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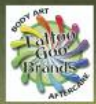
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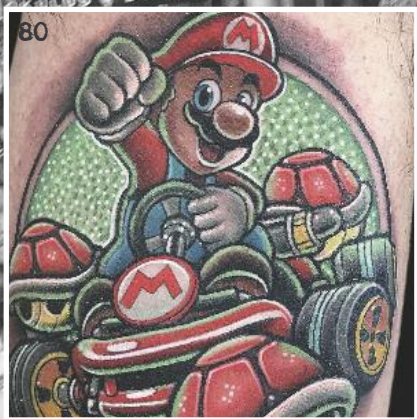
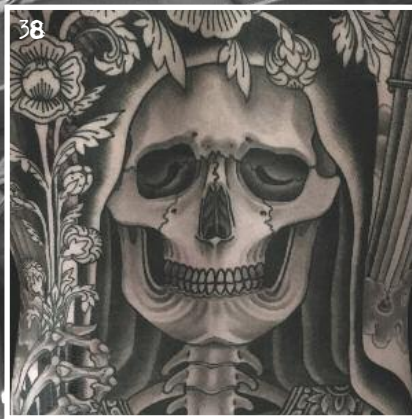


All correspondence should be sent to
Total Tattoo Magazine
111 Furze Road,
Norwich,
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Editorial team

Perry Rule, Lizzy Guy
Jill Feldt

Editorial enquiries

editor@totaltattoo.co.uk

Advertising enquiries

advertising@totaltattoo.co.uk

Gallery submissions

gallery@totaltattoo.co.uk

Subscription enquiries

subs@totaltattoo.co.uk

Social Media

Instagram: @totaltattoo

facebook.com/totaltattoo

Contributors

Jenna Kraccek

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WELCOME to 164

People who don't 'get' tattoos often ask questions that are obvious to tattooists or people who have been tattooed. Come on, we've all had "But what does it mean?!" or "Did it hurt?" You may be bored of being asked those kinds of things, but it's harmless and I think it's a good way to get talking to people. After all, they're genuinely curious. Some questions can feel a little too personal ("Oh, are they under your clothes as well?") but the one that I really don't like to answer is when they ask you about money. I'm not talking about the "How much for a sleeve?" question that tattooists so often hear; I'm talking about people who want to know "How much did you pay for your tattoos?"

Over the past month, I've been asked this twice (which is bizarre, because I don't think I've ever been asked it before). Of course, in the right context, asking about the cost of a tattoo might be OK, but on both these occasions the question came from someone I'd never met before, who didn't have tattoos and didn't have any desire to get any. Both times, I didn't reply, but looking back, I really wish I'd told the questioners to mind their own business. They weren't asking because they were interested; they were asking out of sheer nosiness.

There is a strange taboo around money. According to etiquette experts, it's just not the done thing to ask about it. And according to a survey I saw recently, about seven out of ten people don't like talking about it. So when I was asked (to quote exactly what one person said to me) "How much are you worth then?" I felt so incredibly uncomfortable I could only manage some mumbling. I was in a no-win situation: anything I said was going to be met with something along the lines of "You spent how much?! You could have gone on holiday/bought a house/raised an army of children", that sort of thing.

I think it's weird to ask someone how much something they own or wear costs. It feels like the questioner can't form an opinion of someone or something until they have found out whether it's expensive or cheap. If, like me, you're permanently skint, you take pride in finding bargains in everyday items, but you work and save hard for things that you really want. So to be asked that particular question feels like being judged. It's a personal attack on my spending and saving habits.

'Good tattoos ain't cheap, cheap tattoos ain't good' certainly holds true most of the time, but money isn't everything. Rather than asking yourself what a tattoo is worth, why not ask what it's worth to you? With hindsight, that would have been the best way to answer the question about the cost of my tattoos. I wish I'd thought of it at the time...



Lizzy
Editorial Team
editor@totaltattoo.co.uk

"Grown-ups like numbers. When you tell them about a new friend, they never ask questions about what really matters. They never ask: 'What does his voice sound like?' 'What games does he like best?' 'Does he collect butterflies?' They ask: 'How old is he?' 'How many brothers does he have?' 'How much does he weigh?' 'How much money does he have?' Only then do they think they know him. If you tell grown-ups, 'I saw a beautiful red brick house, with geraniums at the windows and doves at the roof...', they won't be able to imagine such a house. You have to tell them, 'I saw a house worth a thousand francs.' Then they exclaim, 'What a pretty house!'"

Antoine de Saint Exupery, from 'The Little Prince'.

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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 NR7 0AU

BOOK REVIEW

100 paintings, Vol 1

By Joe Spaven

£30

Atonement Books

www.atonementbooks.com



This book is the product of an astounding ongoing project by Joe Spaven of Scarlet Rose Tattoo. Joe, one of the UK's finest Japanese specialists, has set himself the task of producing a stream of small paintings representing all kinds of traditional Japanese imagery and motifs. It began with a couple of dozen individual pieces... then he decided to aim for a series of 100... and now (relishing the discipline of the project and the artistic benefits it brings) he is keeping going until he reaches 1000.



These paintings have an apparent simplicity and a refreshing energy. They are not laboured or overworked, and they are not perfect – and that is their essence. They were executed 'in the moment'. They are clean, bold, fresh, and very, very good. And of course they would make excellent tattoos. You can see that they are the work of someone who knows exactly what that entails.



Joe himself says that his tattooing has improved through working on this project. In fact, looking through the book page-by-page, you soon become aware of how the paintings flow. You witness Joe getting faster with his pen, and more confident.

'100 Paintings Vol 1' was launched with an exhibition at the recent Tattoo Collective event in London. We cannot recommend this book highly enough – for the art within its pages, for the concept itself, and for the courage and tenacity with which Joe has embarked on this very special creative journey.



LET'S FACE IT...

OK, so it doesn't involve anywhere near the same level of commitment as getting a real portrait tattoo, but here's a fun way to wear someone's face on your skin for a while. French Etsy seller Lilimandrill is offering hand-drawn custom portraits in the form of temporary tattoos.



They're being marketed as wedding favours, the idea being that every guest should sport a portrait of the happy couple in celebration of the big day. For this reason they're priced for sale in bulk. 25 identical temporary tattoos will cost you £65.24 plus shipping, and the more you order, the cheaper they get (500 will cost £260.95 plus shipping). Names and dates can be added at no extra cost, and the turnaround time is 3-4 weeks.

The portraits are hand-drawn from photos, and customers are sent a sketch for approval before the temporary tattoos are produced. According to Lilimandrill's Etsy shopfront, nearly 8,500 portraits have been produced so far! (They're also available as ready-inked rubber stamps, or printed on to mugs.)

Check out

www.etsy.com/shop/lilimandrill



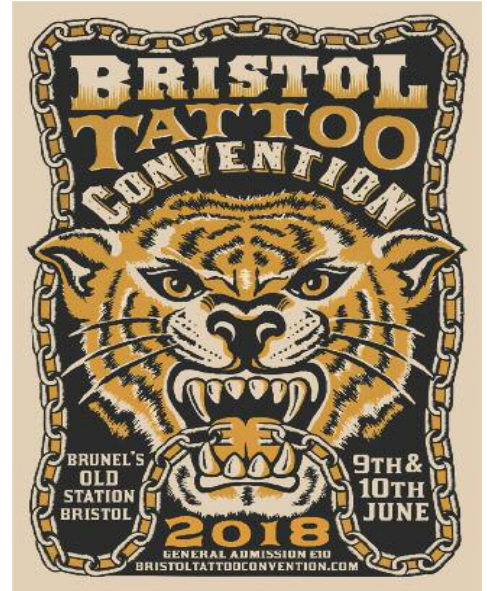
WIN TICKETS TO THE BRISTOL TATTOO CONVENTION!

The Bristol Tattoo Convention is coming up! It will take place on 9th and 10th June in the spectacular setting of The Passenger Shed at Brunel's Old Station, a magnificently preserved piece of Victorian railway history right in the centre of the city. As always, the artist line-up is top notch and the organisers have brought together a great selection of vendors selling "unique and relevant products that complement the art of tattooing" (many of them handmade). This is an event for serious tattoo fans, and the organisers have generously provided us with 5 tickets for lucky Total Tattoo readers to win. To be in with a chance, all you have to do is answer the following question:

Where is the Bristol Tattoo Convention taking place?

- A. In the garden shed**
- B. In the Passenger Shed**
- C. Behind the bike shed**

Email your answer to comps@totaltattoo.co.uk with the subject line **BRISTOL**, to arrive no later than May 31st. The first 5 correct entries drawn out of the hat will win a ticket. For competition terms and conditions see p5. Check out www.bristoltattooconvention.com for more information about the event.



Thom DeVita

RIP

1932-2018

We were sad to hear of the passing of legendary tattooer, Thom DeVita - a unique artist who was perhaps not as well-known as he deserved to be..

Born and bred in Manhattan, Thom famously opened his first studio the day after tattooing was banned in New York, in 1961.

He tattooed "the tough guys that other tattooists didn't want to tattoo" and, as a result, amassed a vast collection of stories and memorabilia representing a rich tattoo history.

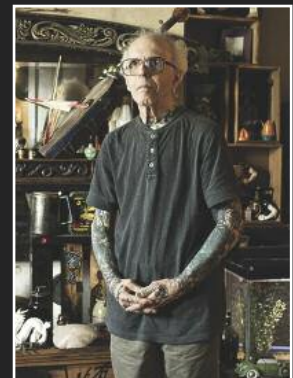
A forefather of modern American traditional, Thom started tattooing purely for the love of the art form.

He was an artist before he became a tattooist (he mixed in the same crowd as the New York School painters in the 1950s) and he continued to create sculptures, montages and constructions throughout his tattooing career.

He respected tattoo art from other cultures too, and incorporated many non-traditional elements into his designs.

Towards the end of his life, Thom was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. This forced him to step back from tattooing, but he continued to create art through rubbings, stencils, stamps and montages.

Our thoughts are with Thom's family, friends, and colleagues.



BOOK REVIEW

Japanese Flora

By Sören Sangkuhl

€65

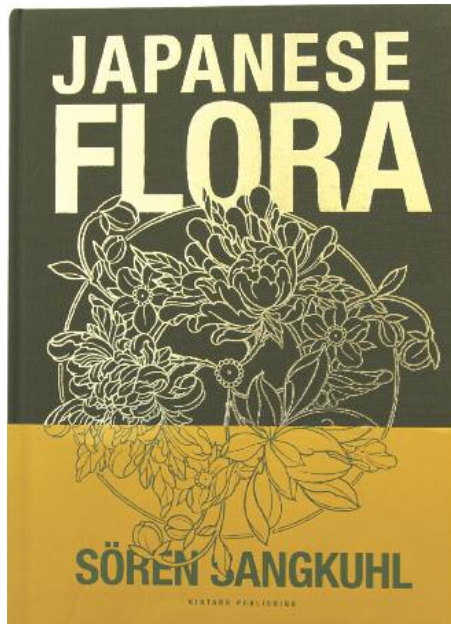
Kintaro Publishing

www.kintaro-publishing.com

Yet another quality offering from Kintaro! Clothbound, with a gold-embossed cover, this is an extraordinarily beautiful volume of delicate line drawings from a master of the art. As Sören Sangkuhl tells us in his moving and joyful introduction, his intention was to give Japanese flowers (their petals, leaves, buds and seed pods...) the focused attention they deserve, from cherry blossoms in spring, through chrysanthemums in summer, to maples in the autumn.



These breathtakingly clever illustrations were not originally intended for publication. They were produced purely as studies for personal use. And this is one of the reasons they are so special. You can see the process within them – the development and unfolding of each intricate image – and you can use that to practice your own technique. These drawings are an ideal reference source; Sören explains that his intention was to leave plenty of room for the viewers' own imagination. He tells us that this volume represents more than 400 hours of drawing time and a great deal more thinking time.



Spend a while with these gentle pencil drawings yourself and perhaps (as Sören himself describes in the introduction) you will find peace of mind in this garden too.

This is a truly exquisite volume – but why oh why did the publishers not notice that parts of the handwritten introduction (a thing of beauty in itself) have become trapped in the binding due to the provision of an insufficient gutter width to the pages? This is a crying shame, but it doesn't detract from the utter perfection of this book's wonderful artistic content.



FOOD 4 TATTOOS

FOOD 4 TATTOOS
This Sunday 9am
Beauty From Ashes
Tattoo Parlor

Here's a tale of real community spirit. Big-hearted Kyle McIntosh, owner of Beauty From Ashes Tattoo Parlor in Indiana, USA, decided to contribute to his local food bank in a rather unique way. On Sunday 8th April he offered free tattoos in exchange for donations of tinned, dried or other non-perishable foodstuffs.

Each item donated was worth one dollar of tattooing, and the minimum donation was 60 items. Many of the people who came along were already tattoo fans, but others took the opportunity to swap some store cupboard items for their very first ink. Originally the idea was for the tattoo studio simply to be a drop-off point for the food bank, but Kyle decided to give the project an extra boost by offering this special day of tattooing. And it was successful on an epic scale! As the food donations came in, everything was loaded on to a huge truck or stacked in the studio store room, then it was all delivered to the I Care Ministries Food Pantry at Seymour Harvest Church.



As we go to print, this is still happening... According to Kyle's social media posts, the tinned goods alone have amounted to more than 11,000 items (and they're still being counted). The incredible mountain of donations also includes more than 400 boxes of macaroni – which will no doubt be made into numerous portions of classic American mac 'n' cheese! Kyle's studio slogan is 'LOVE GOD. LOVE PEOPLE. LOVE INK.' and he often supports worthy causes, saying he feels blessed to be able to help others using the tattooing talent that God has given him. A genuinely heartwarming news story.

WIN TICKETS TO THE KKBO9!

The Kustom Kulture Blastoff is a unique homegrown experience. It's a celebration of hot rods and custom vehicles – a friendly weekend gathering of people who create them, people who drive them, and everybody who enjoys them. As well as the vehicles themselves, this event showcases the music and art they inspire. Tattoos included of course! There will be airbrushing, pinstriping and low brow art of all kinds, plus lots more besides (check out www.kustomkultureblastoff.com for details).

KKBO9 takes place at the Lincoln Showground from Friday 31st August to Sunday 2nd September (so there's plenty of time to plan it into your diary). The exciting news is that this year the Tattoo Zone will be twice as big as last year.

The organisers have kindly given us 5 tickets for lucky Total Tattoo readers to win. To be in with a chance, simply send us the answer to the following question:

Which county is The Kustom Kulture Blast Off taking place in

A - Abrahamsire

B - Lincolnshire

C - Americanshire

Email your answer to comps@totaltattoo.co.uk with the subject line **KUSTOM**, to arrive no later than May 31st. The first 5 correct entries drawn out of the hat will win a ticket. For competition terms and conditions see p5.



Kustom Kulture Blast-Off
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CHINA TATTOO BAN



China is often in the news, and now it's in the tattoo news as well – but for all the wrong reasons. This isn't a story about astounding Asian art. This is a story about official repression. As part of the Chinese government's drive to promote "moral values", there's been a clampdown on the wearing of visible tattoos. If you watched the recent football match between China and Wales (6-0 to Wales, since you ask) you'll have noticed the Chinese players apparently wearing bandages on their arms and legs... These were to cover their ink. (We understand that the Chinese Football Association's edict doesn't apply to visiting players from overseas; only to Chinese players.) The tattoo ban also extends to the entertainment industry. Press reports suggest that tattooed celebrities are no longer allowed to appear on Chinese television (unless they cover their tattoos) and according to one news story, the organisers of the Strawberry Music Festival in Hangzhou this month ruled that no visible tattoos should appear on stage, requesting that all performers cover their tattoos with clothing, scarves, stickers or bandages.

WHOOPS BRIGHTON

This amazing body suit was created by John Fowler at East Side Tattoo, but the gremlins got into issue 163 of Total Tattoo and managed to lose the credit from our Brighton Tattoo convention report. Our sincere apologies.



INK ARM OF THE LAW

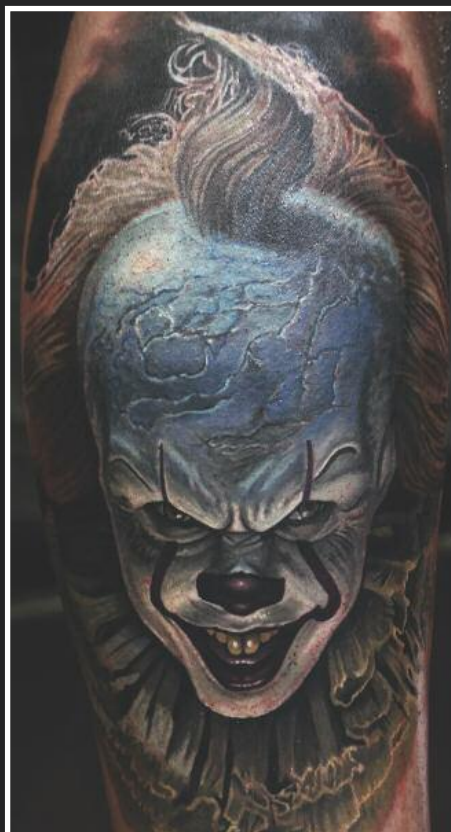
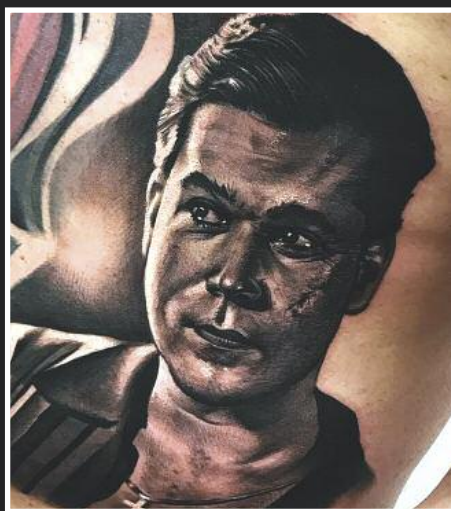


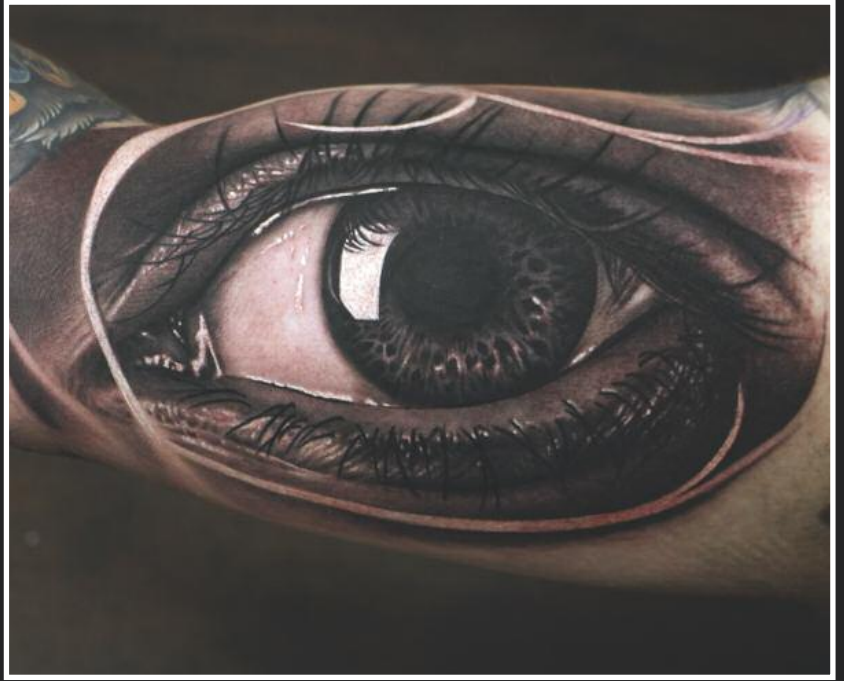
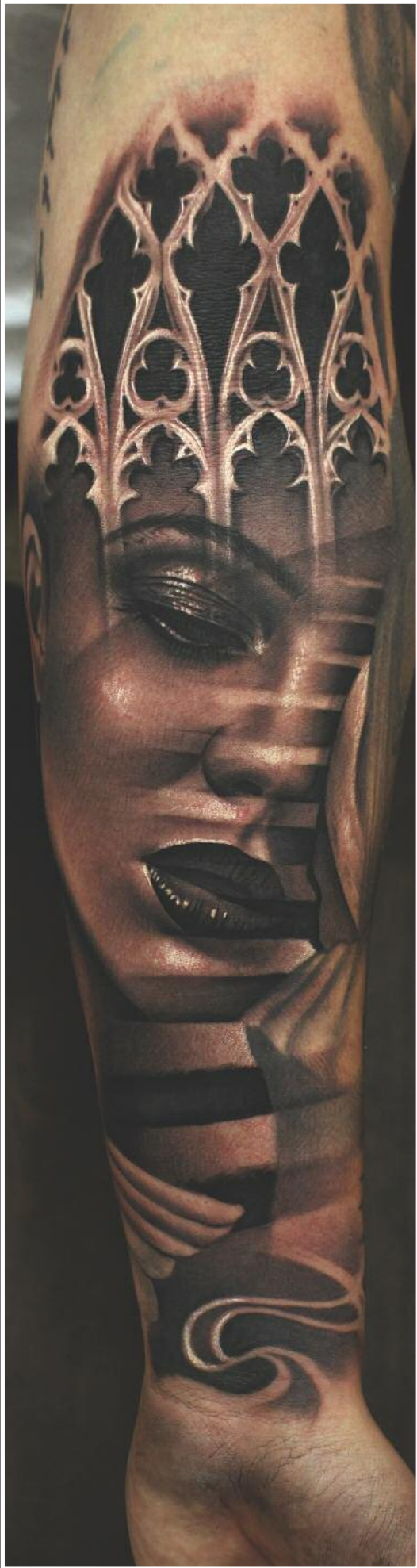
Our news radar has picked up another story reflecting the gradually changing attitudes towards tattoos in police forces around the world. Currently the Philippine National Police (Pambansang Pulisya ng Pilipinas) has a strict policy of not employing anybody with tattoos. But according to recent press reports, Manila's police chief has opened the way for a review of that ban by suggesting that exceptions could perhaps be made – on a case-by-case basis – for those with religious, family or artistic tattoos on parts of the body that would not be visible when a police uniform was worn. (Many people in the Philippines still associate tattoos with criminality.)

Dean Taylor

A Tribute in Pictures

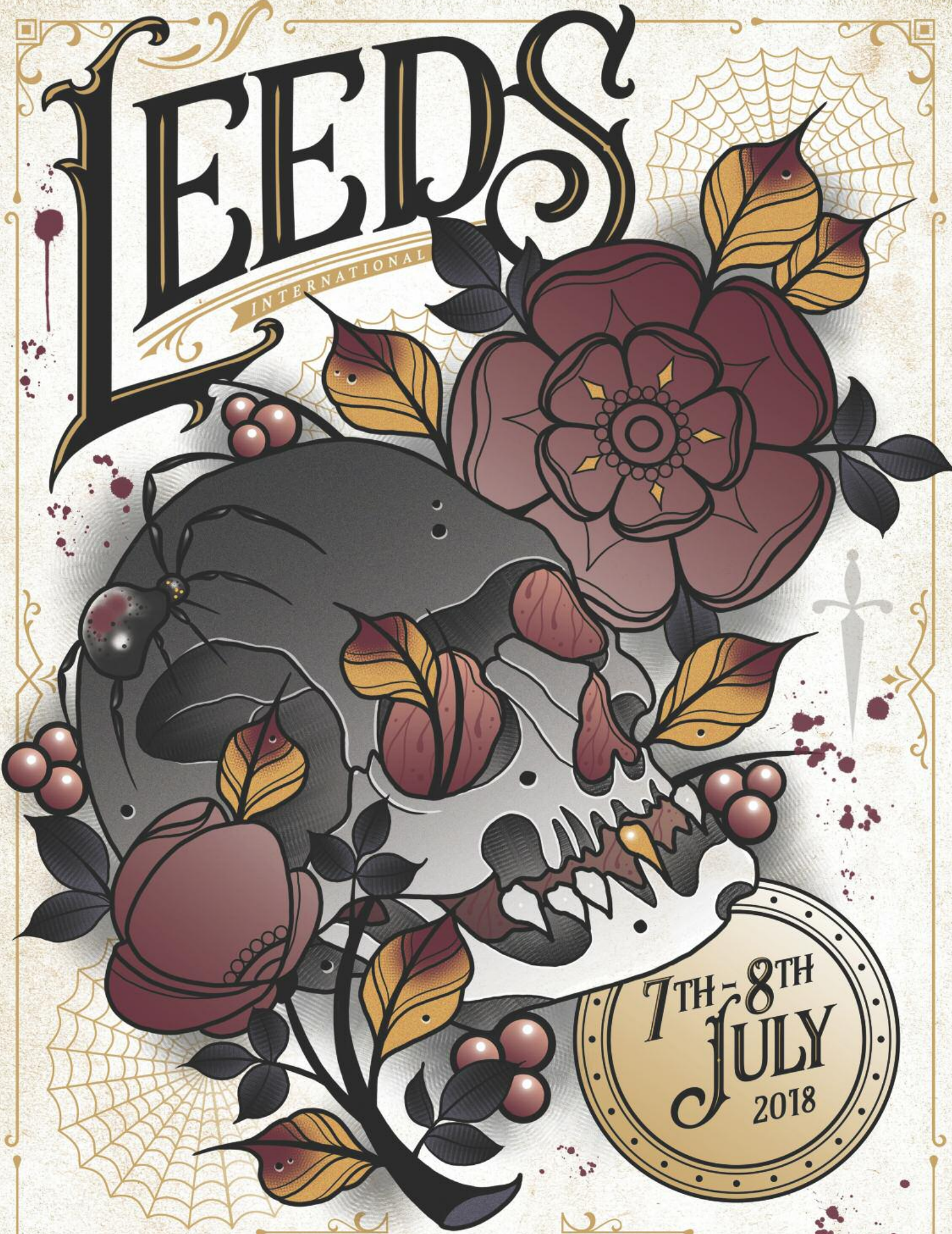
A few months ago we told you the very sad news about the passing of a young tattoo talent from Newcastle Upon Tyne, Dean Taylor. Born and bred in the North East, he was an exceptional artist and was truly destined for great things before his life was tragically cut short. Here at Total Tattoo Magazine we had our eye on Dean, and the promise he held, and by way of a tribute we would like to present some of his work. Our thoughts go out to his family and friends, especially the crew of Northern Glory Tattoo who worked with Dean and supplied us with these images.





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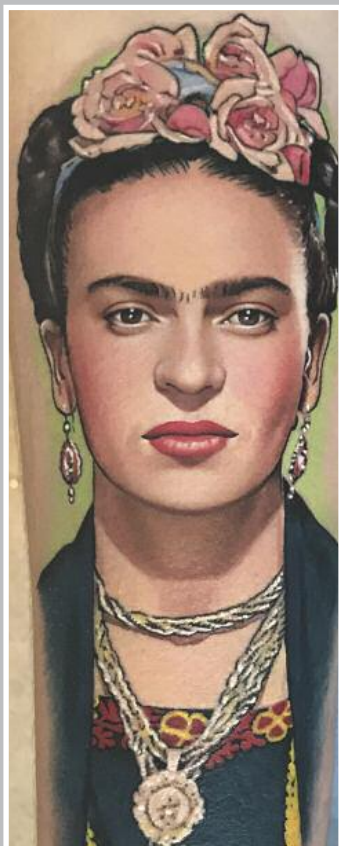
David Corden

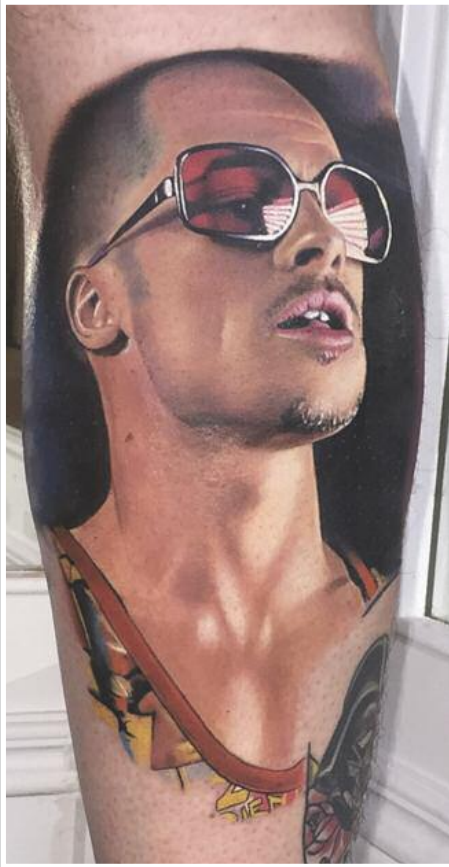
Semper Tattoo



David Corden opened his beautiful studio, Semper, in the centre of Edinburgh three years ago. He has managed to surround himself with an incredible team of tattooists. As one of the UK's foremost realism artists, his work is recognised all over the world; he's also one of the kindest and most positive people you could ever wish to meet. We first got to know him when he was just starting his apprenticeship at Ritual Art and it was a real pleasure, as always, to catch up with him again for this interview.

I begin by asking David what it feels like to be so well known as a tattooist. "I guess I've got used to it," he tells me, "but I do still have to pinch myself every now and then! Here I am in Edinburgh, working in an amazing studio with some amazing artists. I definitely don't feel like the studio owner, because we're all just mates. When I started to get attention and recognition within the industry, nothing really changed. When you become known, it really is the same as before. You do your tattoo, you post it online, you have a laugh with your mates, and you go home and play with your dogs. And there in the background the internet is doing its thing..."



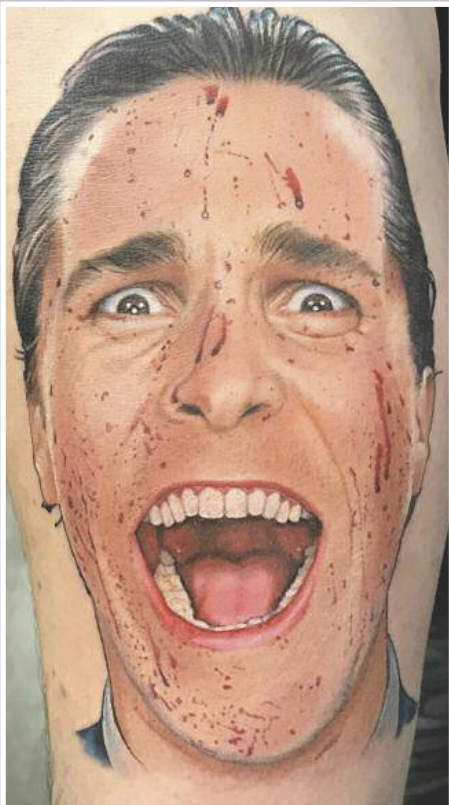
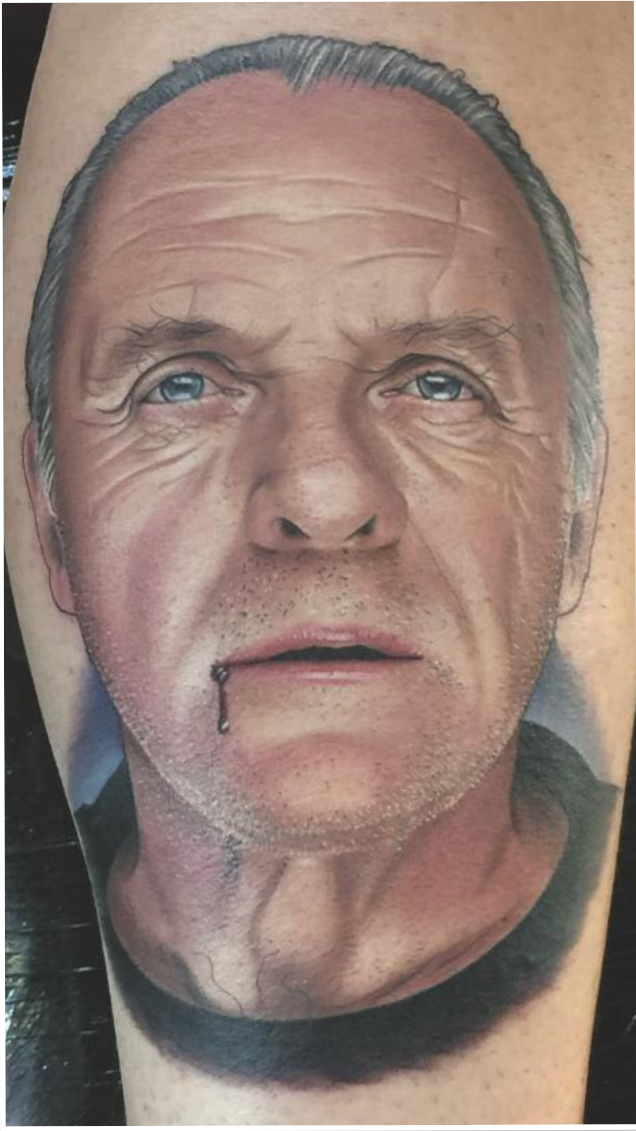


"I sometimes look at our artist line-up and think, 'Wow, I used to read about you guys in magazines and now you work with me!' We have so many different styles going on in the studio and we all welcome each other's input; it's a very collective mentality. We really are like a family, and I love that. We all look out for each other and we all socialise together too. On our days off we might meet up for breakfast, which then spills over into lunch, or even dinner. Elliot was initially going to guest for about a year, but he felt so at home here he stayed. He once told me, 'I never knew a studio could be like this!'"



I wonder if being so close makes it difficult to be 'the boss'. "Not at all," replies David. "Being friends makes it easy. I built the team really slowly. That was always the plan. First it was just Michelle Maddison, Claire Hamill and me. We knew that anyone who joined us had to be the right person. The rule was (and still is) that nobody is allowed to join unless everybody agrees. And I would never have anyone here who came along slugging off another studio. That's not the way we do things. I invariably get a feeling about whether or not our guest artists might want to hang around with us for longer. Things kind of manoeuvre themselves into place. In fact I have never offered anybody a job, or asked someone to come and join me. It's always been the other way round!"

Semper is in a historic listed building, which presented David with some additional challenges when it came to setting up the studio. "I had very particular ideas about how I wanted it to look," he recounts, "and I made models and put together a big presentation for both the council and the landlord to show them what I was proposing to do. We were passionate about preserving the original beauty of the building. And I think not having the word TATTOO on the front helped our case; there have been other applications to open tattoo studios here on the Grassmarket that haven't been successful. Lots of people think Semper is an art gallery or a high-end hairdressers. I love it that we don't fit the stereotype."



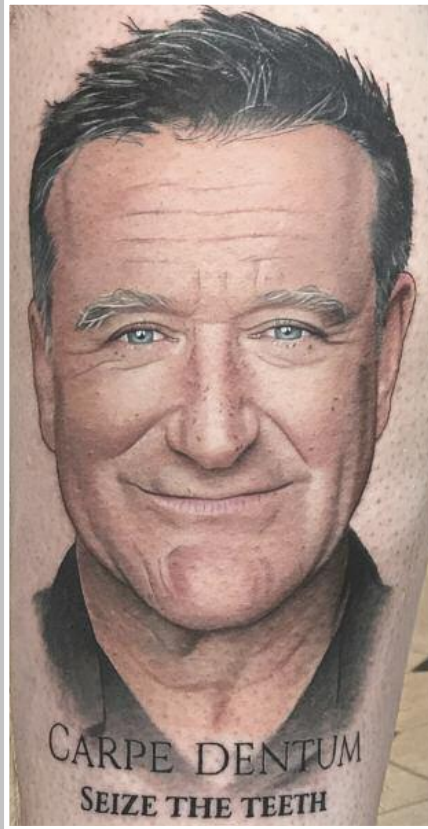


Edinburgh has lots of good tattoo studios and a large concentration of superb artists, but there seems to be a unity amongst them. "Yes, Bizarre Ink and Paul Slifer's Red Hot & Blue are just around the corner. But we didn't take any trade from other studios. Nearly all our clients travel in, and we were booked up for months in advance before we even opened. If we do get walk-ins, we usually send them to the other studios. Occasionally one of our customers will wander into another studio by mistake, thinking it's us, but they will always be treated with respect and given the right directions to get to Semper. We're not poaching anybody else's customers. We're too busy to do that!"

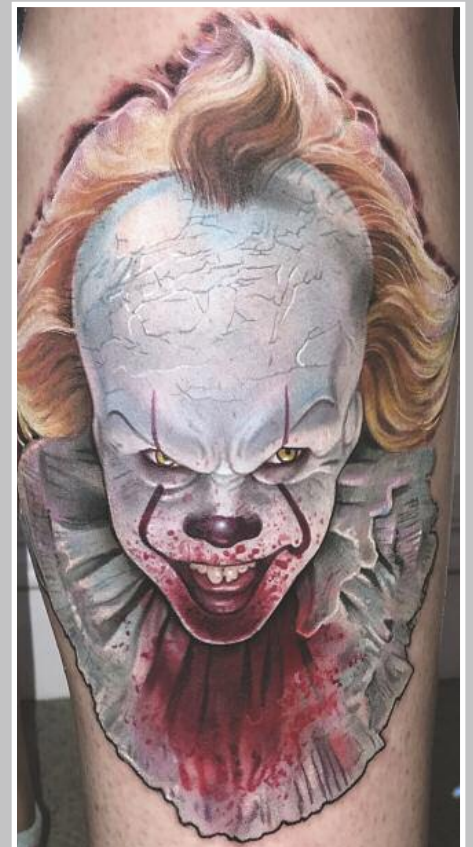
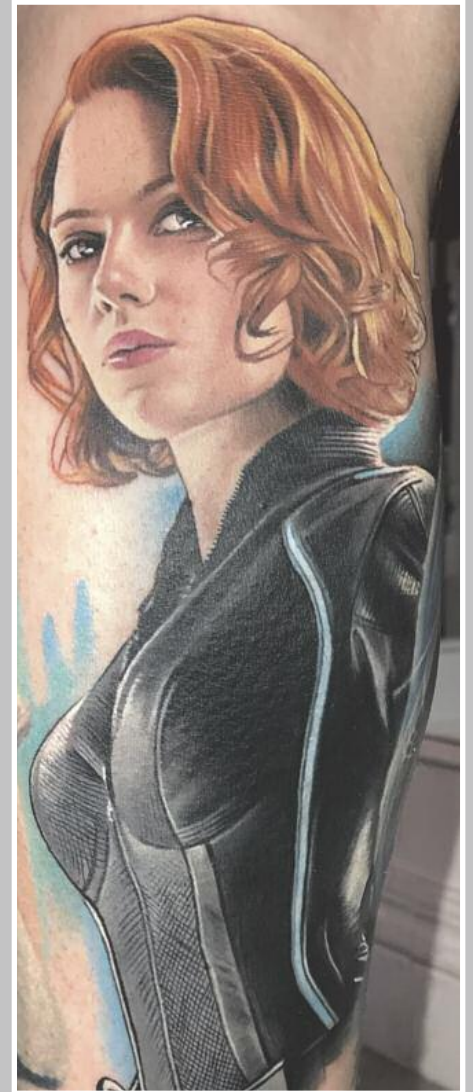




David is a pioneer, taking UK realism to previously unimagined heights. "But I certainly don't feel that I'm a pioneer," he says, modestly. "I will never see my own work in that way. I always see the faults, and the bits that I've struggled with. Whenever I look at someone else's work and they say something like, 'Yeah, but that bit of red didn't go in very well...', I can never see it like that. I just think it looks amazing. But I always see what's wrong with my own work. Guys that marvel at the perfection of their own work, that really isn't a very nice trait."



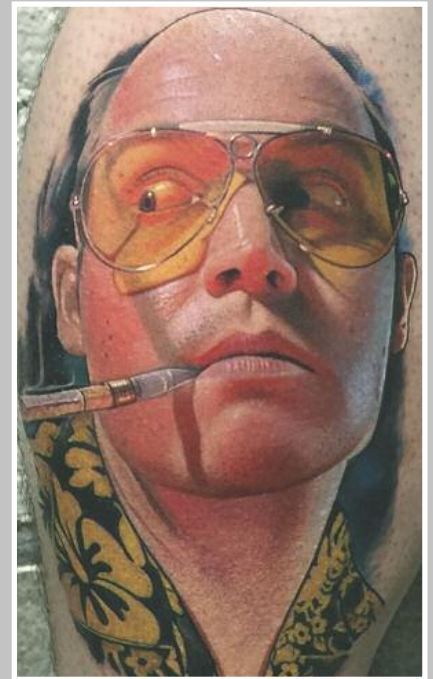
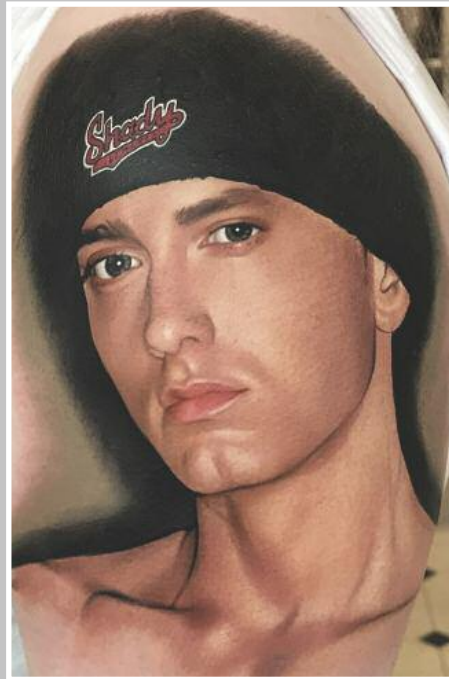
David knows the value of good customer service. "I think getting into tattooing when I was a bit older has made a real difference to me. I'd had twenty years working as a ventilation engineer – in the real world! – and that gives me a real affinity with my clients, because I know what it means to them to have saved up for their time in the chair. I want to give them the best possible experience I can. I don't ever want anybody to feel like they are simply 'today's money'. I want them to feel like friends."



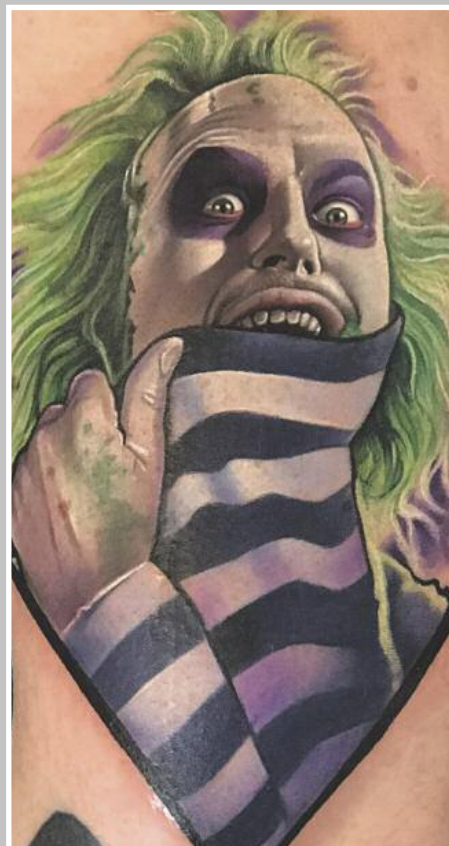
"Jason Butcher once told me that if you specialise in a particular genre, you will probably form closer bonds with your clients – because if you share a love of something as fundamentally important as a tattoo style, you will inevitably have other interests in common too. He's right. That's exactly what I've found. Likewise, if a client comes in with an idea that I'm not feeling, we'll talk about it and I'll try to find another artist to do the tattoo, because I believe that every client deserves to have a tattooist who feels as passionate about their idea as they themselves do. We are here to serve the client and we have to give every tattoo one hundred per cent." David feels this is especially important now that there is so much competition in the tattoo world. "If you haven't treated your customers particularly well, word can get around and your reputation can suffer. With so many good tattooists about, artists need to be providing a complete service at a level that leaves the customer in no doubt that they have come to the right place."



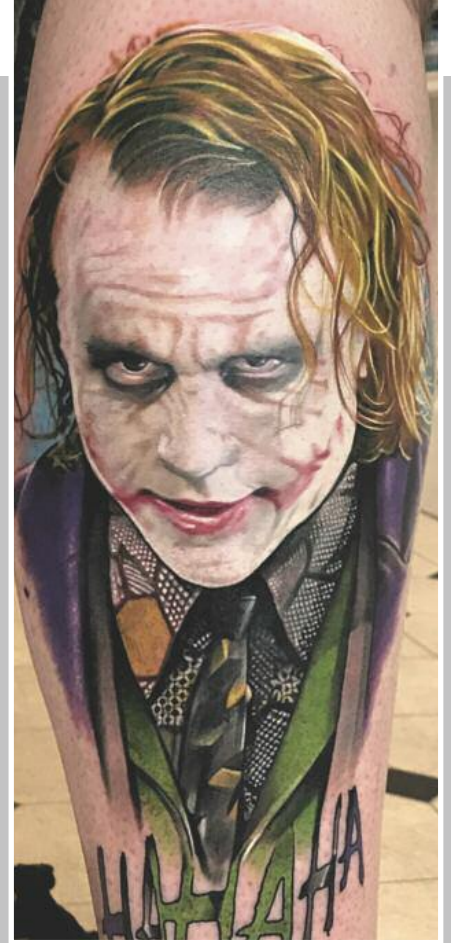
A while back, one of David's tattoos (a Joker) attracted a great deal of negative publicity because of a bad heal. It felt important to take this opportunity to hear David's side of the story. "It was the client's first tattoo and he was in agony from the moment we started," recounts David. "As always, I told him that if he had any problems or concerns afterwards he should come back to us straight away. We heard nothing at all from him... until three years later, when I received a very aggressive Facebook message. I was horrified when I saw the pictures. Emotionally, the whole thing upset me deeply because I'd put heart and soul into that piece. I loved the tattoo and I really liked the client too. He was awesome. I tried to get in touch with him to find out more about what had happened, but without success. The frustrating thing for me was that he'd left it so long and then slated me online! I know in my heart that I did everything properly as I always do (if I didn't, I wouldn't be in business) but once the tattoo leaves the shop I have to trust the customer to do their part of the job. There are so many factors that can affect healing and let's face it, every tattooist does a tattoo that heals badly from time to time. But if a customer comes back and says, 'Oh, it's healing badly, I need a second pass', that's fine! This was just the wrong way to go about things. But that's how it goes. And now it's out there there's nothing I can do about it."



We move on to talking about David's tattooing technique, which is slightly unusual. "I am completely backwards. Most people work from the bottom up (from the left or the right, depending on whether they are left- or right-handed) but I work from the top down. I do this because then I'm wiping AWAY from the work that I've just done, which always made more sense to me, despite everyone telling me I was wrong! The colour stays super clean and I'm not irritating the skin, and when my tattoos are finished they don't have that red, sore glow that so many other tattoos have. If you're working from the bottom up, you're constantly leaning on the work you've just done, and continually wiping into it, so it seems obvious that it's going to get red and sore. I always make sure my tissue is very wet and I use a lot of Hustle Butter. But the truth is, there's no right or wrong way to tattoo. No other artist will work exactly the same as you. You may take 10% of your technique from Nikko Hurtado, 5% from Bob Tyrell and 20% from Jeff Gogue, but the largest percentage is always going to be you."



And how about equipment? "As tattooists, everything we use is key to the work we do," says David. "I will only use the very best. I believe you should always spend the money. If you use a cheaper box of needles that you know isn't so good, then you can't moan if you're struggling with the tube or the ink keeps clogging. At the end of the day, tattoos aren't cheap and when you work out what we're spending overall to create each piece, that couple of pounds you might save is going to be such a small percentage. If there's a product that's going to make your work better, faster, cleaner or easier, then buy it! In the long term, it will be worth every penny. I use the FK Irons Spektra Xion and it's awesome. I absolutely love it. It's fully adjustable you can make it hit hard or soft for your grey shading, I like the fact that it does both. Fusion inks have always been my preference, and now I'm using their FYT cartridges (which they make for Cheyenne as well). They're excellent.



We talk a bit about guest spots. David has worked at some world class studios, including Gabe Ripley's Off The Map Tattoo (with Jeff Gogue) in the USA. "It was only a year after I'd finished my apprenticeship when Gabe invited me to the Paradise Tattoo Gathering," he tells me. "He'd seen my work online. He just happened to be on that page the very moment my work came up. A few minutes earlier or later, and he could have seen someone else's work instead. We got on really well. And I was surrounded by amazing artists! Some of my absolute heroes were there, and when a few of them told me they followed me on social media, it absolutely blew me away. I never thought the people I looked up to would even be aware of me! Which is why I always try to leave comments on other people's posts... although to be honest, I'm crap with social media. If it wasn't for the job, I definitely wouldn't have social media in my life. But we've become dependent on it even though we all hate it. And young tattooists can now elevate themselves to incredible heights not through great work but simply by understanding how to exploit social media..."



I ask David to talk about his own personal style. "Until recently, I never realised I had an identifiable style. In my mind, it's simply 'real'. If it looks 'real' it's right, and if it doesn't then it's wrong. Yet because I can recognise a tattoo by, say, Jordan Croke or Nikko Hurtado I know they must have a style! When I was starting out, I would study other people's work and try to deconstruct



what they were doing – but you can end up pulling yourself apart with self-doubt. Eventually you learn that you just have to concentrate on what YOU do. I just need to be the best 'David Corden' I can be. If you look at other people's work too much, you will end up hating your own."

"Combinations of styles are what I'm finding most interesting at the moment," David continues. "Realism with Traditional. That's the thing I look at and wish I'd thought of myself. Combinations excite me – and collaborations too, working with others who can do the elements that maybe you're not so good at yourself. We're doing more and more of that in the studio here, and it's giving us a whole new direction both individually and collectively. And as more pieces get out into the world, more customers are coming to us and asking for something similar."



To finish, I ask David if he can identify just what gives him his positive outlook on life. "I guess I just let myself be happy," he replies. "My two beautiful dogs wake me up with smiling faces every morning, and I walk to work in one of the world's most beautiful cities. And of course as a tattooist I can start my working day at lunchtime! I only ever play happy music – never sad – and I get to draw pictures on amazing people every day, as my job! I am in the enviable position of being able to do only the work that I feel most passionate about, and I work in an industry that I absolutely love."

David Corden
Semper Tattoo
7 Grassmarket,
Edinburgh, EH1 2HY
Tel 0131 466 0370
sempertattoo@gmail.com
www.sempertattoo.com

Mondial du Tatouage

There are international tattoo conventions, and then there is Le Mondial du Tatouage – a three day mega-event in Paris that is truly unlike any other tattoo show we've ever been to!

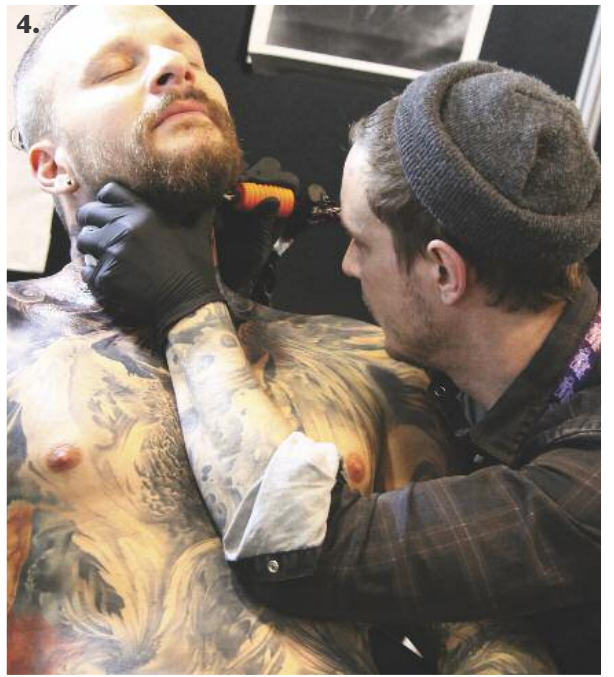
Walking into the Grande Halle de la Villette, past the patiently queuing hordes, you can feel the anticipation in the air. The excitement is infectious. This is a show that tattooists and tattoo fans wait all year for. And at midday on Friday 9th March, it started with gusto!

Heading towards the artist booths, my mind was spinning as I tried to take in all that I could see. There are some 420 artists at this convention, from all over the world. The open plan venue is on two levels, and it's a stunning nineteenth century building – all glass and iron – that was once part of the slaughterhouse trade. Although it's not in the centre of Paris, it's very easy to get to, with Metro, bus and tram stops nearby. There are hotels a few minutes' walk away, as well as bars, restaurants and shops. At the top of the building, a red neon sign reading MONDIAL DU TATOUAGE glows bright in the late winter evenings.





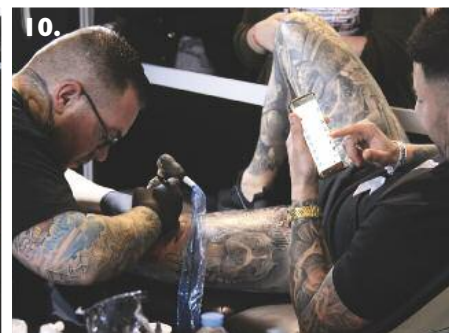
1. benjamin laukis, on the road
2. vincent zattera, diamond tattoo (italy)



The work at this show is absolutely faultless and at times it's overwhelming. The artist list reads like a 'Who's Who' of the tattoo world, but in addition to the big well known names I was pleased to discover new studios and tattooers I hadn't heard of before. This is what conventions are all about – watching the masters at work, whilst at the same time seeing what else is out there and being inspired.

The floor-to-ceiling glass walls, and the sheer volume of people circulating, made for a very warm ambient temperature – which gave the perfect excuse to escape to the outdoor bar and food area. There was a good variety of caterers, ranging from Italian to Caribbean, with options to suit everybody (something that other convention venues need to pay a bit more attention to!) In addition to this outdoor space, there were also several other areas around the venue where visitors could relax in specially provided 'Mondial du Tatouage' deckchairs and drink a beer whilst taking the whole experience in.

'Mondial du Tatouage' translates as 'World of Tattoo', and this convention encompasses many other aspects of tattoo art. On the top level of the venue was an exhibition of paintings by Shawn Barber that included an amazingly dynamic group portrait of Filip Leu, Kari Barba, Luke Atkinson, Bill Salmon and Mondial du Tatouage organiser Tin-Tin himself, along with scenes from last year's convention. Shawn was also doing live painting in his booth on the ground floor level. Other displays included customised Doc Martens and Harley-Davidsons in a sunken area near the stage.



- 3. augustine nezumi, singapore electric (singapore)
- 4. matthew james working
- 5. flower wall
- 6. kasaink, family art (spain)
- 7. natalie nox, on the road
- 8. easy sacha, mystery tattoo club (france)
- 9. aber, moth and rose (greece)
- 10. carlos fabra working
- 11. luke atkinson (judge)





12.

13.

14.

- 12. astin, astin tattoo (spain)
- 13-14. diao zuo tattoo (taiwan)
- 15. filip leu and kari barba judging
- 16. david, monster family tattooshop (france)
- 17. pierre oked, tin-tin tatouages (france)
- 18. valentino, val tattoo (russia)
- 19. kintaro publishing art exhibit



15.



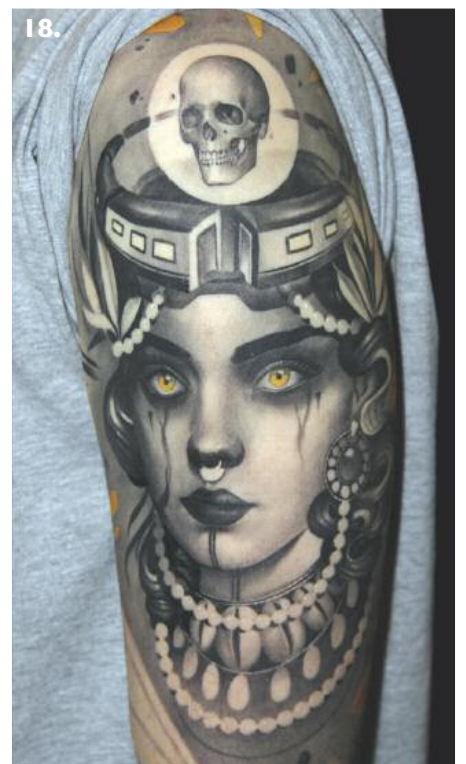
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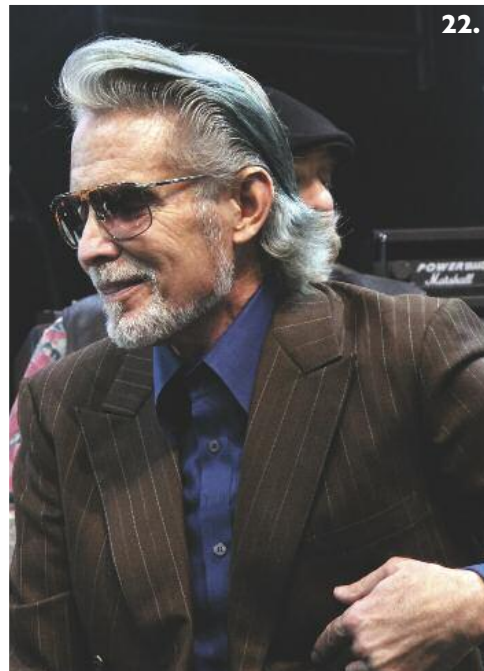


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18.

There is absolutely no chance of getting bored at this show. Once you've got round the two floors, it's time for the competitions – and my God, I've never seen competitions like these before! Winning an award at the Mondial du Tatouage isn't like winning an award at any old show. There were eight categories in total, with tattooists competing for stunning Hannya mask trophies. The judges were none other than Filip Leu, Kari Barba, Bill Salmon, Luke Atkinson and Mark Mahoney... and they are thorough! Judging took place throughout the weekend and could be watched from all around the convention (in the minutest detail) on a huge, double-sided, high-definition screen. I was in the official photographers' pit, but I couldn't stop myself simply gazing in awe at the work on show instead of actually taking photographs! The whole thing was truly mesmerising – from the tattoos themselves to the way the pieces were judged. And it wasn't just me who was awe-struck. Glancing over my shoulder, I could see crowds of people eagerly watching on the big screen. It was something to behold.



After the day's competitions were finished and the prizes were awarded, we all settled into enjoying the strumming of sludgy guitars as the tattooists wound down and the entertainment picked up. If you're at a serious tattoo convention, expect serious entertainment. Big name alternative bands – including Graveyard and Black Moth – took to the stage across the weekend, making other conventions look like village fetes in comparison.

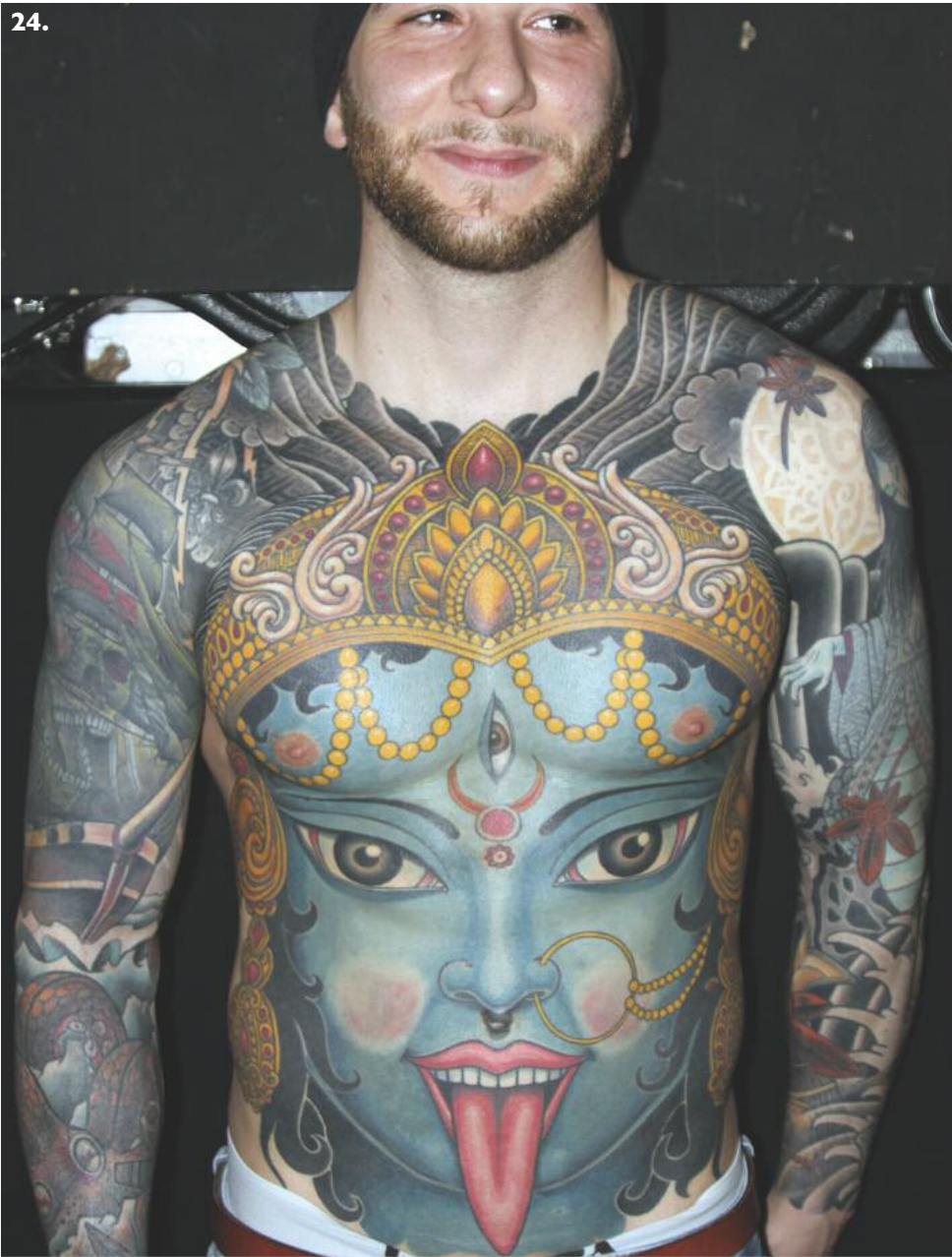
This is a top quality convention and the attention to detail was phenomenal – right down to the beer tumblers emblazoned with Mondial du Tatouage artwork. Tin-Tin runs this event with a high level of professionalism and with enormous respect for the participating tattooists – employing the best audio-visual technology to enhance the proceedings (the sound was always crisp and clear; and never deafening). At the end of each day, there was already edited footage on social media – to show those who didn't make it what they'd missed, and getting the attendees at the convention ready for the next day.

As with all great shows, the weekend went by too soon and I left the convention on the Sunday night feeling utterly overwhelmed. Tattooist friends have since asked me what the Mondial du Tatouage was like and I find myself asking them, "Why on earth didn't you go!!" The tickets start at €30 for the day, and they are more than worth it. Quite simply, this truly is the World of Tattooing.



- 20. fede, gas tattoo (spain)
- 21. shawn barber, painting chris crooks
- 22. mark mahoney judging
- 23. javier obregon, family art (spain)
- 24. mathias bugo, artribal (france)
- 25. raphael tiraf, knock on wood (france)
- 26. scooby tattoo
- 27. bill salmon judging
- 28. matt curzon, empire (australia)

24.



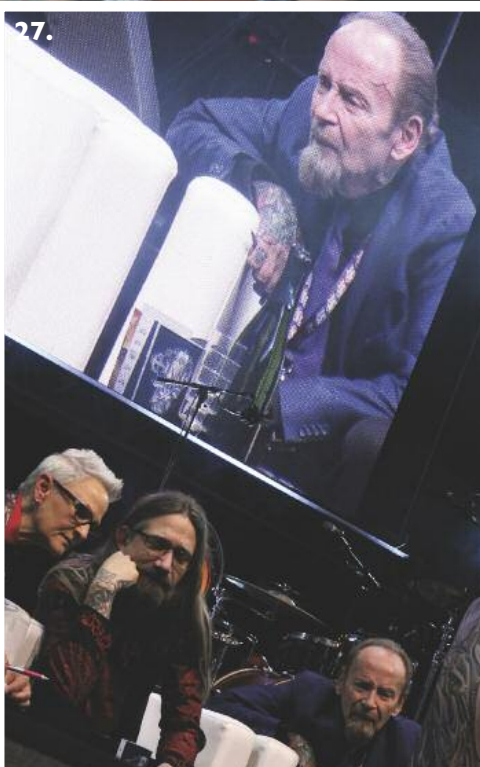
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Our cover model this month is Illusionsiv from Portugal. As well as being a professional model, she's also a graphic designer and a make-up artist (who enjoys creating the unexpected...)

Who is Illusionsiv?

Illusionsiv is a 26 year old full-time weirdo from Portugal who loves music, art and dogs.

How did you get into modelling?

I started when I was 17, with my best friend. In the beginning it was just for fun, and I never thought I would end up doing what I do today! I feel so grateful. I was invited to do a Suicide Girls shoot when I was 19.

What's it like to be a Suicide Girl?

First and foremost, we're a family. We're a group of empowered alternative models and our philosophy is that every woman in this world is beautiful. We don't do stereotypes. I've been a Suicide Girl for seven years now and it's one of the best things that's ever happened in my life. As well as being a model, I'm also one of the brand's graphic designers. I have awesome best friends all around the world. I travel all the time — it's one of my favourite things to do — and I meet so many fans and wonderful people.

What are your favourite travel destinations?

Generally, I prefer going to places where I can be surrounded by nature. I find cities too crowded sometimes. But I love Venice. It's magical. My favourite place in the world is Sintra, with its beautiful scenery and castles. It's in the same region of Portugal as Lisbon, and I go there whenever I can.

Tell us about your passion for make-up.

I like to be creative all the time. With make-up, you can be creative 24/7. I've learnt a lot about it, and it's one of my favourite hobbies. I like doing glam make-up of course, but the best style for me is the creepy stuff and the gore. I love doing what people don't expect me to do — and of course my favourite time of the year for that is Halloween... I really want to develop my make-up skills even further and I'm currently taking part in a competition. Wish me luck!

Have you had any negative experiences because of your ink?

I live in a country where tattoos are not 100% accepted. It's better now, but it's

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Illusionsiv

Cover Model Profile



Have you had any negative experiences because of your ink?

I live in a country where tattoos are not 100% accepted. It's better now, but it's not perfect. Being a girl with so many tattoos has been super difficult at times — especially when I was trying to get work. I've had a lot of No's in my life. But at the end of the day, I am what I am, and I'm super proud of it. Self-love is the best thing you can have in your life.

What was your first tattoo and how do you feel about it now?

My first tattoo was a small old school red rose on my left leg and I still like it! I was 16 when I got it done, so I was very young, but it was a good choice.

Do you have a theme for your tattoos, or a favourite style of tattooing?

I don't think I have a theme. I have a mix

of styles on my body right now. I've always loved old school, but now I'm getting into new school.

Any favourite artists?

I absolutely love @PedroSantosTattooer from Vintage Daggers and @Mr_Cohen_Tattoo

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

I've designed one or two of my own, but I usually prefer it if my artist designs them.

What inspired your neck tattoo?

My neck tattoo is the flower of life. It's a design from Sacred Geometry, which holds that all life is part of a divine geometric plan.

Any plans for more ink?

I'm currently working on my back — but

it's been my most painful tattoo so far. It's really, really hard. You have to be prepared to be physically and mentally strong for every second of the process. I'm also going to get a giant wolf on my leg in the next few months.

Do you have any advice for new models trying to break into the industry?

It's a wonderful world, with all its ups and downs. Just believe in yourself and never let anyone push you around. We have awesome people on this planet but we also have horrible ones. Listen to yourself, and look in the mirror every day to see the badass you are!

How do we get in touch?

You can always reach me on my Instagram: @illusionsiv

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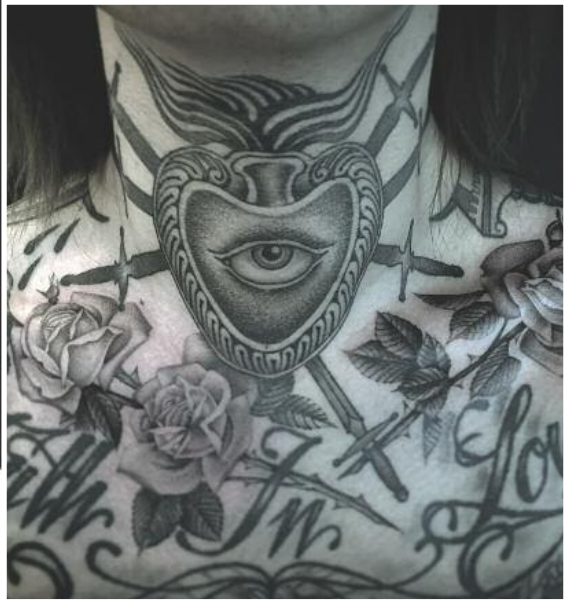
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Zac Scheinbaum is an enigmatic hat-trick of talent – a tattooist, an artist and a book publisher. His tattoos are perfect examples of fine line blackwork; his art has been exhibited in galleries across America (most recently in his one-man show 'Above Water Below Flame' at ATAK in San Francisco); and his new publishing venture, Afterlife Press, produces books that are things of beauty. Zac is based at Kings Avenue Tattoo in New York, and this is where we met.

ZAC

SCHEINBAUM





Zac, where did it all begin for you?

I've been tattooing for eleven years. I was born in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and that's where I learned to tattoo. While I was still an apprentice in New Mexico, I made an appointment to get tattooed at Kings Avenue... but the wait was so long that by the time the appointment came round I'd already decided to make the big move and give New York a shot! That's how I ended up here.

What was it about New York? The artists? The tattoo scene?

Definitely both of those things, and there were a few other factors too. My family is from here, so we'd always visited and I'd always felt comfortable in the city. Also, my partner at the time wanted to go to graduate school here. Everything seemed to be coming together, so I thought I'd try it. I worked in a couple of other street shops first. It was the job at Saved Tattoo that opened up the doors for me and led to me being here at Kings Avenue. That was when it felt like the stars suddenly aligned!



Do you think your early street shop experiences benefited your tattooing?

Out in New Mexico, it's a different scene. It's much slower, so you have a lot more time to draw and work on designs. You also do any tattoo that comes through the door. You don't specialise in a style; it's not busy enough for that. When I first came here I worked at St Marks, which was like in the back of a bong shop, so it was a totally different vibe. And the shifts were from noon until 2am, 3am, 4am... I was only doing only one or two little pieces a day, like text or something, but what that job did give me was all those hours to draw and build my portfolio.

Did you have a formal art education?

I dropped out of school a couple of times... While I was apprenticing I did take some art classes (it was inexpensive, and my dad was a professor at the school), but I was already deep into tattooing. At the time, I didn't think the classes benefited me at all, but now I can see that they did.



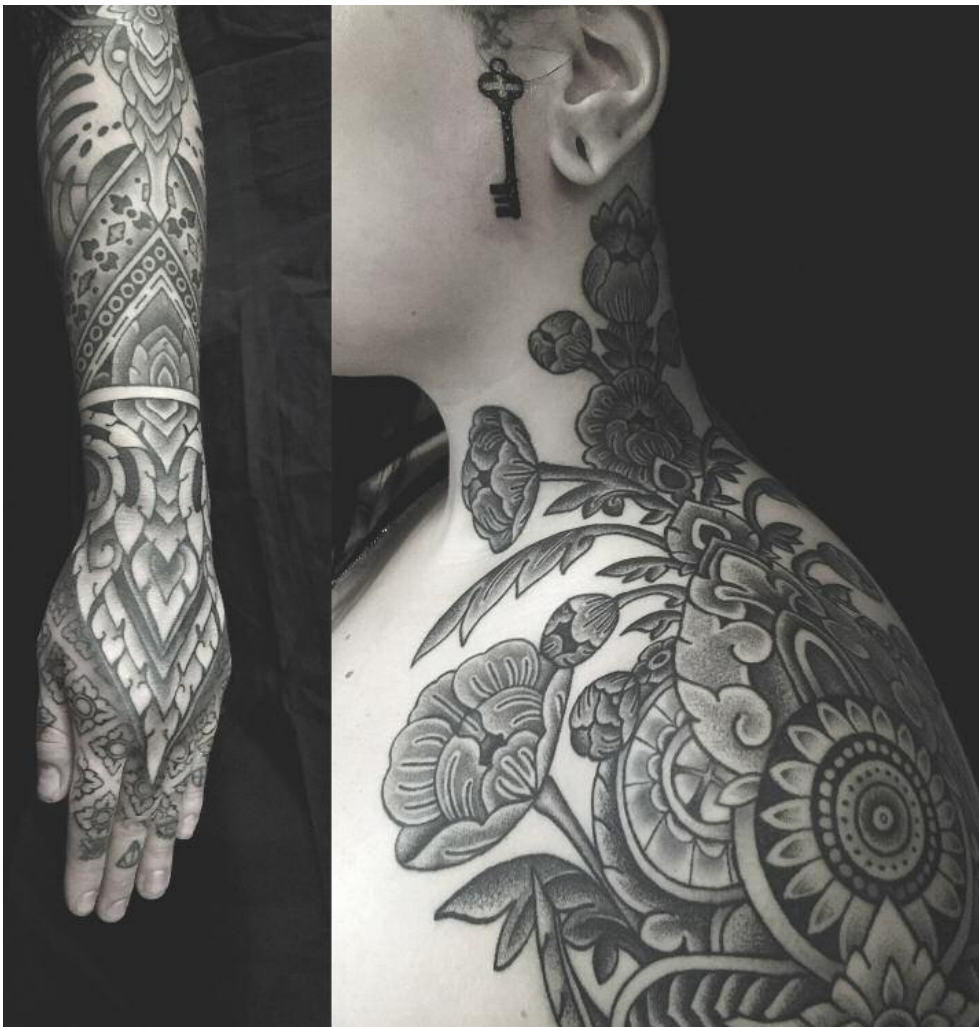


And how did you develop your own style?

When I first moved here I really wanted to do American traditional tattooing, but I realised straight away there was way too much competition. And it didn't feel right to me. So I just focused on drawing what I wanted to draw. When I started at Saved, that was the first time anyone told me it was OK to say 'No' to doing a tattoo, and that I should cultivate my own particular style. Before that, I'd never been allowed to refuse anything (which I guess is understandable, with business owners not wanting to turn any business away). But that was a revelation for me. I started bringing an artistic approach into tattooing and figured I could really do something 'different'.

That must have felt liberating.

Yes, it did – and still does. But it also feels bad, because I don't like to say 'No'. But any time I refuse to do a particular tattoo, it's because I don't think I would make a good job of it, not because I don't like the idea itself. I remember one time a guy came in with a full Japanese sleeve and I had never done a Japanese tattoo like that. I was drawing a Japanese dragon over and over again, and it was probably two months of rearranging appointments before I finally admitted I wouldn't be able to do it. That felt like a huge defeat, but it was also honest and I think that's important. Clients have to feel comfortable. If they come in and ask for a tattooist who specialises, they kinda know what the tattoo is gonna look like, and they know there's not gonna be any crazy surprises.





In complete contrast to the current European avant garde style...

Yeah, you don't get many people who are open to the idea of having something that's never been done before!

How has being in New York influenced your approach to tattooing?

I would say it's more about the people who are around me, rather than New York itself. When you're working alongside other tattooers, you can't help but be influenced by their different approaches. Even if you're not looking at the internet, you're always looking at the people who are tattooing around you. After a while, you create your own thing which is a combination of everything you've borrowed. That's totally normal. It's why you can often tell where people work and who they work with. And it's the same when you look at countries. It's why there's a 'European' approach to Japanese, for example.

Where does your inspiration come from? What influences your work?

I am inspired by everything – art, architecture, going to museums, whatever! I am definitely influenced by Japanese culture, tattooing and woodblock prints. I love that style, but I don't feel 'qualified' to tattoo it. I love old paintings – the Flemish and Renaissance masters, that sort of thing. That's my favourite kind of art. I like well-rendered images, and perfect anatomy. I've come to realise that when something is more experimental or abstract, I don't enjoy looking at it as much. I guess that's why my own style is so illustrative.

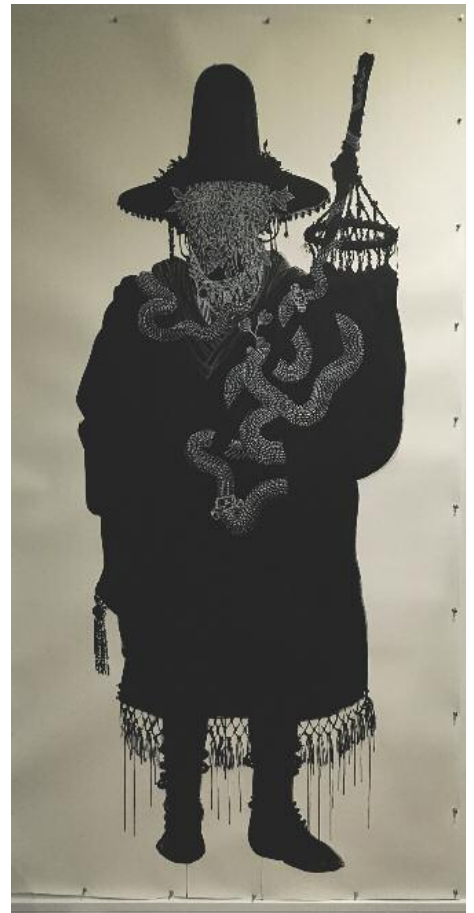


There's a recurring theme of skulls and snakes in your work. Does that come from you or your clients?

I definitely enjoy that imagery. But I think what happens is that you do one tattoo that you like, and you post it on the internet, and all of a sudden everyone thinks that's your thing! For instance, I did a huge snake cover-up on a friend's chest. After posting it, I did snakes for about two years straight! So it wasn't necessarily my choice, but it wasn't by any means a problem. Of course I can always choose which pictures to post, but some clients get upset if they don't see their tattoo online...

Tell us about the symbolism in your art and tattoos.

Sometimes it feels elitist or unnatural – or even cocky – to incorporate symbolism and deeper meanings into tattoos, and I don't like that. But I do love the idea, and I love learning about what various imagery signifies in art. A lot of old paintings have religious themes; every object in the picture will have a meaning. This is true for Japanese art as well, where every element of the design tells us something. In my own art, the symbolism sometimes gets out of control; you can add too many things and it just doesn't work.



Knowing when to stop can be difficult...

Definitely. It's not so bad with my tattoos. I can figure out where the end point should be. But with my paintings it's very easy to overdo it. Over the past couple of years I've been doing big, black, silhouetted figures with white inside. If I add too much into the painting, I can just paint over the white with black. Obviously you can't do that with a tattoo!

Do you think tattooing should be recognised as an art form?

I definitely recognise it as an art form. But I also think it depends on what kind of tattooing you're taking about, and who's doing it. If you listen to a Japanese master explaining their art, it's amazing. By comparison, someone might get a walk-in eagle, which is great too. Although tattooing is an art form, it's still work for hire. Being a tattooer is still a job. What makes a tattoo a piece of art is the intention behind it. The imagery and the imagination are really important.



Any thoughts on tattoo longevity?

I think the reality is that very small scale tattoos might not have the same longevity as larger scale tattoos. You have to be OK with that. When I was apprenticing, and making needles, we only made 3's and 5's. So 5 was the biggest I used. The other day, somebody showed me a picture of a tattoo that was forty years old that had been lined with a 5 round. It looked great. I also recently saw a tattoo that had been lined with an open 8 or whatever it was, and after only three years it looked crazy. When you're doing big work, I think the important thing is to hold back. Even if it looks a little weaker when it's freshly done with a thinner line, it's still going to look great in ten or twenty years time. Friends of mine who have been using 18 rounds for years have realised the same thing. They've told me, 'I'm gonna use an 11 from now on!' You can still get that big, bold look. You just gotta hold back a bit.

Tell us about Afterlife Press.

We wanted to produce books that would be almost like a remembrance for the featured artists – not that they're dead or that they're gonna die any time soon, but just to commemorate a particular period of time, and a particular body of work, for future reference. Our books will feature artists who are making a significant contribution to the tattoo world right now. Artists who have interesting stories to tell. I particularly wanted to include personal, in-depth interviews so that everything would be well documented.



In contrast to the transience of social media...

Yeah. You need something more permanent. Something physical. People still want books!

What is the ethos of Afterlife Press?

I remember when I was first starting to tattoo, books and magazines really excited me. They fuelled my interest in the craft. But with the eruption of the internet it feels like things have become overly saturated. For me, the magic's been taken out of it. I love books. I think they're an art form in themselves. But recently I've seen very few books that I would want to own. In general, I feel very disappointed with what's out there. So I just wanted to make something that I could feel excited about – and something that the featured artists would feel excited about too.

And you plan to publish content that hasn't been seen before?

Yes. We were really lucky to have Grime as our first artist, because he doesn't share a lot of things online. He had so much stuff... I mean I can't believe how much content he supplied! In a way our first book was the most important one, because it's really hard to pitch an idea when it doesn't yet exist in physical form. The next volumes are going to be easier to pitch, because people will be able to see the concept and format. We now have something to show them. Hopefully they will get excited about the idea and want to hold work back to go in the book.

How long did Volume One take?

It took just under two years. It was way more work than I envisaged when I first thought of the idea – which is good, because what I originally had in mind was a much smaller book. I didn't think it would end up being so big. We just had so much content, and we had to use it!

What are your future plans?

We're almost done with the interviews and content for Volume Two, and we've also begun Volume Three. These books are all going to be very different from each other, which I think is a good way to start. I have a list of people we'd like to feature in future editions, and I'd like to keep publishing books as long as people are interested in them! I also want to do other stuff under the Afterlife imprint, such as photographic prints (a lot of the material shot for the books in on film, so they're real photographs). We want to make Afterlife more than books. On a personal level, I'm honoured and blown away that people love our first book. That's what makes me want to do more.

Zac Scheinbaum
Kings Avenue Tattoo Manhattan
188 Bowery 2nd Floor
New York NY 10012
Tel: +1 (212) 431 5464
kingsavetattoo NYC@gmail.com
zacscheinbaum.com





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evaldas gulbinas,
efka tattoo art



inky joe, five keys tattoo studio



kayley henderson, masamune tattoo

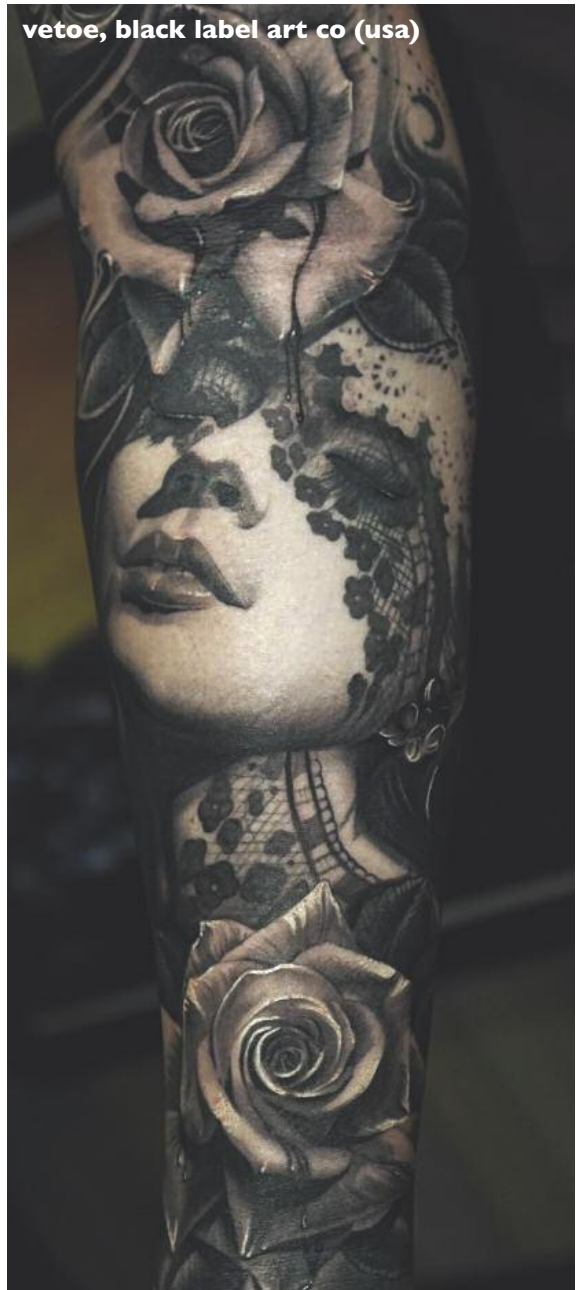


jonesy, rising wave tattoo

ian moore, this old skin



vetoe, black label art co (usa)



gari henderson, masamune tattoo



luke bolton, tattoo fx

alex hennerley, adorned



little andy, the church



lilly calzaghe, next generation



annabelle luyken, evil from the needle



jimmy scribble, private studio



**anastasia grichina,
die tätoweiner (austria)**

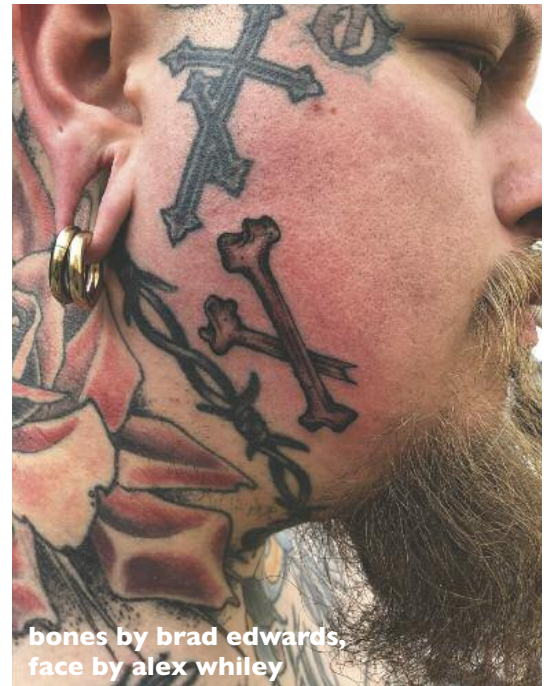
geezy, inkdependent



**isabel filipa silva,
tattoo gallery espinho (portugal)**



keatives (germany)



bones by brad edwards,
face by alex whiley

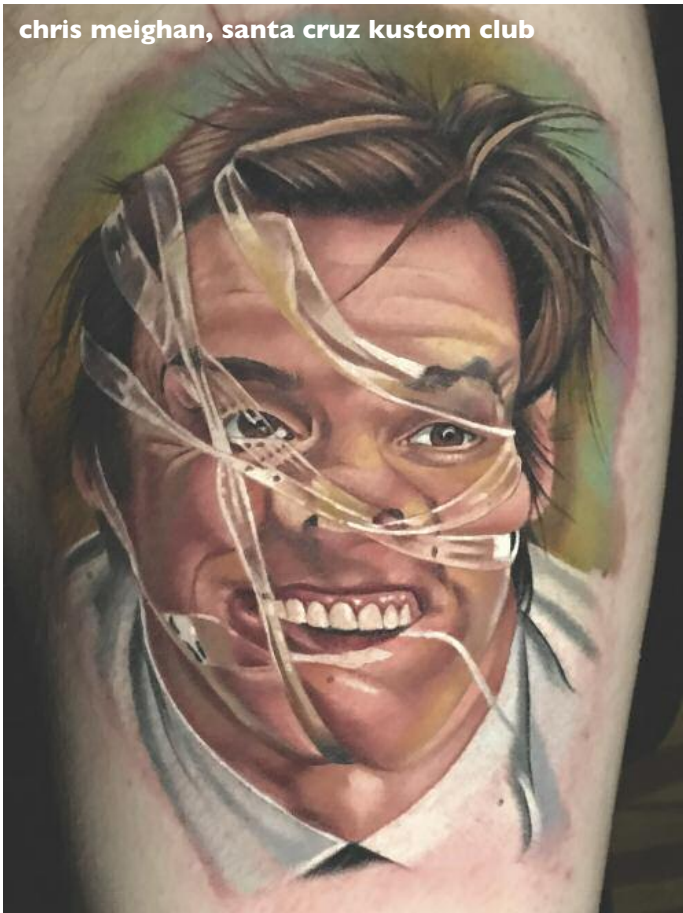
ben roberts, heavy duty tattoo company



paul goodwin,
no regrets



chris meighan, santa cruz kustom club



steph reed, abrakadavra

emils salmins, renaissance tattoo



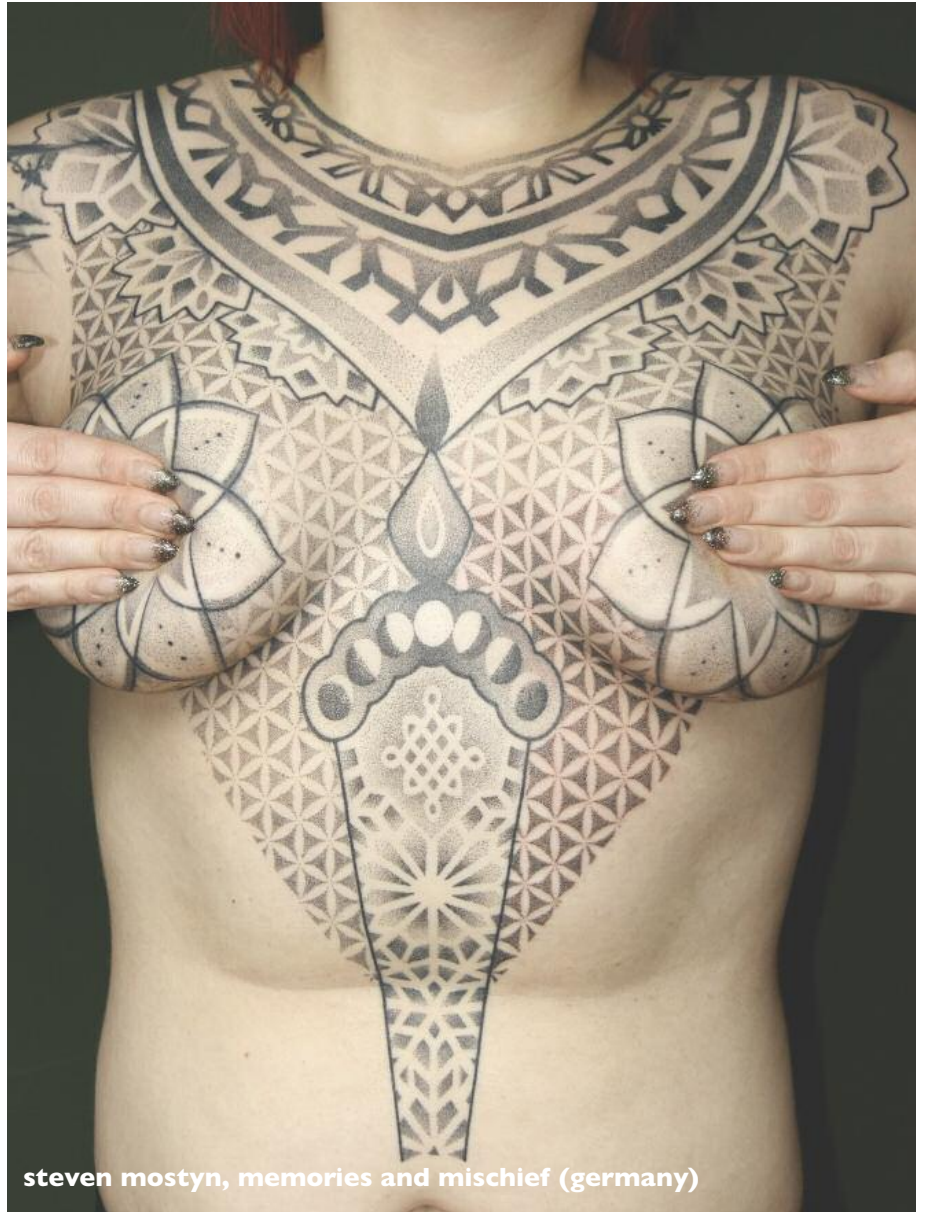
kotone taniguchi



leo blackbirds, till you die tattoo



evaldas gulbinas, efka tattoo art



steven mostyn, memories and mischief (germany)

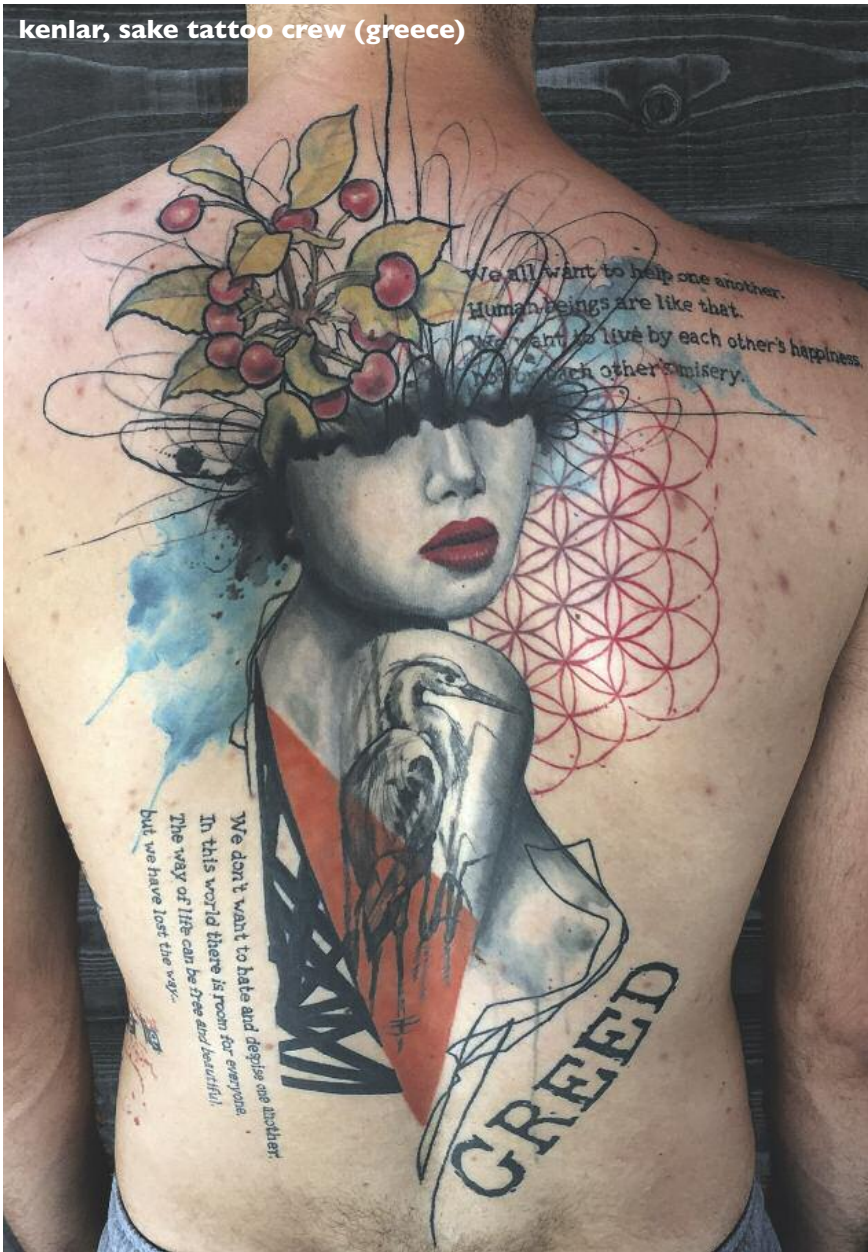


adam szabo, locomotive tattoo (hungary)

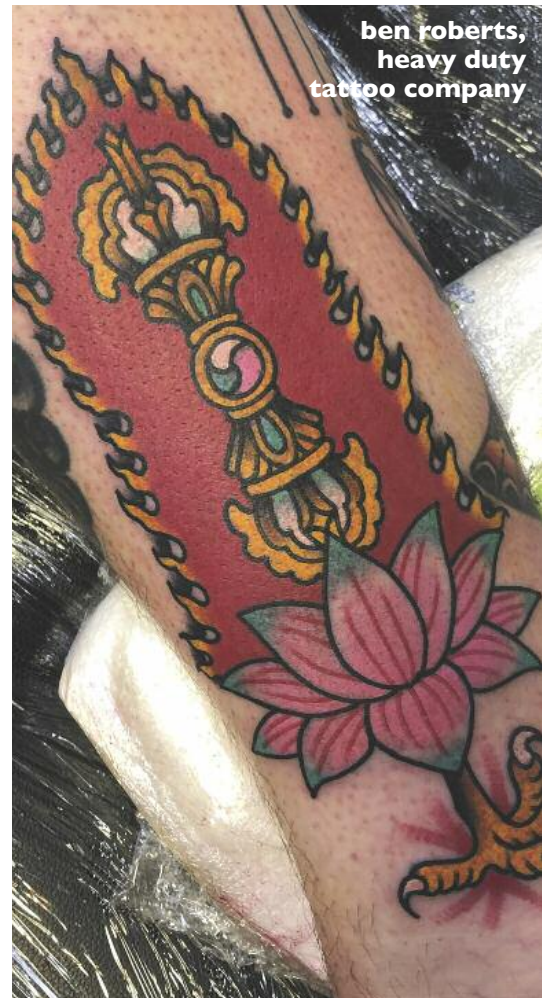
ching, orient ching (taiwan)



kenlar, sake tattoo crew (greece)



annabelle luyken, evil from the needle



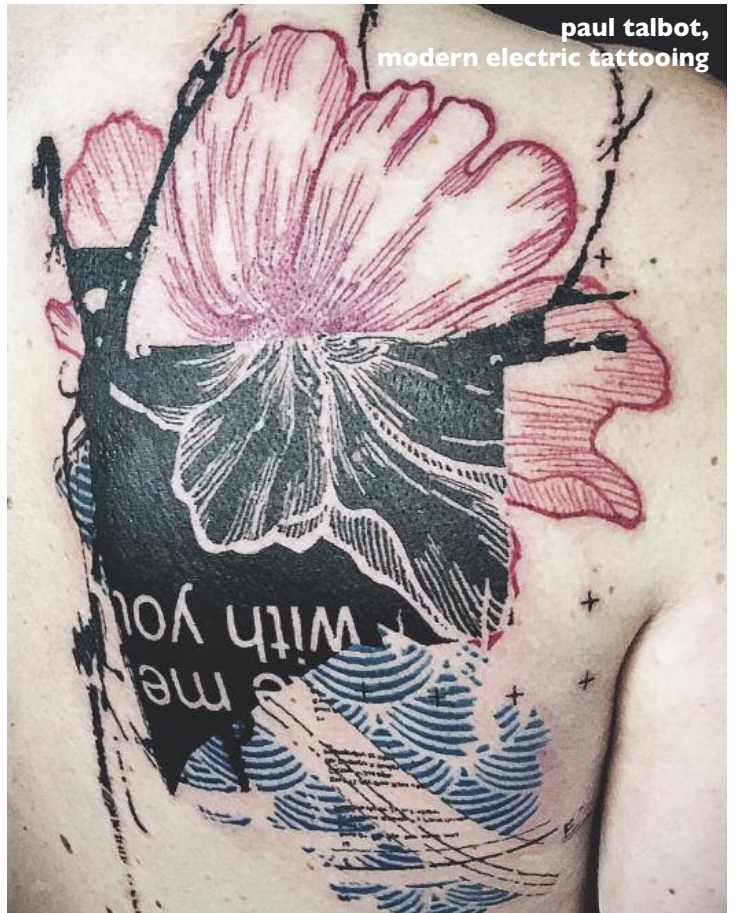
ben roberts, heavy duty tattoo company



lady hans, arthouse



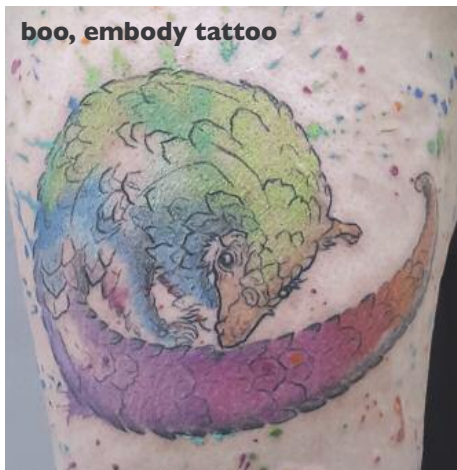
sofie simpson, nala tattoo



paul talbot, modern electric tattooing



neil dransfield, heartache & heart break



boo, embody tattoo

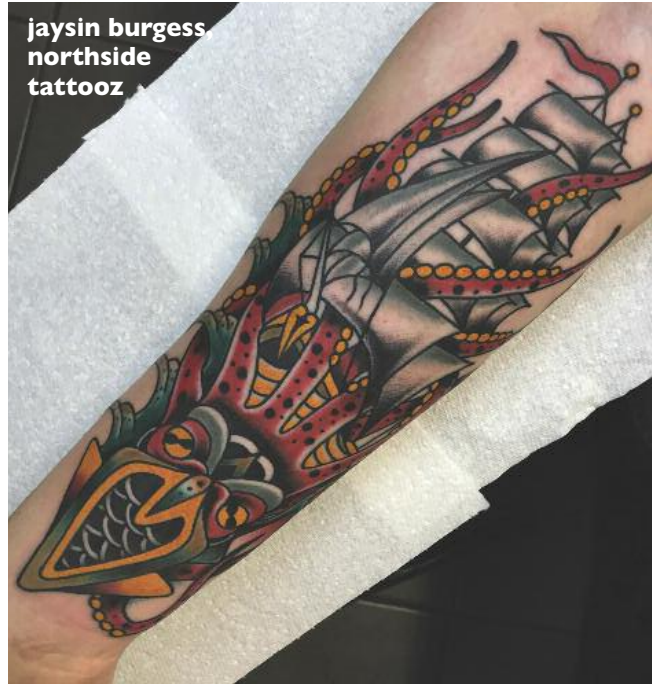


georgia, adorned

ivan hack (russia)



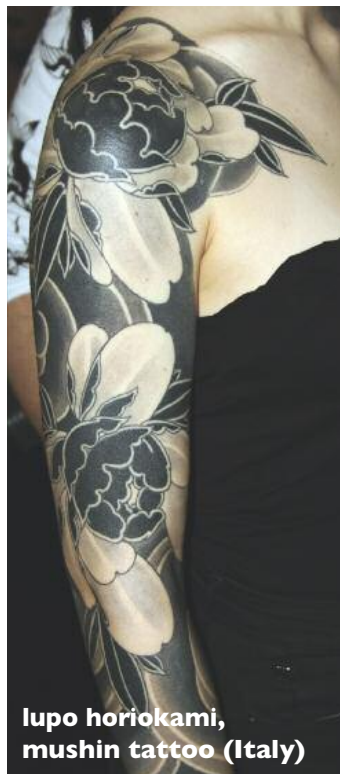
jaysin burgress
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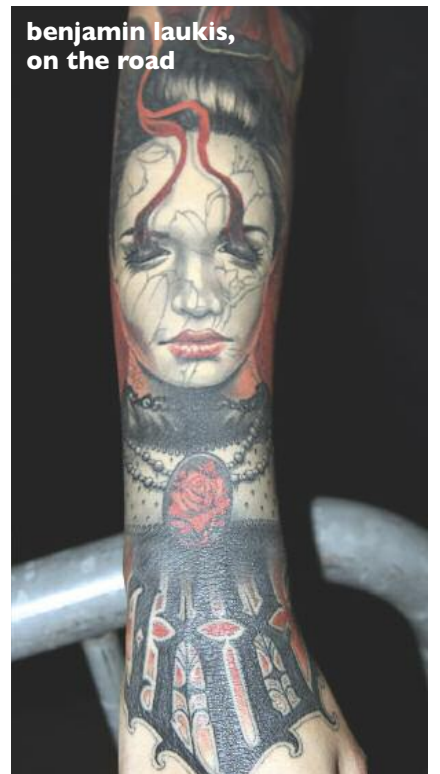
duza, tin-tin tatouages (france)



maude dardeau, tin-tin tatouages (france)



lupo horiokami,
mushin tattoo (Italy)



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KIKU

Kiku is the sort of person everybody should get tattooed by. First of all, he oozes coolness. You can't help but want to hang out with him. Then there's his tattooing. Japanese, but with hints of Western traditional and pop culture. From backpieces to one-shot tattoos, everything he creates looks amazing and I can't help envying those lucky people who wear his work. We met at Invisible NYC, where he's based, to talk about tattoos, his freehand technique and the notion of imperfection...



Kiku hails from Tokyo, and that's where he first discovered tattooing. "It was Jun Matsui who really got me into it," he tells me. "Jun did my second tattoo. One of my friends knew him and I really wanted to meet him and get tattooed by him. It wasn't just about the tattoo. The whole experience was incredible. He was such a cool guy. I was like, 'Oh my God, I wanna be like him!'"

Invisible is on Manhattan's Lower East Side, near the Bowery and Chinatown, and there are a number of other top class studios in the vicinity. Kiku has many friends among his fellow artists.

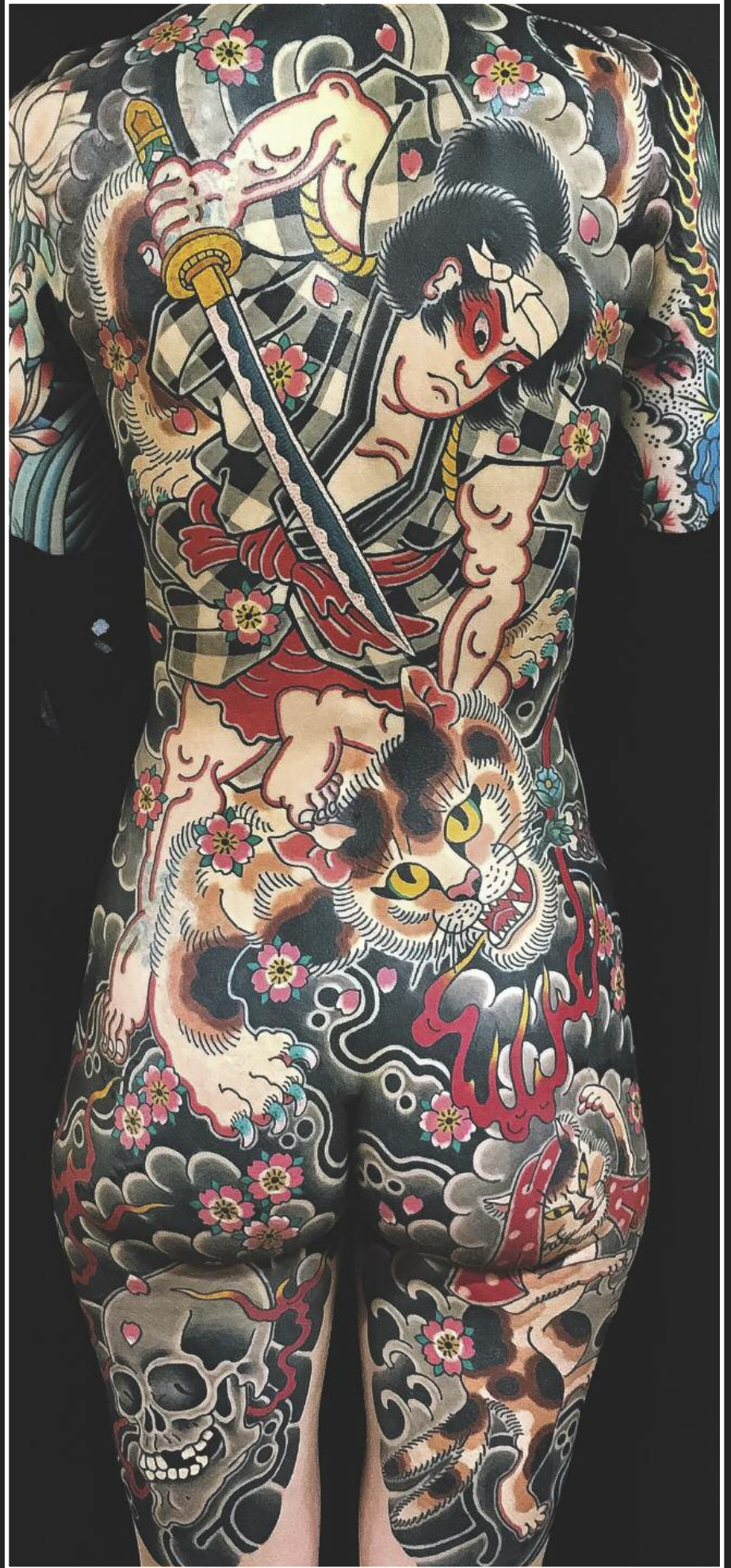
"Horizakura from the Horitoshi Family is a great inspiration for me. He's another Japanese tattooer in NYC, who does traditional Japanese-style tebori [hand-poking]. He's a really good friend of mine. His style is hard to describe, but to me it's unique, dark and simple. I'll be getting more tattoos by him, for sure! And I am inspired on a daily basis by my old friends Regino Gonzales and Chris Garver. They are just geniuses. They can do any style. Whatever they do is magical."





"When I started working here ten years ago," Kiku continues, "I was still unsure of my own style. I didn't know what I wanted to do. I was still figuring it out. I knew I was going to do Japanese, but I hadn't found my own way of doing it. Regino, who was working next to me, has an art school background. He can draw human figures perfectly. But I haven't got those basics. One day, though, I realised there was no need to compete with him. I can only do what I can do. Instead of forcing myself to be what I'm not, I just needed to be myself. It's like handwriting. You've got to be comfortable with what you're doing."

"When you first start tattooing, once you've got the technical knowledge, you inevitably copy somebody (and there's nothing wrong with that). You wanna be like Filip Leu or Ed Hardy or whoever. But then you have to add your own personality to it. If I drew a dragon and gave it to somebody else to tattoo, it would look totally different. Every artist has a different touch. And just one alteration in a line will make the entire image look different. It's just like calligraphy, where every stroke is unique. But what's happening now is that all the technical information is out there on the internet, and it only takes a few years for a tattooer to become proficient, but there's no personality in people's work because they're not being themselves. They're producing clean, perfect tattoos but with no soul."





Kiku's comment about 'perfection with no soul' reminds me of something I'd seen on his social media - the use of the hashtag #wabisabi. "When I first used that word, it was as a joke!" he explains. "But the more I think about it, the more it makes sense. In Japan, 'wabisabi' is the beauty of the imperfect and the incomplete. It's also the beauty of impermanence. Nothing lasts forever. I like that idea." We talk about the fact that as long as tattoos are still made by humans (and not robots!) there will always be imperfections, and that these imperfections can be charming.

"That's one of the reasons I started doing freehand," Kiku continues. "You know how if you're tracing the same design over and over it kinda loses its edge? It seemed obvious to me that I should just freehand it. There's so much more energy in the moment." However, drawing directly on to skin, then swapping pens for needles, requires a certain level of confidence. "I like the pressure," Kiku admits. "With an appointment, there's only a certain amount of time to draw the design on before you need to start tattooing, but that works for me. It pushes me. It was at the San Francisco convention, four or five years ago, that I first did it - only because I was too lazy to prepare enough drawings!" And Kiku has worked that way ever since.

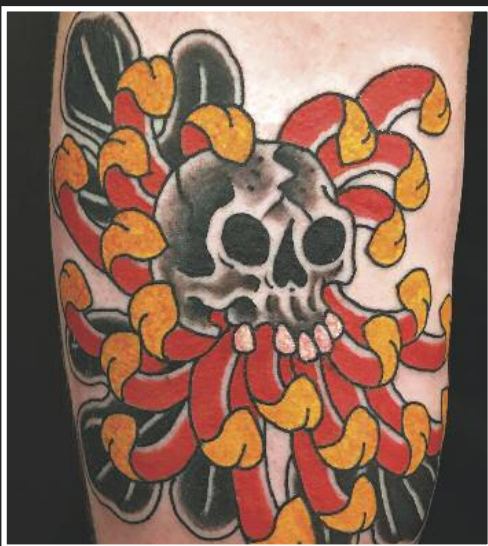
"The great thing about doing freehand is that you have the 'muscle memory' to enable you to reproduce the imagery, but then there's always the 'lucky accidents'. They happen every time! And they always end up looking cool. Whereas if I'd done the same thing on paper, I would want to go back and fix it."

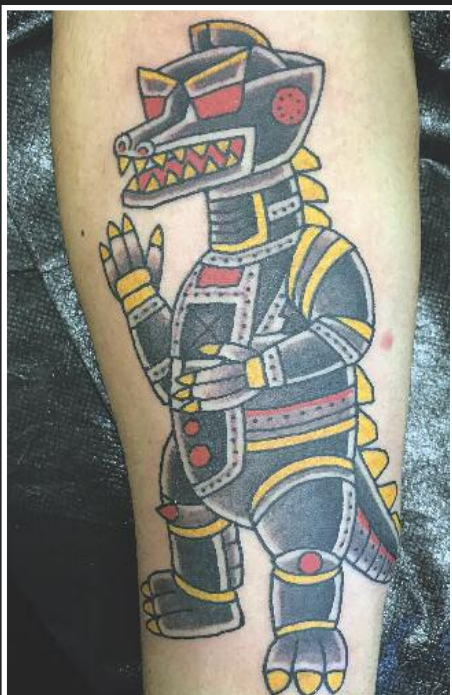


"Most people look at a group of koi or skulls that I've done and think they look the same. But to me, every one of them is slightly different." And of course every blank area of skin is different too. "Right! If I look at, say, an arm – even before I draw anything – I can kinda see how I want the tattoo to be. Just by the shape of the arm. I stare at the blank skin for a minute or so, and I can see where to start with the design, and how the tattoo will flow."

Aesthetically, Kiku's work combines traditional Eastern imagery with the block colour and line weights that are characteristic of traditional Western tattooing. He himself describes it as "solid". I ask him to elaborate. "When I look at my own designs, the crucial thing for me is their simplicity. I want them to be easy to read – a strong outline with heavy black shading and bright colours. When I started out, I was trying too hard. I can see it in my old work. My work is much more natural now. A design loses its meaning if you overwork it or put in too many lines or too much detail. It sounds cheesy, but less is more."

"I certainly wouldn't say my style of Japanese is super traditional," Kiku continues. "There are so many rules, but I don't want to limit myself, so I have to compromise. It can be a struggle sometimes. These days, I only follow the rules in a minimal way. Especially with smaller pieces. It also depends on what the client wants of course. I like old Japanese tattooing that's really simple and, in a way, almost 'goofy'. I grew up seeing a lot of American traditional tattoos – and at the beginning of my career, when I was still living in Japan, I wanted to do more American-style work. That's why I came to America! But when you live abroad you start to appreciate your own country and your own culture more... and I realised I should go back to my roots. But I still like American traditional and I've incorporated it into my style. It's kinda pop, in a way."





I wondered if Kiku ever felt a pressure to tattoo designs he didn't feel comfortable doing? "Not really," he replies. "I have a great clientele. When people come to see me, they already know what I do and they know what their tattoos will look like. They normally give me a rough idea of the subject – a dragon for example – and then leave me to it. My consultations tend to be really quick! I'm lucky that my clients don't tell me exactly how to do it or how they want it. I might be given a reference picture once in a while, or an example of a tattoo that someone else has done, but in those situations I always explain to the client why my tattoo will look different."

Kiku has a great relationship with his clients. "You have to be friendly!" he says. "Tattooing is art, but it's art on a human being. And if you're working on a large scale piece and you see the client over many sessions, you get to know them. You get to hear all about them and their lives. Sometimes that's difficult, but you have to learn to leave it at the studio and not take it home with you."



How does Kiku unwind? "I paint... oh, but that's still work I suppose! I don't have 'hobbies', because I don't really switch off. I just love my work. I could go on a vacation, but I'd still be thinking about tattooing, and I'd still be looking out for inspiration. I should paint more... and I want to paint things that aren't related to my tattoos. It's more fun that way, as I don't have to think about the rules and I can do what I want. I recently painted a bunch of monsters from old movies - the vintage figures that I collect, that I grew up with. They weren't intended for tattooing, but so many people asked for them! These kinds of things come naturally to me, because they're the kinds of things I love."

I ask Kiku if he has a favourite tattoo that he has done. "Yeah," he says. "The backpiece I did on a friend. It's the Samurai fighting with a giant cat. It felt like a breakthrough. I don't know why, but it just came out much better than I expected. I was like 'Wow!' I don't know how to describe it..."

And 'Wow! I don't know how to describe it...' is pretty much the feeling I have about my delightful conversation with this enchanting artist.

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ALEX

Alex is no stranger to the tattoo world and can often be found visiting the many shows on the convention circuit. He has been collecting ink from an early age and is almost completely covered, but he still regularly visits his local studio as he undergoes the long and painful process of getting his work re-lined and re-coloured. Alex also has his own successful studio, Garage Ink, next to his home in Whitby, North Yorkshire. We met up with him at the Scottish Tattoo Convention, and he told us his story...

When I first started getting tattooed in 1983 there were only maybe three tattooists in a 100-mile radius of where I lived. I was 17 and it was the skinhead era. The lads that I hung around with had tattoos on their necks, and I really wanted to be like them. In those days you didn't need to show any ID, so I lied about my age and had my arms and my chest done before I was even 18!

I stopped for a couple of years and got into the scooter scene, going to rallies all over the country. Then I ended up getting Lambretta and Scooter Boys tattooed on my back and it just went on from there. You'd see the odd sleeve or a large tattoo every now and then, but I wanted to be different and go the whole hog. So I just went for it, had my back done, my belly and my legs. It took years just to outline my legs even before we started to colour them. By the time we got on to doing the shading, all the line work needed re-doing. With me, it was always going to be full body suit or nothing. I knew I would never be happy with just one or two tattoos.

People ask me if I'll ever regret it, and I don't think I ever will because I am so involved with it all. If I'm in a café and I see somebody fully tattooed up, I always go and talk to them and find out who's done the work. I'm just so interested in it. Nowadays, out and about or in the pub, you see a lot of people with sleeves or tattooed up to their necks - but they've probably never bought a tattoo magazine or a tattoo book, and they've got no real interest in the tattoo world. For me it's everything.

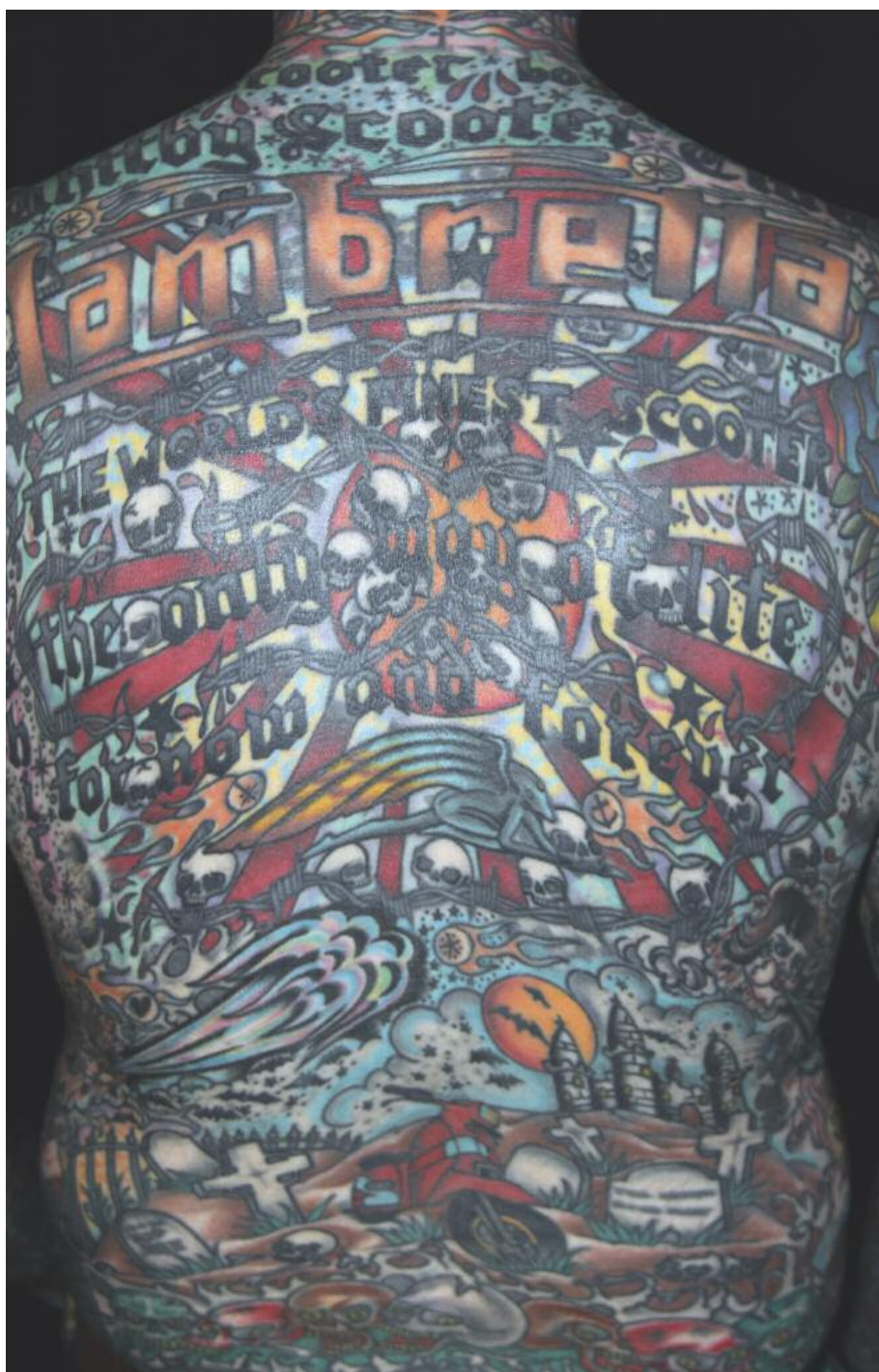
Nearly all my work was done by Dave Phillips in Bridlington. We also had Sinbad in Middlesbrough, who was proper turbaned-up and everything. His flash was incredible, and so was his traditional tattooing. And there was King Arthur's in Scarborough. He was famous, and he was like a local hero to me because he'd been all over the world travelling to conventions (this was back in the day, when there would only have been a couple of dozen artists there!) He did the first tattoos I ever

got - a couple of swallows on my hands. I'd seen a book all about London skinheads, with a picture showing a lad with these tattoos. They looked amazing, so I wanted them. I've now had them covered.

In those days you could only really get traditional tattoos, or maybe a little bit of Japanese. I used to go in some weeks with £40-£50 and get something off the £50 board. Other weeks I might only have £20 and I'd have to get something smaller. I had the Indian and snake on my arm first and I think it cost me about £36 for the two. It was a lot in those days, but now it's so expensive to get tattooed you really have to be earning some cash if you want any real amount of coverage. Back then I was in the building game and I spent every penny on tattoos. Then I got laid off for about six months and I would get my giro, which was £94 for two weeks, pay my mum some board and lodging, and get straight on the bus to Bridlington to spend the lot on tattoos. I wasn't bothered about getting a drink as long as I was tattooed. That's all that mattered.

About fourteen years ago I started to do tattoos myself. You couldn't buy any equipment and it was still all underground, but me and my brother ordered some stuff from America. It took ages to come through customs. We didn't have a clue how to tattoo or how to set up a machine. It was just trial and error on each other.

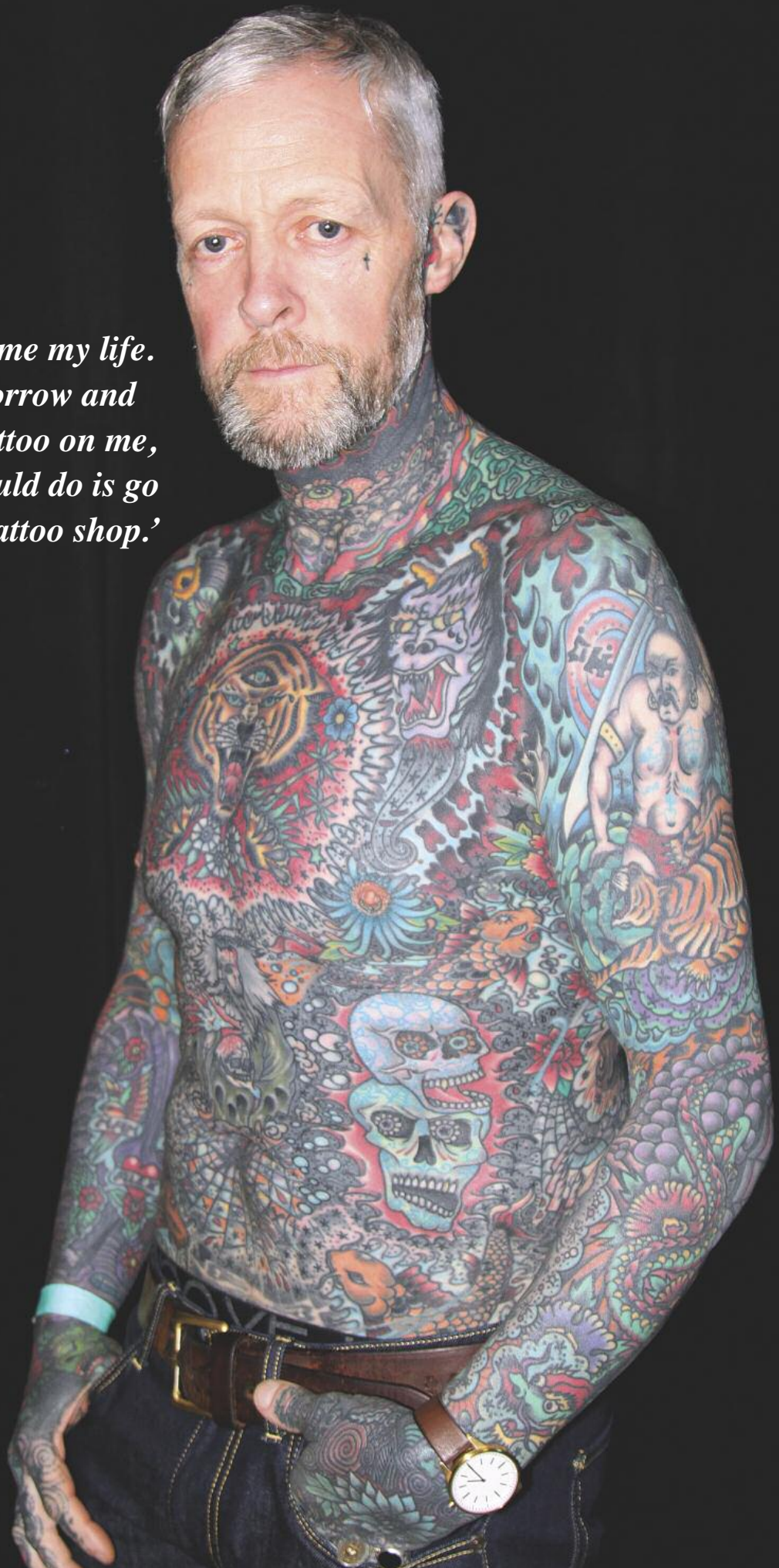
If I could take all my tattoos off and change them, I would still go for traditional, or traditional Japanese. That's my style. For me, traditional tattooing is how it all started and that's how I like it to be. I love all the other realistic stuff, but it's not something I would wear. I'm not sure I could go through all those really long sessions again though, like I did years ago. I still get tattooed every week, by Chris Newport at North Sea Tattoos in Scarborough. We get on well. I chose him



because he had just moved to the shop and wasn't massively busy. We got talking and I asked him if he fancied re-working some of my stuff. It's just gone on from there. North Sea Tattoos is really close to my barbers, so I go every Thursday morning. Chris is re-lining and re-colouring the whole lot bit by bit. Sometimes it's an hour, sometimes half an hour, or whatever. All the guys do good work and we have a proper good banter. But the older I get the more it hurts. I never used to think about it. Now I use numbing cream.



*'Tattoos have become my life.
If I woke up tomorrow and
had never had a tattoo on me,
the first thing I would do is go
straight down the tattoo shop.'*



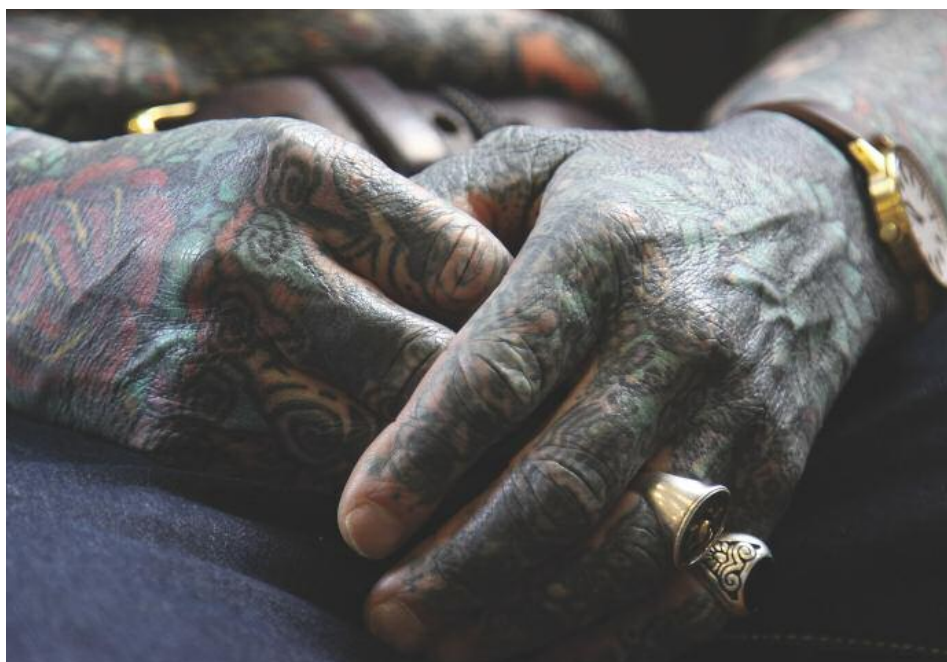
I think kids today might live to regret some of their choices, My suit has taken twenty years, but they get done in just two or three years. And some of today's fashionable styles, like naive tattoos, well I think some people might regret them too.

My suit is made up of hundreds of small designs, all overlapping, and it's evolved - not like today, when people have their whole body done as one design. The dragons on my arm are only four or five inches long! The artists who did large-scale concept pieces back then were out of this world, but they were inaccessible to the likes of me. The Tom Ptolemy and Brent of Dunstable backpieces were amazing. When you look at the way standards have gone up though, any run-of-the-mill tattooist today would have been a top artist in those days.

In Whitby, where I live now, everyone knows me for my tattoos. Tattoos have become my life. If I woke up tomorrow and had never had a tattoo on me, the first thing I would do is go straight down the tattoo shop. It's not a confidence thing. Some people get tattoos to cover up their lack of confidence, but that's not me. I just love tattoos. People have said I should get my back covered up, or get bits lasered, and have something new. But the scooter scene has also been a part of my life for over thirty years. I've ridden all over this country with various clubs.

I've had a couple of cover-ups on me over the years and I do actually like solid blacked-in arms, but my concern would be knowing where to stop; I would probably end up completely covered like Lucky Diamond Rich. And if I went for blacking out now, it would mean all the hours I've spent getting re-lined and touched-up would have been a waste of time.

I'd like to think that one day I'll be finished but to be honest I'm not sure I ever will be. And I'm certain that I won't ever regret getting so much coverage. I'm looking forward to being that 70-year-old guy covered in ink.



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THE TATTOO COLLECTIVE

The UK convention scene is now in full swing, with events just about every weekend for the first three months of the new season! Securing an early slot on the calendar is The Tattoo Collective at the Old Truman Brewery on Brick Lane in London's East End. Last year was its debut, and although it offered an amazing line-up of artists in a bright, spacious venue, it wasn't very well attended. So what was in store for us this year?

Once again the weather was awful. Everyone was well wrapped up in the freezing conditions, with snow and wind keeping the temperatures well below zero. Although we were only a week away from the official start of Spring there was no sign of any sunshine. Battling with the elements, it didn't exactly feel welcoming. And if you didn't know where you were headed, the entrance to the venue (which is set back from the main drag) was a bit difficult to find too. The signage from Brick Lane consisted of a single A4 sheet with an arrow saying 'Tattoo Convention', lost against a background of other people's colourful posters – and that was all visitors had to direct them to the show.

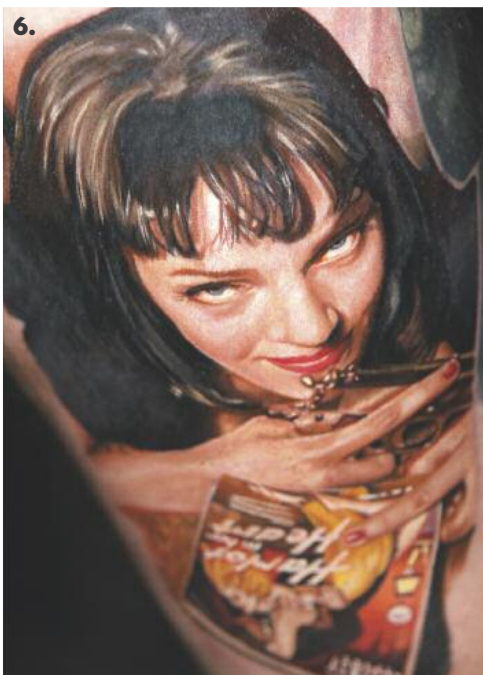
The Tattoo Collective is organised by the same people who have brought us the mighty London Tattoo Convention at Tobacco Dock for the past thirteen years. So expectations were high. This show defines itself as being all about the art of tattooing – showcasing the work of British and Irish studios – and alongside the 150 tattooists there is also a large exhibition area. On display were paintings by Chris Guest, furniture by Gina McQueen, illustrations by Joe Spaven, beautiful woodblock prints from the Japanese Gallery, a collection of decorated skateboards and a selection of tattooist-customised Gretsch guitars. Also on offer was the chance to take part in a woodcut workshop with printmaker and tattooist Lacey Law.

As you would expect, this show is very professionally organised and expertly laid out. It spreads through three sizeable rooms, all on the same level. The largest room houses the tattooists; the smaller adjoining room is where you'll find the bar and stage; and the third room is the exhibition area. Entertainment is kept to a bare minimum (there are no major bands or loud rock music here!) with much-needed atmosphere being provided by the background music that's played throughout the day. The focus of this show is tattooing – pure and simple – and the competitions that take place towards the end of each day feature some truly amazing pieces. The judges – George Bone, Joe Spaven and Grace Neutral – certainly had their work cut out.



1. aron cowles, a fine tattoo establishment
2. steve morante, fudoshin
3. damian gorsky, ushuaia tattoo





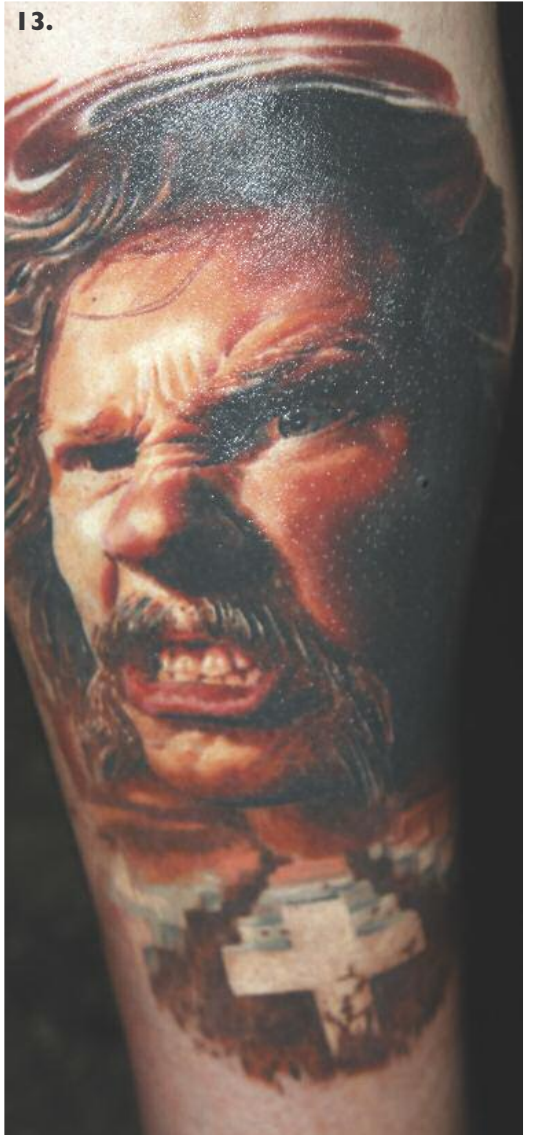
- 4. **jordan croke, second skin**
- 5. **justin burnout, ghost house collective**
- 6. **radu rusu, atelier four**
- 7. **steve morante, fudoshin**
- 8. **tek tek tattoo**
- 9. **damian gorsky, ushuaia tattoo**
- 10. **justin burnout, ghost house collective**
- 11. **max pniewski, southmead**
- 12. **alex rattray, empire ink**
- 13. **max pniewski, southmead**

Sadly, visitor numbers were very low and by the Sunday many of the traders were looking very forlorn. Brick Lane itself is a bustling hive of activity, a traditional London market with plenty of street entertainment, plus great places to eat and drink, as well as lots of interesting secondhand shops full of reasonably-priced things to buy... and maybe this is the reason the Collective seems to be struggling to attract an audience. Why pay a hefty ticket price when there's so much going on just outside the door that you can enjoy for free? (And in these straitened economic times, value for money is an increasingly important factor. There are other UK conventions with minimal entertainment offerings but, in contrast to the Collective, they have lower ticket prices to reflect this.)

To be fair, the Collective is a great opportunity for tattooists to come together and enjoy each other's company – and maybe that's the whole point of this event. It's fun to catch up with friends in the trade, have a beer, grab some food and hear the latest gossip. And for the general public it's a chance to see some great artists at work, but London's tattoo fans can already do that with the larger London Tattoo Convention each September (which offers much more in the way of entertainment and many more artists from further afield too). It feels almost as though the organisers of the Collective are competing with themselves!

This show has the potential to be something really special. It has an enviable location and it's put on by some of the best organisers in the business, but it needs to be more effectively promoted and it needs to attract more visitors through the door.

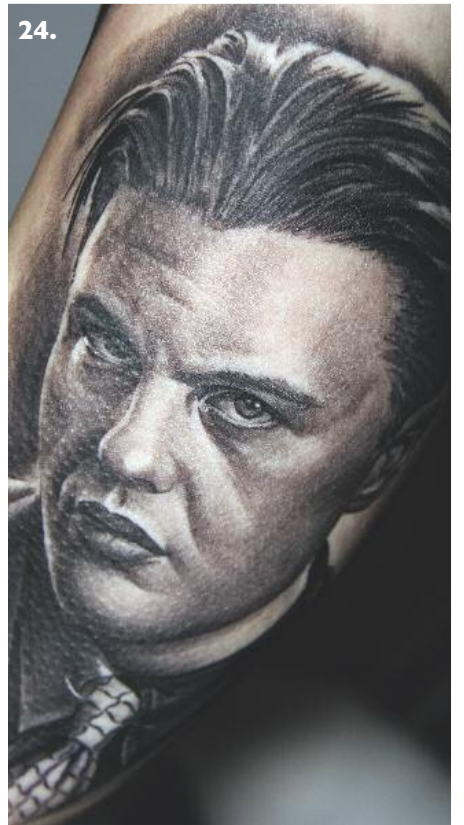
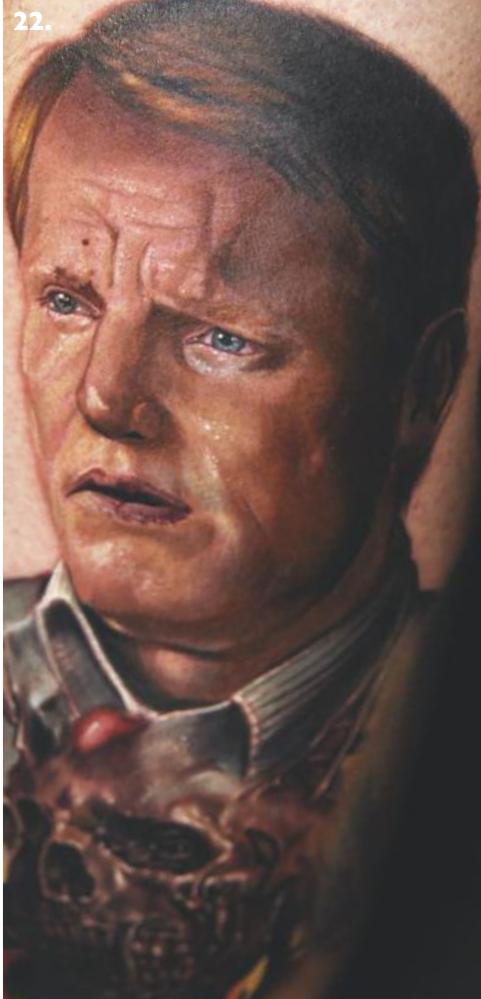






14. paul talbot, modern electric tattoo
 15. joe spaven exhibition
 16. boris bianchi, private studio
 17. tim childs, southsea tattoo co
 18. phatt german, irie ites



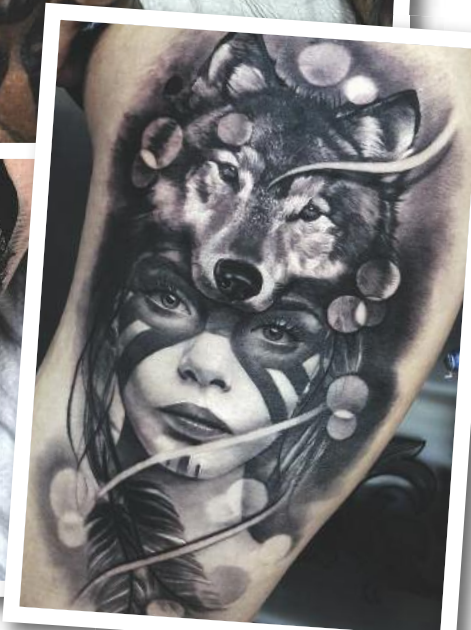


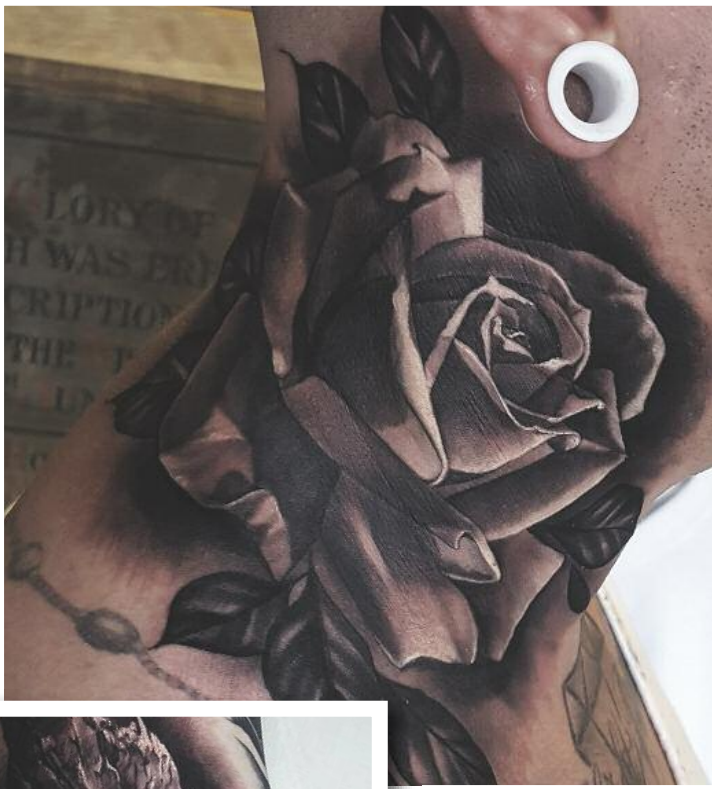
- 19. jenna kerr,
devil in the detail
- 20. rich, dark horse collective
- 21. duncan whitfield,
custom propaganda
- 22. endre, tattoo end
- 23. marcin,
inkdependent tattoo
- 24. gianluca schiappapietra
straight lines tattoo

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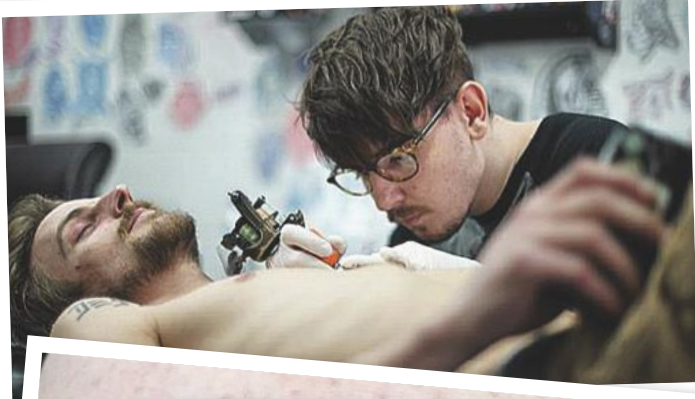
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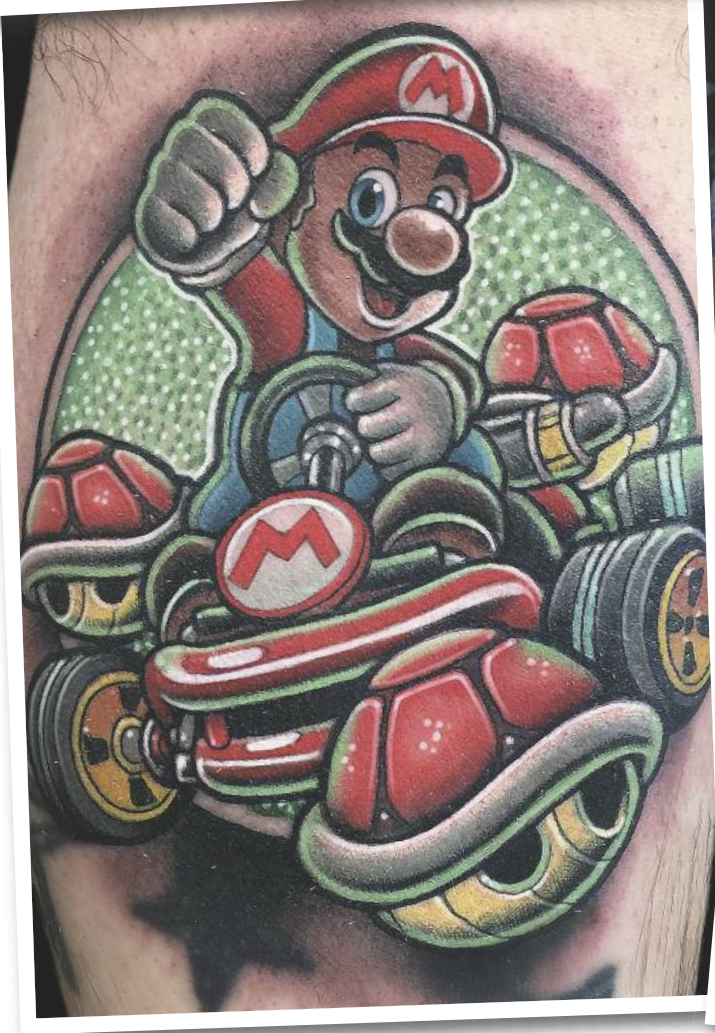
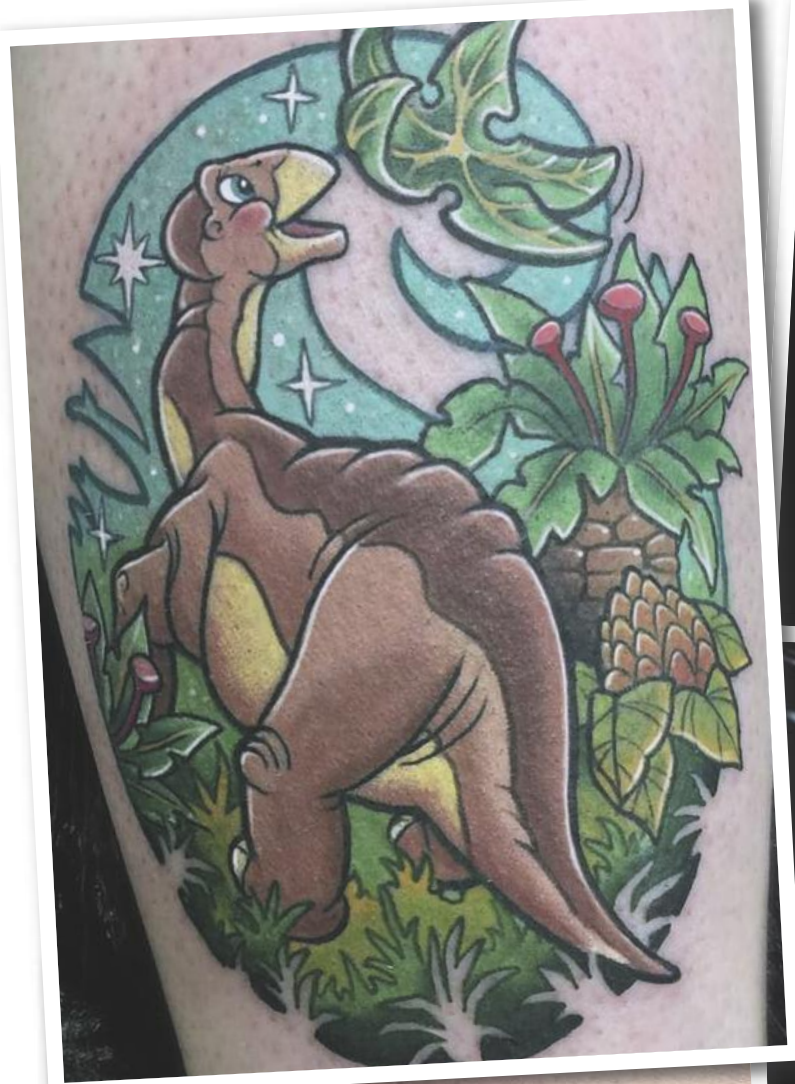
NICK IMMS THE CHURCH





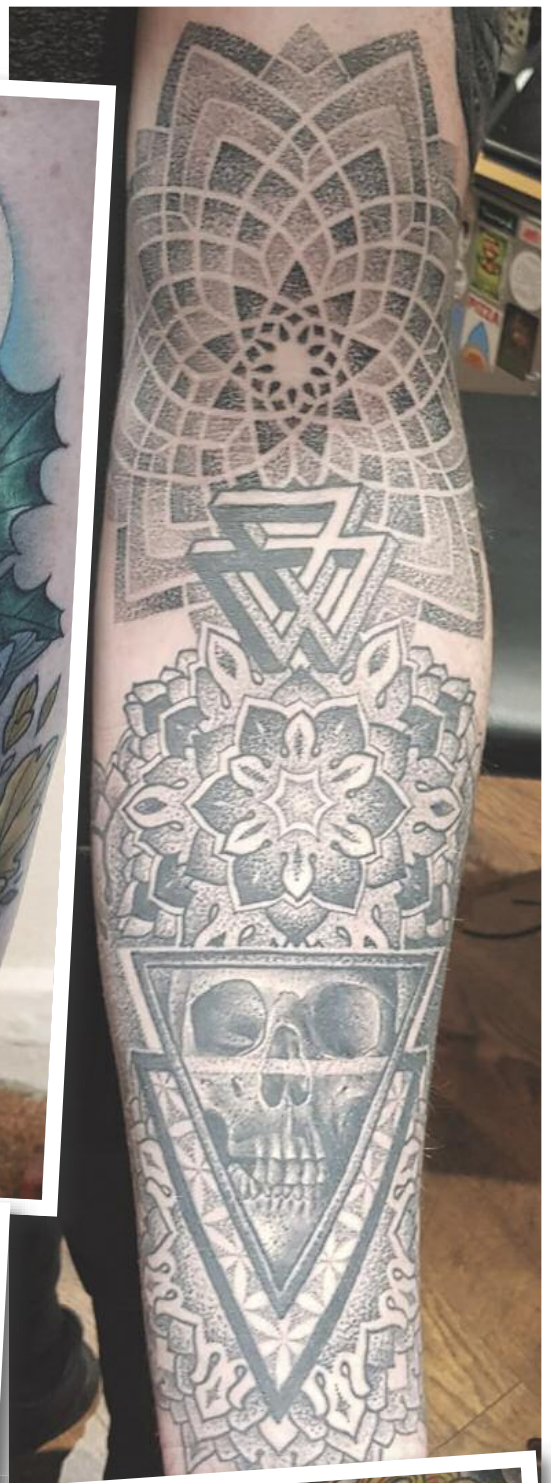
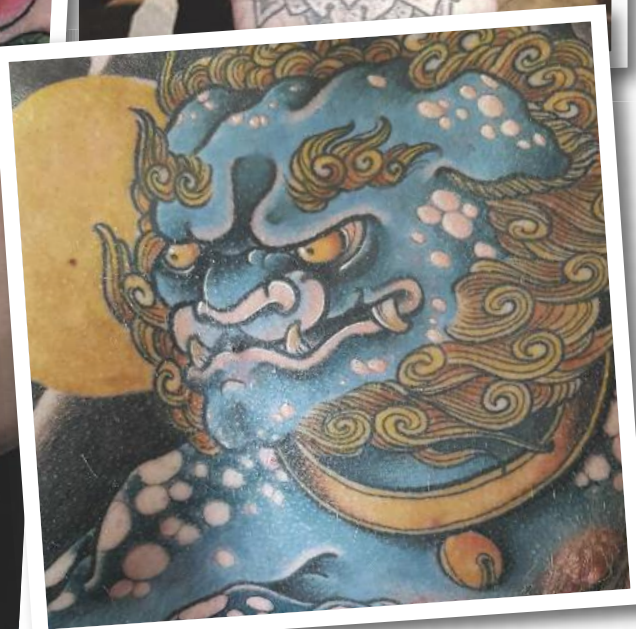
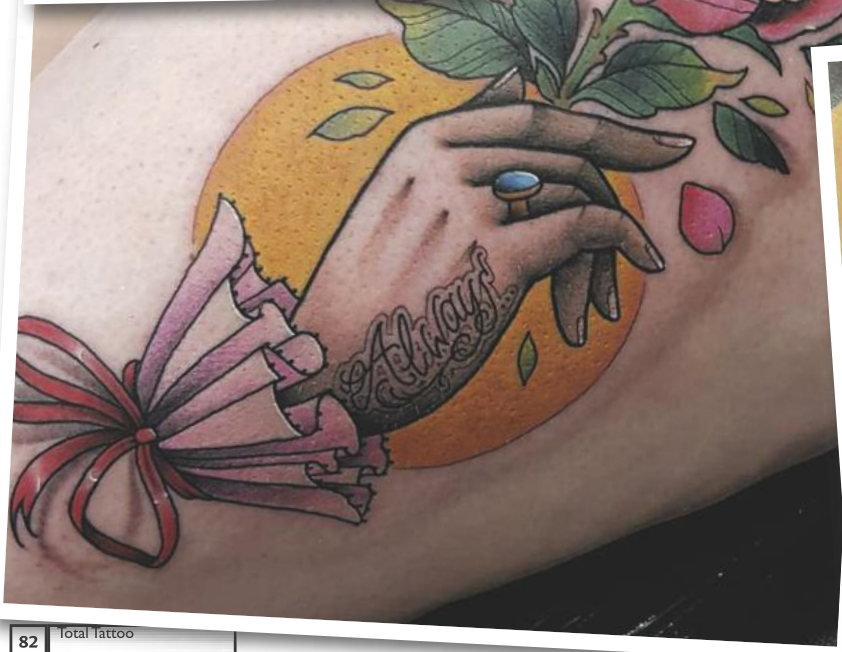
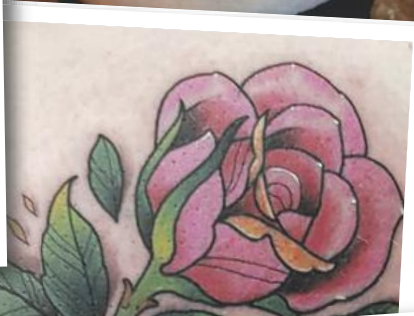
LUKE THOMPSON
ELECTRIC GARDEN TATTOO

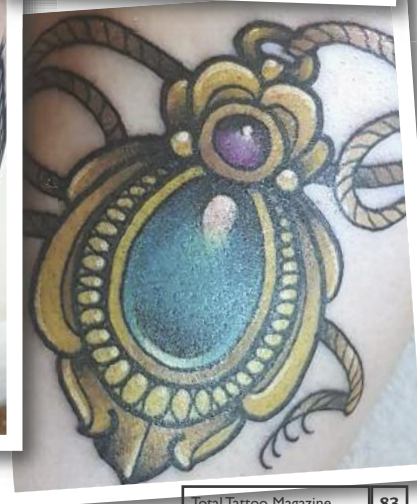
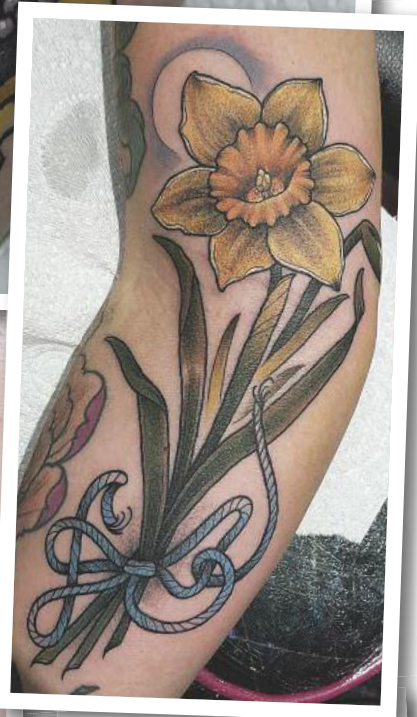
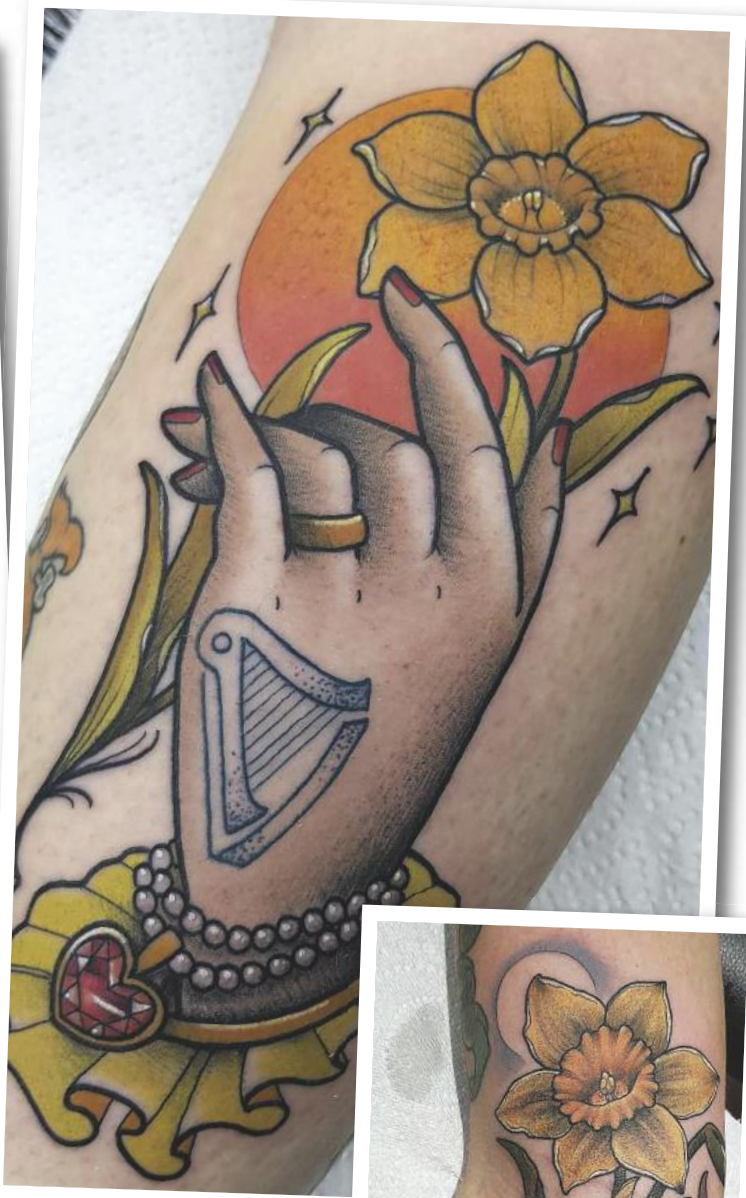
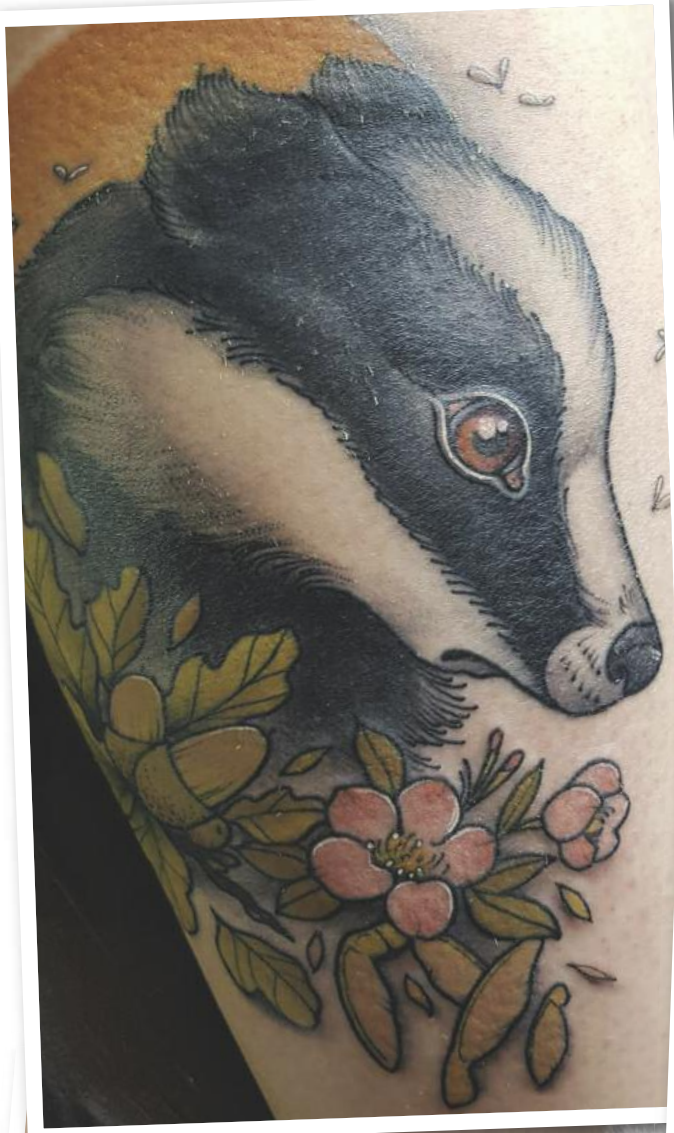




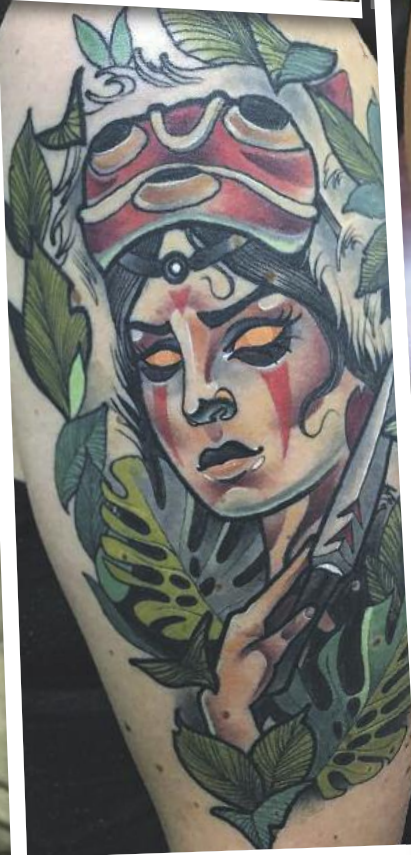
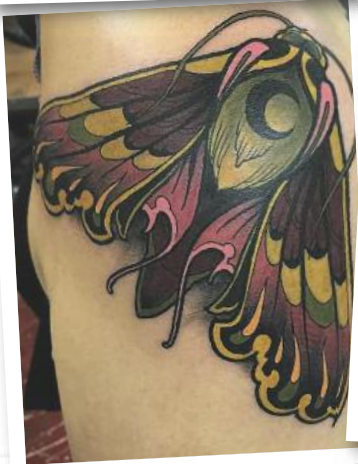
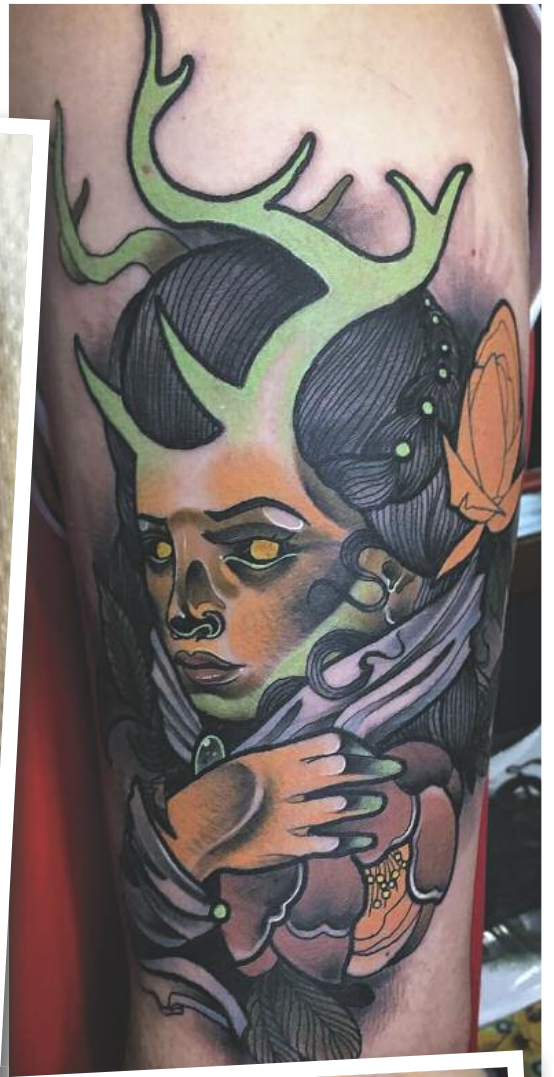
HANNAH WESTCOTT

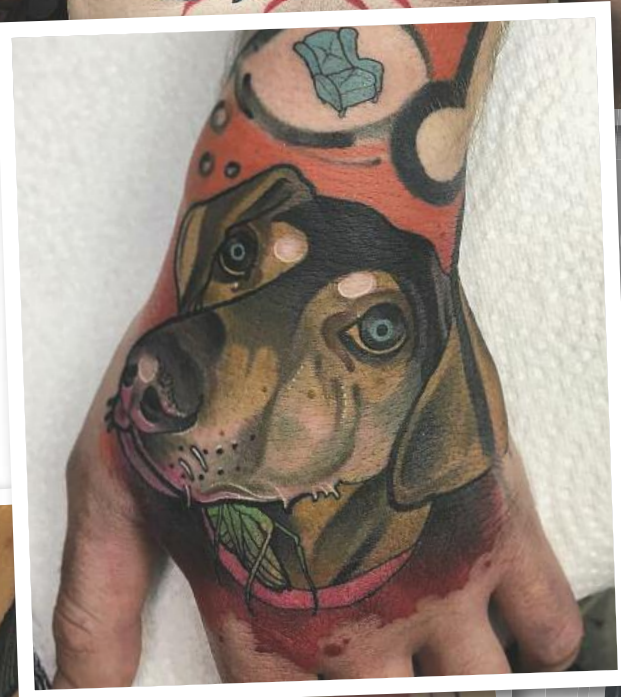
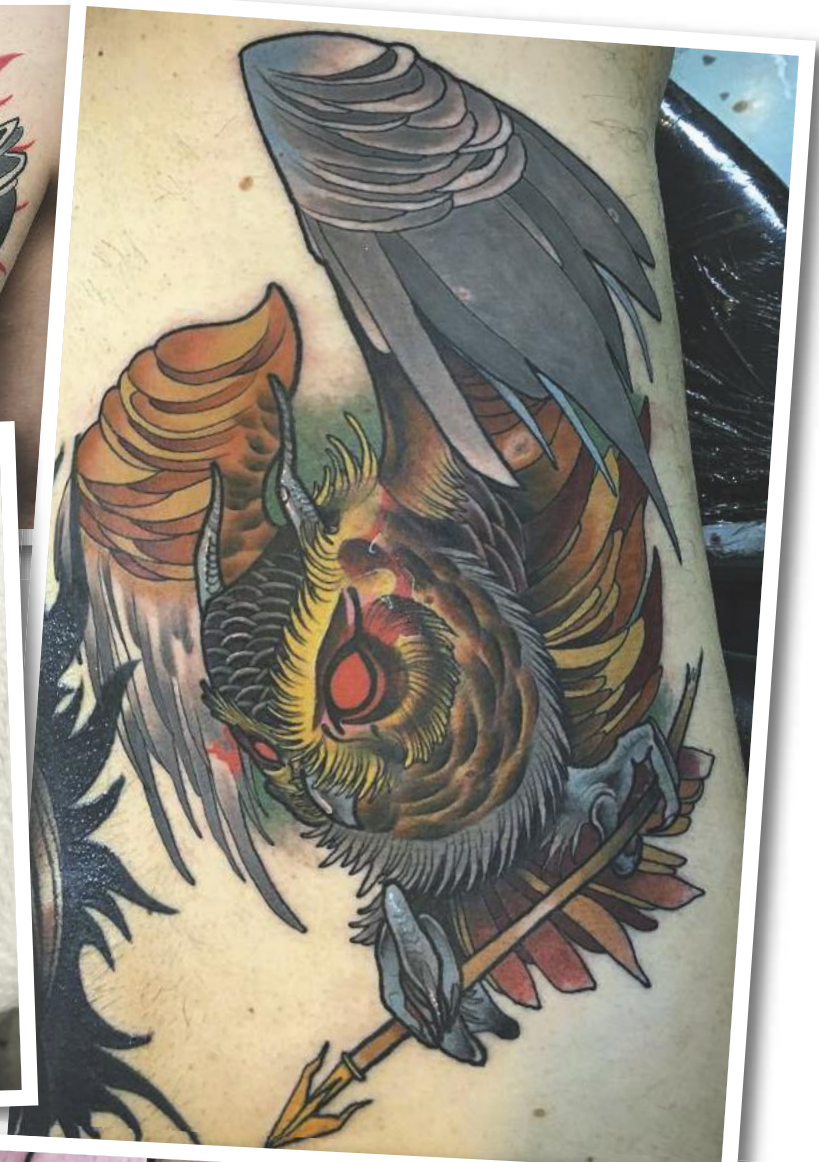
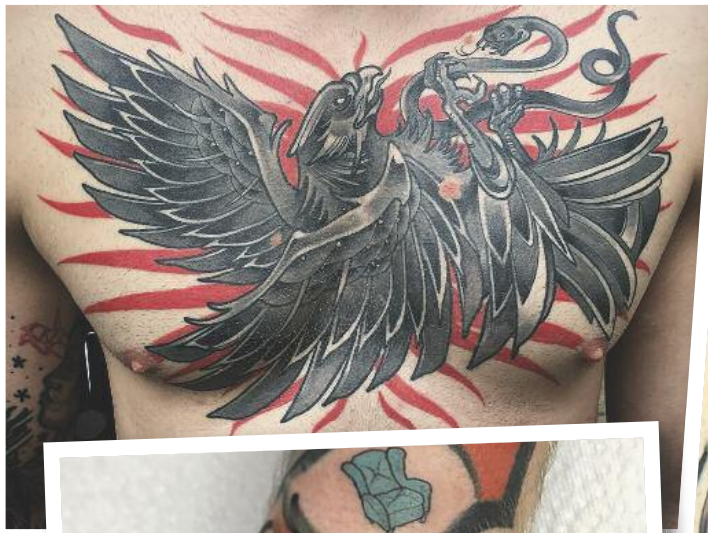
PRIVATE STUDIO

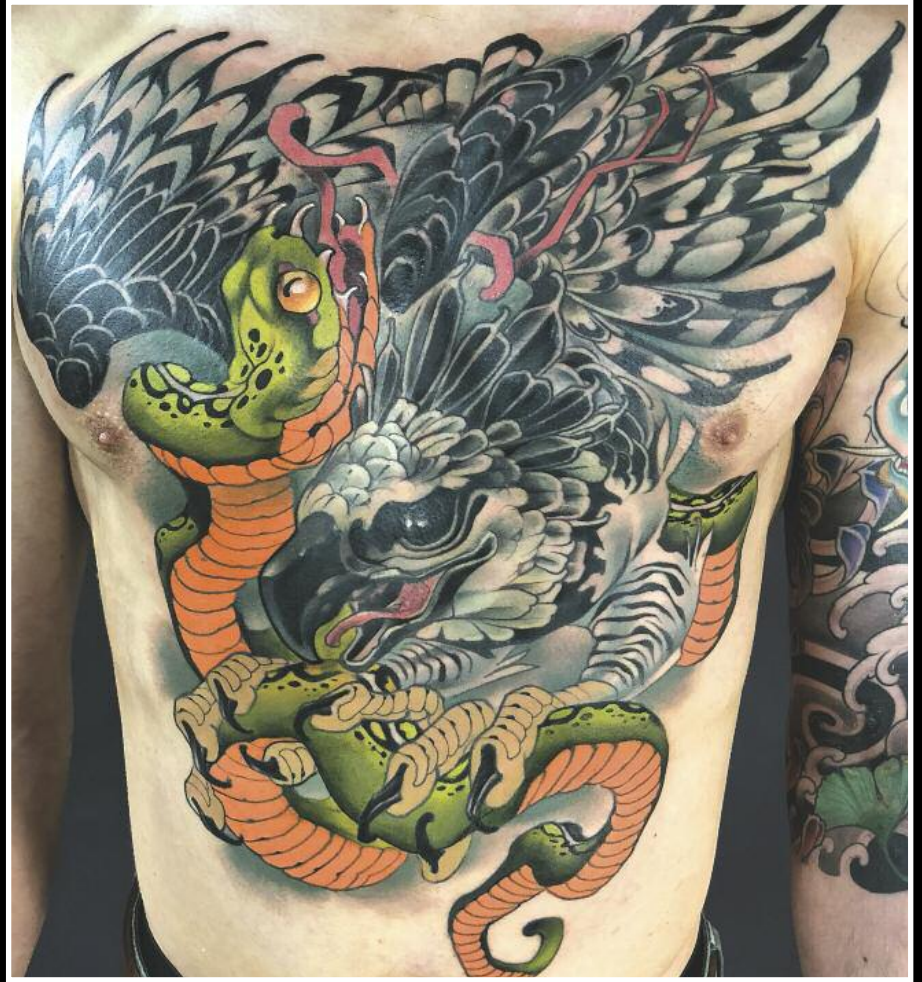




ADAM SZABO
LOCO-MOTIVE TATTOO
(HUNGARY)









MOSH

Spanish tattooist and graffiti artist Mosh (aka Lluís Febrer) works at Family Art Tattoo in Barcelona. He's always loved New School, and he aims to give all his tattoos a unique and recognisable personality.

Tell us a bit about your background, and how you came into tattooing.

I was born in Menorca, in the Balearic Islands, and I lived there until I was nineteen. My interest in tattooing started when I was fourteen, when I had an art teacher who was also a tattoo artist. We were learning how to do illustrations for comics, and he gave us photocopies of some of his drawings to take home. I was also into skateboarding and graffiti at that time, and I was often in the company of people with tattoos, so tattoo culture was already very familiar to me. In 2006 I decided to move to Barcelona and start my own tattooing career. I've been tattooing for eleven years now, and I've been at Family Art Tattoo for a year.

Is it a good place to be?

Yes, I feel very comfortable working there. I am constantly learning from my colleagues and from all the guest artists too, and the variety of styles on offer at Family Art nourishes me artistically as well.



What is the tattoo scene like in Spain?

The Spanish tattoo scene is crazy! There are so many great tattooists, and the number of people coming into the industry just keeps on growing. So does the number of people who want to get tattooed! Black-and-grey and neo-traditional are the most popular and commercially successful styles here. My own preference is for something deeper, something involving a more personal creative process – something which perhaps not everybody will regard as beautiful.

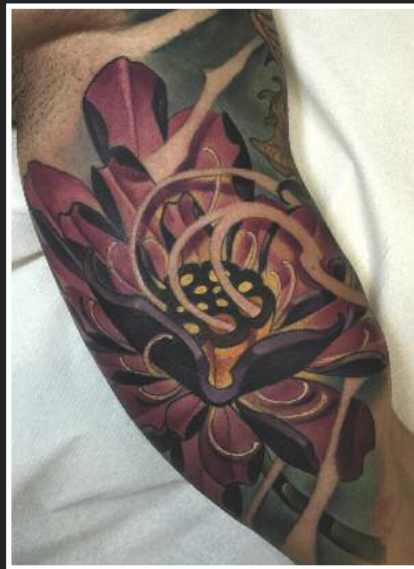
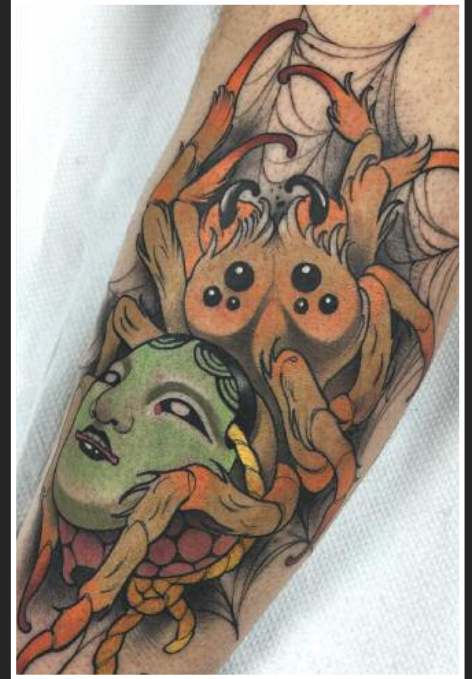
Your own work is very New School in style. Have you always been attracted to this genre?

Yes, I have. I've always tended to distort reality in whatever I draw (I used to do that even before I was a tattooist) and I think the influence of graffiti style is very evident in my work. I'm influenced by comics and oriental art too. But I give everything my own personal touch, and New School is a style that allows me to express myself fully. My work is characterised by unreal perspectives and the use of volumes, textures and dynamism. I use black to prolong the life of my tattoos, and I also like rich, contrasting colours with a diversity of tonalities. Occasionally I work in black and grey. And although my drawings are always New School in style, I sometimes tattoo in a more Neo-traditional way – with neutral colours contrasted against one or two brighter colours, and applied flat in some areas. I prefer not to punish the skin too much, and I like to leave areas of skin without ink so that the design visually breathes. Obviously, whatever kind of tattoo I'm doing, I also have to take into account the customer's skin type. We haven't got the best skins here in Spain, and of course the sun does his work in the summer!



What is your favourite subject matter?

All my life I have been fascinated by animals, plants and invented creatures. I suppose this is because of growing up in close proximity to nature in Menorca. Right from when I was a young kid I was drawing animals, dinosaurs, and all kinds of monsters. And by the time I was in my teens, I was already painting many-eyed monsters on the walls and ramps of the skateparks!



When you first started tattooing, what did you want to achieve?

When I first started to tattoo, I already had a very marked style. I was already very focused on New School. Of course I've done tattoos in all kinds of other styles over the years – Polynesian, tribal, traditional, dotwork, watercolour, realism, etc – and I think it's very important to know how to do any style and learn something from each one. I didn't start tattooing in order to become famous, or even to be seen as cool, and I'm certainly not the kind of person who thinks the quality of their art is measured by the size of their Instagram following – although being well known does bring the work in! I started to tattoo because I was fascinated by the world of tattoo, and my goal was to develop the necessary techniques to be able to tattoo my drawings. I've always wanted to make bigger pieces. I've never created a bodysuit, and that's something I would love to do.



Are there any tattooists who particularly inspire you?

There are so many international artists whose work I love, but there's one who has really caught my attention: Steve Moore [Get More Tattoos, Canada]. His work is incredible.



Is it important to you that people recognise your work?

It's very important to me that people see my work as having its own personality, and it makes me very happy when someone tells me that my style is easily recognisable. Of course everything I do is influenced in some way by other artists – all art is formed from something that's already been created – but the vital thing is to differentiate it in some way. There's something magical about making a connection with someone through your drawings to the point where they actually want to get tattooed by you.



Tell us about your equipment.

For many years, I worked with coil machines. I have several, all of them well maintained, and I really love them. But I'm currently part of the Inkjecta team and I've been using an Inkjecta machine for two years now. I'm really delighted with it. You can work all kinds of lines and all types of filler, from the softest greys to the most saturated colour. It's very comfortable and it's very practical – both for everyday work and also when you're travelling – because you only need one machine and some cartridges. It functions like a traditional direct drive machine but you can configure the strength and depth of the needle stroke, and that is perfect. I still sometimes use a coil machine to do very thick lines, because I love the feeling you get. Line is very important. It has to be perfect because errors are not easily fixed. Of course colour is important too, but that's easier to retouch.



Do you enjoy working conventions?

I only started attending conventions last year. I went to Brussels and London. Conventions are good for the world of tattooing, and good for us artists too. It's an opportunity to meet each other and see how we all work. Everybody learns and grows. This year, I'm looking forward to the Big North Tattoo Show and the Scottish Tattoo Convention among others! Tattoo competitions certainly motivate you to do your job better, although I do think it's strange to judge one tattoo against another – especially when it comes to 'Best of Show', when so many top class tattoos aren't even entered into the contests. Even so, it's great entertainment for the audience.





You had some brilliant digital prints on sale at the International Brussels Tattoo Convention. Do you make much use of digital technology in your work?

Thank you for your compliment! I'm not an expert, and I must admit I'm not totally satisfied with the latest prints I made with the iPad Pro. I definitely like drawing with it, but the paintings look much too perfect and clean. I want to achieve a more 'traditional' result – dirtier and more expressive – so that it's difficult for people to tell if it's digital or not. It's true that the iPad Pro is an incredible tool, with infinite possibilities, but I've recently gone back to pencil and paper and watercolour. I also hope to find some time for oil painting. I miss all those traditional media! With the iPad Pro it's far too easy to correct your mistakes, and that doesn't help you learn. You become lazy and you adopt bad habits. Actually, I tend to use it more for cleaning and preparing drawings for the thermal printer, and also for colour tests.

What else do you like to do when you're not tattooing?

When I'm not tattooing I like to be quietly drawing, spending time with my lovely girlfriend Marta (aka Violeta Poisoned) and our cats, or going for walks in the countryside. I also love visiting my family and friends in Menorca. I miss them constantly, but I'm lucky because they aren't very far away.

What are you most proud of in your career?

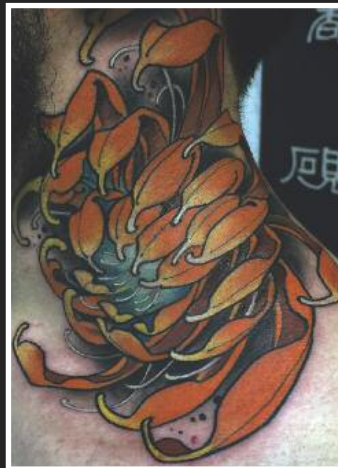
I am proud of the fact that I persevered during the early stages. It was really just my own hands and my desire to learn that carried me through. I would like to thank all the clients who trusted me even when I was inexperienced, Marta who has always been there for me, and my family and friends who have all encouraged and supported me. They've given me the best motivation possible.

What advice would you give to someone coming into tattooing?

Develop patience and perseverance. Be reliable and dependable. Respect your clients. Respect other tattooists' work. And know the value of having a tattoo machine in your hands. My hope is that the world of tattoo will continue to grow, and more importantly that it will grow in the right direction.

Mosh
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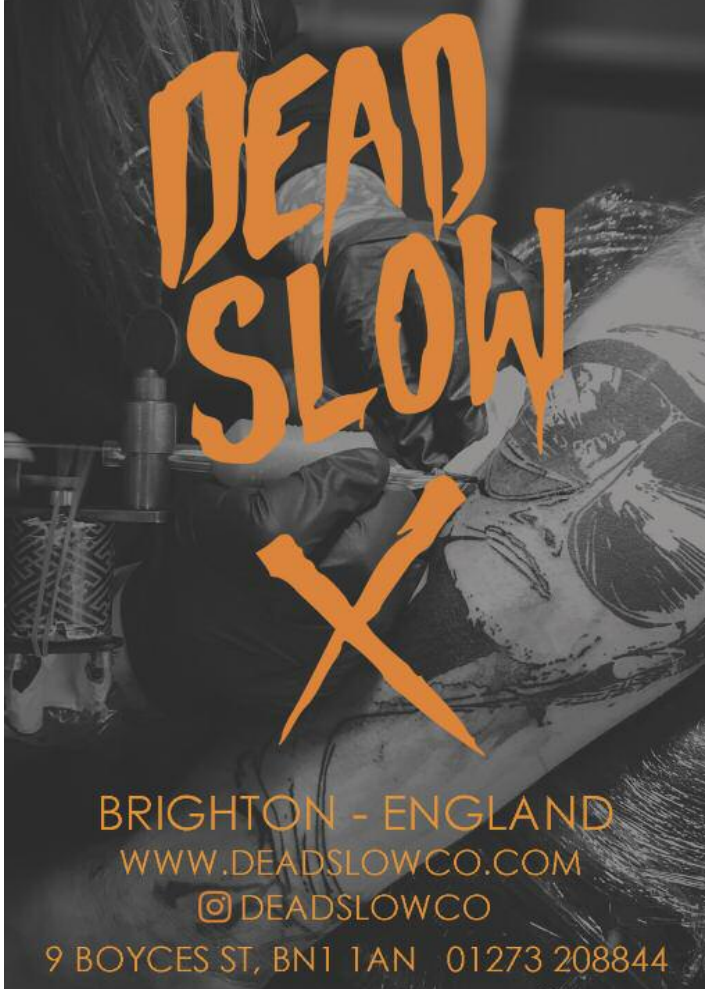
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Scarlet Rose

21 High St,
Milton Keynes MK16 8AR
Tel no: 01908 618388
joe@scarletrosetattoo.com
www.scarletrosetattoo.com

Second Skin

77 Ashbourne Rd,
Derby DE22 3FW
Tel no: 01332 242688
info@secondskinstudio.co.uk
Instagram: @secondskinderby

Uptown Tattoo Studio

4 woodgate, Leicester, le3 5ge
Tel no: 01162 251661
uptowntattoostudio@gmail.com
www.uptowntattoostudio.com

EAST OF ENGLAND

Braintree Tattoo Studio

148 Coggeshall Rd,
Braintree CM7 9ER
Tel no: 01376560633
info@braintreetattoostudio.co.uk
www.braintreetattoostudio.co.uk

Churchyard Tattoo

14 Churchyard,
Hitchin SG5 1HR
Tel no: 01462 338781
cytattoo@gmail.com
Instagram: @churchyardtattoos

Cult Classic Tattoo

32 North St,
Romford RMI 1BH
Tel no: 01708730500
cultclassictattoo@gmail.com
www.cultclassictattoo.com

Electric Punch Tattoo

Unit 4, the Pavillion,
Tower Centre, Hoddesdon
EN11 8UB
Tel no: 01992447756
info@electricpunchtattoo.co.uk
www.electricpunchtattoo.co.uk

Five Keys Tattoo

21-23 St George Street,
Norwich. NR3 1AB
Tel no: 01603762636
fivekeystattoo@gmail.com
www.fivekeystattoo.com

Indigo Tattoo and Piercing

2 Lower Goat Lane,
Norwich, Norfolk NR2 1EL
Tel no: 01603 886143
www.indigotattoo.co.uk
indigotattooandpiercing@gmail.com

Immortal Ink

39 - 43 Baddow Road,
Chelmsford, CM2 0DB
Tel no: 01245 493444
contact@immortalink.co.uk
www.immortalink.co.uk

Red's Tattoo Parlour

123a High Street
Colchester, Essex
CO1 1SZ
Tel no: 01206 766606
www.redstattoo.co.uk

Signum In Sanguinem
(Oliver Jerrold)
4 The Gurdons, Assington Suffolk
CO105LW
Tel no: 07519859001
ojtattoo@gmail.com
Instagram:
@signum_in_sanguinem

Wolf and Arrows
57 St John's St, Bury Saint
Edmunds IP33 1SJ
Tel no: 01284 701643
Instagram: @wolfandarrows

LONDON

Dharma Tattoo
529 Roman Rd,
London E3 5EL
Tel no: 020 79988008
info@dharmatattoo.co.uk
www.dharmatattoo.co.uk

Family Business
58 Exmouth Market,
Clerkenwell,
London EC1R 4QE
Tel no: 02072789526
info@thefamilybusinesstattoo.com
www.thefamilybusinesstattoo.com

Frith Street
18 Frith Street (basement), Soho,
London W1D 4RQ
Tel no: 020 7734 8180
frithstreettattoo.london@gmail.com
www.frithstreettattoo.co.uk

Fudoshin Tattoos
158 George Lane,
London E18 1AY
Tel no: 020 8989 6144
fudoshintattoos@hotmail.com
www.fudoshintattoos.com

Happy Sailor Tattoo
17 Hackney Rd,
London E2 7NX
Tel no: 020 7033 9222
Email: Via website
www.happysailortattoo.com

Inksmiths Of London
8 Chequers Parade, Eltham,
London SE9 1DD
Tel no: 020 8617 3338
Inksmithsoflondon@gmail.com
Instagram: @InksmithsofLondon

Kilburn Original Tattoo
175 Kilburn High Road, Kilburn,
London. NW6 7HY
Tel no: 02073723662
info@kilburnoriginal.com
Instagram: @kilburntattoo

Leviticus Tattoo Emporium
170 High Road,
Loughton IG10 1DN
Telephone: 02085024029
Email:
leviticustattoo@hotmail.com
Instagram: @leviticustattoo
emporium

New Wave Tattoo Studio
157 Sydney Road, Muswell Hill,
London N10 2NL
Tel no: 02084448779
lalhardy@hotmail.co.uk
www.newwavetattoo.co.uk

Old Habits Tattoo
364 Kingsland Road,
London. E8 4DA
Tel no: 02036090931
oldhabitstattoo@gmail.com
www.oldhabitstattoo.com

Seven Doors Tattoo
55 Fashion St, Shadwell,
London E1 6PX
Tel no: 020 7375 3880
sevendoorstattoo@gmail.com
Instagram: @sevendoorstattoo

Through My Third Eye
342 Hornsey Road,
London. N77HE
Tel no: 02034172552
throughmythirdeye@outlook.com
www.throughmythirdeye.com

SOUTH EAST
All Or Nothing Tattoo and Piercings
12 Church Street
Witham
Essex CM82JL
Tel no: 01376 519602
Email :aontattoo@outlook.com
www.aontattoo.com

1770 Tattoo
4 Little East Street
Brighton BN1 1HT
Tel no: 01273710730
info@1770tattoo.com
www.1770tattoo.com

Death's Door Tattoo
13-16 Vine Street,
Brighton. BN1 4AG
deathsdoortattoos@gmail.com
Instagram: @deathsdoortattoo

The Church Tattoo
11 Church Road
Redditch B97 4AB
Tel no: 01527 759852
thechurchtattoo@hotmail.com
Instagram: @thechurchtattoo

Higgins and Co
69 Terminus Road, Above
Coffee Republic,
Eastbourne BN21 3NJ
Tel no: 01323 301973
higginsandco71@gmail.com
www.higginsandcotattoo.co.uk

Scribbly Head @Electric Buddha
32-36 Plains of Waterloo,
Ramsgate CT11 8HX
Tel no: 01843 855041
scribbly_head@hotmail.com
Instagram: @scribbly_head

Rising Phoenix Tattoo
6 High Street,
Leighton Buzzard. LU7 1EA
Tel no: 01525217121
studio@risingphoenixtattoo.co.uk
www.risingphoenixtattoo.co.uk

Valhalla Tattoo
215 High Street, Bromley,
Kent. BR1 1NY
Tel no: 02083139470
info@valhallatattoo.co.uk
www.facebook.com/valhallatattoo215

SOUTH WEST

Crow Quill
63 Bedford Pl,
Southampton SO15 2DS
Tel no: 023 8034 0058
instagram: @thecrowquill
www.thecrowquill.co.uk

Needle and Fred Tattoo
22 High St,
Littlehampton BN17 5EE
Tel no: 01903 733622
needleandfred@live.co.uk
Instagram: @inkfred

North Gate Tattoo
13 Northgate St,
Bath BA1 5AS
info@northgatetattoo.com
www.northgatetattoo.com

Purple Rose Tattoo
56 Staple Hill Road, Fishponds,
Bristol, BS16 5BS
Tel no: 01173 300123
purplerosetattoo@hotmail.co.uk
www.purplerosetattoo.co.uk

WALES

Dexterity Ink
Unit 9 Indoor Peoples Market
LL13 8 Wrexham
Tel no: 01978 447100
www.facebook.com/DexterityInk
TattooStudio09

Physical Graffiti
124 City Road, Cardiff.
CF24 3DQ
Tel no: 02920481428
pgct@hotmail.co.uk
Instagram: @physicalgraffititattoos

Stronghold Tattoo
2nd floor Hugh St Chambers
Cardiff, CF10 1BD
Tel no: 07943 981671
www.strongholdtattoo.com

WEST MIDLANDS

Dark Horse Collective
33 Boldmere Rd,
Sutton Coldfield B73 5UY
Tel no: 01214061635
www.darkhorsecollective.com

Nala Tattoo & Piercing Studio
81 Bolebridge Street
B79 7PD Tamworth
Tel no: 01827 68353
contact@nalastudio.co.uk
www.nalastudio.co.uk

NORTH WEST

All Style Tattoos
28 Crellin Street
Barrow in Furness
LA14 1DU
Tel no: 01229 838946
Email: allstyletattoos@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/allstyletattoosbarrow

Aurora Tattoo
Sultan of Lancaster, Brock St,
The Old Church, Lancaster
LA1 1UU
auroratattoo@hotmail.co.uk
www.auroratattooostudio.co.uk

Bold As Brass Tattoo
Charleston House, 12 Rumford Pl,
Liverpool L3 9DG
Tel no: 0151 227 1814
boldasbrasstattoo@gmail.com
www.boldasbrasstattoo.com

Cosmic Monsters Incorporated
Mitre House, the courtyard
27 The Strand, Bromsgrove
B61 8ab
Tel no: 07863135814
cmitattoo@gmail.com
www.cmi-tattoo.com

Marked for life
45 High Street, (Winpenny house)
Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1SB
Tel no: 01642 641235
tattoomfl@gmail.com
www.marked-for-life.com

Sacred Art Tattoo
497 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton,
Manchester. M21 8AG
Tel: 01618811530
tattoo@sacredarttattoo.co.uk
www.sacredarttattoo.co.uk

Skin Kandi Tattoo Studio
50a Westfield Street, St Helens
Merseyside WA10 1QF
Tel no: 01744734699
skinkandi@hotmail.co.uk
www.skinkandi.co.uk

True 'til Death
13 Whalley Road
BB5 1AD Accrington
Tel no: 01254 433760
Email: via Facebook – True 'Til
Death Tattoo
www.accringtontattoo.com

IRELAND

Yakuza Tattoo
41 michael street
Waterford, Ireland
Tel no: +353 51 852 621
Email: soydantattoo@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/
YakuzaTattooStudio

CONVENTION CALENDAR

UK CONVENTIONS

19th-20th May

Scarborough Tattoo Show

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

19th-20th May

Northern Ireland Tattoo Convention

Belfast Waterfront 2 Lanyon Pl
Belfast BT1 3WH
www.nitattoo.com

9th-10th June

Bristol Tattoo Convention

The Passenger Shed, Station Approach,
Bristol BS1 6QH
bristoltattooconvention.com

23rd - 24th June

York International Tattoo Convention

Earswick Club, Huntingdon Road
York.YO329PX
www.yorkinternationaltattooconvention.co.uk

7th-8th July

Powys Charity Tattoo Convention

Community Centre, Mount Lane
Llanidloes, Powys SY18 6EZ
www.facebook.com/Powys-charity-tattoo-convention-283437561802173

7th-8th July

Leeds Tattoo Expo

First Direct Arena, Arena Way,
Leeds LS2 8BY,
leedstattooexpo.com

27th-28th July

Titanic Tattoo Convention

1 Queens Road, Titanic Quarter,
Belfast BT3 9EP

24th-29th July

Cardiff International

Tattoo Convention
Mercure Cardiff Holland House
24-26 Newport Rd, 28 Cardiff CF24 0DD

17th - 19th August

Tatcon Blackpool

Norbeck Castle Hotel, Promenade,
Blackpool.
www.tatconblackpool.co.uk

1st - 2nd September

Oxford Tattoo Convention

The Oxford Academy, Sandy Lane West,
Littlemore, Oxford
www.facebook.com/oxfordtattooconvention

1st-3rd September

Kustom Kulture Blast Off

31st August – 2nd September
Lincolnshire Show Ground
Lincoln LN2 2NA
www.kustomkultureblastoff.com

28th-30th September

The International London Tattoo Convention

Tobacco Dock, 50 Porters Walk
London E1W 2SF
www.thelondontattooconvention.com

19th-21st October

Midlands Tattoo Industry Show

Athena Leicester, Athena, Queen Street
LE1 1QD Leicester
www.midlandstattooindustryshow.co.uk

27th-28th October

Cambridge International Tattoo Convention

Guildhall Place
1-6 Corn Exchange St, Cambridge, CB2 3QF
www.facebook.com/cambridgetattoocon

11th - 12th November

East Coast Tattoo Expo

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

OVERSEAS CONVENTIONS

25th-27th May

Tattoo Nouvelle Ére

Le Salon 1861, Avenue Richmond,
Montreal, QC, Canada

1st-3rd June

Amsterdam Tattoo Convention

Amsterdam RAI Exhibition and Convention
Centre. Europaplein, 1078 GZ Amsterdam,
Netherlands

29th June-1st July

Ink Mania

Gouverneur Verwilghensingel
70 3500
Hasselt, Belgium
www.inkmania.be

13th -15th June

Empire State tattoo Expo

The New York Midtown Hilton
NYC Manhattan. USA
www.empirestatetattooexpo.com

3rd-5th August

Berlin Tattoo Convention

Arena Berlin, Germany
info@tattoo-convention.de
www.tattoo-convention.de

3rd-5th August

Pagoda City Tattoo Fest

Crowne Plaza Hotel Reading
1741 Papermill Yard,
Wyomissing, PA 19610, USA
www.pagodacitytattoofest.com

24th-26th August

Winnipeg Tattoo Convention

Red River Exhibition Park, Portage Ave,
Winnipeg, MB, Canada
www.winnipegtattooconvention.com

14th-15th September

Kaiserstadt Tattoo Expo

Tivoli Eissporthalle Aachen
Hubert Wienen Straße 8
52070 Aachen, Germany
www.kaiserstadt-tattoo-expo-aachen.com

5th-7th October

Florence Tattoo Convention

Fortezza Da Basso, Florence, Italy
www.florencetattooconvention.com

6th-8th October

Monster Ink Tattoo Fest

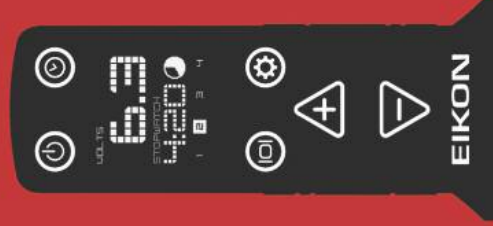
Evenementenhal Venray
De Voorde 30, 5807 EZ Venray,
The Netherlands
www.monsterinktattoofest.com

8th-9th November

Brussels Tattoo Convention

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

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