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KOREA

JESSICA KINZER

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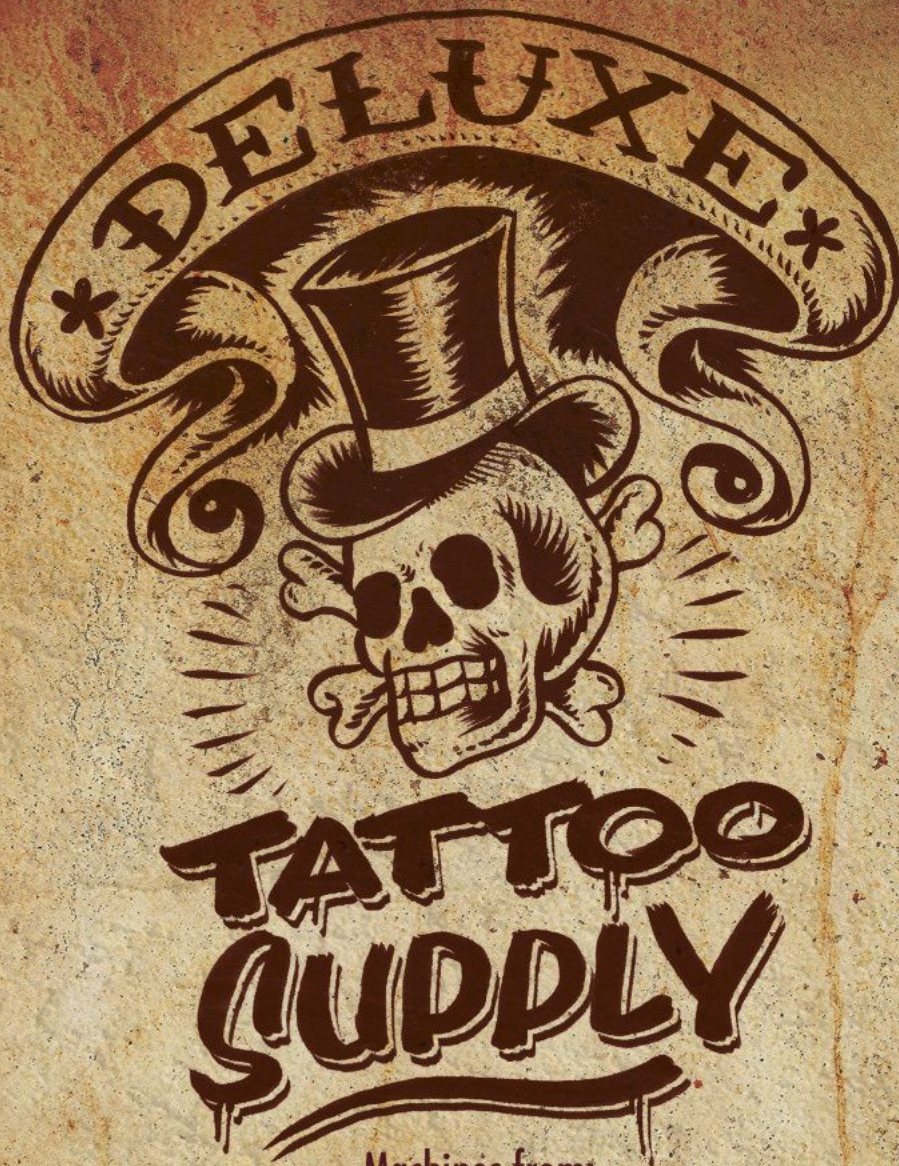
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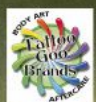
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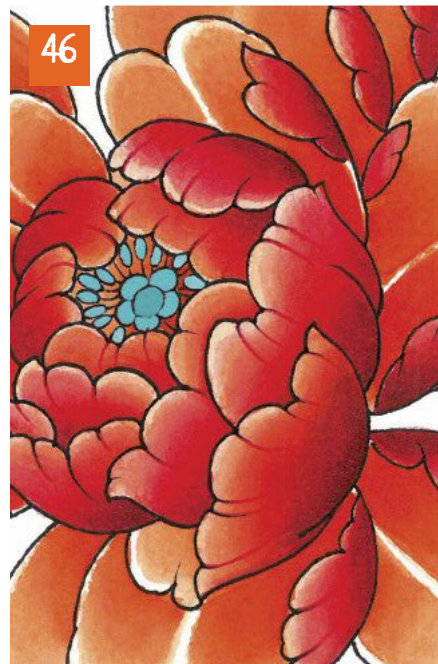
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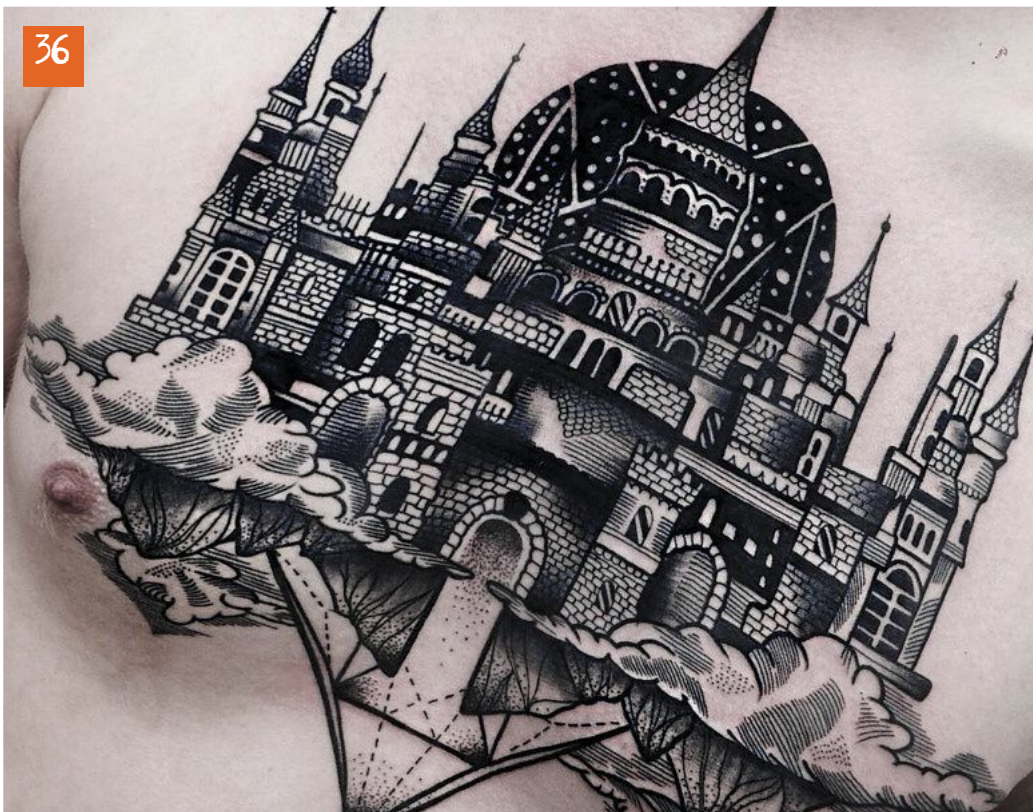
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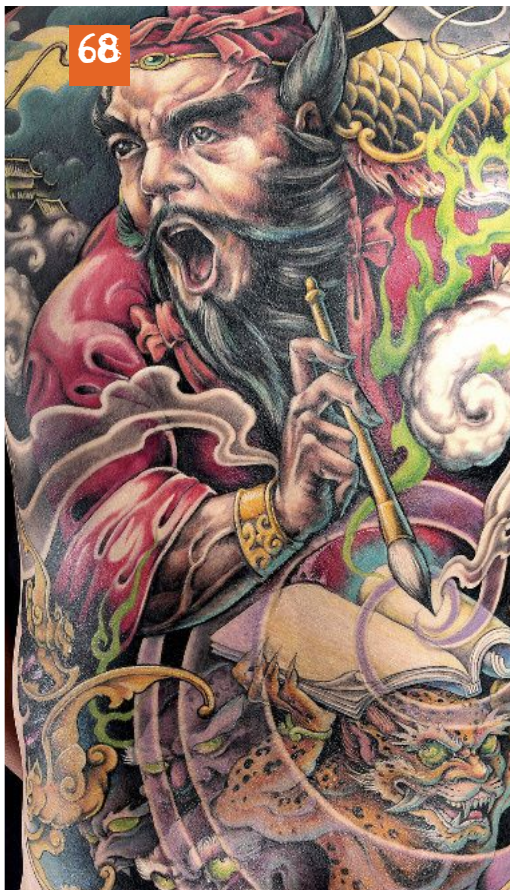
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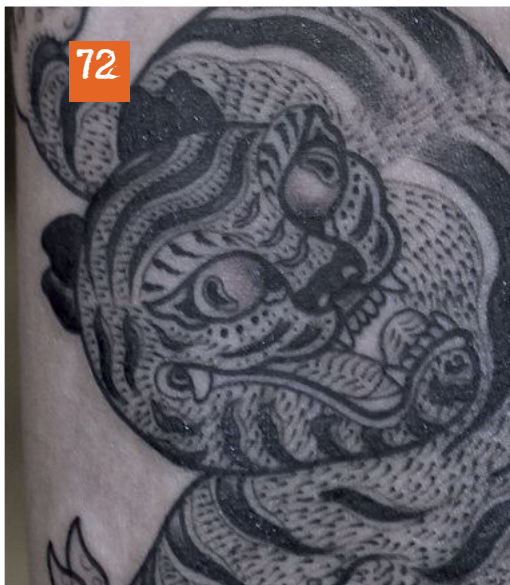
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111 Furze Road, Norwich, NR7 0AU
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Images must be high resolution (300) and sized at 100mm by 150mm. The disc needs to be labelled with the artist & studio name. Or email them to gallery@totaltattoo.co.uk

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WELCOME to 150

I saw an alarming sight the other day when I got out of the shower. I caught a glimpse of myself and realised that, in terms of getting tattooed, I'm running out of space.

I imagine that this is the body art equivalent of an existential crisis. I've never considered myself to be 'heavily tattooed' as I still have a bare back and most of the backs of my legs, but it dawned on me that once those spaces are filled they're filled for good. And I already have plans for my back...

Years ago, this might not have bothered me so much. And perhaps if I was older, I might be glad that 'it's almost over'. I never set out with a plan as to what tattoos I would have and where – in fact I initially only wanted a couple (however, we all know that it's hard to stop at just a couple!) – but as the quality of tattooing has soared, I can't help but feel a slight panic when I think about the number of artists whose work I would like to have versus the amount of skin I have remaining.

From talking to other people, I know I'm not alone in feeling this way. Although getting tattooed is, let's just say, less than pleasant, I hate the idea of never being able to get tattooed again. I seem to have developed a pre-tattoo ritual, which involves a bath, eating as much breakfast as I can, then skipping down to a studio, armed with sweets and coffee. For me, and many people, visiting a studio and getting to know the artists is a really positive and fun experience; I've made great friends, discovered new talented artists, and talked about everything from the meaning of life to good old fashioned gossip. But although I leave a studio with a new piece of beautiful work, I always feel that it's a bittersweet ending.

From a deeper point of view, I suppose nobody wants to feel that they're at the end of their journey with regard to their goals in life. In the office, we often say how we don't want to die because we're not 'finished' in our tattoo journey. It sounds a bit morbid, but I think this feeling about the significance of an 'ending' is relatable in many different cultures - as exemplified by the special markings that signify the end of a Japanese bodysuit (the Bonji or Juzu beads) and the various tattoos that are used as protective amulets for the afterlife.

At the end of the day, whether it's being under the needle or being involved in the 'tattoo scene', tattooing is something I will always be passionate about. But I still can't help wondering what I'll do with my spare time once the final piece is complete...



Lizzy
Total Tattoo Editorial Team
totaltattoo@totaltattoo.co.uk

"I think it's a part of us as human beings that we search outside of ourselves for meaning."

Nick Cave

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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

HUMAN CANVAS MARKS 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Just over a decade ago, infamous Belgian tattooist Wim Delvoye was looking for someone willing to be a human canvas. Wim had previously achieved notoriety by tattooing pigs, and this new project was to become controversial too – because when he said “human canvas” he meant it in a very literal way. He planned to create a tattoo that would be treated like a conventional work of art and sold on the international art market. He therefore needed a customer who would agree to his tattooed skin being sold to an art collector, with the intention of it being preserved and framed upon his death... and, while still alive, be prepared to exhibit himself (and of course the all-important tattoo) in art galleries. The man who agreed to do this was Tim Steiner from Switzerland. The resulting backpiece, executed by Wim Delvoye, was sold to German art collector Rik Reinking. We hear the work fetched more than £100,000 – with Tim receiving one third of that sale price. Tim sees himself as a “temporary frame” for the work and feels that tattooists should be accepted as artists in their own right in the contemporary art world. He also explained that Wim Delvoye's idea was to highlight the uniqueness of tattoo art – that it changes with time, as the wearer's body changes. In his 10th year as a living canvas, Tim Steiner participated in his longest running exhibition yet, at the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Hobart, Tasmania.



DR EVIL IN COURT

Many readers of Total Tattoo Magazine will know of Mac 'Dr Evil' McCarthy, the highly regarded body modification specialist. Mac is acknowledged throughout the industry to be an expert in his field, and much of his work is

concerned with reconstructive procedures (for stretched ears, for example). We were therefore shocked to hear that Mac is due to appear in court charged with several counts of grievous bodily harm and wounding relating to consensual body modification – charges which, it must be emphasised, were made by a third party (who cannot be named) and emphatically NOT by the customer involved. A petition in support of Mac has been set up: <https://www.change.org/p/support-professional-body-modification-specialist-mac-mccarthy> There is also a support group on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1202913426495873>



Studio for sale

Tiger Sid John Siddons has contacted us to let us know he is selling his studio due to illness. He tells us, “Everything is included the sale – tattoo machines, designs, stencil machines, steriliser, etc. It's a great shop with 43 years of history. It just needs the right person to run it. For viewings and enquiries please telephone 07872 642451”.

Big North Tattoo Show WEBSITE GOES LIVE!



WWW.BIGNORTHTATTOOSHOW.COM

WIN TICKETS TO TOTAL TATTOO'S VERY OWN BIG NORTH SHOW

THE BIG NORTH total tattoo SHOW

We are incredibly excited to be hosting our first ever tattoo convention - **The Big North Tattoo Show** - at the Metro Radio Arena, Newcastle Upon Tyne, on **29th and 30th April**.

There will be around 300 top class artists at the show - from the UK and worldwide. It's an event not to be missed, whether you're coming to get an amazing tattoo or simply want to marvel at the insane skill of these artists. In addition, the show will boast tons of entertainment by an astounding array of unique acts, plus tattoo competitions, an exhibition by our sponsors Jennings Harley Davidson and lots more besides.

Our website is now live, and we are constantly adding to our confirmed artist list and entertainment programme, so keep checking our updates on **www.bignorthtattooshow.com**

Advance tickets are selling fast, but you could be in with a chance of winning a pair of weekend passes to the show by answering this simple question:

How many artists will be at the Big North Tattoo Show?

- A) Around 300**
- B) Nobody knows**
- C) Pi (= 3.141592653589)**

Please email your answer and contact details to comps@totaltattoo.co.uk with "BIG NORTH" as the heading to reach us by 30th March (Usual T&Cs apply – see page 5.) Good luck!

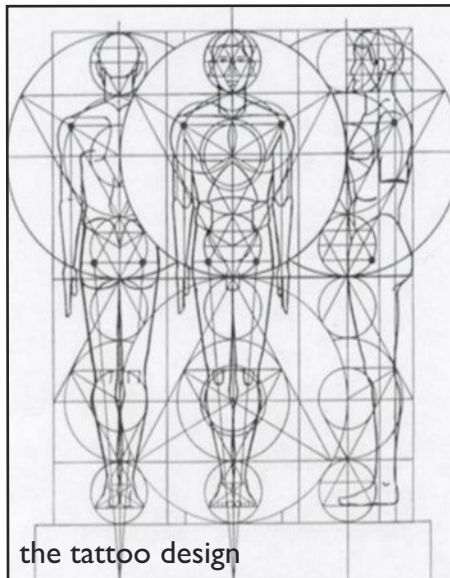


SEEING RED AT SANG BLEU

High quality London studio Sang Bleu is under fire on social media, finding itself accused of discrimination because one of its artists refused to tattoo an HIV positive customer.

Provided the correct health and safety procedures are followed there is no risk to an artist tattooing someone who is HIV positive, but tattooist Malvina Wisniewska felt unable to proceed when her customer disclosed his HIV status. She later explained on social media that this was because of a personal HIV scare a few months ago; when tattooing another HIV-positive customer, she had received an injury from a sharp object and had to undergo HIV testing and precautionary treatment. Although she subsequently received the all-clear, she said the traumatic experience left her feeling mentally unprepared to tattoo another HIV positive customer so soon afterwards, and felt that if she'd gone ahead with the tattoo in her anxious state her work might have been sub-standard. Sang Bleu apparently offered the customer an alternative artist, but according to comments posted on social media he left the shop feeling

extremely aggrieved. It is of course against the law to discriminate against anyone on the basis of their HIV status and we understand that Malvina Wisniewska is now no longer working at Sang Bleu. Studio owner Maxime Plescia-Buchi was keen to stress that he is against discrimination of any kind and expects all artists working at Sang Bleu to share the same ethical principles and abide by the law.



WIN TICKETS TO SOUTHAMPTON TATTOO FESTIVAL

The Southampton Tattoo Festival will be hosted at the Ageas Bowl, Hampshire, on the 1st and 2nd of July. As well as top class tattooing, there will be a vintage market, burlesque show and live music. Children under 15 years old get in free, and the organisers tell us the weekend will be fun for all the family.



If you'd like to be in with a chance of winning tickets, just email us the answer to the following question:

Where will the Southampton Tattoo Festival take place this year?

- A) The Fruit Bowl**
- B) The Ageas Bowl**
- C) The Fish Bowl**

Please email your answer and contact details to comps@totaltattoo.co.uk with "SOUTHAMPTON" as the heading, to reach us by 30th March 30th. (Usual T&Cs apply – see page 5.) Good luck!

RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX

A heartbreaking online video showing a man tattooing his Sphinx cat has caused outrage amongst tattoo fans and artists alike. Identified only as 'Aleksandr', the man from Yekaterinburg in Russia apparently gave his cat, Demon, an anaesthetic (which can in itself be harmful) before tattooing the animal with Russian criminal-style tattoos, and he says it's not the first time he's done it. It's a riddle that seemingly has no answer – how can human beings show such cruelty towards their non-human friends?



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We'll be posting great tattoos, news, and exclusive competitions. Follow us on [#totaltattoomagazine](https://www.instagram.com/totaltattoomagazine)

RUSSIAN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Amidst widespread concern about recent changes in Russian law that decriminalise certain forms of domestic violence, it's good to hear about someone who is trying to help survivors of the abuse. We've picked up a story about Russian tattooist Yevgeniya Zakhar, who is offering to ink women free of charge – covering their physical scars, boosting their self-esteem and helping them to regain ownership of their bodies. She posted an ad on social media, and was apparently absolutely inundated with responses, and has since tattooed more than a thousand women (such is the need for her service).



TATTOO YOUR CAR!

We've heard that purchasers of the Audi R8 (and, in due course, other models too) can opt to have any design of their choice – provided it's legal – etched onto their new car's bodywork. The process involves blasting on a powder that roughens the surface of the lacquer and leaves a permanent matt-finish mark in the shape of whatever template was used. Vorsprung durch Technik!



WIN TICKETS TO INK & IRON

Ink and Iron will once again be hosted at The New Bingley Hall this year, on Sunday 9th April. As always, some of the industry's most talented artists will be tattooing at the event which will also include live music, DJ sets, a car and bike show, a powerlifting competition and a "Light and Dark" art exhibition. Advance tickets are priced at £15 (available until Saturday 8th April) or £20 on the day. The organisers have kindly given us two pairs of tickets to give away to two lucky readers. To be in with a chance of winning, all you need to do is email us your answer to the following question:

What is the name of the art exhibition at this year's Ink and Iron convention?

- A) Light and Dark
- B) Black and White
- C) Tea and Coffee

Please email your answer and contact details to comps@totaltattoo.co.uk with "INK AND IRON" as the heading, to reach us by 30th March. (Usual T&Cs apply – see page 5.) Good luck!

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Collaboration

AN INTERVIEW WITH JASON BUTCHER
AND LIANNE MOULE

Words by James Sandercock • Pictures by James, Jason & Lianne



The dictionary definition of 'collaboration' is 'working together'. The collaborative relationship between artist and client is of course an inherent part of tattooing, but truly creative collaborations between tattoo artists are few and far between.

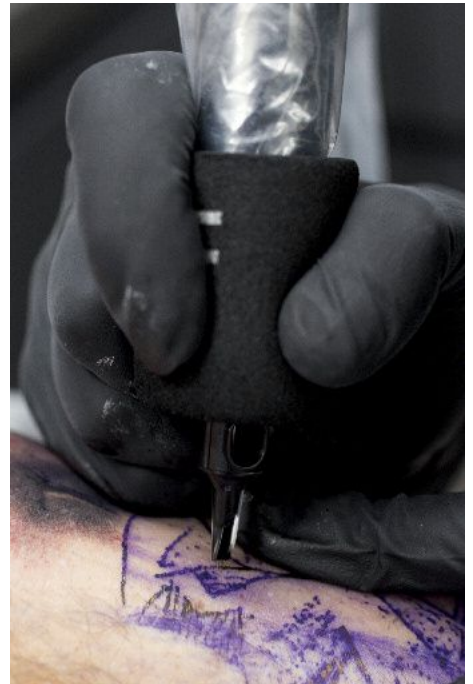
It was when I saw the work of Volko and Simone of the Buena Vista Tattoo Club that my eyes were first opened to the creative possibilities of true artistic collaboration. Those artists were producing something that simply couldn't have come about without the collaborative process. It wasn't just a case of deciding to work together on one customer; there was something different happening, something empathic that led to a different way of thinking about tattooing. What I realised then, and still believe now, is that when there is an intimate connection between two artists, collaboration can yield something that is beyond even their expectations. The magic of collaboration happens somewhere in the unknown, in the meeting of minds, maybe even in the meeting of spirits. That kind of relationship is a rare thing, but you can clearly see it in the collaborative work of Jason Butcher and Lianne Moule.

Originator of the much-emulated Death Romantic style, Jason has long been leading the way with his large-scale black and grey concept tattooing. Lianne, who apprenticed under Jason, has made her own impact on modern tattooing with her watercolour style. Their personal lives are intertwined, and their tattoo styles seamlessly blend in a way that perfectly reflects this. I recently spent an afternoon with them at Jason's shop Immortal Ink – catching up, drinking great coffee (Jason would make a fine barista) and talking about the beautiful tattoos they create together.

James: Do you feel your collaborations are even more exciting and interesting than your individual work? Was it a natural step to take?

Jason: For me, working together with Lianne definitely feels like something greater than the sum of our two parts.

Lianne: We spend our lives together. Even when we tattoo separately we design together and help each other out. We just naturally reached a point where it seemed that we should be tattooing together.





Jason: We do have our own individual strengths and weaknesses. Composition is one of my strengths; I don't know why, but I just see shapes first rather than concentrating on the image. So I would find myself looking at Lianne's designs and saying, 'I think you need a bit here, or a straight line there'. And of course there were always things she could help me with too...

Lianne: Yes, I'd end up putting some textures into Jason's designs, or painting something in. We were getting more and more involved in each other's work, so why not just take that onto the skin and do the tattoo together?

James: So how has the process developed?

Jason: Because our work was crossing over more and more, it did feel like a natural progression. But the first one we did was definitely more separate parts than one cohesive style.

Lianne: As a tattooist, you become quite precious about what you're doing. The feeling you get when you go up against another artist's work is that you're somehow going to get too close to it... and that you might ruin it. When you're collaborating, you must overcome that feeling. Now, we're really confident in what the other person is doing and not so precious about our own bits. That's





really been the biggest lesson. I know that whatever Jason does is going to be best for the tattoo, and he feels the same about me. And we don't just do our own bits; we will go over and into the other's work and build it up. At the end of the day it's what's best for the completed tattoo rather than our individual efforts.

Jason: But that was a hard place to get to! I was a bit of a diva about it. I wasn't exactly a control freak, but I thought I knew best. When we first started collaborating, we did this design and I was telling Lianne that she needed to paint this bit and use these colours and she was just like, 'No, I'm going to do it like this.' But I'd had a particular colour scheme in mind and I wanted it kept that way.



Lianne: You'd come up with the plan and that's the way you wanted it to be.

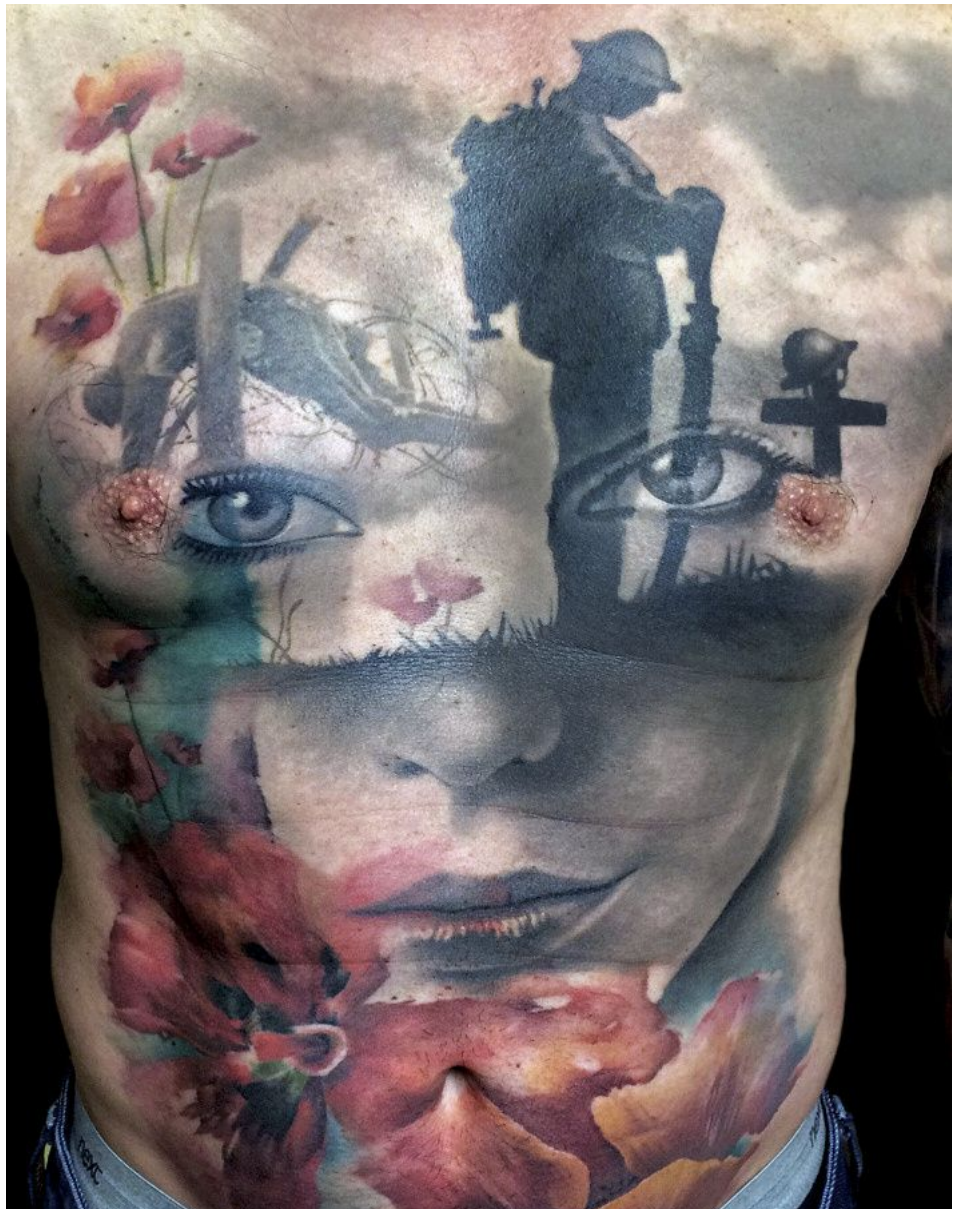
Jason: I threw my toys out of the pram and stormed off into the living room shouting, 'I don't care! Do whatever you want!' So Lianne did what she wanted and I was like, 'Um... that's actually much better than my idea.' From that moment on I have trusted her completely.

Lianne: You learn to give up a little control when you work together. The most important thing is what is right for the person in front of you - the client. It's not about you showcasing your work. We have done tattoos where my bits are quite subdued and Jason's work stands out more, and vice versa. It's important that the parts are not fighting each other for attention. As tattooists we are used to showcasing what we do best, but when you're working with another artist you just want the whole thing to look good. You need to understand that what you do is not necessarily going to be the main focus. It can be kind of hard sometimes.

James: So how does it work in the consultation process? Do your clients ever state that they want more of one artist than the other?

Jason: We sometimes get that. We do have a couple of clients who are more into one of our styles than the other...

Lianne: But it's one of the reasons why it's so important for us to find the right clients, and why we don't just tattoo anybody.



Jason: We always try to do what is right for the design. It sounds pretentious, I know, but it's the truth. We try to put our egos aside and let the tattoo be whatever it's going to be. Our customers need to understand that, and they need to do the same. They need to give up control over things such as which artist does most of the work. When Lianne and I sit down together and start to work on the design we are always surprised at how it develops; there are always twists and turns, and we explain all of that to our clients. For instance the client might ask for a sleeve, but we don't really use terms like that anymore. We'd say something like, 'It's mostly going to be on your arm, but would you be OK if it carried over onto your chest?' We are trying to break down barriers and have fewer limits, so we need our clients to understand and feel that way too. Most people seem to be really cool about it.

Lianne: If there are any difficulties or problems we can't iron out at the consultation stage we have to say that we're not the right tattooists for that client.

James: How have people reacted to your collaborative pieces?

Jason: I've had a hard time with criticisms from people who like my individual work – comments like 'You used to be great' or 'Your work is shit now'. Lianne, you don't get any of that do you? The people who like Lianne's work are much kinder... But when Lianne posts her individual stuff it does get way more likes than our collaborative pieces. Our collaborative work has deeper layers and levels; it asks more of people. I think we both feel our work together is more important; it's just not as easy for people to consume.



Lianne: I understand how social media works. I know that 95% of the people looking at my work are everyday people and they're not looking to push artistic boundaries. If I tattoo a pretty rose on a girl, people will like it. Getting a large response to posting a flower doesn't have any relevance to the work we are doing together. What we do together is a bit more niche. It's not the same thing at all.

Jason: And our peers in the serious world of tattooing love what we are doing.

James: Have you changed as artists?

Jason: It's changed my way of thinking about tattooing and broadened my horizons.

Lianne: For me it's hard to say, because it's been a slow evolution. We've reached this point gradually.





Jason: I think there will always be a link or a crossover in our work.

James: Has collaborating changed the way you feel about tattooing?

Jason: Yes, absolutely! As your career goes on you get stuck in your ways, but this has given me a new enthusiasm and taken me to another level. And Lianne, you were always known for small nature pieces, but as soon as we started to collaborate all of a sudden people wanted a backpiece or a body suit from you!

Lianne: Yes, it was rare for me to be asked to do big stuff. But now I'm doing all these huge pieces.

Jason: Isn't it strange? 'Collaboration Lianne' is a body suit person, but 'Solo Lianne' is still working on smaller tattoos...

Lianne: My collaboration customers are very different to the ones who come to me for my solo work.

Jason: It's just one of the many things we've learnt along the way. How far can we push the limits we impose on ourselves.

James: Has working together brought you closer together personally?

Lianne: Yes it has, and it totally makes sense now. We do everything else together, so why did we keep our art separate?

Jason: I feel the same way. We overcome so many obstacles whilst collaborating on our tattoos, and those things were obviously obstacles in our relationship as





Lianne: It feels like anything is possible. Ten years ago people wouldn't even have dreamt about some of the things that are happening today – like putting ink onto a flower, using that as a stencil and then tattooing it. To me that's just brilliant art. It's never just about the final tattoo; it's the entire concept. It's like a piece of performance art, where the tattoo is a reminder of the experience. Who would have thought tattooing would go there?

Jason: Why do there have to be any limits in tattooing? Why can't a client just go into a studio and get passed from artist to artist? Why does there have to be a set way of doing things?

Listening to Jason and Lianne talk about their collaborative process, it's not difficult to see why the tattoos they do together work so beautifully. In fact I find myself wondering whether the simple word 'collaboration' really does them justice. These pieces feel like something so much more than that...

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well. But maybe we didn't know they were there? It's been a cool way to get over some of those issues, but in disguise...

James: I sense that you now have a greater appreciation of what the other person does?

Jason: Absolutely. Sometimes I look at something I've done and think, 'Lianne will make that look cool'.

Lianne: We might be doing a piece at a convention over two days, and I'll do my bit on day one, then Jason will do his bit on day two, and at the end of it I'll look at my work and think, 'Great, he's made it better'.

James: Do you feel that what you have discovered is something other people can now learn from?

Jason: We just taught a seminar at the Paradise Gathering and it was really well received.

Lianne: When we were putting the seminar together we decided we couldn't teach techniques, but we knew we could share our philosophy. Learning to let go of your personal control... learning to really trust someone else... and finding the right person to work with.

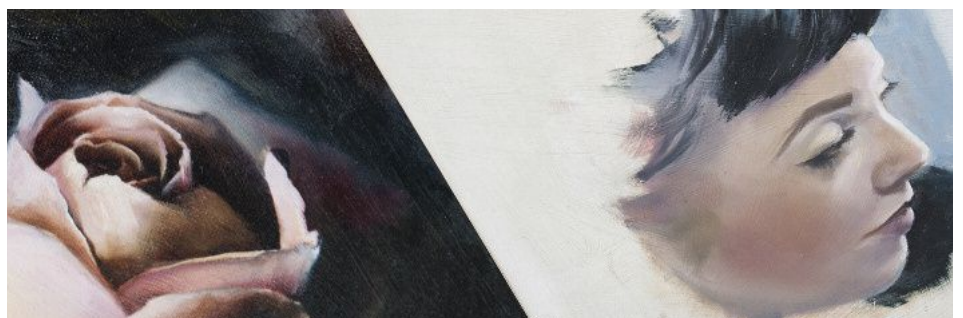
Jason: Also understanding the relationship with your client. When you are doing big work, that becomes very important.

James: Do you know where you're headed with this project?

Jason: Not really! We're just going wherever it takes us.

James: How do you see things developing in the future? Might there be a time when you no longer feel the need to work as individual artists at all?

Jason: Yes, I think so, eventually. There are things we like to do individually but we could easily incorporate those into our collaborations. That would be my goal – to be working only together. It feels like we have reached the phase in tattooing where people are mixing everything together, so why not? Why not do things differently?





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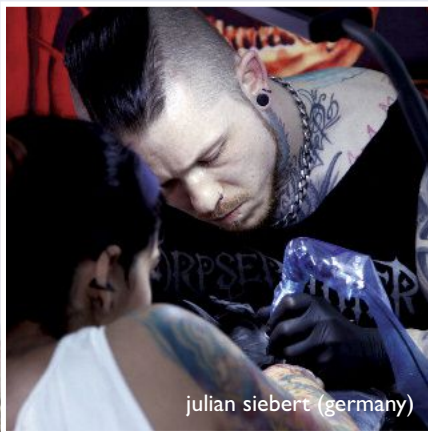
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GOA

Tattoo festival 2017



julian siebert (germany)



guy le tatoeer



deep, kraayonz tattoo studio (india)

The beautiful coastal region of Goa in western India, less than one hour's flight from Mumbai (Bombay), is a small slice of paradise. With sandy beaches caressed by the Arabian Sea and kissed by the sun from dawn to dusk, it's the most amazing place to combine a tattoo convention with a holiday/tattooists' retreat.

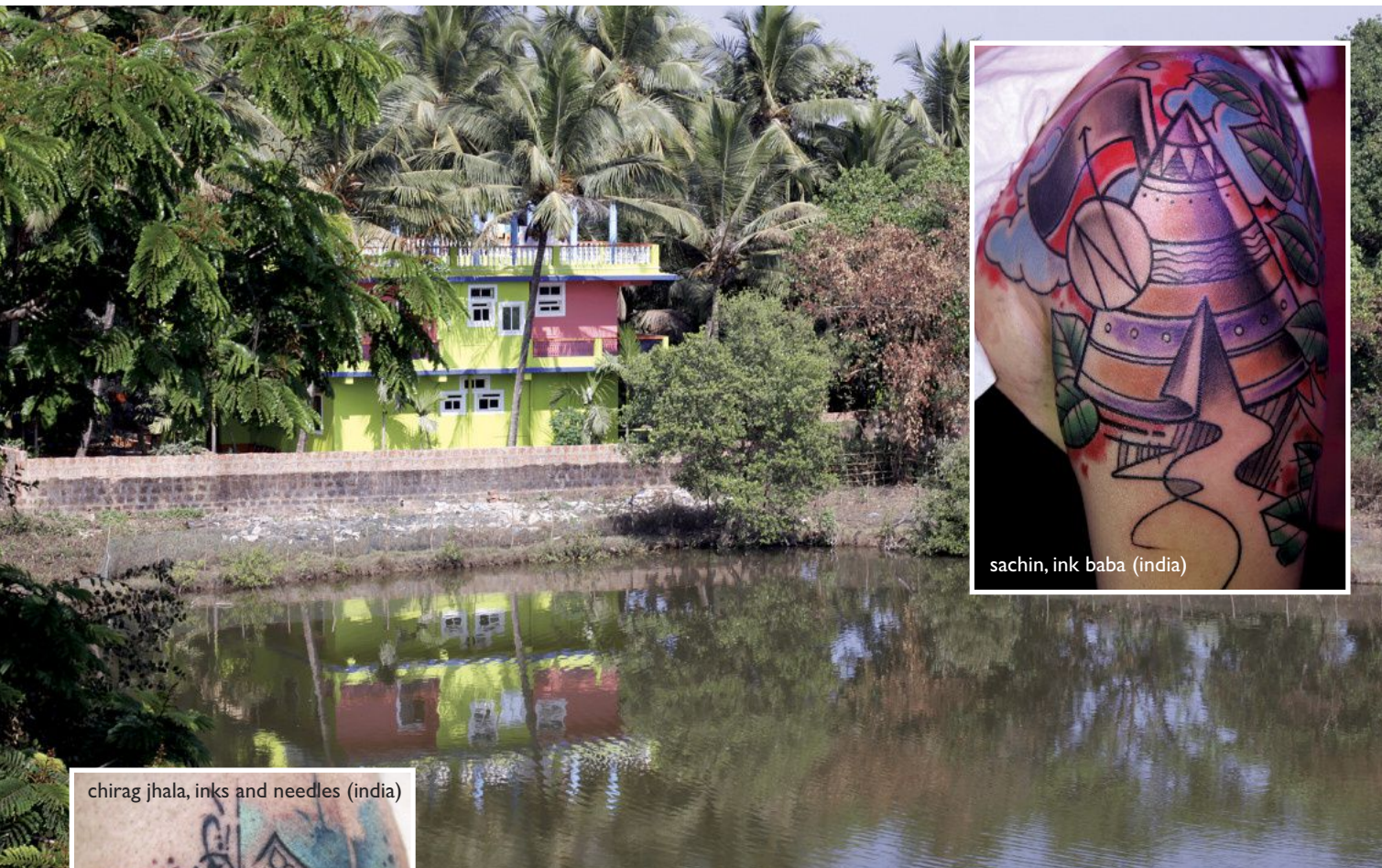
India is a magical place. Somehow in all the dust, noise, craziness and chaos, time kind of calms right down. The pace of life is slow, and it's easy to see why this part of the world has been so popular with travellers and hippies since the early 60s.

Last year saw the first Goa Tattoo Convention, put on by Martin McIver of Tattoo TV (organiser of the Tattoo Tea Party, Galway show, Big North show, etc). Martin's vision was simple: introduce a

list of great European tattooists to a place he himself loves to visit, add a selection of influential Indian artists, a few traders and some fantastic entertainment, and let the festival begin!

The show is held at Tito's White House on the Anjuna Road. The complex consists of a café serving good quality European food, a nightclub, a pool, a bar and a large open-sided tiered area which housed most of the tattooists, with others dotted along the main thoroughfare at the front. Temperatures soared into the high 30s on all three days, and the open areas were wrapped in netting to allow cool air to flow whilst at the same time keeping out the dust and the insects.

Pretty much everyone who had previously visited the show had opted to come again, including Rhys Gordon (Little Tokyo in Australia), Adem (Fat Fugu), Soydan (Yakuza Tattoo in Ireland),



sachin, ink baba (india)

chirag jhala, inks and needles (india)



Holly (Boo Tattoo), Jake X and Lewis (Crooked Rook), and Marcus (Yuktimaan). There were also some fabulous new additions to the line-up, including Matt Hanumantra (Unlty), Julian Siebert (Corpsepainter), Guy le Tatooeer, Claire Hamill and many more. Indian artists included Mukesh (Moksha Tattoo), Sunny Bhanushali (Alien Tattoo), Pramod Deshmukh (Leo Tattoos) and Lloyd Fletcher (Lloyd of the Rings). Take a look at www.goattatoofestival.com for the full artist list.

On the Thursday before the show Mukesh and Sunny teamed up to present a seminar on realism which included them both tattooing two separate tattoos on the same guy (Warren from England) while they explained their process along the way! Friday morning was the official start of the show, and in typical Indian style essential jobs were being completed right up to the very last moment. Then the people came, the sun shone and the smiles beamed. There was a tangible buzz in the air as old friends met up, and everyone was busy. Entertainment on the large free-standing stage got underway with belly dancers and some very inventive bands who looped tracks while performing acrobatics, all of which was filmed and projected onto a massive digital backdrop screen. No expense was spared.

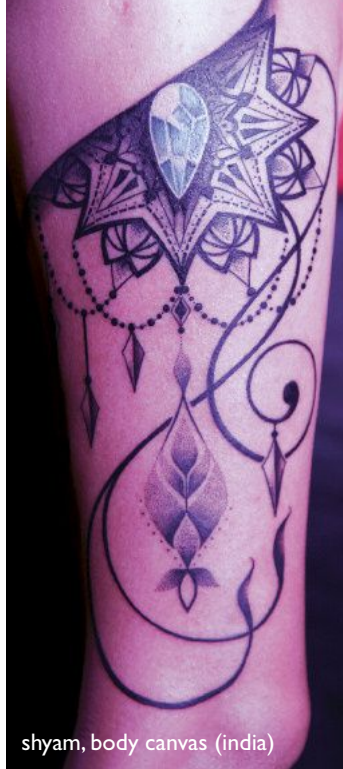
mukesh waghela
moksha tattoo
(india)



sean, sailor max

All through the day the fun and excitement continued, and as the sun went down and the lights came on the show took on a magical feel that really encapsulated the essence of a festival. Alcohol is incredibly cheap in Goa and everyone seemed to take good advantage of the party vibe. Then many of the artists headed to the nearby beach for a well-deserved rest after the day's proceedings.

Saturday dawned, and we needed to get to the show early to catch Matt Hanumantra's seminar. It was the first seminar he had ever given, not that anyone would ever have known; it was an extremely interesting and informative presentation, despite the fact that he was feeling a little under the weather. The show itself proceeded very much in a similar vein to Friday. Julian Siebert (Corpsepainter) worked on a full sleeve themed around the Hindu god Shiva, while Guy le Tatoer spent most of his time tattooing all the other tattooists who were desperate for a piece of his special brand of brilliance! Between the chatting, drinking and generally having a good time the day passed really quickly and before I knew it I was judging on stage. Not many of the European artists entered the competitions, leaving the Indian artists to fight it out among themselves. Then after the show it was straight off to the Saturday night market, a massive outdoor event with stalls selling all sorts of Indian trinkets, a food area and a full-on rave in the middle. It's huge, and it was the ideal place to collect a few gifts for the folks back home.



shyam, body canvas (india)



duncan viegas, infidel tattoo (india)



hanumantra, lecture on black work



mukesh waghela, moksha tattoo (india)





sebastian kristen, corpsepainter (germany)

Sunday was slow to start and the temperature was way up. Numbers through the door were small, but this being India nobody really cared; everyone just got on with having fun and enjoying themselves. One of the Indian artists had spent days creating an amazing masterpiece of a portrait out of nothing but coloured dust! Its likeness and technical ability were incredible and I feel sorry that the photo (see page 31) simply cannot do it justice. And Sunday was serious competition time. The judges were Lal Hardy (New Wave Tattoo), Naresh Bhuna (Flamin' Eight) and Jocke Hultman from Sweden. Emotions ran high, with many of the winning artists literally crying with joy.



the only way to see india

As the show drew to a close, a palpable wave of sadness flowed through all of us as we realised it was over for another year. There are good shows, great shows and a few shows that are truly amazing experiences, and for me Goa sits well within that last category. It's so much more than a tattoo festival. It's a celebration of the way that tattooing can unify people from opposite corners of the world. The Indian artists really appreciate the European guys for coming over and sharing their stories and knowledge, whilst the European guys love the way we are all so welcomed into the world of Indian art.



kevin andrade, flying lotus (india)



pramod deshमुख, leo tattoso (india)



josh lin, synthetic lab (taiwan)



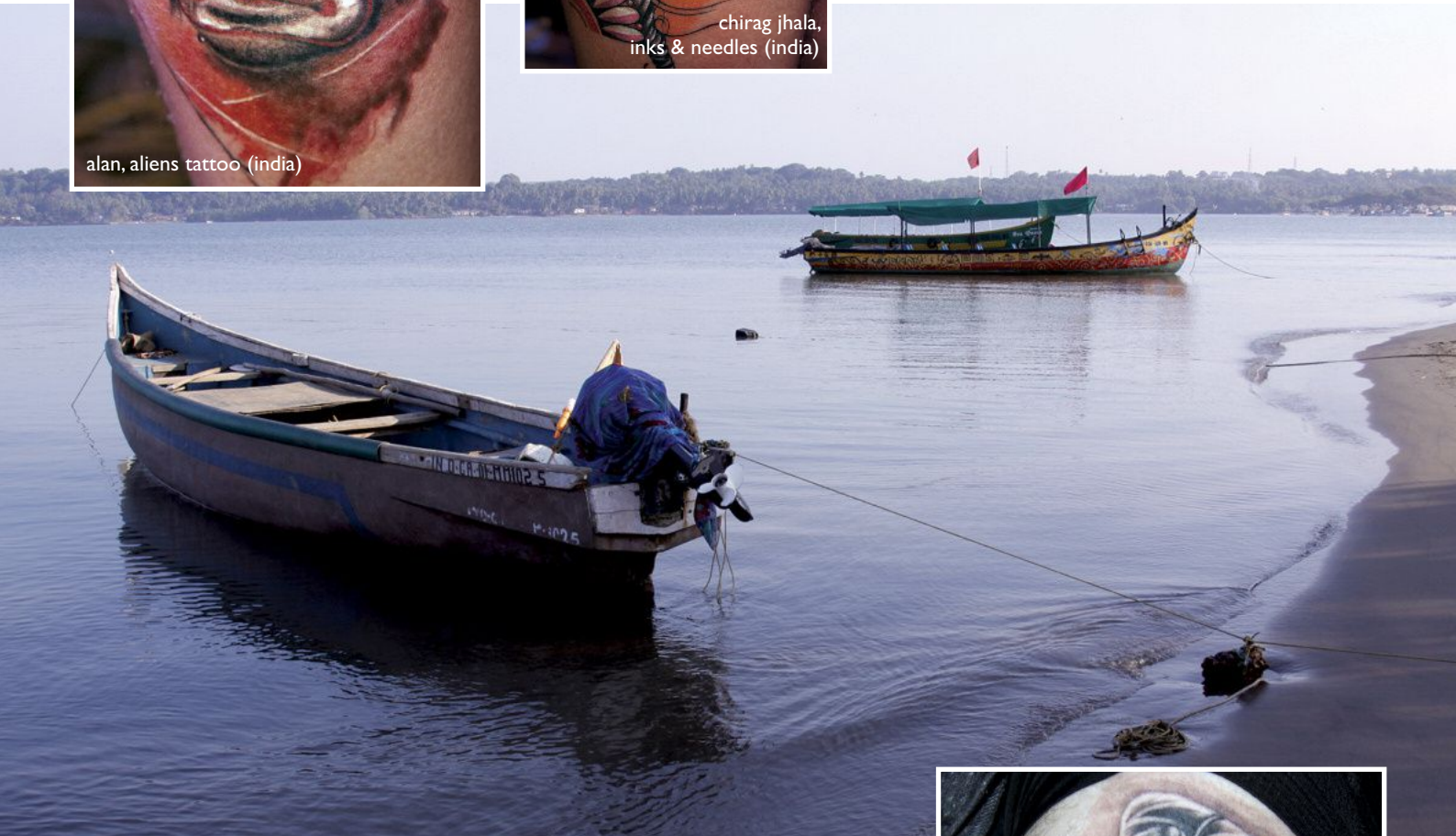
julian siebert, corpsepainter (germany)



alan, aliens tattoo (india)



chirag jhala,
inks & needles (india)



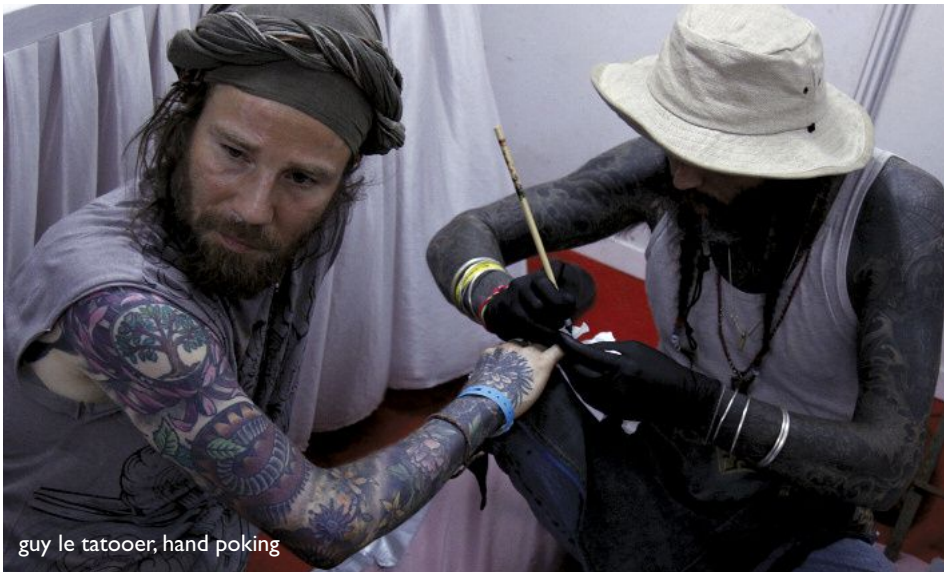
alister ephraim,
eye circus (india)



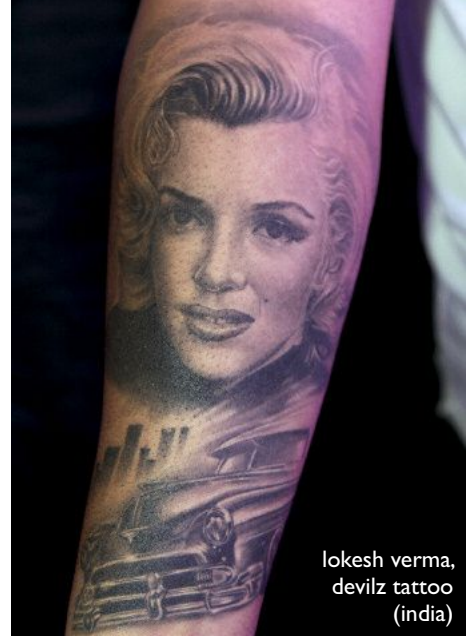
mik lepcha, mohans tattoo inn (nepal)



mukesh waghela, moksha tattoo (india)



guy le tatoover; hand poking



lokesh verma,
devilz tattoo
(india)



sunny bhanushali,
aliens tattoo (india)



mapusa market



the crew



jessi manchester,
jessi manchester tattoo (germany)



matt chahal tattoos mike banting



josh lin, synthetic lab (taiwan)

Lots of us stayed on in Goa after the show of course, and the following morning at 8am we assembled for what is becoming a bit of a tradition: the motorbike ride out to 17th century Fort Tiracol (reached via the river ferry) for lunch. All the artists rent bikes of various sizes and we ride in unison, which is just the best thing ever. It's the highlight of the trip for us. Then the numbers of visiting tattooists gradually dwindled over the next week or so as our time in paradise came to an end and we dragged ourselves back to our real lives and back to our work commitments. However long I get to spend in India, it will never be enough.



painting made of powdered pigment by pramod sahu



sudhir rao, body canvas

SARAH JENSEN

This month's cover model is Sarah Jensen, a Norwegian Puerto Rican who's passionate about yoga and gaming. She'd also love to be able to fly faster than the speed of sound!

Tell us a little about yourself...

I am Puerto Rican and Norwegian. (I was raised in a Norwegian household, but I do wish someone had taught me Spanish while I was growing up.) Norway is my favourite place in the whole world. Everything about that country appeals to me and I'd love to live there one day. One of my greatest passions is yoga because it makes me feel like I can disappear into myself and re-emerge cleansed, healed and whole. Career-wise, modelling is my full-time gig. But all that comes after my full-time mom responsibilities. Not many people know that I have two children because I keep our private lives off social networks.

What's your day-to-day style?

I can describe my style as "classic with a touch of BoHo chic" – because I don't know what either of those things mean and I'm wearing sweatpants...

I hear you are a gamer.

Yes, I've been gaming since I was a little girl. I started on PC and the original PlayStation, with games like Crash Bandicoot and Tomb Raider. My top games right now are Destiny, Skyrim, Final Fantasy, and OVERWATCH!!!

If you could have a special power, what would it be?

I know it's a cliché, but I would love to have the ability to fly. Mach 5 at least.

Tell us about your first tattoo...

I started getting tattoos as soon as I was 18 even though my father expressly forbade it. I absolutely loved the process, but never for one moment did I envisage being heavily inked. As time went on, however, I realised that I was passionate about tattooing. My first tattoo is now covered up by a koi. Back then, I didn't understand the importance of going to a professional tattoo artist with a quality portfolio, and it showed.

Which was your most painful tattoo?

That would have to be either my foot or my ribs, although they are two different kinds of pain.

Do you help design your tattoos or do you rely more on your artist?

When I go to an artist for a tattoo I give them an idea and then let them expand upon it. The only thing I'm very particular about is the size of the tattoo. Other than that, the artist has a completely free rein. I'm not an artist myself, so how can I possibly ask for an original piece while trying to micromanage the details? I definitely respect their skill.

Any plans for future ink?

I want to get my knees done, and my left thigh is completely blank. I'm shopping around for artists at the moment. There are so many good ones out there but so little space left on my body.

How do you feel about social media?

Social media can be a double-edged sword, and I don't like publicly sharing the very intimate details of my life. I have a fantastic fan base, but I find that the content is getting extremely racy and risqué; it's a lot of pressure for someone to have to live up to. At the end of the day, social media isn't real. It's easy to lose yourself in your own image if you're not careful.

How would you change the world?

If I could change the world, I would make karma instantaneous. (While I realise that isn't very realistic, neither is world peace...) I think we would treat each other better if there was an immediate consequence to our good or bad actions. It would be like an accountability booster for humanity.

Any projects in the pipeline?

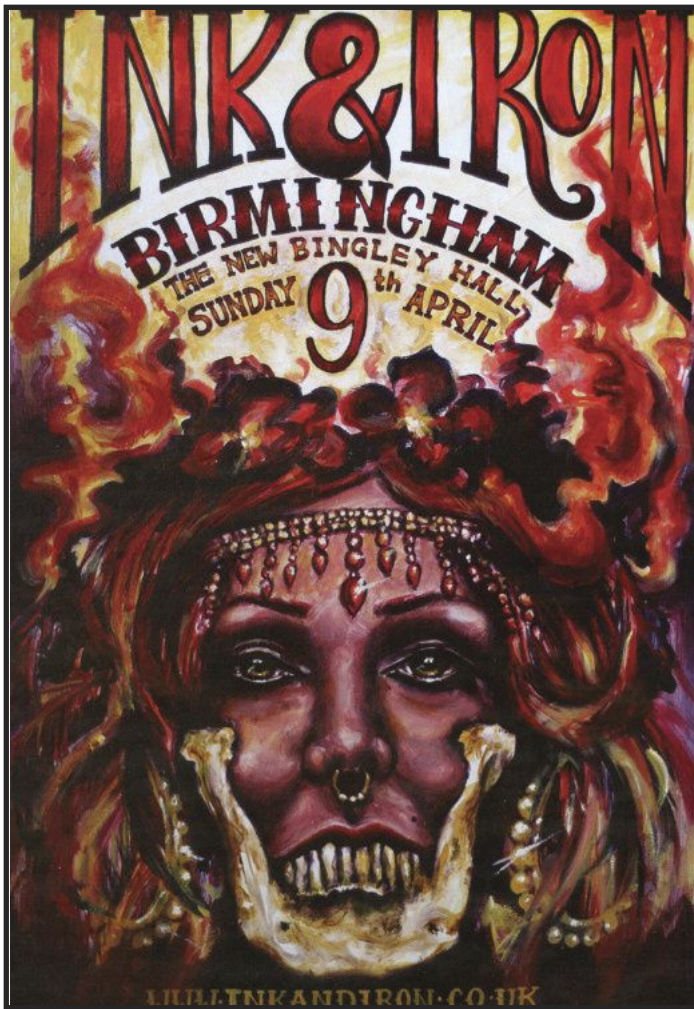
My show ('Playtime with Sarah J' on BRealTV) is streaming on YouTube. I will be gaming live, doing yoga, and there will be Q&A sessions and lots of other fun things!

How do we get in touch?

JustSarahJensen is my handle right across the board.

Words and Pictures: Jenna Kraczek





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Words by Perry • Pictures by Jessica

Jessica Kinzer

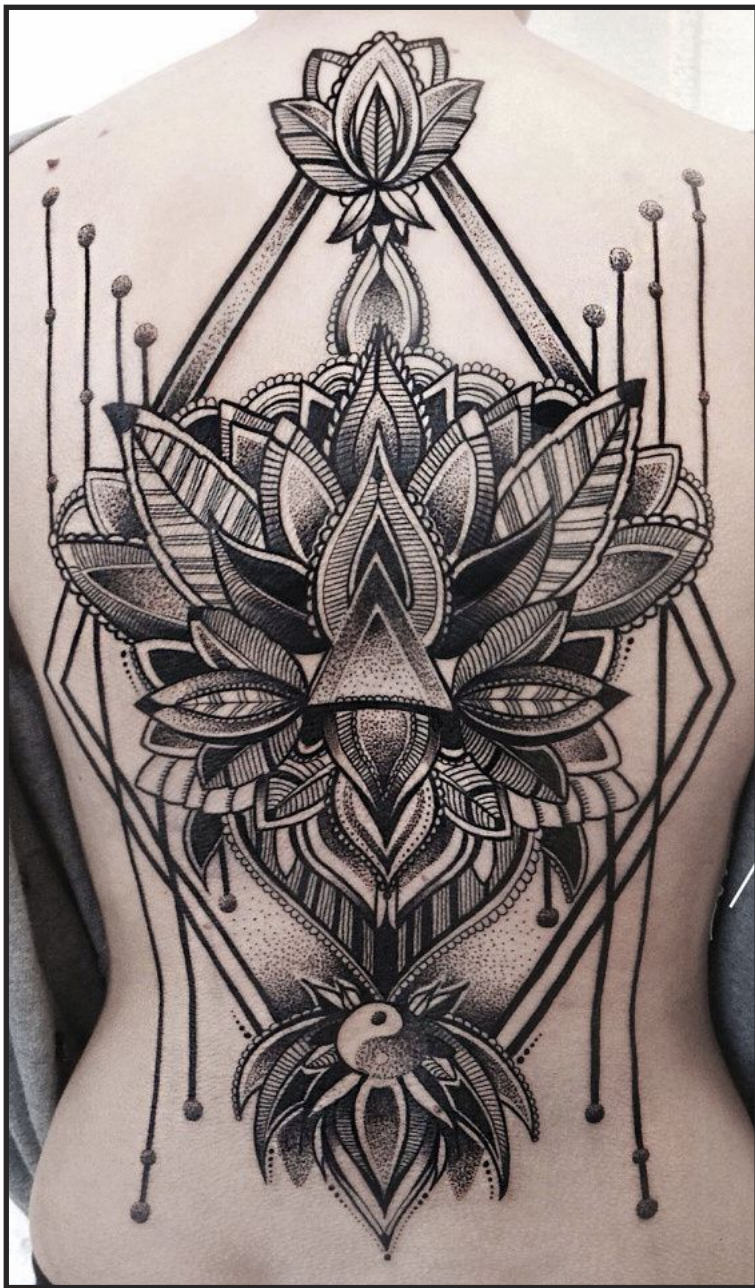
Jessica is an extraordinary new talent in the tattoo world. Although she's only been tattooing for two and a half years, she demonstrates a level of skill and professionalism that often takes far longer to develop. Winner of German tattoo magazine *Tätowier's* 'Best Newcomer' award, we think she has a great career ahead of her.



I begin by asking Jessica about her involvement in art prior to picking up a tattoo machine. "I never really had any involvement in art at all," she tells me. "I always used to draw, but only for fun. Back then I was much more interested in making music. At university I studied Energy and Resource Management and then I worked for a pharmaceuticals company. One day a friend saw some of my drawings and said, 'Hey, you should do something with this talent...' I remember sitting in the office feeling sad and suddenly realising that I had to make a decision about what to do with my life. I wanted a job where I could draw, and make people happy, whilst at the same time getting paid enough to live on. That was when I decided to pursue a career in tattooing. I knew there was a tattoo shop out there calling me! My parents didn't think it was a viable option at all, but I started to draw and draw all the time, then I went to the shop where I'd been getting tattooed and asked the boss if I could be an apprentice. He said, 'Sure, why not!'"

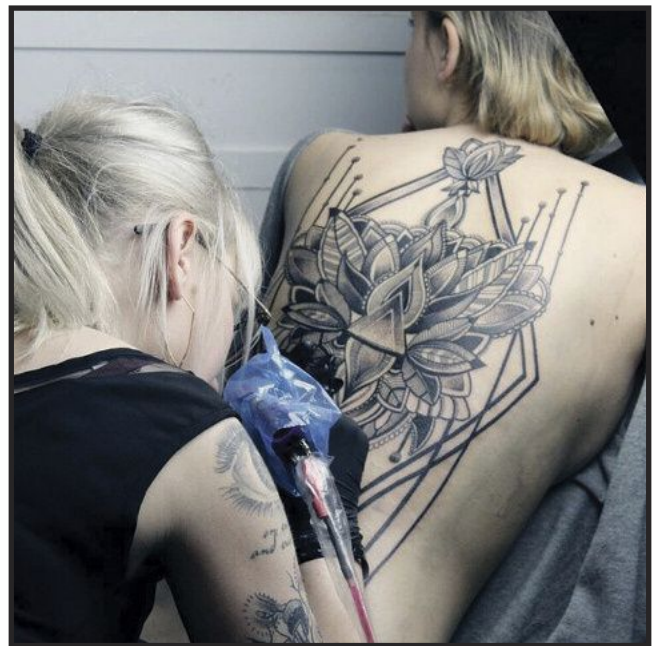
I asked Jessica if she was surprised by his willingness to take her on? "No, not really," she says. "He'd seen my drawings, and he knew he could teach me how to tattoo, plus he wanted someone who would fit in with the team. We're good friends. I'd find it difficult to work in a super cool shop where you have no connection with the other artists. We're more like a family. There's no conflict and no egos, and we all work together instead of working apart. That's how you learn and grow." It's always heartening to hear about an old school tattooist recognising ability in a young talent, and Jessica agrees. "Absolutely. I know I've been very lucky. I've had a lot of help from old school tattooers who have shown me how to make technically good tattoos that will last. I'm very grateful to them." And how about that initial step of transferring her creative skills from paper to skin? "It wasn't difficult," Jessica tells me. "I just kept practising and practising."

All over the world, new tattoo shops are opening and the competition for customers is hotting up. I asked Jessica for her thoughts on the current situation. "It's so much easier today to get into the business, yet at the same time it's still quite difficult! Equipment is easier to get hold of, but the



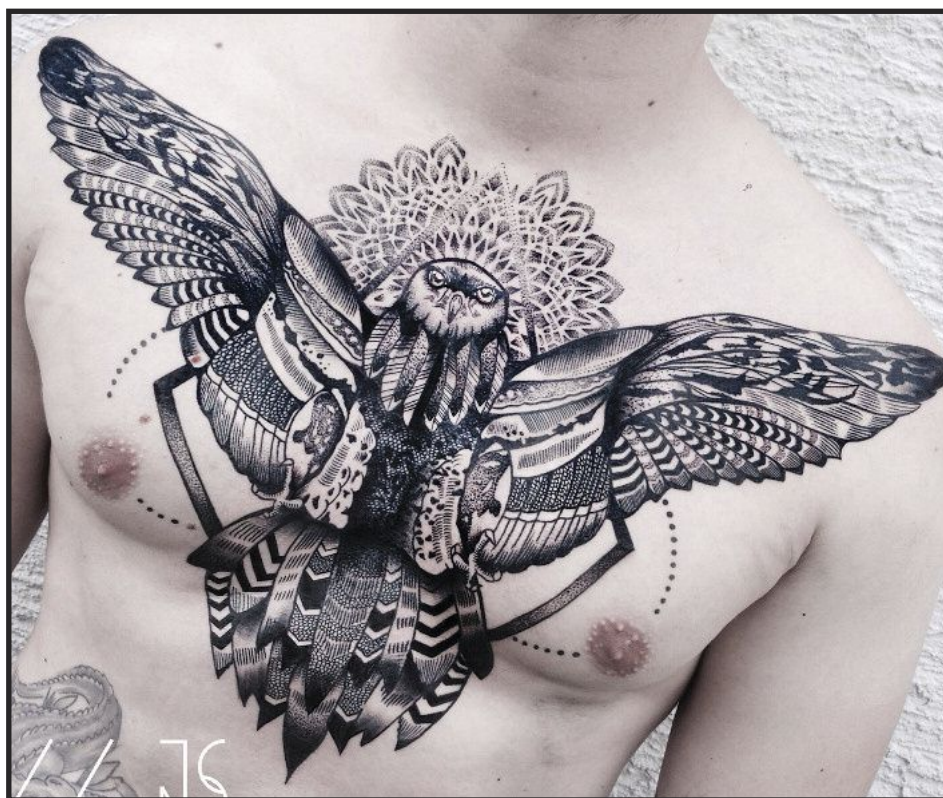
learning is just as hard. There are lots of really great young artists coming through. A year ago, German tattoo magazine *Tätowier* ran a competition to find the best newcomer (which I managed to win). It was a good opportunity for me to see the work of some incredible young tattooists. That competition, and the level of talent, really inspired me to keep trying to get better."

Amazingly, Jessica has only been tattooing for two and a half years. She seems to have such a good, solid attitude towards the world she now inhabits. "My boss and my colleagues have instilled a traditional ethic in me, insisting that I learn the basics and always consider how the tattoo will look in the future. My attitude is very much the way an old school tattooist would think," Jessica explains. "If you do a lot of detailed work like I do, you need to put a bold line around it otherwise it can get a little lost in a few years. I have a lot of realism tattoos on my body and I do believe that if it's done well and done right – and you place contrasting colours with a lot of darks against lights – you can create a great tattoo that will stand the test of time. But it's a skill, and I'm still learning all the time."



I wanted to know if being thrown into the spotlight by winning the Tätowier competition meant that Jessica felt a pressure to achieve? "Not really," she replies. "Maybe that was because of the attitude instilled in me by my peers. I didn't let it go to my head. My life hasn't changed. I still tattoo every day; I still have my regular customers; and I still try to do the best I can. The only pressure I feel is the pressure I put on myself. In Germany, like everywhere else, we have a lot of TV programmes about tattooing and although I've had some publicity, I try to avoid those. I have a passion for tattooing and I don't like to see it sold as entertainment for the masses."

In the UK we are now seeing some tattoo conventions turning their backs on traditional tattoo competitions, and I was eager to get a young artist's view of this. "I kind of like tattoo competitions at shows because I love to see the work. But I never enter them myself because I feel my customer deserves a great tattoo and I don't ever want to rush a piece to get it finished for a competition. Working at a

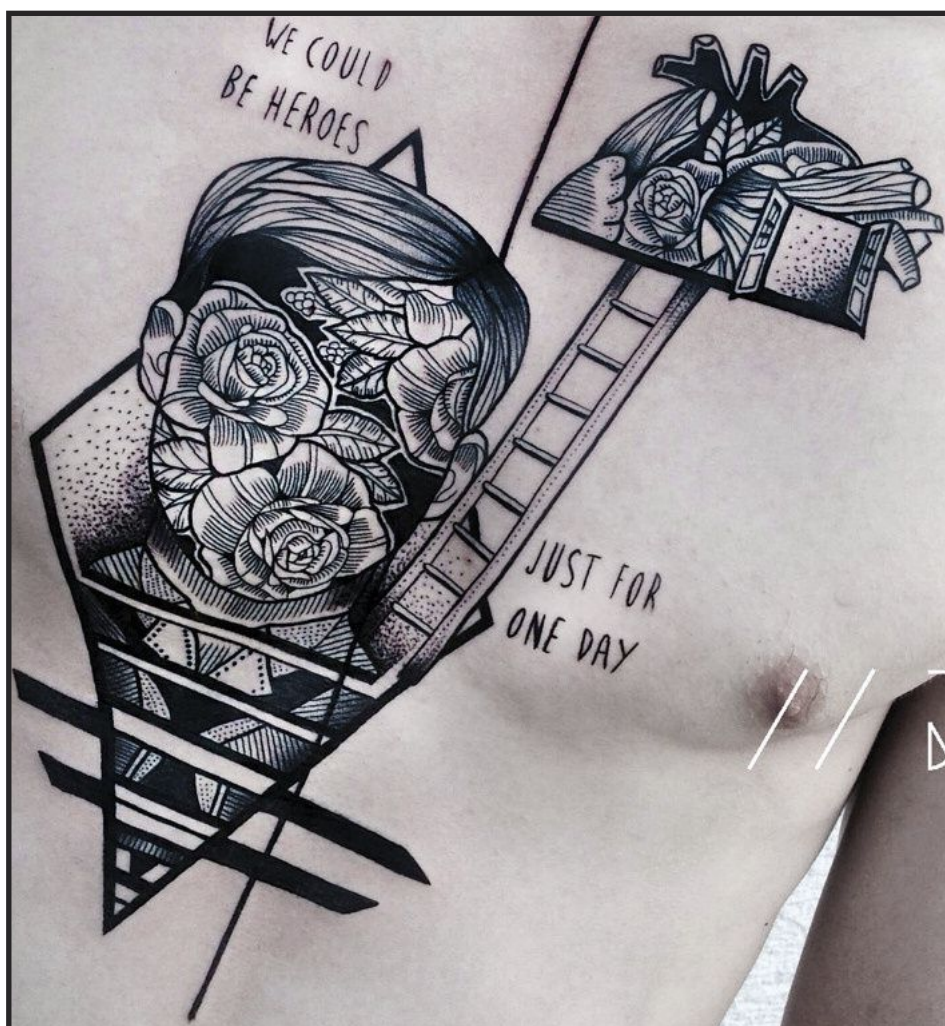


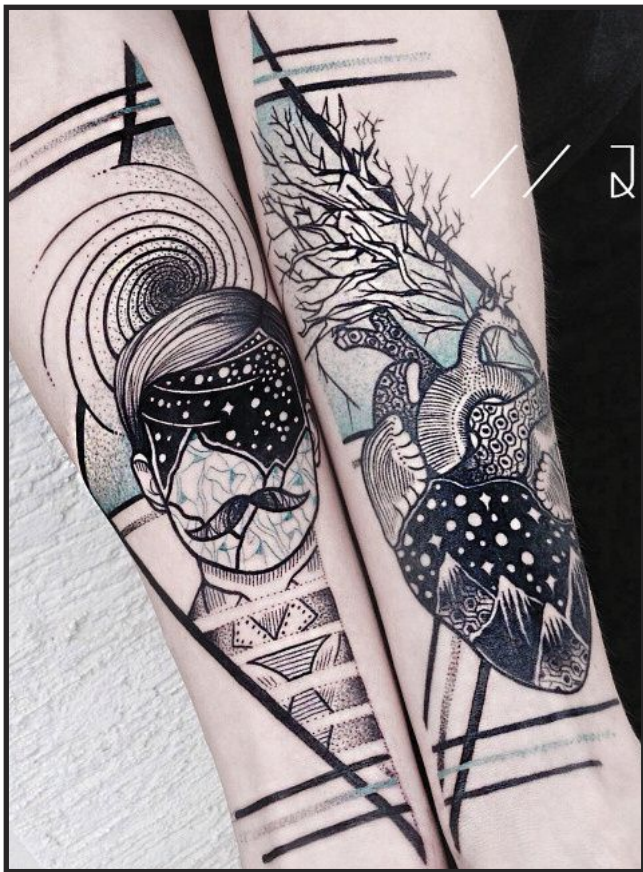


show is always difficult. The light is bad, it's uncomfortable, and there's lots of noise and other distractions. It's not always the best for the customer. I do know tattooists who go to conventions because they really want to win. But I prefer to focus on learning from other tattooists, and making new contacts and friends. I think that's the true nature of conventions."

We talk a bit about all the various styles of work on show at conventions, and this leads on to a discussion of Jessica's own style – which she describes as predominantly blackwork, linework and dotwork. "I love to include botanical shapes and patterns," she tells me, "and I am constantly trying to find something different... which is so hard, because there are so many good, original artists out there. Everyone is trying to find their niche and discover elements that will make their work stand out. I have become well known for doing mandalas, and I love doing them, but I don't want to be constantly copying myself. There are ways to reinvent them, but it gets harder."

Although striving for originality is important, Jessica also feels it is vital to strengthen and deepen her style. She is certainly not content to rest on her laurels. "For me, the key technical elements of my work are the smooth consistent lines and the anatomical placement of each piece. So much of what I do involves placing accurate geometric shapes on imperfect asymmetrical bodies, and you have to find a visual compromise. A tattoo needs to look good when you are sitting around relaxing, not just when you are standing up straight. All the elements need to be considered."

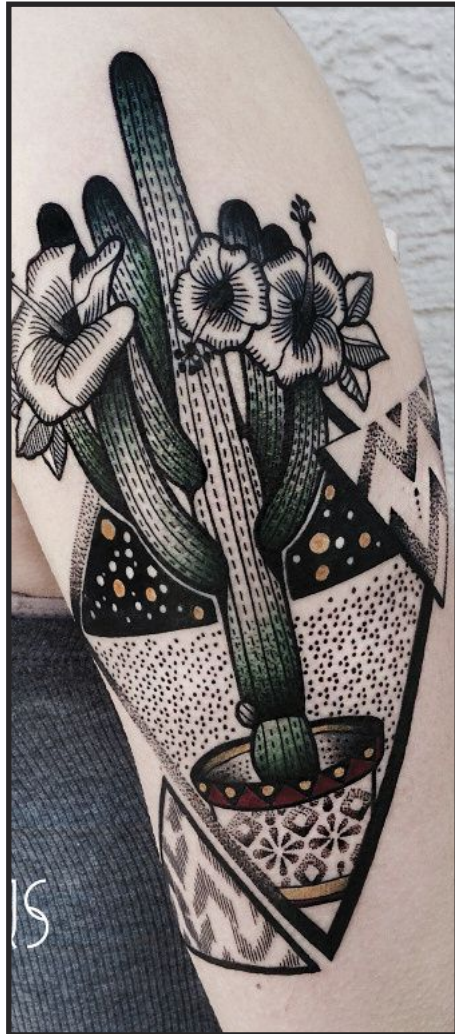




I ask Jessica about her preferences regarding tattoo machines. “I use a combination of coil and rotary machines,” she tells me. “For really fine line work I use the Cheyenne pen, which works well, although it does look a little like a vibrator!”

Of all the things she's learnt, Jessica admits that she found colour theory the most difficult to master. “Because I didn't have any formal art education, it's taken me quite a time to understand how colours work together, and to develop a solid, unique colour palette of my own. But I'm getting there. The main thing I've had to get used to, though, is dealing with all my amazing customers! Tattooing someone is such an intense situation, and getting used to that is a big part of the job. You always have to be kind.”

For Jessica, the customer plays an important role in the design process. “I start by spending time just talking with them. We maybe drink some coffee, and do some sketching together. I already have lots of pre-drawn ideas – creepy, crazy, mad designs – and there's a strange kind of pressure because the customer is always expecting you to create something perfect. But I'm not a machine. Over time I've learnt that perfection isn't always achievable and something too perfect can actually look a bit cold and lifeless.”



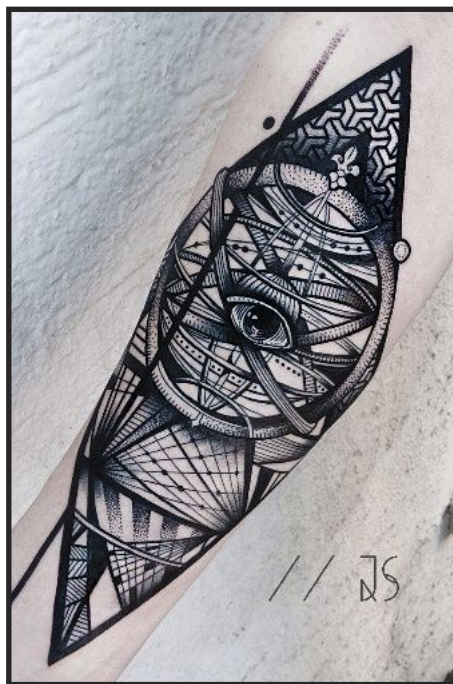
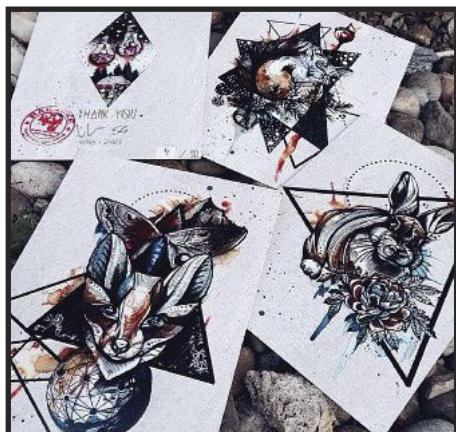
That balanced outlook is apparent in the way Jessica organises her whole working life. "I try to be very disciplined," she tells me. "At the end of every day, after the shop closes, I spend one hour answering emails then in the evening I draw. Last year I got the balance wrong and worked all the time, but now I try to spend more time enjoying life. Outside of tattooing, I create artwork for bands and merchandising. I like to paint too, although I only seem to get round to it a couple of times a month." And are her parents any more in favour of what she's doing now? "Initially my family were against me tattooing because I had good qualifications and a sensible job. But when they realised that I could support myself and pay my bills by being a tattooist, they started to understand that tattooing is a real job. Then when they saw me in the magazines, I think they were really proud."

Jessica had originally intended to open her own studio as soon as possible, but tells me she realised that it would be wiser to concentrate on further developing her talents first. This leads us on to talking about the need for professionalism in tattooing. Looking to the future, Jessica foresees a time when tattooing becomes very clearly divided between the truly great artists and an awful lot of poor quality ones. "Some tattooists do it because of a deep-seated passion, but for others it is only about the money. And the TV shows haven't helped. Even my mother watches them, and like everyone else she now believes it's easy to cover up a tattoo!"

"I think it would be a better world if there was more love in tattooing," Jessica continues. "I know that sounds hippy, but I love it so much! Tattooing takes over your whole life. It makes me very happy. My customers pick up on that energy and they have a great time too."

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RODRIGO SOUTO PAINTS A JAPANESE PEONY

Rodrigo Souto, a tattooist at Black Garden Tattoo in London, has established himself as a specialist in large scale Japanese work focusing particularly upon peonies. Recently he produced a book of his beautiful creations. Here, he presents his own personal tutorial on how he does it. He's also kindly provided an exclusive cut-out-and-keep limited edition print of the finished piece!

Here is a list of what you need::

Tracing paper
Arches watercolour paper, rough 300gsm
Small plastic pallet
Water container (I cut one from a large plastic water bottle)
Small tea towel

Pens:

Faber Castell Pitt Artist Pen sanguine 188 B
Faber Castell Pitt Artist Pen sanguine 188 S
Staedtler pigment liner 05
Staedtler pigment liner 0.05
Sharpie ultrafine permanent marker

Brushes:

Pro Arte Prolene number 4
Pro Arte Prolene number 0

Inks:

Daler Rowney FW acrylic



I begin by taking a piece of tracing paper and a pen. I don't use pencils anymore, because I think a pen gives more flow, which is how I want my flowers to look – to flow on the paper and flow on the body. I do a quick sketch with my pen, based on a series of circles, to figure out the shape of the peony.



I then put another piece of tracing paper on top and trace it again, this time with finer lines. I add a little shading, to figure out where it's going to be darker, where the colours will go, and where the highlights will go. After this, I check the lines and prepare the lightbox.

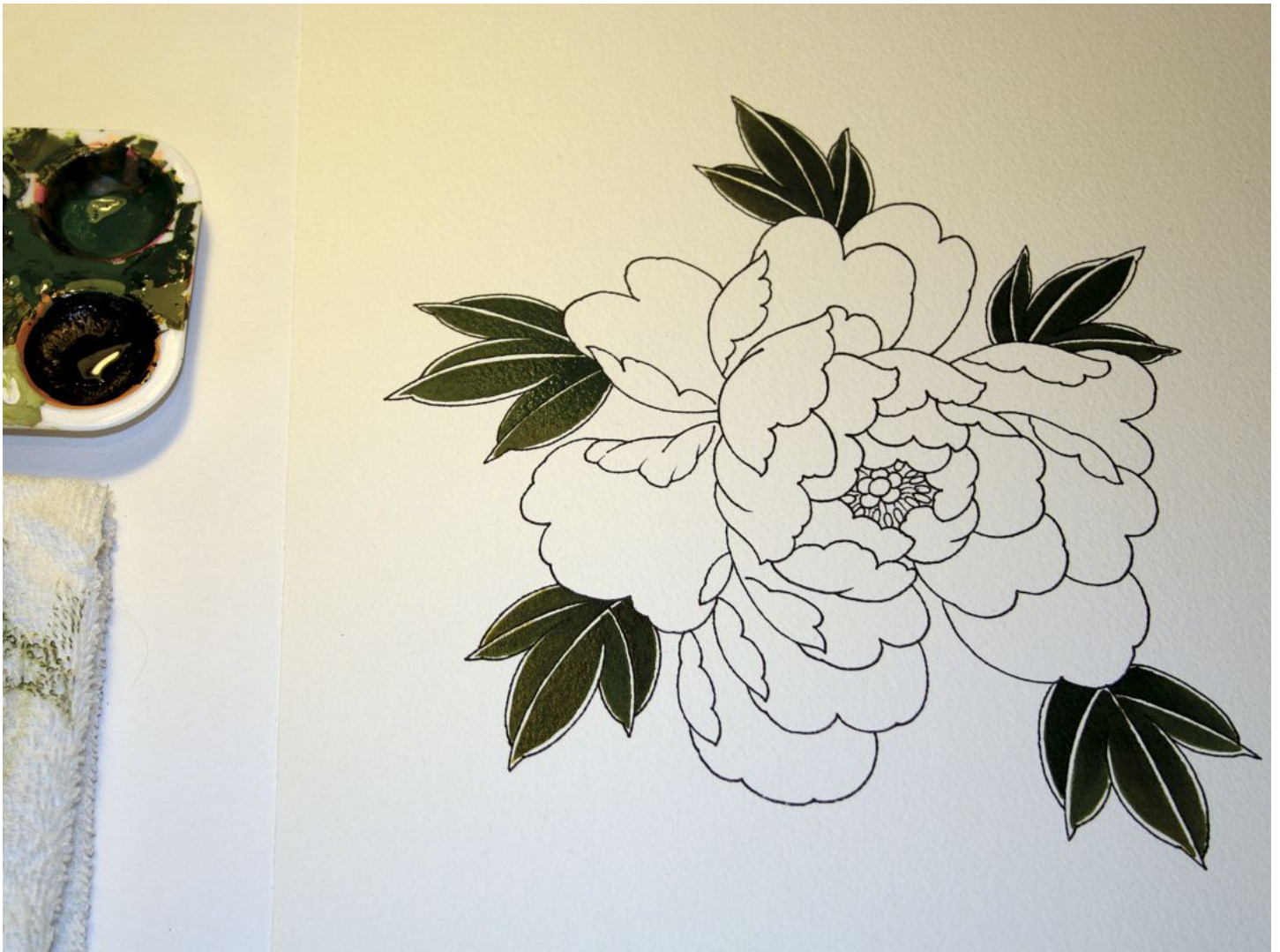


On the lightbox, I can see the best positioning, size, etc. I leave a little space around the sheet. I use masking tape to secure the tracing paper onto the watercolour paper, to stop the drawings from moving around. I use Arches 300gms watercolour paper; it's one of the most expensive papers, but I've tried so many and for me this is definitely one of the best. It gives a lot of freedom; you can put a lot of water into the paper and it will still hold and not warp.

The particular paper I'm using for this painting is quite rough. Some people don't like it for lining paintings, because it can be quite difficult to make the lines on a textured surface, but I prefer it. I find the smoother variety much more difficult to paint on. However, this is only my personal preference. There are different styles and textures of paper, and it's worth trying them out to find out what works best for you.

I'm using an ultrafine Sharpie to line the painting. It's permanent, so I can use watercolours and inks on top, without it bleeding. I try to make the final lines nice and clean. And I always end up adding to the piece! If you look at my first sketch and compare it to the last one, you can see that they're not exactly the same.





Once I've finished the lines, I'll clear my table and get out my paints, inks and brushes. Now I am ready to start adding colour.

I start with the leaves, working from the darkest part (dark green, almost black) towards the lighter parts. If the lines get covered, it isn't really a problem because I can always go back over them.

I'm using a brand of ink called Daler Rowney FW, which is a liquid acrylic. Not many people use it; a lot of tattooers I know use Dr Martins, which I used to use, but I found that the colour faded over time.

I think the most important thing when you're doing a painting is that the inks don't fade, especially when you dilute them with water. It's a bit like tattooing; if you don't do solid colour, it's more likely to fade out! Don't get me wrong. I'm not suggesting that using a different ink is a mistake; it just might not have that longevity.

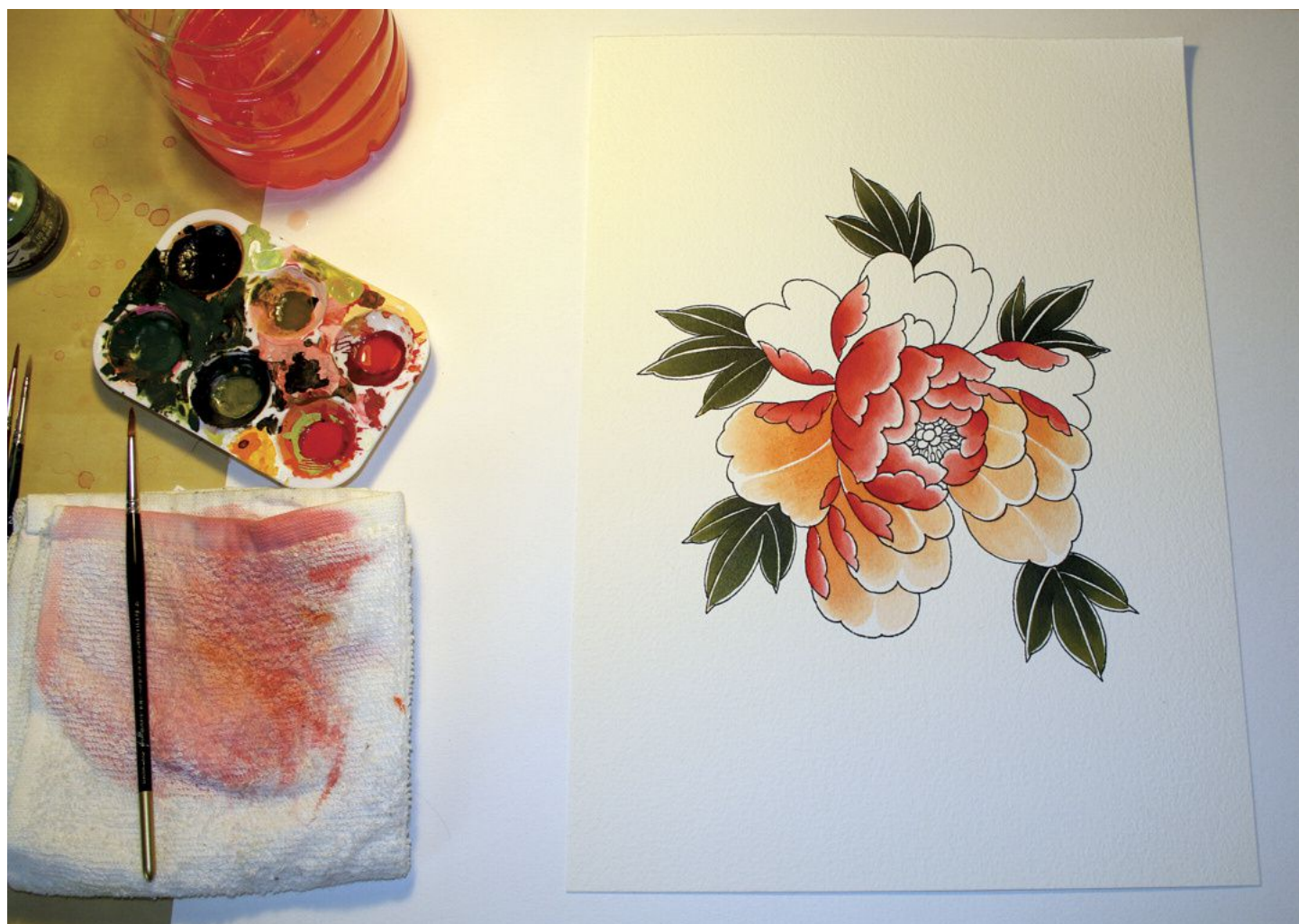
I tend to mix everything on a piece of paper. I start with the dark green, clean the brush quickly, then dip it into the yellow and mix on the paper. I do one layer and wait for it to dry, then if I need to I can go back and add extra tones. With this ink, I can add as many layers as I want.



Once I've finished the green, I change the water. I'll be moving on to the red shading and I don't want to get tints of green in it.

I start by using a light red, with lots of water, and I build up the shading on the exterior surface of the petals. I continue building up the shading until I need to get the paper dry, and then I repeat the process until I get the shading that I want.

I paint the inner surface of the petals using a different, lighter tone of red. It's the same process as I used for the leaves – watering down from dark to light and adding layers until I achieve the desired result.





Once I've finished shading the petals, I go back and do a little bit more of the darker red at their edges. Then I do the central part of the peony with blue.

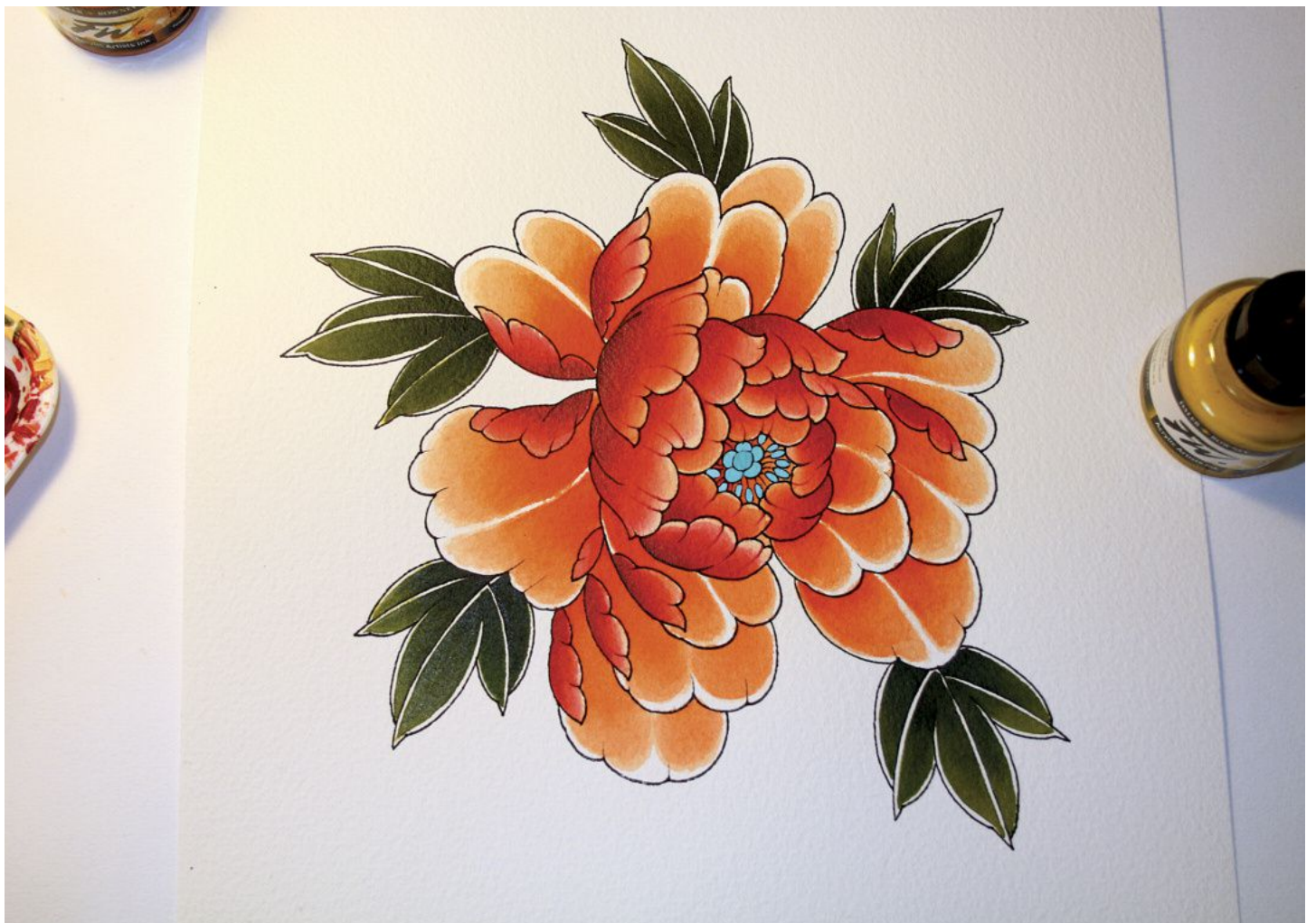
I think I'm done! Once everything is dry, I check over the finished painting.



I hope this tutorial helps you! I'll be doing my second peony book next year, as the first one is out of print, and I'll be combining the sketches with photos and paintings.

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GALLERY

daryl watson, painted lady tattoo parlour



aaron willett, king's ship tattoo



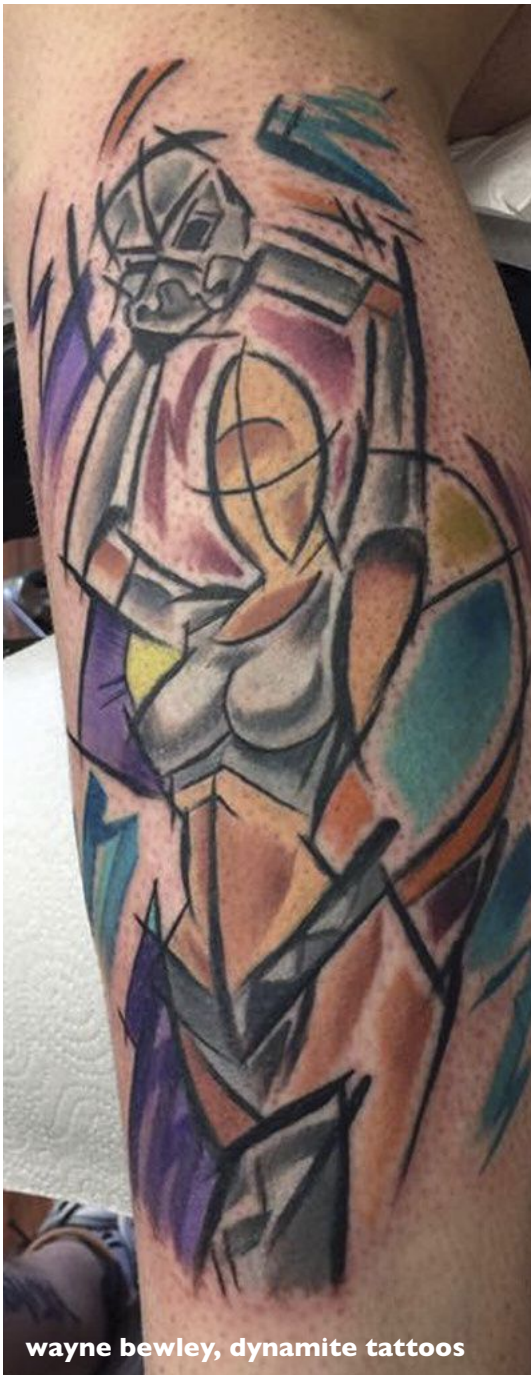
ueo, ueo tattoo (switzerland)



max slatter, a sailors grave



steve, rude studios

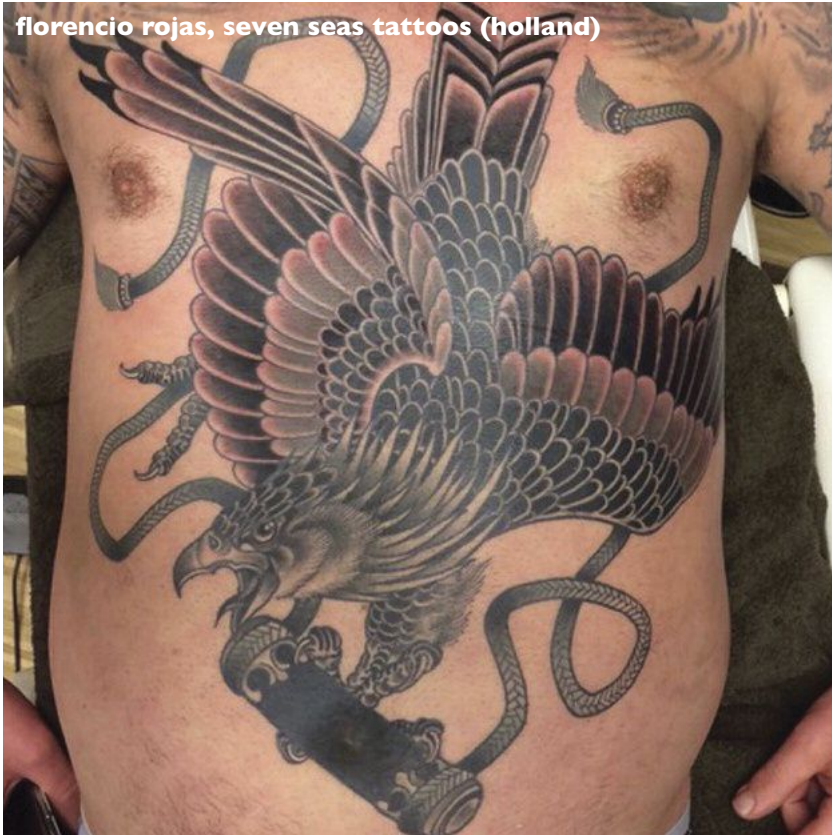


wayne bewley, dynamite tattoos



nuno feio, feio artwork (portugal)

florencio rojas, seven seas tattoos (holland)



mason williams, arlight tattoo studio (usa)



maria, king carlos (sweden)



jen hayes, hand and dagger



aaron clapham, hope and glory

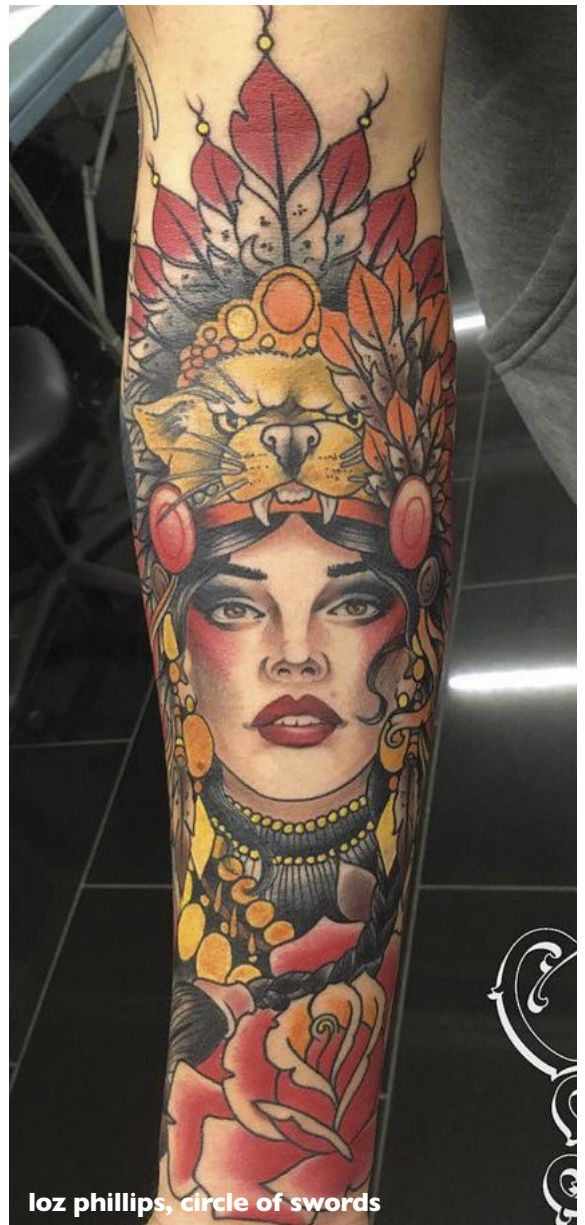


yonah krank, finest beef shop (belgium)

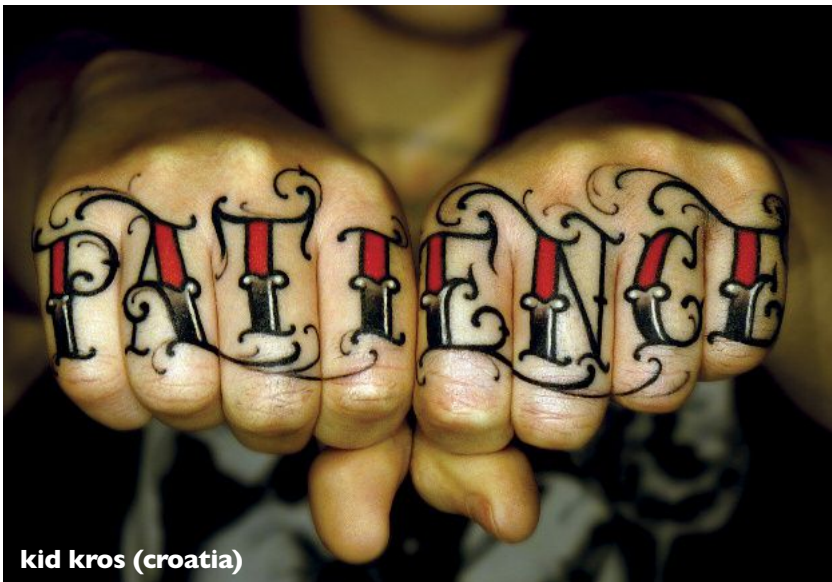
marie cox, folklore tattoo



danny taylor, the inkwell



loz phillips, circle of swords



kid kros (croatia)



leo, hope and glory



charlotte lee, skullduggery tatu



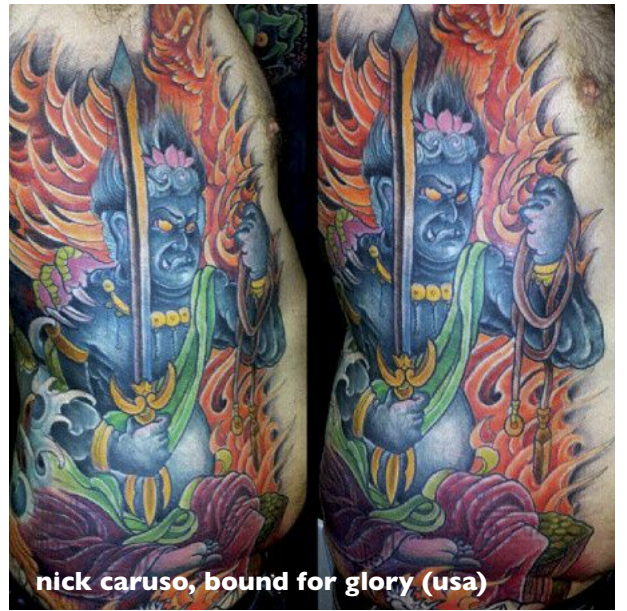
hannya jayne, o'happy dagger



han maude, infinite ink



bryn holman, human canvas



nick caruso, bound for glory (usa)



xavier, prick! tattoo



chavez, borderline tattoo



christopher kenyon, true 'til death



yarda, mystic eye tattoo (spain)



anrijs straume, bold as brass



max rathbone,
second city tattoo club



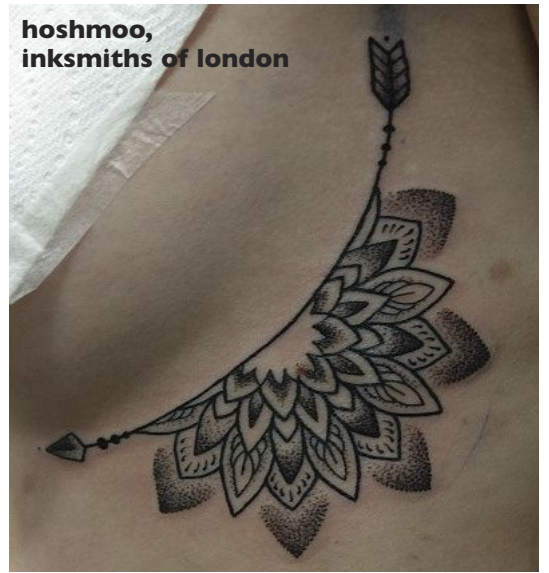
woody,
eightfold tattoo



chris, north sea tattoo company



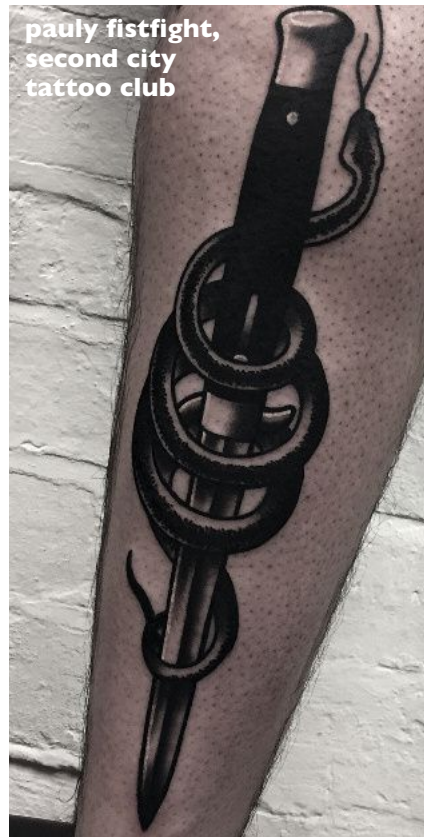
lewis parkin, northside tattooz



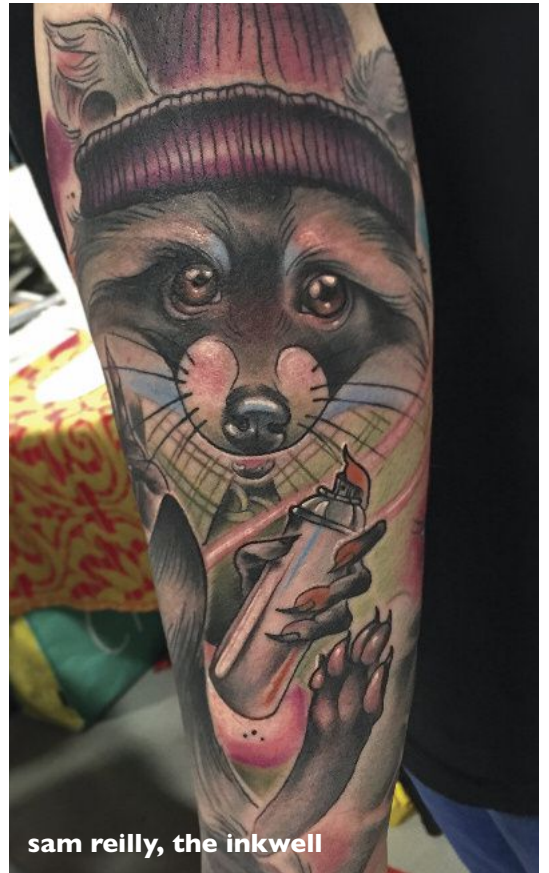
hoshmoo,
inksmiths of london



amy edwards,
dark horse collective



pauly fistfight,
second city
tattoo club



sam reilly, the inkwell

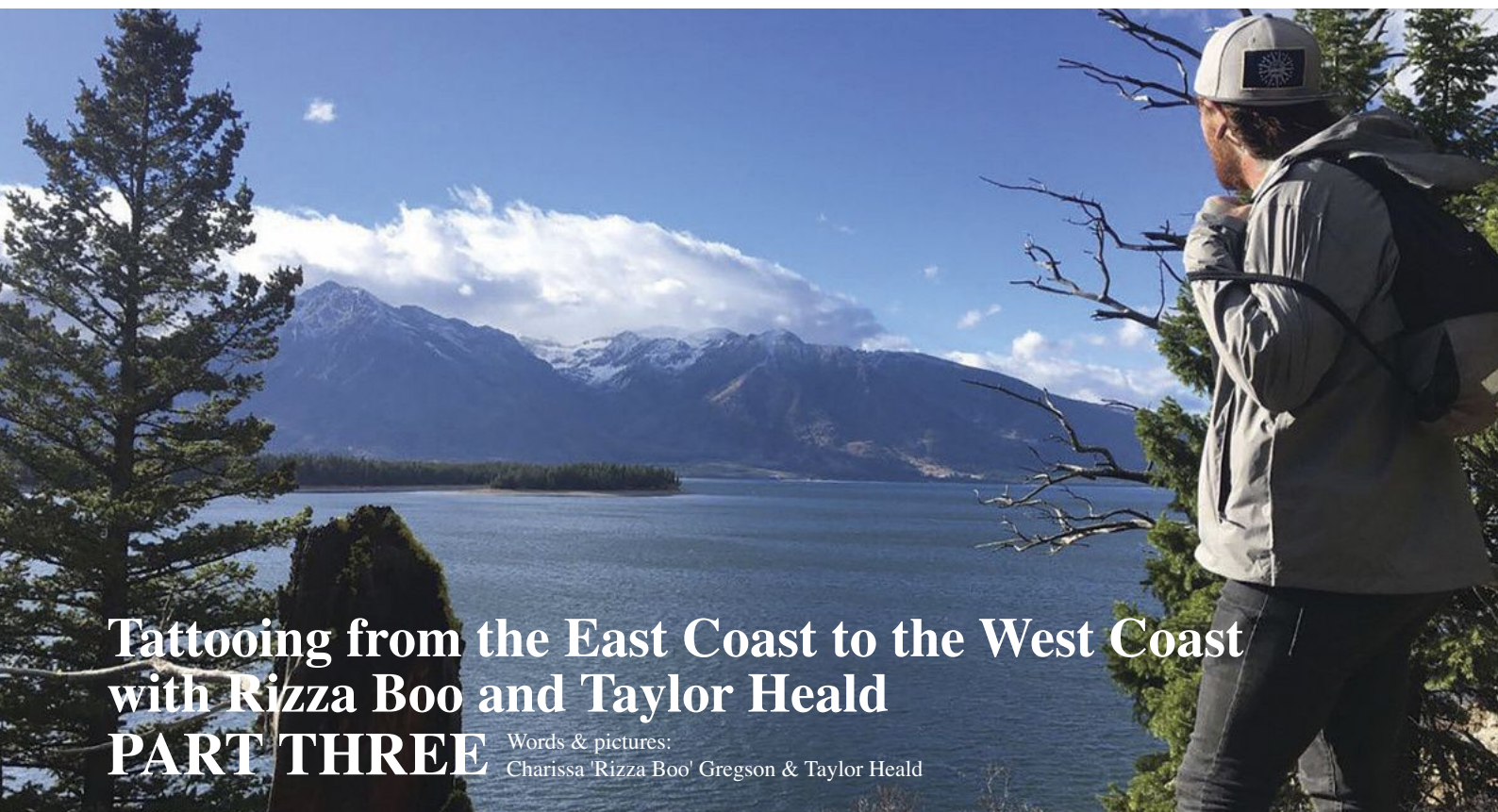


uncl paul knows (greece)



inky joe, five keys

An American Road Trip



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

PART THREE

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) recently completed an epic two month tattoo trip across the USA. This is the third instalment of their adventure. Having visited six cities and guested at five different studios in their first three weeks on the road, they're now taking a well-earned break to enjoy the scenery before heading to Area 51 in Eugene, Oregon.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

On the road so far: 2226 miles and 36 hours of driving

TAYLOR: Growing up in the United States, you're taught a lot about our national parks and their wildlife, and we figured that visiting a few of them would be a good contrast to all the big cities we'd been working in. The National Park Service was founded in 1916, so our road trip was actually taking place in its centenary year. En route to our next guest spot in Eugene, Oregon, we decided to head off to the Rocky Mountain National Park. I'd visited there as a child and I just knew we would experience some great things. Two hours out of Denver, we were driving along the Trail Ridge Road which took us immediately to the highest elevation of our entire trip – over 12,000 feet above sea level. The barren landscape was beautiful, and the weather seemed to change by the minute. One moment we would be in hot sun, the next we would be in the middle of a cloud with snow and rain whirling around us.



by taylor

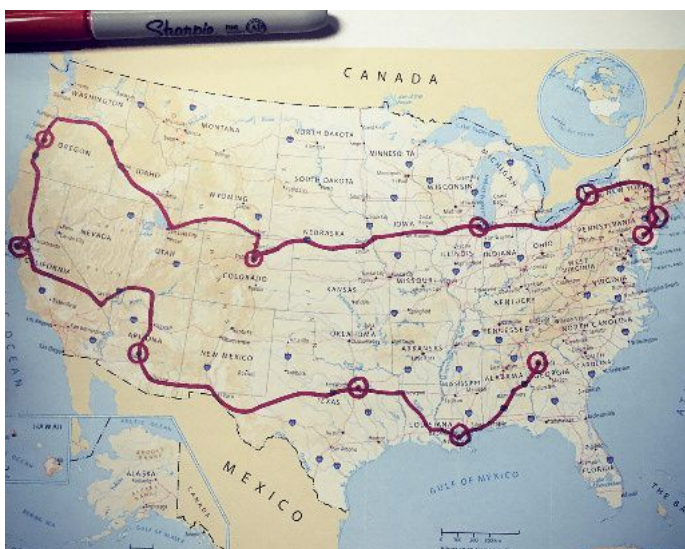


rizza boo, in the rockies



RIZZA: This certainly was a change from all the places we'd been in up to now. On the drive up, we climbed higher and higher and you could really feel the difference in elevation. We jumped out of the car at one point to look at the view and immediately I had my first run-in with altitude sickness! It soon subsided, but I felt the effects for a couple of days. The views in the park were mind-blowing. Previously when I'd thought of a "park" I would have pictured a small green space with children's climbing frames... not these rolling golden hills with mountainous backdrops! It was so nice to get lost amongst the trees and breathe some fresh air.

TAYLOR: We finally made it to the campsite where we would be pitching our tent for the night. Man, were we unprepared for the cold! The temperature got down to freezing, and we just didn't have the right gear to keep us warm, but we survived. The next morning we woke to the sound of a male elk bugle, and saw half a dozen females with calves walking through the campsite – only about thirty feet away from us.



driving to the rockies

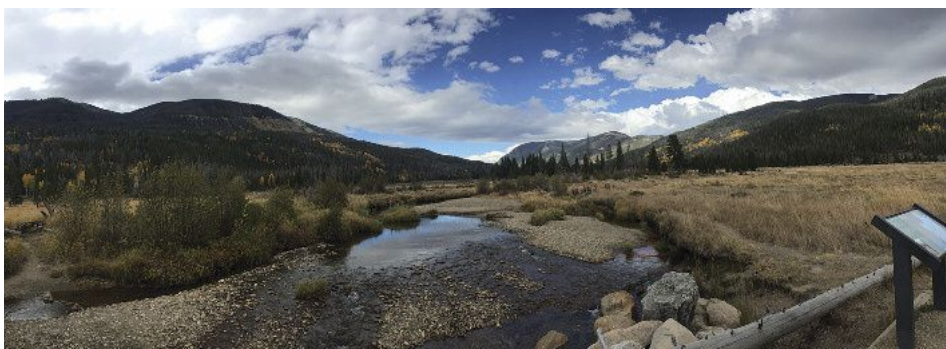


RIZZA: I always enjoy camping – the quiet at night, and being able to see so many stars in the sky away from all the light pollution. It was a real treat to see those elk up close. They were obviously regulars at the campsite, strolling through as if they owned the place, definitely not caring about the people wandering around.

TAYLOR: We spent the day hiking, and walked way further than we'd expected. But it was completely worth it, seeing sights such as the aspen trees with their shimmering gold leaves in front of the blue sky. We got back to the campsite completely exhausted and very hungry, but we didn't have much time to rest or eat as we had to hit the road north. Five hours of driving later, we were in the rolling state of Wyoming.

**GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK AND
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK**
**On the road so far: 2773 miles and 45 hours
of driving**

TAYLOR: The Wyoming landscape was stunning, with its wide open spaces, giant plateaus and unforgiving cliffs. We kept our eyes peeled for pronghorn antelope and license plates from states we hadn't seen yet. As we continued north, the magnificent Teton mountain range started to rise on either side of us. We decided to stop here and camp for the night. We went for a long hike – with momentary breaks in the clouds giving us glimpses of the highest peaks – then returned to our tent, built a fire and relaxed for the evening.



giant aspens



'old faithful'

RIZZA: We could easily have spent a couple more days here, just hiking around and taking in the mountain scenery, but we were on a tight schedule and that just wasn't possible. At this point, I will just mention one thing. Bears are a real threat when you're camping. Every campsite has warnings about not leaving food out – even in cars – and they provide you with large metal anti-bear food containers. Much as I wanted to see the wildlife, the thought of what might happen if we crossed paths with a bear did worry me slightly... But what can you do? It doesn't happen often, and there are amazing things to see out there, so it's definitely worth a little risk.

TAYLOR: The next morning we headed for Yellowstone, spotting deer, elk, and pronghorn antelope along the way. With its geothermal attractions – like geysers shooting way over a hundred feet into the air – this national park receives huge numbers of visitors, so boardwalks have been constructed to prevent the landscape getting ruined.

RIZZA: And you can see why Yellowstone is such a tourist hotspot! The park itself is beautiful, and the geysers and geothermal pools are like nothing I've ever seen before. You could feel the heat and see the ground bubbling, and there was the smell of rotten



eggs from all the sulphur. The wooden walkways mean you can observe everything without disturbing nature's delicate balance.

TAYLOR: Our few days in the national parks were an important break in our working schedule. They really did us good, and we also managed to gather masses of reference material. Then we had a fourteen hour overnight drive from Yellowstone to Eugene. That was rough.



EUGENE, OREGON

On the road so far: 3605 miles and 59 hours of driving

RIZZA: We were guesting with a friend of mine, Chris 51, at his studio Area 51. We met a couple of years ago working some nerdy conventions and I knew his studio would be something to behold. It was full to the brim with all kinds of toys, comics and memorabilia – so much cool stuff. Chris and his wife were gracious hosts, providing us with somewhere to stay as well as a great space in which to work. People's kindness and hospitality were a massive part of our trip. I love this about our job. We have such freedom to travel, learn from other artists, and see old friends and make new ones.

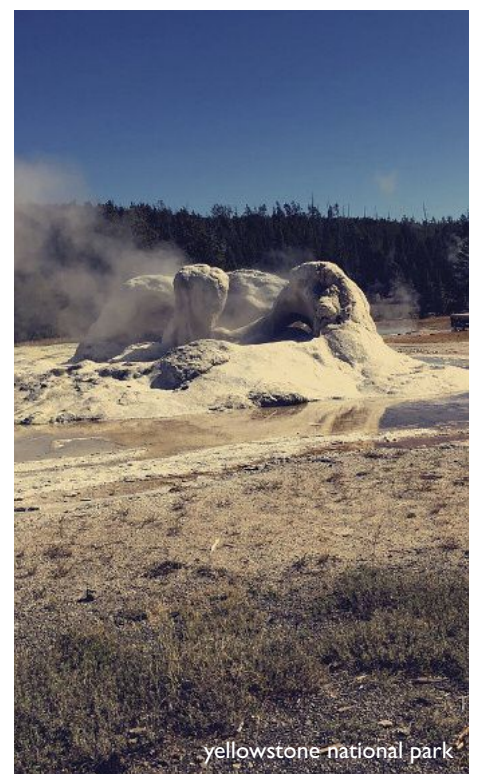
TAYLOR: At Chris's shop I had two full-day appointments with people who I hadn't tattooed before (and I felt very lucky to have such tough clients who were able to sit for so long). The first was the start of a half-sleeve consisting of a wolf skull and some foliage, and the second was the start of a more purely decorative sleeve. Both were in black and grey, and I ended up pleased with the results. It was nice to have a change from the styles that I normally do and the colour that I typically use – and these tattoos were the exact aesthetic opposite of Chris's shop! From its blue and orange exterior, to its interior full of collectable toys, arcade games and movie props, it's certainly one of the most unique shops I've ever worked in.

RIZZA: The whole time I was away, I was really lucky with the types of pieces people were requesting from me. Essentially I am happy with anything involving space scenes, dinosaurs and animals – all of which I was getting asked for at each guest spot. I had a particularly good time working on a huge Jurassic Park tattoo, on yet another lovely lady who had driven a long way to get tattooed by me. I definitely want to visit Area 51 again. It's a great shop with a fun crew.

TAYLOR: Our stay in Eugene was too short! And this wasn't just because I had two projects on the go. It was more to do with the fact that we had such a pleasant time with Chris. But after just two days it was time to hit the road again, this time down to coastal highway to San Francisco.

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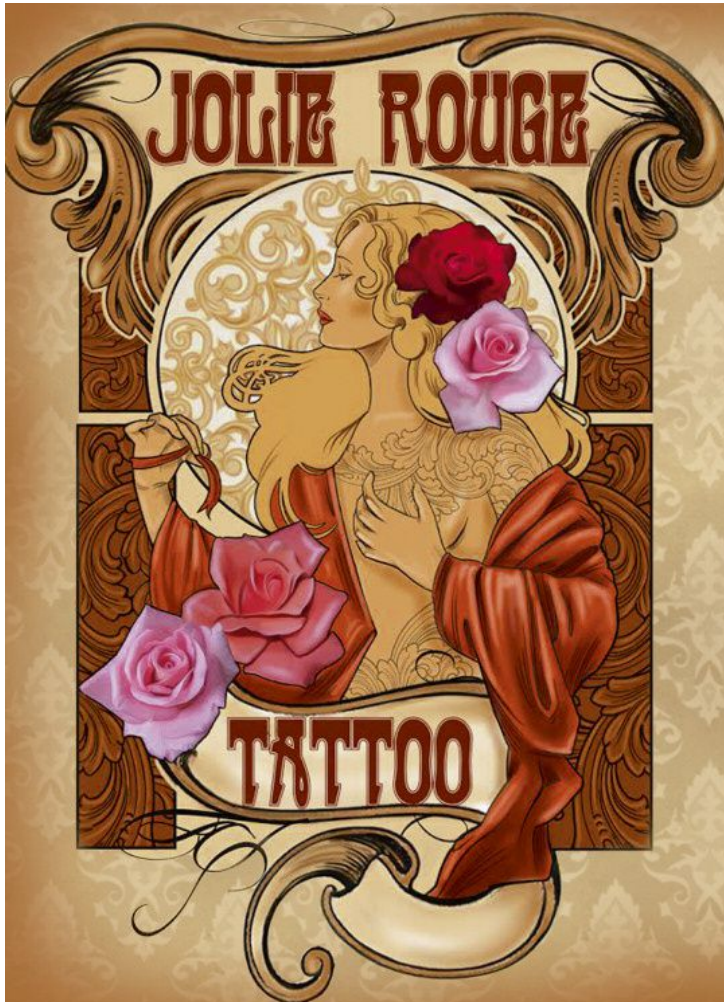
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Artists

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Lord Montana Blue - Keely Rutherford
Maharani

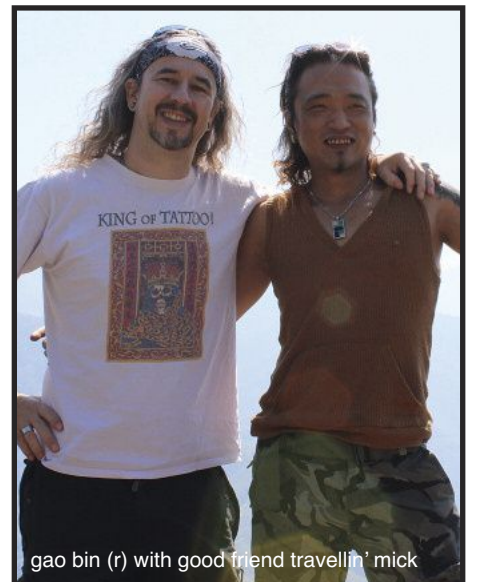
Gao Bin

'Lion King' was an outstanding artist who tragically died in October last year. The shock wave of his passing has been felt around the world. His work transformed tattooing and his ability to create perfectly balanced large-scale compositions both inspired and amazed (and he was, quite simply, one of my personal favourites). As a token of our appreciation I would like to present some of his work here, for the world to see just what a talent global tattooing has lost. Our love and thoughts go to his family and friends.

Perry







gao bin (r) with good friend travellin' mick

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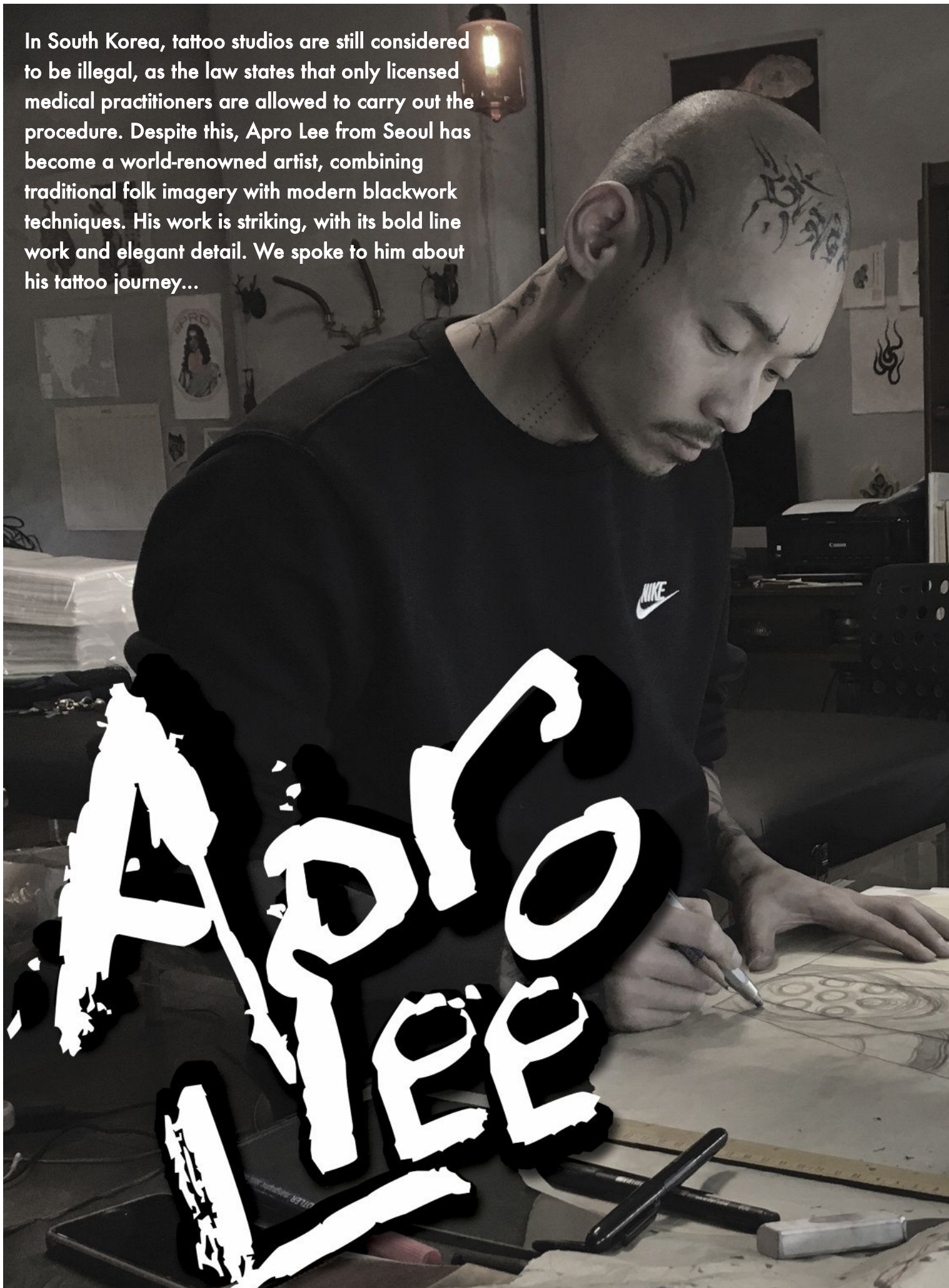
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In South Korea, tattoo studios are still considered to be illegal, as the law states that only licensed medical practitioners are allowed to carry out the procedure. Despite this, Apro Lee from Seoul has become a world-renowned artist, combining traditional folk imagery with modern blackwork techniques. His work is striking, with its bold line work and elegant detail. We spoke to him about his tattoo journey...



Apro Lee

When did you start tattooing?

I started in 2005.

At that time, it was illegal to tattoo?

It was more illegal than it is today. It's still illegal now, but it was stricter then. Having said that, it wasn't too bad because not many people knew about tattooing anyway! It isn't part of our culture. I found a guy who would teach me — then I realised he'd only just started three months before, in America. So really I taught myself. What are you gonna learn from someone who has only been tattooing for three months? At the time there was no YouTube, nothing. I used to look at tattoo pictures and try to figure out how the tattoos had been done. I practised on my friends, and some gangsters too. They wanted big tattoos to look scary, and I needed a big canvas to practice on.

What was it that made you want to tattoo?

I didn't really plan to become a tattooist at all. Until I was 23, I'd never seen any tattoos and I'd never met any tattooists. I was in the army — all Korean people have to do national service at some point — and I was starting to think about what I wanted to do after leaving. I hated studying so I didn't want to go to university, and I knew I wouldn't get a highly paid job. But ever since I was little, I've loved to draw. (Actually, there was a time when I wanted to be a cartoonist. I was drawing all the time.) Then one day on the news I saw this story about a guy who decided to get a tattoo so that he could get out of the army. Back then, if you had a certain percentage of your body tattooed you would be thrown out and go straight to jail. It was a big story. The guy was arrested, and so was the tattooist. I found the story especially interesting because of the tattoo. It wasn't tribal or old school — it was a colour portrait of Kurt Cobain from Nirvana. I was really surprised and intrigued by it, and I started to think, 'Maybe I could do this...' So, not having any money or any education — only my drawing skills — I decided there and then that tattooing was what I should do.



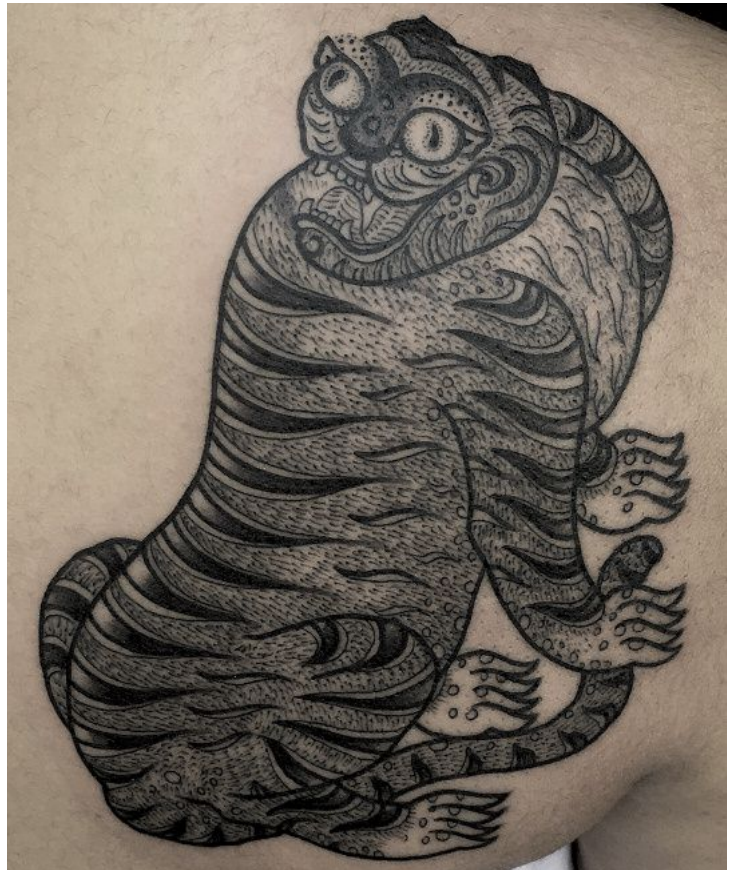
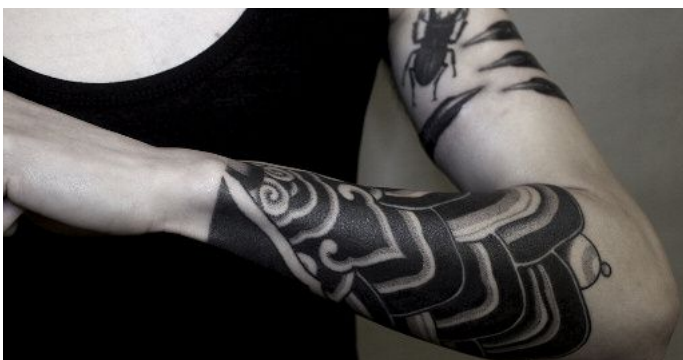


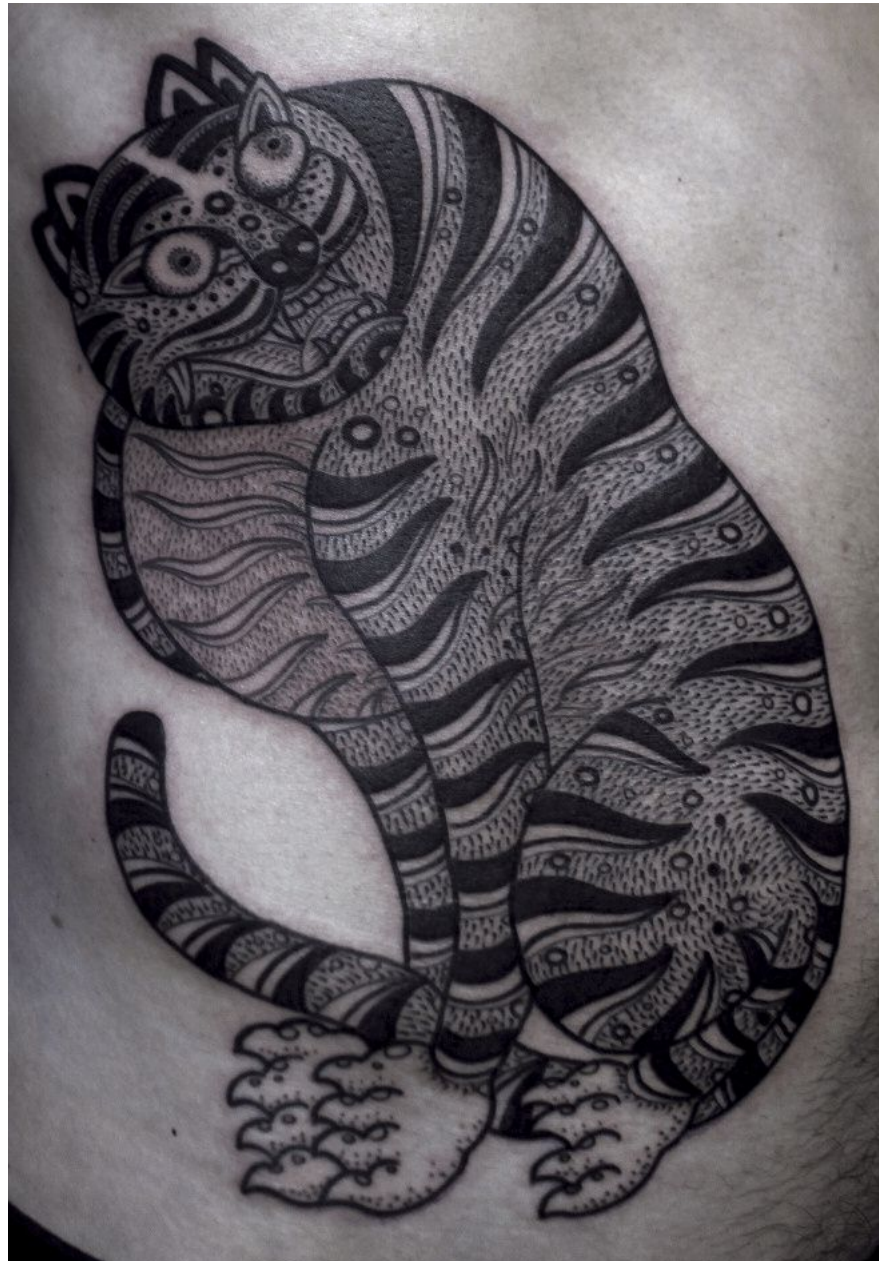
Weren't you afraid of being caught?

No. I knew tattooing was illegal, but because I wasn't part of a 'tattoo scene' I didn't feel scared. I felt I was simply doing it 'without permission'.

And how did things progress from there?

After a couple of years of teaching myself in Seoul, I looked at my work and I really wasn't happy with it. Most people's tattoos get better with time, but mine were getting worse. I thought, 'Who's gonna want to get tattooed by me, even if it is illegal?' I hadn't made any kind of name for myself, and my tattoos were shit. I was so poor I couldn't even pay my rent. Because there was nobody to teach me, or tell me what I was doing wrong, or even tell me how to adjust my machines, I just stagnated. I had two machines, but I didn't know a lot about them! I would do everything with them, so the tattoos were suffering because they were getting out of tune, etc. It was really hard to find anyone to ask for help. I wanted to learn, and I wanted to build some experience, so I decided to travel. I looked at a map of the world and randomly picked a country — Australia. That was ten years ago.





And now you have your own studio in Seoul?

Yes, I have my own private studio. I travel abroad for half the year though. I have a routine: January, February and March in the States, then back to Seoul for a few months, then Europe, then back to Seoul, followed by Asia.

You mentioned that you first became interested in tattooing when you saw a realistic portrait, but that's very different to what you do now. Did you start off with realism?

Yes, I started with black and grey realism and I did it for five or six years. The work was very detailed, and required a lot of concentration and preparation. Although I enjoyed doing it, I actually got really sick with the stress – my personality is very sensitive, and tattoos are very sensitive too. In the end, it became too much for me and I was starting to hate it. I'd started tattooing because I loved it, but I'd put too much pressure on myself. So I changed my style.

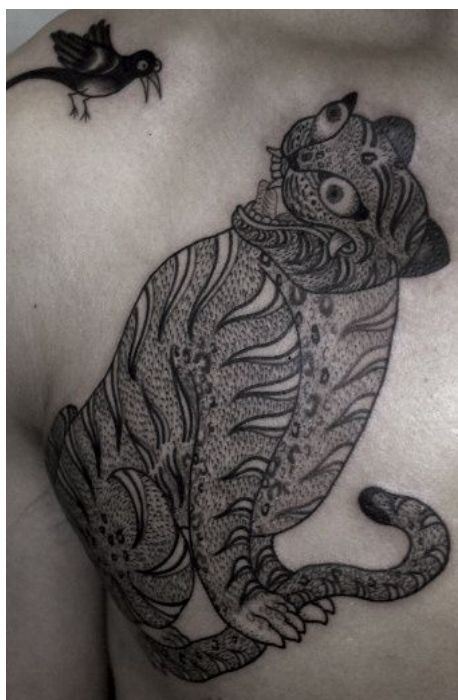


Did anything else influence the change?

Yes. I also wanted to create something more Korean. Although there's definitely an Asian tattoo culture, there isn't a specific Korean tattoo culture (for obvious reasons) and it was always in my head to try to combine things in that way. Then one day I drew a tiger head, and a friend saw it and asked if he could have it tattooed on him. And then another friend saw it and asked for the same. That was the beginning of my own style. I'm inspired by Korean art and culture, and making things bold and simple, but actually, when you look closer, you can see many more details. I love putting that detail in.

Tigers and magpies feature prominently in your work...

There are many meanings behind the tigers in my work. I don't know all of them, but one of my favourite stories is that, back in the day, Korean people used to paint tigers on the outsides of their houses to protect them from ghosts, or negativity. So there were tigers everywhere. However, whilst tigers were seen as strong, protective animals, they could also be frightening. People didn't want to be scared, so the tigers were painted to look friendly, with funny faces. With the magpies, there are also many meanings. One of them is that the magpie is a messenger for the tiger. Also, in paintings you will often see a magpie sitting on a pine tree, because the pine tree is a symbol of being well and the magpie is regarded as lucky. If you see a magpie in your yard, people think it's lucky.





Do you think it's important for tattoos to have a meaning?

It depends on the person. People can pick any meaning they want, or they can choose no meaning at all. It's cool either way. At the moment, it's certainly fashionable to have tattoos with meanings, but there's no right or wrong.

Do you have a vision of how you want your work to develop?

I'm always thinking about how I can improve and evolve. My current style is so different to what I was doing when I started out. It's strange — I used to do a lot more detail, but now I've simplified it. I'd like to simplify it further. Before, when I was doing portraits, the image itself was the important thing. Now, I look at the body. The tattoo makes it more beautiful, and that's what's important to me. When a painting is tattooed on a body, it's not beautiful in the same way as a piece that's specifically designed to fit, so I'm trying to produce designs and patterns that flow and enhance the natural beauty. Back then I saw trees; now I see the forest. It's like tribes who get tattoos to be strong, or to differentiate themselves from others; a human being doesn't otherwise have any patterns on their skin.

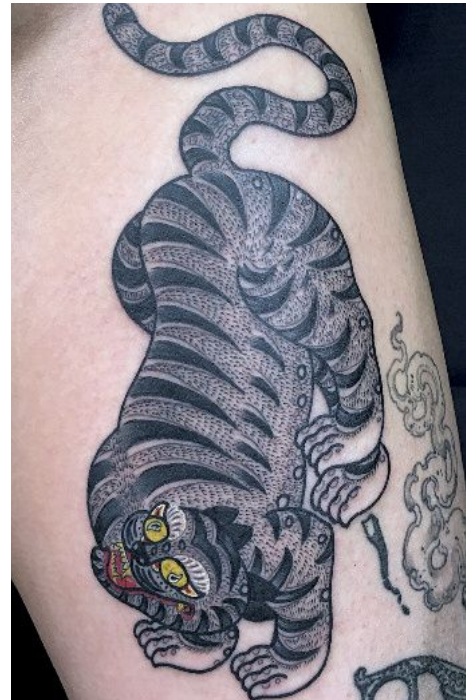




Do you have any future plans?

I always have future plans, but they're very messy because my head is like a whirlwind! I'm learning more about Korean and Buddhist art. My teacher is one of the painters who paints temples in Korea, so she knows a lot about history and traditional culture. I want to incorporate more of that into my style, and make it something that I can give to people. And I've tried hand-poking — just for myself and friends. It's interesting, but it's very slow. I think hand-poked tattoos are very beautiful, and it's something I might do more of in the future, but it takes time to learn. So really I don't know what I'll be doing in five or ten years' time, but right now I'm tattooing and travelling!

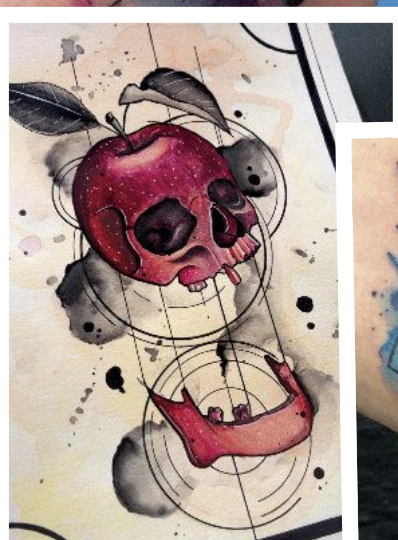
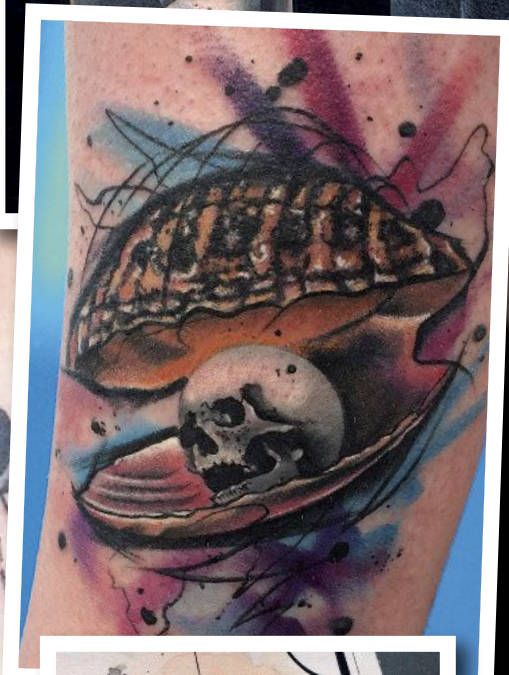
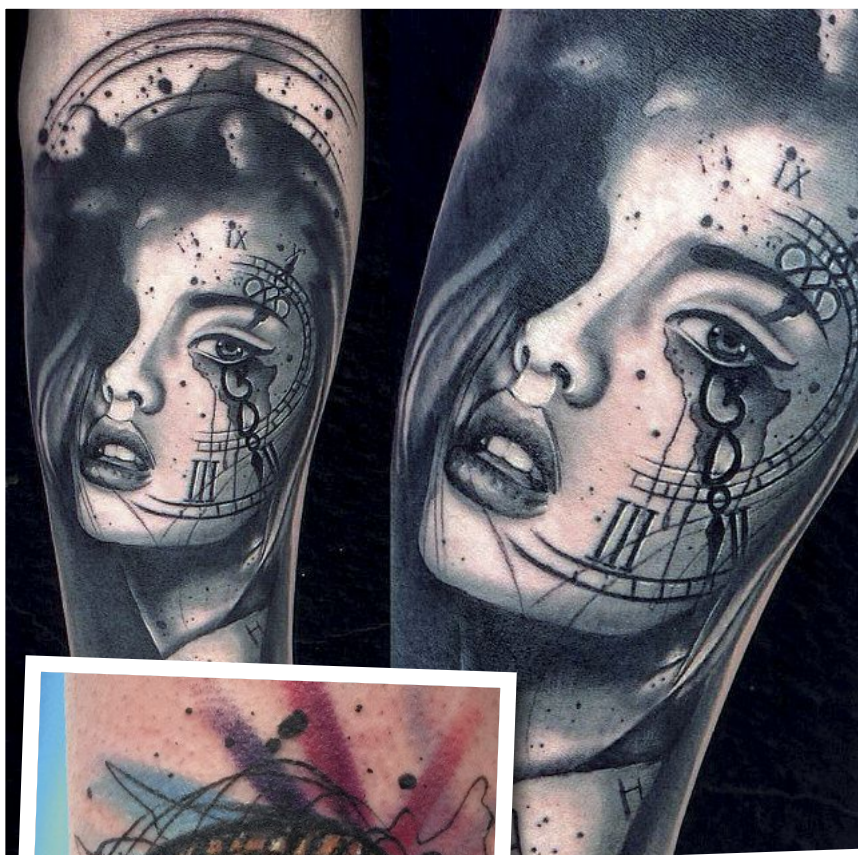
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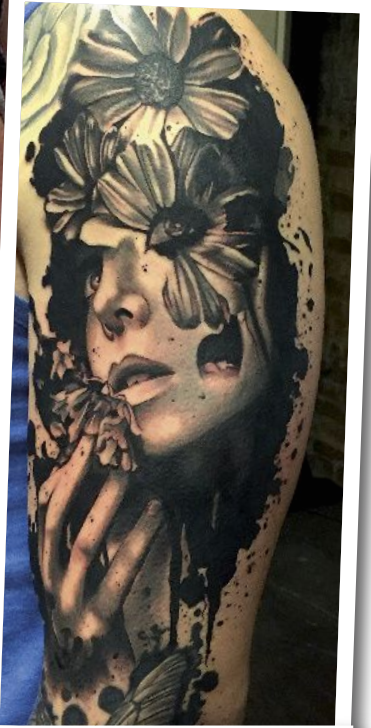
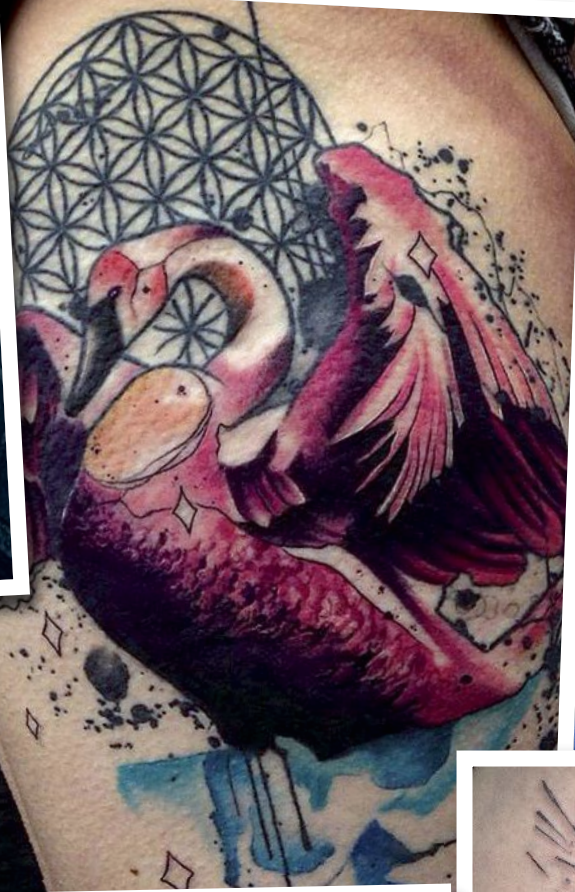
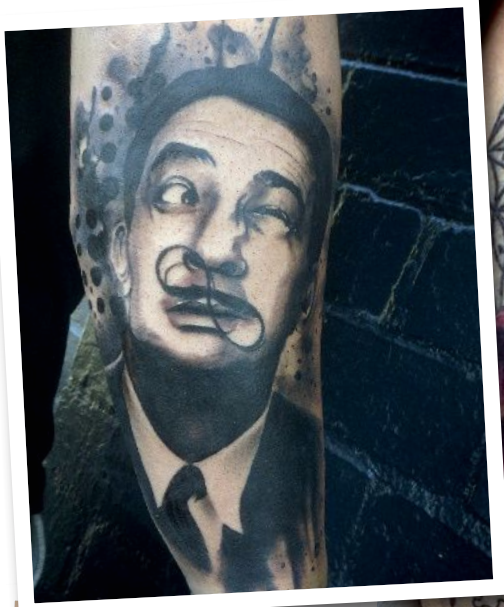


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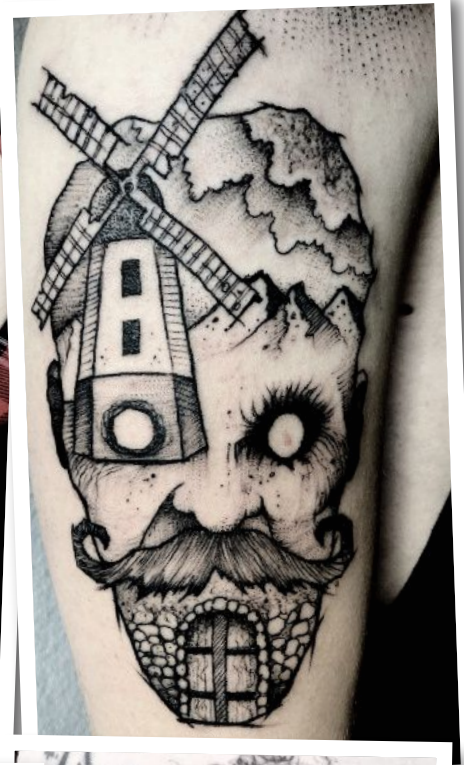
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A personal view of the convention scene by Dan Stone of Electric Buddha

Ah, the much-maligned tattoo convention. I'm not going to say we've got too many of them...
I'm not going to comment on how the awards have become devalued over the years...
I'm going to talk about something else that really pisses me off about these events. The artists!

I've heard the same old things said so many times now:

"This convention is nothing without us."

"We're the main attraction."

"Why should we pay for our booths?"

"If you go to a music festival, the bands haven't paid to be there."

"I'm fed up with promoters and events companies putting on conventions."

I'm just going to let that all sink in before I go on, because I know some may find what I'm about to say controversial.

Ready?

OK. So you're comparing a tattoo convention to a music festival? Music festivals are put on by promoters and events companies who have the capital behind them to make them what they are, whereas tattoo conventions are almost always put on by artists and studio owners – basically, small businesses. And a friend of mine in a band told me that many of the lesser known acts do, in fact, pay to be at festivals, just to get their name out there.

So you don't want promoters and events companies putting on conventions, and you don't feel you should pay for your booth because tattooists are the main attraction. But let's just look at what it costs to put on a tattoo convention. There's one convention I work which I know costs the organisers around £130,000 to put on – before they've even opened the doors to the public. There's the hire of the venue, the staff and security costs, the catering, the booths and furniture, clinical waste removal, insurance, marketing, and the production of tickets, artist passes and wristbands – plus of course those trophies that people covet so much. A great deal of money goes into a convention before we (the artists) rock up with all our gear. If you (the artist) don't feel that you should pay for your booth then where is all that money going to come from? The punters?

I've heard many artists say they think the price of a weekend ticket to a convention is a bit much. Well be prepared for that price to skyrocket if artists no longer have to pay for their booths! How many

members of the public would fork out £300 – because that's about what it would need to be – just for the privilege of walking round a tattoo convention?

I've even heard artists say that the convention organisers should pay *them* for turning up and sitting tattooing in a booth. Once again, where is this money going to come from? And it begs another question. If this were to happen, should all artists be paid the same? I'm pretty sure the artists suggesting this particular brand of lunacy would soon complain about a 'lesser' artist being paid the same as them. And why would an artist even turn up if they knew they were being paid less than someone else? (I'd like to point out here that this is an extreme level of egotistical bullshit that I have only heard mooted on a couple of occasions.)

The simple fact is that you just cannot compare a tattoo artist to a musician, or a tattoo convention to a music festival. It's creativity in two incredibly different formats. The tattoo convention is, basically, a promotional and networking exercise (and one that you can put through your books too – remember to account for all your business expenses from the moment you leave your studio on the Friday to the moment you return to it on the Monday).

It's beyond wrong to even suggest that artists shouldn't pay for their booths, and even worse to suggest convention organisers should foot the bill for everything. The tattoo artist is only one third of what makes a convention happen.

Yes, without the artists the convention wouldn't exist. But without the punters it would be just a room full of tattoo artists sitting around chatting and maybe tattooing each other. And without the organisers the convention would consist of Joe Public and a bunch of tattoo artists milling about on the pavement wondering what the fuck is going on!

Conventions don't owe you anything. Tattooing doesn't owe you anything. It's down to you, the artist, to work those conventions that you feel best represent your own particular brand of tattooing ethics.

If you genuinely feel that conventions owe you something, if you genuinely believe you deserve more than simply paying for a booth (the same as everyone else), then I'm going to respectfully suggest you pull your head out of your arse so that you can better focus on being the best tattooist that you can be. Yes, I do know who you are – but right now, I don't really care.

Check yo'self before you wreck yo'self.

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DARYL WATSON



Daryl Watson works at Birmingham's Painted Lady Tattoo Parlour. He's only 24, but he's already built quite a reputation for his outstanding work in the neo-traditional style. We wanted to know more about his creative influences and how he approaches his tattooing.

Have you always been interested in art and tattooing?

Definitely. My dad was a watercolour painter many years ago, and he's always encouraged art and creativity within my family. He was the one who pushed me to pursue my drawing. I've drawn all my life, but I developed a strong interest in tattoo art in secondary school and I haven't stopped since.

When and why did you start to get tattooed?

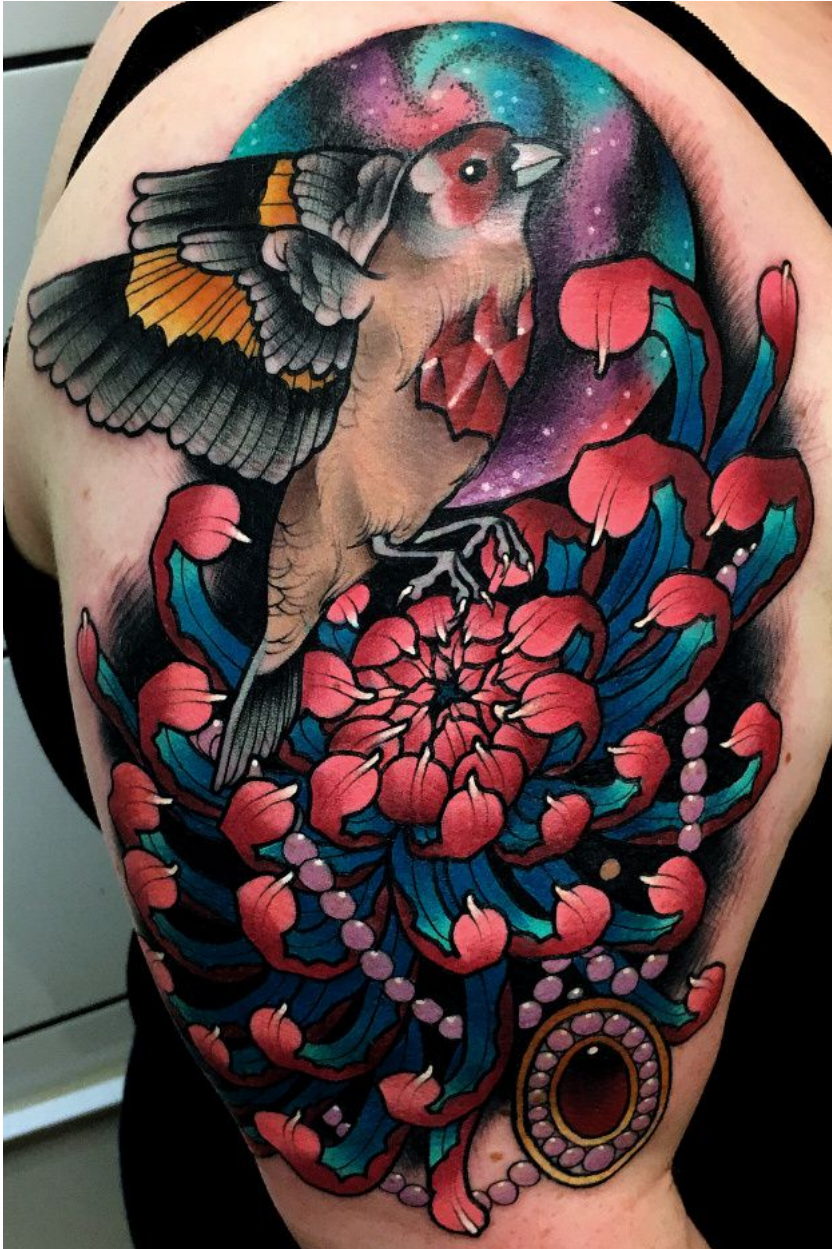
I got my first tattoo when I was 17. It was a mixture of love for tattoos and a keen interest in getting into the industry. I was too stupid and impatient to wait to get tattooed professionally, so now I'm now getting all those early tattoos covered – but I still see those experiences as contributions to my journey into tattooing.

Who tattooed you before you became a tattooist? Did those artists influence your style?

Before I started tattooing I had work off Neil Dransfield, Tiny Miss Becca, Matt Adamson and Antony Flemming – to name just a few – and yeah, I can definitely say I was influenced by them all. They all contributed to my love for the neo-traditional style.

I understand you've been tattooing for around four years? Did you find it difficult to find an apprenticeship?

It's three and a half years since I did my first tattoo, to be exact, and three years that I've been tattooing full-time. Was it difficult to find an apprenticeship? Yes and no. I faced a lot of rejection, but I didn't have any problems with that because I was prepared for it. I was also ready to travel or move if I needed to. I was living in Newcastle at the time, and I finally got a 'yes' from a shop in Glasgow. I guess my portfolio did it. I'd spent nine months creating it while working in retail after dropping out of uni, and I made sure it was professionally presented and not just some sketches



in plastic wallets. My own tattoo collection also helped. I remember my old boss Simon (who gave me the apprenticeship) quizzing me on who had done what on me and asking about my favourite artists. That went a long way I think. It showed that I had an actual interest in the industry.

You've become an outstanding artist – very quickly! What do you attribute this to?

That's incredibly flattering! I think a whole mixture of things have contributed to my drive: sobriety, travelling, getting tattooed by amazing artists (some of whom I'm lucky enough to call friends), and my girlfriend who supports me and inspires me a ton... She really helps me with my ideas and drawings.

Many tattooists say that the first tattoo they do on a 'real' customer is one of the most deeply anxious experiences of their lives. Would you agree?

One hundred percent! I'm not generally an anxious person, but doing my first tattoo was just terrifying. Nothing has made me as nervous as that first one, but to this day whenever I'm tattooing visible areas (hands, necks, etc) it still gets my heart going.

Do you incorporate any particular themes into your tattoos?

Jewels, flowers, bugs, birds and animals are big recurring elements in my tattoos. Often that's because of what the customer requests, but a lot of the time I include jewels and flowers without people asking. It's just something I'm so used to putting in a composition now.

What techniques have you learned that you would say are integral to your tattooing style?

Steady solid lines and packing/blending colour well. Without them my work would be nothing... but that said, both of those techniques could always do with improvement. I'm always learning.





What is the best piece of tattooing advice you've ever been given?

That you can always make progress. If I can't find fault with my tattoos, there's no reason for me to keep creating. I always critique every piece I do and I know where I could have made that piece better – whether it's something simple like the drawing or the colour choice, or something more technical like the lines or shading.





Which technical aspect of your work have you found hardest to master?

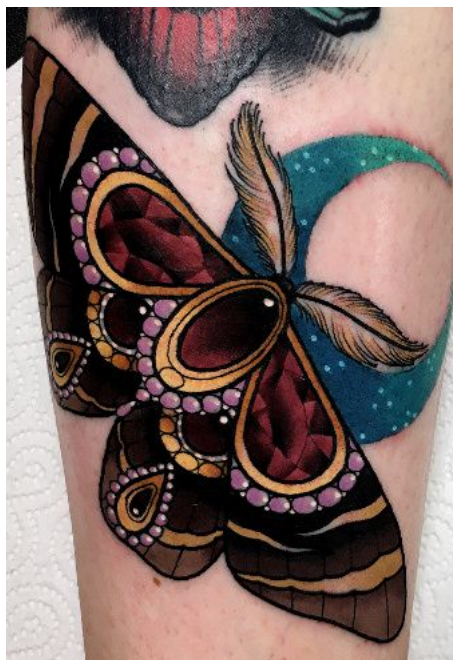
The whole thing! Not one bit was easy. At the start, I found lines very difficult. They used to stress me out a ton. Then for a long time it was colouring. It just changes constantly. Personally, I wouldn't say I've mastered anything. I'm a baby in this industry!

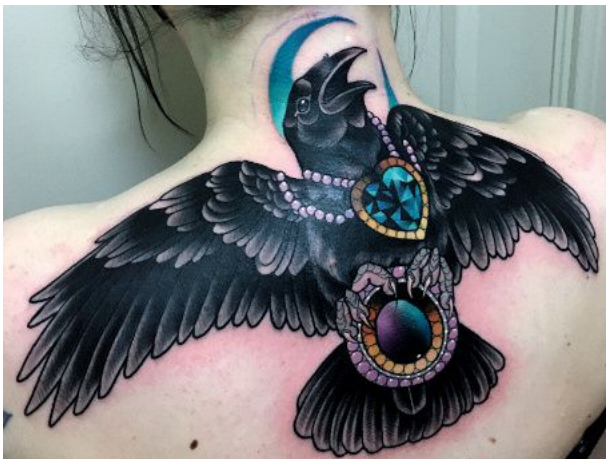
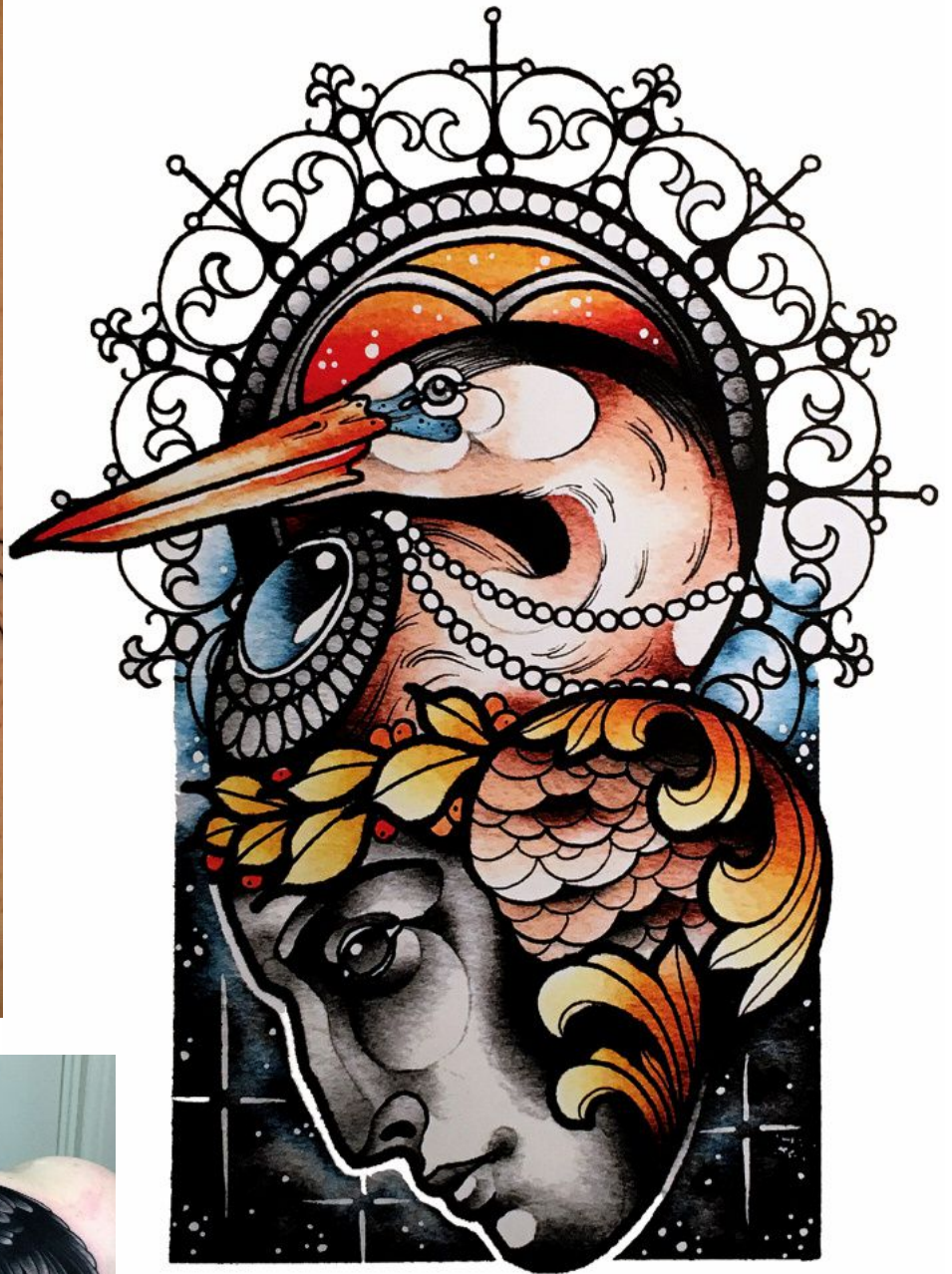
Do you work on a custom-only basis?

Yeah, I work in the private Painted Lady studio with clients booked online for custom pieces. I never tattoo the same design twice, unless it's requested by the client (a couple tattoo for instance). Even if I do a little walk-in I will always draw the design myself so that each piece is for the client.

How do you go about designing a tattoo?

Reference is a big part of it. I know some artists who are disgustingly talented and can





draw full backpieces without looking at one piece of reference, but I need it to get things right. Another thing I do that people find weird is that I piece designs together. For example if someone asks for a skull and roses, I will draw a full skull and all the roses too, then layer them and rub areas out. I find this gives me more control over the composition and flow of a piece.

How do you avoid creative blocks?

My girlfriend has a strong interest in all art – fine art, interiors, tattooing, you name it – and whenever I can't think of anything she gives me loads of cool ideas and references.

What, if anything, do you want to develop within your work?

Pretty much everything. At the moment I'm really trying to focus on developing my drawing. Up to now, I've put more



time into perfecting the technical side of tattooing. That's not to say I've nailed it, but I feel I want to spend more time looking into my drawings and seeing if I can make improvements there.

How does a tattooist keep evolving?

Critique your work, talk to other artists and get tattooed by them, gather inspiration from everything in your life. That's what helps me make progress.





If – God forbid – the studio was on fire and you had to save just one piece of equipment, what would it be and why?

This is a genuinely hard question to answer. Picking one thing is extremely difficult as one piece of tattoo equipment is useless on its own... but for that reason I'll pick the sentimental machine. It was the first machine I

ever really loved using, and it's one that I would never sell. I got it off my main mentor when I was learning, Luke Skinner of Petal Faced Gypsy. It's a 2011 or 12 Paulo Cruze liner; bright pink with Hello Kitties on the coil. It looks completely ridiculous, but it helped me out so much when I first started.

As a relative newcomer, how do you view the tattoo scene?

Even in my short career, I've seen massive growth. I've seen tattooing become much more custom-based and more commercial. All of which is amazing for the industry I love.

What inspires you most about the tattoo scene right now?

For me personally, it's seeing how many tattooers there are who have been tattooing for even less time than me and they're already killing it! That's really awesome.

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IN FOCUS

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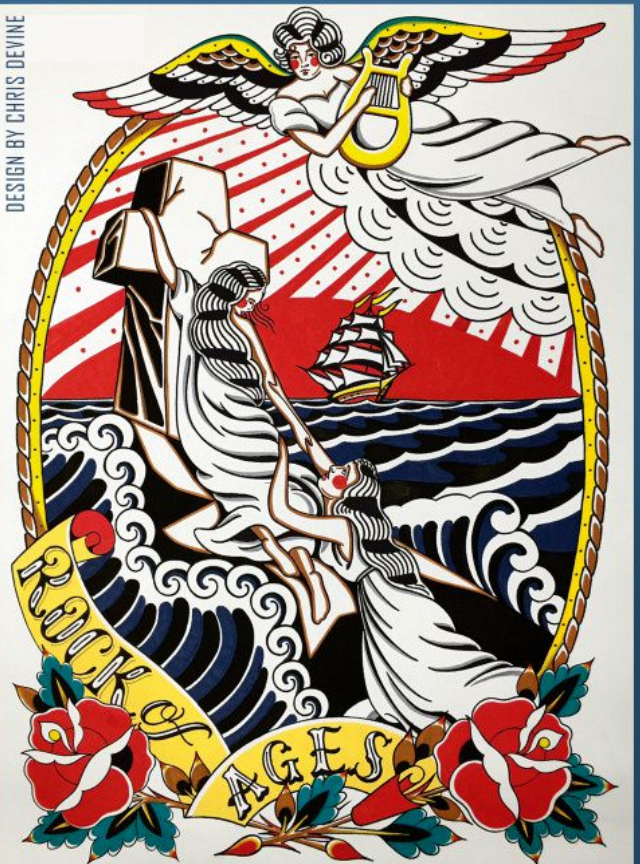


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NORTHSIDE TATTOOZ.CO.UK



Hello again dear readers. Here I am again, your resident international bright young thing. This month I'm so tired I can hardly think, so I'll just let you loose inside my head. Welcome to another tale from the naughty step.

Gearing up for the forthcoming months of conventions, guest-spots, airports, motorway services, etc, I found myself thinking about the huge changes happening in the UK and Europe, in the US, and indeed around the whole planet. Like most people, I honestly have very little idea how these changes are going to affect my world. It seems to me that we are on the edge of a very important time in human history (which may very well be a turbulent and uneasy one).

And how will this impact tattooing and tattoo artists?

Well, with the artwork that we put on our clients, we artists are the people charged with documenting these dark days. We are the ones who give life to the stories our clients tell us. Stories that we immortalise on their skin.

Museums and art galleries will show the humans of the future how we WISH our world was right now, not how it actually IS, because they're full of images filtered through the minds of creatives with their own personal viewpoint. Tattoo artists, however, tell the stories that are given to them to draw. Funny, sad, hopeful, angry... our tattoos tell the truth about twenty first century humans. They are the unfiltered, honest stories of the common man.

Or at least, they always used to be.

Back in the day, your tattoo would have had a meaning. It would have been thought about, drawn and finished by a pro and then sold (as flash) to artists. Old school flash sheets had themes and they worked because they were stylistically flawless. But these days your tattoo could be nothing more than a meme that you saw or one of those 'internet popular' designs you found. Sure, you'll convince yourself that you are a 'guiding light' so that you can shoehorn a lighthouse or a compass into your tattoo. How about a brainy quote on your ribs? Or a fox-head woman thing? The current zeitgeist would appear to be 'let's just all agree that these are the artists we like and the designs that everyone wants, and let's just keep churning them out.'

At a time when tattooing could be telling the stories of all the problems that face twenty first century humans, what is it doing instead? It's doing nothing more than an X-Factor style race to the bottom. Everybody's the same. Everybody's award-winning. Everybody's famous. Vanilla-flavoured. Magnolia-coloured. So much of what I see is hopelessly unoriginal regurgitated crap.

But I don't think this is the fault of clients or tattooists. I'm trying to figure out why it is

that we have all decided to become LESS individual when we love an artform that is ALL ABOUT individuality. Why does everyone want the same tattoos? Are we really that unoriginal? Have we all been brainwashed? Are the lizard people secretly in charge of tattooing? Or maybe we're living in a time where we're becoming too scared to stand out from the crowd. We pick the same design over and over again because there's safety in numbers. Is our society finally becoming the future that Orwell predicted in '1984'? Is this twenty first century paranoia?

Honestly I'm not sure. All I see is people getting covered in the same old mass-approved, mass-appeal tattoos when they should be getting something incredible. Tattooing has never been in healthier creative shape than it is now, but it takes a little effort to seek out the exciting, truly amazing stuff.

So if you're an artist with less than 1,000 followers on instagram and you'd like me to take a look at your portfolio, send me a link to the usual email. If I like what I see I'll share your work, because we all know that as long as the lizard people are in charge you ain't getting shared anywhere else!

**Until next time - Paul
talesfromthenaughtystep@gmail.com**



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CONVENTION CALENDAR

UK CONVENTIONS

June 4-5

Northampton tattoo Convention

The Northampton Saints Rugby Ground
Weedon Road, Northampton. NN5 5BG.
www.northamptoninternationaltattooconvention.com

June 4-5

Scarborough Tattoo Show

The Spa Scarborough, South Bay, Scarborough,
North Yorkshire YO11 2HD
www.facebook.com/scarboroughtattooshow

June 4-5

Leeds International Tattoo Convention

Exhibition Centre Leeds, Clarence Dock,
Chadwick Street, Leeds LS10 1LT
www.leedstattooexpo.com

June 11-12

Bristol Tattoo Convention

The Passenger Shed, Brunels Old Station,
Station Approach,
Bristol BS1 6QH
www.bristolstattooconvention.com

June 18-19

York International tattoo Convention

The York Race Course,
Tadcaster Road York YO23 1EX
www.yorkinternationaltattooconvention.co.uk

July 9-10

The Southampton Tattoo Festival

Ageas Bowl, Botley Road, Southampton,
Hampshire SO30 3XH
www.southamptontattoofestival.co.uk

July 16-17

Powys Charity Tattoo Convention

Community Centre, Mount Lane
Llanidloes, Powys SY18 6EZ
www.powystattooconvention.co.uk

July 22-24

Midlands Tattoo Industry Show

Leicester Road Football Club, Leicester Rd.
Hinckley, Leicester LE10 3DR
www.facebook.com/Midlands-Tattoo-industry-Show-980219155377587

July 23-24

Cardiff Tattoo and Toy Convention

The Motorpoint Arena Cardiff
Mary Ann Street, Cardiff CF10 2EQ
www.cardiffattooandtoycon.co.uk

July 29-31

Titanic Tattoo Convention

Titanic Building Belfast
1 Queens Rd, Titanic Quarter, Belfast BT3 9EP,
www.facebook.com/titanic.tattooconventionbelfast14?ref=ts

July 30-31

Portsmouth Tattoo Convention

The Guild Hall, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth
PO1 2AD
www.portsmouthtattooconvention.co

August 19-21

Tatcon Blackpool

Norbreck Castle Hotel, Queen's Promenade
Blackpool, Lancashire FY2 9AA
www.tatconblackpool.co.uk

August 20-21

Robin Hood Tattoo Show

CotgraveSocial Club, Woodview, Cotgrave,
Nottinghamshire NG12 3PJ.
www.robinhoodtattoofestival.com

September 2-4

South Yorkshire Body Art Festival

Ponds Forge International Sports Centre,
Sheaf Street, Sheffield, S1 2BP

September 23-25

London Tattoo Convention

Tobacco Quay Wapping Lane, London E1W 2SF
www.thelondonstattooconvention.com

October 1-2

Ink 'n' art Bournemouth

Pier Approach, Bournemouth,
Dorset BH2 5AA
www.bournemouth.tattoo/

October 8-9

Halloween Tattoo Bash

Wolverhampton Racecourse, Dunstall Park
Gorsebrook Rd, Wolverhampton WV6 0PE
www.halloweentattoobash.co.uk

October 28-30

Jurassic Coast Tattoo Convention

The Premier Inn, Bournemouth Central,
Westover Rd, Bournemouth BH1 2BZ
www.jurassiccoasttattooconvention.co.uk

Nov 12-13

East Coast Tattoo Expo

Highfield Holiday Park, London Road, Clacton-
On-Sea, Essex, CO16 9QY
www.eastcoastexpo.co.uk

April 15-16 2017

Maidstone Tattoo Extravaganza

The John Hendry Pavilion
Detling Showground, Maidstone, Kent
www.maidstonetattooextravaganza.co.uk

OVERSEAS CONVENTIONS

July 15-17

NY Empire State Tattoo Expo

New York Hilton Midtown, 1335 Avenue of the
Americas,
New York, NY 10019,
www.empirestatetattooexpo.com

Oct 21-23

Evian Tattoo Show

Palais Des Festivites, Evian
www.eviantattoo.com

Oct 30

Tattoo Sunday

Studio Hall, Boogschutterslaan 41,
Sint-Kruis (Brugge), Belgium
www.facebook.com/tattoosundaybrugge

Nov 11-13

Tattoo Sunday

Tour & Taxis
Avenue du Port, 86c, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
www.brusselstattooconvention.be/

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