well I'm gonna need your full sleeve because this is my vision"—then that

amazing. They're doing a fucking tattoo—the same types of tattoo that everybody else is doing. They're just doing it with their own bit of flare and somehow it becomes 'art'.

"I'm not gonna hold it against anyone if they consider themselves an artist and they think themselves a little bit higher end, but by the same token I do get offended for the clients. I feel a lot of clients get talked into doing these. One of the big things we see now is heavily tattooed clients—people who would never have had a back piece or a body suit and I'm sure a lot of these people walk away thinking they were so happy they did that. I would love to see ten or fifteen years from now how many of those people are still happy to have a fucking back piece or a sleeve.

"You have to live the rest of your life with that hand. Do you realise it's eventually going to stand in the way of a career? I'm a tattooer and even I have issues when I go into a restaurant or particular establishment. If some dude's got his fucking face tattooed—well, I'm a tattooer and still get weirded out by it.

"It's taken me 20 years to get my hands done and 23 years to get my neck done because I know this is it—but it took me this long to make a decision. It's your fucking body, man!" ▣

person comes in wanting a wolf and walks out with a tiger. It's not like they're doing something tremendously fucking different that's



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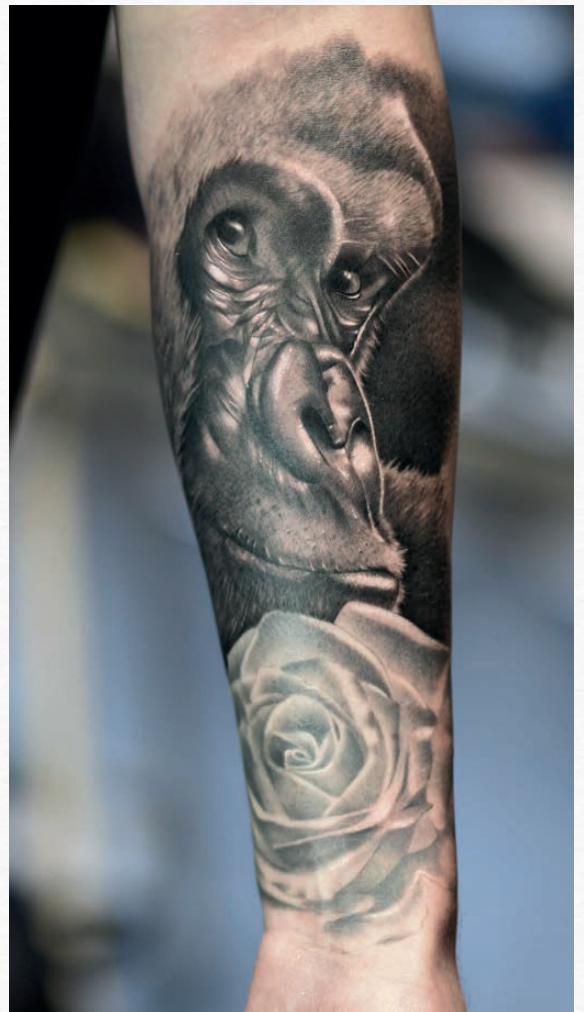
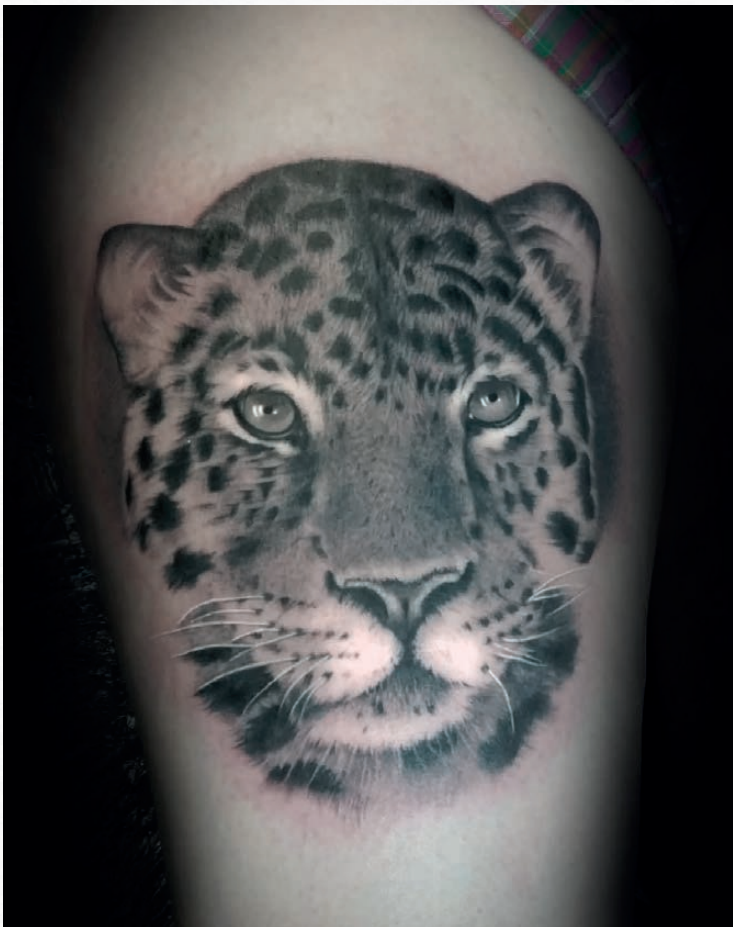


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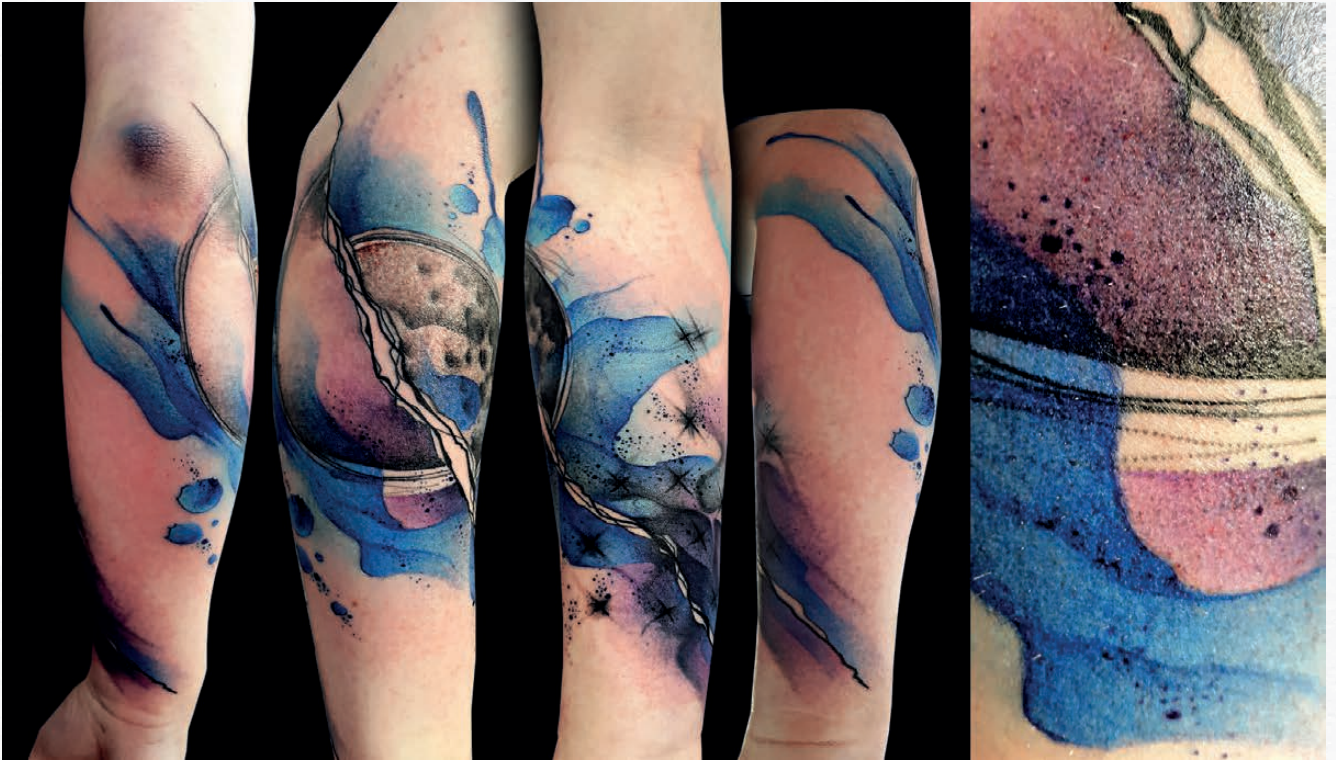
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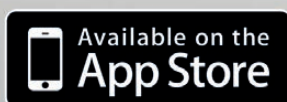


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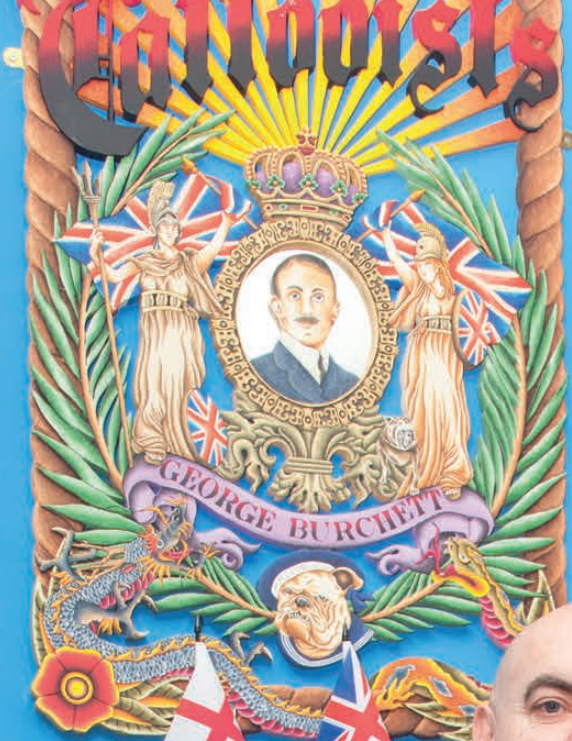
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# TATTOO LONDON

[PART TWO]

*The exhibition 'Tattoo London', held until May 8th at the Museum of London, gets under the skin of London tattoo culture, spanning a period of 100 years of professional tattooing. Among the contemporary tattoo artists involved and commissioned for the creation of original artworks is Lal Hardy who lived through the 70s and the 80s as few others did in the tattoo trade. Being at the crossroads of the massive energy that inspired new trends coming from the subcultures and the new wave of ideas coming from the US with Ed Hardy surfing on the top of it, Lal lived and participated to the emergence of modern tattooing in Europe. An era that he recalls, from the studio he opened 35 years ago in London...*



## **WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG, WHERE WOULD YOU GO AND GET TATTOOS?**

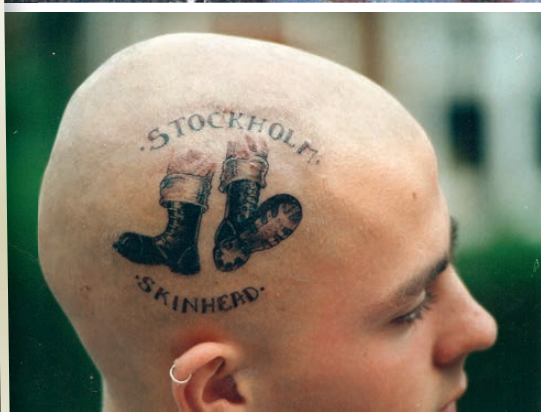
February 8th, 1976, I was 16 or 17, I went and got my first tattoo: a panther's head with a dagger done by Dave Cash in Wood Green, North London. It cost me four pounds. Because there were so few tattoo artists, the names were very familiar and very famous. In London there was Jock Tattoo Studio in Kings Cross, Cash Cooper in Soho, Dennis Cockell, George Bone... each town used to have one tattooist. Like in Plymouth you had Doc Price, in Bristol Les and Danny Skuse, Phill Bond in Torquay. Gradually as the 80s started, because of companies like Ultra that were

making equipment more readily available, more people started to get into tattooing. Now, there are so many tattooists in London, there must be over 300 easily.

## **THE 70S AND THE 80S WERE VERY EXCITING TIMES WITH THE EMERGENCE OF MANY SUBCULTURES...**

I think the 1980s especially were very interesting times, so much was happening. There was a lot of creativity and a lot of influences. In those days, because there were only three channels on TV, people didn't have the luxury of staying indoors and being able to watch sport, so the pub became a focal point for the community—and every





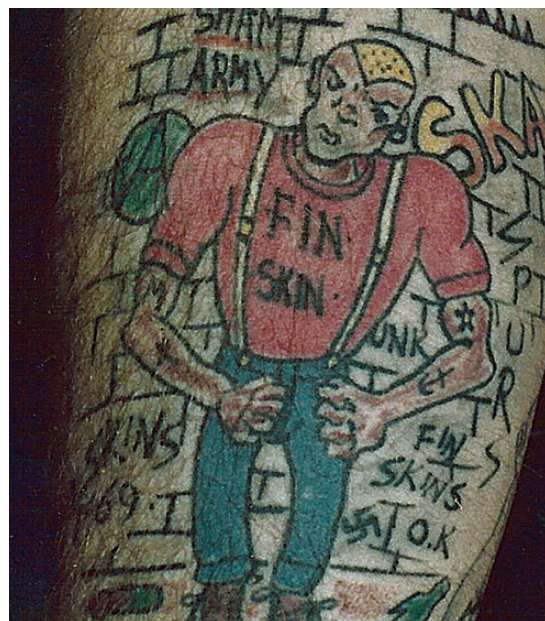
pub used to have a room where they had music. The revival of the Teddy Boy movement—the original Teddy Boys were from the 1950s—was very exciting. There were clubs everywhere and every night of the week there was somewhere you could go and watch Teddy Boy bands and rock'n'roll bands. Then it changed to Rockabilly... and that changed to Psychobilly. At the same time you had skinheads, punks, new romantics...

**AND SUBCULTURES WOULD GET TATTOOED, WHICH ONES IN PARTICULAR?**

All of them! The ones that tended not to get tattooed too much were the new-romantics. The subcultures picked

tattoos that reflected their particular subcultures. But if you look at the very, very early punk-rockers—the early days of the Sex Pistols and The Clash—not many had punk rock tattoos. It was when the second wave came along, probably from 1977 to 1984, with bands like the Exploited and Anti-Nowhere League. In the punk era, so many people were making fanzines or independently publishing records that there was a lot of artwork that went on out there. One of the things for example is the Exploited's mohican skull. You would see it on t-shirts, painted on the back of leather jackets, on band badges, people would get it tattooed too. These images would start to appear in all different formats and mediums.





**WHAT KIND OF DESIGNS WOULD THESE SUBCULTURES GO FOR?**

The original Teddy Boys went more for traditional tattoos: hearts, skulls, swallows, daggers, but the ones of the later generation got images related to that music scene too. Record labels, microphones, tattoos in memory of the stars that died like Buddy Holly, Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent. If you were a punk, quite often you would have a logo from a band, pictures of punk girls, mohican girls. Because the skinhead movement was fragmented at the time between different political views, there was a lot of patriotic tattooing with images like the Fred Perry logo, 'Made in...' and the name of the town they came from, viking iconography

was popular, Dr Marten boots, heavy metal people would go for Eddie (Iron Maiden) and AC/DC logo.

It wasn't like everything was defined back then. Some of them went from one subculture to the next. I always think it's funny when you see a skinhead who is covered in rockabilly tattoos. It was just mad and there were things happening all the time.

**THE MUSIC WAS A KEYSTONE AT THAT TIME THEN?**

The music, the fashion. I copied a lot of album covers. How many people have a Motorhead logo? The fact that the music the people would listen to and the fact that the people gravitated where the music was being played,





linked the fashion of the dress codes. When Sid Vicious died, people wanted to get tattooed this picture of him in which he wears a nazi t-shirt.

**SOME PICTURES OF THE TIME DEPICT YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FACIAL TATTOOS. WAS IT A COMMON THING?**

There was this whole thing about being anti-social. In Britain, in the late 1970's going through the 1980s, you had Margaret Thatcher, the miner strikes... so many different contributing factors. Young people's views were moulded. A lot of the skinheads would get tattooed on their heads, some of them would get it on their faces because, when you're in a group together and you're in a pub with 500 punks or 500 skinheads and 50% of them are

tattooed, it seems normal within that group. But when you go out into society and there's 5000 people on the streets and you're the one person with your face tattooed, it makes you an outsider. I've never done facial tattooing, I found it something to avoid. Now you can go to a tattoo convention and see people with their face tattooed and it seems to be more acceptable, but back then it was basically saying, you're never gonna get a job.

**HOW WOULD THE OLD-TIMERS TATTOOISTS REACT TO THE NEW EXPECTATIONS OF THIS YOUNG GENERATION ?**

Back then, if you went to Jock and said: "I want to get an Exploited skull", he would go: "What the fuck are you talking about?" You just got what he had on his walls, and





that was it. Dennis Cockel would probably have done it because he was pushing the boundaries and he'd come back from America.

But the thing is, at the same time as this happened, myself, Ian of Reading and some other people, were drawing designs and putting them out there. Gradually some of the old-school people realised there was actually a market within the subcultures.

#### **BEING INVOLVED IN THE PUNK SCENE, WHAT KIND OF NEW DESIGNS WOULD YOU CREATE?**

Seeing all that imagery and tattooing on punks, we started to do punk girl faces, with a coloured mohican on it, a ring on her nose, a chain, etc. When you're young, you want to do those things and be enthusiastic. Jock said to me, "Why would you bother putting an ear-ring on a girl? Why?" The older guys, they just wanted to do tattoos with the minimum of effort and with the minimum of colours. Ed Hardy, after we met, because he loved the punk stuff I was doing, said to me "What you're doing is a new wave of tattooing", so I kept it to name my studio.

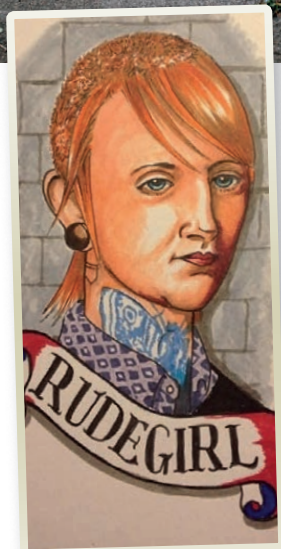
#### **AT THE SAME TIME, ED HARDY WAS ALREADY MOVING THE LINES OF TATTOOING IN THE US, HOW DID YOU MEET HIM?**

Through Dennis. His shop was in a posh area with a lot of more upper class, trendy young people going there and where he tattooed the Stray Cats and Steve Jones from the Sex Pistols, to name a few. When pictures of Ed Hardy's work came out I was getting tattooed by Dennis and hanging around his shop. He told me about Ed and he said, "You really need to see his work." Then he called me up: "Ed is coming over, come and meet him, if you want to get tattooed by him, we'll make an appointment." It was 1980. Suddenly seeing the work that he was doing was amazing, unbelievable. I told him I wanted to get a punk rock girl, he was so enthusiastic to make this design.

#### **WHAT IMPACT DID HE HAVE ON THE TATTOO SCENE IN ENGLAND ?**

Once it became apparent how visionary he was, everyone wanted to get tattooed by him, to talk with him and be inspired by him. At the time, there was the Tattoo Club of Great Britain which meant small conventions in hotels,





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mainly for tattoo artists. Ed came to a couple of them, so the only people he tattooed were tattoo artists. People suddenly realised that you could go out and find inspiration from so many different places.

Ed made people look away from the tattoo flash that a lot of tattooists used to copy exactly as they were. He opened doors and opened people's eyes. Technically too, I never knew what a magnum was until I met Ed. In my eyes, all the fantastic tattooing that goes on now, which is incredible, he really was the starting point for inspiration. For people of my generation, he is a God.

**DID YOU GO TO AMERICA?**

Yes, in 1982, I went to the 'Tattoo Expo' convention, on the Queen Mary ship in Long Beach, California. There was Mike Malone, Leo Zulueta, Greg Irons, the Dutchman, Jack Rudy, Mike Brown... all these artists were mind-blowing. Going there and seeing



what was going on changed everything. At the same time in England, people like Micky Sharpz, Ian of Reading, Kevin Shercliff, Tony Clifton... these guys started to make a name for themselves. In Europe you had Clause Fuhrman, Bernie Luther, Luke Atkinson, Mick in Zürich, Filip Leu. That was the beginning of the vortex that started.

**WHAT ABOUT TATTOO CONVENTIONS?**

They were starting to take off a bit, so with that, people would get together. Me, Ian and some other guys got together and started to put on our own conventions. That was Dunstable Tattoo Expo. That drew a lot of people together. People like Bernie Luther came in, Claus Forhman, Paul Booth, Horiyoshi III. Suddenly this whole energy was happening. Back then, there was one or two in England and Dunstable was the big one in Europe along with Amsterdam.

**HOW DO YOU LOOK AT THE TATTOO SCENE NOW?**

In the 30 years I have been involved in it, it's changed so dramatically that I just wonder what the next 30 years will have in store. One of the big things now is how many kids are computer-literate enough to use Photoshop to create designs. Ultimately with tattooing I guess that, whichever way you create the design and the customer loves it, it doesn't matter. Some people are vey anti-computer but, you know... it's fucking 2016! ☐

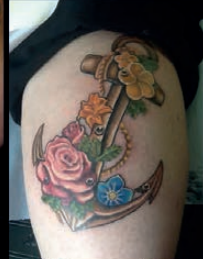




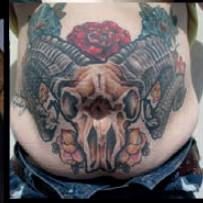
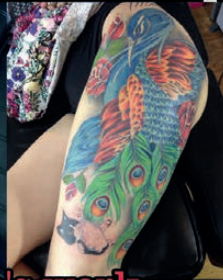
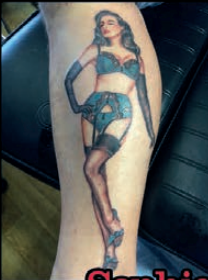
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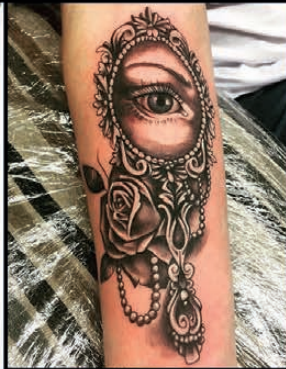
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Helen Brown



BEHIND THE INK

# LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

*Hipsters. They took our beards and our lumberjack shirts and now they want our tattoos. There seems to be a lot of Victoriana lady face and bearded fop tattoos of late, but is it just a fad? Wayne Simmons meets three of traditional's finest to find out.*

When it comes to old school, you get a lot of motifs and tropes that, rightly or wrongly, define the whole tattoo industry. An anchor is one example, a love heart another. For me, one of the most striking of these motifs has been the lady face—it's such a versatile image that can be used to represent all kinds of things, from the quintessential gypsy to the most badass looking witch and everything in between.

Helen Brown from Gung Ho! in Birmingham was one of the first purveyors of the lady face to catch my eye. A regular on the convention circuit, she's tattooed a few neo-trad pieces on my girlfriend over the years, including a rather splendid lady face. "I could quite happily

tattoo girl faces all day," Helen once told us, a sentiment she voiced again as we got together for this interview.

It's a tattoo she's made a lot, and clearly one she still loves doing, but where did it all start and why does it remain such a popular theme today?

"It probably comes from missing loved ones during the war years, or when sailors were at sea. You've got the Lady Luck or Man's Ruin girls, for instance. Today, there are lots of different starting points for why people want to get them but generally I think they just want a beautiful girl on their arm."

Miss Jo Black is another artist who's all about the face. Working out of her own studio, Black Inc in Frome, Somerset, she's built up quite a rep within the neo-trad



Helen Brown





All work this page Helen Brown

world and lady faces are something of a staple for her. “I think it’s because we find emotional context in expressions,” she tells me. “Using faces can be a way to convey certain emotions or feelings in a visual way to others. Women’s faces are popular because it’s easy to make a woman look beautiful and there are a million ways to do it.” Theme-wise, Jo’s seen one thing in particular come up time and time again with this type of tattoo. “Love is a massive theme. Often people use the male and female forms to express this emotion visually.”

Tanya Buxton inked that very

**IT PROBABLY COMES FROM MISSING LOVED ONES DURING THE WAR YEARS, OR WHEN SAILORS WERE AT SEA**

Helen Brown

thing just the other week, as it happens. Working out of Magnum Circus in Cheltenham, she’s another artist whose neo-trad has struck a chord with me. “I tattooed each calf for a female client, one to represent her and one to represent her partner,” she tells me. “So the designs were matching, but not matching—if you know what I mean!”

For Tanya, a ‘couple’ tattoo is definitely about balance—the ol’ Love & Hate duality schtick we talked about in last month’s BTI, if you like. She’s found that lady faces are popular with both male and female clients, but it’s mainly





All work this page Jo Black

guys that go for gentlemen tattoos. “Hipster guys?” I wonder, and Tanya laughs. “Gentlemen tattoos have been around a while,” she reminds me, pointing to the classic boxer design as a great example. “I do think maybe the hipster style, bearded gentlemen designs may be more of a trend at the moment,” she adds, “but who knows, let’s see. Maybe it’s another classic in the making.”

Jo agrees. “The bearded man does seem to have had a bit of a boom,” she admits. “It’s almost related to the current trend of tattooed ‘gents’, but I suppose also it’s a way to do a male face with

**WOMEN’S FACES ARE  
POPULAR BECAUSE  
IT’S EASY TO MAKE  
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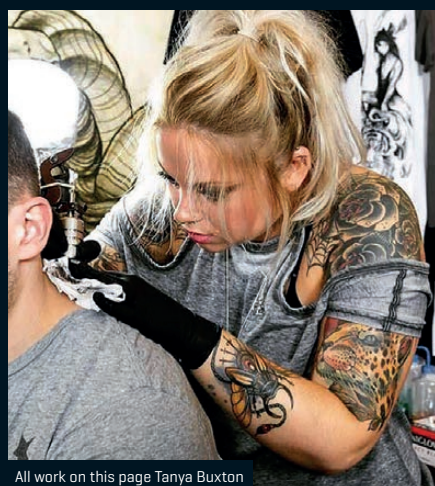
Jo Black

a bit more detail to it.” Jo points to the visual appeal that Helen spoke of earlier. “Women have the hair and the makeup and the big eyes. Men don’t usually have any of that going on.”

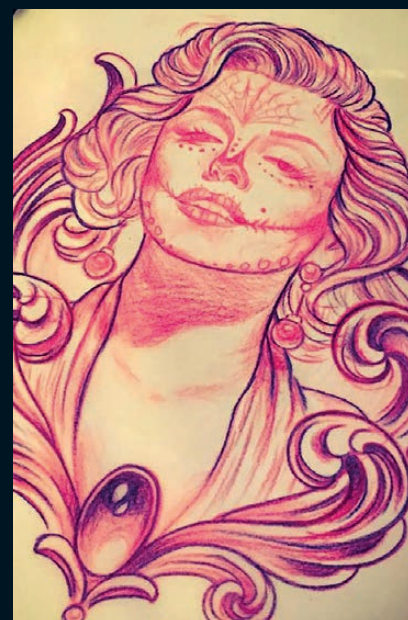
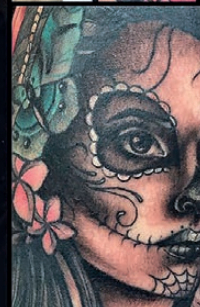
So what are some of the most popular designs within this particular sub-genre? For Helen, it’s mostly the classic gypsy head but she’s worked up a horror theme in the past, too. “I’ve done a few ladies based on characters like the bride of Frankenstein. I’d love to do some more like that. I recently tattooed Vincent Price on one of my good customers, too.”

For Tanya, one tattoo in par-





All work on this page Tanya Buxton



ticular resonates. “It was an African pin up girl on a regular client of mine. He always gives me creative freedom and the piece allowed me to push the boundaries and try something new.” Something any artist is going to welcome, of course.

Jo sees a lot of different tropes. “With the gents, I have had Sailor, Spiff, Gangster, Wizard and Merman crop up again and again, and for the ladies I get Mermaid, Witch, Demon, Angel and Victoriana repeatedly. That is not to say they are any less interesting to do, or that the ideas are not original, it

**I DO THINK MAYBE THE HIPSTER STYLE, BEARDED GENTLEMEN DESIGNS MAY BE MORE OF A TREND AT THE MOMENT - MAYBE IT'S ANOTHER CLASSIC IN THE MAKING**

Tanya Buxton

just means they are more popular than others.”

Popular they may be right now, but tattoos featuring ladies and gentlemen are anything but new. Rather, they're an important part of our tattoo heritage, an adaptable staple that stands the test of time and, like any good art, is still evolving. Simply put: you're always going to have tattoos featuring the male and female form because you're always going to have fine art and sculpture and film doing the same, and art begets art, right?

Hipsters will be here today and gone tomorrow. But ink is for life. □



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# ART IS ANARCHY

*There's nothing more exhilarating than creating art. Well, we think so anyway. We sent Beccy Rimmer off to interview two artists that have anarchy, individuality and determination at the heart of what they do*

**O**ur enjoyment of tattoos goes hand-in-hand with our appreciation of art. German artists (and co-owners of alternative brand DARKER HALF) Chris Weiss and Sebastian Mueller create illustrations that just reek of everything we love about traditional tattoos.

In addition to their unbelievable artistic talent, the pair has strong—and similar—opinions on how to create art and how to achieve what you want.

I was desperate to chat to them because I knew our conversation would evoke motivation and inspiration. I wasn't wrong. Let's open the book:



ed designing flyers, websites and artworks for local shows and bands. After studying design I worked in several agencies and in the BMX Industry, where I met Sebastian for the first time. Currently I'm a full-time senior art director in a small design studio, where I have the freedom to do a lot of freelance work next to my all day work.

## **INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO OUR LOVELY READERS!**

SM: I'm Sebastian, an illustrator and graphic designer from Cologne, Germany and have been doing this for nearly 15 years. I started drawing at a very young age, tracing comics and skateboard graphics, and somehow just stuck with it! After school I interned at a graphic design bureau and learnt the basics of working as a graphic designer. After spending some years in different creative agencies and a well-known BMX Company, I took the chance to become a full time freelance artist in 2012.

CW: My name is Chris, I'm also an illustrator and graphic designer based in Cologne. I got into graphics nearly 16 years ago, when I start-

## **WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE THING TO DESIGN?**

SM: Since my work is focused on illustration and branding, I would say that these are the disciplines I have the most fun working in. I do a lot of band merch and it's always cool to come to a show and see people wearing your designs on a tee. There's a lot of competition and it sometimes doesn't pay too well, but I still love it and it's definitely worth it. Of course I also love working on personal pieces like screen-prints and collages. Mostly tattoo





**THERE'S A LOT OF COMPETITION AND IT SOMETIMES DOESN'T PAY TOO WELL, BUT I STILL LOVE IT AND IT'S DEFINITELY WORTH IT**

and 80s inspired art as you can see.

CW: I'm some kind of an interdisciplinary creative. In my studio job, I do a lot of web and editorial stuff, but my main focus is on illustrative artworks, just like shirt designs and record covers. As I'm not earning a full living out of freelancing, I don't need to take every job request I get, so I try to work more like an artist than a designer at the moment. I want to be more exclusive, take more time for my own projects, like Darker Half or exhibitions. I've planned a lot for 2016.

**TELL US ABOUT HOW TATTOOS HAVE INSPIRED YOUR ART.**

SM: I love the simplicity, the reduced amount of colours and the bold lines of traditional tattoos. You can find a lot of this traditional imagery like, for example, daggers, skulls, roses and anchors in my illustrations. I'm kind of a late bloomer when it comes to getting tattoos but over the last

couple of years I'm getting there.

CW: As I got into tattoos when I left my mother's house 12 years ago, my work got more and more inspired by tattooing. I think with the neo-traditional hype of the last years, tattoo-styled designs are more popular than ever, and I was always fascinated about bringing analog and digital styles together. My images are sometimes not directly tattoo-inspired, but I love finishing illustrations with elements like eyes, tears, roses and all that stuff.

**IS THERE AN ARTS SCENE IN COLOGNE THAT CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR WORK?**

SM: I wouldn't consider myself part of the local art scene. I visit art shows occasionally and know some of the guys around, but I'm more connected to the local skate scene.

CW: I also live in Cologne, Germany. There are some real cool artists here, but there's no actual scene or community. I know a lot of guys here, doing art, photography or tattooing, but there aren't that much group shows, art-events or alternative galleries. That's why I came up with the Darker Half brand. I wanted a platform to express myself, without giving the whole thing my face. I wanted it to be a collective, so I asked





Sebastian to start this thing with me. We want to do more art-events in the future and maybe there will be a gallery with our name on it... someday... who knows!

#### WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS FOR THE FUTURE?

SM: Personally I want to get better at screen-printing and creating websites, and also to get back to drawing a bit more. Business wise, I'm looking forward to working some fun projects. Right now we're planning a couple of new tees and screen-prints for Darker Half that should be out soon. It would be cool to host our own art show in the next couple of months.

CW: I want do more art-based projects, like painting murals or doing installations. There are so many different ways to bring your art onto surfaces. I love working with wood, steel and light, so I want to come up with more 3-dimensional or multi-layered stuff. I also want do more screen printing, since we have a quite big space to work in right now.

#### WHAT IS YOUR ARTISTIC PROCESS?

**I DON'T NEED TO TAKE EVERY JOB REQUEST I GET, SO I TRY TO WORK MORE LIKE AN ARTIST THAN A DESIGNER AT THE MOMENT. I WANT TO BE MORE EXCLUSIVE, TAKE MORE TIME FOR MY OWN PROJECTS**

SM: I collect all inspirations... in a folder, whether it's screenshots, quotes, typefaces or scribbles. When an idea forms in my head I scan through that folder and check if there's anything that would help to make this idea come to life. I normally don't sketch that much and rather start with a white canvas. Therefore I end up with loads of different approaches and then pick one to finish up. Probably not the smartest way to do this but it works for me!

It's definitely harder to design for myself since I'm pretty detail orientated when it comes to my own stuff. I couldn't charge a client the amount of time that goes into my own designs. With clients it's a bit different, because most of the time they come up with a specific concept and





**I'M KIND OF A LATE BLOOMER WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING TATTOOS, BUT OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS I'M GETTING THERE**



sometimes you end up doing things a bit differently than you would do them for your own. It's still fun, but sometimes you just have to be more of a businessman than an artist. All over it's still the best job in the world for me.

I think one of the hardest challenges in art and design is that everybody has his own opinion on your work. People like your style

or they don't. It's pretty subjective and there isn't much you can do about it. This, combined with people's increasing skills in applications like Photoshop and Illustrator, sometimes keeps me awake at night.

CW: I usually start with a rough sketch. After the client's approval I do a more accurate version of the sketch and start working out the details. After scanning the sketch I rebuild the whole line-art with Illustrator. So it's easy to move and align stuff, before I go to the shading and coloring process, which is more analog style again.

The main difference in working for clients is that there is more communication and of course sometimes the final design is not like I wanted it to be in the beginning. The most challenging thing for me is that there are so many designers and illustrators out there, clients have the freedom to let you work on 10 different designs and not taking a single one if they don't like it. That's one of the reasons why I want to be more an artist, being independent from the market and its struggles.





#### WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

SM: Probably music and other designers but it could be anything from movies and magazines to photographs, books and tattoos.

CW: Definitely other artists. When I was a teenager I already loved the art of Florian Bertmer or Pushead. I spend a lot of money on art prints that are surrounding me in my house, where I am most of the time when I create stuff. I'm super hyped on all that occult inspired stuff out there, UK-based Craig Robson for example.

#### ANY ADVICE FOR ASPIRING ARTISTS AND DESIGNERS?

SM: Work hard, stay original and don't sell yourself cheap. It's okay to copy one's art while you're still learning but over the years you should develop your own style and try to improve it. Also, it's great when you're still in school and your favourite band pays you 50 bucks to print your design on a tee (I probably would have done it for free) but remember that good work should have

**THERE ARE SO MANY  
DIFFERENT WAYS TO BRING  
YOUR ART ONTO SURFACES**

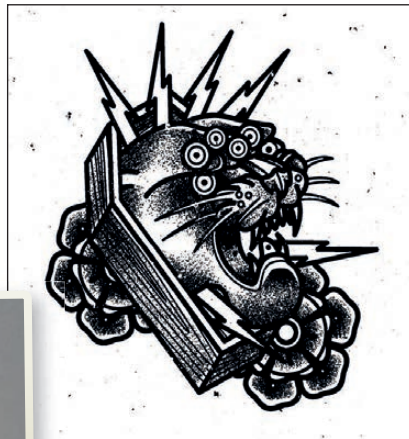
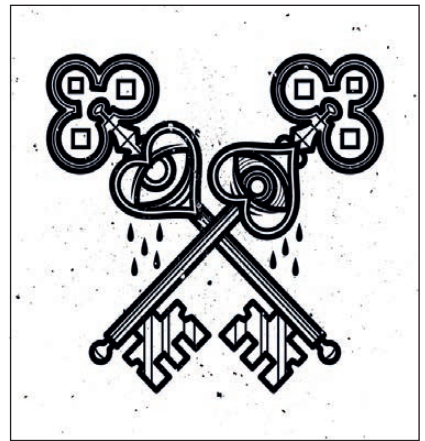
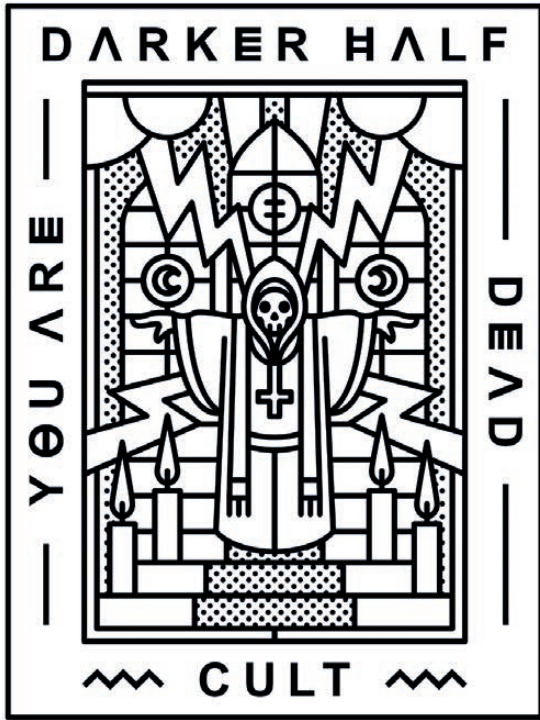
its price. One day you might want to make a living from it. Selling yourself cheap will come back to you in the long run.

CW: Don't work for free. It's always trouble and you never feel satisfied... doesn't matter how much fame or social media support you get offered for your work. Be yourself. Get inspired by others, but don't focus on this too hard... let your own ideas have space to grow. It just takes time and a lot of trying out.

#### TELL US ABOUT DARKER HALF.

CW: The idea for Darker Half basically came up when we realised how many unused designs we had in our drawers. I think both of us had played with the thought of getting some of these designs





**DON'T WORK FOR FREE. IT'S ALWAYS TROUBLE AND YOU NEVER FEEL SATISFIED... DOESN'T MATTER HOW MUCH FAME OR SOCIAL MEDIA SUPPORT YOU GET OFFERED FOR YOUR WORK**

printed and to start our own line. After working together for a year at a BMX company we stayed in touch and sent our ideas and sketches back and forth to hear what the other thought. We both share a passion for dark and occult imagery and some day the idea came up to just throw everything in and work as a collective. We then set up a little workshop at our shared office where we can expose screens and print posters. We got some shirts printed, created a webshop and hosted a little art show at a friend's coffee shop. It's been a bit quiet the last couple of weeks since we both are neck-deep in work for our day jobs, but we're currently creating a new range of products that should be out in early spring.

**DO YOU WORK WELL TOGETHER?**

CW: For us, working as an artist collective is the

perfect way to push your work to the next level. It's cool to have somebody that gives you advice, looks on your work differently and knows how to improve your art in ways you wouldn't even have thought of. It also gives you the chance to achieve more and simply get more work done, since you always have a helping hand, split the costs and help each other out. It's also easier to promote a brand, then yourself as an artist.

**LET'S END ON A GOOD ONE. WHY DOES THE WORLD NEED ART?**

SM: It's the best way to let your mind drift away. Art doesn't have to make sense and everybody sees it differently. It could be so many things: a way to express yourself, to blow of steam and spend ours of doing it without a special purpose.

CW: Art is Anarchy ☐

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# CAMERAS & UKULELES

*A singer, talented ukulele player, model and writer, Leah Jung is one of the most recognisable—and beautiful—faces in the tattoo world. In addition to gracing countless magazine covers, she has appeared on Ink Master, become the first heavily tattooed model to open a New York Fashion Week runway show and even starred in an Evian commercial. Yes, she's one of a kind...*

As soon as Leah Jung returned to New York City from a rather enviable Hawaiian trip, which included plenty of sunshine, rum, ukulele lessons and a tattoo session at Sailor Jerry's original shop, we just had to track her down. After all, there's nothing quite like living vicariously through a badass bombshell.

"My entire trip to Hawaii for Sailor Jerry's 105th birthday was unforgettable!" gushes Jung. "I got my first Sailor Jerry tattoo almost 10 years ago and my second recently in Honolulu at his original shop—it was a great honour."

"Hawaii in general is very relaxing and inspiring, so it's easy to see why Sailor Jerry set up his home base there," she continues. "It is so wonderful to see the location still being used for traditional tattoos. I got a palm tree and an awesome artist named Anthony Vicar executed it perfectly."

"Afterwards, we were able to visit Sailor Jerry's gravesite, which was simple and unassuming. I understand the man himself was humble and soft-spoken, so his modest headstone was fitting. Our group then took some shots of Sailor Jerry Rum and spoke a touching cheers to him as a tribute."

"Everyone in the tattoo industry is familiar with his legacy—his work is so recognisable—and although modern tattooing can turn different art styles or photography into tattoos, his designs will forever



be art that is associated with tattoos," adds Jung when asked about the timeless appeal of Norman 'Sailor Jerry' Collins' work. "They have also proven to stand the test of time. His bold outlines and bright colours do really well on skin and are clearly readable from both a distance and up-close."

## **In Front Of The Lens**

"My very first modelling job was to pose as a reference for a somewhat famous painter

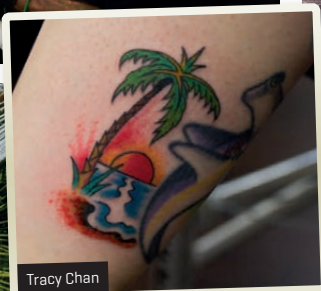




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Tracy Chan



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**HAWAII IN GENERAL IS VERY RELAXING AND INSPIRING, SO IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY SAILOR JERRY SET UP HIS HOME BASE THERE**

when I was a teenager,” recalls Jung of her introduction to the modelling world. “The painter was an acquaintance of my mother. Before that, modelling was never something I considered. I had five or six other modelling jobs within the next couple of years, but they did not pay much, if anything, and I mostly found it to be a waste of my time.”

That all changed in 2009 thanks to a friend who suggested she sign up for a networking site tailored to models and photographers. “I had really exciting results, getting some nice photos taken for myself to promote my music,” she says. “The photos got such great feedback, I started to take modelling seriously. Since then, it has been a very rewarding experience.”

Now a consummate pro, Jung has graced the

covers and pages of countless publications, but no matter how much time goes by, “I’m still surprised by how little most models are valued. If you’re not a recognised model wrapped up in commercial campaigns, you are likely to get replaced if you ask for \$50 more than the girl next to you, regardless of experience.”

“They can make you look like whatever they want with makeup and Photoshop, so a lot of us undersell ourselves, even though we work long, stressful hours,” she says, shining a light on the less-than-glamorous reality of modelling. “Also, once you model lingerie or swimwear, ignorant people on the Internet seem to assume that you’re a stripper or a prostitute. At the end of the day, when you’re not getting paid and not getting spoken to respectfully, it’s difficult to see the silver lining.”

**Leah Jung Is...**

Just a nice girl trying to create things and share them. If I can see a little more of the world because of what I've put into it, then it's all worth it.





Bartek Stadnicki Photography



Kelli Bullock Photography

**I'M STILL SURPRISED BY HOW LITTLE MOST MODELS ARE VALUED. IF YOU'RE NOT A RECOGNISED MODEL WRAPPED UP IN COMMERCIAL CAMPAIGNS, YOU ARE LIKELY TO GET REPLACED IF YOU ASK FOR \$50 MORE THAN THE GIRL NEXT TO YOU, REGARDLESS OF EXPERIENCE**

“Fortunately, I haven’t had many bad experiences,” she continues, before adding that “there have certainly been some ‘What the hell?’ moments. I’ve shown up to more than one studio wherein the photographer was clearly a hoarder. Literally piles of shoes and wigs and nonsense—there was barely a floor to stand on.”

“Other times, mostly just when I was starting out, before I had the experience to spot the weirdos, I quickly realised that I was hired because the photographer wanted to meet me and hang out more than he cared to photograph me.”

“There’s also been many times when the job wasn’t properly described to me. One time they ended up covering my entire body in paint when it was just supposed to be

painted underwear. It was so uncomfortable and difficult to remove.”

What has changed over the years is how tattooed models are perceived. “Ten years ago, a heavily tattooed model wouldn’t be used in fashion or advertising at all, unless maybe they were a successful rockstar,” points out Jung.

That said, there’s still a long way to go. “Now, you see heavily tattooed models—still mostly men—but they are often being used as novelty and not necessarily to speak to others who live an alternative lifestyle. Most of the castings I go on are still for biker chicks and heroin addicts. I think most people finally realise that we aren’t all sailors and convicts, but we’re still classified as ‘a little weird’.”

#### **No Sleep For The Artistic**

On her days off from photoshoots, Jung can be found embracing her love of music, kicking major ass on the ukulele and showing off her beautiful voice. When she’s not doing that, she’s at boyfriend Jon Messa’s tattoo studio, Sacred Tattoo NYC.

“I really am working every moment that I’m awake!” laughs Jung.





Kelli Bullock Photography



Tracy Chan



Tracy Chan

**...I QUICKLY REALISED THAT I WAS HIRED BECAUSE THE PHOTOGRAPHER WANTED TO MEET ME AND HANG OUT MORE THAN HE CARED TO PHOTOGRAPH ME**



Kelli Bullock Photography

**Leah Jung On...  
Choosing New Ink**

I have been tattooed by maybe 30 different artists. At least once I've been drunk and spontaneous. Other times I have discussed specific designs with an in-demand artist for months. Sometimes, I'll just see a drawing a friend has finished and they'll add it to my collection, so we can spend a day together.

"Every time my phone goes off, there is an email to research or a new musical arrangement to listen to from one of my collaborators or one of a million other tasks."

"Three days a week, I work assisting the artists at the tattoo shop my boyfriend works at and I also do all of his emails. I try to learn a new song, create a video, edit it and post it about once a month. Each song and video takes two full uninterrupted days to be public-ready. Tonight, I have to memorise lines and secure payment for a small acting job I booked for tomorrow and hold on, my phone is ringing..."

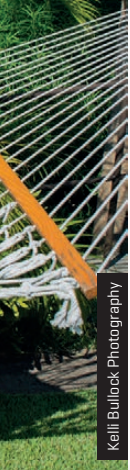
But even with so much on her plate, there will always be one clear winner. "I would much rather be a musician," she says with-

out missing a beat. "Although modelling has given me unforgettable experiences, it really doesn't truly represent me. It promotes what I look like or someone else's vision for a photograph, but music shares my soul. I would love to play more shows, tour, record a full album, shoot music videos, collaborate with other bands—everything. At the moment, modelling just pays more than music does and my fan base has grown to be mostly men who like tattooed women."

**Exploring Jung's Tattoo Collection**

"Now that the majority of my tattoos have healed for several years, I see how some have aged a little better," starts Jung when asked to take a look at her personal ink collection





Kelli Bullock Photography



Kelli Bullock Photography



Kelli Bullock Photography

Bartek Stadnicki Photography



## MODELLING PROMOTES WHAT I LOOK LIKE OR SOMEONE ELSE'S VISION FOR A PHOTOGRAPH, BUT MUSIC SHARES MY SOUL

and name the first pieces to jump out at her.

“I really like my hourglass tattoo by Ian Dana, which is in the centre of my torso. The sand was created using dot work years before I saw a surge in the popularity of dot work tattoos. It feels like a very ‘timeless’ tattoo to me.”

“Just above my hourglass, at my sternum, is a much newer tattoo, consisting almost entirely of dot work. I really love this tattoo by Peter Madsen because it was so difficult to receive. Aside from being expensive, I found a great sense of mental and physical achievement when it was over. He drew the design freehand while I stood for several hours, maybe four or five. Then he tattooed for another six or seven hours with very little break time. The healing process also left me

uncomfortable for a week. Every time I see it, I am reminded how strong I can be.”

Then there are her signature palm tattoos. “Technically, I have six tattoos done by six different artists that stretch across the palms of my hands,” she says. “The two focal pieces are of a locust and a plague doctor done by Don Demers and Rich D’Amaru.”

“I never hesitated when I decided on them and I still love them and get complimented on them regularly. They represent being in control over the evil things that cross one’s path. On the bottoms of my fingers is my first and only hand poked tattoo, executed by my fascinating nomadic friend Dot by Dot. It’s interesting to stare at this tattoo because I can see each individual drop of ink under my skin.”

### Leah Jung On... Her Favourite Tattoos

I am currently in progress with a big leg piece from one of my favourite artists—Matt Buck—who is based out of New York City. His style is generally neo-traditional, but he adds a certain dark sadness to his designs that makes them hard to forget. He’s also very influenced by Renaissance art and it especially shows in the classic faces he draws.





Kelli Bullock Photography



Tracy Chan

**NOW, YOU SEE HEAVILY TATTOOED MODELS — STILL MOSTLY MEN — BUT THEY ARE OFTEN BEING USED AS NOVELTY AND NOT NECESSARILY TO SPEAK TO OTHERS WHO LIVE AN ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE**

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It's easy to imagine that being on shoots with fellow tattooed models inspires plenty of ink talk and, as Jung reveals, there's one particular placement that always catches her eye.

"I really love the way an amazing throat tattoo looks on a beautiful girl, but I have never considered getting one myself," she reveals. "Personally, having the option of appearing non-tattooed is very efficient for my lifestyle, but the bravery and impact of tattoos like those on some models, Teya Salat for example, are really unforgettable to me. Also, I think sticking with a colour theme is very appealing, like Morgan Joyce, who is covered in only black and pink tattoos."

Dating a tattoo artist also means regularly geeking out over ink, although, "he sees tattoos differently than I do. I don't know any-

thing about actually drawing or tattooing and he studies it constantly. I'll see a tattoo that I think is really detailed and unique and he'll be more concerned about how its lack of black will be problematic to its ageing."

With so much going on, a week-long nap should perhaps be on the horizon, but it seems there's no such thing as downtime for Jung. "I recently filmed a few more videos, including a comedy skit for Funny Or Die and another social experiment for viral video pranksters Moe and E.T. Also, I'm learning more cover songs to hopefully reach more people who are interested in the ukulele," she says enthusiastically, adding, "I would really enjoy giving lessons online—perhaps I'll look into some strategies for starting to do that, too!" ▣



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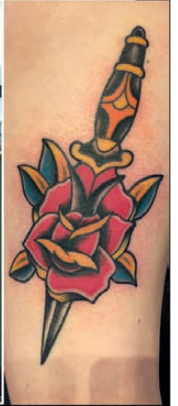


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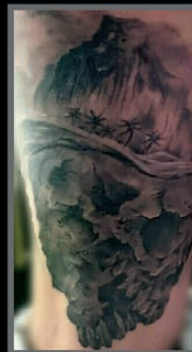
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AN EYE IS UPON YOU

## NEEDING A FIX

*This month's column comes to you directly from my sick bed - I'm now on day five of the flu. Real flu, not just a bad cold, nor even a theatrically overblown bad cold, but an honest to goodness, fever and fatigue, can't-get-down-the-stairs, not-entirely-sure-what-day-it-is, bout of proper influenza.*

**T**his is the stuff they try to vaccinate the vulnerable against and right now, I can definitely see why. I feel wretched. And not just physically wretched either, I feel emotionally wretched too. I've felt useless for the best part of a week, barely able to reply to a text or email, let alone compose a column worth reading.

I've been forced to cancel some long anticipated plans too, dancing with my vintage chorus line in front of a crowd of 1500 and most saddening of all, I had to postpone a tattoo appointment that I've been waiting for since December—or more accurately, for about ten years, but that's a different story.

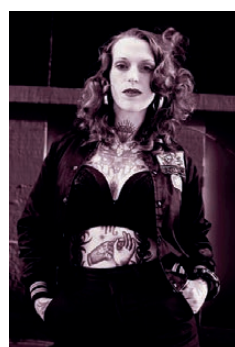
So it's not an overstatement to say that right now, I feel pretty betrayed by my own body. Generally, I'm one of the fortunate majority in that my body is pretty darn good to me and although not a top of the range model, it is reasonably fuel efficient and it mostly manages to get me from A to B without breaking down. I'm almost 40 (you'll probably read that phrase multiple times this year, apologies. If you're about to hit 40 too, you know how it is) but bar a clicky left knee and stiff right shoulder, my body is largely doing me proud.

I have a group of gym friends that range from 'half my age' to 'could feasibly be my offspring' who will happily attest to my usual ability to keep up, but not this week. This week I have been in exile. So much so that I briefly considered buying something bulky online, just to have the postman knock the door and make me feel a little less lonely. I realise all this sounds rather self pitying and frankly, it is.

I feel very sorry for myself—but it's hard to feel good about oneself in any kind of intellectual or existential way when one doesn't feel good about, or at the very least, at peace with one's own body. That's not to say we should judge ourselves on how we appear to others, or to accept the judgement of others on our



Dek Kent



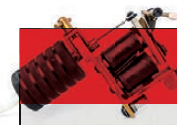
PAULA HARDY KANGELOS  
DiamondBetty

**I BRIEFLY CONSIDERED BUYING SOMETHING BULKY ONLINE, JUST TO HAVE THE POSTMAN KNOCK THE DOOR AND MAKE ME FEEL A LITTLE LESS LONELY**

looks. Aesthetic values are personal values and we should not be obliged to mitigate our own choices for the comfort of others, but our bodies are not just shells or vessels, they are a part of our whole selves. It's important to inhabit them as comfortably as we can.

Is this why the controversy around the TV show 'Tattoo Fixers' has raged so fiercely? After all, at first look, the show seemed no worse than most of the other mass consumption tattoo TV shows—perhaps it even looked





**TO RAISE THEIR HOPES AND THEN SCRIBBLE ALL OVER THEM WITH UNNECESSARILY LARGE, RUSHED, COPIED OR OTHERWISE SUBSTANDARD TATTOOS IS NOT JUST IRRESPONSIBLE, IT'S INCOMPREHENSIBLE**

a little better? It didn't have the barely-related-to-tattooing scripted celebrity story lines that we came to expect (and dread) from the 'Ink' franchise and it promised to bring a valuable message to the uninitiated: that there is no need to live with a tattoo that makes you unhappy, that something can always be done, that there are 'options'.

Unfortunately the options presented ranged from the banal to the irresponsible. A former show guest's online expose only confirmed what we already suspected, that the constraints of making a TV programme on time and on budget were at odds with the time and patience required to make a tattoo with any kind of skill or integrity.

This was demonstrated by one of the show's 'stars' being repeatedly caught out copying the custom works of a number of the UK's most respected contemporary tattooers. Good, original tattoos take their sweet time in research, in planning and in execution. Taking shortcuts via other people's intellectual property is, sadly, far from uncommon though witnessing these transgressions doesn't usually ignite quite such an emotional flame.

Perhaps the biggest problem with Tattoo Fixers is that its starting point—its raw ingredient—is people that already feel let down, betrayed by, or not at all at ease with their bodies? To raise their hopes and then scribble all over them with unnecessarily large, rushed, copied or otherwise substandard tattoos is not just irresponsible, it's incomprehensible to those of us who found our bodily peace at the end of an artist's needle.

I'll be fine in another day or two, but takes a lot longer to fix a bad cover up than it does to get over the flu. ☐

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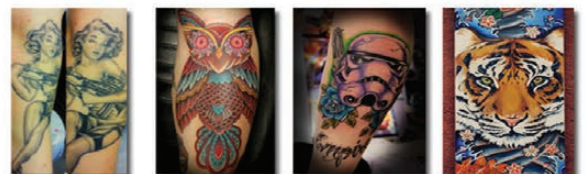
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## This month has been all about Tattoo Fixers...

**A**s tattoo writers, we report on topics in a completely unique way (in comparison to other journalists).

We're motivated and recruited to write for blogs, websites and magazines for one reason – we care about the thing we're talking about, and seek to convey this eloquently and above all, respectfully.

That's why, it's always a difficult task to cover a topic that might cause any hurt or upset. Any potential reporting on something sensitive means we're no longer concerned with portraying our own feelings, but the feelings of those around us. This is never simple.

For the last six months or more, there has been an industry outrage at the TV show *Tattoo Fixers*.

We first talked about this friction in issue 254 (*Reality Bites*), in which I interviewed three tattoo artists about why the national media had been doing a massive disservice to those working as a tattooist in the UK today. Since then, *Tattoo Fixers* has progressed into its second series, and again, artists' animosity towards the show was prominent.

That's why, this month, I had decided that these escalating viewpoints desperately needed to be out in the open. There couldn't be such a vast amount of hostility coming from the industry, and us not talk about it.

On the evening of the 3rd March I wrote about some of these artists' opinions on my blog. By the weekend, the article had received 280,000 views. This was four times the number of views my site had received in its entire lifetime.

Holy fuck. We'd started something.

A week later, there were 20+ news stories along the same theme – statements in national papers from individuals who had experienced the show, interviews with tattoo artists and more. I am sure you've seen it all, so I won't go into too much detail.

Now, two weeks later, the buzz has died down, and we can reflect. What just happened? Why? Has it achieved anything?

*Tattoo Fixers* isn't going to be removed from our screens, and I think more similar shows will follow. Should we admit that the



Sven

**GREATER THAN OUR PASSION FOR WRITING ABOUT TATTOOS IS THE ENTHUSIASM OF THOSE TATTOO ARTISTS WHO AT THE MOMENT FEEL SO MIS-REPRESENTED**



BECCY RIMMER  
BeccyRimmer

industry is done for, and we might as well all give up now?

I think we can take away some small hope. I began by saying that one of the hardest things to do is represent the opinions of others. Only now do I realise how important it is that we continue to do so.

I also said that as tattoo writers, we're different to other journalists because we hold a geeky passion for our topic. Well, greater than our own passion is the enthusiasm and dedication of those tattoo artists, those who at the moment feel so mis-represented.

If we can all make room amongst our own intentions to represent the passions of others (and tell hundreds of thousand of people about it along the way) it'll do as a pretty good first step. ▣





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