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A GLIMPSE INTO CORNWALL'S MARITIME MUSEUM EXHIBITION



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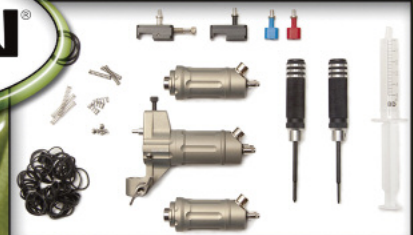
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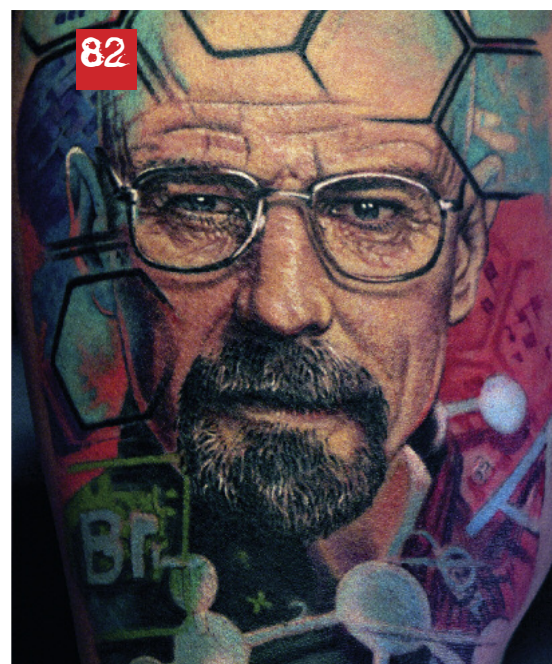
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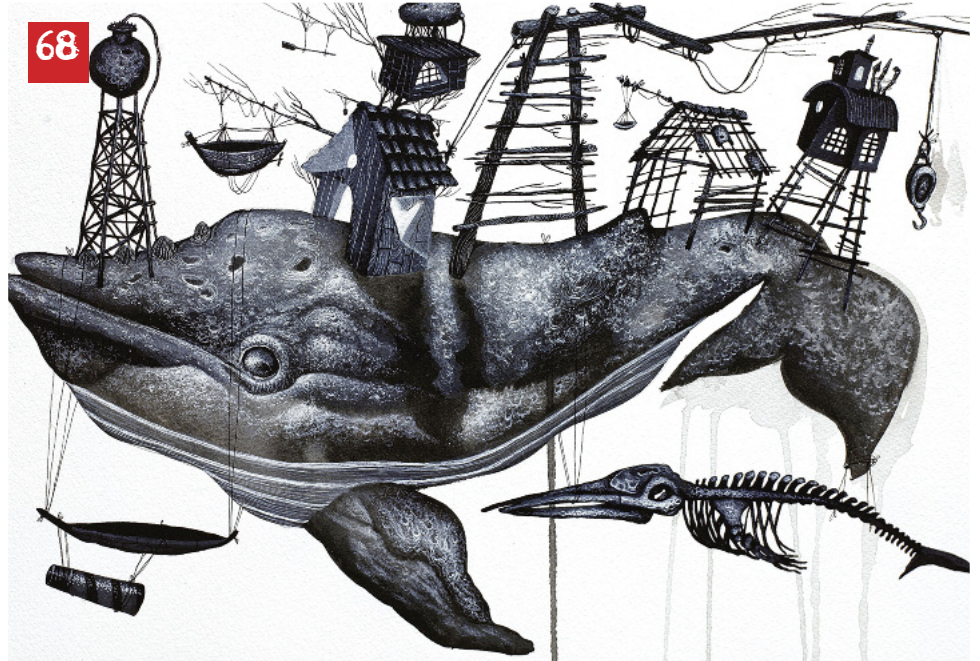
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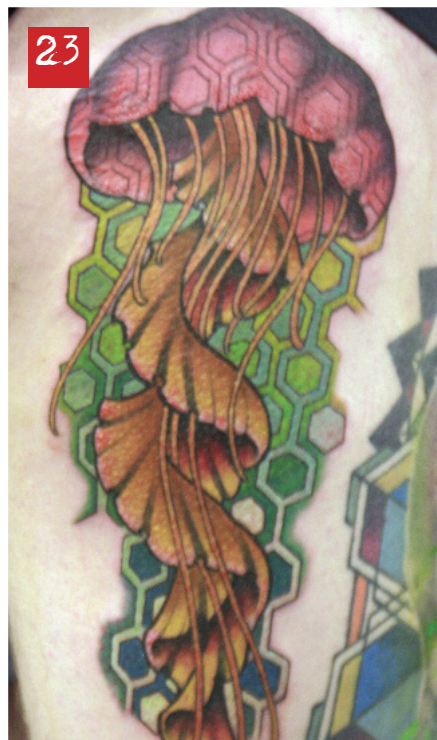
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# WELCOME to 149

As many of you are aware, we recently featured tattoo artist Reese Hilburn on the cover of Issue 147, as well as an interview with her. Like a lot of our pieces, this feature had been scheduled in for a couple of months, and we were therefore shocked to learn (after going to print) that she had been posting other tattooists' work on her social media, and claiming it as her own.

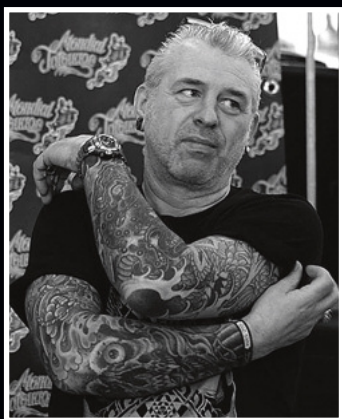
It goes without saying that we do not support any form of fraudulent activity, especially within the tattoo world. Reese is paying a heavy price for what she did – and rightly so. However, it set us thinking about plagiarism in general.

What exactly is plagiarism in tattooing? Surely it's the way of the world now? If we are honest, maybe we've all done it, perhaps without even realising it. Tattooists often use images and designs from the internet without paying their dues to the photographer or the original illustrator. We all take inspiration from what has gone before, so is it really a surprise that some people are going one step further?

Many people see tattooing as something precious and untouched by 'the system', and find it insulting when the 'old values' are disregarded. (And not just by tattooers. With the ever increasing demand to be 'different', tattoo art is everywhere.) Styles of tattoos come in and out of fashion, and are often determined by what the public want. The customer is king, regardless of any advice given to them by the professional, and they'll get what they want – whether it's good or bad. The craft of tattooing is not something that is formally taught, so it's impossible to educate everyone. Whilst this makes the handed-down history even more special – and something to be cherished and valued – it inevitably means that this history is in danger of being left behind as the ball keeps rolling.

The tattoo world is constantly changing – for better or worse – and there is nothing we can do to control it. Quite simply, what was unacceptable twenty years ago is no longer unacceptable now. Tattooers are able to mould their own paths and this should be celebrated; by creating their own legacies, they are in turn giving back to a well-loved industry. Surely the rules of tattooing should be flexible, as this freedom is something that attracted us all to it in the first place? Just because the younger generation doesn't seem to show the respect that the older generation would like, that's not really their fault. It's just the way the world is.

What Reese did was, by her own admission, wrong. We don't condone this kind of dishonesty in any way. But it did give us some interesting food for thought.



## Perry

Total Tattoo Editorial Team  
editor@totaltattoo.co.uk

**“If you steal from one author it's plagiarism; if you steal from many it's research.”**

Wilson Mizner

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# NEWS & REVIEWS

Tattoo news and reviews for your delectation and delight. If it goes on in the tattoo world, it goes in here. Send us your news items, books or products for review and items of general curiosity and intrigue for the tattoo cognoscenti.

News, Total Tattoo Magazine, 111 Furze Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR7 0AU

## BOOK REVIEW

**Todd Noble – Sketchbook**

**\$60.00, 72 pages**

**Available from**

**[rightcoasttattoo.bigcartel.com/](http://rightcoasttattoo.bigcartel.com/)**

As you can see from the spectacular feature in this month's issue of Total Tattoo, Todd Noble is a very talented traditional-style tattooer. He describes this sketchbook as a way of 'giving back' to the industry that has taught him so much. The pages are crammed full of sketches in a whole range of subject matter (not just his well-known girl heads) and Todd says his aim is to show other artists what has worked for him in the hope that it will work for them too. It would be a great addition to any sketchbook collection, and invaluable for fans of American tattooing.



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## PATIENT-FRIENDLY INK

The use of tattoos to pinpoint areas of skin for medical treatments is nothing new, but we've heard that US researchers are now developing pigments that are more 'patient-friendly'. They are non-inflammatory (so there is less potential for discomfort) and they are invisible in normal lighting conditions (so a special light is required to see them). What's more, they only last as long as they are needed and fade after a few months.



## ARTIST VACANCY

Design 4 Life in Liverpool are looking for a neo-traditional and colour realism artist to join their busy studio. If interested, please email [tony@design4lifetattoo.co.uk](mailto:tony@design4lifetattoo.co.uk)





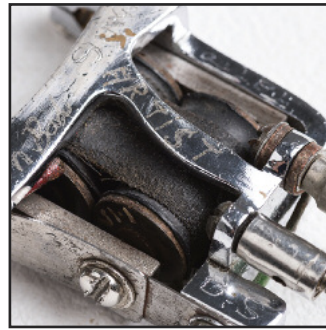
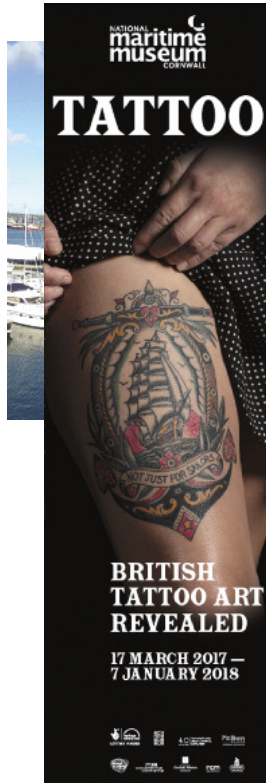
# WIN TICKETS TO TATTOO HISTORY EXHIBITION

We're really excited about the forthcoming exhibition at the National Maritime Museum Cornwall (in Falmouth). 'Tattoo: British Tattoo Art Revealed' will be the largest display of tattoo-related objects and artwork ever assembled in the United Kingdom. It will feature historical artefacts and photos, plus contemporary art commissions including the unique 100 Hands Project (see our feature in this issue!) which comprises original work by some of the best tattooists in the UK. The organisers have kindly given us a pair of tickets for two lucky readers. To be in with a chance of winning, simply tell us the answer to the following question:

**Where is the National Maritime Museum Cornwall?**

- (A) Falmouth
- (B) Bognor Regis
- (C) Scunthorpe

Email your answer, with MARITIME as the subject, to [comps@totaltattoo.co.uk](mailto:comps@totaltattoo.co.uk) to arrive no later than 28th February. Usual terms and conditions apply (see p5) and the exhibition runs from 17th March 2017 to 7th January 2018. Good luck!



## WE WANT OUR MONEY BACK

According to stories in the Indian press, the Mumbai Regional Congress Committee, which describes itself as "India's most vibrant political movement", has come up with a powerful way to protest against the government's recent demonetisation decision (a drastic economic move that means certain banknotes cease to be legal tender and become immediately worthless) and highlight the hardship this is causing. About fifty Congress workers got a tattoo on their forearm that reads Huamara Pradhan Mantri Rishwatkhori Hain, which roughly translates as Our Prime Minister is Corrupt.



## ARTIST WANTED

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## HELLO SAILOR!

We received some exciting news in the office this month, which is a breakthrough for both traditional tattoo culture and the acceptability of tattoos in the workplace. For the first time ever, a seaman in the Royal New Zealand Navy has been given permission to wear a *Moko* (a full facial Maori tattoo). Rawiri Barriball, who has served in the Navy for twenty years, felt that it was right time in his life to make the commitment. He received his official approval from the Navy in December. His decision came in part from a desire to help 'normalise' traditional body art – the more widespread the wearing of the *Moko* the more accepted it will become – but it was, of course, very important to him at a deeply personal level too. His brother

tattooed him, and in an interview afterwards Rawiri said that he was aware of people's reactions from the moment he stepped on to the street, noticing distinct changes in both their body language and in the way they spoke to him. He is very sensitive to the potentially intimidating effect of his new appearance, and the fact that some people might actually be slightly scared by it – especially in the context of his job as a seaman combat specialist where he often comes face-to-face with people he is trying to help in different parts of the world. But he is hoping his beautiful traditional ink will ultimately make a very positive contribution to a sea change in the attitudes of society as a whole.





# WIN TICKETS TO SCOTTISH TATTOO SHOW

This year, the Scottish Tattoo Convention will be held on 25th and 26th March at the Edinburgh Corn Exchange. We're loving the poster artwork for the show, which was created by Marcus Maguire who is also working at the convention. The organisers have kindly given us a pair of tickets for two lucky readers. To be in with a chance of winning, simply tell us...

**Who designed the artwork for this month's Scottish Tattoo Convention advert in Total Tattoo Magazine?**

**A) Marcus and Spencer**

**B) Maximus Decimus Meridius, Commander of the Armies of the North, General of the Felix Legions and loyal servant to the TRUE emperor, Marcus Aurelius. Father to a murdered son, husband to a murdered wife. And I will have my vengeance, in this life or the next.**

**C) Marcus Maguire**

Email your answer, with SCOTLAND as the subject, to [comps@totaltattoo.co.uk](mailto:comps@totaltattoo.co.uk) to arrive no later than 28th February. Usual terms and conditions apply (see p5). Good luck!



## LUSH TATTOOS

We read in the news that a group of employees at ethical cosmetics company Lush in the USA recently decided to express their passion for the company's products by getting tattooed. Their Lush-themed designs included bath bombs, lavender sprigs and the Fighting Animal Testing logo, and the tattoos were created by Shelby Golob of Black Thorn Gallery in Pennsylvania.



## CORRECTION CORNER

In Total Tattoo Issue 148 we published this great backpiece that we photographed at the East Coast Tattoo Convention. We wrongly credited the artist as Brad Nicholson from Low Tide Tattoo. The tattoo is actually by Charlie Coppolo from that studio.



## BIG NORTH TATTOO CONVENTION

Our first convention, at the Metro Radio Arena in Newcastle upon Tyne, is fast approaching! Advance tickets have gone on sale and are priced at just £12 for a day and £21 for the weekend. They're available from [facebook.com/bignorthtattooshow](https://www.facebook.com/bignorthtattooshow) where you'll also find the latest information about who is coming to join the party!





## WIN TICKETS TO NORTH LAKES TATTOO SHOW

This year's North Lakes Tattoo Convention (at the Shepherds Inn, Carlisle, Cumbria) promises to be better than ever, spanning across three days from 31st March to 2nd April. Up for grabs are a pair of passes for the whole weekend. To be in with a chance of winning, all you need to do is answer the following question:

**How long does the North Lakes Tattoo Convention 2017 go on for?**

- (A) 2 days
- (B) 3 days
- (C) 4 days

Email your answer, with NORTH LAKES as the subject, to [comps@totaltattoo.co.uk](mailto:comps@totaltattoo.co.uk) to arrive no later than 28th February. Usual terms and conditions apply (see p5). Good luck!

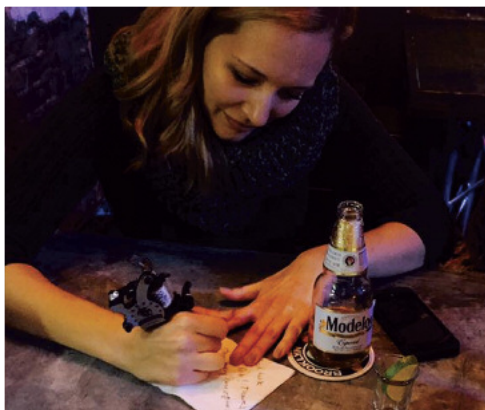
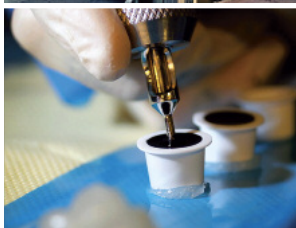


## LASER SURVEY

Laser manufacturer PicoWay have revealed the results of a recent survey about tattoo removal. It was a fairly modest sample size (250 people who were having tattoos removed plus 100 people who were thinking about having it done) but the figures are interesting nevertheless. More than 20% of the respondents wanted tattoos removed because they had been impulsive decisions; 24% said the design was no longer relevant to them; and 17% thought their tattoos were no longer "cool". 13% cited parenthood as the reason for wanting to get rid of their tattoos, but just 5% said it was because of career aspirations or dress code issues at work. And 81% said they were more likely to get another tattoo now that they knew it could be removed at some later date...

## DRINK BEFORE YOU INK?

We've heard on the news grapevine that a tattoo shop in Brooklyn, New York, has opened its own bar next door. The Forever Ink Bar has tattoo-related décor and a tattoo-themed drinks menu that includes such concoctions as 'Yes it F----- Hurts' and the 'Tramp Stamp'. Controversial? Maybe. But while the bar opens its doors to customers at 5pm, the tattoo parlour closes for business at 7pm, so anyone requiring a bit of Dutch courage before they go under the needle doesn't have much time to get drunk – and anyway, the guys at Forever Ink insist they are serious about not tattooing customers who are obviously under the influence.



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Interview by Lizzy Guy  
Pics by Todd Noble

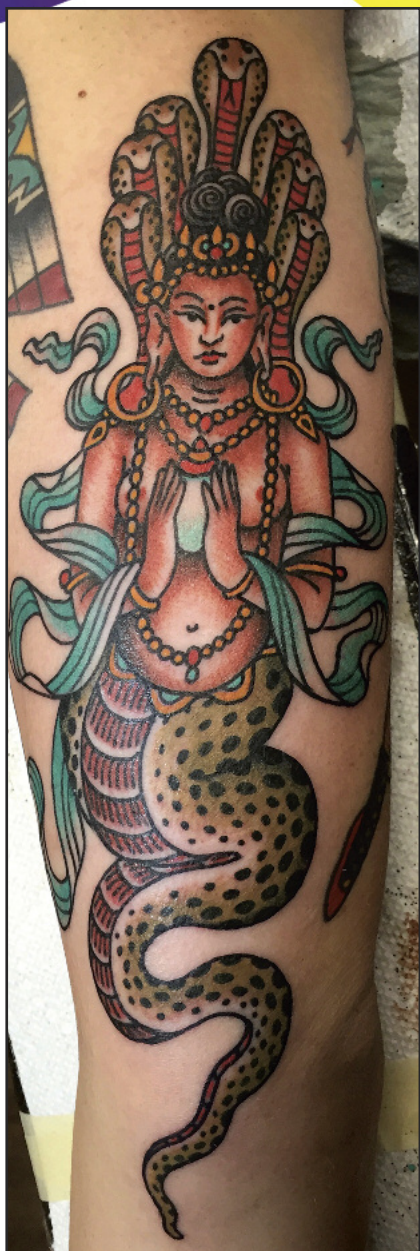
# Todd Noble



**Todd Noble is an all-American superstar with a deep love for traditional American tattooing. He's a brilliant tattooer and a very cool guy. Todd's been honing his skills for twenty years now and his superbly clean tattoos pack a real punch. You could call his work 'New Traditional' perhaps... but he would hate you if you did!**

**As well as tattooing, you're prolific at drawing and you've published your own books. Have you always been interested in art?**

"Yeah, ever since I was little. My parents were very supportive of me taking art classes when I was a kid, and I went to college to do art too. When I got out of college I did a couple of art-related jobs – such as silkscreening, t-shirt design, that sort of thing – and I did that for about seven years. But it didn't really feel like I was at home, y'know? Then I had the opportunity to learn how to tattoo. It was a new form of art for me and thought I'd give it a try... but it's not something you 'try'. You either sink or swim. It's all-encompassing. If you don't put 100% into it it'll show real quick. From the first time I did it, I was like, 'This is what I wanna do, and I'm gonna be the best I can be at it!'"





**And that was back around 1995?  
Where did you start off?**

"I started in a little town called Fenwick Island in Delaware, where I still have a tattoo shop called Right Coast Tattoo. I split my time between that shop and Redemption Tattoo in Cambridge, Massachusetts – just over the river from Boston."

**Why do you choose to split your time between two shops?**

"My wife and I wanted to move to Boston. She was looking for better job opportunities, and I wanted to be tattooing more – because Fenwick Island is a beach resort town, so business slows down in the winter months. My wife now works in a really good hospital in Boston, and I can continue to work with my good friends at the Fenwick Island shop too. Even in the city there's definitely still some months where there's a dip – usually towards Christmas, for instance, when people suddenly think, 'Oh shit, I've gotta save my money.' But overall, it's fine. I still do big custom stuff and I do walk-ins as well. Whatever's popular on Pinterest!"







**How do you feel about the 'Pinterest' tattoo?**

"I know a lot of tattooers who are disgusted by the evolution of tattooing, but it's to the point that you just have to get past yourself and thinking about the way things were. If you don't change and evolve then you're gonna get left behind! To me, Pinterest and the internet... well they're the new flash. People get their images there, instead of picking them off the wall. In some ways, I'm busier because of it. Their money is green and they wanna get tattooed. I supply tattoos and that's my service. If something isn't tattooable then I'll explain it to them. So yeah, Pinterest is just another way that customers get inspiration for imagery."

**That's a great way to look at it. A lot of tattooists seem to hate it!**

"They're probably tattooers who weren't tattooing twenty or thirty years ago, when people would come in and pick the same fucking design off the wall... like, 'I want the yin-yang butterfly, or the cross with a daisy underneath it'... Even in the sixties and seventies, people were all getting the same shit. A lot of things now (like the infinity symbol) are the new yin-yang butterfly."

**How do you feel about other aspects of the internet and social media?**

"I do have a problem with it because, for newer tattooers, it's cut out a lot of the hard work that I (and my generation) had to go through. Like, I had to travel to conventions to

get my name out there, and try to get my work into magazines so that it could be seen, and make connections and do guest spots... Twenty years' worth of hustling grinds to a halt when you put one picture up on social media and millions of people see it and start following you! And the internet's created a whole generation of people – not just tattooers – who think that everything is fuckin' free. People come into the studio and photograph the stuff on the walls and I'm like, 'Hey, that's my fucking painting! Get your own!' Just because you can find free stuff on the internet doesn't mean you can do the same in real life."





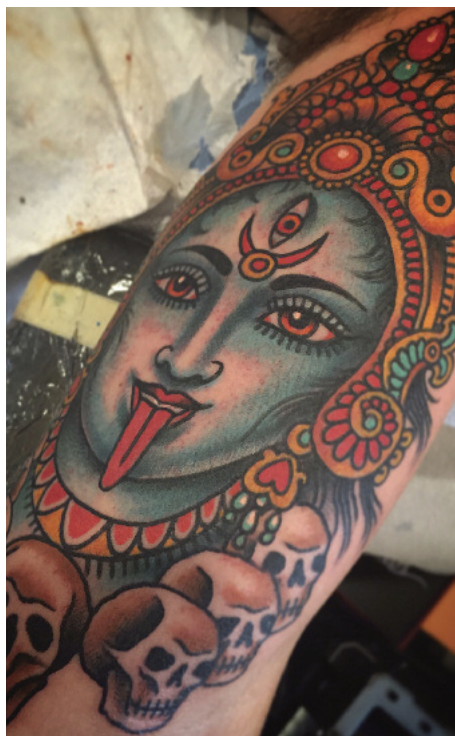


**Seeing the rewards of your hard work must be incredibly satisfying. Can you identify anything in particular that's been the key to your success?**

"I don't think there was ever a particular thing. It's been a combination of decisions and drudgery – like coming to Europe in the middle of winter, doing three shows in a row, freezing my ass off standing in train stations in the middle of night. Stuff like that. It was hard, you know what I mean, but it's made me who I am. So it wasn't one thing, but a combination of a lot of smaller, different experiences; and I'm still growing and changing now. You have to keep going. I've never been one to settle. I want more clients. I want to appeal to a broader range of people."

**Why is that important to you?**

"It perpetuates business, ultimately. I'm an artist but at the same time I'm a businessman. You can't rest on your laurels in tattooing – the competition is right behind you and they've had it way easier than you."



**Is it hard to be both an artist and a businessman?**

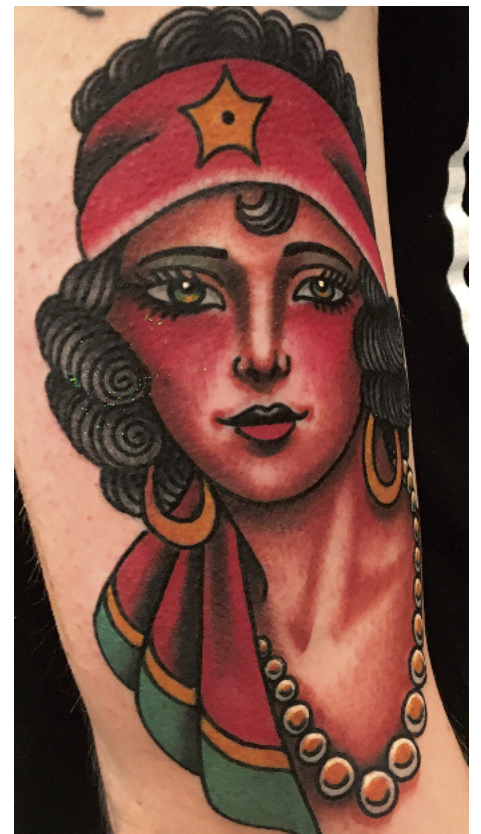
"Yes! For me it's constantly trying to figure out the next business move, pay my taxes, order supplies, etc. Creative types aren't the best at being organised. It's controlled chaos! And you have to balance your time between the business and the creative side. You've got to keep up with the running of your business, but if you're not doing enough of your art you can fall behind on that too! You have to find a happy and healthy medium, and that's not easy."

**With your experience, I guess your drawing skills have been honed almost to the point of muscle memory?**

"Yeah. I'm am a perfectionist, to a degree, but I also accept that tattoos can never be perfect. I want my tattoos to look nice and be aesthetically pleasing, so that the customer walks away with a smile – but I don't aim for complete perfection. With drawing, I've got my routine down pretty good. I know what I want to achieve, and how I want the designs to look. All of that comes with time and practice. The parameters of American traditional make it a little easier, too. It's gotta look a certain way and there are a few rules involved."

**How do you develop your work? What's your advice to others?**

"Practice makes perfect. Keep tattooing as much as you can, try to push the stuff that you really want to excel at. Even doing the regular walk-in stuff hones your skills. You can't do custom stuff without pulling a good line or making small tattoo look really detailed. As long as your foundations are solid, you can move up!"





**Do you thrive under the pressure of the busy walk-in shop environment?**

“There is pressure, yes, but if everything is right and I'm comfortable, then I enjoy it. You have to be able to adapt – this person wants a portrait, but next you've gotta do tribal. It's like doing completely different styles of tattooing, but you should be able to tattoo anything that walks through the door if you're that kind of shop. I think a lot of tattooers now just straight started out doing one particular style, which gives them a lot of weaknesses.”

**Some tattoo styles and images date more easily than others...**

“Yeah, you'll certainly be able to say, 'Oh, you got that infinity symbol in 2016!' With the stuff I do – the American traditional – it looks like American traditional whether it's from the 40s, 50s, 60s or later. It's got the same colour palette, the same design structure and the same black shading. It should look timeless, from a certain era. Tribal armbands and lower back tribal can be dated, as can stuff like mandalas. I try not to do stuff where people can look at it and know the year it was done.”



**Is that the appeal of traditional to you?**

“Yeah, it is. A lot of American designs came from the carnie population, you know, the artistes travelling around in the 30s and 40s, entertaining small towns. Also, there's the naval and military history of the designs – like guys getting stuff when they came into port and had a little bit of money and wanted something like a tattoo of a girl to remind them of their mom or girlfriend back home. There's a lot of nostalgia to that, which I think is super cool. To me, it holds more meaning than any other genre of tattooing. But I'm not saying other genres don't have value. Tribal, for example. I respect the hell out of that imagery, but I'm not Samoan or from New Zealand so I wouldn't wear it because it doesn't have the same meaning for me. And I *shouldn't* wear it because I'm not part of that culture. If you're just trampling on the history of it, it's bad mojo!”

**What about Japanese tattooing?**

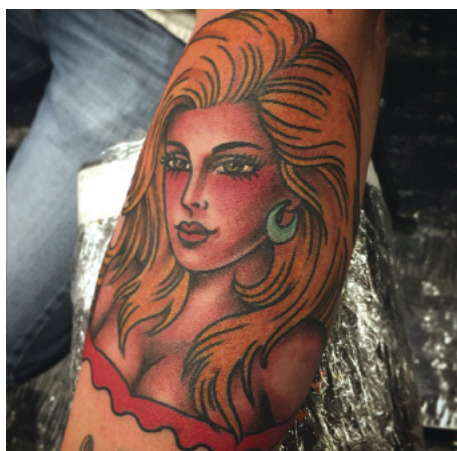
“I think Japanese imagery can be relevant to lots of people. I have some Japanese-inspired tattoos, and I like the symbolism. The difference is that the designs can have their own meanings in say, your life or my life.”

**If you had to pick one American artist who has inspired you, who would it be?**

“Cap Coleman. His American traditional – really stripped down and basic, and to the point – was designed to be tattooed fast, because that was the pace back then. He had twenty or thirty sailors out front and he wanted every one of their five dollar bills, you know what I mean? Get 'em in, get 'em out! His girl heads were immaculate, and a lot of Sailor Jerry imagery was directly appropriated from Cap Coleman designs. You can see it in the pin-ups. To me, he's one of my all-time favourites.”

**Is it important that the history and nostalgia of American traditional is preserved?**

“I think so. Maybe not to everybody, but it's my trade. I don't claim to be a historian – there's a lot that I don't know – but I continue to learn, and that inspires me. It's our tattoo roots. To me, American culture is really interesting. Whether my clients get it or not is a totally different matter. And that's their prerogative.”





**And the newer generation of tattooists...?**

“Tattooing has grown so fast. I think there’s more emphasis on the tattoo itself now – and making it technically sound – than on the roots or the history of the design, or why it was designed in the first place. It’s just visual imagery now. The visual language is being used to further the art. The history definitely got left behind. There are very few people who still know the history to pass it on. And how do you pass it on? But you wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for the guys before you, eating canned beans and wearing the same white shirt three days in a row!”



**Where can 'traditional' tattooing go from here? Does it need to evolve?**

“That’s a good question. It’s gonna do what it does. Twenty years ago, I wouldn’t have ever thought tattooing would be like it is now! So I just keep my head down and do what I do. I make small changes to my designs – to make them a little more readable or this or that – but I don’t explore or experiment too much because I think that negates the authenticity. Now you’ve got all these sub-genres – like ‘neo-traditional’. It’s like, what the fuck does that even mean?! You can’t have ‘neo’ (‘new’) traditional! Just call it neo-illustrative or something like that.”

**I guess every tattoo style somehow acquires a name...**

“Labelling is shit! It’s all about putting people in boxes! Who even came up with that name neo-traditional!?”





**Is it important for you to be able to tattoo a range of different subject matter?**

"I make sure I do. With the walk-ins, I may not be able to express my creativity in the same way as with custom work, but I have bills to pay! Those walk-ins will become regulars, who may then get bigger tattoos. Sat in your studio for an hour, they will be looking at the work on your walls. They might not have known they could get tattoos like that. You're opening that door for them."

**And the trust needs to be built...**

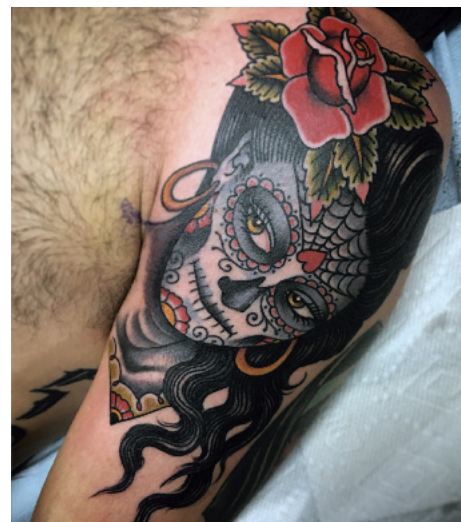
"Sure! It's that issue of trust, and building a relationship between you and the client. And even if they're just starting with a little piece that others might see as 'following the herd', you'll be able to pay your bills and they will be happy with the tattoo!"

**And lots of people who find their first tattoo a nerve-racking experience soon start looking at the space that needs filling...**

"100%. It's the whole experience. There's still a magic to tattooing. It's just down to who you go to. You could go to the watered-down places, or you could go to the experienced guys who love it and hold it true. Tattooing is so big now that there's a lot of the wrong people in it, but there are still the right people too. You can gripe about the wrong people, or you can just do what you do and do it good and not give a fuck about anybody else."

**Are there any styles you prefer to avoid?**

"I try to avoid realistic styles – well, colour portraits anyway – because as much as the technology, the inks and needles, etc, have evolved, I still really don't think that stuff will last or maintain its look, even if it looks amazing when it's first done. I'm seeing colour portraits from twenty years ago and I'm covering them up and putting blastovers on them. The generation now, they don't care about tattoos lasting. They want that picture for social media – so they can get thousands of likes and thousands of followers – but that fresh wet spiderman tattoo is gonna look like a pink pizza slice in ten years' time!"







**You've got some great tattoos yourself – including a cobra on your chest by Grime. Do you still get excited about getting tattooed?**

“No, I hate it! It's fucking horrible! Once you get into your forties, you should be done. I've got spots left, but I should have filled up earlier.”

**Tell us about your books...**

“The Look of Love Book recently sold out, and number two is coming out shortly. I've also got a sketchbook out there.”

**How do you feel about putting your work out there for others?**

“It's not like I'm giving it away, because people are buying the books. And nobody will be able to tattoo these designs the way I tattoo them. Maybe some people will do them better! It's my way of giving back, like, 'Here, this is what I've found successful. If you try it this way, maybe you'll get similar results.' I'm tired of seeing bad tattoos; people are gonna tattoo whether they're good or bad, so if my book can help them be better than that's great. Not many people who start tattooing quit, because they taste the freedom and the money. Even if

you do terrible tattoos, if there are ten customers who like your work that ego stroking is going to make you want to keep tattooing. You're gonna think you're good, because ten people told you that you were good. You're not gonna have a true sense of yourself because you're listening to false opinions. You have to look at your own work

and critique yourself, or have someone look at it. But if your ego is too fragile for that kind of feedback, you'll hurt yourself.”

**Finally, how do you relax away from tattooing?**

“I do a lot of surfing. I hope to tie in travelling and surfing with some more overseas conventions next year – just so I don't lose my mind! I certainly want to tattoo more and publish more books, but I also want to surf and vacation more! You know what they say... All work and no play!”

**Is it difficult to strike a balance?**

“Yeah. For the longest time I was hungry just be a good tattooer. It was all I did – draw and work. But now I'm at a point where I can see that I've given a lot to my career. I feel comfortable, but I need to get back to myself and nourish myself, because I neglected myself for a long time. I was definitely close to burning out, so I had to draw back and assess the situation. You have to enjoy your success, but for a lot of people it's just a carrot on a stick that they're chasing. You get caught up in it. Money, possessions... you don't need that shit! It's good to step back and see where you've been.”

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- 1. Ilandudno
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# CARLAD INK

**After a nice two hour bike ride across North Wales – which seemed like only half an hour because of the beautiful scenery – I found myself in Llandudno...**

Venue Cymru is the perfect place for a tattoo show. It's a combined conference centre, theatre and exhibition hall, and it's on the seafront. A huge staff of volunteers ensured that information about the weekend was everywhere. And even the volunteers' kids were helping out! But then this show also caters for the kids. Whereas most shows are for over-18s only, this one basically says "come on in and enjoy yourself" to everyone. And a lot of people did just that. The organisers should be very proud of what they achieved here. Furthermore, the show continues to raise money for the Motor Neurone Disease Association, it's chosen charity for the last five years.

As I walked around, one of the most obvious things that I noticed was that everybody looked happy. People were talking to each other, everyone seemed relaxed and chilled, and the customers just kept coming! This event has hit on a magic formula of good artists, good entertainment, good friends and a good venue. Everything you need to make a great show.

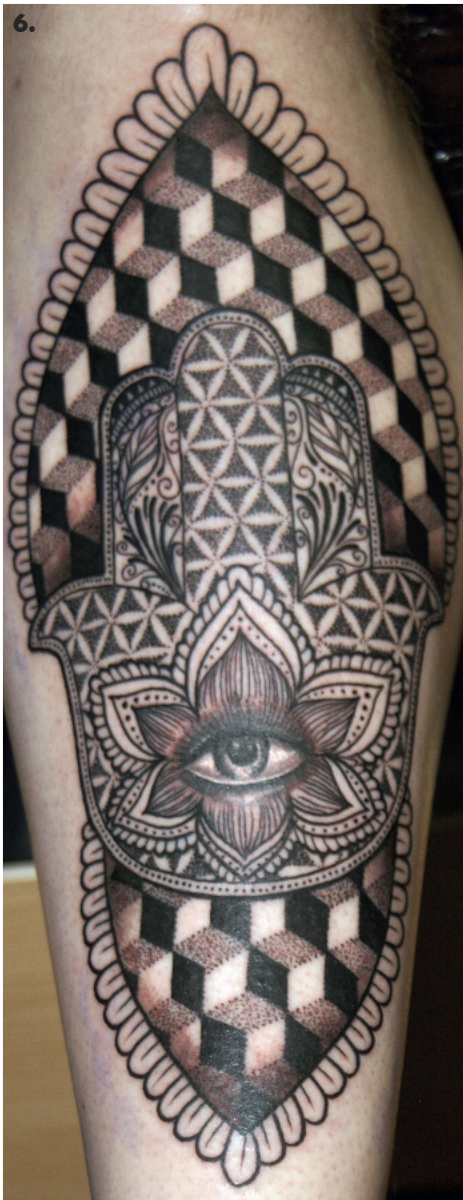
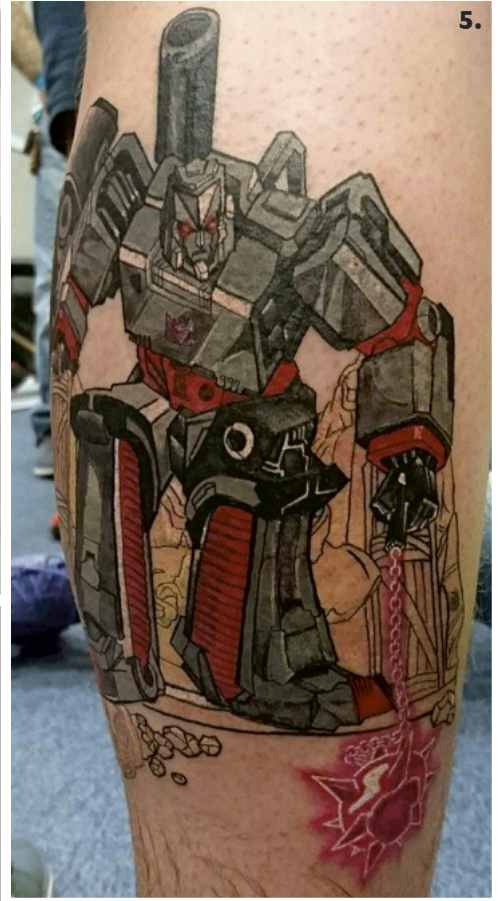
The entertainment was for all the family. There were circus acts, bands, a magician, even Santa (well it was the beginning of December) and we saw everything from sword swallowing (with The Bloody Bones Show) to cocktails being shaken and swung from fish hooks in eyelids... to Velma Bon Bon burlesque and The Pearl Shaw Dance School.

Many studios look forward to a quieter time during the winter, but there are a lot of diehards out there and a good number of them came here. Had there been an award for Furthest Travelled it would have been won hands down by Brian Woodhouse of TattooSkills, who came all the way from Virginia Beach in the USA (albeit just making a stopover en route to Amsterdam). Others who had made the journey to get here included Chip from The Rogues Gallery and Kari-Anne of Queen of Diamonds, both of them winning categories at their first ever show, plus Sean Parry doing his detailed Nordic work and hand-poking, and Cherub and children from Skin Kandi – to name but a few.

There were more than a hundred artists sharing fifty booths, spread over two floors, and there was plenty of room to swing the proverbial cat. All this space meant there were no traffic jams or bottlenecks in the aisles; and there was plenty of space to sit and chat in the large seating area too. There were coffee and food booths and a bar on both floors.

I had a great weekend in Llandudno and I'm definitely putting next year's dates in my diary – 2nd and 3rd December. Why not do the same? I'll see you there.





4. james, colt 45

5. jared, electric scribble tattoo

6. cassie, freebird tattoo

7. lee bridge, inkredibles tattoo

8. acrobats on stage  
for the kids

9. dan buckler, dexterity ink

10. chunkz 13, flying juice

11. kari-anne, queen of diamonds

12. sean healy, the ink shack

13. luke williams,  
top notch tattoos



10.



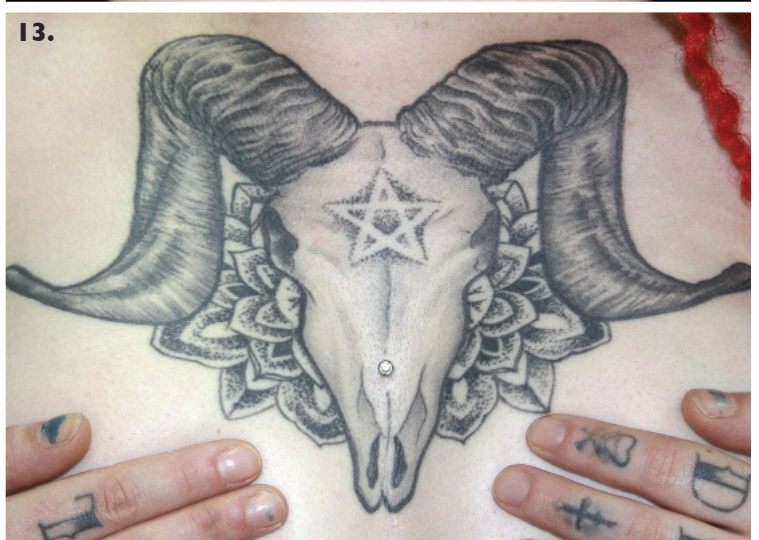
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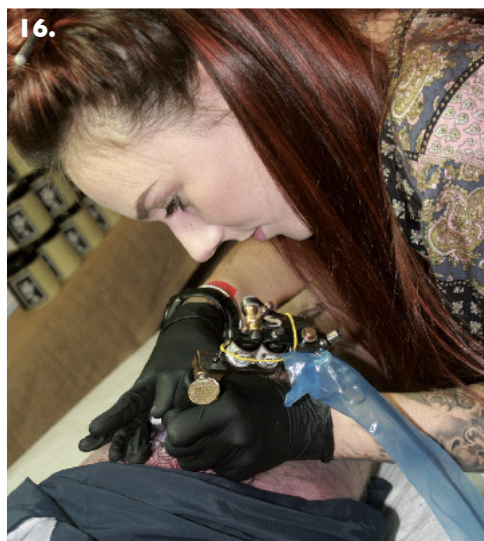
12.



13.







14. ferdi, lawless tattoo (indonesia)  
15. shelly, the caged fox  
16. chip working on a winning piece  
17. jimmy, electric scribble tattoo





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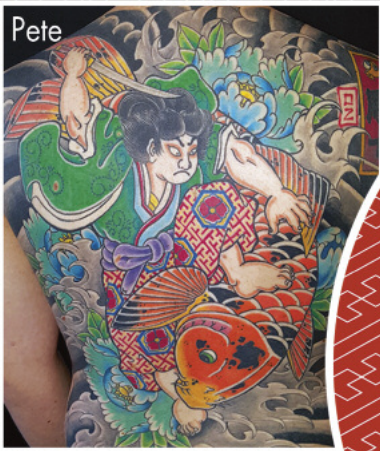


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Pete

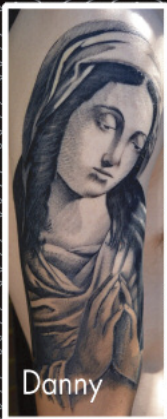
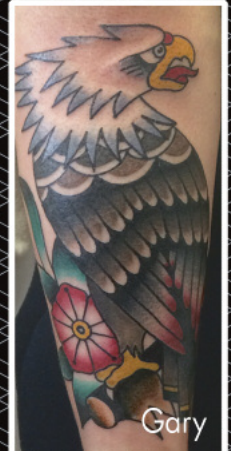


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# An American Road Trip



## Tattooing from the East Coast to the West Coast with Rizza Boo and Taylor Heald

**PART TWO** Words & pictures:  
Charissa 'Rizza Boo' Gregson & Taylor Heald



Travel buddies Charissa 'Rizza Boo' Gregson (of Bath Street Tattoo Collective in Glasgow) and Taylor Heald (of Sink or Swim in Buffalo, NY) have recently returned from an epic two month tattoo road trip across the USA. In the last issue of Total Tattoo they took us to Philadelphia, New York and Buffalo. Their next stop is Insight Studios in the Windy City, Chicago, then it's on to Kansas and Colorado.

### CHICAGO

On the road so far: 1052 miles and 18 hours of driving

**TAYLOR:** It was through Johnny McDevitt (@johnnymcdevitt) that I earned the first ever guest spot of my career. Johnny is a resident artist at Insight studios, which has become like a second home to me. Over the past three years I've guested at this shop half a dozen times, and I knew we had to stop there on our way out west. Also, Chicago was the city where Charissa and I first met, so we were looking forward to being back and exploring even more. On my last trip I had the honour of tattooing a cat portrait on Insight's owner, Bob Jones (@theofficialbobjones), and this time round most of my time booked tattooing animal portraits on friends of his who had seen that tattoo. Insight Studios is a shop everyone should visit if they have the chance. The interior is a composition of rustic brick walls, clinical stainless steel counters and glass block half-walls that reflect the light to make the entire space very well lit, and it's one of the busiest shops I've ever seen, with tattooing, piercing and laser removal too. I worked mainly in the basement, which they'd recently finished renovating, and



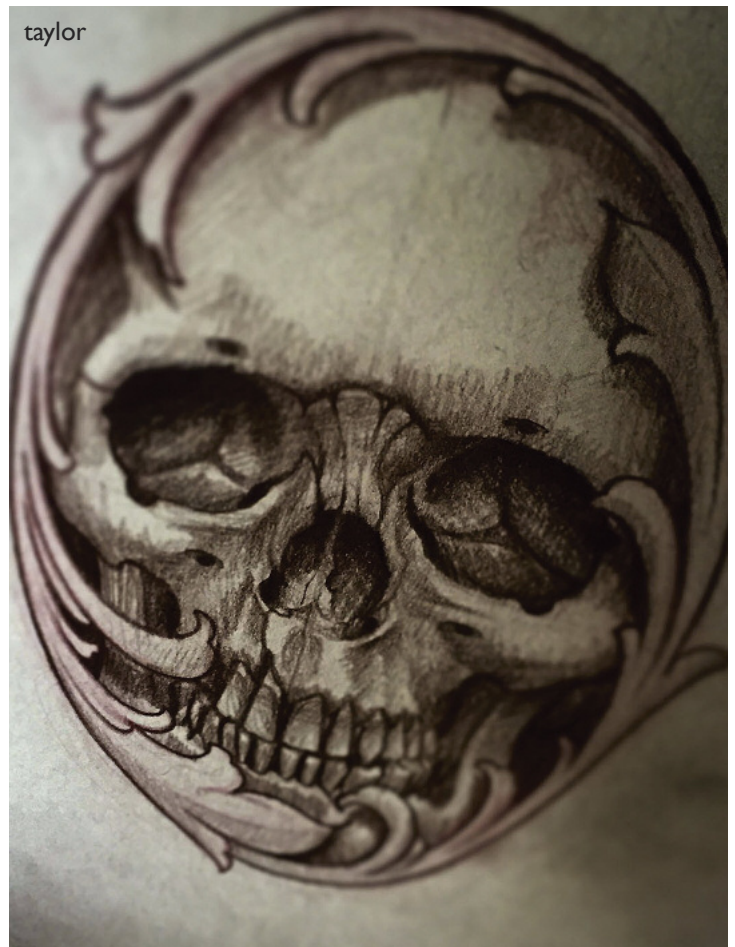
taylor



Charissa worked upstairs on the main tattoo floor. As much as the quiet of the basement was nice, I did feel I was missing out on all the shenanigans upstairs! One of my favourite tattoos from this guest spot was the sphinx cat portrait that I did. It was fun working with the fleshy tones in the cat, mixed with the bold line work around the frame. The contrast between the two really gave me a nice effect that I'd been trying to accomplish in my work for some time.

**RIZZA:** I've visited Chicago on a few occasions and I've always really enjoyed my time there. The city is busy, with lots of people constantly milling around. It definitely has an industrial feel. I find I spend a lot of time admiring the skyline, with towering skyscrapers all around. We were fortunate to be able to stay with Bob, the owner of Insight Studios. He is the proud cat dad of six feline friends. Because I travel so much, it isn't really possible for me to have pets of my own at home, so I really enjoy it when I stay with people who have animals around. Bob's cats definitely rule the roost. It was nice waking up to cat cuddles.

taylor



rizza boo





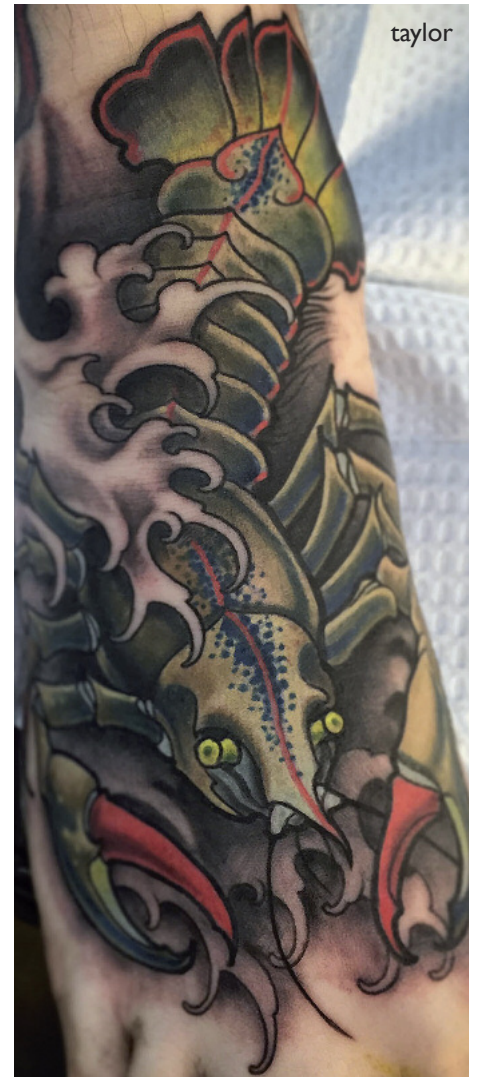
rizza boo



**TAYLOR:** We ate with the other artists each night. Santi, the shop piercer, plays guitar in a band and we went to see them play while we were in town. Then on the last night of the trip we went to a “Porn and Chicken” evening – which, as you can imagine, was a classy event. The bar was packed, everyone was dancing, and they served chicken and played porn on all the TVs. You can fill in the gaps for yourself! For us, the night ended with tacos at a 24hr Mexican diner. On our final day of tattooing I had a cancellation, which would normally have been kind of a bummer but Johnny had mentioned that he was interested in getting tattooed so luckily I could fit him in. He sat like a beast while I blasted a crayfish on his foot.

**RIZZA:** Throughout this whole trip – Chicago included – I’ve been totally overwhelmed by the fact that so many people travelled so far to get tattooed by me. Distances in America are huge, and clients would often drive for several hours. It’s truly humbling that people would want to do that, and I really appreciate people putting that kind of effort in. It was also nice to be able to work on so many other tattooists and apprentices. And I was given a lot of freedom with the pieces that I did. People let me run riot with colour palettes and were just generally enthusiastic about the way I wanted to approach things.

taylor



rizza boo



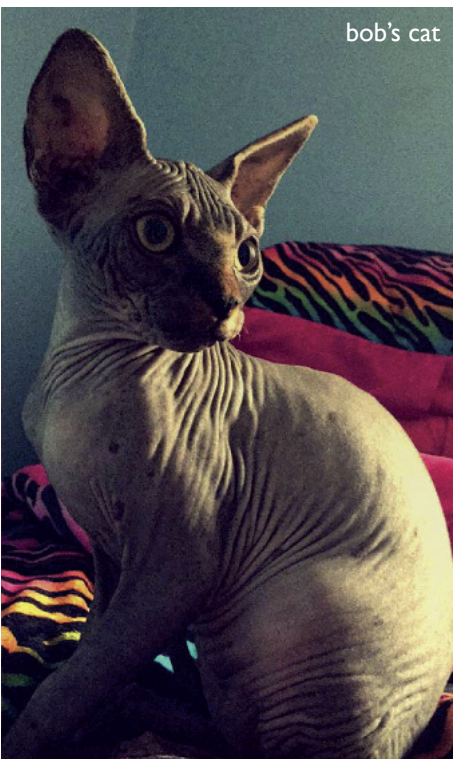


rizza boo



**TAYLOR:** Many of the artists at Insight Studios are firearms enthusiasts, and I figured this would be a good excuse to get us to the range for some target practice, and have Charissa fire her first gun. We drove one and a half hours out to the suburbs where we met up with Johnny, Jason and Jeff. It was awesome. We all competed with each other. Neither Charissa nor I won anything, but it was fun none the less and a great experience to put into the trip.

bob's cat



taylor



**RIZZA:** When we first got to the gun range I was definitely nervous. Obviously attitudes towards firearms are completely different in the UK and the US. Most of us in the UK don't grow up around guns; everything we know about them comes from films and video games. The guys took good care of us. They were on point with their firearms safety and I quickly began to relax and enjoy the experience. Turns out I'm not a bad shot.

## CONCORDIA

**On the road so far: 1709 miles and 28 hours of driving**

**TAYLOR:** After Chicago we took a detour to a little town which is just thirty miles from the geographical centre of the United States – Concordia, Kansas. This town is where I spent most of my holidays as a child, and it's where my grandparents still live. I figured this would be as good a place as any to give Charissa the full flavour of Middle America. We spent two nostalgia-filled days with my father's parents, with plenty of home-cooked meals and quality family time, and we visited my aunt's farm where we fed the calves, then we went and shot some pistols, rifles and shotguns out on the property. It all went too fast.



rizza boo



taylor



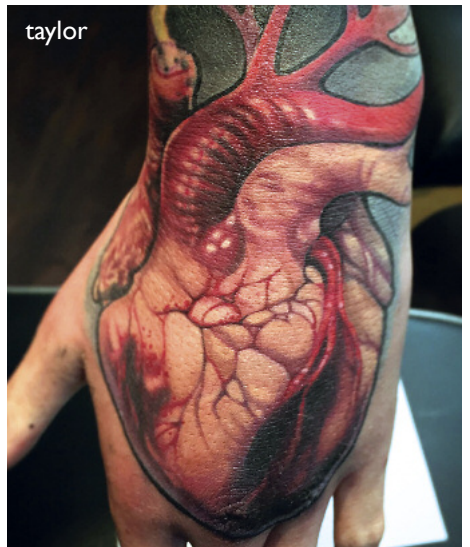
taylor



rizza boo



taylor





**RIZZA:** The trip so far had been so completely non-stop it was great to have a couple of more relaxed days. Taylor's family were very hospitable. The landscape there was all very flat – just fields on fields – and we started to see some wildlife. Sadly we saw one young deer a little too up close and personal when it decided to dart in front of the car after its mother. Luckily we weren't going fast, so we nudged it rather than hitting it. The little guy just looked a little dazed, shook itself off and trotted away seemingly unhurt. The car was also fine!

## DENVER

**On the road so far: 2156 miles and 34.5 hours of driving**

**TAYLOR:** Driving from Concordia to Denver is a six and a half hour straight shot through

the endless agricultural fields of the Midwest. The drive was broken up by minor stops for food and gas until we reached the wind farms along the border of Kansas and Colorado. Thousands and thousands of windmills, hundreds of feet tall, sprawled on either side of the highway as far as we could see for about an hour of the drive. Then the terrain got rockier, and eventually we arrived in Denver. We stayed with my good friend Kyle, and as a thank you to him Charissa and I bought us all tickets to a concert that night at arguably one of the best venues in the world: the Red Rocks Amphitheatre. The stage and seating are positioned between two giant red rocks that jut up on either side, all overlooking the city of Denver in the background. The band Lotus were headlining, and they put on a spectacular show – and after our six and a half hour drive we were ready for sleep at the end of the

evening! The next day was Sunday and we went to Kyle's sister's house where we watched football with their whole family, all day, and enjoyed a much-needed rest before starting our guest spot at Old Larimer Street Tattoo.

**RIZZA:** I really enjoyed the time we spent in Denver. As you approach the city you start seeing these amazing views. It's surrounded by mountains and those awesome red rocks. Old Larimer Street is a large studio, with full-time artists catering to all styles and offering both custom and walk-in tattoos. Everyone here made us feel very welcome. I again tattooed someone who worked at the studio – Taylor, the receptionist and piercer. We did a portrait of her gorgeous pup Drexl. I love doing animal portraits. You can really see how much it means to people when you do tattoos of their furry friends. I'm glad that it's something I can do.

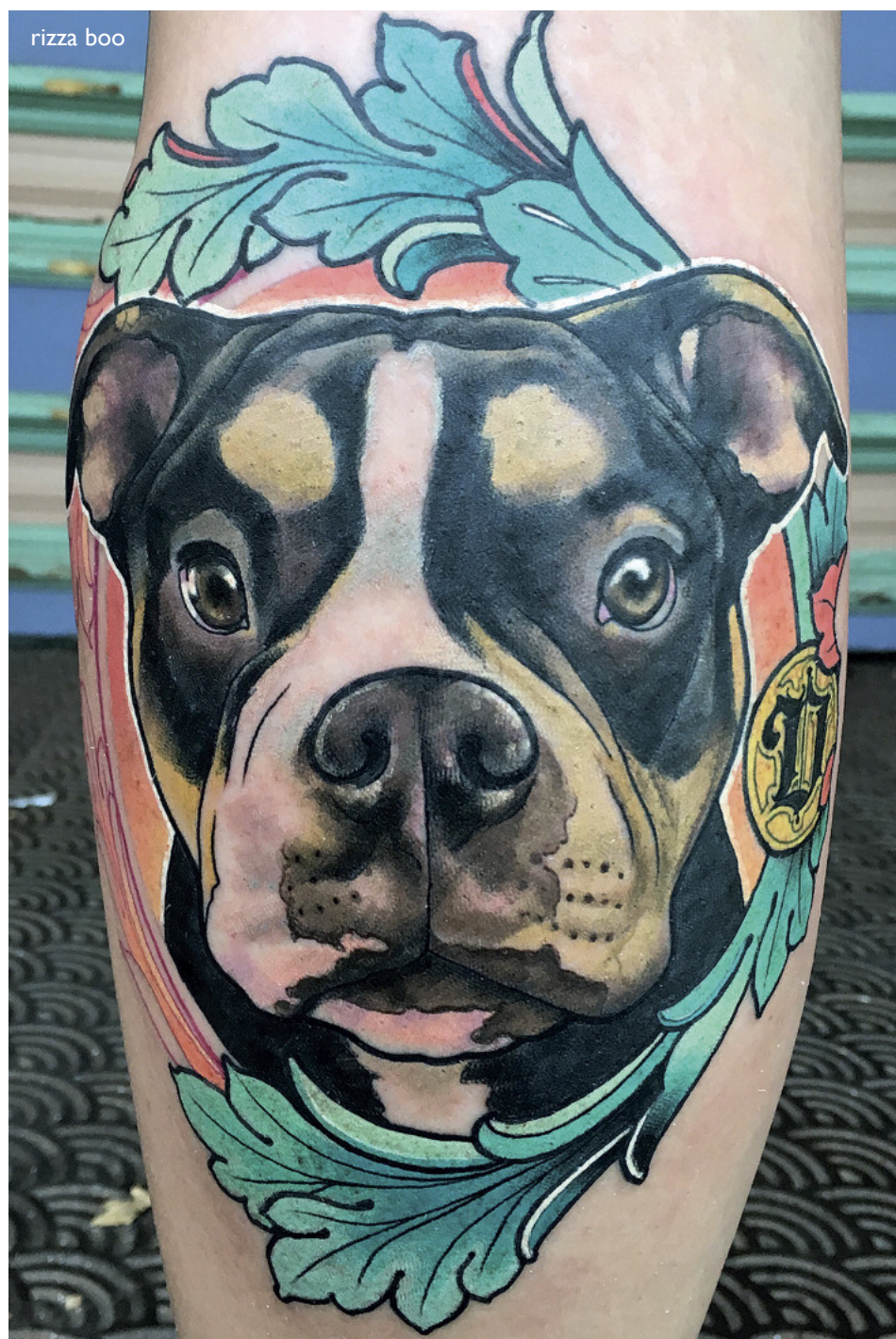
**TAYLOR:** I'd visited Old Larimer Street Tattoo earlier in the year and I had two return clients to work on this time – both of whom were getting their hands tattooed. One was getting a Pokemon, and the other was getting a human heart (the final session of his sleeve). After our final day tattooing we decided to tick off another activity on our American list by going to a professional baseball game. The Colorado Rockies were playing that night and we thought it would be the perfect way to wind down after another successful guest spot – especially as Charissa had never been to a game before. Even though the Rockies lost we were able to enjoy a few beers and the company of friends.

**RIZZA:** It was my first baseball game, so obviously I didn't understand a thing – but there were M&Ms, beer, and gourmet hotdog action so I was happy. The concert at Red Rocks was completely epic. What an amazing venue. Music outside is special anyway, but being sat in an amphitheatre surrounded by the red rocks was great! You could really feel a buzz in the air. Good vibes. This may also have had something to do with the legal status of marijuana in Colorado...

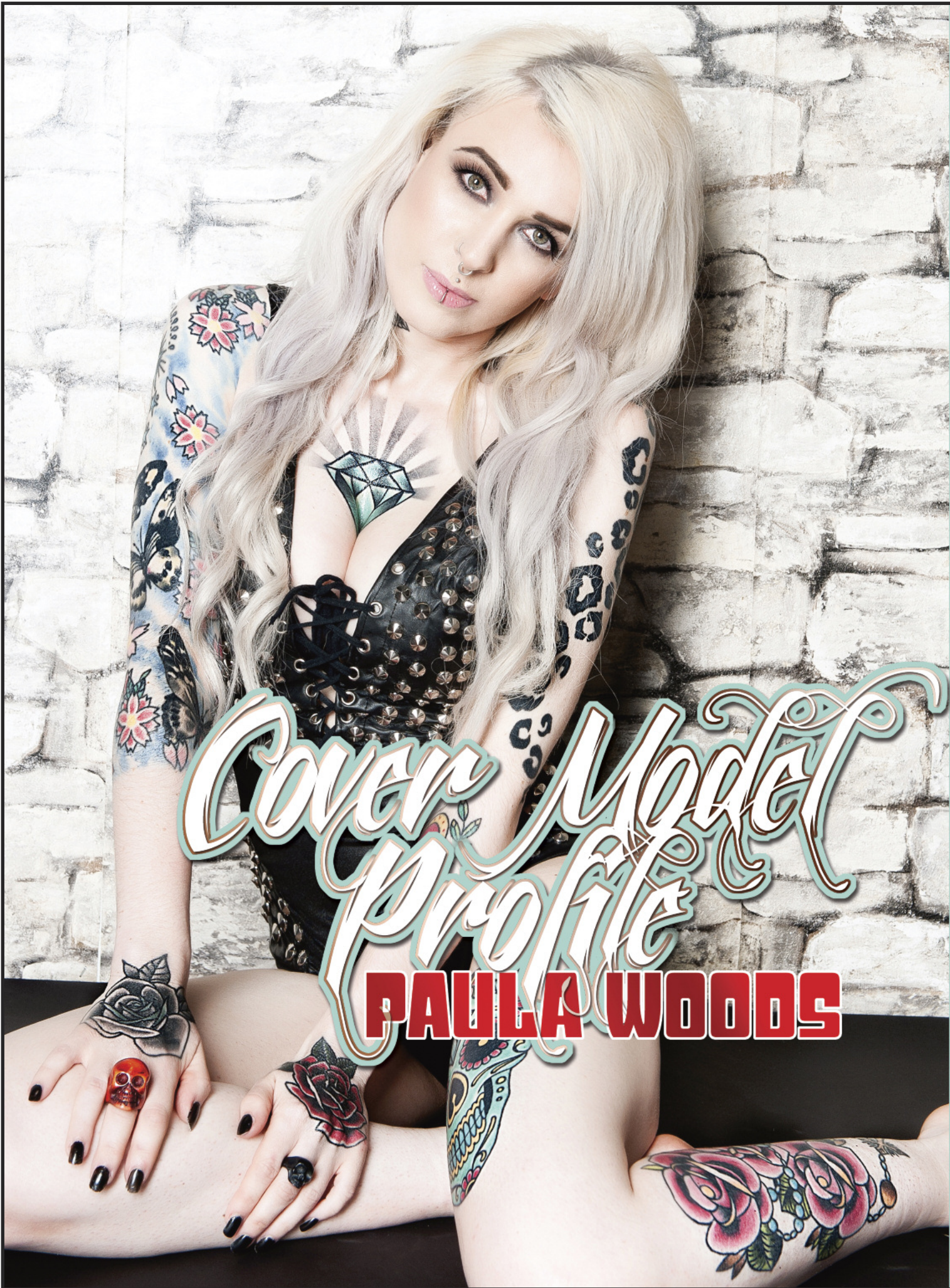
**TAYLOR:** By this point in the trip we'd done five guest spots in two and a half weeks, so we decided to take a break from work and visit a few national parks, unwind and do some hiking. You can read about our continuing adventures in the next instalment!

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Cover Model  
Profile  
**PAULA WOODS**





## **This month's cover model is Paula Woods, who loves supporting her local dog rescue charity and enjoys a walk on Nottingham's wild side...**



### **First of all, tell us about the Wildside Girls.**

Nottingham's Wildside bills itself as the UK's premier sleaze-glam-hair-metal club night. I went there years ago and thought to myself it would look great to have dancing girls like on the Mötley Crüe 'Girls Girls Girls' video. So I suggested it to Al Wildside, the DJ, and he loved the idea. The Wildside Girls started in 2007 and we are still going strong for the best rock night in the city! We have guest dancers joining us on the first Saturday of every month, and we're also planning to do a charity calendar in 2018 for Mucky Paws Dog Rescue (where I used to work).

### **Tell us about your other creative activities.**

I'm a dancer, wardrobe assistant and make-up artist. I also enjoy putting on charity events. On 29th April at The Salutation in Nottingham we're doing an all-day metal gig/club night to raise money for Mucky Paws Dog Rescue (with six great bands, a DJ, dancing girls, a special guest and amazing prizes to be won!)

### **What inspires you to get tattooed?**

I love art and music. That's what makes me who I am, and it's what inspires my tattoos. I knew from a young age I would be a heavily tattooed lady.

### **What is your first tattoo memory?**

I've had an interest in tattoos for as long as I can remember. As soon as I turned 18, I headed into Liverpool to get my first ink, which was a tribal sun on my left shoulder. Years later, as I got into bigger and better pieces, I got it covered up at Into You in London.

### **Any plans for more ink?**

Yes. I plan two new large pieces on my right leg, where I have no work yet, keeping the style old school and with lots of colour.

### **What do you look for in a tattooist?**

I go to one guy now – Lee at Bodycraft in Nottingham. I love his style, so delicate and colourful. He's quick and he totally gets my style. We work well together and chat away whilst I'm getting inked. However, I do like to keep an eye out on the scene and I'm seeing a lot of fantastic work coming from the Monster Shop in Mansfield, Nottingham.

### **Your cover shot was actually taken while you were in America. Can you tell us about your trip?**

Yes, I was in Los Angeles for three weeks, enjoying the coast in the beautiful sunshine. I stayed on the Strip, went to all the rock 'n' roll tourist spots, and met some amazing people. We did the photoshoot near Disneyland.

### **What advice would you give to aspiring models?**

Do as many photoshoots as possible and get as many contacts as you can, especially photographers and make-up artists. And you need to want more than a 9 to 5 job!

### **What are your goals?**

To keep on modelling, dancing, getting tattoos and enjoying life to the max.

### **How do we connect with you?**

[www.facebook.com/paulawoodsmodel/](http://www.facebook.com/paulawoodsmodel/)

Photo by Jenna Krackzek • Words by Perry



# SCOTT KNIGHT

## BROKEN BISCUIT REPAIR SHOP

**S**omewhere in Norfolk there's an ordinary farm... with an extraordinary little workshop in one of its outbuildings. Scott Knight's Broken Biscuit Repair Shop is a room full of curiosities – taxidermy, flowers, ancient driftwood, mammoth's teeth, stones and crystals – and it's here, amongst this myriad of objects, that Scott creates the intricate hand-carved skulls for which has become so well known. Scott greets us and shows us around, cups of tea in hand. He shares a phenomenal amount of information with us, and over the course of a delightful afternoon we learn an incredible amount about bones, carving techniques, and Scott's approach to making his exquisite pieces of art.



"I was really young when I first started carving," Scott begins. "I was allowed to have a penknife when I was a kid, just six or seven years old. My dad was really handy with a knife and he always insisted they should be sharp, because it's the blunt ones that cut you if you push too hard. He taught me early on how to use a knife properly, and I started making walking sticks – peeling off the bark and carving a figure on the top. I also made chess sets and did whittling. Years later, I started experimenting with different techniques and exploring different materials. I made my own tools, because I could make them exactly how I wanted them, and that was how I got into making knives and selling them. But a lot of work





goes into making a knife, and it wasn't viable as a business because of the difficulties involved in sending them abroad. People certainly wanted to buy them, but posting them out of the country was always a gamble because even though they weren't bought or sold as weapons, they would often be confiscated by customs."

Some of Scott's earliest creative influences came from his grandfather, a museum curator, and it was memories of the time spent with him that also inspired the strangely appealing name of his workshop. "When we were kids, granddad used to come and have tea and biscuits with us. We'd never eat the broken biscuits in the tin, but he would, and he used to line them all up on the table and put them back together again before dipping them into his tea and eating them. That stuck with me - hence the name Broken Biscuit Repair Shop. I learned a lot from my granddad. He used to take me around museums when I was a kid. He started me looking at the past, and the future, and all sorts of possibilities, so it's a bit of a nod to him. There were a lot of pieces in the museum which I was always interested in - especially the Maori artefacts and the stone tools, which fascinated me. Later, of course, that widened out with the internet."





Social media and the internet have allowed Scott to hone his skills and learn from others, and he's in touch with a great network of friends and fellow artists in many different countries. "I've learned so much and found so much inspiration through people on social media. I started with wood, then went into bone and shell, then stone. I got in touch with Maori and Inuit people. I've built a network of connections all over the world, and from that I've been able to trade my work for materials such as jade from New Zealand and America, or pieces of woolly mammoth ivory, which is obtained naturally in Siberia and Alaska as the ice melts. I'm very lucky to have had this support. One fellow even sent me the jade itself, some tools, and a hand-written note entitled 'An Idiot's Guide to Jade Carving' - which is actually what got me started on that. Some people are a little guarded and don't want to share their information because of traditions going back generations in cultures that I don't belong to. That's fair enough. I've been accused of making a quick buck out of their art. That's why I moved away from traditional pieces into carving skulls. Nobody can argue with those!"



Scott has now been carving skulls for about six years. I asked him what was so appealing about this particular form. "I think a skull is the most honest representation of anybody. It's a face that can't lie. You can't change it with make-up. Nobody ever sees it, unless things go horribly wrong! It's never revealed, but it's the true person. It's the box that holds the soul; when the body's finished living, that's the last bit that remains. That's how I see it. It's that constant reminder of our own fragility and mortality. Whoever we are, however big we are, whatever we wear or own or how much money we have, it doesn't mean anything, because we're all the same at the end of the day. Whatever is stuck to the outside or is going on in the inside doesn't matter. We're all the same frame."







"The other thing that appeals to me," Scott continues, is the fragility of the skull. A lot of carvers fall short on the point that the skull is a three-dimensional object with tunnels, archways, internal structures... It's not just a ball with dents in it. There's textures everywhere you look. It's all form and function; everything does something. To capture that in a carving is a really nice challenge, I find – to get in as many of those little details as I can, no matter what size of skull I'm working on, whether it's 6mm or a larger one. I like to get all the details, like the gaps in the teeth, and the 'gadgets bits' that allow it to work, like attaching moving jaws with jewellers' wire. The first one I did, I named Sarah. There's also a Rachel and a Samantha too. Since I've been carving skulls, it's changed the way I look at people. I'm almost mentally

undressing them, thinking 'Cor, you've got a lovely jawline!' In the past, in a room full of people, I might have been looking at the girl in the red dress... but now I'm looking at the fat bloke with the broad brows!"

Scott uses a wide range of materials for his carving – organic, inorganic and man-made, anything from crystals to avocado stones to pool balls – and we're surrounded by a vast array of fascinating objects. When I ask Scott if he has difficulty throwing anything away, he gestures around the studio and just laughs! Some of his materials he finds whilst working on the farm, others he is given as a gift or as part of a trade. He also works on specially commissioned pieces.

"I'll often repair stuff or carve from things that people have sent me," he tells me. "That's trickier, because I'm working on something that belongs to someone and probably has a history – and if it goes wrong, there's no turning back! For instance a lot of people send me pool balls which belonged to a family member. That's a lot of pressure, but I'll do it. I have to be in the right frame of mind; I don't want to rush anything. Sometimes I'm sent ivory, but I always make sure it's been sourced responsibly – in other words, fossilised. I don't want to perpetuate the demand for killing animals for it."



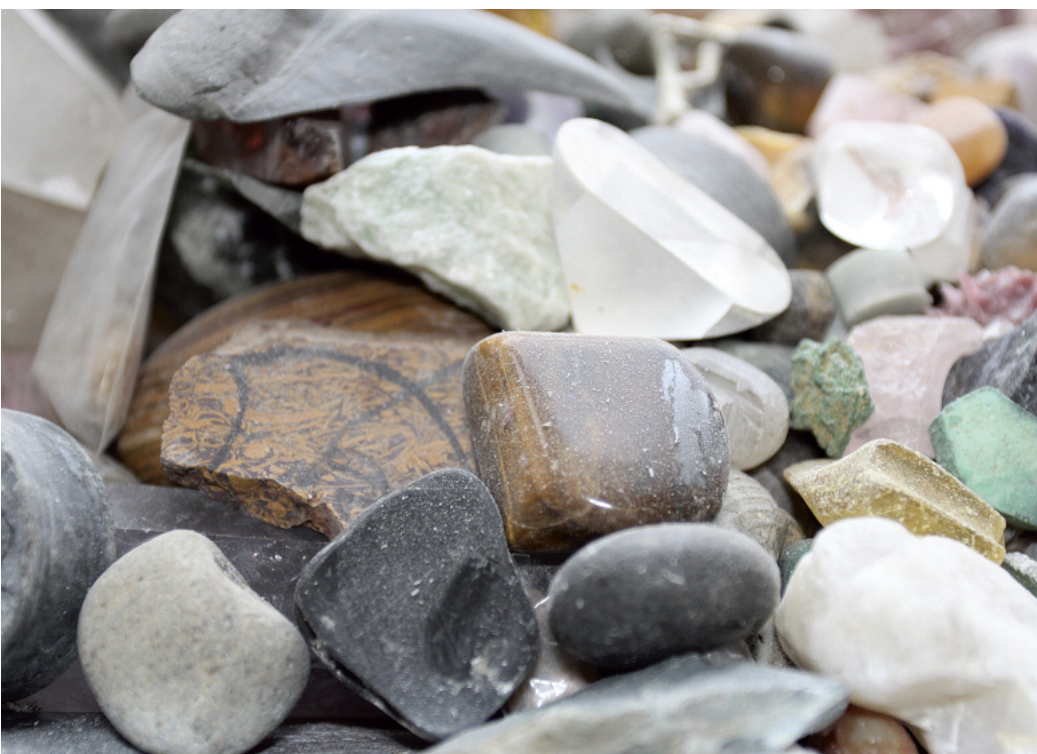




The pool balls have now become something of a trademark for Scott, and I was intrigued to know how he first came up with the idea of using them. "My wife Terri saw a 13-ball that someone was wearing as a pendant and said she'd love something like it. The idea had never crossed my mind as I used to think they were made from ceramic, but they're actually a polymer resin. So I bought a set, hacksawed them in half, and realised how easy they were to cut. And being round, they lean themselves to becoming skulls. I started carving the 8-ball and it was absolutely shoddy, so I put it in my 'box of shame' [laughs] but Terri found it and asked about it. She thought it was really cool and encouraged me to finish it, so I sat it on my desk for a couple of days, then picked it up and refined it. Once it was polished it looked much better. Straight away people were asking for them. The more I did, the easier they became to do as I got more practice in. And it took off from there, really. I do as many as I can, because there's always a demand for them."

Scott has to balance his time carefully between his work, job and family. "It can be tricky at times," he admits. "When my kids were little, it wasn't an option to have sharp tools around, or objects they could choke on, so it was all shelved away for a few years. I still did a bit, but not as much. Now the kids are teenagers, they're not gonna choke on anything unless they do something really stupid! [laughs] It's a big part of life again for me now, which is good."

"I've usually got several pieces on the go," Scott continues. "There are always people waiting with their ideas, and obviously it gets very busy around Christmas, but I don't let that dictate what I do too much, because I don't want to put pressure on myself. Pressure takes the joy out of it. I usually come to the workshop first thing in the morning, before I go to work on the farm, for about an hour. The tiny skulls made of woolly mammoth tusk are ideal, because they take less than an hour to do. I can then leave with a clearer mind. And if I've managed to make something in the morning, upload a picture of it and sell it by lunchtime then that's even better!"



"Sometimes, if I'm working on something small, I might take it to work with me, plus a few tools, so that if I get held up – waiting for a lorry or stuck in a field somewhere and I'm having to wait for a winch or something – I can sit and do some carving there to pass the time. If it's a big project, I have to fit the hours in whenever I can. The most recent crystal skull I did, I spent seven days carving it and three days polishing it. I was just locked in here, in the workshop, getting it done, because once I'd got it into my head that was what I was going to do I just couldn't relax until I'd finished it. It was one of those ideas that just drives you mad unless you get it out of your system – and that can be a problem. I have to have a balance, or else something will suffer."

Scott is hands-on from the start of each piece, through to its final execution. He begins by making a quick sketch on the material with pen, then mills it roughly





dozen, but they'd all be identical – and why would I want to do that? The last crystal skull I carved sold for around £700, but of course if you look online you can see mass-produced crystal skulls for as little as 99p. I can't sell them for any less; it wouldn't be financially viable. People do appreciate that I've sat and hand-made my work – and that's the beauty of social media, because I can show the whole process step-by-step. Other people are carving pool balls too, and producing similar things to me, and

into shape. From there, he works on the details. Once the carving is finished, he polishes and cleans the skull. The results are breathtaking. What's so appealing about Scott's work is that although the subject matter is the same for each piece, each skull is unique, whether intentionally or not.

"When I look at the work I've done in the past, I can see how the pieces have evolved and become more detailed. I'm often asked if I get bored of doing skulls, but each one is different. I still spend a lot of time in museums looking at skulls. Each one I meet offers me a different feature; I'll see something different in each one that I can take inspiration from."

"I'm not interested in complete perfection in any way," Scott continues. "I could get a 3D printer and do 8-ball skulls by the





it's a constant battle from my point of view to keep moving forward. I've got to get better and better and outrun the others. Some of their prices are similar to mine, which is OK, but there are companies in the Far East charging minimal prices that I just can't compete with – but what they're producing is far less detailed, and if that's what someone is happy with, then fair enough."

It's apparent that for Scott, this is a true passion. It's not about making money. The Broken Biscuit Repair Shop is quiet and peaceful, and the whole process is very tactile. Scott enjoys his work, and with all the many hours he has spent carving he has come to the realisation that he can now 'think' through his hands rather than relying on his eyes or brain to command the process.

"I'm an artist. It's not just about making and selling. What interests me is the challenge and the quiet space in your own mind. It's a place I can go where nobody else can reach me. I'm in there for as long as I want to be, and as deep



as I want to go. It's like meditation in a way. The old boy who wrote me those notes about jade carving said it perfectly: you switch your mind off and let your heart drive for a while. Just let your hands do it, and see what shapes come to you. You never know what you're gonna find when you open a stone, or what it's gonna do. There's a lot of freedom in that mindset where you're so relaxed you're not thinking about what you're doing so you get a great result out of it. That's a really nice place to be."

"But it's taken a while to get there," Scott continues. "Some days I struggle to reach that point, whereas on other days I can reach it easily. If that piece is really strong and it's communicating with you before you start, you're on to a winner because there's that connection with your material. The pool balls are a different matter, because they're all homogeneous; but with a rock, for instance, if I pick it up, that one will tell me something completely different to another one. I can't force them into shape. [Scott's holding a rock as he talks.] I'd love this to be a skull, but there's no guarantee that there's a skull in there. Sometimes I'll have stones here for ages, because I don't hear anything from them. Until they show themselves – and tell me what they can be – they'll remain as they are. But some of them, straight away, as soon as I pick them up, I know what they're going to be. It's the same with crystals. The last one I carved was in here for over a year. Every day I picked



it up, but I just couldn't see a way in. I couldn't see how to get the skull I wanted. I was sure it was in there, but I wasn't confident enough to start it. Then one day I was out at work on the Fens, a long way from the stone, and I suddenly knew how to do it. As soon as I got home I picked up my pen, lined the skull out, and there it was!"

Scott sells and showcases his work entirely on social media. To see more of his processes, or to make an enquiry, head to:

**Instagram:**  
[@skotbiscuit](https://www.instagram.com/skotbiscuit)

**Facebook:**  
[www.facebook.com/The-Broken-Biscuit-Repair-Shop-289732504373474/](https://www.facebook.com/The-Broken-Biscuit-Repair-Shop-289732504373474/)





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# GALLERY

anrijs straume, bold as brass



adam pekr, inkversion tattoo

emil, cross the line tattoo studio



nickola boskovic  
estcado tattoo (holland)







sway, sacred electric



aber, moth and rose (greece)



uncl paul knows, ironbrush tattoo (greece)



peter lagergren,  
malmö classic (sweden)





doug fawkes, flaming gun



christopher kenyon, true 'til death



thomas bates, five keys



ballsy, factotum



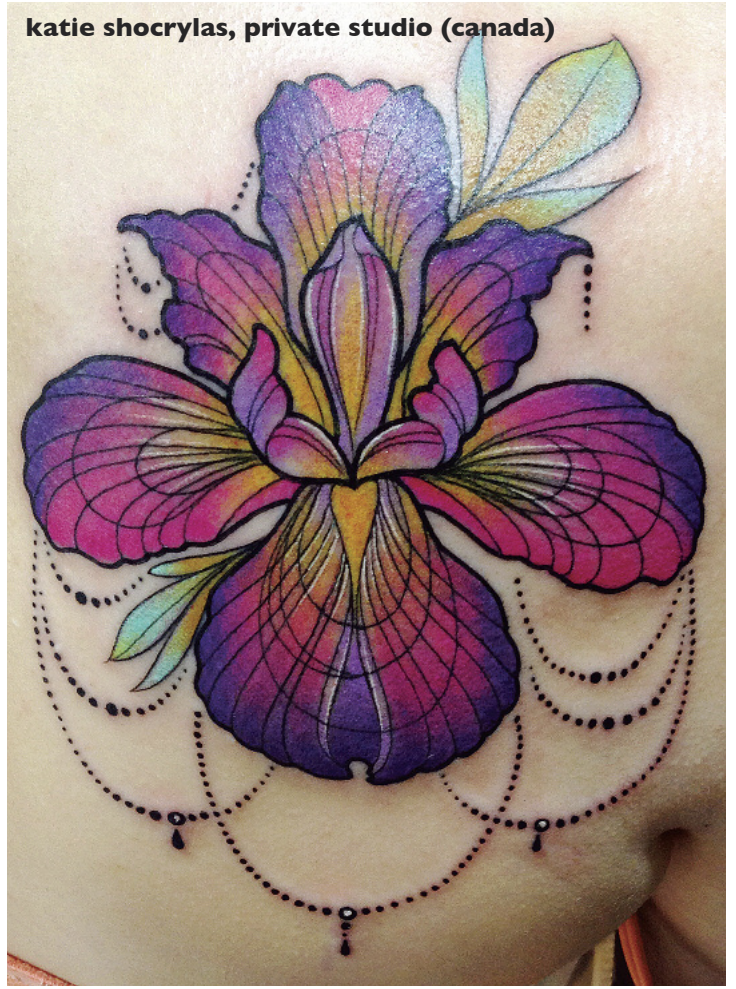
daryl watson, rock n roll



jody dawber, jayne doe



katie shocrylas, private studio (canada)



chris morris,  
frontier tattoo parlour



kurt marlow, gung ho!





**gaston tonus,  
gax tattoo (germany)**



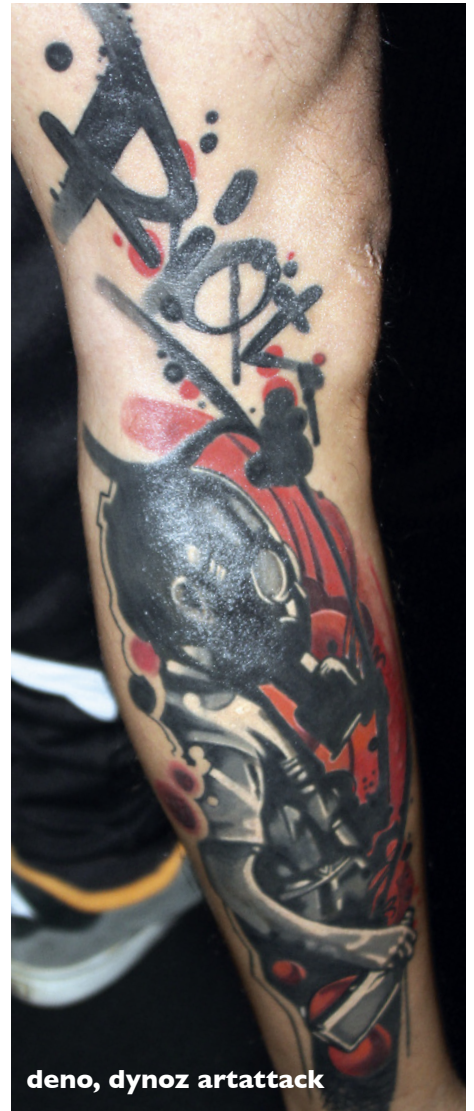
**ilya samõwar,  
private studio  
(estonia)**



**matteo cascetti (italy)**



**dimitris chatzis,  
nico tattoo crew (greece)**



**deno, dynoz artattack**





**sam rivers, curiosities**

sam rivers  
curiosities tattoos



**chloe jane,  
tanuki tattoo**



**guillaume smash,  
l'imaginarium**



**alan hindes, tatt house**



**red, tattoo rooms**





shige, yellow blaze (japan)



lewis parkin,  
northside tattoo



ozzy ex silesia



alix ge,  
tin tin tatouages  
(france)



nick, luv n roll





# TATTOO:

## British Tattoo Art Revealed

at the NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM CORNWALL



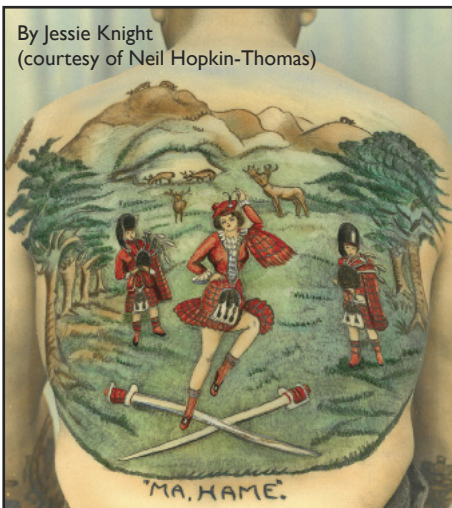
Words by Alice Snape  
Pictures courtesy of NMMC



By Sway  
(100 Hands Project)

**Next month, a new and exciting exhibition opens at the National Maritime Museum Cornwall (NMMC) in Falmouth. It's the largest gathering of tattoo-related objects and artworks ever assembled in the UK and it features many items from private collections that are not normally on public display. The exhibition also includes contemporary art commissions, plus the '100 Hands Project' – one hundred silicone arms that have been tattooed by one hundred leading tattooists to provide a snapshot of present day tattoo art. All in all, a unique and magical journey through our amazing tattoo heritage.**

There may be a lot more inked skin on show nowadays (it's estimated that one in five of the total UK population is tattooed, rising to one in three among the younger generation) but contrary to what some journalists seem to want us to think, the popularity of tattooing is by no means a new phenomenon. Even in Victorian times, newspaper articles were commenting that ink was no longer the preserve of sailors, and nearly a hundred years ago a feature in *Vanity Fair* informed its readers that "Tattooing has passed from the savage to the sailor; from the sailor to the landsman. It has since percolated through the entire social stratum; tattooing has received its credentials, and may now be found beneath many a tailored shirt." This new exhibition at the NMMC showcases tattooing's rich maritime heritage – we're on the Cornish coast in Falmouth after all! – but also demonstrates that across the centuries people from all sections of society ("from ruffians to royalty, sailors to socialites, pilgrims to punks") have been tattooed.



By Jessie Knight  
(courtesy of Neil Hopkin-Thomas)

Western tattooing has a rich and diverse history, and no previous exhibition has featured such a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of its story. "What's been missing is this real big-picture, trans-historical survey, which joins up the dots in chronological order from the 17th century to the present day," says exhibition curator Dr Matt Lodder, lecturer in Contemporary Art History and Director of American Studies at the University of Essex (who also contributes articles to *Total Tattoo Magazine* now and then). "When it's laid out as a continuous story, the whole sense of tattooing's place in society changes: it's not some new fad, but a constant, important presence in British cultural life, part of the fabric of how our country has expressed itself and understood itself for centuries."





Sinbad machine  
courtesy of Willy Robinson

Showcasing the work of big name tattoo artists from the legendary George Burchett to modern-day masters Alex Binnie and Lal Hardy and beyond, this exhibition also reveals hidden histories such as the story of Britain's first female tattoo artist, Jessie Knight, who worked from the 1920s until she retired in 1963. Among the items on display is a hand-painted banner used by Jessie's tattooist father to advertise his trade, and which later became one of Jessie's most prized possessions.

Much of the flash and ephemera on show has been kindly lent by private collectors, the majority of whom are tattoo artists. It's the kind of material you don't usually find in museum collections, and it's rarely on display to the public. "It's been a labour of love earning the trust of the people who own and care for this magical material," Matt Lodder told me, "and it's a real privilege to be able to share their stories more widely. Because tattoo-related material has never really been something that museums have collected, many of the stories of tattooing's past are left untold."



Rare examples of early flash courtesy of Neil Hopkin-Thomas



Sailor Jerry machine  
courtesy of Willy Robinson



By Freddie Albrighton  
(100 Hands Project)

Lal Hardy has lent some of his amazing personal collection of tattoo memorabilia to the exhibition. "Many years ago I tried unsuccessfully to get the British Museum and the now sadly defunct Museum of Mankind to hold exhibitions like this," says Lal, who feels this is a timely and valuable event. "It's so important that we record and document the history of tattooing as it is one of the most diverse and fascinating practices of the human race." Alex Binnie, owner of London's iconic Into You (which closed its doors for the final time last Autumn), has also loaned some special objects, including a painting entitled 'Tattoo Electric Expert' by Henk Schiffmacher, and Into You's shop sign. They wouldn't be on display here if the shop was still open, of course. "It's recent history, if you will," says Alex. He is also curating a personal selection of original non-tattoo art by British-born tattooists - including Duncan X and Curly, who both worked at Into You. "Curly, who in many ways doesn't consider himself an 'artist', has thrown himself into the idea and is

working on his piece as we speak," says Alex. "I think he'll come with something really worth seeing."

'Tattoo: British Tattoo Art Revealed' also includes what the exhibition organisers have described as a "sculptural map" of the current UK tattoo scene, an innovative installation that responds to the uniquely three-dimensional nature of tattoo art. The '100 Hands Project' (search #100hands on Instagram), which it has been my privilege to curate, features one hundred silicone arms tattooed with high quality original artwork by one hundred of the UK's most talented contemporary tattooists. "The historical section of the exhibition ends in the mid 1990s," Matt Lodder explains. "The '100 Hands Project' shows how all those rich and intertwined histories have blossomed into the kaleidoscopic industry that exists today."

There's a wide cross-section of tattoo genres on show, representing the kind of work that is popular right now - from black and grey and geometric to neo-traditional and colour realism. Contributing artists include Sway and Jemma Jones (Sacred Electric), Freddie Albrighton (Immortal Ink), Lewis Parkin (Northside Tattooz), Otto D'Ambra (The White Elephant), Touka Voodoo (Divine Canvas), Claudia de Sabe (Seven Doors) and David Corden, to name just a handful.

"For my submission I simply tattooed something that I would love to tattoo for a customer in real life," Claudia de Sabe told me. And the reason she wanted to be part of the project? "There are still a lot of misconceptions about tattooing. An exhibition like this can help establish a secure space for this art/craft within the artistic community. Ten years ago, something like this would maybe have been on display at a tattoo convention



By Hanumantra  
(100 Hands Project)

for three days, but not at a museum, or for this length of time. It's incredible." And, explaining how he came up with the idea for his piece, Otto D'Ambra told me, "Modern society has a superficial view of tattooing. Tattoos are fashion. They are an essential part of a trend these days. But there is certainly much more than that behind people's desire to get tattooed. In my work, I wanted to highlight the meaning and purpose of tattooing. Putting aside aesthetic considerations, what is it that drives an individual to mark themselves?"

Rare examples of early flash courtesy of Neil Hopkin-Thomas





# TATTOO



## BRITISH TATTOO ART REVEALED

17 MARCH 2017 —  
7 JANUARY 2018



Three major contemporary art commissions are also on display in the exhibition galleries at the NMMC – another wonderful way of bringing tattooing to life inside the museum. Three tattoo artists, working in very different genres, have created designs on hyper-realistic body sculptures, with the aim of setting up an aesthetic dialogue with the surrounding displays. In response to the story of Captain Cook's voyages to the Pacific, Tihoti Faara Barff's work celebrates the modern revival of Tahitian tattooing; Matt Houston's commission is a heroic celebration of sailors' tattoos; and Aimée Cornwell uses her signature style to illustrate how tattooing is breaking down artistic boundaries.



A pair of tattooed eyes on preserved human skin.  
Photograph by Gemma Angel. Courtesy of the Science Museum, London.

"Tattooing is a magical, romantic, exciting and often-misunderstood artform," says Matt Lodder, "and we hope that our exhibition will communicate some of that magic to visitors." Overall, there are more than four hundred artworks, photographs and historical artefacts on display, and the NMMC has collaborated with organisations such as the Science Museum, Museum of London, Pitt Rivers Museum, Royal Museums Greenwich, British Library, Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology (University of Cambridge), the Palace of Westminster, Royal Cornwall Museum, Cornwall Records Office, and the National Archives.

Located on Falmouth's aptly named Discovery Quay, the NMMC is a vast and striking building, with fifteen galleries across five floors. 'Tattoo: British Tattoo Art Revealed' will take you on a truly extraordinary journey through history, and we highly recommend making a trip to this lovely Cornish seaside town to experience the exhibition.

**'Tattoo: British Tattoo Art Revealed'**  
runs from 17th March 2017 to 7th January 2018

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**Falmouth**  
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Museum opening times:  
Every day from 10am to 5pm, except Christmas Day and Boxing Day



Harriet-Heath



Tooka Voodoo



# du Mondial Tatouage

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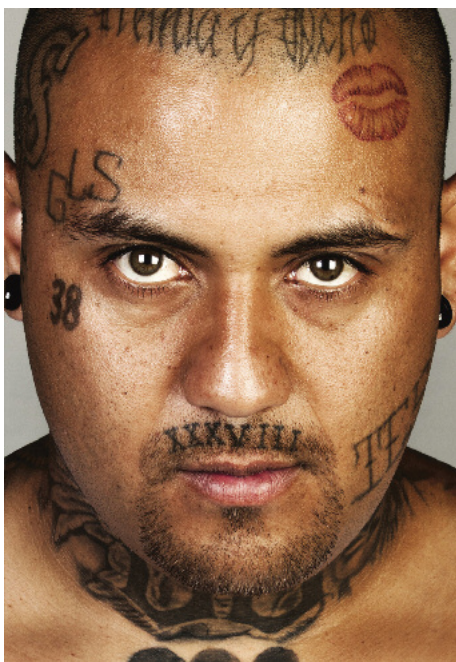
Pictures by Steven Burton  
Words by Lizzy Guy

# skin deep

**When a person chooses to get tattooed, they must be fully aware that they are not only marking their body permanently but also projecting an image of themselves to others. The latter, on the whole, may be innocent enough; but some tattoos, and some tattoo designs, have negative connotations. In these instances, what happens if you have been drawn into a negative way of life, with a negative projection to the world around you? And how does this affect you when you are trying to turn your life around? Steven Burton is a British-born photographer who lives and works in America. His new book and ongoing project, Skin Deep, examines the process of digitally removing tattoos from portraits of gang members, enabling them to see how the removal of their gang tattoos would change their appearance and, potentially, their future. The results are extraordinary.**







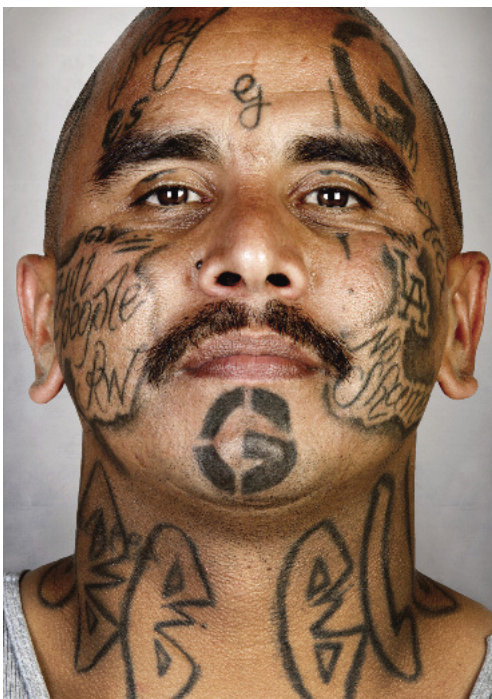
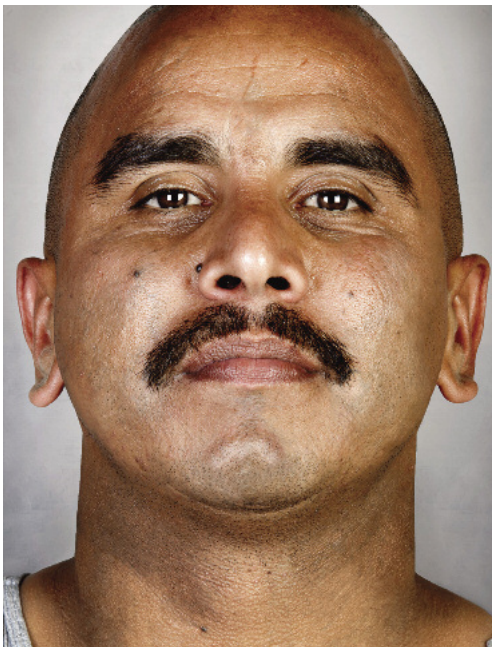
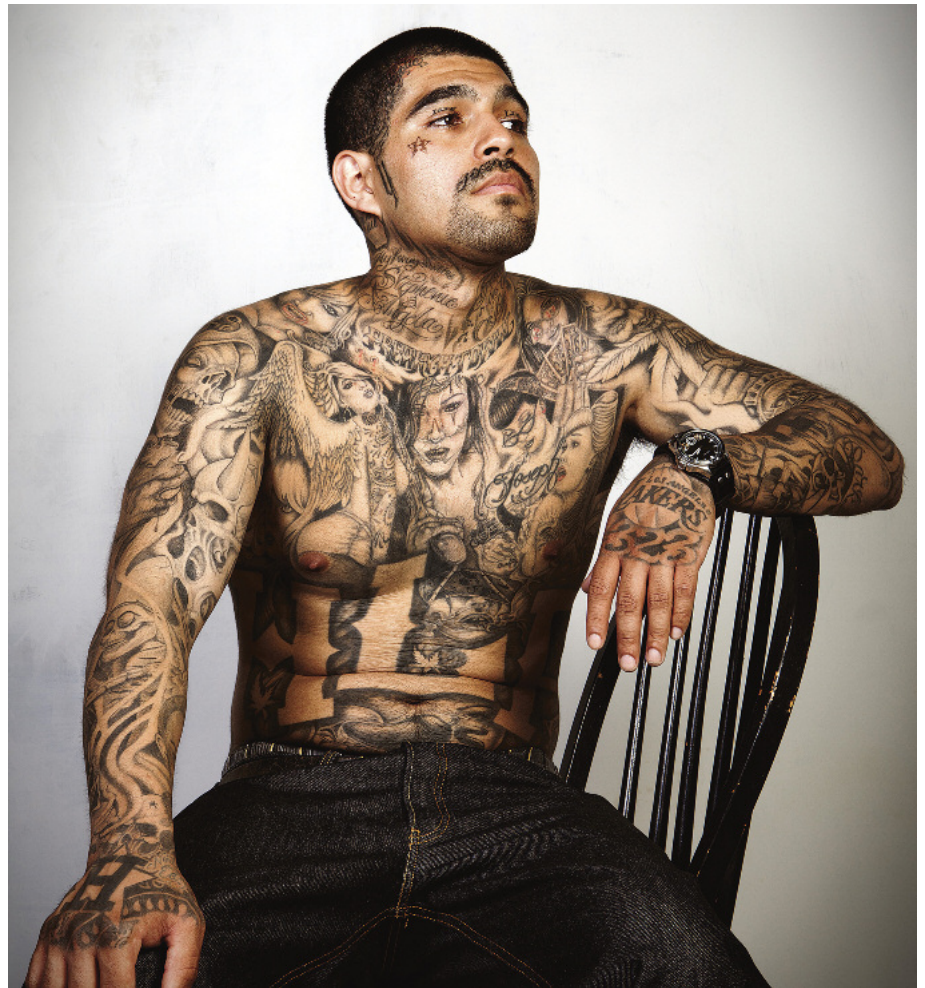
**What is your background as a photographer?**

I am a portrait and advertising photographer. I began to take photographs seriously after a trip to Tibet in 2000.

**What was the inspiration behind the 'Skin Deep' project?**

A friend of mine was working at Homeboy Industries in downtown Los Angeles, an organisation that helps gang members back into society. She took me to see the documentary 'G-Dog', which is about Father Greg Boyle, its founder. After watching the film, I was so inspired by Father Greg – and the homeboys/girls trying to change their lives against all the odds – that I knew I had to do something to help spread awareness of the incredible work they do there. It was when I learned that tattoo removal is such an important part of leaving a gang that the idea of doing it with Photoshop came to me.





### **How did you approach the project?**

The first thing I did was take pictures of tattooed gang members from the internet to test out the concept. I made a GIF image of the tattoos disappearing and re-appearing, put it on my phone and went to Homeboy Industries. I showed it to Fabian Debora, a drug counsellor and artist, and he loved it. I managed to convince four homeboys to allow me to photograph them, and after a week I returned to show them the images and interview them – not knowing what their reactions would be.

### **What was the response?**

One of the more heavily tattooed guys, Marcus, started laughing because he just didn't know what to say. He was sort of shocked by the image. The laughter was followed by a weighty silence, then his eyes teared up. It was then that I realised how deep this story could be. The most common reaction amongst the homeboys was wanting to show the images to their mothers. Honestly, each story broke my heart. But then they would describe how they were trying to turn their lives around, and the story turned from tragedy to one of perseverance. For some of them it's an ongoing battle. Their biggest fear is slipping back into gang life.

### **So you spoke with everyone about their 'before' and 'after' photographs?**

Yes, it was important that I showed the final Photoshopped image to the subject during our interview. Their reactions are everything. As a viewer it touches your heart because the moment is so real. It made all the hours in front of the computer worthwhile. It also helped to break the ice in our conversation. They revealed very personal (and sometimes shocking) details about the abuse, violence and drug addiction they had suffered for most of their lives. You cannot help but have empathy for their struggle when you read the interviews or watch the videos.

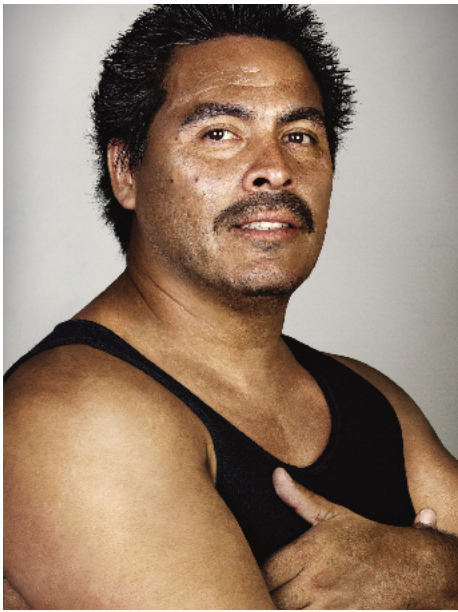
### **And where did the project go from there?**

Whenever I photographed a homeboy, I always asked them if they had friends who might be interested too. It took a while, but the word spread. I tried to find subjects who were heavily tattooed, especially on their face, to make more sense of the concept. There are so many photographers and videographers trying to make images of homeboys, but I think the uniqueness of my concept – and the fact that I was giving my subjects the chance to see themselves without tattoos (some for the first time in decades) – gave me an edge. I wasn't just taking portrait photographs; I was exploring the question of judgement and the challenges these people face every day. I was trying to humanise a group of people that are so quickly demonised by society.







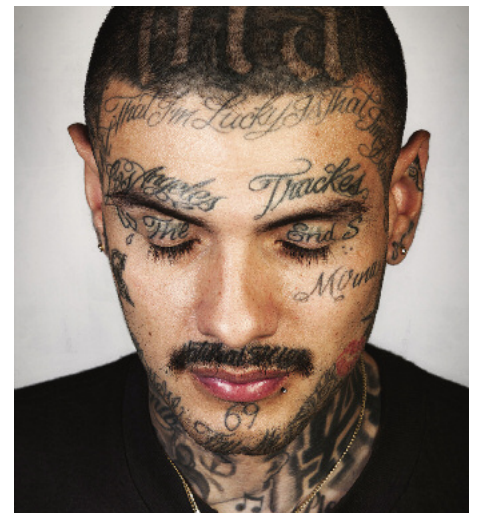
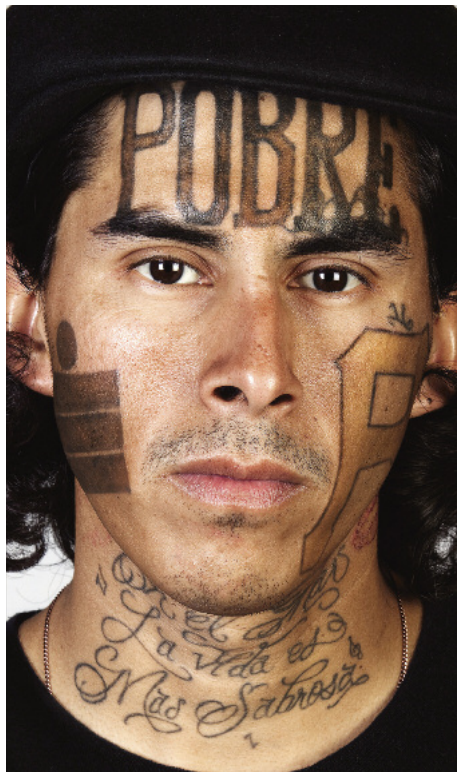
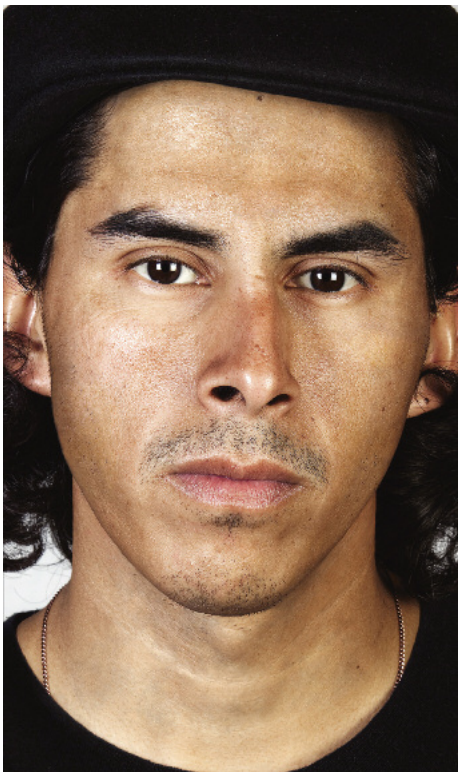
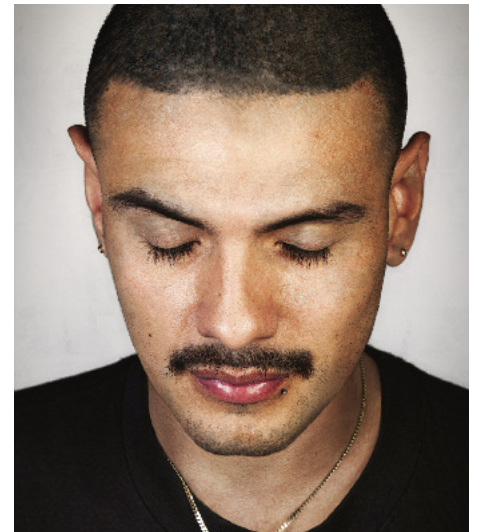


**Has the project affected how you feel about tattoos?**

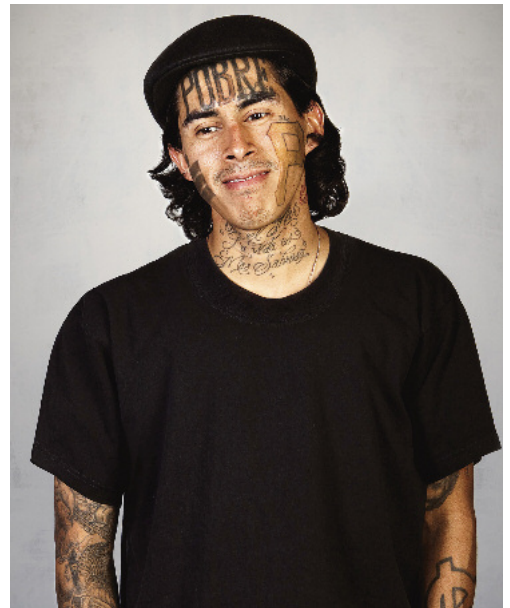
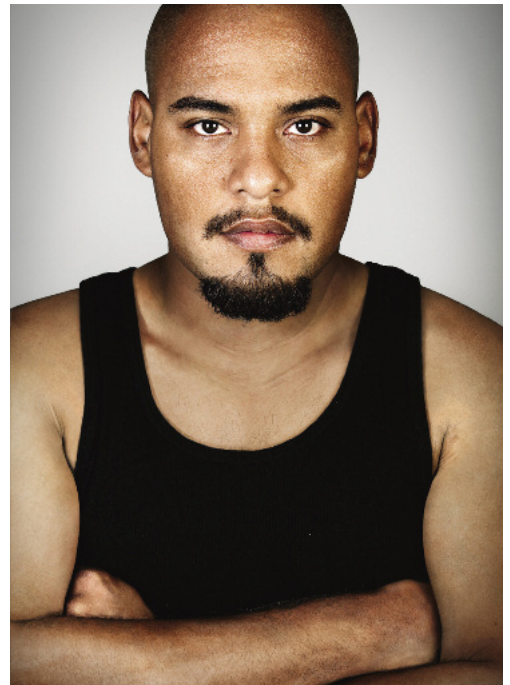
I like tattoos, even though I don't have any myself. I went to art school, so I appreciate good art. And my sister was a punk rocker with a tattoo on the side of her head and loads of friend covered in ink – so I grew up with it. I am also fascinated by the cultural aspects of tattooing. This project is about seeing beyond gang tattoos and the initial fear they create. I'm taking the tattoos away so that the viewer can be intrigued enough to hear the stories of the subjects. With education and understanding comes empathy, and from there the viewer hopefully sees the human being.

**What did you learn from the project?**

What I learned from this project is that the only difference between the subjects and myself is the situation and the opportunities we have been given in life. If I judge someone by their skin it's a reflection of my own ignorance. It was humbling, listening to the subjects' stories about their struggles – about the courage it takes to leave the gangs, about fighting drug addiction – and realising that everyone can make a choice about changing their life, whether or not they are a gang member. A common thread in the interviews was that the subjects wanted the circle of violence to end with them. They wanted to give their children a chance.







**What do you hope this book will achieve?**

I hope the photographs and interviews in 'Skin Deep' will catch the attention of everyone – gang members and the average reader alike – and will inspire empathy and understanding for the incredible challenges these people face in changing their lives and searching for something better. I would also love to raise awareness of the amazing work being done at Homeboy Industries.

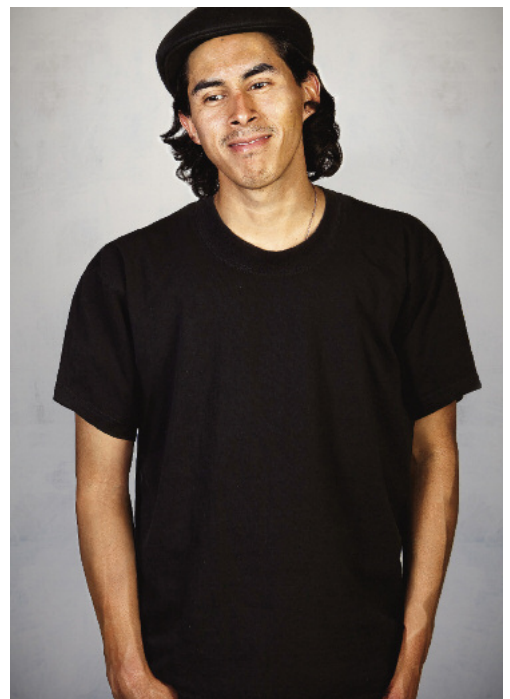
**Tell us more about the book.**

It's going to be a quality hardback, with a lenticular printed cover (so it moves when you look at it from different angles). Inside, the interviews and the 'before' and 'after' pictures will be arranged opposite each other. I'm honoured that Father Greg agreed to write the foreword. I've raised half the money for the production costs through a Kickstarter campaign, and I've partnered up with Power House Books in New York City who are providing the remainder. The Kickstarter campaign has also been an incredible way to get the story and the message out there. We're hoping it's going to be released soon.

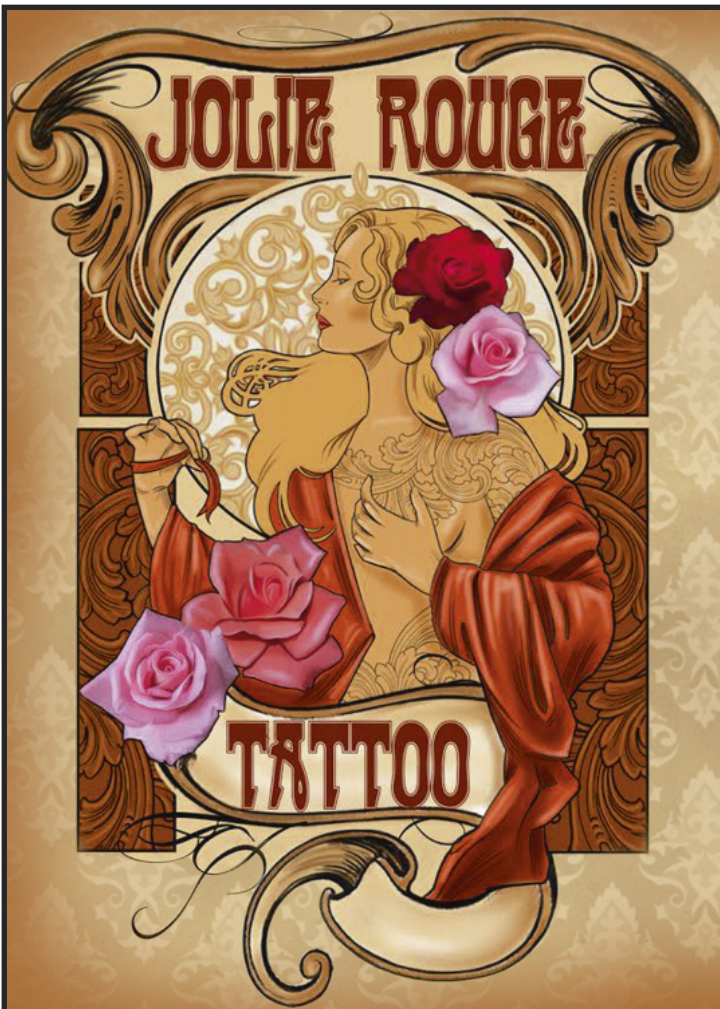
**Any future projects lined up?**

I would love to extend this project and work with more homegirls, and possibly people in prison too. I am also hoping to spend some time at Standing Rock where the Native Americans are trying to prevent the oil industry building a pipeline through their ancestral land. I always want to photograph people I admire.

[www.kickstarter.com/projects/1657996647/skin-deep-ex-gang-members-looking-beyond-the-tatto](http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1657996647/skin-deep-ex-gang-members-looking-beyond-the-tatto)







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# BUE 2530



**T**he enigmatically named multi-media artist BUE 2530 gave us a fascinating insight into his creative thinking when we interviewed him recently. To him, all art is one. His creative heart is on the street, and his inspiration comes from a passionate connection with nature. Defining his tattoo style as “illustration on skin”, he imbues all his work with deeply felt meaning.

**Tell us a little about yourself...**

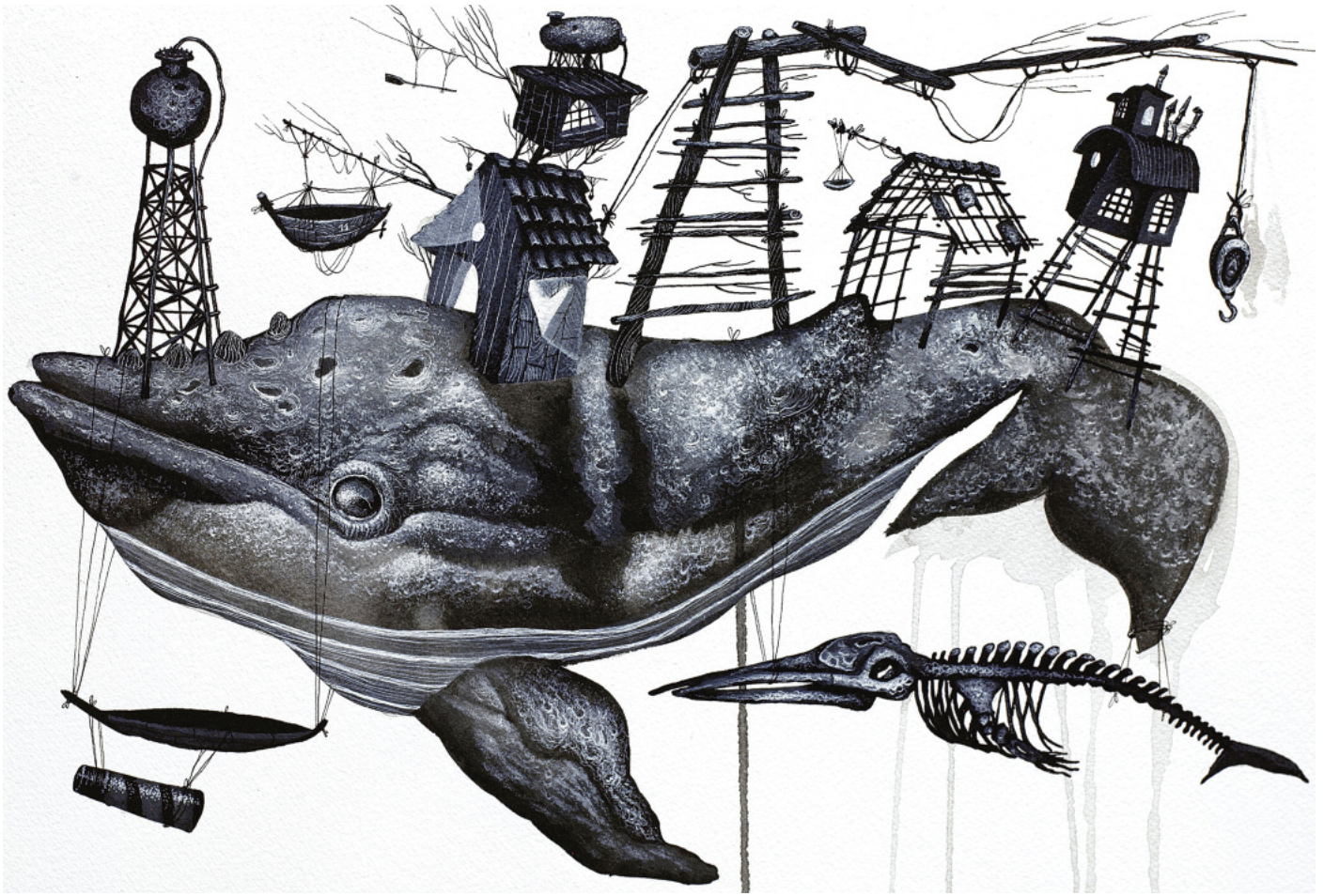
I was born and raised in a small southern Italian town, one of those places where the things you want aren't always available... Not growing up in a big metropolis makes you hungry. It forces you to commit, to do the research, and to think of nothing else. I did my first tag in 1997. I was very young and inexperienced, but everything started from there. From that point, art in all its forms became my life. I did my first tattoo aged fourteen – it was on my father – and many years passed between then and the moment when I picked up a tattoo machine again in 2010. I haven't put it back down since! I currently live and work in Florence.

**Did you have any formal artistic training?**

I completed my secondary education at an art school, then I moved to Florence to attend the Accademia di Belle Arti.





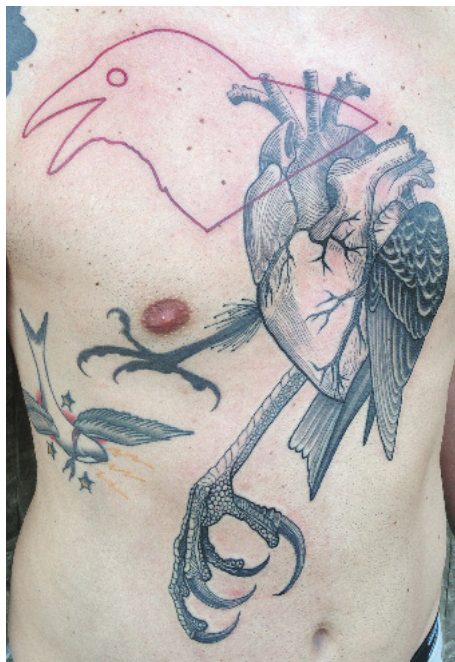


**What made you decide to pick up a tattoo machine?**

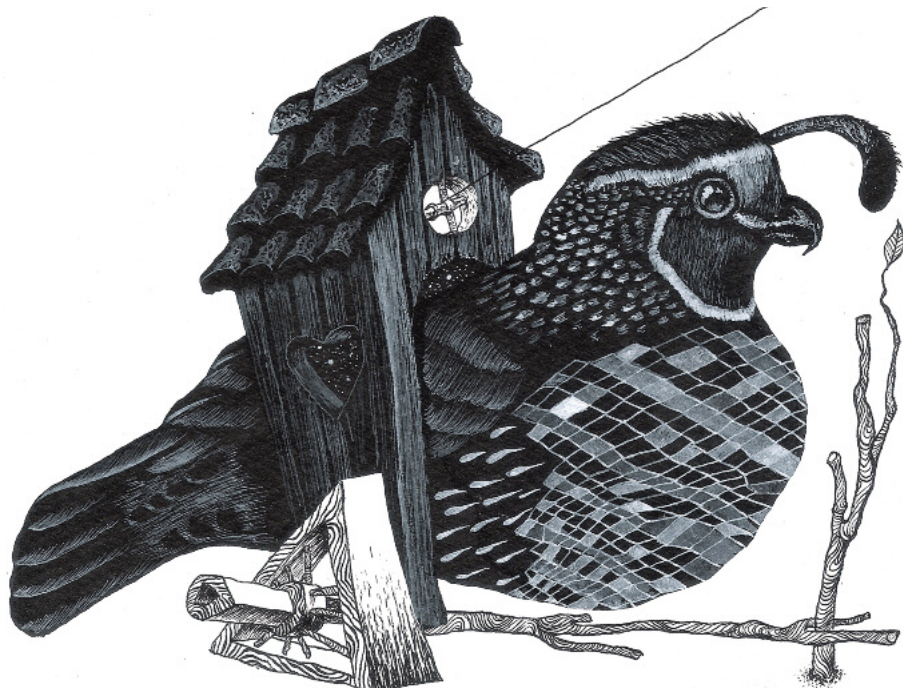
Strangely, I started tattooing because of tattoo machines... Naif, a Tuscan machine builder, taught me how to make them and I decided to experiment with the tools that I'd created.

**What's really striking in your work is the way you combine architecture and animals. Is there any symbolism in this?**

Animals are at the centre of each of my designs. They're what I observe, they're what inspires me, and I feel I have a lot to learn from them. In a society that often denies animals their right to exist, they have become almost mythological creatures for me – rather than a 'resource' inhabiting a sick or toxic environment. The human figure, represented by elements like a house, is the weight that plays heavily on their lives, an invasive presence that burdens these living beings who are forced to suffer because of the choices we humans make.







**You say on your website, “There are writers who write letters and there are writers who draw.” Do you think all tattoos should tell a story?**

All forms of expression have the ability to tell a story or communicate a vision, an experience. Tattoos aren't an exception.

**What else inspires you?**

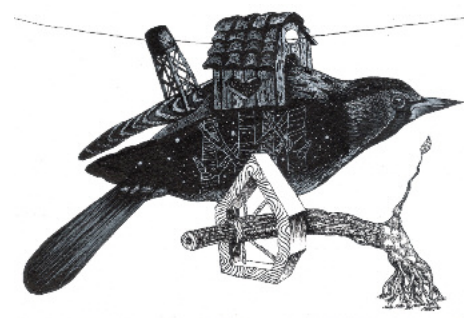
I'm a vegetarian and I try to take care of the environment as much as possible. The research I do for my tattoos is based on observations of everything that surrounds me, and my sensitivity towards certain themes naturally pushes me to represent what I see.

**How do you develop a design for a client?**

I get instructions from the client, and starting with their idea I draw directly onto their skin (rather than preparing everything before their arrival). In this way the design takes shape with their participation.

**You work in several different artistic media – tattoos, paintings, murals... Do you have a preference?**

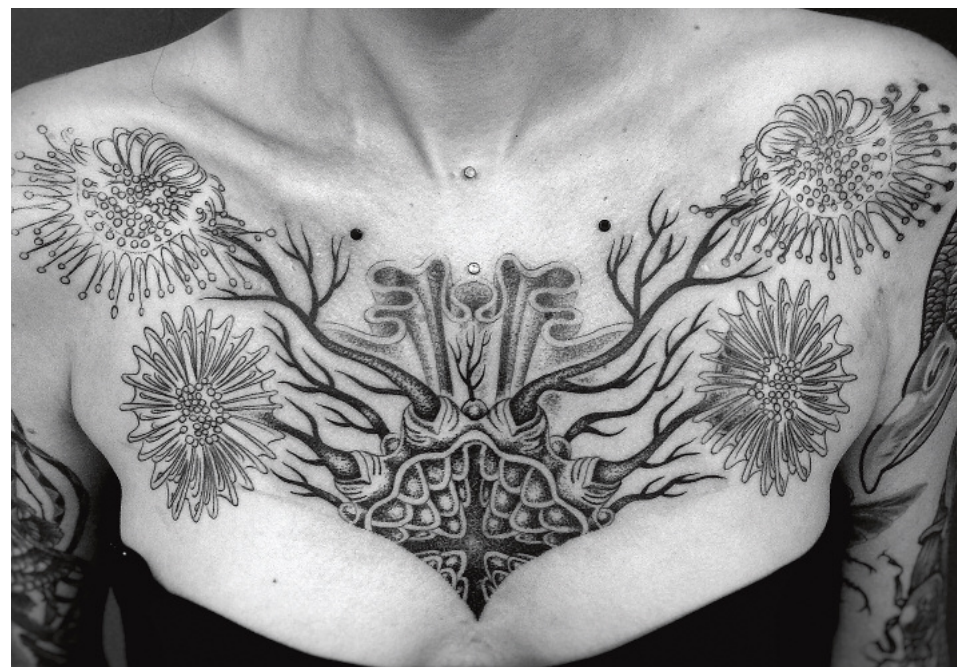
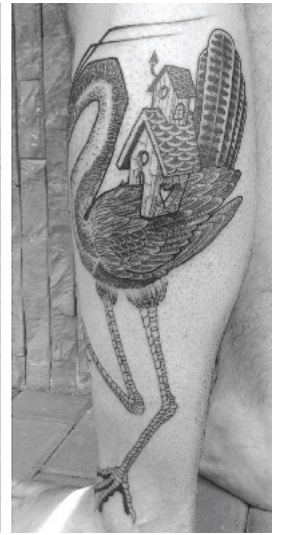
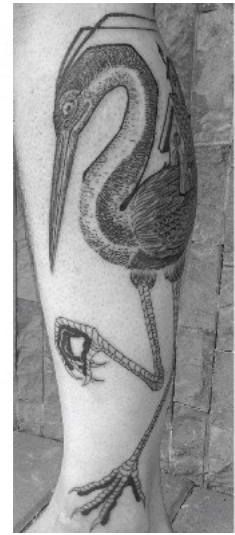
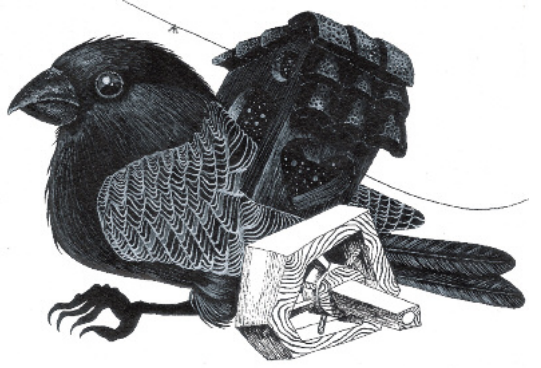
Unlike tattoos, other surfaces don't speak.















**Could you tell us a little about your other artistic practices?**

From a young age, I've loved experimenting with different artistic media – whether it was spray painting alongside a crew around the city, or discovering different painting techniques during my years at art school. My artistic essence comes from the street and from the graffiti world, but I was curious to experiment with other techniques and it was this curiosity that drove me to painting, because it was easier to find support for that. The idea for my woodland installation projects came from the desire to transfer my experience as a writer *into* nature without *occupying* it. To just be part of it, and represent it directly in the places from which I draw my inspiration.







**How do you divide your time between tattooing and drawing/painting?**  
 I try to spend the same amount of time on both activities in the first six days, and on the seventh day I bathe in the river.

**Do you find it hard to stop working?**  
 It's not difficult, because I don't feel the need. What I do is what I love, my passion. When I want to stop it's because I want to dedicate myself to something else.

**How do you relax?**  
 By coming into contact with nature in all its forms.

**In terms of your work, where do you want to be in ten years' time?**  
 I like to think that wherever I am, I will always continue to wonder.

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- 1. bio mike, no remorse (greece)
- 2. pavo kirov (russia)
- 3. super cars on show
- 4. attila, invictus tattoo (germany)
- 5. hori yo (taiwan)
- 6. homz santiago, homz tattoo (switzerland)
- 7 & 8. damian gorsky, ushuaia tattoo
- 9 & 10. rigo rodriguez, nuke artworks (germany)



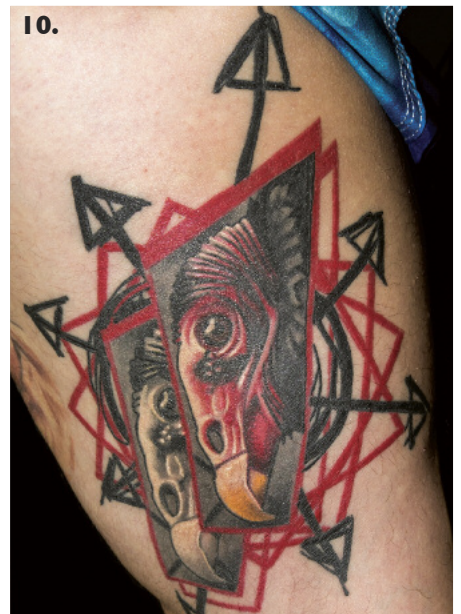
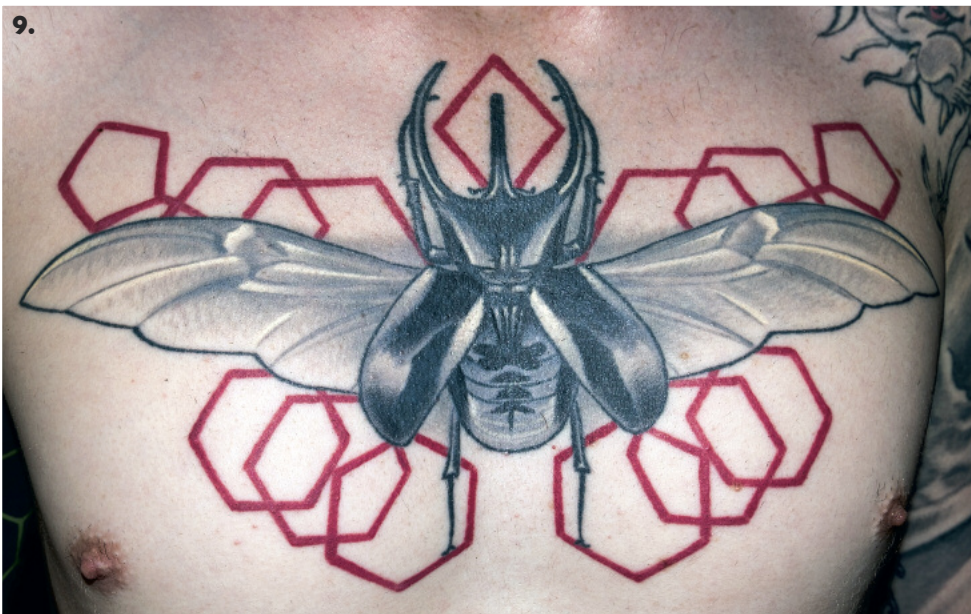
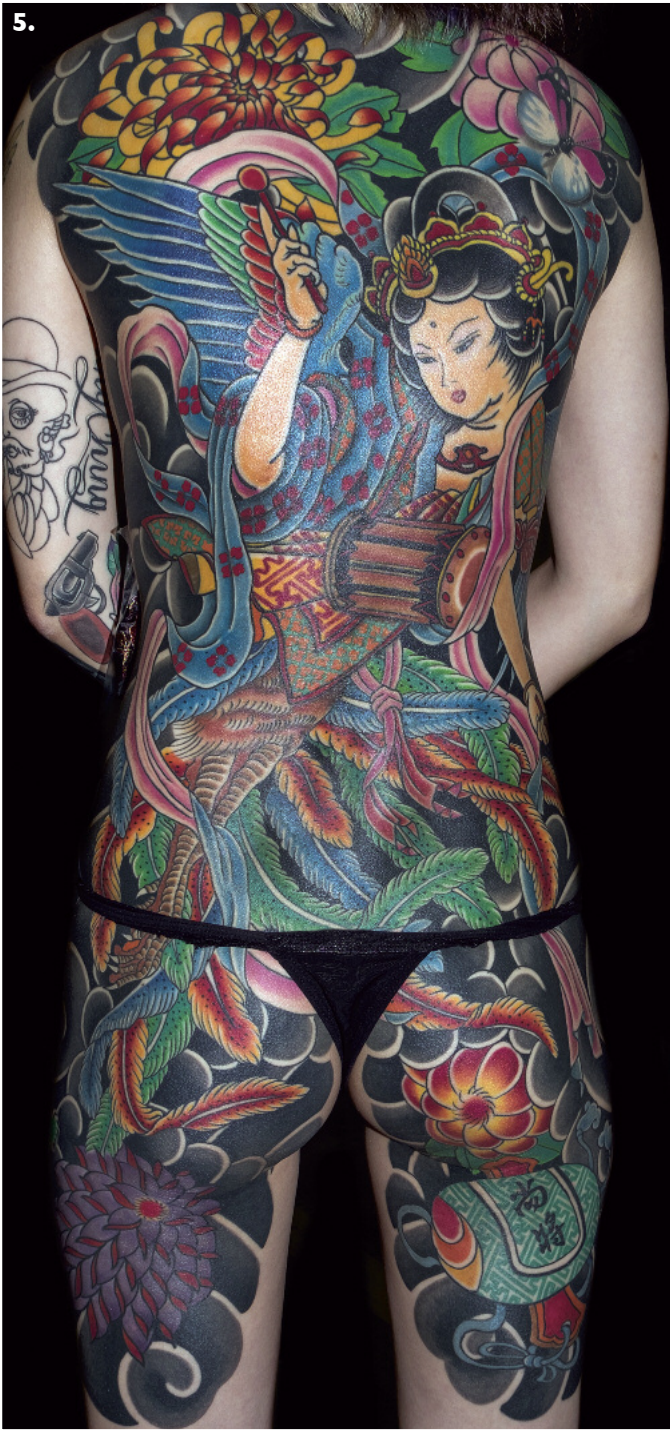
# BERLIN

In a post-Brexit German summer, two things were immediately obvious to me: First, the climate seems to have taken a turn for the worse (it was August, but it was cold - although when I spotted some Spanish tourists wearing winter jackets I thought that was a tad over the top!) Second, Berlin is now home to a sizeable refugee population (many of whom are in fact being provided with temporary accommodation in the former Berlin Tattoo Convention venue, the old Tempelhof airport building).

The city still maintains its close associations with Eastern Europe - though now in a very different way to its Cold War days of course - and this convention attracts the best of those astounding Russian, Polish and Hungarian artists who, with their refreshing new approach and style, have revolutionised modern tattooing. Berlin, however, also appeals to those travelling from much further away, such as the Taiwanese, Chinese, Japanese, South American and North American artists. The sheer number of nationalities present was incredible and the range of work on display was awesome. Among the guests working at the show were Russian Karina Cuba, Chinese Shuo Jie Li, Finnish Elias Erävalo, Taiwanese Diao Farn, Poland's Tofi, New Zealand's Darby Tuhaka, Portugal's Thiago Amorim, Italy's Fiumix & Quila, Mexico's Benjamín Otero, Thai Om Sakya, Chilean Guarralupe, Hungary's Gyula Szilvási, Lithuanian Tomas Vaitkunas, India's Obi, Switzerland's Rossi Roncelli, Japan's Toshihide... - plus dozens of others from around the world. A cross-pollination of styles was evident in many of the tattoos seen at this show. Customers are becoming more savvy and quality-conscious, and they're seeking out the very best. Photo-realistic work is going from strength to strength, so much so that come competition time, it could be found in more than one category - and it wasn't limited to portraiture either. And it was obvious from the other competition categories that, while the organisers of this show have a clear eye on the tattoo zeitgeist, they were also not forgetting the more traditional styles which have contributed to the overwhelming popularity of tattoos as we know them today. Another thing I noticed at this convention was the fact that more and more people's first tattoos are now large pieces of great technical depth; customers are evidently thinking long and hard before taking the plunge.

The convention venue, the Berlin Arena, has a great waterside location which really suits this high summer event. With performers doing their thing on the indoor and outdoor stages, artists painting murals, and tattooist seminars on offer, this convention offered, as ever, a wide range of activities - utilising the venue's facilities to the full and reflecting Berlin's importance in the tattoo industry. Many artists from all around the globe have now chosen to make this amazing city their tattoo base - making Berlin a veritable tattoo capital in the heart of Europe, and this wonderful convention as relevant as ever in a constantly changing tattoo landscape.









11.



12.



13.



14.



15.

- 11. making of the mural
- 12. unio, aero & inkeaters (germany)
- 13. unio, aero & inkeaters (germany)
- 14. rob beneath, rigor mortis (germany)
- 15. david giersch, david giersch tattoo (germany)
- 16. diau farn (taiwan)
- 17. viktor meyar (germany)
- 18. unio, aero & inkeaters (germany)
- 19. tamás kőbán, stigmata (germany)













- 20. wei zuo (taiwan)
- 21. christian benvenuto (argentina)
- 22. panos, polis decay (greece)
- 23. pavel, get tattooed (russia)
- 24. tofi, ink-ognito (poland)

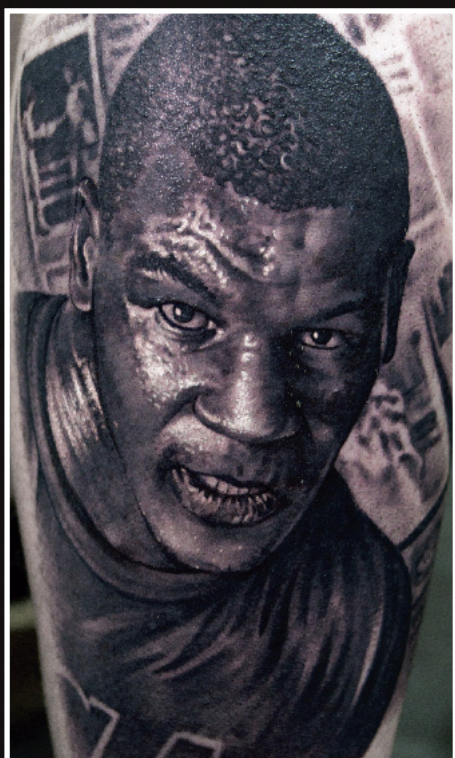


# REMISS

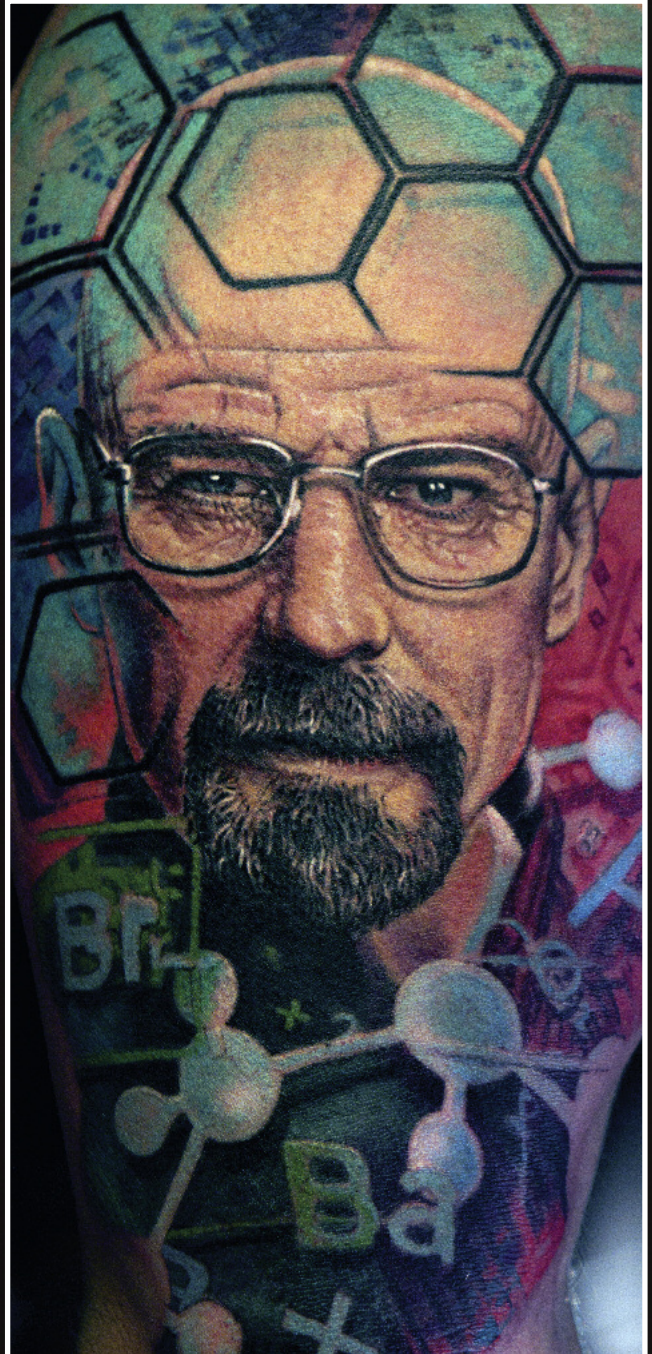
## TATTOO

Currently based in Ireland, Remigijus Cizauskas is a Lithuanian realism artist of outstanding ability who has become renowned for both black and grey and colour work. His perfectionism is evident in the meticulous detail of every single tattoo he creates, and he goes to great lengths to ensure that everything he represents is as accurate and as close to the original as it can possibly be.

"I began with a one year tattoo apprenticeship in Lithuania," Remis tells me, "but to be honest they didn't really actively teach me. It was up to me to pick up what I could. I left in 2004 and went to work in a studio in Spain. It was a lot of fun there, but it wasn't really busy enough for me to learn very much, so after a year I moved on again. I felt I had no choice, because I wanted to improve." I ask Remis how the move to Ireland came about. "We had some friends living there. We went to stay for a week and just fell in love with the place. At first I worked in a shop, but now I have a private studio which is out of town and surrounded by nature. I do a lot of conventions, so it gives me that perfect balance between travelling and working from home. If I had my own studio in a busy city centre it would all be too crazy for me."







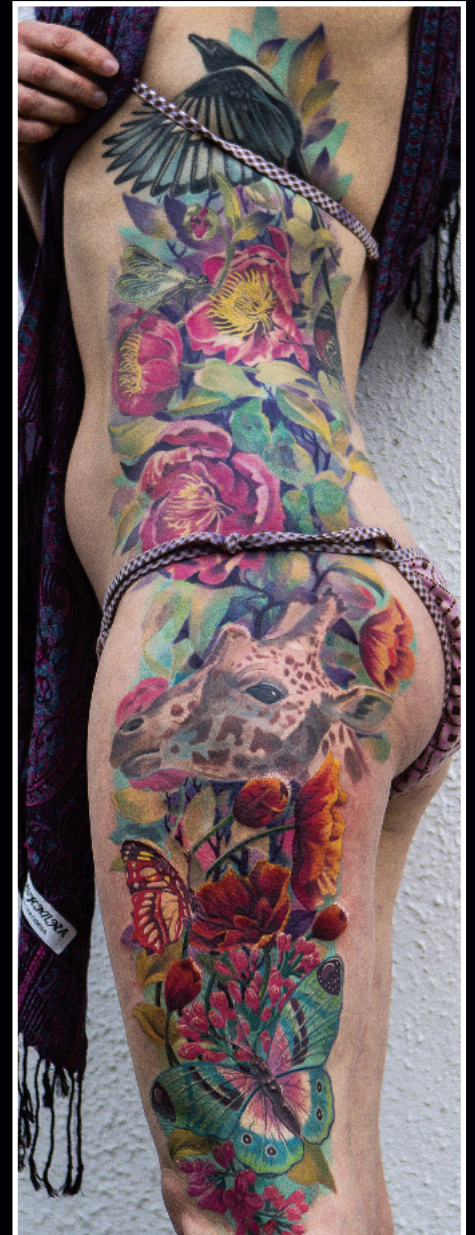
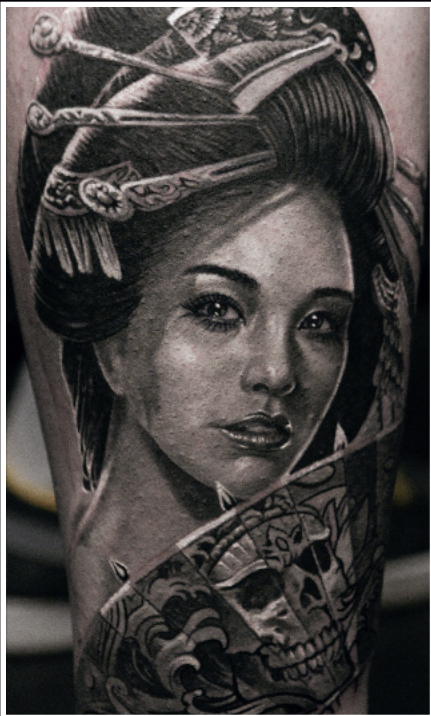
Following Remis through social media, it is obvious that travelling plays a major role in his life. I ask him how important it is to his creativity. "When you stay at home in a nice quiet environment, working by yourself, it's all too easy to start snoozing! For me, the shows are a way of waking myself up. They give me inspiration. I get to see amazing artists producing amazing work and it challenges me to do better."



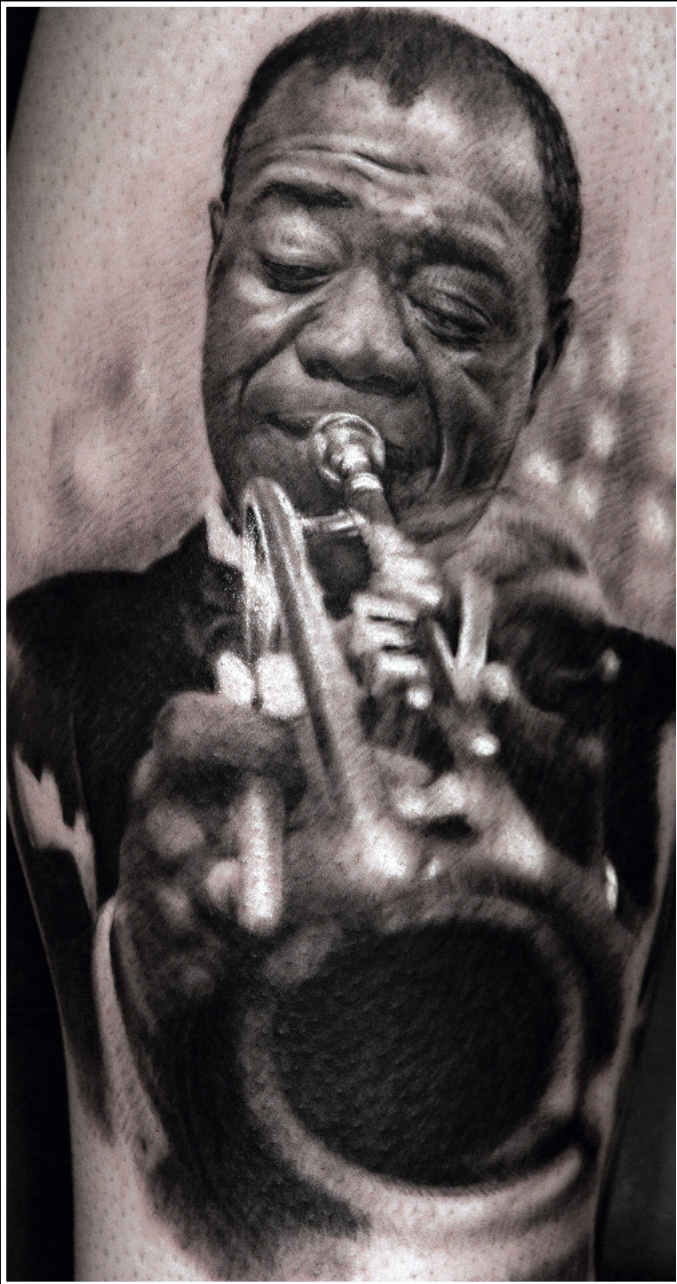




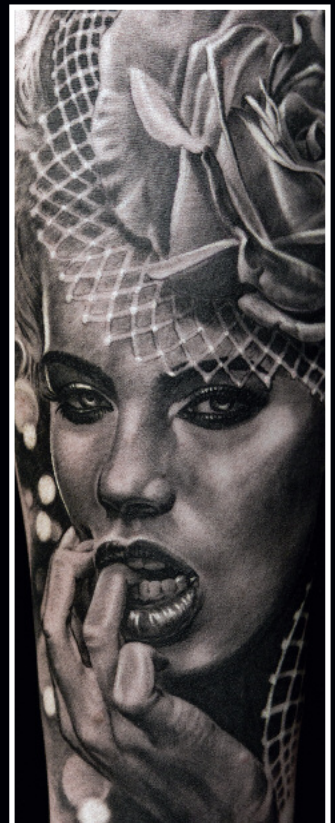
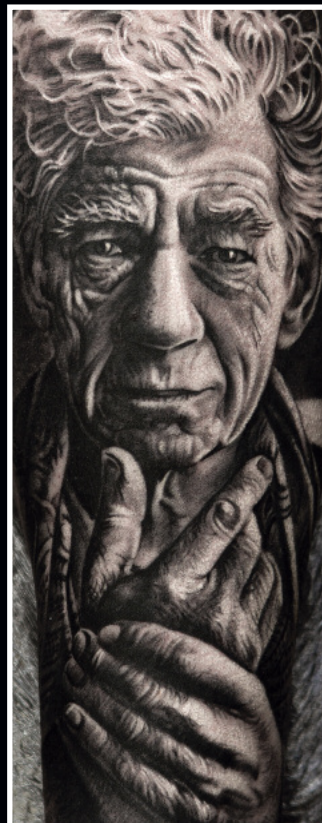
Remis remembers the moment when he was first inspired to start tattooing. He was being tattooed by a friend, using a home-made machine. "I saw how he was drawing, and it was very similar to my own style," he recalls. "I asked him a few questions and he gave me the answers, and the first thing I did when I got home was to build a machine for myself. I tattooed my friends, then when I moved to the city I went into a tattoo shop to ask if there was such a thing as a tattoo school where I could learn more about it. I had no idea how to become a professional tattooist! They explained that there weren't any tattoo schools, but they looked at my drawings and offered me the opportunity to work there as an apprentice. I know I was very lucky. In that one day, a whole new world opened up to me. Before that, I had never even seen a tattoo magazine, but they had magazines in the shop, and pictures on the walls... It was amazing."







Many realism artists find their images online, print them off, and create the stencil from that. There is often an assumption that drawing skills are not needed – but artists of Remis's calibre prove that this is simply not the case. "A lot of old school artists say you don't need to be able to draw, and there is certainly some truth in that, but I believe it's important to be able to use all of your artistic ability if you're going to create a really great tattoo. As a realism artist – first and foremost – I aim to create compositions that flow and fit, with the major elements firmly based in realistic representations."







Improvements in machines and inks mean that realistic tattoos can now potentially achieve greater longevity, but realism still attracts more than its fair share of negative comments. I wondered how Remis felt about this. "There is always going to be criticism from other genres within tattooing, and people will always have different opinions on what is good or bad and what will or won't work as a tattoo. People say 'your tattoos will never last', but I think they last long enough. I've seen work of mine from eight or more years ago and it's still there. I don't know how many years we need to wait before the critics will admit that maybe... just maybe... I was right!" I ask Remis if longevity is due to technology or technique. "I think any solid tattoo will last," he replies. "Of course there will be some 'settling in'. A 2mm blend will become a 4mm blend over time, but if you are aware of this, and you plan for it and allow for it in the tattoo, then your image will have a longer life. All tattoos lose saturation over the years. No style will last for ever. I think a good tattoo should last for at least five years and then if you want you can always put the finer details back in." So would he advocate a second or even third pass







over a tattoo at a later date? "Not necessarily," says Remis. "I think the tattoo needs to be finished when it's finished, otherwise it's unfair on the client. But if we meet at some future date, and the tattoo would benefit from a second pass – and the client and myself are happy to do it – then why not? But it shouldn't be a necessity. I build up my shading gradually and work a lot of saturated contrast into my work to help it stand the test of time."

Remis is well known for his black and grey work, but he also produces stunning pieces in bold bright colours. "If I do black and grey all the time, it gets boring. Likewise, if I do too much colour I miss the simplicity of black and grey. So I like to mix it up a little. Usually the choice is dictated by the image. Some images will have more impact in colour. With black and grey, the light source is very important. With colour you can play a little, as long as you use the right colours."





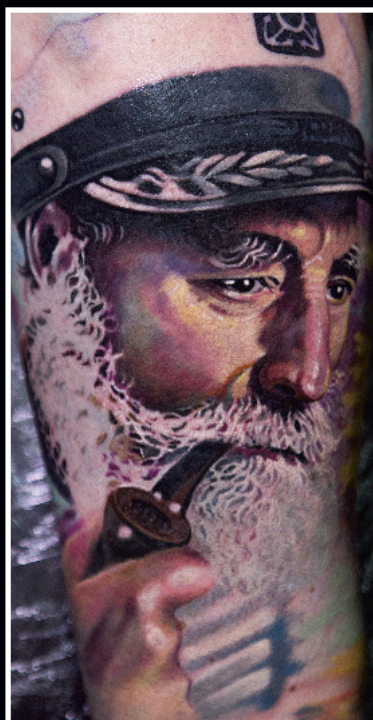
I ask Remis about his painting. "I don't have as much time for painting as I would like. I have a few paintings on the go, but they have been works-in-progress for several years! I would love to be able to finish them. I wish I could say that my painting influences my tattooing, but it's probably the other way around. I tattoo every day, and I'm always improving – and it's probably my photography that inspires me more than my painting. When I'm taking photographs, I love looking for great compositions and good light sources – and that's also what I am looking for in my tattooing."

With so many people harvesting ready-made images off the internet, it's very refreshing to hear Remis explain how he can build up an



original composition using his own photographs, thereby creating a truly original design. And it adds a whole extra dimension to his meticulous preparation. "Often, if I am doing a portrait of a family member for example, I will offer my client a photo shoot. That way, I can make sure I get the right reference, lit in the correct way, with all the important details that I need to give me the best chance of creating a great tattoo. I know exactly the angles that will give me the perfect placement of the tattooed image on the body."

Over the years, much has changed within tattooing. I ask Remis if there is anything that has particularly affected him in his work. "People's attitudes," he replies. "In the past, most clients would ask for specific elements and they would want this and that and all sorts. Now people tell me they want one or two elements in my style, then simply leave the rest to me." And what of the future? "I would like to open a larger studio where I can invite my friends to come and work. Where I am now is very beautiful, but it's also very small. And I would like to introduce a more varied style into my tattooing – although sometimes when I look back at my old work it still looks somehow 'new' to me. Much improved, yes, but still 'fresh' in a way."



As our interview draws to a close, I have just one more question for Remis. What does tattooing mean to him? "Tattooing is my lifestyle," he tells me. "I am surrounded by amazing people and I have the opportunity to meet more amazing people all over the world. Tattooing gives me the freedom to travel and the freedom to express myself."

**Remis Tattoo**  
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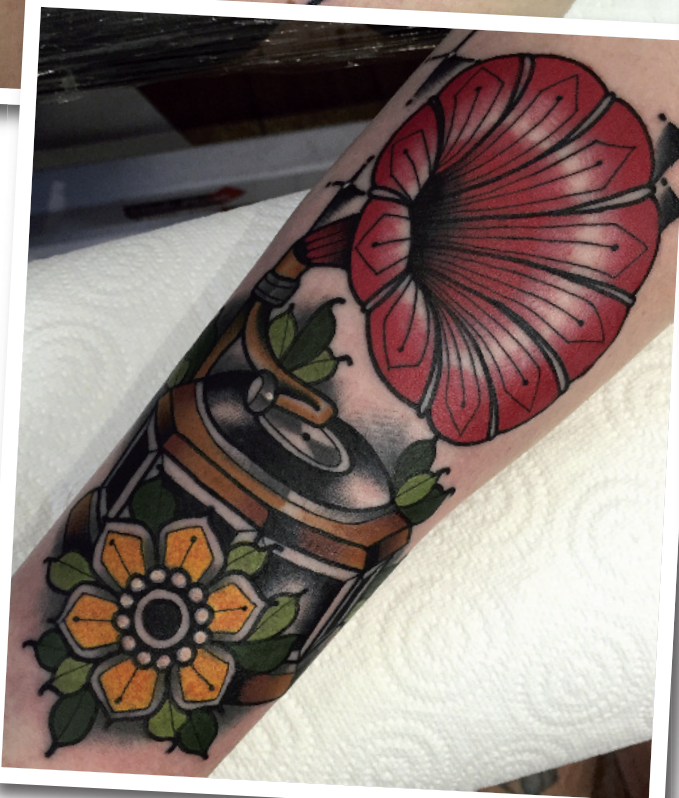
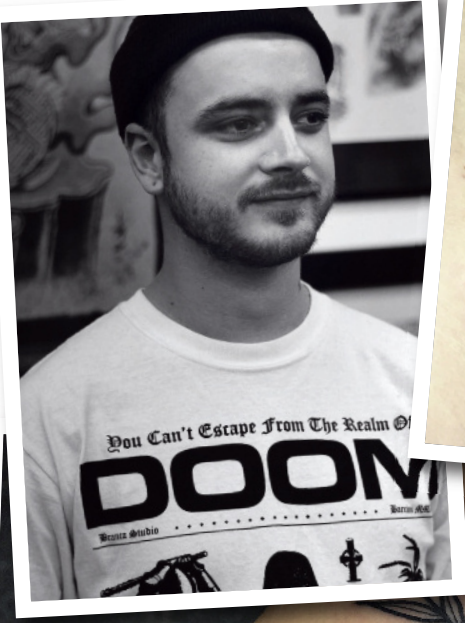
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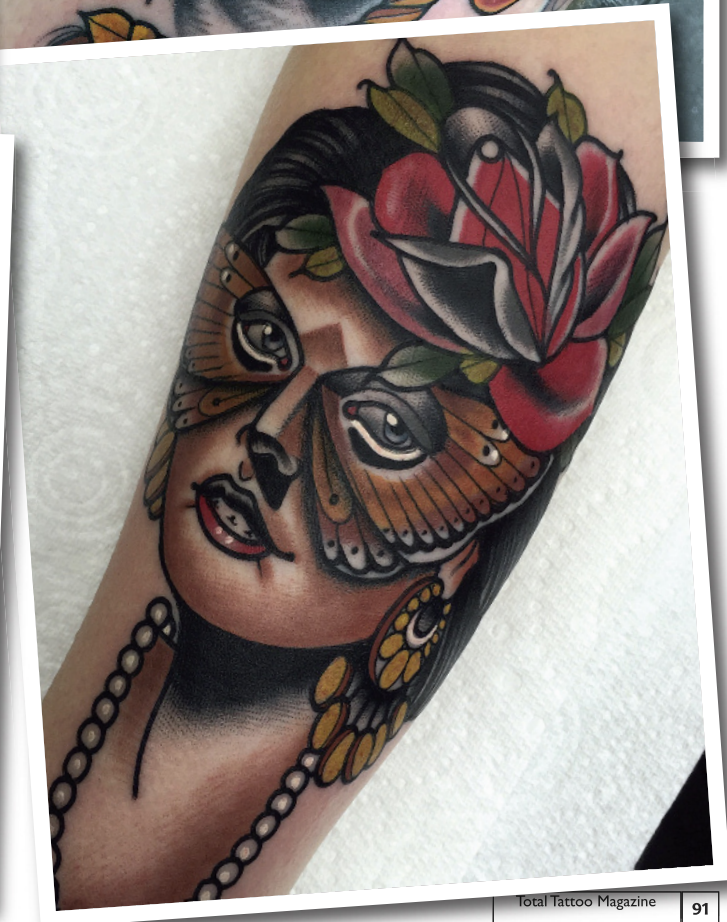
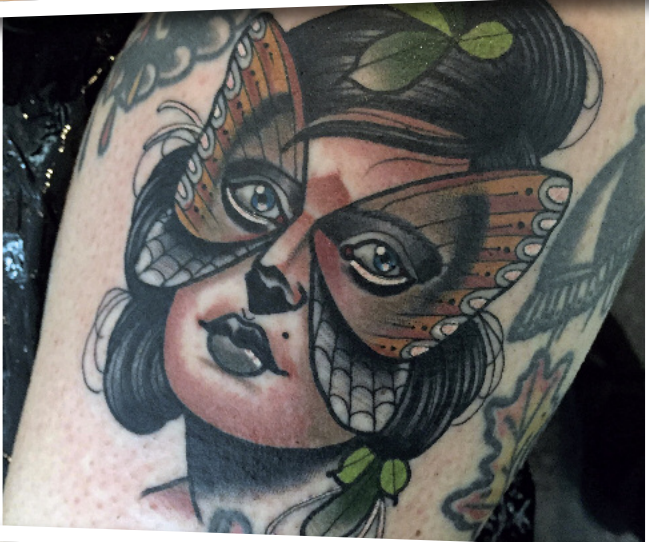
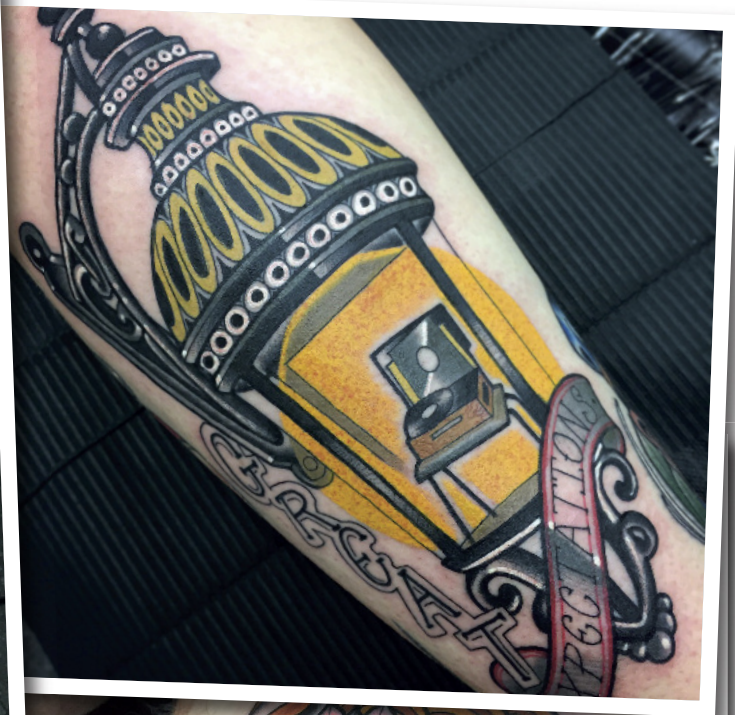
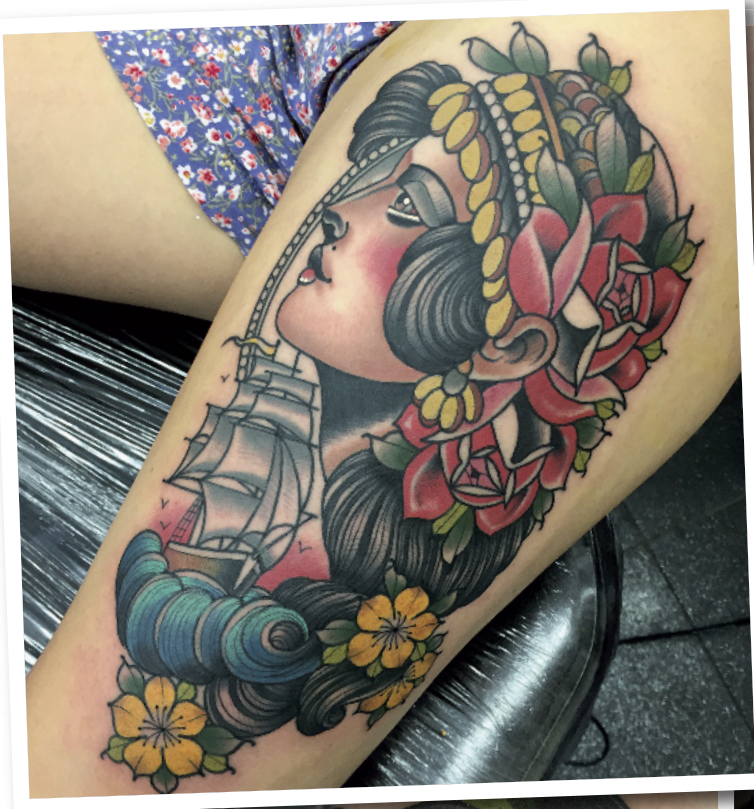
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**Portfolio, Total Tattoo Magazine, 111 Furze Road, Norwich NR7 0AU, UK**

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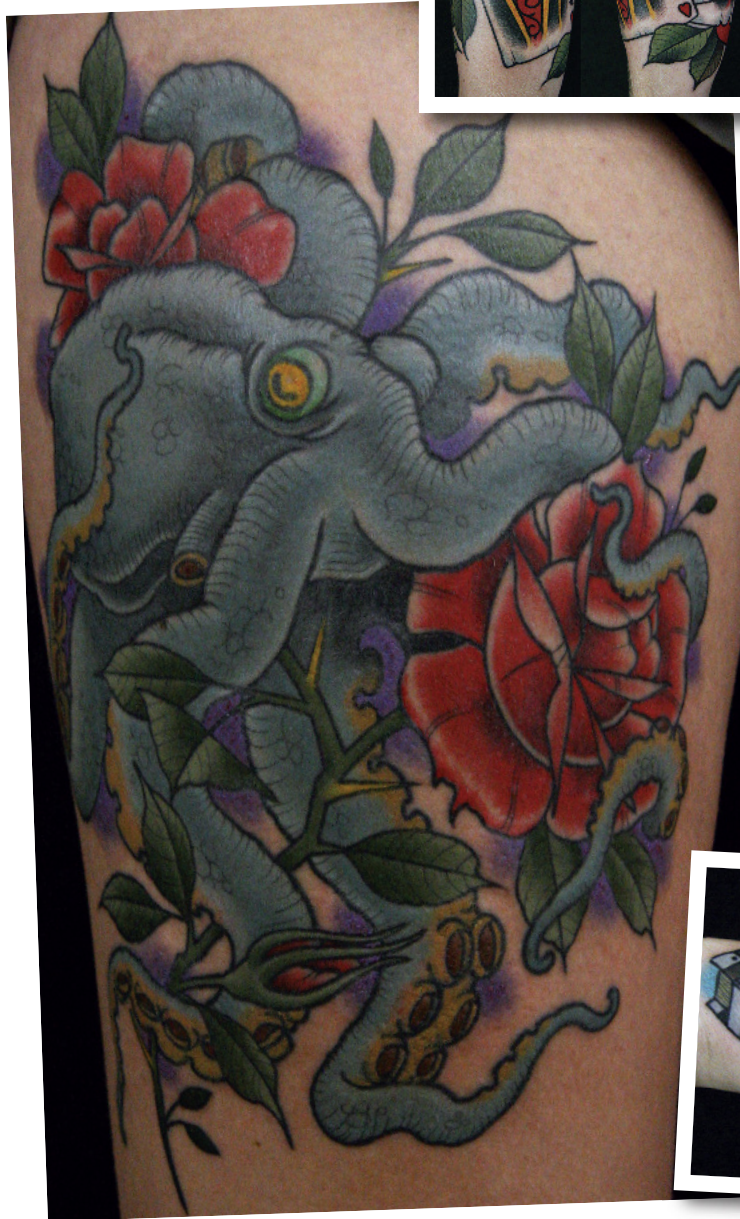
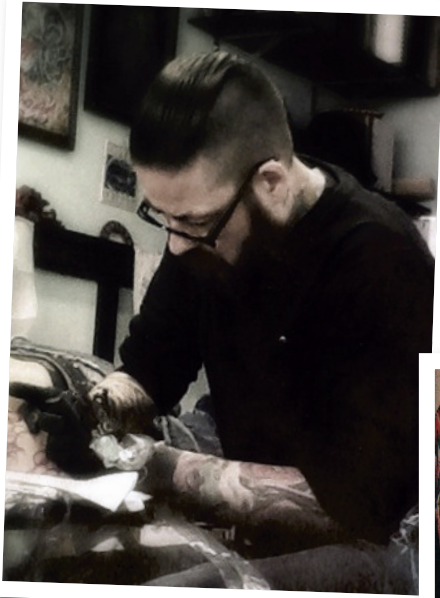




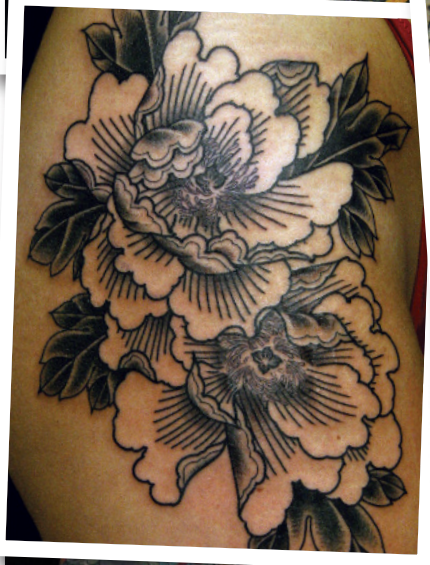
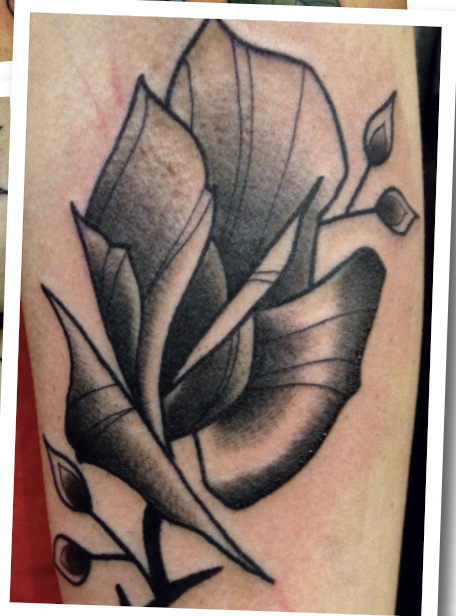
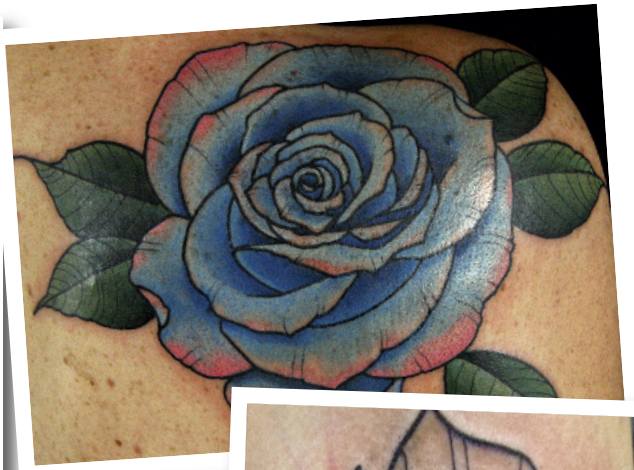




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# TALES FROM THE NAUGHTY STEP

by Paul Talbot

**Hello again dear readers. Welcome to another tale from the naughty step.**

**I've never really been a victim of discrimination or, if I have, I've never noticed it. I remember feeling slightly embarrassed about my 'dirt poor' childhood but I don't ever remember being discriminated against because of it. Unless of course you count having to queue up separately for free school dinners, but the way I saw that was 'a free meal is a free meal - fuck it'. So I've always believed that, despite evidence to the contrary, I live in a fairly open-minded world and my appearance has very little bearing on how people judge me.**

But then again, perhaps not.

I was flying to the Sanremo tattoo show in Italy recently with Karen, my wife, and Beth, my daughter, when we got stuck for five hours in a fog-bound Schiphol/Amsterdam airport. (In addition to providing me with the material for this column, that delay also gave us a lot of time to have fun filming footage for my vlog which by the time you read this will be uploaded over on my new YouTube channel [www.youtube.com/paultlbt](http://www.youtube.com/paultlbt), but I digress...) Now I travel a great deal, so I've got a frequent flyer card that allows me a few benefits - such as priority boarding, priority treatment at the transfer desk, etc. You know the kind of thing. But the number of times this gets questioned! I'm standing in the priority queue, as I'm perfectly entitled to do, but I get everything from disgruntled mumblings to people actually challenging me about my status

as a 'special' customer, telling me the queue I want is actually 'over there'. The suited and booted seem annoyed that this scruffy foul-mouthed Brummy gobshite could possibly be included in the 'people with very important jobs to do' queue. I finally realised that, for the first time since queuing for a free school meal, I was being discriminated against. And it made me very happy to tell those 'important' people (not very politely) that I was, in fact, allowed to be in that queue. Just because I dress different, look different and am generally, well, different, that shouldn't give anyone the right to make any assumptions about my financial or lifestyle status. After all, I probably make more money than them anyway!

So is it just me? Is it my appearance? Have YOU been discriminated against because of your tattoos or your 'tattoo sub-culture' style? Do you feel that unfair assumptions are

made about you? Drop me a line and let me know your take on this.

Stand strong, my beautiful, tattooed brothers and sisters!

**Until next time - Paul**  
[talesfromthenaughtystep@gmail.com](mailto:talesfromthenaughtystep@gmail.com)





# CONVENTION CALENDAR

## UK CONVENTIONS

**February 18-19**

### **Frome Tattoo Convention**

Cheese & Grain

Market Yard, Frome, Somerset, BA11 1BE

[www.facebook.com/frometattoocon/](http://www.facebook.com/frometattoocon/)

**March 4-5**

### **Tattoo Tea Party**

EventCity

Phoenix Way, off Barton Dock Rd, Urmston, Manchester, M41 7TB

[www.tattooteaparty.com](http://www.tattooteaparty.com)

**March 25-26**

### **The Scottish Tattoo Convention**

Edinburgh Corn Exchange

10 New Market Rd, Edinburgh, EH14 1RJ

[www.scottishtattooconvention.net](http://www.scottishtattooconvention.net)

**April 15-16**

### **Portsmouth Tattoo Extravaganza**

Pyramids Centre

Clarence Esplanade, Portsmouth PO5 3ST

[www.tattooextravaganza.co.uk](http://www.tattooextravaganza.co.uk)

**April 15-16**

### **Maidstone Tattoo Extravaganza**

The John Hendry Pavilion

Detling Showground, Maidstone,

Kent, ME14 3JF

[www.maidstonetattooextravaganza.co.uk](http://www.maidstonetattooextravaganza.co.uk)

**April 29-30**

### **TOTAL TATTOO & TATTOO TV present:**

#### **The Big North Tattoo Show**

The Metro Radio Arena

Arena Way, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 7NA

[www.facebook.com/bignorthtattooshow](http://www.facebook.com/bignorthtattooshow)

**April 29-30**

### **Lincs Ink Tattoo Convention**

Beachcomber Holiday Park &

Entertainment Centre

208 North Sea Lane, Humberston, Cleethorpes,

Lincolnshire, DN36 4ET,

[www.lincs-ink.co.uk](http://www.lincs-ink.co.uk)

**May 5-7**

### **Liverpool Tattoo Convention**

Adelphi Hotel

Ranelagh St, Liverpool, L3 5UL

[www.liverpooltattooconvention.com](http://www.liverpooltattooconvention.com)

**May 13-14**

### **Brighton Tattoo Convention**

Brighton Centre

King's Rd, Brighton, BN1 2GR

[www.brightontattoo.com/](http://www.brightontattoo.com/)

@brightontattoocon

**May 13-14**

### **Glasgow Tattoo Festival**

The Studio

8 Dixon St, Glasgow, G1 4AX

[www.facebook.com/GlasgowTattooFestival](http://www.facebook.com/GlasgowTattooFestival)

**May 27-28**

### **Scarborough Tattoo Show**

The Spa Scarborough

South Bay, Scarborough,

North Yorkshire, YO11 2HD

[www.scarboroughtattooshow.com](http://www.scarboroughtattooshow.com)

**June 10-11**

### **Bristol Tattoo Convention**

The Passenger Shed

Station Approach, Bristol, BS1 6QH

[www.bristoltattooconvention.com](http://www.bristoltattooconvention.com)

**June 24-25**

### **York International Tattoo Convention**

New Earswick & District Indoor Bowls Club

Huntington Rd, York, YO32 9PX

[www.yorkinternationaltattooconvention.co.uk](http://www.yorkinternationaltattooconvention.co.uk)

**July 1-2**

### **Cirque Du Tattoo Festival**

Bescot Stadium

Bescot Cres, Walsall, WS1 4SA,

[www.facebook.com/cirquedutattoo](http://www.facebook.com/cirquedutattoo)

**July 8-9**

### **Leeds International Tattoo Expo**

First Direct Arena

Arena Way, Leeds, LS2 8BY

[www.leedstattooexpo.com](http://www.leedstattooexpo.com)

**July 15-16**

### **Cardiff Tattoo and Toy Convention**

The Motorpoint Arena Cardiff

Mary Ann Street, Cardiff, CF10 2EQ,

[www.cardiffattooandtoycon.co.uk](http://www.cardiffattooandtoycon.co.uk)

**July 29-30**

### **Portsmouth Tattoo Convention**

Portsmouth Guildhall

Guildhall Square, Portsmouth,

Hampshire PO1 2AB

[www.portsmouthtattooconvention.co](http://www.portsmouthtattooconvention.co)

**September 29-October 1**

### **Midlands Tattoo Industry Show**

Leicester Athena

Queen Street, Leicester, LE1 1QD

[www.facebook.com/Midlands-Tattoo-industry-](http://www.facebook.com/Midlands-Tattoo-industry-Show-980219155377587)

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## OVERSEAS CONVENTIONS

**March 3-5**

### **Mondial du Tatouage**

Grande Halle de la Villette

211 Avenue Jean Jaurès, 75019 Paris, France

[www.mondialdutatouage.com/en](http://www.mondialdutatouage.com/en)

**March 18-19**

### **7th Rotterdam Tattoo Convention**

Ahoy Rotterdam

Ahoyweg 10, 3084 BA Rotterdam,

The Netherlands

[rotterdam.unitedconventions.com/](http://rotterdam.unitedconventions.com/)

**May 17-24**

### **3rd Traditional Tattoo and World culture Festival**

The Recinto Ferial De Santa Ponça (junto

molino) Urbanización de Galatzó (Calviá)

[www.traditionaltattooofestival.com](http://www.traditionaltattooofestival.com)

**May 26-28**

### **13th Amsterdam Tattoo Convention**

Amsterdam RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre

Europaplein, 1078 GZ Amsterdam, Netherlands

[www.tattooexpo.eu/en/amsterdam/2017](http://www.tattooexpo.eu/en/amsterdam/2017)

**July 15-17**

### **NY Empire State Tattoo Expo**

New York Hilton Midtown

1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY

10019, USA

[www.empirestatetattooexpo.com/](http://www.empirestatetattooexpo.com/)

**August 4-6**

### **27th Berlin Tattoo Convention**

Arena Berlin

Eichenstrasse 4, 12435 Berlin, Germany

[www.tattoo-convention.de/tcb-final](http://www.tattoo-convention.de/tcb-final)



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