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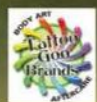
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KING OF THE MONSTERS

Much like those of us who lived with the addiction that was the magical TV experience of *LOST*, we will look back on this period in tattooing as being a Golden Age.

A Golden Age happens a few times over the course of a culture and as often happens, the people that are part of the new Golden Age like to put the previous Golden Age in its place as being 'not so good' by rechristening it the Silver Age. It happened in TV. It happened in the movies. It most definitely occurred in comic books. So far, nobody has been so arrogant as to baptise their sexy period in proceedings as the Platinum Age—most likely because it sounds awful.

Anyway, regardless of what people choose to call it, the fact remains that in the big wide world outside of your door, there's great work going on—and as luck would have it, unlike pop music (which tends to eat itself) it's very likely that it will continue to get better. Rather like the movies however, tattooing likes a good remake more than anything else. I could point at a thousand tattoos that are a tattoo of a tattoo... until they go so far down the line, at the back of the queue, the client thinks they're getting an original idea.

Then again, you can watch a *Godzilla* movie (the 1954 original is a good place to start) and love it for all its faults because the spirit in which it was made will forever eclipse whatever comes after—no matter how much money and tech you throw at it.

This is what tattooing does best—you can take a small idea and when your artist loves it, delivers the ink with passion and talent, you will find yourself with the greatest tattoo in the world... and that's how it works. It's not up to anybody else to decide how fantastic it is. Heaven knows I can promise you one single thing I know to be an absolute true fact at this point: nobody gives a damn about anybody's tattoos but their own. Not really.

That little tattoo of a camper van with a couple of dates beneath it can even drown out the noise of the 'four years in the making bodysuit'. Make no mistake—I like most



THAT LITTLE TATTOO OF A CAMPER VAN CAN EVEN DROWN OUT THE NOISE OF THE 'FOUR YEARS IN THE MAKING BODYSUIT'



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things to be epic on a Tolkien scale but I also love those smaller intimate moments where you catch a glimpse of the man in the pointy hat hiding behind the curtain too.

You can't remake *LOST* though and hope that by calling it something different people won't notice what you've done. As clients, we need to let the wonderful artists out there breathe and do what they do best, but in a similar fashion, as a client you also need to point out when somebody tattoos a hand and it looks like either a) a bunch of sticks or b) a bunch of bananas.

I've confused myself now. Next month, I'm going back to story-telling. ▣

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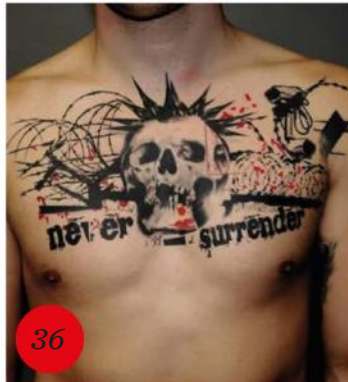
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A little pictorial round-up of one of the new games in town.

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Tired of Tattoo TV shows not doing what they're supposed to, Grace Neutral took it upon herself to steady the ship over at Viceland. Time for a catch-up.

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This month, Wayne Simmons goes behind the scenes in the life of Amy Savage, tattooist and animal rights activist..

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In the first instalment in a new series, Beccy Rimmer spends the day soaking

up the tattoo scene in Leicester – and meets two studios that are encouraging artistic collaboration in a unique way.

36 SMASH IT UP

If you think British punk was a watered-down version of what was happening Stateside, then think again... it had its own unique voice and tattooing to match.

42 ACT OF FAITH

As tattoo writers, we dream of finding inspiring individuals who have something interesting to say about why we choose to get tattoos. Kendyl Noor Aurora has more to say than most.

70 MR DYNAMO

There aren't many places in the world

today in which tattooing remains largely taboo. In Israel, however, the art form is considered illegal under Jewish law and is strictly forbidden due to religious beliefs - and then there is Dori Bazaran's Dynamo Tattoo...

76 THE TRANSFORMATIVE TATTOO

Sean Herman continues to bring us stories that mean something behind his tattooing.

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Claire Seville has worked as an ice dancer, club dancer, DJ and model. But when her daughter was born she picked up a camera to keep a record of the new life and found, well... a new life of her own as an acclaimed professional pinup photographer

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TTTISM: THE MAGAZINE

Representing the new digital-age of tattoo media, TTTism has built its reputation as a consistent source of inspiration in contemporary tattoo culture. Until now, @TTTism has been accessible exclusively on Instagram, exhibiting design work by some of the most respected, established and innovative artists within the industry.

But now, TTTism debuts the first edition of their quarterly print magazine, dedicated to the world of contemporary tattoo culture. TTTism has been produced as an amalgamation of its digital presence, designed with inspiration from contemporary art and fashion magazines, as well as iconic tattoo-specific publications such as Tattoo Time. Issue 1 of TTTism features a host of renowned tattoo artists including the likes of Curly Moore, Mike Rubendall, Tati Com-

pton, Thomas Hooper and Roxx, as well as fashion photographers Maxime Ballesteros and Adam Katz Sinding.

If you're ever keen to expand your horizons, you can buy issue one of TTTism online now for £14 at: sangbleu.club/product/tttism-magazine

While you're in the zone, you also need to check in at their store sangbleu.club/shop/publications and take a tour of their other publications. Recommended from this quarter are the books Tati by Tati Compton, which is beautifully put together and Maxime's very own 1000 which is a collection of over 1300 tattoo designs created across his 8 year tattoo artist career. Produced in a limited edition run of 1000 copies, if you ever considered yourself a collector of important things... you know what to do.

CONVENTION POSTER OF THE MONTH



Also, Dan Dyson has just opened up a new studio out in Huddersfield. If you're passing by, drop in and check the place out. You can find Ink Lounge at 18-20 Acre Street, Lindley, Huddersfield HD3 3DU. Tel: 0744 692 7264

Welcome to a new section of the mag... well, not so much a 'section' (and maybe it will die after this one instance) but it seems like a good idea right now because a lot of us all said "Wow, that's a really nice poster for a show" all at the same time which means they are onto something.

The show is Deauville Tattoo Festival and is on 19/20 August. If you're feeling adventurous, you can find your way there by following this address information at Centre International De Deauville, 1 Rue Lucien Barrière, 14800 Deauville, France.

Yeah... we had to look up where it was too.

NEW STUDIO NEWS



Opening their doors in Norfolk is A Sailors Grave.

You can find them at 55 Springfield, Gorleston, Norfolk. NR31 6AD. Tel: 01493 302394. You can also find these guys on Instagram at sailorsgrave_tattoo and Facebook at tattoosailorsgrave

CONVENTIONS

NORTH LAKES TATTOO SHOW

31 March-02 April 2017

The Shepherds Inn & Auctioneer
Wavell Dr, Rosehill Estate,
Carlisle CA1 2ST
northlakestattooshow.co.uk

INK & IRON TATTOO CONVENTION

09 April 2017

The New Bingley Hall
1 Hockley Circus
Birmingham
B18 5PP
inkandiron.co.uk

7TH TATTOO EXTRAVAGANZA PORTSMOUTH

14-16 April 2017

Pyramids Centre
Clarence Esplanade
Portsmouth
PO5 3ST
tattooextravaganza.co.uk

LIVERPOOL TATTOO CONVENTION

05-07 May 2017

Britannia Adelphi Hotel
Ranelagh Place
Liverpool, L3 5UL
liverpooltattooconvention.com

BRIGHTON TATTOO CONVENTION

13-14 May 2017

The Brighton Centre
B M E C P Centre, 10A Fleet St
Brighton, East Sussex
BN1 2GR
brightontattoo.com

GREAT BRITISH TATTOO SHOW

27-28 May 2017

Alexandra Palace
Alexandra Palace Way
London N22 7AY
greatbritishtattooshow.com

NORTHAMPTON INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION

10-11 June 2017

Northampton Saints Rugby Football Club
Franklin's Gardens, Weedon Rd,
Northampton
NN5 5BG
northamptoninternationaltattooconvention.com

YORK INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION

24-25 June 2017

New Earswick & District
Indoor Bowls Club
Huntington Rd,
York YO32 9PX
yorkinternationaltattooconvention.co.uk

TATTOO JAM

11-13 August 2017

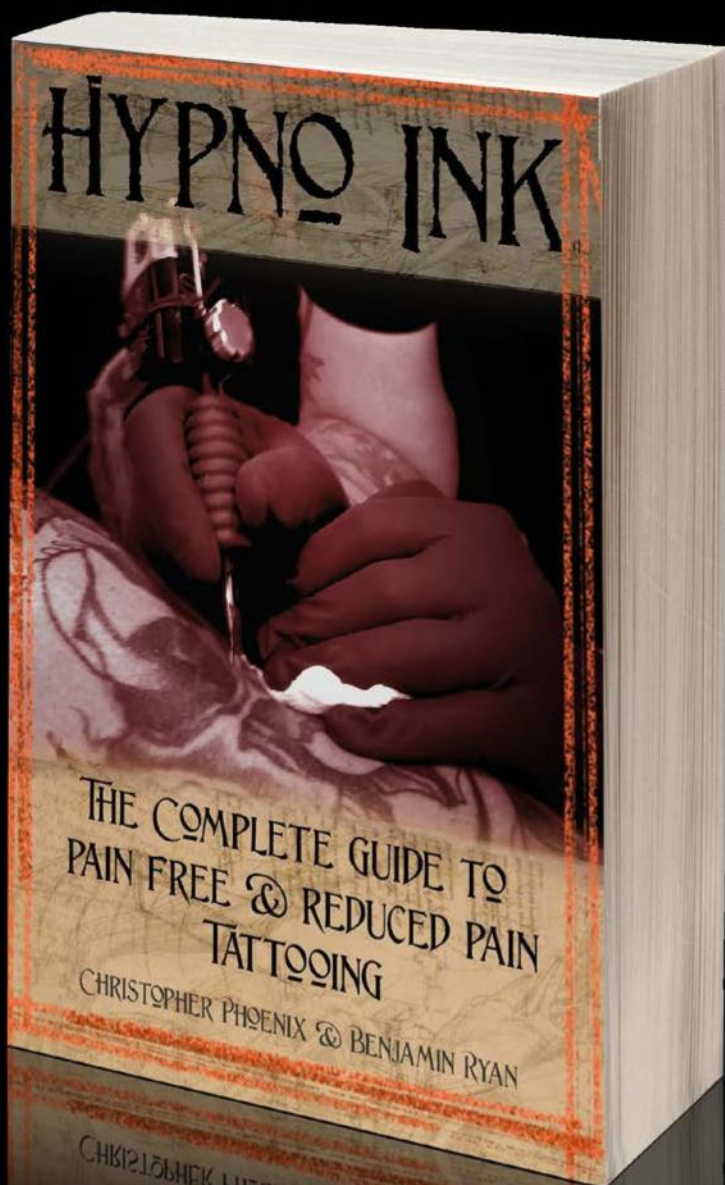
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LISTEN TO MY VOICE...

Following up on our story from Hypno Ink of a couple of issues back, Benjamin Ryan recently performed what is believed to be the world's first pain free tattoo over the Internet, via the medium of Skype.

Benjamin and fellow hypnotist Christopher Phoenix (from Brisbane, Australia) specialise in this area of hypnotherapy, and are the authors of a new book called Hypno Ink, which is about using hypnosis for pain free and reduced pain tattoos.

Hypnotherapy over the Internet is becoming more common as we live in an ever more global society, but their approach to pain free tattooing (known as Hypno Inking) has never been done this way before.

Ryan and Phoenix were asked by fellow hypnotherapist Richard Hennessy if they could perform their process over Skype. Richard had previously had three sessions on his back piece, each increasingly more painful than the last. In the third session Richard had gone into shock after an hour and was unable to continue, which is why he asked for help from Hypno Ink.

Benjamin Ryan said “we had never attempted our process over the Internet, so we didn’t know if it was possible, but we like to push the boundaries and are firmly of the belief that the best way to find out what is possible is to try”

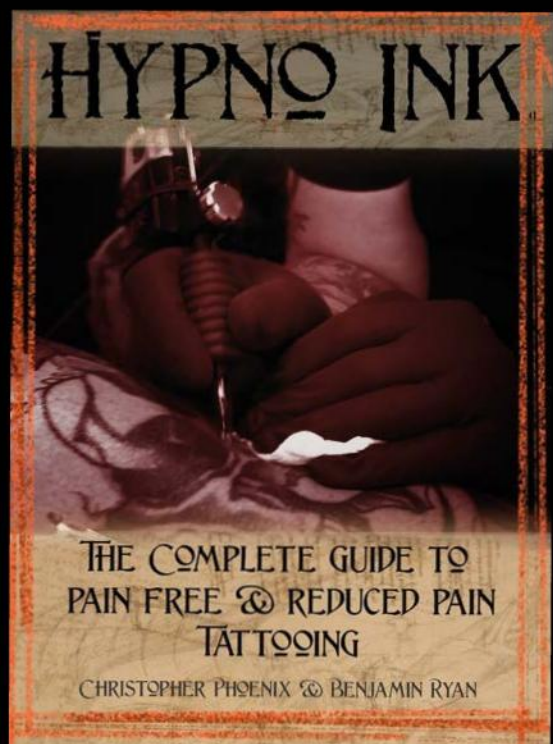
The session using Hypno Inking was a complete success, with Benjamin Ryan in his Suffolk therapy centre and volunteer Richard Hennessy in a tattoo studio in Sheffield. The session lasted nearly 2 hours.

Richard Hennessy said “Unfortunately I had another appointment to get to, so we had to call it a day after two hours. But, it was a completely different experience. Now 24 hours later, it’s the best healing I’ve ever had. I can hardly feel a thing, whereas last time my back was in agony, I couldn’t be touched for days and days afterwards. This time, it’s hardly even there.”

Christopher Phoenix said “We are hearing from lots of our clients that, as well as the immediate benefit of less pain during the session, the healing is quicker and more comfortable, with way less swelling too. It’s quite a pleasant surprise for people who have had a lot of tattoos to compare their experiences. Our theory is that during hypnosis the body isn’t registering the experience as a trauma, so the healing begins in a much kinder way.”

Volunteer Richard Hennessy has made a video about his experience with Hypno Inking which can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EzuK0o28Jl4&t=1s>



DAN DYSON TATTOOS



DATES

27TH - 28TH MAY
GREAT BRITISH TATTOO SHOW, LONDON

24TH - 25TH JUNE
YORK INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION

11TH - 13TH AUGUST
TATTOO JAM, DONCASTER RACECOURSE

MORE DATES TO BE ANNOUNCED!

  @TAT2MANDAN

by
Robert Sedgbeer



This last few weeks has been all about digging deep into serious tattooing—I've been looking at some hardcore Japanese tattooing for a project I have in mind, digging around in exhibitions, putting together this issue of the mag along with the next and then... well, then this turned up in my inbox and made me laugh.

The kind of laugh were you snort coffee through your nose.

I thought it was so much fun that I kept going back to it for kicks and smiling every time, which means it's more than deserving of a place on this page. This is one of those tattoos that can be

described as clean, well thought out, it has great lines and it's hard to fault it particularly if you happen to be a fan of Judge Dredd.

And yet it also exists in a parallel universe—for while it is all of those things, it's simply just great fun and sometimes—especially around here—it's easy to forget that for most people, tattoos really are a fun thing and not something to be dissected into their component parts.

Thus, this month Mr Sedgbeer, we are handing the glass full of celebratory liquor to you.

Nice work.

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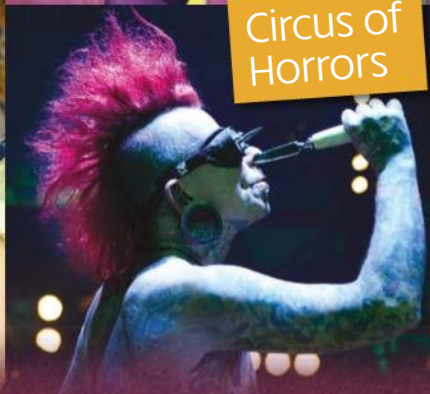
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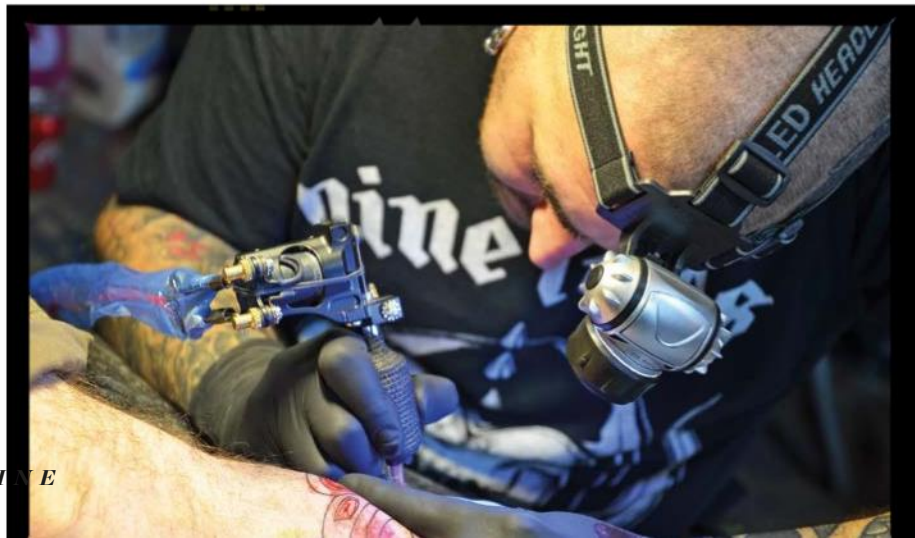
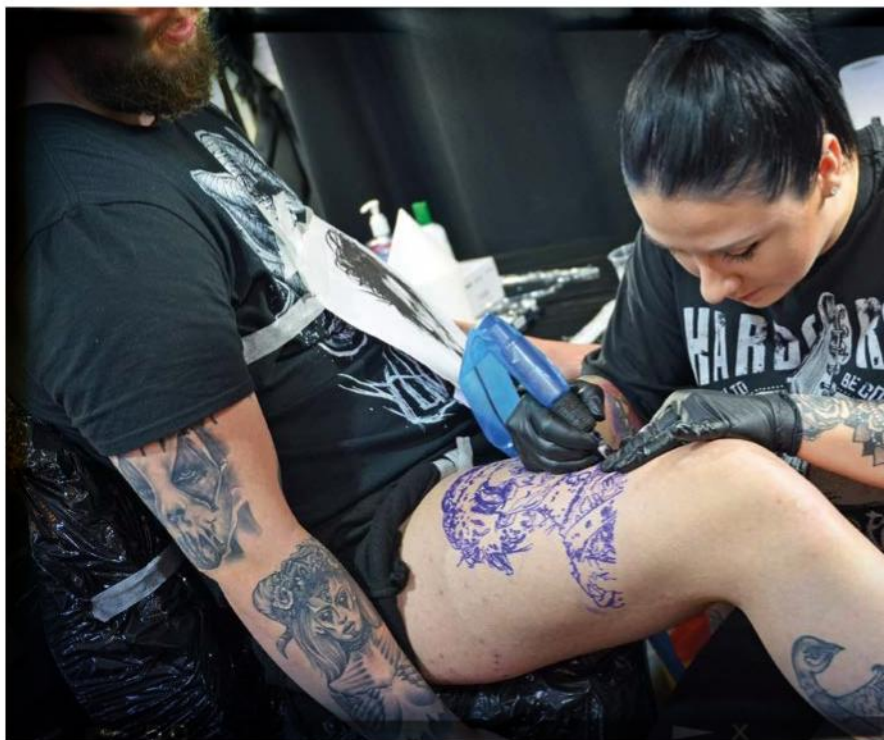
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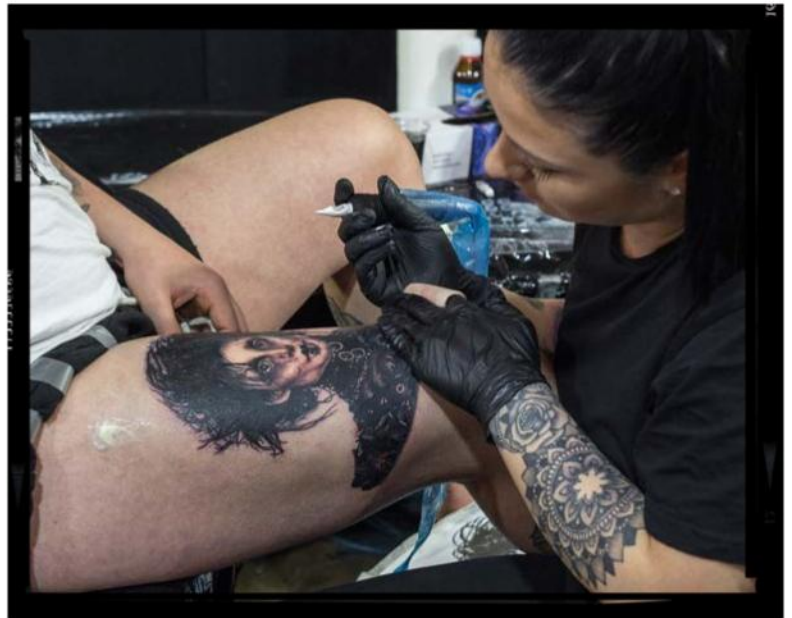
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 **Manchester International
TATTOO SHOW**





Scenes from the **FROME TATTOO CONVENTION**



What the Frome convention may lack in national reputation or commercial backing, it certainly makes up for in artistic integrity and quality. Drawing on both local and national talent, the convention once again saw exceptional work created over the two period by all the artists involved.

Competition winners for the Saturday were: Best New Skool: Terr Whitfield (Southmead Tattoo Studio), Best Colour: Chris Stratch (Southmead Tattoo Studio), and Best in Show (Saturday) was Verity Fox (Black Inc)

On the Sunday, the winners were: Best Traditional/Old Skool: Kyle Lawrie (Divian Mantra Tattoos), Best Black/Grey: Verity Fox (Black Inc) and Best in Show (Sunday) Hayley Jones (Southmead Tattoo Studio). All judged by the very lovely Mz Bones & Anna Quinn.

The convention also played host to the Gentleman Ink UK finals, with some strapping young men showing off their best artwork to win some top prizes, as well as live entertainment from the Harlem Rhythm Cats and Professor Elemental.

So what's next for organiser Tim Beale?

Tim said: "I plan on taking what I've learned from running the Frome show to put on another small independent convention in neighbouring Trowbridge. Possibly bigger and maybe even better than the Frome Tattoo Convention, I hope to maintain the warm friendly atmosphere we have created for artists, traders and visitors.

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INTO HOW THE ART FORM
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INDUSTRY IT IS TODAY**

GRACE UNDER PRESSURE

From the illegal underground tattooists of South Korea to Brazilian women challenging social stereotypes, Grace Neutral's productions with VICE are offering an edifying shift away from the usual fetishising of tattoos by using them as a conduit to highlight the often contentious social and political realms of each wearer

A head of VICELAND's 2017 series, Needles and Pins, Grace chats with Fared Kaviani about her experiences in front of the lens and what it's like to be an ambassador for contemporary tattoo culture. Let's get it on:

So, one day you were tattooing at Good Times and then suddenly you're a media personality at VICE media. Can you tell me how that happened?

Well, I was lucky enough to be approached by i-D a few years' back to write an alternative Christmas speech about beauty which received a great response.

i-D then made a film about me and my outlook on tattooing which also went down really well. It was after my i-D series 'Beyond Beauty' that VICE asked me to work with them.

And how has that journey been for you thus far?

I started making films with VICE at the start of 2016 and we wrapped up the first series of Needles and Pins by the end of the year! It has been one amazing year, that's for sure!

Let's talk about the shows. It's so refreshing to have someone from the tattoo community represent contemporary tattoo culture in an intelligent and socially



and politically charged manner, unlike other mainstream shows that often debase the art form. What are you hoping to achieve with these shows?

What I wanted to achieve with these shows was super simple: I wanted to tell a true story about tattooing, and offer people a proper insight into how the art form came to be the big industry it is today.

I also wanted share some of the cultures and techniques

ONE COMMON THEME THAT STRIKES ME IS THAT TATTOOING IS SUCH AN AMAZING WAY TO BUILD FRIENDSHIPS AND COMMUNITIES

that helped evolve the art. Just like you say, mainstream shows on tattoos seem to only fetishise and poke fun at tattooing. I got sick of this—and decided I'd have to do it myself. (Good plan. Ed.)

What is the extent of your role in these stories, is it limited to presenter or are you actively searching out stories and utilising your knowledge and networks gained while tattooing? There must be so much involved.

I am not a TV presenter; it has never been a goal of mine. I simply got offered a once in a lifetime opportunity to learn more about my craft.

Being in front of the camera and guiding the audience through my adventures was definitely something I had to learn, but because I am so passionate about tattooing it was natural for me to quickly form relationships with a lot of the people we filmed.

For me it's all about finding the stories. I was very involved in the development and making of the show; for example, I knew and suggested some of the contributors you see in *Needles and Pins*.

What's the most interesting thing you've learnt, whether about yourself or anything else, over the course of the shows?

I have learnt so much from every single place I have visited. But the one common theme that strikes me is that tattooing is such an amazing way to build friendships and communities. I feel so lucky to be part of the global tattoo family.

Most memorable moment for you?

The most memorable moment filming the series was riding around LA on quad bikes with Venice Bad Boys.

Most interesting thing you've discovered about tattoo culture?

In one episode of *Needles and Pins*, we go to New Zealand to learn about Maori tattooing and Maori culture—and this was the most interesting discovery for me. The Maori people are so beautiful—and its history is so intertwined with tattooing, nature and magic, it was hard not to fall in love there. It is definitely a place I will return to continue my tattoo journey and education.

Has the show received any criticisms?

To be honest, I haven't heard any bad comments about the show. Obviously there has been the odd internet troll calling me a 'freak' because of the way I look, but I have heard it all before and I'm very good at shielding myself from any negativity comments.

All the feedback about the show has, so far, been really positive—and I'm over the moon about that!

Would you agree that the normalisation of tattoos—great for reducing stigma and allowing autonomy over one's body—has also created a new 'beauty' industry/ideal? Tattoos becoming less about expressing spirit and individuality and more about acquisition: the purchase of social capital and of 'beauty.'

Yes for sure, I think the majority of tattoo artists (well, at least the ones I know and work with) understand how sacred it is to tattoo; the energy you share with that person is so beautiful, and sometimes, even life changing.

It's been something that I have been conscious of for a long time—and I love that more and more people (not just tattooers, but also the people who get tattooed) are realising this as well.

And lastly, what have you got planned for 2017?

2017 is all about tattooing, travel and having a fucking good time while I do it! ☐





AFTER HOURS

What do tattoo artists do when they're not tattooing? In After Hours, Wayne Simmons talks to some of his favourite artists about the things they get up to when the studio lights go down. This month, he meets Amy Savage, tattooist and animal rights activist

Recently, I've become fascinated with the idea of tattoo art as a form of protest. This isn't anything new, of course, tattoos having been used to express political dissent for as long as they've been around. We see the darker side of this in Danzig Baldaev's popular series of books, *Russian Criminal Tattoos*. Throughout the series, Baldaev collects hundreds of photographs of convict tattoos which he took over a lifetime working as a prison guard. Among these are white supremacist tattoos as well as script giving voice to racist and homophobic tendencies, none of which are appealing on any level or, indeed, well executed. But tattoo art has been used to express progressive political views, too, over the years, championing popular revolutions and giving hope to those feeling downtrodden. We see this in Issue 271's excellent *Serpents of Bienville* piece where Sean Herman talks of how the tattoos he made for his friend Robert Waldrup, portraits of Frida Kahlo, Malcolm X, Huey Newton and Che Guevara, helped strengthen his resolve for social justice. 'In



moments where I may have otherwise felt muted or dissuaded from expressing myself, they have emboldened me to speak my mind,' Robert said. 'My portraits are not only beautiful tattoos, but daily reminders that my thoughts, my emotions, and my words matter.'

I think there's a new breed of artist emerging from the scene, one who perhaps takes this concept further. The tattoo has become more symbolic or metaphorical, not the slogan being shouted out of a megaphone that Baldaev's convict tattoos were, and the artist is invested in the protest as much as the client. A few names spring to mind, people I've interviewed over the years, Hannah Willison and Hollie May Wall, both animal rights activists, perhaps top of the list. Amy Savage is another within that camp and she's got a theory on why, at least within animal rights activism, more artists are evolving in this way. 'I feel that animal rights activism is on the rise in general due to social media and a growing awareness,' she tells me. 'A fair few tattooers are vegan, potentially due to alternative culture, a social media presence and



TATTOO ART HAS BEEN USED TO EXPRESS PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL VIEWS OVER THE YEARS TOO

the diversity in clients and people we meet and interact with every day through our work.'

A lifelong animal lover, Amy became engaged in activism from an early age. 'I've always felt a strong bond with animals,' she explains. 'When I was 10 years old, I started doing voluntary work, looking after a variety of animals from rabbits to horses. I worked in several places over the years, learning more about different species and their needs.' It wasn't long before her love for art and her love for animals came together, Amy drawing up her own leaflets about issues such as battery farming and fox hunting and posting them through the doors of her local

neighbourhood. But this wasn't just a childhood thing, Amy's interest in animal rights increased as she got older. 'Later, as an adult, I obtained a degree in Applied Behavioural Science & Welfare of Animals, which expanded my knowledge in and passion for animal rights.'

As an artist, the muse that animals provide to Amy cannot be overstated. Even the name of her studio, The Warren in Canterbury, works into the plan. 'I mostly tattoo animal related pieces, a lot of which are on people who are vegan or changing to veganism. So I believe that for the work I do, my involvement with activism is a huge influence. Which is great, I would not have it any other way.'



I FEEL THAT ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISM IS ON THE RISE IN GENERAL DUE TO SOCIAL MEDIA AND A GROWING AWARENESS

Beyond the studio, Amy's activism is largely driven by the contacts she's made online. In fact, the internet remains a wonderful tool for organising herself and like-minded individuals. 'It has created groups and pockets of activism everywhere. It is also ideal for spreading information and making people aware of the realities behind animal related industries, thus changing perceptions and lifestyle choices.'

Over the years, Amy has attended protests and demos as well as getting involved with direct action, such as sabotaging illegal hunting. 'With it being Winter, there are many anti-fur demonstrations popping up,' she points out, 'as fur is used very commonly on hats and coat trims, sometimes without people being aware that they have been sold real fur. Another seasonal issue is fox hunting which is still happening all over the UK. Local Hunt Saboteurs use a variety of methods to sabotage active hunts and help the wildlife to safety where possible.'

Recently, Amy has got involved with vegan activism, something which she feels is fundamental to all of her animal rights work. "The Earthlings Experience" is a form of activism she attends regularly, its aim to educate the public about the reality of animal agriculture through a silent, almost theatrical presence on the street. Wearing masks and standing statue-still, activists offer passers-by



I BELIEVE THAT FOR THE WORK I DO, MY INVOLVEMENT WITH ACTIVISM IS A HUGE INFLUENCE. WHICH IS GREAT, I WOULD NOT HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY

the opportunity to view footage from slaughterhouses via a laptop. 'And then there's "The Save Movement",' she tells me, 'it's another form of activism that's growing rapidly across the country. Activists "bear witness" to animals heading into the slaughterhouse, offering them compassion in their last minutes of life and using the footage to open people's eyes to the reality animals face

in the meat, dairy and egg industries.'

There's certainly a lot to get involved with, for anyone reading this whose interest in animal rights activism has been piqued. Amy would encourage readers to do what she did and get online to find out more. 'Join the facebook groups of local activists, send them a message or attend a local fair and have a chat with them.' But for Amy, the most positive change we can make is a change in our diet. 'If you are not vegan and considering it, take a look at vegankit.com and watch documentaries such as *Cowspiracy*, *Earthlings* and *Forks Over Knives*,' she says. 'You'll only wish you had made the change sooner.' ▣

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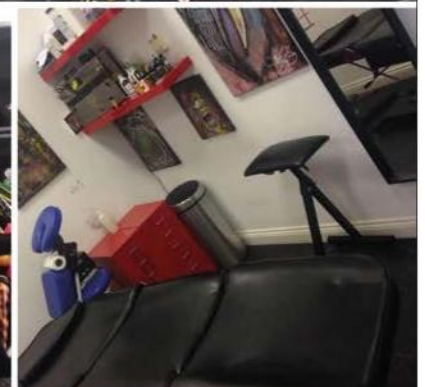
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BROTHERS



& SISTERS

In the first instalment of her new series, Beccy Rimmer spends the day soaking up the tattoo scene in one of the UK's great cultural cities—Leicester. Meet two studios that are encouraging artistic collaboration in a unique way





MEET THE ARTISTS



Name: Clare Lambert
Tattooing: 4 Years+
Studio: Sakura Tattoo [Owner]
Instagram: @clare_lala_tattoo
Describe Your Style: "Watercolour with neo-traditional and black-work elements."



Name: Pablo Griffin
Tattooing: 7 Years+
Studio: Brothers Ink H.Q. [Owner]
Instagram: @pablo_griffin_tattooist
Describe Your Style: "Black and grey, realism, script and bold traditional designs."



Name: Emjay
Tattooing: 1 Year+
Studio: Sakura Tattoo
Instagram: @emjaytattoo
Describe Your Style: "Messy and expressive black-work. Detailed yet unrefined and raw sketch pieces."



Name: Mike Love
Tattooing: 3 Years+
Studio: Brothers Ink H.Q.
Instagram: @mr.mikelove
Describe Your Style: "I'm a hand-poke artist. My work uses bold, clean, straight lines and a lot of black-work and shading."



Brett



Clare



Emjay

First stepped foot in Brothers Ink H.Q. over a year ago, when I got tattooed by hand-poke artist Mike Love (remember issue 258?). After my appointment whilst waiting in reception I overheard Mike talking to a new customer. As she described in detail what she was looking for, I witnessed Mike give her lots of great advice... but then give her directions to another studio in Leicester. As a potential client walked out of the door, I said to him, "you don't see that every day."

It turns out that this particular individual was looking for a watercolour tattoo—a specific style that upon consultation was perfect for tattooist Clare Lambert who worked at her own studio just around the corner—Sakura Tattoo.

I learnt that both of these studios placed the satisfaction of their clientele at the very top of their list. They aimed to pair-off each separate customer with the perfect tattoo-

ist for their requirements, even if that meant sending the individual elsewhere.

I went on to discover that the collaboration didn't end there. These city centre studios shared not just clients but advice and information too. They partook in art-creation evenings together and had even created partnerships in the forms of collaborative tattoos. Mike and Clare worked together on a series of artworks in which Mike hand-poked the outline and Clare added watercolour embellishments weeks later. It's one thing to witness selfless and collaborative business whilst sitting in reception, it's another to be lucky enough to wear a representation of it on your body forever.

This interview forms the first in a series. Over the next few months I want to introduce you to some of my other favourite places to get tattooed in the UK. Since that first encounter, I have returned time and time again to Leicester-based sibling studios Brothers



Jo



Katie



Kiah

MEET THE ARTISTS



Name: Jo aka JibberJabber
Tattooing: 9 Years+
Studio: Sakura Tattoo
Instagram: @jibberjabberjo
Describe Your Style: "Most styles but love doing illustrative-realism nature-themed pieces."



Name: Katie aka Tari Telega
Tattooing: 2 Years+
Studio: Sakura Tattoo
Instagram: @tari_telella
Describe Your Style: "Weird and wonderful. I like to experiment with strange depths and contrasting styles and colours."



Name: Kiah O'Rourke
Tattooing: 4.5 Years+
Studio: Brothers Ink H.Q.
Instagram: @kiahohattoo
Describe Your Style: "I feel like it's too early on in my career to say, but probably neo-trad. I love lettering, roses and stylised portraits."



Name: Lydia Amor
Tattooing: 1 Year+
Studio: Sakura Tattoo
Instagram: @lydiaamor_
Describe Your Style: "I am a hand-poke tattooer and a black-work artist. I create dark, high-contrast tattoos and ornamental pieces such as mandalas."



Name: Brett Murray aka Anokz-One
Tattooing: 4 Years+
Studio: Brothers Ink H.Q.
Instagram: @anokzone
Describe Your Style: "Neo-trad graphic images with stylised, abstract twist."

Ink H.Q. and Sakura Tattoo. I knew their nine artists had to be the first to have a voice in this string of articles:

Thanks for having me, guys. It's great to be in Leicester for the day. Would you say that this city has a thriving tattoo scene?

Clare: I'd say Leicester is home to a real variety of creative people and interests.

Pablo: There is a really large tattoo scene here but no one specific 'type' of client.

Katie: I'd say it's one of the most cultural cities in England. There definitely isn't a particular client base, which is wicked. You never get bored!

Kiah: There's more of a 'tattoo scene' than I have ever seen before, but there is never competition or bad vibes between most of the shops.

Lydia: Yes, the majority of the studios in the city network together well which is a rare occurrence in a small city.

Mike: We constantly give and receive recommendations from other shops, which are a huge boost for everyone, especially the client getting the best possible tattoo.

Clare: We also have people travel to our two studios. Between us, we have enough different styles to accommodate all clients.

Beccy: Tell me a bit more about your clients and what they mean to you?

Clare: Customer relationships are so important to me. Every tattoo that I do comes from me and if someone is going to wear that forever there is already an initial trust and closeness formed from the beginning. I want everybody to leave our shop with a positive representation of the studio, the people in it and the overall experience.

Mike: Developing strong relationships is number one. 80% of my clients are returning clients. Tattooing people is how I have met a lot of my friends. How could you not become



Clare



Lydia



Emjay



Kiah



Pablo



Katie

friends, after spending hours and hours talking and giving them something to wear for the rest of their life?

Lydia: Some people come to get tattooed by us to escape a hectic life for a few hours. As tattooists I think it's part of our role to ensure that they enjoy their time here.

Katie: They say your clients represent you as a person, so I must be pretty fucking brilliant. Just kidding—I owe everything to my customers. I do not see them as clients, I see them as my friends.

So, the studios, obviously I know the answer but tell our readers what the atmosphere is like here?

Clare: Here at Sakura I have tried to create a unique tattoo space that represents me as a person and gives off a warm and calming atmosphere. Good vibes and friendliness is important to us as we want people to feel relaxed and at ease as soon as they walk

through the door.

Lydia: Almost every customer that I tattoo compliments on how at ease they feel. I love that we have that atmosphere as I remember my first visits to less-than-welcoming tattoo studios and how the atmosphere negatively affected my first tattoo experiences.

Jo: As artists, we all support each other. We have a bond of friendship which is then shown as nothing but warmth to our clients. I love these ladies—I couldn't be without them.

Katie: I always dreamt of belonging to a 'tattoo family', as cliché as that sounds. I felt lost in the industry as I found it hard to fit in I suppose. Now, I feel like I belong here and have found my purpose.

Emjay: It's also extremely important to be working in a positive atmosphere. I am so grateful to be surrounded by beautiful humans that lift each other up. These are my sisters.

Pablo: At Brothers Ink, the atmosphere is very important—we are, like brothers. It al-



Mike



Brett



Jo



Brett

lows us to be creative and bounce ideas of each other but also have fun working with each other. We look out for each other.

Kiah: There's no politics here. No big egos. We all push each other too, and I've personally felt a lot of support since I started here—in and out of work.

Mike: At our studio, the client is the priority. Creating a good, positive, welcoming and friendly environment for them is the most important reason we are here. I came to work in Leicester for Pablo. His approach to creating a great atmosphere for clients and artists is something that I believe is truly rare to come by.

Brett: I feel blessed to be working with these lads. We work hard and we love our jobs.

You've described your own shops—time to talk about your counterpart and how you work together!

Clare: Brothers Ink has been a huge support for us. Between the two studios we cover a

variety of styles and can look to each other for advice and to overcome difficulties. We share ideas and support each other to move forward, which I think is hugely important—to be constantly bettering yourself. We all share the same passion and love for the business that we are so lucky to be part of.

Lydia: By collaborating together we give our customers a wider choice when looking for the perfect artist. We get together for special occasions such as birthdays and shop achievements. It's lovely that we're all friends instead of competitors.

Kiah: It's definitely important to be collaborating with other artists. Even if it's as simple as showing someone else a drawing you've done or asking how they'd tattoo a certain thing, it keeps you on your toes.

Mike: Collaboration is the best way to learn, evolve and grow!

Clare: It's just so important to support each other in this industry—we can learn so much

Describe your studio in one word or phrase.

- Pablo:** Dope!
- Brett:** Obsessive.
- Clare:** My safe place. Keeps me motivated, keeps me sane.
- Mike:** Home from home.
- Emjay:** A haven.
- Katie:** Astronomical. I dread to think what life would be like without it.
- Jo:** My heart, my home.
- Lydia:** Sanctuary.



from each other. Negativity and jealousy sadly pops-up far to frequently. I live for positivity and encouragement.

Stepping back from the day-to-day, let's end on a philosophical note (as always)! What does tattooing mean to you?

Jo: It's a passion. To be good at tattooing you need to love it, otherwise what's the point? I wanted to be a tattooist since I first thumbed through tattoo magazines in high-school. Now, it's my bread and butter.

Kiah: Tattooing means freedom. I'm very fortunate that people want to come and get tattooed by me as it allows me to just be creative every day. A shit day in a tattoo shop is still a million times better than a good day at the office.

Mike: I really believe that I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for tattooing, and I know I am not the only one to feel this connection.

Emjay: Tattooing enables you to be the best, most creative version of 'you' that there is.

Tattooing gave me a path to be the best I can in every way. It is clarity. It's a meditative state that is highly addictive, challenging and extremely fun!

Katie: How I define the word depends on how I am feeling. I've never been good at saying how I feel—I tend to suppress my emotions instead of dealing with them head on. Then I discovered drawing how I'm feeling. Now I can embrace strange emotions that I never learnt to accept and they start to make sense. Tattooing can mean capturing moments that you are scared to lose. It's a therapy.

Lydia: I'd say it's a sense of freedom. All of my tattoos are made from the spirit and I love the fact that you can take tattooing all over the globe. It knows no boundaries.

Clare: To me, tattooing is everything. It's the freedom to experiment. The dedication to work hard. The opportunity to challenge myself. The pride in giving someone a gift that will stay with them forever. Tattooing is life. ▣

Tell Skin Deep readers something about you, outside of tattooing, that they won't know.

Emjay: I love meditating. It brings me balance and relaxation.

Jo: I have an incredibly unhealthy obsession with all things ginger.

Katie: I have the ability to weave game and book quotes in pretty much everything I say without people realising. I'm a massive nerd and proud of it.

Lydia: I am straight-edge and vegan. LIVE BY THE PEPSI, DIE BY THE PEPSI.

Mike: Lydia is my partner and we have just got engaged! We plan to set the date for mid 2018. We are so excited.

Brett: I make most of my digital artworks in the early hours. I really should sleep more!



- Piercings -




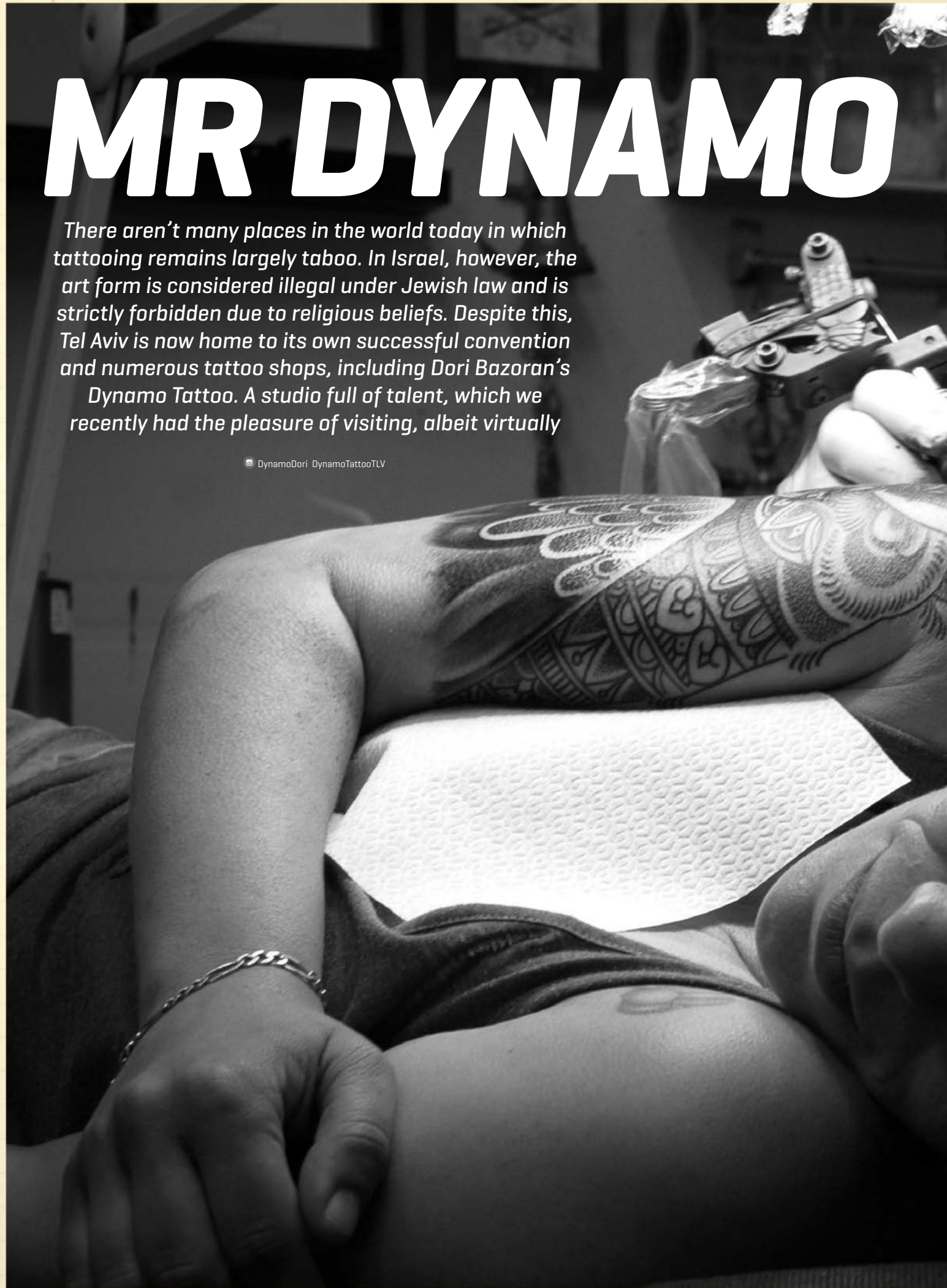
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MR DYNAMO

There aren't many places in the world today in which tattooing remains largely taboo. In Israel, however, the art form is considered illegal under Jewish law and is strictly forbidden due to religious beliefs. Despite this, Tel Aviv is now home to its own successful convention and numerous tattoo shops, including Dori Bazoran's Dynamo Tattoo. A studio full of talent, which we recently had the pleasure of visiting, albeit virtually

 [DynamoDori](#) [DynamoTattooTLV](#)





Discovering tattoos through “magazines from overseas, the different aspect they symbolised attracted me immediately,” recalls Dori Bazoran. At the time, he was working at a record store and admits, “the decision to learn to tattoo was very simple. It was clear to me from the beginning — my goal was to become a full-time tattooer. As soon as the opportunity to tattoo was given to me, I went for it.”

A tough apprenticeship followed, as did a life-changing trip to India, and today, Bazoran is a seasoned artist, shop owner and proud family man running Dynamo Tattoo in Tel Aviv. When he’s not creating art or spending time with his wife and kids, Bazoran can be found playing on his electronic drum set and, most recently, talking to us about what life is really like for a tattooer working in Israel in 2017.

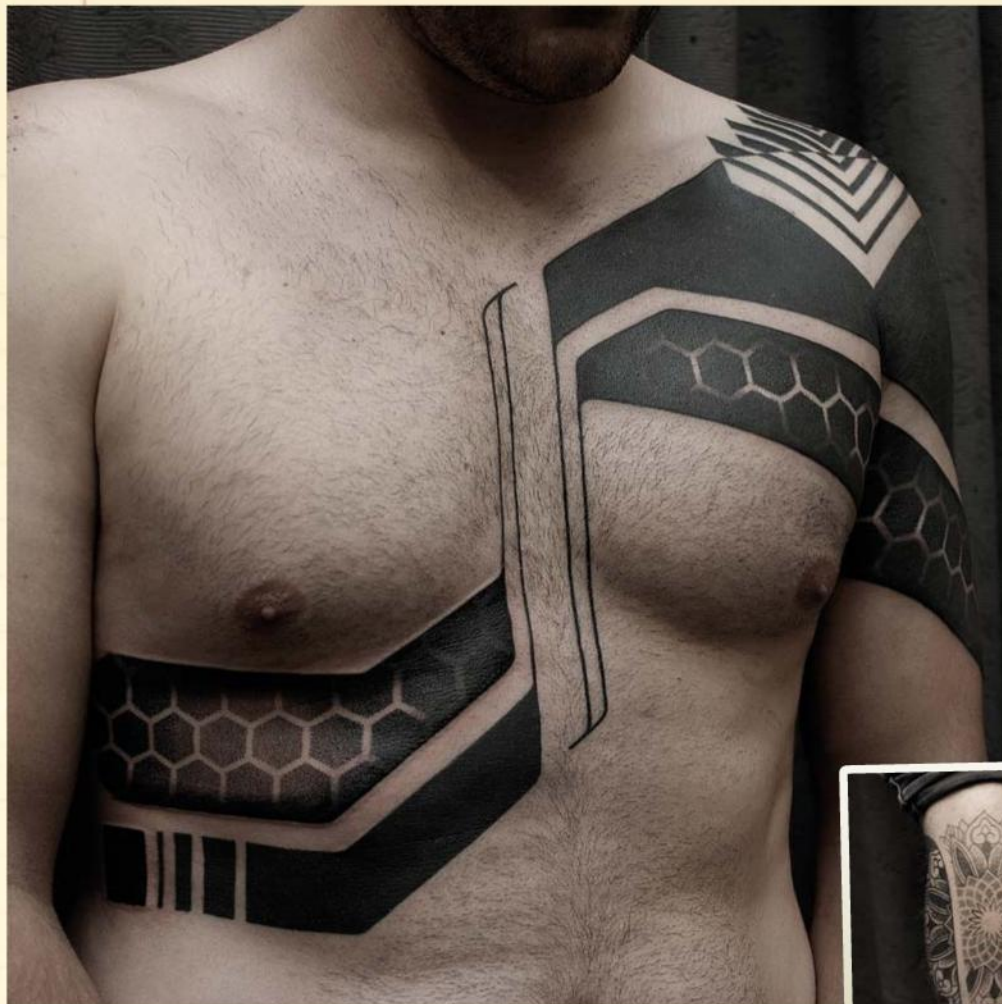
How did you first learn to tattoo?

After my military service ended, I met a tattooer who I eventually apprenticed under. Like any other apprentice at the time, my apprenticeship was lengthy. It was basically a lot of cleaning tubes, a lot of soldering needles and a lot of good times. After my apprenticeship, I passed through a lot of street shops, picking up what I could from everyone I worked with.

You opened Dynamo Tattoo in Tel Aviv in 2006. What made you decide to set up your own shop?

One day, I found myself in Goa, India and that’s where I opened my first shop, which I tattooed out of for four years until I returned to Israel in 2006. After a few years of working for different bosses at different shops and opening my first shop in India, it seemed obvious to me to have my own place, as I felt that I had a lot to offer and enough knowledge to start a business that could represent who I am as a tattooer.

Words: Barbara Pavone



Given that tattooing is illegal under Jewish law, what's the tattoo scene like in Israel?

Tel Aviv is flooded with studios nowadays. Tattoos are linked closely to Israel's art community and it seems that there isn't a person aged 18 to about 50 that doesn't have at least one tattoo. But I think that it doesn't matter if tattoos are accepted in any certain culture. I'm always impressed to see someone who's heavily tattooed. Some people still think it's too much, but hey, that's what makes tattoos so special.

Who are the people getting tattooed at Dynamo most often? I would imagine it's the younger generation...

Actually, our clients aren't really from the same walks of life and the age range is very dynamic, although, people who come in for large-scale work are of a more mature crowd. They know more about tattooing than the average client and are willing to put in what it takes to be heavily tattooed.

Do you ever struggle with being your own boss — and a boss to others?

For me, the hardest part is being a boss and a friend to the tattooers that work at my shop,

but they never listen to me anyway! Seriously though, I never actually feel like a boss. Dynamo is more like a family than a business. Working and spending my days with creative people that I love is what it's all about.

Tell us about the talented artists working with you at Dynamo right now...

People come and go, all of them talented tattooers. At the moment, we are four tattooers at the shop. Fima recently started as an apprentice with a lot of love for tattooing and great talent. Aesthetically, he is into traditional tattooing and manages to break everything up and put it back together in a very surreal way.

Omer also started as an apprentice and became a good tattooer very quickly. He is into Japanese tattooing and never stops putting out solid black and grey and colour tattoos. I knew Omer's tattoos before he started working with me at the shop and always liked them. When he

Tel Aviv-Yafo
 Located on the Mediterranean coastline, Tel Aviv-Yafo is Israel's second largest city with a population of just over 400,000. In addition to being the financial and tech hub of Israel, Tel Aviv boasts the third-largest economy in the Middle East, as well as a booming tourism industry. Over 1 million international tourists flock to the city each year to see its historic landmarks and experience its legendary nightlife.



returned to Israel, he came seeking to join the family and he's been an integral part of my studio ever since. His work starts with traditional and ends with large black ornaments.

Browsing the shop's portfolio, it seems like you guys really do cover almost every style! That being said, have you noticed any major trends among your customer?

That is true! We strive to be able to give anyone the best tattoo possible in any style they want. I think in Israel people lean more towards black tattoos, especially blackwork, sacred geometry and the various tribal styles. Black tattoos are pretty much a good choice for Israelis who tend to spend their time sunbathing at the beach.

What's the toughest thing about being a tattooer in Israel in 2017?

There's nothing bad about being a tattooer

in 2017! Times have changed and tattooing is very accepted now as a profession. It's not an easy job, but a good result — a good tattoo — gives you enough satisfaction to not think about anything negative.

If we were to pay you a visit, what would we absolutely have to see (and eat!) as tourists?

To answer this is difficult and easy at the same time. I live in Israel, which is so beautiful yet so tiny that you can see it all in a few days! It's a country of old and new cultures. And food? All Israeli food is good!

Looking at what makes a good piece of art versus what makes a good tattoo, how do the two compare in your eyes?

Art is perceived as a favour by the spectator and as long as it creates emotion, positive or negative, it's good art. Tattoos are something else. They need to work with the

Tattoos Under Jewish Law

"You shall not make gashes in your flesh for the dead or incise any marks on yourselves: I am the Lord." This is a passage from the Torah that is often cited when explaining why tattoos are prohibited under Jewish law. It's interesting to note that there has been debate over whether this means that only the inclusion of God's name or a deity would deem the tattoo illegal or whether all tattoos, regardless of design, are forbidden.



body's contour. A good tattoo has good lines, interesting composition and the ability to withstand the test of time.

When you're drawing and designing, do you find yourself being influenced by any particular artists?

I am visually drawn to the designs of the first artists of our civilisation: tribes from all around the globe. Still, I also enjoy the fact that I can learn and progress by being influenced by more modern artists, such as Jun Matsui, Gerhard Wiesbeck, Nazareno Tubaro, Dillon Forte and Jeroen Franken.

If you could embody any artist for 24 hours, who would you trade places with? Perhaps one of the talented folks you just mentioned?

Actually, I can't think of anyone I would be willing to swap places with! Not even my favourite artists, as I honestly think I would be stressed to be in their shoes. Maybe I would swap with the prime minister and bring peace to the Middle East. He's not

much of an artist, though. [laughs]

Turning to your personal collection of ink, what are some of your favourite pieces?

I'm not heavily tattooed, but I have some amazing lived-in pieces that were done by one of Israel's veteran tattooers, Avi Vanunu. I also have a few cool tattoos from the guys at the shop!

What's next? Any exciting new projects or travel plans on the horizon?

Next is another day at shop! Even after 16 years of tattooing, I'm still excited and interested in taking on new projects. I manage the studio and I'm also a family man and that kind of limits me in terms of going around doing guest spots and conventions, but it happens from time to time.

Before we let you go, please finish this sentence: Dori is...

If I find an answer to that question, I will surely let you know! [laughs] ▣

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عن نوره نور

As tattoo writers, we dream of finding inspiring individuals who have something interesting to say about why we choose to get tattoos. As soon as Beccy Rimmer began speaking to Kendyl Noor Aurora, she knew all of her prayers had been answered

 auroraisnthome · YouTube 'Kendyl Noor Aurora'

Kendyl Noor Aurora is a New York-based student. Previously known as “The Tattooed Hijabi”, the 22 year old vlogger has a large fan-base that admires her refreshing outlook towards religion. After quickly rising to social media fame in 2013, Aurora decided to take a step back from the world and focus on her religious education. After a reflective hiatus... she’s back.

I first discovered Aurora on YouTube through a video she had created on the subject of ‘being a Muslim with tattoos’. One minute into the clip and I knew I had to share her experiences with you all. Her vlog was intended to start a new dialogue about tattoos within

the Muslim community. As a major tattoo magazine, it’s our responsibility to be the forum for those discussions, right?

Aurora had her first tattoo aged 16 with parental consent, and now counts her present-day collection at around 50. “That first tattoo was an atlas of the world,” she reflects. “High school had been rough for me and I wanted a reminder of the places I had seen and those I was yet to see. It was a positive motivation to get through the bullying I



Antar Hanif



Antar Hanif

had faced.” Years later and this left arm has now become her “travel sleeve”, a homage to her favourite places in the world.

The rest of her tattoos honour her family and her favourite cultural figures—from a poignant portrait of her grandmother to *Harry Potter*-themed tattoos, this collection of ink tells the story of her personality, life-



DESCRIBE YOUR FAITH AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU IN JUST ONE WORD.

remembrance



style and interests: She takes me on a journey through each tattoo and its meaning—representations of her ancestry, vivid memories “and not forgetting of course,” she adds, “my beloved *Home Alone* tattoo, which is a crowbar labeled *The Wet Bandits*”.

The words “you are Noor” are written out on her body in her friend’s handwriting, who incidentally also wears the same tattoo. “Noor is my Arabic name,” she explains, “it means light”. This tattoo is an important one for her, “it serves as a reminder of the Muslim woman I have grown to be. I am Kendyl Noor Aurora and no one has the power to effect my connection with Allah (God). I keep the light of Allah in my heart and share that with the world.”

Some Muslim communities can disapprove of tattoos, and ‘ridding yourself’ of your own ink once reverting to Islam can often be expected. “Removing my tattoos was never a thought in my mind,” Aurora confirms, “they

are an intrinsic part of the woman that I am, and I saw no reason to ever change that.”

Still, visiting sacred spaces where tattoos were often viewed as impermissible was challenging for her (“it took time for me to find my footing as a Muslim woman”) and finding her faith away from others was key for her own spiritual journeying. “I knew that I needed to understand myself first,” she says. “To focus on building that strong personal connection with Allah before facing the social element of the community. Once I did that, I found it far easier to unapologetically exist.” Unlike many other tattooed Muslims, she makes no effort to cover the tattoos on her hands and forearms: “I won’t cover my art for the comfort of other people. There is no reason to. I’m not ashamed of the journey I’ve lived which is now illustrated in my art.”

Aurora receives mixed reactions to her tattoos. Whilst many are intrigued and thoughtful, “others make snap judgments,” she says, “some even tell me it isn’t possible for me to be a Muslim because of the way that I look.” One of the most difficult situations was at a fashion convention when her greetings to other Muslim women were constantly ignored. “This was very diffi-



cult," she recalls. "I desired a connection to my community." As with all of the challenges in her life so far, she finishes this story with positivity: "nevertheless I continue to smile and give my Salaams to my fellow Muslims because you never know when you could open someone's heart."

I ask her if age is a contributing factor in these circumstances. Are older Muslims more likely to have a strong reaction to tattoos, or people from particular backgrounds or countries? In response, she talks of her own family roots and the acceptance of tattoos in Morocco, she gives examples of discrimination, but ultimately she has a refusal to speak negatively about the seemingly critical opinions of others. This makes me smile. She campaigns for tolerance yet never judges those who may judge her. It's beautiful to see someone who practices what they preach. As tattooed communities we're always fighting to be accepted in our uniquely designed skin, but are often quick to sneer on those who disapprove. We can learn something here from Aurora about our own hypocrisy.

She admits that it hasn't always been so easy: "I used to react quickly but I have learned to not jump to conclusions." Now





next is a portrait of my first sphinx cat, leki. he was my therapy animal for years while i was quite ill. i hope to capture all of his mischievous personality in homage on my skin.



accessible to those wanting further religious education. “Seeing a tattooed Muslim gives a new layer of dimension to some people’s pre-conceived notions of what a Muslim looks like,” she explains. “When people see someone that they can relate to, they often feel more comfortable approaching them, opening up and asking questions.” As interesting forms of art, her tattoos have done just that—they have

“built bridges between myself as a Muslim and people of all (or no) faith backgrounds.”

Before I delve deeper into Aurora’s own tattoo story, I ask her if she thinks tattooed Muslims are mis-understood. “I don’t think they are, because they’ve never been given the opportunity to express themselves in the first place.” For this individual, her discovery of faith was filled with “trials and tribulations”. Aurora admits that often the media are keen to tell an inspiring revert story that’s free from honesty and challenges. Her tattoos represent just that: “they are a part

Antar Hanif



with each individual piece of feedback about her tattoos, she takes time to think before replying, to assess whether the comment is “truly negative” or an over-reaction due to her prior experiences. “I try to hear people’s perspective,” she says “attempt to understand the culture they come from, answer any questions, and value each interaction.” For her, every single one of these encounters is “as an opportunity to open the minds and hearts of the people around you.”

In fact, she sees her tattoos as being beneficial for the Muslim faith as it makes her



of that journey, they tell my story.” Other tattoo wearers will agree that these marks represent everything we have experienced in order to reach the point we are at now. For Aurora, each piece has led her to this present moment, in which she now has a relationship with God. “How could I ever regret that?” she asks. “My art represents how blessed I am to be where I am today.”

In the past, other older tattooed revert Muslims have provided support for Aurora and now she wishes to do the same for her followers. “I hope to show others within any faith community, who may be faced with similar challenges, that they have nothing to be ashamed of,” she says. Her message: own your journey, love your body (tattooed or not) and never let anyone tell you that you don’t have a place within your faith because of the way you look.

Reading through the comments beneath her videos, it’s clear that her being vocal about these morals has been a huge inspiration to a large community. Her messages speak to young women who may be faced with similar challenges. “I hope to encourage them to keep pressing forward,” she tells me.



HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CONCEPT OF TATTOOS IN ONE WORD?

experience

But the women (and men in fact) who find comfort and motivation in her words are not just Muslim. Her inclusive views bridge the gap between different faiths—something we perhaps need in the world right now more than ever. “I think the gap is not nearly as wide as we have come to make it seem,” she believes, “we are far more alike than we are different.”

Aurora’s YouTube channel is the first step in a mission to encourage the world to talk about religion. “We need to start having an open discussion about some of the realities of our places of worship,” she admits, “all too often I hear from friends who feel ostracised.” These dialogues are not limited to tattooed, or even Muslim, people—they are for any human beings who have ever felt excluded from spaces that are designed to be inclusive.

As I look back on these words I realise that I have written this entire article with the omission of many facts about this individual that previous interviews have focused



Antar Hanif



Antar Hanif

i think anyone with a good number of tattoos ends up with one at some point. i have my upper knuckles blacked out. they used to say "voyager" (which i loved) but they were done poorly.



Antar Hanif

on. What is her ethnic background? How and why did she join Islam, or is she a born Muslim? What are the key principles of this faith? At the heart of everything Aurora does is a message of inclusivity and acceptance. Speaking to her has made me see that we are constantly asking the wrong questions when it comes to representing people of faith. Focusing on specific differences does nothing but separate and segregate us. Speaking to Aurora has made me truly appreciate what it means to create unity and we have had no need for details in this important discussion.

When I first approached Kendyl Noor Aurora, I thought we'd talk about tattoos and faith, but we have not. We've explored faith,

we've explored tattoos, but for Aurora these topics are not intrinsically linked: "none of my tattoos directly relate to my faith," she admits. Our tattoos and our belief systems do not define us—we create ourselves. Be it through ancient stories, comforting communities or permanent scars on our bodies, we all find personal ways to live our lives. Each and every single person on this earth is completely different, and that's something worth celebrating.

Some of Aurora's statements can be attributed to faith AND tattoos: "we really need to set aside our personal feelings, leave the judgments and get to know someone for who they are." For many of us, tattoos ARE our faith. In finding my own personal correlation between tattooing and Islam, I've achieved the one thing that Aurora would want me to—I've drawn attention to that which connects us, rather than that which divides us. By finding a few thousand words of common ground between our two passions, we take that first step—not for our separate communities but for what Aurora calls "our one global community." A community in which, she believes "the time has come for us to focus on what unites us." ▣

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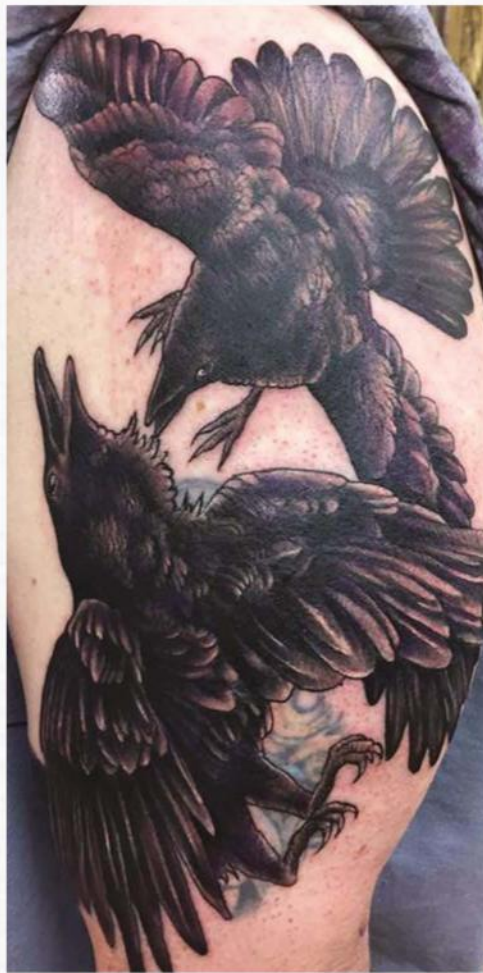
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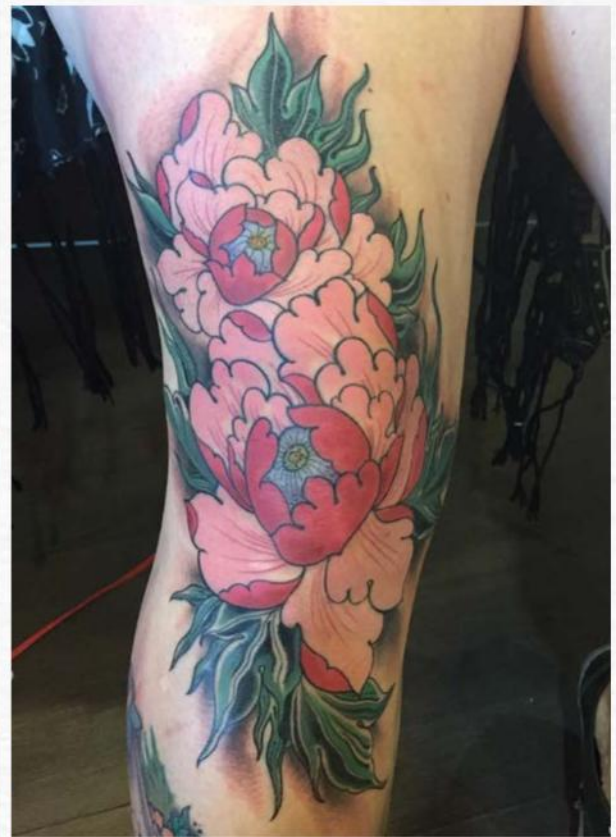
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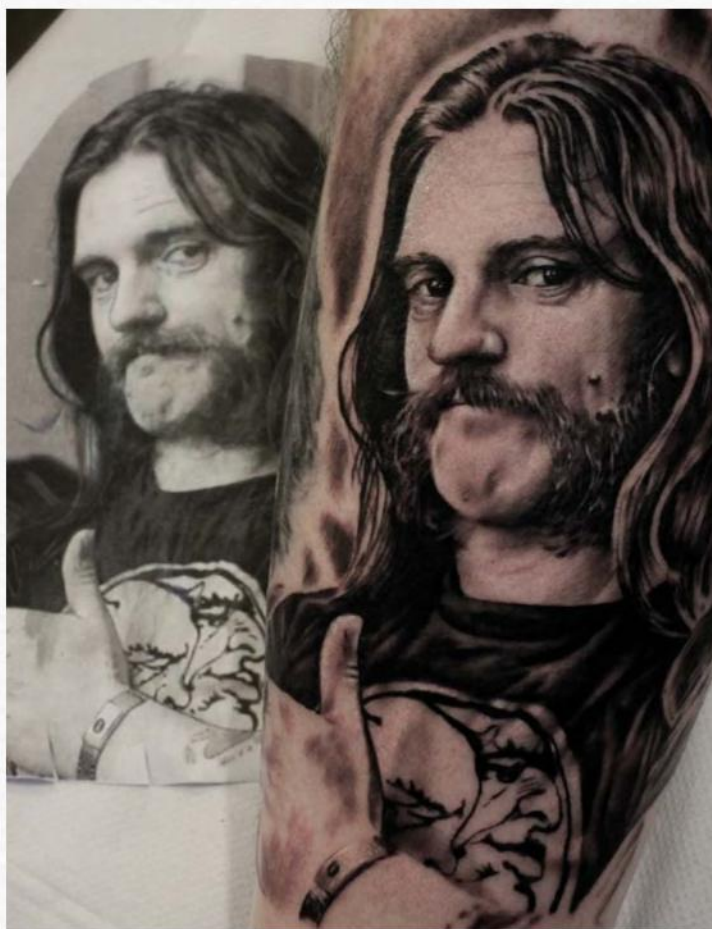


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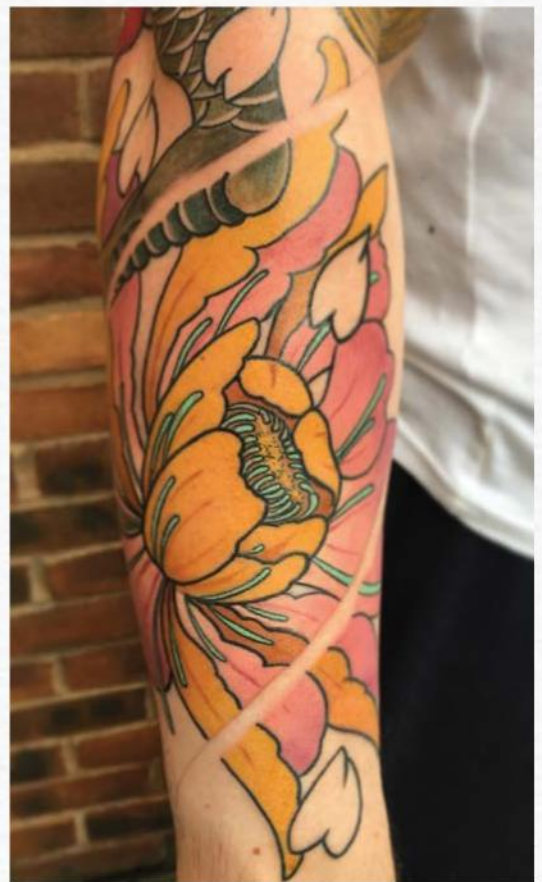
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RANYA ART

Born and raised in Rome, Ranya, describes herself as a 'closed, timid and tormented child' who used her creativity to escape a difficult childhood that 'touched on the macabre'

It would be easy writing to wave this off as the inspiration behind Ranya's art; like her early life, it's dark, grotesque and very macabre! How I would have imagined steampunk...if Clive Barker had of got his hands on the genre. But that would do Ranya, and her art, an injustice. Because, take a closer look, stare into the void a little, and you'll notice a beauty shine out from behind the shadows.

As a child, Ranya was always drawing. She attended the Art Institute, not because she necessarily showed an interest in art, but because she was 'not suited to any other matter'. Ranya studied and worked as a graphic engineer and web designer and, when she was eighteen, she entered the world of Oriental dancing, and became a professional belly dancer. At the same time, she also opened her own costume shop, which she has since closed down to focus on her sculptures.

It was when Ranya's brother's father's (Life sure can be complex huh. Ed.) phone shop went bankrupt, about eight years ago, that she started putting the pieces together and being inspired on her current path. With all the stock lying around the shop, unused and unwanted, it seemed a shame to throw everything away.

"This is now one of my favourite activities! Going to empty shops; or ones that are closing down, or that are closed; and collecting small household appliances; like DVDs, VHS players etc. Family and friends also often have something to throw away - and here I come to collect. It's got to the point when people see me, they come



PLACES CAN DEFINITELY LEAVE A MARK, BUT MY TRUE TRAVELLING IS WITHIN MYSELF.

right up to me and give me some old rubbish!"

Ranya describes her creations as, refined cyborgs, and are made up of a varying range of recycling materials; such as watches, cameras, VCR consoles, computers, gaming consoles, motorcycle parts... and the list goes on. With her hands, she performs modern day alchemy; tak-



I HAVE AN ENDLESS IMAGINATION AND WHILE THE REALITY REMAINS, I SEE LOTS OF OTHER THINGS.

In March 2016, I exhibited my work in Rome and after the success I had, I would like to continue to exhibit my work through tattoo conventions, as I believe my artwork works well, is in harmony, in this kind of environment. I am also in the process of creating prizes and awards for some of the conventions. So far, I have worked in collaboration with the following tattoo conventions: International Tattoo Expo Roma, the East Coast Convention, in Pescara, Italy, the Summer Tattoo Festival, in Senigallia and Sanremo Tattoo Convention. In March of this year, I will be exhibiting my new works at many Italian galleries and in June, at a convention in Switzerland. My new set it is real alternative neoclassicism. My inspiration, as always, the guy. The tattoo artist. He kidnapped my heart and my mind.

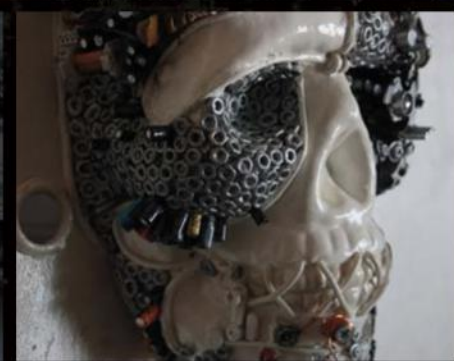
ing scrap metal and turning it into aesthetic gold. Ranya is modest about the praise she is getting for her work, the success she is receiving with her art coming as a surprise to her; especially, as she has ‘never studied this particular medium before.’ You could say that a lack of a formal art education helped keep her creative spirit free, but Ranya puts it all down to her hands. “I have created a lot of ‘hands’ in my art and I always believed that with my hands, I could have done great things.”

As I said at the top of this feature, though on first appearances Ranya’s sculptures seem to reflect the darker side of her psyche, it was actually love that got her fully immersed in her current ‘style’. Up to this point, Ranya had already started working on some abstract creations on canvas, using recycle media, but didn’t feel she had accomplished what she

had set out to create; nothing a muse in the form of a tattoo artist couldn’t resolve.

“My inspiration for these sculptures, comes from a crush I had on a tattoo artist, who is a handsome man and a very talented artist. I started using his face as a means to create these artworks and also to get to work in the places where he works, such as the Italian tattoo conventions. When I met him, through his eyes and what I perceived, I felt I was able to travel into space. With this memory alone, I could create for many years. Inspiration for me is very strange, some places can definitely leave a mark, but my true travelling is within myself. My inner being, the studying of the universe and its own infinite censored information, are for me the highest form of inspiration.

But, my muse, every year I meet him at a convention and this gives me great inspiration, which means, in a way, I have enough ideas to go on for another year. The first time I was at a tattoo convention I thought, “I like this place, I am happy here. I find inspiration



HER CREATIONS ARE REFINED CYBORGS: MADE UP OF A VARYING RANGE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS.

here, I find it comfortable.” All the people I have had the honour to work with so far, from those who organise the conventions to the artists; they all take their job very seriously and do everything with passion and dedication. They have a great deal of experience, which they never fail to share. I have built strong and valuable relationships, friendships, for life. It’s a world of art.”

It takes Ranya about a month or two to complete a sculpture, depending on how many pieces she needs to use; some works have required more than five hundred pieces before. When she begins a new piece, Ranya admits that sometimes inspiration can be a little hard to come by, but most of the time she has a specific idea in mind. Either way, when it comes to the actual process of sculpting, creation is organic, tending to grow as she works on it.

“I don’t draw, nor really plan my creation ahead. It’s all in my mind and often, while working on it, I modify the original thought or idea. So often the end result is very different from what I had in mind when I started.

Ever since seeing an Arabic dancer in a restaurant, at the age of twelve, Ranya has been passionate about Arab culture. “I remember being small and dancing alone in the house, pretending to have cymbals in my hands and belly dancing.” At fifteen Ranya started studying oriental dance; which includes techniques such as the sword dance, the dance of the veil and folk dances of the Arab countries of the Mediterranean basin. In 2016, Ranya stopped performing publicly and is now studying the tribal dance styles of Morocco, as well as new styles such as dance tribal fusion and gothic; collaborating with other dancers in 2017. At the moment, Ranya is only performing at private events.



I create while I work on it. I work at home as I am a single mum and I have a room as my own studio. While I work I usually prefer silence, but it depends on the moment and the kind of work I am doing. Sometimes I listen to documentaries on alternative science, theology, certain historic periods or characters, astronomy, quantum physics, or physics in general. Sometimes I listen to anything to do with spirituality. Nowadays I have two views of what I look at: what I see and what I imagine. I have an endless imagination and while the reality remains as such, I see lots of other things. A creative block for me is a temporary depression. I am moody and it happens that I work, but without really getting anywhere. I can't create art from my sadness, I need to transform this feeling into something else to be able to get something out of it.

For my last set of sculptures, which kept me going for a year, I worked without breaks or interruptions. Day and night I kept thinking about this guy; hence the name of the se-

ries "the boy". It was a platonic love really. We never got together and I believe that is what protected my work and my productivity. Nothing happened, nothing could have made me sad and could have stopped me. The problem in general is, if I date somebody, even the slightest disappointment affects my work and my creativity. So, I am keeping myself away from anything that could affect my frame of mind! Like men!"

So far, every piece that Ranya has created has been sold and she is currently working on demand... whilst trying to put together an exhibit for December, working on commissions for birthday presents and tattoo studio openings. Whether Ranya's art is too your taste, or not, you can't deny she has hit the vein when it comes to her art. Like Ranya, her work is a fusion of many inspirations and mediums; full of contradictions that should jar, but in truth, visually please. I for one she continues to see her tattooed Italian muse, just so we can see what creations her mind reveals next. □

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Traumatic events have a way to direct our lives into areas that we could never foresee. The death of my close friend Jason was the catalyst in the creation of Serpents of Bienville, a now thriving community project. He encouraged me more than anyone ever has, and held me up in a way that will probably never happen again



Tattoo by Sean Herman on Mark Fetting

TRAUMATIC EVENTS BECOME A PART OF WHO WE ARE, WHILE BECOMING THE FUEL FOR WHAT WE DO

After his passing I decided that if he saw that good in me deep down, I had to get to work on manifesting it for myself to see. His death created a hole in my heart that reminds me every day to get something good done, to move forward. Events that can be viewed as traumatic have a way of creating a marker for change, a change that will create a new course, a new path for our lives.

As a young teenager Malala Yousafzai spoke out against the growing oppression from the Taliban. After beginning a well known campaign for education, one that also criticised the Taliban, Malala was shot in the head at close range by a Taliban gunman. After surviving the attack, she used that energy to continue on, now more inspired, becoming a spokesperson for human rights, education and women's rights. In 2014 she won the Nobel Peace Prize. She kept moving forward.

Traumatic events become a part of who we are, while becoming the fuel for what we do. I can remember years ago when my client Mark told me he wanted to get a skull/

grenade exploding tattooed on his arm. I was caught off guard by the reason behind it. I had tattooed Mark Fetting many times at that point, with his time in the military offering him the ability to travel around and get tattooed by me as I was living the nomadic tattoo life. I had at one point run into him at an airport where he had enjoyed the benefits of a layover, only to have the guy who is going to tattoo him in another city show up behind him and scare the crap out of him. We had a good sense of humour together and things always stayed positive and fun.

Mark loved getting tattooed, and I loved tattooing him.

Like many of us, when talking about his first exposure to tattooing, Mark has a clear distinct memory,

"The military has a hand in the first tattoo that I ever saw. My grandpa is in his eighties now and he served in the Navy as a youngster. While in, he got a big tattoo on his outer forearm. By the time that I was old enough to remem-



Malala Yousafzai



Tattoo by Sean Herman on Mark Fettig

IT'S ONLY WHEN SOMETHING IS TAKEN FROM YOU THAT YOU TRULY RESPECT IT...

ber it, it had faded beyond recognition. But he tells me that it used to be a skull and dagger. That side of my family is a little conservative so seeing him with this big tattoo threw me off. I always wondered about how he might've been back in the day. My dad said that he was kind of a badass! It's a far cry from the sweet old man that he is today."

Mark has a candour that I'm not used to, and he says it with a smile. When talking about why he wanted the grenade tattoo from me, Mark said simply, "My friend Brett and I were blown up." Later, we spoke again about this event and he said, "Brett was the only person on the planet that could truly relate to my traumatic event with. Hell, we healed in the same hospital room together, bickering back and forth about the channels and nurses. I guess I took him for granted, feeling that he'd always be there. And that is one of my big problems: taking people and things for granted. It's only when something is taken from you that you truly respect it." I can identify with this, especially now. My friend Jason and I were also comrades in life's tragedies, and losing him changed my life forever.

After tattooing Mark for years, I was happy to hear that he was going to embark on an apprenticeship and become a tattooer. Mark is one of those people that love tattoos, with a respect seen by few. Here is what Mark has to say about it in his words,

"It became clearest to me while serving just what tattoos may mean to a person. There are countless tattoos dedicated to fallen soldiers. I knew the guys that those tattoos were dedicated to. It's powerful stuff sometimes just seeing a guys name again or a particular logo or badge, crest, etc. So in that regard, to me, military tattoos have the most significant meanings. They tend to draw the most emotions out of me. I never got a fallen soldier tattoo and that may be the reason. I don't tend to like constant reminders of those types of memories. One of the most significant tattoos that I wear is the grenade that you gave me over the huge scar under my left arm. My 'angry-nade.' My closest military brother, Brett and I went through this event of being hit by a grenade together and for that, I certainly wanted it commemorated. And now, after Brett sadly has taken his life, that drives even more meaning for me. It's strange how tattoos work like that. You get something for one reason and you think this way or that and as you grow, your story ages and changes with the tattoo.

"My interest in tattoos started very early. In high



Mark Fettig



Tattoo by Sean Herman on Mark Fettig



Tattoo by Mark Fettig



Tattoo by Mark Fettig

WITH EACH PASSING TATTOO SESSION, I COULD FEEL MYSELF BECOMING MORE AND MORE COMFORTABLE IN MY SKIN

back seat to training and drinking. I was getting stronger and less scrawny... but I was STILL self conscious about my arms for some reason and just had an overall sense of self-loathing. I'm not sure where it stemmed from but I just felt incomplete in some way.

"It was at the end of my second tour of combat and a couple of years before I got out that I decided that I wanted to get a lot of tattoos. I became obsessed with the thought of having sleeved arms. I did a lot of research and eventually landed on you, Sean, and slowly started my transformation. With each passing tattoo session, I could feel myself becoming more and more comfortable in my skin. I became out-going and inviting. I started to hate wearing long sleeved shirts because it hid the person that I really was and I felt as though I couldn't be my true self unless my tattoos were showing. It really was a strange phenomenon for me. I can remember asking you to tattoo my hands and you wouldn't agree at first. It took me telling you that I always wanted people to see the real me, long sleeves or not, without the ability to hide that

school, I was a little, dark and brooding type of kid with a lot of anger. My wardrobe included a lot of hoodies and baggy jeans. High school was also when I discovered the dark and macabre works of Paul Booth. I obsessed over his tattoos, as well as others. Back in the 90's, I didn't see much else out there like his stuff. So I spent a lot of my teenage years huddled in a corner, doodling away, dreaming of better things to come my way.

"After I graduated, my self consciousness was still bottoming out. I particularly hated my arms for some reason. I was just uncomfortable in my skin. I needed a change. That came in the (extreme) form of joining the Army as an Infantryman. I pride myself to this day for that decision (good or bad). It was one that I made on my own and am proud that I recognised a need for change. I saw my life spiralling and needed to get far away.

"The Army was my life at that point. Art and doodling took a



Tattoo by Mark Fettig



Tattoo by Mark Fettig



Tattoo by Mark Fettig

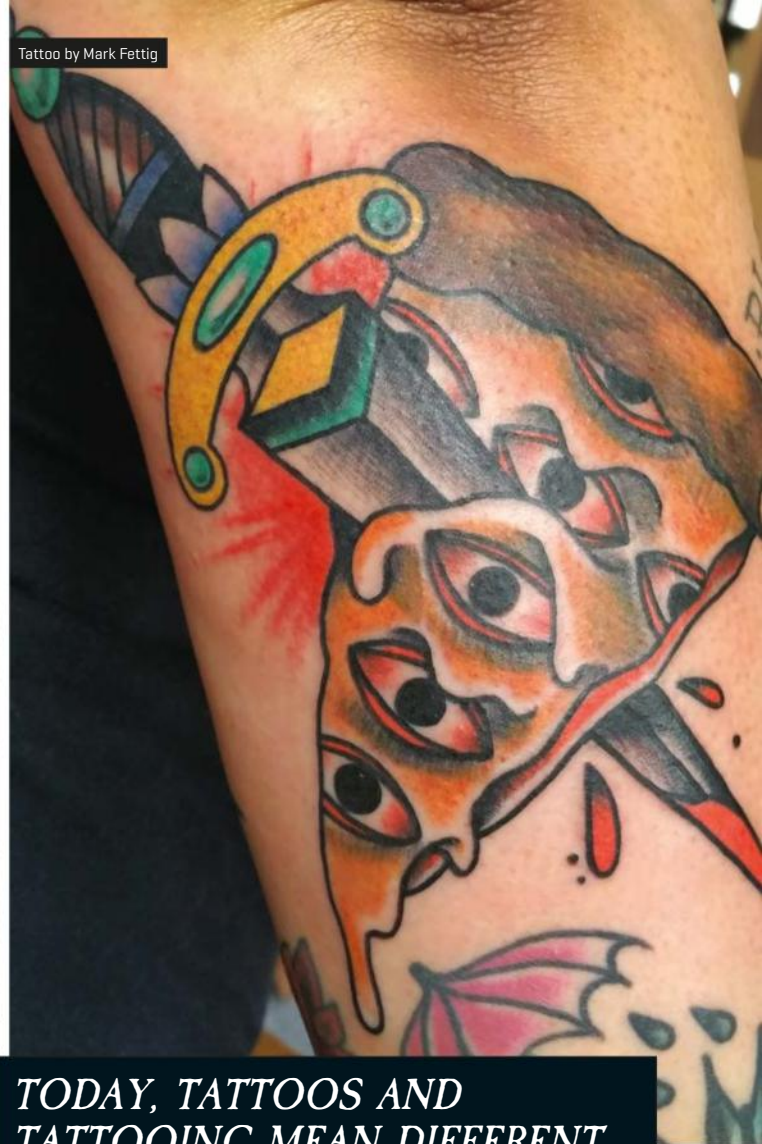


Tattoo by Sean Herman on Mark Fettig

all the time. It was self healing in one of the strangest of ways. Wearing all of these tattoos has revolutionised my way of thought and liberated me of self doubt. It forces me to be true to others as well as my self. My tattoos are a constant reminder of that and of the journey that I took to get there. I went on a lot of road trips, chasing you around during your nomad years. Had a lot of fun on the road with my wife Rose and my other friends. That and



Tattoo by Mark Fettig



Tattoo by Mark Fettig



Tattoo by Mark Fettig

TODAY, TATTOOS AND TATTOOING MEAN DIFFERENT THINGS TO ME, THEY ARE ABOUT TRUST

getting hammered during layovers, waiting to fly to San Diego and getting caught by my tattooer at the terminal.

“After eight years with the Army, I settled on the notion of chasing my art passions again. I started by working towards an illustration degree. I didn’t initially set out to become a tattooer. My friend and roommate at the time knew a local shop owner and set me up with a meeting. My now wonderful friend and owner of Honest to Good-

ness Tattoo, Kaelyn Currow graciously took me under her wing and taught me about just what it takes to be a tattooer. Now, after five years, a BFA in illustration and different tastes from the Paul Booth era later, tattooing is still my life. Today, tattoos and tattooing mean different things to me, they are about trust. My clients are wonderful folks and they rely on me to aid them in THEIR healing. THEIR personal growth or for whatever reason that they come to decide on being tattooed. The responsibility of that can be a heavy burden for me at times. I know what these tattoos mean to people and how proud they will be to wear them and show them around and tell their stories to others. I never want to disappoint a client and really feel the stress of their importance. So now I live out most of my time worrying about other peoples happiness, haha. But being stressed with those concerns really keeps me on my toes and pushes me to continue to grow as a tattooer and as an artist.

“People get tattooed for a million different reasons. Everyone has a story. Then again, some people just want to wear cool tattoos because they just like them. I have had a few clients that have come in looking to cover certain areas of their body because they were uncomfortable



Tattoo by Mark Fettig



Tattoo by Mark Fettig

ALWAYS KEEP MOVING, EVEN AFTER YOUR WORLD EXPLODES BEFORE YOUR EYES

with their skin. Some have had scars from self mutilation, some have stretch marks they can't stand or areas of extreme weight-loss that they want to distract from. So for those individuals, I do feel that I am helping with their healing process. It makes me feel good to know that they are comfortable enough with me to help them with that. On the other hand, a lot of people won't just come out and say that they are uncomfortable in their skin so if I am helping with that, for some folks, I'm sure they'd want to keep it to themselves. I'm certain I didn't tell you why I wanted all those tattoos while you were tattooing me all those years. Now I pride myself on my people skills and love the consultations with my clients. It's great getting to know people, hearing their stories and sharing my own with them. I still have so much to learn and I really look forward to the future and this great career and all the crazy things that it throws my way."

The meaning of life is to keep moving. Through this journey, events will always come our way, creating an easy point to falter and wonder why. From Mark I am reminded the key to all of this chaos is to maintain momentum, and to move forward. Always keep moving, even after your world explodes before your eyes.



Tattoo by Sean Herman on Mark Fettig

Mark Fettig can be found at *Honest to Goodness Tattoo and Piercing* in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Visit their website at www.htgtattoo.com or follow him on instagram @markfettig



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SNAP & TICKLE

Claire Seville has worked as an ice dancer, club dancer, DJ and model. But when her daughter was born she picked up a camera to keep a record of the new life and found, well, a new life of her own. Now an acclaimed professional pinup photographer, she's shot some of the biggest alt models in the world—folks like Masuimi Max, Ulorin Vex and Cervena Fox—and her very first solo book is coming out this year. We got her to come out from behind the lens for a chat

You've had a pretty varied career, including spending time touring all over Europe in ice skating shows. How has that love of spectacle and glamour carried through into your photography?

I've always been a bit of a show off on the ice. I was never the most confident person, but put me out there under the spotlight doing something I love and I'll show you what I'm really made of. I loved the drama and emotion you could portray, the feelings you could evoke, as a solo skater out on the ice. This carries over into my work, it's all about telling a story, so the viewer can use their own imagination to read between the lines. Plus I adore playing dress up with my girls, it's a complete process from start to finish: hair, makeup, outfits, location, it all works hand in hand.

How did the shift to professional photographer happen? A lot of people start taking more pics when their children are born but not everyone finds a new career from it, after all.

I actually began with family portraits and weddings, my pinup photography was a side line, but that became too methodical for me. I needed to be more creative and I had this darker more erotic style that I needed to get out. So



Claire Seville

Words: Russ Thorne



eventually I took the plunge and decided to do pinup full time - my college tutor [she has an HNC in photography with a full distinction] actually gave me the confidence in my work to go for it. It was pretty niche back then, with only myself and a couple of other pinup photographers in the UK. Now it's becoming much more popular, which is great as there's more of an understanding of what I do.

I'm really interested by the idea that you felt there was a darker, creative side of your photography that needed to be let out. How did you know it was there?

It kind of just was, I'd just see things in a certain way but needed the right models to explore it with. I've always been obsessed with the female form, even from a really young age. I remember watching the opening credits to 'Tales of the unexpected', glued to the silhouette of the naked lady dancing across the screen. Being brought up by my grandparents made anything like this slightly awkward, so it was a case of 'don't let them see you looking'... which makes you want to look more, right?

What was the appeal of pinup photography for you, and how did you first persuade people to model in that style for you?

I like the fact that it's tease not sleaze, it's a way of being sexual without being obvious. It drew me in straight away. I was already running a burlesque show so it went hand in hand really. It was hard finding models that got it, I tried a few glamour models first but it didn't really work. Then I shot with a few relatives before I eventually found models who were into it as much as me.

Since then you've worked with some big names, but also people who have maybe never done anything like this before. Can you usually uncover the pinup diva in anyone, and what's your approach to getting the great shots you get?

I love it when a lady walks in nervous and most of the time lacking in confidence and by the time they leave they're feeling fantastic with a great big smile on their face. Everyone has got a hidden sex kitten within, best way is to



have a few giggles and keep telling them how gorgeous they look to prise it out of them. I guess being a woman allows me to do this without it being creepy!

You've photographed your fair share of tattooed skin - what makes inked people good to photograph?

I think body art really suits my style, it brings an extra dimension to the photos. Inked skin always looks great and I always want to do the amazing work justice.

You have your own ink, too. Why do you have it, and what influences the pieces you get (if anything)?

I've got a couple of tribute tattoos to my Nan and Grandad, they brought me up and meant the absolute world to me, I still miss them terribly. But most of them are just of things I like, I go to Dawnii Fantana with an idea and let her do her thing. Gary Stanley has done a few too, a kewpie doll, I had one as a kid so when I saw his take I had to have one. He also did the epic length of lyrics on my leg, let's just say that's to remind me of a more carefree time in my life.

Moving on to the book, it must be very exciting to have a collection coming out. How did it come about, and what can we expect from it?

It was a dream come true! I had been approaching publishers for five years and last year in January I had an email back asking to arrange a Skype chat. After two hours it ended with them saying they'd be sending my contract over. It's a collection of my work: some older, but mostly new stuff. There are two sides, my good girls and my bad girls - I won't tell you any more, you'll have to buy it and see for yourself.

You mention using your shoots to tell a story. How does that work? Do you decide on ideas and direct your models, or is it collaborative? Or both? (A bit like getting tattooed can be both.)

It's always a bit of both if I'm honest. Like sometimes I'll get inspired by a movie or a piece of music and then it develops from there, then more ideas come as we shoot. It's always a joint effort and that's what makes the finished result so unique.



There's obviously a growing enthusiasm for the kind of photography in your book - why do you think that is? Why do people love the bad girl stuff?

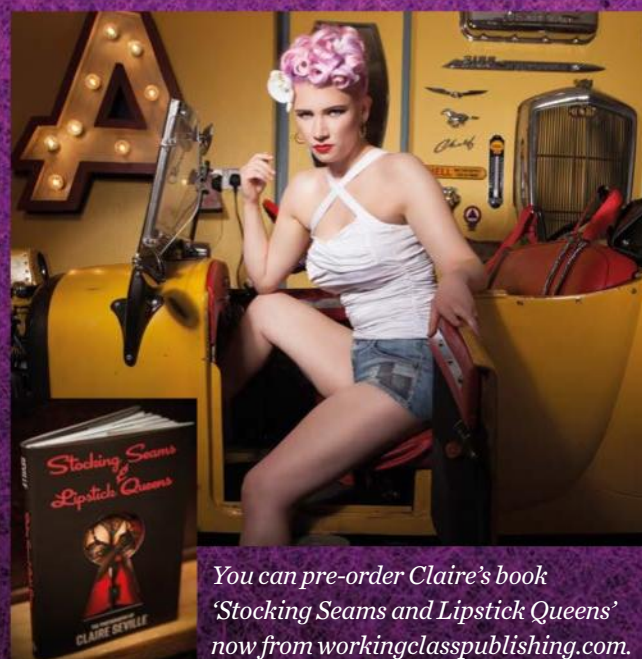
I think because it's so nostalgic, it's the glamour and feel of it all, it's luxurious and makes women feel amazing. I think when you're dressed up to the nines, you feel like you can take on the world and the inner sex kitten comes out.

What's next for you? Anything in the works that you're particularly looking forward to?

Well this year has got to be all about the book really, plus my first solo exhibition [2-9th November at Centrala in Birmingham], which will feature work from the book. Really looking forward to seeing my work that way.

Finally, you're a former model, so what's more satisfying: being in front of the camera or behind it?

Definitely behind it! I love the creative side and making people feel good about themselves, it's so rewarding. ▣



You can pre-order Claire's book 'Stocking Seams and Lipstick Queens' now from workingclasspublishing.com.

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Lal Hardy

Smash it up

"Punk was the only rational response to the depression and the chaos of the mid 70s.

If hippy culture was the age of Age of Aquarius, peace, love, and optimism, then punk was all about artifice, bovver boots, aggression, and no future. Hippies thought they were going to change the world. Punks said we're not buying this shit." [Ted Polhemus.]



I'm sitting on the tube heading for the British Library for a day of talks to mark the 40th anniversary of punk. And while the pierced, bondage-trousered punks immortalised on picture postcards still stalk popular imagination, no one in carriage looks anything like those famous images. However, I've already spotted a handful of commuters who exude a very definite zero fucks attitude. London, Malcolm McLaren, and Middle England may have done their best to claim and tame

punk, but the spirit that ignited a generation steadfastly refuses to be neutered.

It arguably all started with the Ramones in 1976. Frustrated with the faux sentimentality of hippy culture and the endless noodling of prog rock, The Ramones sought to recapture the raw energy of early rock n roll. Their self-titled first album and their no frills style was practically a blueprint for 'punk.' Back then it was just called 'the New York Scene'.



Lal Punk Designs



Koray Karagozler



Lal punks



Buena Vista Tattoo Club



Lal tattooing



Lal Hardy

However if you think that British punk was just a watered-down version of what was happening Stateside, then think again. Punk was a movement waiting for its time. Long before Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren's shop, SEX, claimed to have invented the punk look, teens on both sides of the Atlantic were dabbling in something new.

DON'T DICTATE

In Seaford Pamela Rooke, was alarming British Rail passengers with her provocative clothing and multi coloured hair, long before she morphed into the punk icon, Jordan. In Ferryhill, Pauline Murray was making her own punk clothes from hand-me-downs and charity shop finds, years before she fronted the band Penetration.

"You couldn't get hair colour back in the day" she says. "In fact, I remember seeing a photo of someone with green hair and I went to the hairdressers and was told that it couldn't be done. So you would get spray and do it yourself. People did look at you and shout at you. Point and laugh. But you were expressing yourself. There was a really closed-off mindset at the time and I think one of the reasons people picked up on punk was that it was so liberating. It started with bands like Bowie, Lou Reed, Iggy, Velvet Underground, and even Roxy who had a sort of sci-fi, 50s thing going on. [But after the Pistols] it was almost like a line was drawn. People call it Year Zero. A

lot of bands didn't make it. Other bands started to look old... and it felt for the first time like this was our time, our voice, and we could express what we thought about the shit that was going on. It didn't go down well at all. People hated it. But this new music was an opportunity to explore new things and the thing with punk is that it did draw people towards it who were creative."

The media were quick to damn punk as nothing more than anti-social posing. They howled in middle class indignation, highlighting the fights, the piercings, and the spitting. But behind the sensationalist headlines there was real fear. Kids all over Britain were increasingly drawn to the pyre of punk passion. As Johnny Rotten pointed out, 'No Future' could also be spelt 'Know Future'. This was an intelligent, informed rebellion. Punk was, Pauline says "very idealistic and for a lot of people it was a bit too real. Not cloaked in theatre as such."

Many punks adopted anarchist and nihilist stances; rejecting all shades of politics. Others wrote songs that reflected the realities of unemployment, teen sex, racism, and social inequality. Whatever the stance, punk changed the way a generation saw the world. Arguably, no youth movement had ever been so informed or critical.

IDENTITY

The guys I met on the tube heading for the British Library didn't look the way that people think punks should. But



Lal Hardy

from the get-go, punk was more than just 'a look'. It's was an art, an attitude, and an ethos.

Look at the bands of the era and it's clear that there was no single style. The Damned dressed like Goths. The Clash came on like urban guerillas. The Buzzcocks looked like the nice boys next door. But a key part of the aesthetic was Do It Yourself. Most punk kids were skint. Bands couldn't afford instruments, never-mind stylists. So they became the ultimate bricoleurs. They made their own clothes—appropriating, reusing and subverting existing styles and imagery. It was a look designed to be confrontational and challenging.

Crosses were worn alongside swastikas, not because punks were right-wing, but because they revelled in sticking a pierced tongue out at taboos and icons.

They coloured their own hair, creating gravity-defying spikes and tufts using eggs, spray starch and superglue. It was folk art at its most creative, blurring artistic, cultural, and gender boundaries.

"Patty Smith was coming through," says Pauline, "and I realised that you didn't have to be a sex object to be in a band. Nothing wrong with that, if it's what you wanted to do but ... I wanted to be androgynous. I didn't want to be one or the other. I wanted to be known for what I was doing

I THINK ONE OF THE REASONS PEOPLE PICKED UP ON PUNK WAS THAT IT WAS SO LIBERATING.

and the lyrics I was writing. Personally I'm very proud that I'm from a generation who was able to break free like that."

While punks like Pauline played with gender stereotypes, others wore S&M gear, leather, fishnets, studs, slashed and see-through clothes. Jordan: "It wasn't about sex. It was an exposure but not a 'come and get me' exposure." In 1976, the idea that women could dress however the hell they liked was still pretty radical. As Jordan comments "It was something that really needed to be done at the time."

Punk guys were equally gender fluid, some adopting the macho-posturing of bands like The Stranglers, while others were drawn to the haunted, hopelessness of the Pistols.

ANARCHY IN THE UK

Despite its reputation and it's in-your-face attitude punk was incredibly empowering and accepting, as designer Pam Hogg discovered. Although Pam designed clothes for Siouxsie Sioux and Debbie Harry, she doesn't classify her-



Moira Ramone



Chris Garver



Early punk design, Lal Hardy



Lal Hardy

DIY INK WAS ANOTHER WAY OF FLICKING THE PROVERBIAL VS AT CONVENTION

self as a punk designer. “I was anti-fashion then”, she says, “and I am still today. What I loved about punk was the individuality... there was an incredible ‘anyone can do it’ feeling. Everybody was accepted. Punk is about being yourself and not worrying about what anyone thinks. It’s not just about dressing for the gig, it’s about being yourself always.”

Along with the home-made clothes and DIY hair, punk art, which had begun to evolve on gig flyers and in fanzines, soon found its way onto skin. Album covers, tribal designs, skulls, anarchy signs, song lyrics, and political slogans were adopted alongside more macabre, provocative images. Death and sex—always popular tattoo themes—were now given a punk makeover. Death became a grinning mohawked skull, scantily clad galls were given studded collars and leather jackets.

DIY tattoos were cheap, cheerful and infinitely more varied than the off-the-peg flash then available. With its seedy, prison connotations DIY ink was another way of flicking the proverbial Vs at convention. Later, young tat-

toists such as Lal Hardy began to devise their own images which appealed to the punk aesthetic.

In the 70s those who had ink tended to wear it in places that could be easily covered up. Now punks began to adopt more visible brands: on the knuckles, neck, legs, forehead, and face. This was especially disturbing to the mainstream, where body modification was routinely referred to as mutilation.

Alongside the tattoos, everyday items were repurposed for home-made piercings. The punk with a safety pin through the cheek, and the tampon earring may seem passé today but forty years ago, this was the stuff that kept Mary Whitehouse awake at night.

But then Mary Whitehouse “don’t love me” (The Adicts) and neither did the press. Punks threatened the status quo and, in return, they were hounded and demonised. When that didn’t work, they were mocked. Then slowly, the process of commercialising and diluting began. Within a few years Zandra Rhodes was creating punk collections for Bloomingdales complete with glitter-covered safety pins and zips. Punk wigs appeared in gift catalogues and kid’s TV show “Metal Mickey” featured a punk grandfather. Finally, that famous series of punk postcards appeared featuring a guy called Matt Belgrano sporting a pillar-box red Mohican. The Establishment declared that punk was deader than corduroy but like the man (that would be Iggy Pop. Knowledgeable Ed.) said: “Death doesn’t kill you. Boredom and indifference kills you.”

And who can be bored or indifferent to an art form that—even if you hate it—elects such raw emotion?

Thanks to the British Library’s Signifying Nothing: The Creative Revolution of Punk and Lal Hardy for their help with interviews and images. □

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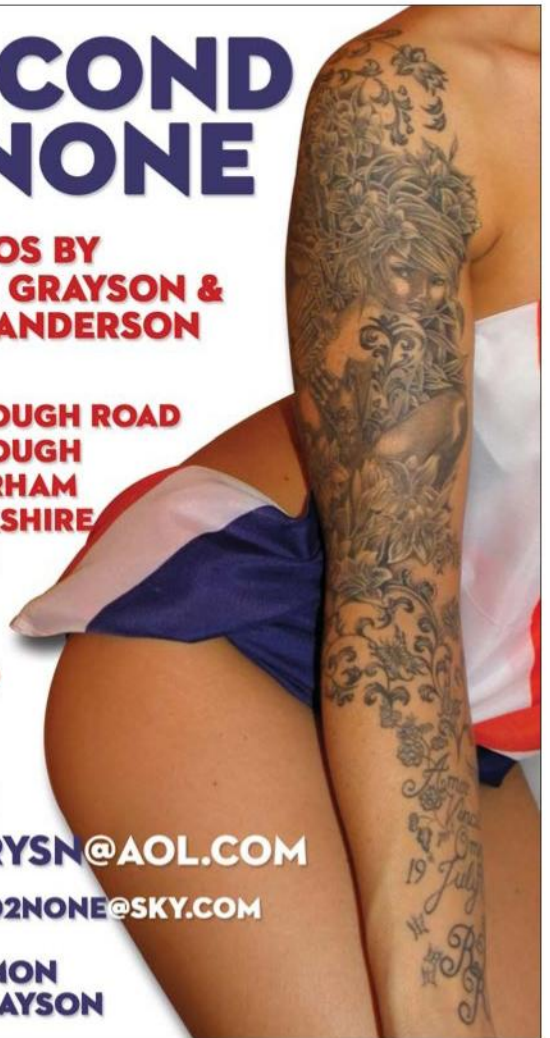
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TRAVEL PLANS

'It's not the destination, it's the journey' is the kind of phrase you generally see superimposed over a cheesy stock picture of a landscape, re-grammed or retweeted by those momentarily convinced of its profound and universal truth, but can such sentiment apply to the tattoo? Surely in our case the destination, whether that be single-shot tattoo or a completely tattooed body is always most significant? As my own twenty year journey rumbles on, I find myself less and less certain

As long as people have been around, people have been making marks, on walls, on objects, on themselves. Tattooing is likely as old as the human race itself, and multiple specimens of ancient tattoos have been found in disparate cultures across multiple continents. The current 'oldest tattoo' record holder is Ötzi the Iceman, who died more than 5,000 years ago, but archaeologists and anthropologists expect to discover even earlier examples as it's likely that the practise of tattooing was already widespread long before Ötzi's time. What experts do not expect to learn, however, is the motivation behind these ancient marks. There are, of course, no written records, no metaphorical travel journals, and so we are left with only the preserved tattoos themselves, the destination. It is speculated that Ötzi's tattoos were medicinal, as they are similar in pattern to acupuncture, but other ancient tattoos have been assumed to function as spiritual protection, or societal insignia, or to be cosmetic or decorative. In short, ancient tattoos are likely as varied as tattoos today and we can do little more than guess as to whether the process of obtaining the tattoo or the end result held most significance.

What is known is that technological ad-

**DESPITE ENORMOUS
INNOVATION AND PROGRESS,
TATTOO ART REMAINS
RESOLUTELY CONNECTED
TO THE TRADITIONAL
PROCESSES OF MAKING AND
SITTING FOR TATTOOS**



John Greaney



PAULA HARDY KANGELOS
DiamondBetty

vances, starting with the very first primitive purpose-made tattooing instruments, have enabled tattoos to progress far beyond their origins. The invention of the electric machine sped the tattoo process up considerably, making all kinds of tattoos more accessible, and right up to the present day, innovations in direct technology (such as machines, needles and ink), and indirect technology, (such as the Internet and most recently iPads and Apple Pencils) have continually opened up artistic possibilities and

CONTEMPORARY TATTOO ART IS NOW WIDER IN AESTHETIC SCOPE THAN EVER BEFORE, BUT YOU STILL CAN'T GET A TATTOO WITHOUT SUBJUGATING TO THE OLD FASHIONED TATTOO PROCESS

contributed to the raising of standards to a level unimaginable a relatively short time ago.

Yet despite enormous innovation and progress, tattoo art remains resolutely connected to the traditional processes of making and sitting for tattoos.

Compare the 'Sailor' Jerry Collins model of high-volume, small-scale, speedily completed walk-in tattoo with the slow and arduous process of the traditional Japanese Irezumi tattoo, inspiration for many of Collins' flash designs. Two quite different approaches to tattoo art practice, but both types of process intrinsically linked with the type of tattoos they produced. You can't get a coherent, detailed, full Japanese bodysuit without putting in the required hours, and Collins' speed is evidenced in his simple, quick to reproduce designs (for example, many of his pin up girls are designed in such a manner that the trickiest parts of the human anatomy to replicate, the hands, are unnecessary, cleverly concealed in behind-the-head-poses or in folds of clothing).

Contemporary tattoo art is now wider in aesthetic scope than ever before, but you still can't get a tattoo without subjugating to the old fashioned tattoo process. Tattoo-owners must still sit for their artworks, literally spilling blood for them. Tattooers cannot create new and innovative styles without first learning traditional skills, as all tattoos are still hand made, and this lack of mass production renders each tattoo unique (albeit sometimes more by accident rather than design).

This is not so in other art-disciplines, photographers need no longer process film or develop prints, sculptures can be 3D printed, even paintings can be delegated to unnamed, anonymous assistants, the attributed artist need not touch them at all, and in turn, the buyer need never know whose hands really made their artwork.

In this sense, the tattoo has never been and can never be all-destination, no-journey, no matter how fast the process of obtaining it, nor how long the experience of living with it. It's as impossible to separate the tattoo from the tattooer as it is to separate the tattoo from the tattoo-owner.

Whether we choose simple hand poked line drawings or multiple pass hyperrealism, if we're content with just one or two small tattoos, edging our way towards full coverage piecemeal or purposefully and deliberately setting out for entire one-tattoo bodysuit, the decisions, the memories, the people and processes will always be as indelibly impressed upon us as the art itself. ▣



Gareth Way



This month Beccy Rimmer has been wondering, at what point do we admit 'tattoo addiction'?

I'd like to believe that I don't have any serious addictions. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy a glass of wine or cup of coffee as much as the next fully-functioning human being. I don't smoke or take drugs. I suppose I have a fairly healthy diet (she says whilst munching on three Nutella pancakes). Today, however, I'm coming to terms with the fact that I might be addicted to tattoos.

The last couple of years have been pretty full on. I can't remember the last time I went more than one month without adding a new piece of ink to my growing collection. It's for business, not pleasure, I remember justifying to my parents with a smirk on my face. For many of us, especially in this industry, business IS pleasure, and vice versa. I love my job.

Anyway, you could describe the last couple of months as a tattoo dry-spell. Purely for financial reasons (everyone's broke after Christmas, right?), my tattoo times have been few and far between. Simultaneously, I've also been pretty painful to be around.

This morning, I sit on a busy train to Birmingham, off to get a new tattoo from Max Rathbone - a peony on my shoulder. This will be the first time I've been tattooed by Max but I'm no stranger to his shop (Second City Tattoo Club). It's home to some awesome artists that you'll be hearing more about in future issues.

The pleasant mood I find myself in this morning makes me consider the truth behind why I've been so foul-mouthed for the last few months. Had the absence of tattoos in my personal life put me in a bad mood?

When you analyse the science of getting tattooed there's a strong argument to put forward for how it could be highly addictive. Whether we get hooked on the adrenaline, the endorphins or the ability to express ourselves creatively - many do find it difficult to just get one. The tattooed world is split into two very clear segments - people who get a single tattoo (often small), and the rest of us... who literally cannot stop going back for more.

Are all addictions unhealthy and need to be addressed? Do they put strain on us men-



Viktor Dimitrov

HAD THE ABSENCE OF TATTOOS IN MY PERSONAL LIFE PUT ME IN A BAD MOOD?



BECCY RIMMER
BeccyRimmer

tally, physically and let's not forget, financially? With other habits, like smoking, we can't help but find ourselves being constantly apologetic and aware of the potential damage being caused.

In truth, I think we depend on these highs because we feel that they bring us more good than bad. As contradictory as the phrase may sound, tattoos just may be one of the world's few 'good addictions'. Plus, life's way to short to play by the rules. ▣



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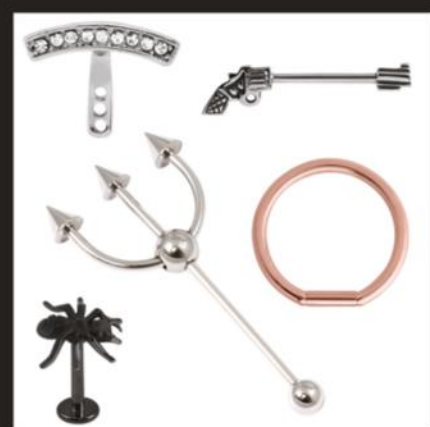
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