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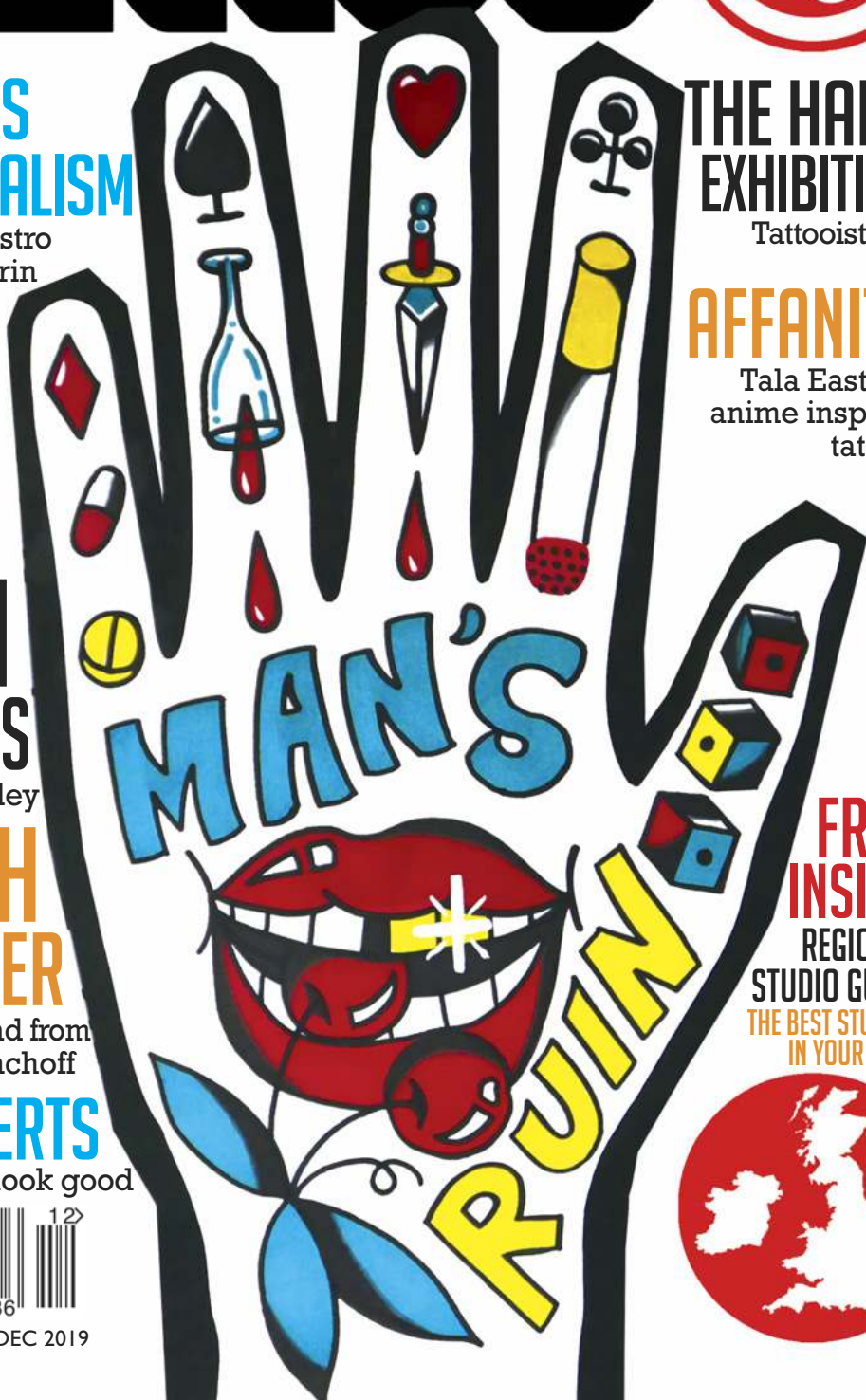
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Total Tattoo Magazine No. 182 December 2019

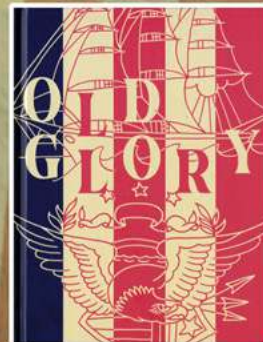
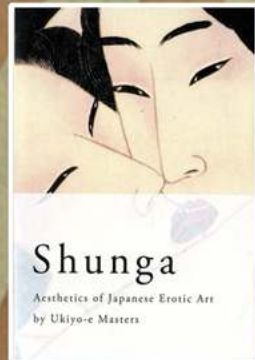
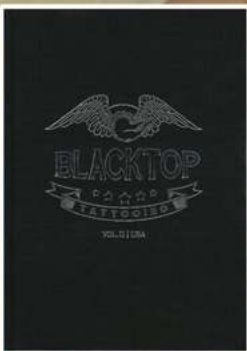
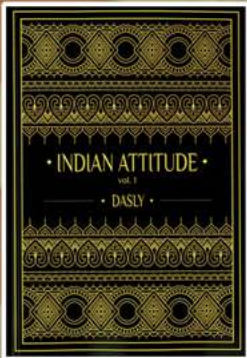
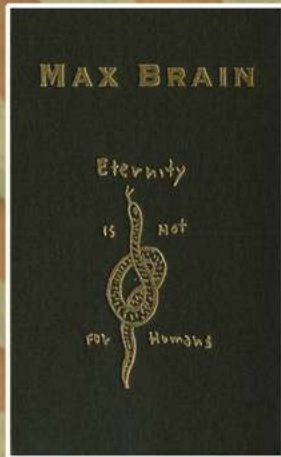
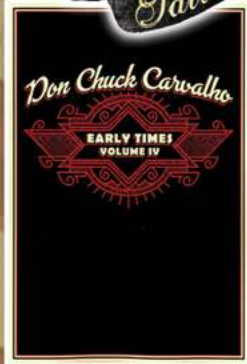
Published monthly by KMT Publishing Ltd.

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Printed in England on re-cycled paper by Buxton Press Ltd

Distributed by Seymour Distribution

Cover: Illustration by Lofi Cruz



EDITORIAL 182



In any creative field, all hope for a better, brighter future resides with the young. The young are the future. Of course it's only right to respect the 'elder statesmen' and pay homage to those who've gone before, but it's the next generation who will carry the baton forward and take our art to new heights – with fresh ideas and unbridled enthusiasm, as yet untarnished by the negativity that seems eventually to engulf so many in our world.

We often lament the passing of the good old days. One remark I heard recently was, "These young kids may be good at tattooing, but they're not much fun at a party!" And this set me thinking... Why do we always do that thing? Why do we have to denigrate or destroy anything that is positive and good? Why do we focus on the negative in every situation? Yes, it's true that some young guns are choosing to specialise in one style right from the beginning – but it's also true that they're smashing it, and surely that can only be a good thing.

Perhaps it's only natural to feel threatened by the new stronger, fitter generation. After all, it's only a matter of time before they take their rightful place as the next movers and shakers. No amount of negativity will alter that fact, but a change in attitudes might just make the transition smoother. We are blessed to have our time carrying our tattoo world forward – each and everyone of us (tattooists, piercers, writers, collectors...) contributing in our own small way. Regardless of whether we're blazing a new trail or treading a well-worn path, everyone has an impact. And it's our choice to make that a positive or a negative impact.

We've just come back from the behemoth that was the 15th London Tattoo Convention. In the midst of the mayhem and bustle, it was hard to find time just to sit and observe this incredible event that was playing out before our eyes – a festival of everything tattoo and without doubt the benchmark against which all serious conventions should measure themselves. London draws together a truly international collection of artists that never fails to impress. Every year, global tattooing is blossoming into an ever crazier haze of vibrant colours (including black!) and every year, bigger and bolder designs are created on customers who seem happy to sit for twenty hours plus over the three days of the convention. Every year expectations grow and every year tattooists rise to the challenge.

We should all take pride in how the tattoo world has grown, for we are all a part of that success. With so much to be happy and positive about, don't let the negatives bring you down.

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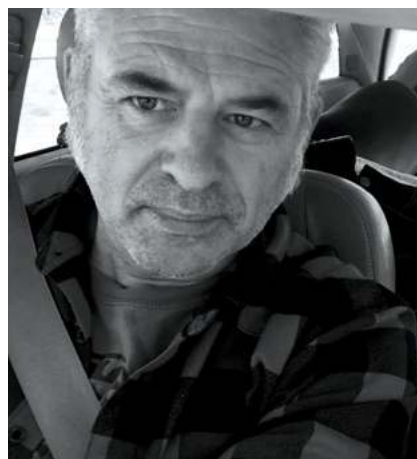
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NEWS & REVIEWS



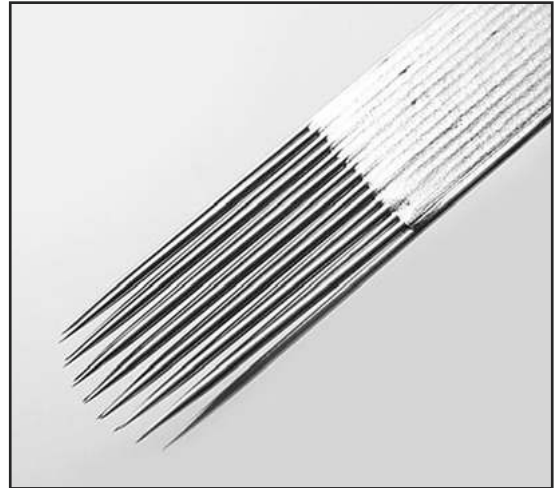
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HEAVY METAL

It's been known for a long time that the various components of tattoo ink make their way into all sorts of hidden corners within the body. But new research shows that debris from tattoo needles can end up collecting in the lymph nodes (where much of the body's 'hazardous waste' accumulates).

And we're not talking about dirty or contaminated needles here. We're talking about perfectly clean tattoo needles, and the incredibly tiny fragments of metal – chiefly nickel and chromium – that rub off the steel during normal use. These particular metals are not always easily tolerated by the body, and researchers are even suggesting that they may be the cause of some people's adverse reactions to tattoos, although more work is needed on this.

The investigations showed that inks containing titanium dioxide (the white pigment often mixed into bright greens, blues and reds) tend to be more abrasive than others, causing more wear and tear of the needle and consequently more deposition of these metal micro- and nano-particles.



The research was carried out by the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung, or BfR). You can read the full details in the News section of their website: www.bfr.bund.de/en

HIT THE ROAD

Gil Descamps of Kraken Tattoo in Mons, Belgium, has created a fully-equipped mobile tattoo shop so that he can ply his trade at private parties and other events away from his main studio. As he said in press interviews, "It's like a food truck, except it's a tattoo truck" – and in fact he does often work alongside a pizza van, so his clients don't need to go very far for a snack. We hear Gil is currently looking for a third tattooist to join his team, so do get in touch via Facebook (Kraken Tattoo Mons) if you're interested.



DOING THE IRONING

Ama Leu, sister of world famous tattooist Filip Leu (of the Leu Family's Family Iron), has launched a new clothing range. Her fabrics are environmentally friendly and her designs are sure to catch the eye – including a t-shirt inspired by the work of her late father, Felix Leu. Check out Filip's latest dragon too!



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AmaLeu Tattoo Design Inspired Clothing
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www.amaleu.com

THE BOY FROM SEVILLE

Spanish footballer Sergio Ramos has joined Budweiser's 'Be a King' advertising campaign. He recently surprised fans by posting a photo of himself on social media with all his ink apparently erased... but take a look at this short video, where his tattoos tell his footballing story, and you'll see where that picture came from:

<https://youtu.be/nqIQs4zcaY0>



QR CODE TATTOOS



French company Sioou produce high quality hypoallergenic temporary tattoos – or, as they describe them, “ephemeral jewellery”. They work in collaboration with artists, illustrators and graphic designers to offer a huge range of designs that are also available in various innovative special-occasion formats. We've heard over the grapevine that Sioou are now also producing temporary tattoos featuring integral QR codes. Scan the image with your phone, and it will direct you to a webpage or video. These are customised designs and we understand from early publicity that they can only be ordered in very large quantities, the idea being that they could be used in the same way as flyers to promote events, for instance. Check out sioou.com



NORM R.I.P.



On 11th October, Eric Rosenbaum (better known as Norm) passed away in Los Angeles, where he lived and owned the studio Love Letters Tattoo. The tattoo world has lost another great name, and our thoughts are with Norm's family, friends and co-workers at this sad time.

Originally from Baltimore, Norm moved to San Francisco in 1988. He began to do graffiti and became part of some of the best global graffiti crews, including MSK, AWR and TSL.

Norm was a huge inspiration in tattooing. He tattooed for more than 13 years and his innovations and creativity extended way beyond the machines he made and his incredible lettering. His many clients included celebrities such as David Labrava and Marilyn Manson.

In Norm's own words, "Lettering is just the shit. Lettering is just amazing... I didn't study it, I wanted it. There was no study, it was simply going to happen. So I made myself crazy trying to do it because I wanted to be the best. Always. To the best of my abilities."

Norm's shop, Love Letters Tattoo, is trying to find out just how many people were inked by Norm by asking everyone to use the hashtag **#normtattooedme** and publicly share pictures of their tattoos. They are also going to celebrate Norm Day on 6th November, the date of Norm's birthday. As we go to print, they have posted an open invitation to tattoo studios all over the planet to join them and share the love on this day:

"Here at Love Letters Tattoo we are opening our doors at midnight and TATTOOING ALL MORNING, ALL DAY, and ALL NIGHT – midnight to midnight. We are doing NORM bangers and flash all day non-stop till our hands fall off. That's what NORM would have wanted. The whole shop together tattooing. And that's what we would like from you on NORM DAY – JUST TATTOO. Open your doors at midnight and just GET IT IN. Tattoo your ass off, draw your ass off – just dedicate NORM DAY to your art. If you tattoo – TATTOO. If you paint – PAINT. If you draw – DRAW. GO HARD FOR NORM.

NORM DAY is about the love of tattooing and painting and drawing. NORM DAY is for everyone... This is already worldwide with over 150 shops from over 70 countries agreeing to open their shop doors and grind in memory of NORM on his birthday!!!! This is bigger than life, just like he is."

Norm's co-worker and friend Big Sleeps has set up a GoFundMe account to cover funeral costs and give Norm a great send-off:

[www.gofundme.com/f/2vgun-norm?utm_source=customer
&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet](http://www.gofundme.com/f/2vgun-norm?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet)

ELECTRONIC TATTOOS



As in all the best scientific stories, researcher Nicholas Williams tried out his experiment on himself... He “tattooed” some electronic circuitry on to his finger, switched on the voltage, and used it to light up an LED (which stayed lit even when he bent his finger). This idea has been around for a decade or so now, but the new thing here is that this circuitry is fully printable ‘in situ’ – right there, on the skin. It doesn’t have to be manufactured somewhere else first. Based on silver nanowires, these “tattooed” electronic components are strong, delicate and flexible all at the same time, so they’re ideal for use as personalised biosensors on the body, with all manner of different applications, especially in the medical field. The research is being carried out under the auspices of Professor Aaron Franklin of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Duke University, North Carolina, USA, and has been published in the scientific journals ACS Nano and Nanoscale.

WORLD BIGGEST TATTOO?



This tattoo measures a solid 195cm x 135cm. Now you might be looking at the photo and thinking, “But that’s not a tattoo...” Technically speaking though, in many ways it is. Californian celebrity tattooist Joaquín Ganga (@gangatattoo) decided to create a hyper-realistic image of Salvador Dali on a swathe of synthetic skin supplied by a laboratory in

Poland. The idea of a ‘tattoo painting’ appealed to him as something stunning and unique, especially on such a scale. And the subject had to be Salvador Dali, of course, since he was a native of Murcia in Spain, just like Joaquín. For Joaquín the piece is significant for another reason too; because it enables him to hang on to a prime example of his tattoo art in a way that he cannot do when he creates his tattoos for clients! ‘Metamorphosis’ is the title of the piece and it took him three weeks to produce. We hear that galleries are commissioning similar artworks from him (on a smaller scale) that will be for sale.

DO YOU TATTOODO

Online platform Tattoodo continues to flourish and develop, having secured several million Euros of funding from investors to enable it to implement its unique booking facility. Launched in 2013, and co-founded by celebrity tattoo artist Ami James, the Copenhagen-based business has experienced extraordinary growth. The statistics are phenomenal. Various sources quote Tattoodo as having a staggering 15 million monthly users and 40 million followers on social media. It now quite justifiably describes itself as the “world’s number one tattoo community” and encompasses all facets of tattoo culture and lifestyle. It’s a one-stop shop, gathering information on tattooists and tattoo studios and enabling users to view portfolios and make a booking via their Global Booking Platform. Tattoodo say on their website, “This kind of accessibility, we feel, will not only revolutionise the tattoo space, but help us give back to the tattoo community by aiding in its progress.” Check it out! <http://www.tattoodo.com>

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All winners will be picked at random (or on

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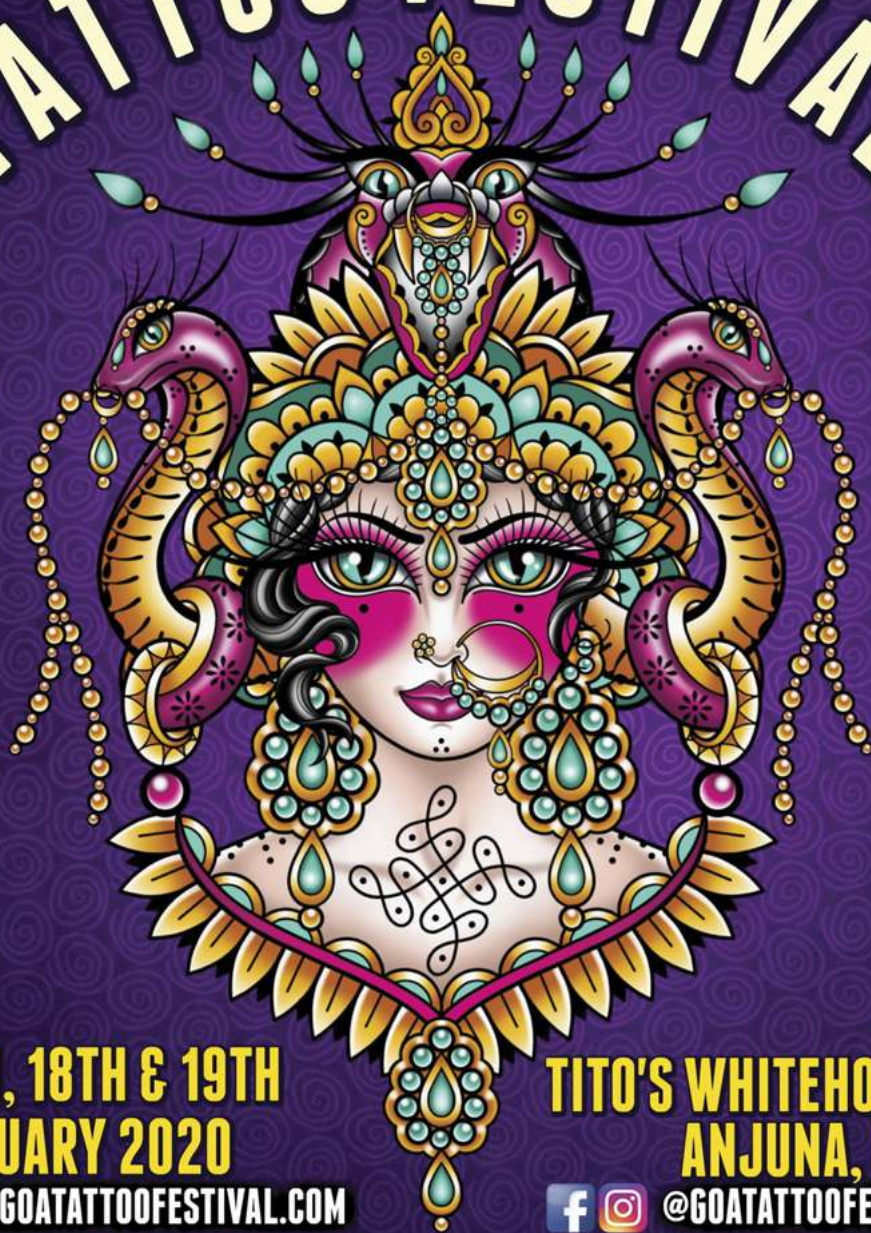
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MICROPORETAPE	Micropore Tape 2.5cm x 9.1m 3M (B) (12 rolls included)	£4.75	£5.00
STE003	Stericlens Aerosol 240ml	£3.20	£9.99
MEP0001	Mepore Dressing 6cm x 7cm (Pack of 60)	£3.99	£7.50

*All prices are inclusive of VAT and are accurate as of the
1st September 2019*





'PROGRESS DOESN'T HAVE
A FINAL DESTINATION.'

SASHA O'KHARIN

Interview by Perry • Pictures courtesy of Sasha O'Kharin

Based in St Petersburg, Russian artist Sasha O'Kharin is known for his extraordinary photo-realistic portrayals of movie characters and other pop culture icons. And when asked where his work is headed in the future, his answer is simple: **To infinity and beyond!**

Why realism?

I chose colour realism because I felt it was the most interesting style for me. I love its complexity. I enjoy focusing on the detail, and concentrating on representing an image as accurately as possible.

Do you work in any other styles?

In a word, no.

What do you say to the people who claim realistic tattoos don't have longevity?

They don't know what they're talking about. They say these tattoos won't last for twenty years... but none of them have really seen a twenty year old realistic tattoo. The tattoos that were done all those years ago, well the artists didn't have the techniques, the machines or the inks that we have now. Things just weren't as developed, so you can't make a comparison. And that goes for all tattoo styles – not just realism. Unless you have a time machine, you can't see into the future. It's just bullshit.





What makes a successful realistic tattoo?

A successful realistic tattoo requires good skin, with good tone. Young skin works best. The quality of your reference is at least 30% of the end result. Artistic technique and equipment make up the rest. If you get all of these elements right, then you're on the way to a great tattoo.

What do you look for in a customer?

Good skin and a good idea!

Where do you find your reference?

My basic source for movie characters is the movies themselves. I just take screenshots and then compose them into a cohesive flat design. That's what makes my tattoos unique. I'm not simply using ready-made images that I've found on the internet.







Do you rely a lot on technology in the creation of your work?

My designs begin their life on my laptop, then I use my iPad to make a digital stencil. I mainly use Photoshop. Technology is an integral part of tattooing now. It's unavoidable.

Describe how you work...

I can work in lots of different ways depending on the subject. Sometimes I work from dark to light, sometimes the reverse. It's not unusual for me to put in the mid-tones then go out to the darker areas. It really depends on the project - the area being tattooed and the type of skin.

What equipment do you use?

I've been tattooing for seven years now, and over that time I've used numerous different machines and inks. Right now I'm using World Famous inks and FK Irons machines. I'm sponsored by World Famous. It's the only sponsorship deal I have - and it's what makes it possible for me to go to so many conventions. World Famous do a lot of things for me, and we've got some great collaborative projects lined up for the future. The quality of your tattoo equipment really affects your end result, and it's important to use the best you can.



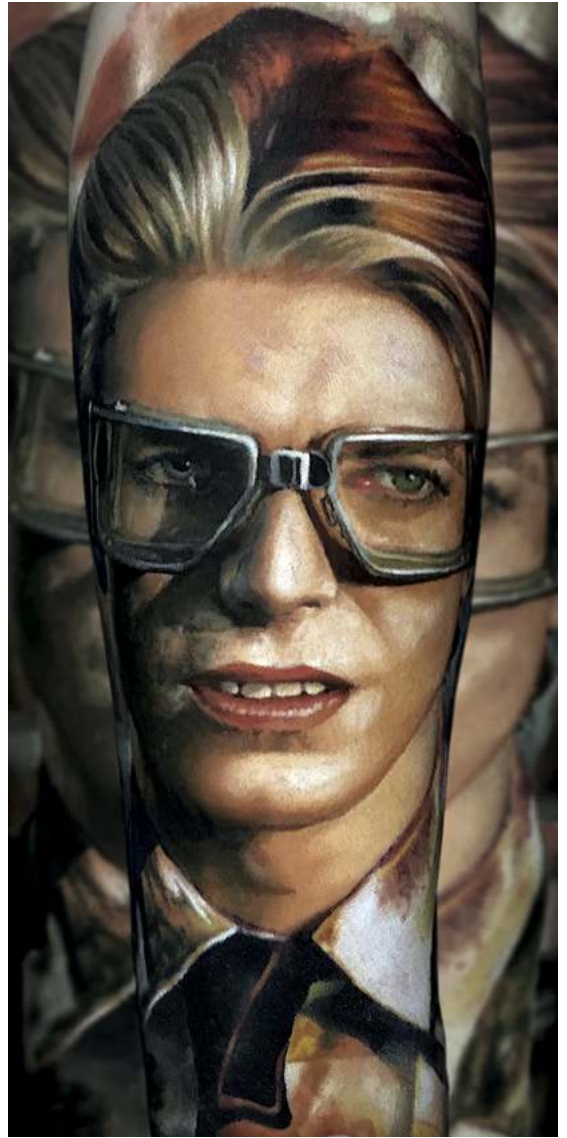


Who has shaped and influenced your tattoo career?

The person who first got me into tattooing was my friend Nicoli Jongrave. We met when we were working in a bar together. He was a waiter, but he decided to quit his job and become a tattooist. So I quit with him, and we opened a shop together. Altogether I've worked in three shops now, and each time I've moved to a new place it's been an important stage in my development. Everyone I've worked with has influenced me and helped me to grow, both artistically and as a person. And now, of course, there are so many great tattooers who inspire me – too many to list here!

Has art always played a part in your life?

My mother was always drawing, my uncle was very artistic, and my sister is a web designer, but none of them have dedicated their lives to art in the way that I now have. But although I've always been interested in art, I've never had any formal artistic training.







What do you do when you're not tattooing?

Even when I'm not tattooing, I'm thinking about tattooing! And I love to travel too. I spend half my life travelling! I think it's really important, because it gives you a chance to interact with other people and learn something new. It opens your eyes to the world. But I'm always ready to come home after a few weeks... I want to tattoo in Russia for the rest of my life. I love my country.

What differences do you see between the Russian tattoo scene and tattooing in other countries?

Interestingly, in Russia we don't seem to be focused so much on the commercial side of tattooing. It's more about developing yourself artistically. Russian tattoo conventions are exactly the same as tattoo conventions anywhere else in the world, except maybe we have fewer overseas artists. Like everywhere else, tattooing is now mainstream in Russia and the industry is growing fast. The very fact that we now refer to it as an 'industry' speaks volumes... There are both good and bad things about the 'industrialisation' of an art.



How do you see your own work developing in the future?

I would say To Infinity And Beyond! Progress doesn't have a final destination. There's no end point. You always have something new to learn and the details get deeper and deeper. It's hard to put into words, but there's always a future that you can grow into...

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LONDON TATTOO CONVENTION



One of the biggest and most exceptional tattoo circuses on the planet takes over London's Tobacco Dock every September. This show has been going for so long, and operating at such a consistently high level, that it's easy to overlook just what it has achieved.

With possibly Le Mondial du Tatouage in Paris as its only rival, the London Convention always puts together one of the most high calibre artist line-ups in the world. There were more than 400 tattoo legends, tattoo pioneers and tattoo trendsetters here, with the latest fads sitting alongside the best in traditional and historic tattoo styles, all celebrated in equal measure.

Carlos Torres



Carlos Fabra



Cristian 'Kasasink' Casas



Art of Felix Leu

Sam Soro Tattoo



Huge crowds of tattoo enthusiasts and tattoo artists seeking inspiration filled the maze-like corridors of the incredible Tobacco Dock venue. With so much colour, character and atmosphere, the London Convention is akin to the Olympics or World Cup of tattooing (but with better medals for the competition winners!) The best tattoos in the world are on show here. Even artists who aren't officially participating send along the cream of their work to be paraded throughout the show. Awe-inspiring body suits and mind-blowing tattoos of all styles and sizes are everywhere to be seen.

To compete and win an award here is no mean feat. My personal favourite winner of the weekend was probably Gakkin, who took Best Ornamental Tattoo with a piece that I loved simply for its impact, flow and style. The official Best Of Show winners Rich Harris and Ryan Smith turned in an equally impressive collaborative effort that demonstrated the new directions in which tattooing is venturing, blending styles and colour palettes that are quite stunning and most definitely exciting. As is always the case at the London Convention, some of the biggest names in the business were on the judging panel – none cooler than Mark Mahoney, whose presence at the show was a highlight for many people.



Gordo Letters



Jumilla Olivares



Alex Pancho



Kid Kros

Abel Miranda



Tofi and Max Pniewski



Artist unknown



Julian Siebert



Tomas Tomas

The London Convention isn't solely about tattooing though, and the organisers always aim to bring in fresh new lifestyle and entertainment elements for those not getting inked. This year saw the addition of the Vans half-pipe skateboarding area with legendary board master Steve Olson in attendance. A Shibari (artistic bondage) cage also drew big crowds. And I must give an honorary mention to the Taco Truck on the outdoor food court, which was well worth a visit!

The art exhibitions surpassed even previous years. In all honesty, this element is in my opinion worth the price of admission alone! Stunning offerings from Chris Guest, Ed Hardy, Shawn Barber, Benjamin Laukis, Mike Dorsey, Godmachine, Cam Rackam, and Tom and Jackee Strom were on show along with the Kintaro spread, Yogi's Hand Exhibition [see our interview with Andy 'Yogi' Starkey in this issue of Total Tattoo Magazine – ed] and outstanding presentations by Alex Binnie and Hanumantra. Truly, if ever anyone questions tattooing as an art form, walk them through these corridors!



Russ Abbott



Shibari demonstrations



Mike Dorsey exhibition



There's been much talk about the ticket price; and at first, we too thought this year's increase was too big a big jump even for the most enthusiastic tattoo fan. However, it's easy to forget just what you have access to for the entry fee. A normal concert these days cost £50 and upwards for a couple of bands and maybe three hours of entertainment; the London Tattoo Convention boasts tons of bands (The Quireboys, The Urban Voodoo Machine, Hell's Bells and The Dusk Brothers being of note), burlesque acts, fire performers, tattooed model meet-and-greets, market stalls (of exceptionally fine wares), outstanding and unique art galleries and of course the aforementioned artist list which aside from tattooing also means booths full of amazing art prints, T-shirts and trinkets to buy. So, value for money? Absolutely it is, but in the current economic climate it may not seem so until you are there. But this is a show worth saving up for (and to fully enjoy it, you may need to).





Tomas Vaitikunas



Charles Huurman



Jak Connolly



The judges
Tin Tin, Filip Leu, Luke Atkinson, Antonio
'Macko' Todisco (Titine Leu not pictured)

Mashkow



Steve Butcher



Adry Sanchez



Zmetek



Jordan Croke



Eliot Kohek and Michael Targuet

There is no doubt that London remains the pinnacle of tattoo shows, with an unparalleled tattooist list and artistic, entertainment and tattoo heritage elements that simply don't exist anywhere else in the world, under one roof, over one weekend. Do we still recommend a visit to this show? The answer is of course 'Hell Yes', and it should be high on the bucket list of every true tattoo fan.

2020's London Convention has moved from its usual September slot, and will take place on the weekend of 31st July to 2nd August. There are also rumours of an impending venue change thereafter. So make sure you don't miss out on experiencing this show at Tobacco Dock. Start saving and get there next year!



Diao Zuo



Stef Bastian's The Tattoo Fan Club



Ed Hardy inspired exhibition



Jim Orié



Stef Bastian



Matteo Pasqualin



Aaron Bell



Trophies



Jen Tonic



Omar Santos



Jenna Kerr and Ryan Ashley Malarkey



Joao Morais

Mads Thill

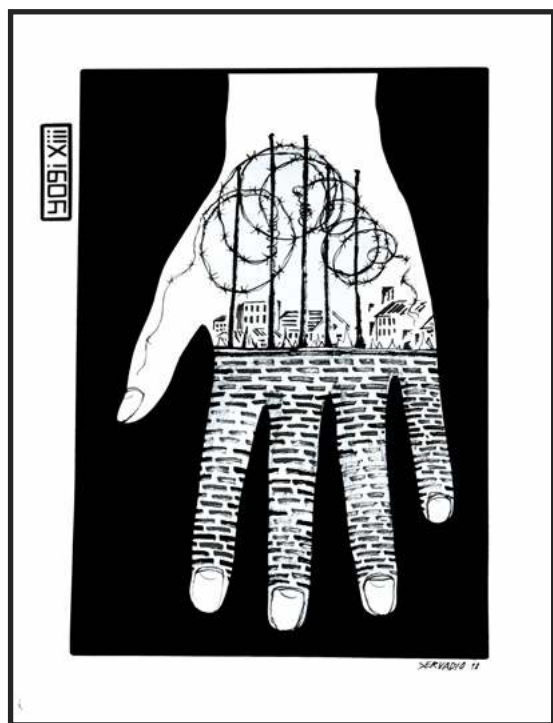
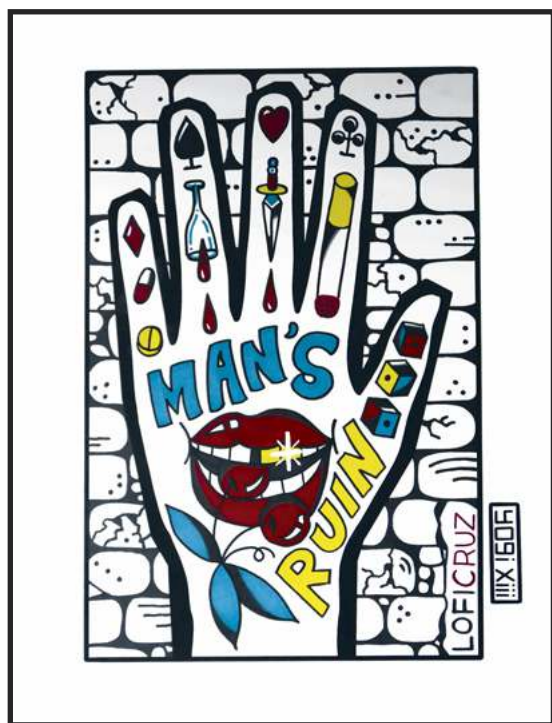


Rich Harris
and Ryan Smith



'FOR ME IT WAS LIKE CHRISTMAS,
UNWRAPPING ALL THE ARTWORKS
AS THEY ARRIVED...'

THE HAND EXHIBITION





Andy 'Yogi' Sharkey, based in Dublin, has been curating exhibitions within the tattoo world for a while now. Last year he organised a fantastic skateboard show; this year he turned his attention to the human hand, inviting 60 artists to get creative with a generic 50cm x 70cm printed outline. The Hand Exhibition has been on show at tattoo conventions throughout 2019 and all the artworks are being sold to raise money for a suicide awareness charity.



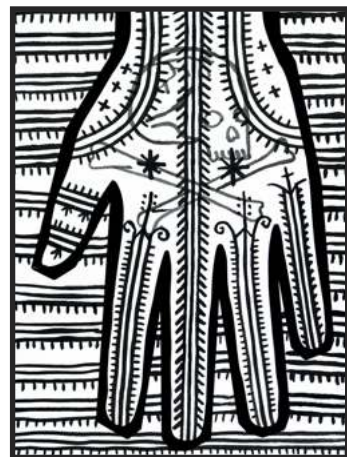


What was the thinking behind the project?

We had two main inspirations. Firstly the prints of Alex Binnie! I've got half a dozen of those around the studio. Also, my partner in Yogi is tattoo artist Captain Agne (@hands.inked) who is best known for her bold finger and tribal hand tattoos. We're always sending each other hand designs. It just seemed a natural progression to take the hand motif and send it out into the tattoo world and see what came back.

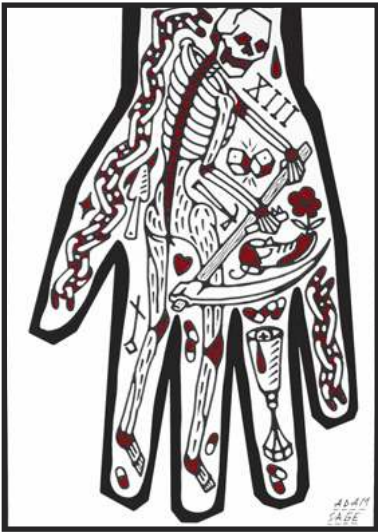
Has the project lived up to your expectations?

It's been wonderful to see all the Hands displayed together and watch people discussing the art, having their photos taken by their favourite piece, or noting down the name of an artist they've never heard of before but whose Hand they love. At each venue I've been amazed at how good the exhibition has looked, and I can't quite believe that we managed to pull the whole thing off. The interest from the tattoo community has been overwhelming. I'm incredibly pleased that so many artists wanted to get involved and that so many conventions invited us along. We exhibited at Brighton, Galway, Goa, London, the Tea Party in Manchester and the Big North in Newcastle-upon-Tyne – and we're finishing at the Dublin convention. Friendships have deepened and my tattoo family has certainly grown! And we've managed to raise about €3000 for Pieta House in Dublin (www.pieta.ie), a charity that provides therapeutic support for people in suicidal distress, their friends and family, and those bereaved by suicide.



So the Hands are available to buy?

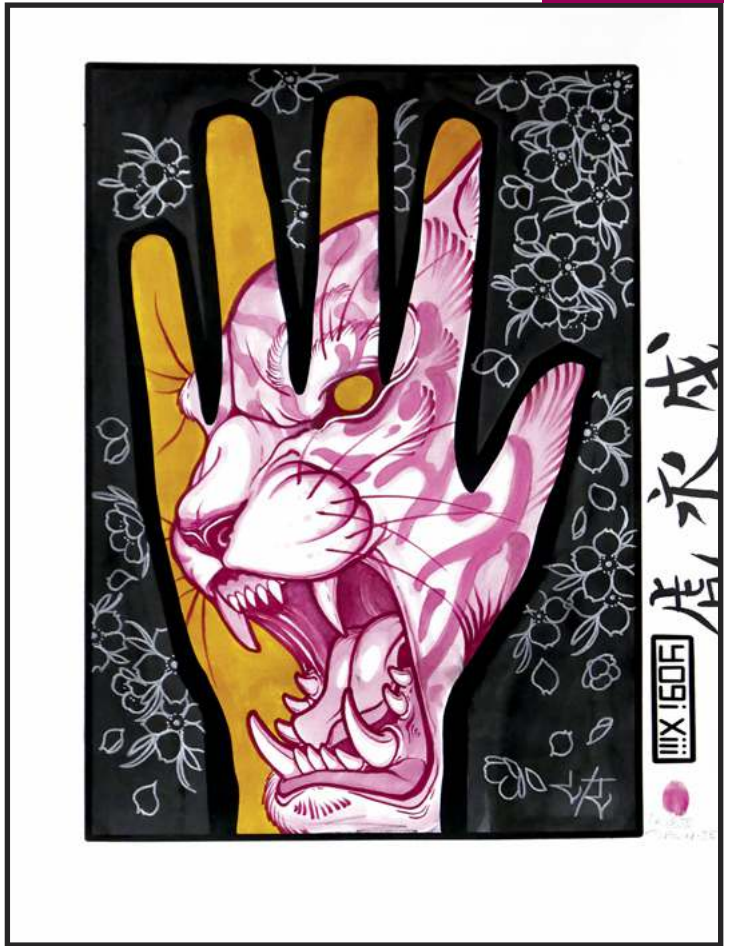
Yes, all of the Hands are for sale (and we still have some skateboards from last year's show too). Check out www.yogixiii.com for the details of what's available, and please do get in touch if you have any questions or wish to make an offer for one of the pieces. Captain Agne and I fund the exhibition costs, so all of the money raised from sales goes directly to the charity. The final Hands exhibition is at the Dublin Tattoo Convention (1st-3rd November 2019). Once that's over, all



the pieces that have been bought will be sent to their new owners. Individual tattooists are promoting their artwork on Instagram too. All of the artists involved have given their time and artworks for free. So thank you, and all my love, to each and every one of you.

Tell us a bit more about what else you do.

Yogi works with tattooers to produce clothing, jewellery, prints, art pieces, etc. We're always working on some new project. (Basically it's all about coming up with ideas to keep Captain Agne busy while I run off to the bar for a Guinness!) I'm also a partner in Dublin tattoo studio True Black Tattooing, with geometric and blackwork tattooer Wagner Basei. We have six full-time artists, as well as weekly guests, so it's a bustling place. I look after the day-to-day running of the business, but as anyone will tell you my main role is actually walking the studio dog Blaaaak.





Do you have a formal art education yourself?

I ran out of school as soon as I was old enough and as fast as my legs would carry me, but I recently went back to art school and got a degree in glass design. I loved the whole experience of learning a new skill, and the theory part of the course was probably my favourite element – which surprised me. Learning about the history of art, craft and design made me look at the

world with new eyes. I was in my 40s when I went back to studying, and I think my accumulated life experience (coupled with the desire to learn something that really interested me) meant that I got so much more out of the course than I would have done when I was young and rebelling against everything.

You've been curating exhibitions for some five years now...

Yes, and for the last two (2018's skateboard exhibition and 2019's Hands) I've been actively pursuing the idea of exhibiting at tattoo conventions. When we put together our very first show, Captain Agne and I had a lot of fun driving all round Ireland and England visiting studios and trying to get as many artists involved as we could. Looking back, it was a crazy idea – but pretty much everybody we approached seemed to like what we were doing. It was

only a small exhibition in Dublin but hundreds of people turned up, including large numbers of tattooists. So after that first success, we just kept going – especially when people started approaching *us*, wanting to get involved. The skateboards project was our first major touring exhibition and it was a real learning curve. We gave out skateboards to tattoo artists and ended up with over 80 completed boards. They just kept turning up at the studio! As before, we were amazed that anyone wanted to participate as we had no real track record at that time. We also had no real plan... but Roy Keane who runs the Limerick Tattoo Convention gave us our big break by inviting us along to his show and we will be forever grateful to him. That was what opened the door to everything else.

How did you go about putting The Hand Exhibition together?

The idea was to tour the exhibition for a year and keep adding artists to the roster as the months went by. The juggling act was to get artists involved whilst at the same time trying to get tattoo shows to give us space for an exhibition that was still being developed! It was blind faith on everybody's part that made it work. The basic hand outline was printed by local studio Damn Fine Print. Then the emails and phone calls began, to see who we could get on board. Towards the end of 2018 we were curating a mixed show in Dublin; we'd already received back eight completed Hands, so we decided to include those in the show. This initial exposure enabled people to see that the concept of the Hands hung side-by-side really worked, which rapidly generated more interest... which was bloody lucky as we'd already agreed to take the exhibition to the Goa Tattoo Festival at the end of January! Nothing like giving yourself a deadline to make you get shit done!



What was the artists' remit?

The artists were free to do whatever they wanted with the basic Hand outline. There were no restrictions. But interestingly, a number of them told me they found it very challenging to work with 'raw material' in this way – especially something so large – when they are more used to working on an iPad. And following that, they told me how they'd been inspired to go back to doing painting, or taking life drawing classes, as a result of taking part in this project. That was really gratifying. It was a positive creative outcome that I had never envisaged.

The list of participating artists is astounding.

Yes, the exhibition took on a life of its own and I was amazed how many artists wanted to get involved. It was a mixture of us inviting them, and them contacting us wanting to participate. I guess it's because people now know who we are, and that we are serious about curating high quality work. It's about fostering a sense of friendship and community too. We were keen to include as many studios as possible, and also to have a good representation of local artists for each convention

venue. As we received more and more Hands, we didn't have enough space to exhibit all of them at once, so we had to rotate them and have different pieces on display on different days. Which of course meant that inevitably there were a couple of occasions when I didn't have an artist's Hand on show on the day they attended the exhibition and I would be talking to them, thinking, "Oh shit, I have your piece out the back in a suitcase..."

Do you have any particular favourite Hands?

AAAAAggghhh... How can you ask me that? But OK, let me think... There's Liam Sparkes (Old Habits Tattoo). His baby's head popping out of a vagina was a real crowd-pleaser! I liked the Hands that were immediately identifiable as the work of a particular artist, because that meant there was a bit of their personality in there – and this had Liam written all over it. Then there's Tony Booth (Dabs Tattoo). A beautiful geometric dotwork piece. It must have taken him days. I think the Hand by Adam Sage (1770 Tattoo) is

a real piece of craftsmanship. The composition is perfect. Captain Agne and I got tattooed by Adam about three years ago, and I'm a big fan. If I was going to purchase one Hand for myself I think it would be this one. And then there's Helen McDonnell (Skullduggery Tatu). Helen painted completely over the Hand to create her own version... and then called me to apologise! I love this piece and I'm always hanging it upside down – the design works both ways – as I know it annoys Helen. I even hung it on its side at The Big North, to really piss her off.

What were your personal highlights of the Hands tour?

My parents live in London and they came along to both the Brighton and London conventions. It was so nice for them to see what is happening in my world. They also got free sandwiches in the artists' lounge in Brighton, so organiser Woody gets extra





thanks for keeping them happy. The Goa Tattoo Festival was another special highlight. It was our second time there, and it's turned into a real must-do event in our calendar. Goa is all about camaraderie, and recharging the body and mind. The motorbike run after the Festival is legendary! It's an honour to call Martin McIver, his team, and the artists who go to this event my friends.

Are there any plans for a follow-up project for next year?

The project for next year is

Captain Agne's brilliant idea. Artists will be given tribal masks to carve/paint/draw on, etc, and I'm really looking forward to getting that one up and running and seeing what everyone comes back with. It's always like Christmas unwrapping the artworks as they arrive. We have already been invited back to all the shows we exhibited at in 2019, and I'm hoping to add some new ones to the itinerary too - so if anybody would like the Mask exhibition at their event, please get in contact with me.



Anything else in the pipeline?

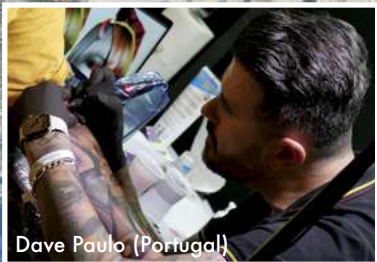
On 23rd-24th May next year we're running a small festival in Dublin - a weekend of cultural imbibing. We've teamed up with local bands, DJs, a skate shop, comic book store, record shop and vegan restaurants - and of course everyone can enjoy a spot of tattooing too. We're excited to be bringing over tattoo artist Manuela Gray and her exhibition 'The Number' from South Africa [see feature in *Total Tattoo Magazine Issue 171 - ed*] and Godmachine will be there selling his prints. It's a new project for us, but really another excuse to see all our friends!

yogixiii.com
[@yogixiii](https://www.instagram.com/yogixiii)
trueblacktattooing.com

MARMARIS TATTOO FESTIVAL 2019

Welcome to the new generation of tattoo conventions. Marmaris, nestled on the southwest coast of Turkey on the sandy shores of the Mediterranean, is an idyllic spot for a tattoo show, and in my humble opinion this event offered one of the best convention experiences you'll find anywhere.

At present there are very few conventions in Turkey. The Marmaris Tattoo Festival was the brainchild of Turkish-born Soydan (Yakuza Tattoo, Ireland) and Adem Senturk (Fat Fugu, UK) and this was its debut. Soydan and Adem have taken their considerable combined experience of tattoo shows and reinvented the genre in an effort to offer travelling tattooists something more than the usual convention experience.



Dave Paulo (Portugal)



Browni Khash, Cleopatra Ink



Ralfy Dabrowski, Hypnotic Art



Mami Evren



Hussein Mistrh (Lebanon)



Rafael Mikimba (Brazil)

The chosen venue was the Green Nature Diamond Hotel, a plush all-inclusive five star establishment with marble floors and a soaring glass atrium on the shores of the turquoise sea. The large basement function rooms were well-lit and comfortably accommodated the 120 attending artists in large booths (each provided with its own individual positionable light). The show started in earnest on the Friday, and as with a lot of the shows I have been to in hot holiday destinations, nothing really got going until mid-afternoon. But there was a steady flow of visitors throughout, and by the time the competitions were underway the venue was heaving.



Soydan and Adem brought in big international names, high calibre local talent, and also some very interesting tattooists from Iran, Iraq and other parts of the Middle East. The hand-picked list of international artists included Benjamin Laukis (Australia), Natalie Nox (Greece), Jurgis Mikalaukis (Lithuania), Remis (Lithuania), Amy Edwards (UK), Darius Pirojenko (Russia), and Ockan (now based in the USA) – all of whom were on the judging panel too. It was good to see so many talented tattooists given the responsibility of judging the work presented. Other overseas names included the super talented team of Adrian, El Mori, and Guido Schmidt from Germany, along with Dave Paulo, who spent an entire day before the show sharing his knowledge to a packed seminar audience.



Hüseyin Ünübol, Tattoo House



Murat Lavsac, XMX Tattoo



Kenan Yüzgec, Cleopatra Ink



Marinka Zotova, Cleopatra Ink



Kerim Kaan Köse, Cleopatra Ink



Ugur Taramis



Benjamin Laukis, body painting display

Many of the Middle Eastern artists seemed to be working on a very small scale using incredibly fine needle groupings – tiny portraits within a geometric shape, for instance, the whole tattoo no more than 6cm across. I would be interested to see the longevity of such pieces, especially on tanned darker-toned skin. Both Soydan and Adem are primarily realism artists, and this might explain why there seemed to be a disproportionately high number of artists working within that genre at the show. Whilst this certainly meant there were some amazingly impressive pieces being produced, it did restrict the choice somewhat for the visiting collector. But maybe this imbalance will be looked at in planning the next show. There was one other slight annoyance that Soydan and Adem won't be able to address though: the lack of wi-fi throughout the building. (Once I'm safely ensconced back home in the UK, the additional cost of access to data will no doubt be one unwanted souvenir from this otherwise very smooth and successful trip!)



Levent Sahin, Duman Tattoo



Nasirpour Mohammad, MRT (Iran)



Anil Abaci, Yerb Sonet



Remis, Remis Tattoo (ireland)



Trophies

Kenan Yüzgecc, Cleopatra Ink



Rafael Mikimba, VM Tattoo (Brazil)



Sahiv, Demon Tattoo



Ralfy Dabrowski, Hypnotic Art Tattoo

In a country that has so few tattoo conventions, the competitions were of course considered an essential element of the show and were very well supported. The judging deliberations ran on a bit, but it was worth the wait just to see the appreciation and delight on everyone's faces as the winners collected their wonderful handmade trophies. Many people were overcome with emotion and it was great to see so much enthusiasm. Winners also received FK Irons machines and supply company goodie bags, all of which further enhanced the reputation, respect and influence that Adem and Soydan already enjoy within the tattoo world.

It is very possible that this was one of the most enjoyable shows that I have ever attended. If you are considering an overseas convention next year, then this really should be on your shortlist. The hotel was reasonable, and the flights were cheap. And I felt very fortunate to be able to stay on for a few days after the show had finished to enjoy this beautiful coastal resort. There are lots of activities to keep the whole family entertained. The weather's hot and the water's very warm, even this late on in the year. The Turkish people are some of the friendliest, funniest and most hospitable that you will ever meet (although single women may find the attention of some of the hot-blooded men a little overbearing...) This was so much more than a tattoo convention. It was a true tattoo community experience, because so many people – tattooists and customers alike – chose to hang out for a day or two after the show, creating strong family bonds.



Ralfy Dabrowski, Hypnotic Art Tattoo



Ralfy Dabrowski, Hypnotic Art Tattoo



Alper Evren, Yankee Tattoo



Faith Ozdas, Junior Tattoo



Faith Ozdas, Junior Tattoo



Engin Koc, Enginkoc Tattoo Studio



Engin Koc, Enginkoc Tattoo Studio



Resul Odabes



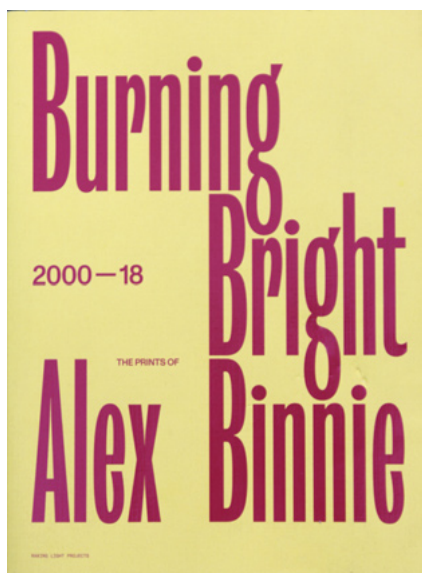
Ozan Kolakoglu, Shadows Tattoo

Huseyin Goktepe,
Cleopatra Ink

Not everything was perfect. But what Adem and Soydan managed to achieve in their first year was incredible, and I am sure any niggles will be ironed out in the future. The artists of Turkey will definitely have influenced (and no doubt been influenced by) the visiting overseas tattooists. And I am certain that the Marmaris Tattoo Festival will become a major convention on the global circuit. Check the dates, grab some sun tan lotion and get yourselves there in 2020!

BURNING BRIGHT

THE PRINTS OF ALEX BINNIE



One of many exciting things at this year's London Tattoo Convention was the launch of *Burning Bright*, a stunning new book of Alex Binnie's prints from American fine art publishers Raking Light Projects. We spoke with Andrew Fingerhut about his vision for the book and his collaboration with the legendary tattooist and prolific printmaker who founded iconic London studio Into You.

On the Raking Light Projects website, we read that your aim is "to bridge the creative values of tattooing, traditional printmaking and fine art." Tell us more...

I founded Raking Light Projects with tattooist Eddy Deutsche eight years ago. I run the day-to-day operations and help to facilitate our various projects; Eddy is our creative director. Without Eddy, Raking Light Projects wouldn't have happened and I'm exceedingly lucky to have him involved. Our initial goal was to publish a curated collection of fine art prints by tattooers. We were interested in showcasing the diverse talents to be found on the tattoo scene today. We then

expanded our remit to include limited-run high-quality apparel and also, of course, book publishing. Over the past few years we've had the privilege of publishing books by such artists as Chad Koeplinger, Thomas Hooper, Walter McDonald and Tomas Tomas.

What was the inspiration behind this particular book?

We wanted to provide an engaging view of the prints Alex has created over the past 18 years – woodcuts, linocuts, screenprints and more. We didn't want to do a simple catalogue; it's not stuffy or formal and the emphasis is very much on the artwork. All of the prints in the book were shot by the same photographer, so we started with a uniform set of pictures. That meant we could focus on the book's design without having to figure out exactly how to present the content. We decided on a clean, contemporary format because we didn't want the artwork to get lost in an overly complex presentation. The entire process was guided by a talented book designer who works with us on selected projects.



How did you first meet Alex Binnie?

I got in touch with Alex by email a few years ago about publishing some of his prints. I vividly remember meeting him in person for the first time. I didn't really know what to expect. He had some pretty direct questions for me, but I guess I answered them correctly! We published several print editions after that, and Alex did a residency at the San Francisco Print Studio a few summers ago that Raking Light Projects sponsored. So we gradually got to know each other, and he was able to see that what we did was high quality and properly produced. We've also published work by a few of the other Into You artists.



Tell us about your working relationship.

Working with Alex is great. He has a clear vision of what he wants to achieve, and he is able to convey that vision without micro-managing every aspect of the design and production. He knows what's important and what isn't - and that's crucial. We were in frequent contact throughout the project, and everything came together smoothly and easily. I enjoyed the entire process.





How long did the whole process take?

Once the photographs were taken, the rest of the process went relatively quickly. It took a few months to get the design and layout done, then another couple of months for production, and we were ready to release the book at this year's London Tattoo Convention.

Has the project lived up to expectations?

Even if you're happy with everything along the way – the initial designs, the proofs, etc – there's still a risk that the final product isn't going to look how you wanted it to. But as soon as we saw the finished book, and the initial reaction it received from Alex and the audience at the London Tattoo Convention, my hopes and expectations were met. Alex is an important figure in contemporary tattooing and I really wanted to get it right with this project. I take real pride in the fact that he was pleased with the book and happy to have published it with us. That means a great deal to me.

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MAX PNIEWSKI, PHOENIX RISING (POLAND)



JOE GILBERT, THE BUTCHER'S BLOCK TATTOO PALOUR



DEL BOI, BLACK MARKET TATTOO



LEWIS STOCKLEY, THE BUTCHER'S BLOCK TATTOO PARLOUR



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THOMAS WINFIELD, CIRCLE OF SWORDS

ANTHONY LENNOX, PARADISE TATTOO



CRAIG STARTIN, BIG WILLS TATTOO



INKY BRAM, RAPTURE TATTOO



SARAH TERRY, RED TATTOO



SARAH TERRY, RED TATTOO

CHRISTOPHER KENYON, TRUE 'TIL DEATH



KARA CHAMBERS, NORTHSIDE TATTOOZ



ALEKSANDRAS KUZNECOVAS

LEAH ROSE SHARPLES, THE BUTCHER'S BLOCK TATTOO PARLOUR



DAN JONES, BLACK SAILS TATTOO



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AGGIE, MONUMENTAL INK



SHAUN HUBBARD, SOTRUETATTOO

TOM TEN (FRANCE)



FEDERICA COLANTONI (ITALY)



JAVIER OBREGON, FAMILY INK (SPAIN)



JAMIE STEWART



RICH HARRIS, DARK HORSE TATTOO COLLECTIVE



PAUL COURTNEY, THE INK COURT



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'PALM TATTOOS ARE PAINFUL, BUT THEY'RE OVER QUICKLY.'

LUKE ASHLEY

London-based tattooist Luke Ashley is rapidly carving out a name for himself as 'the palm guy'. As soon as he started posting his pictures online the demand for his work exploded. And he's even managed to crack the code of making a palm tattoo that will heal well and stay.



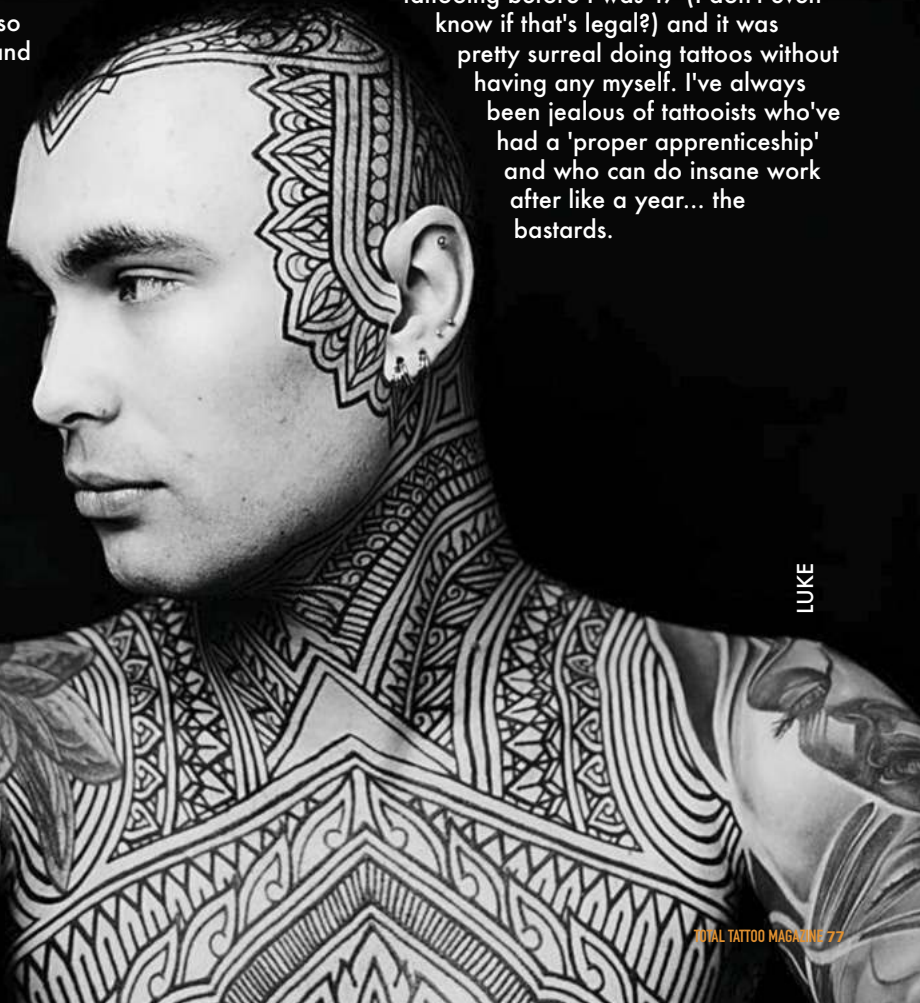


So how did it all begin?

I don't remember making a conscious decision to be a tattooist. It all just fell into place, thankfully! I was always into drawing, right from primary school, and I knew I wanted to do something artistic when I grew up. Being a tattooist was obviously a pretty cool career choice, so when I was 16 I went out and found myself an apprenticeship. As I learnt more and more about tattooing, I just knew it was all I wanted to do. There are so many avenues you can go down with it, and always new things to learn.

Tell us more about how you learnt to tattoo.

When I was 15 my mum and dad bought me a tattoo kit that I had researched online. I only tattooed pigskin and grapefruits at first, until I got my apprenticeship. I apprenticed in a local studio where I was sort of left to my own devices. The guy who mentored me hadn't been tattooing very long himself, so he didn't really teach me too much, but I wasn't complaining because I was in a tattoo studio and I was tattooing! I had to make a lot of mistakes in order to find out the right way to do things. I was actually tattooing before I was 17 (I don't even know if that's legal?) and it was pretty surreal doing tattoos without having any myself. I've always been jealous of tattooists who've had a 'proper apprenticeship' and who can do insane work after like a year... the bastards.



LUKE



Have you always lived and worked in London?

Yes, I was born in south-east London and I've always lived and worked here. I'm currently working at South City Market in New Cross. There's so much creative inspiration here; we offer so many tattoo styles and we have guest artists from all around the world. Living in London is pretty fast-paced, but that's all I've ever known. I really enjoy working with like-minded people. Working hard and seeing progression is what I love. I've never known anyone work as hard as Ricky Williams, who owns South City Market. He's made an incredible workspace for us all and he's taking the idea of a tattoo shop to new levels.



Did you deliberately set out to become 'the palm guy'?

I do find it funny that I'm always greeted with "Oh, you're the palm guy!" I think it's sick that people know my work, but it wasn't ever a strategy or something I set out to achieve. It just sort of happened. I did one palm tattoo for a friend, then a few for other people, and I really enjoyed seeing how they healed up. I did some more, and after a while I began to understand a little better how to get them to stay how I wanted. I managed to get a healed photo of them all together and my Instagram went wild! People started booking in, so I got more practice... and that's how I became the palm guy.





Tell us about your machines.

For my palms, I just use coil machines. My favourites are my Vlad Blads. They're super powerful and perfect for what I need them to do. But it's all about personal preference and getting used to what works for you. I know other artists who use rotary machines for palms, and they heal up just as well.

Why are palms so difficult to tattoo?

Everyone's palms are different. Some are super soft and spongy; with others, it's like drilling through concrete. I've got to be ready to adapt to each client. Some designs simply won't work on certain palms. And each part of an individual palm is different. Some parts are harder; some are softer. This means these parts of the tattoo will heal differently. Basically the whole thing is a minefield!



Palms are notoriously painful to get tattooed. Do you get many people tapping out?

I'm actually really blessed with my clients. I'm always designing crazy detailed pieces and 90% of people sit really well through the whole thing. It's always a painful experience, but they stay still for me and let me just crack on with what I'm doing. The whole thing's over with pretty quickly. I've had a few people tap out, but not as many as you might think. There's some tough people out there – wayyyy tougher than me. I don't think I could handle some of the things I've done to people...

Do you think you'll ever get bored of doing palms?

Not at all! I'm still progressing with what can be done, and I'm always trying out new techniques and equipment that I think will improve my palm tattoos.

Do you like doing different styles?

Yeah, I love doing any style on a palm. The weirder the better. I really enjoy neo-traditional as I get to use a combination of line weights, which I think makes the pieces really stand out. Probably my favourite thing to do is big, full, geometric palms with some heavy black. They're always fun and super brutal.





What do you recommend for a good heal on a palm tattoo?

My first aftercare recommendation for palms would be try to do as little movement as you can for the first four days. After roughly two weeks, it will start to scab; at four weeks the scabs should all be off; and after six weeks it should be settled, and that's what you're left with. It's a long healing process. While that tattoo is healing, I personally recommend a small amount of cream throughout the day for the first two weeks. Some people like to wet-heal tattoos. Some people like to dry-heal tattoos. The best advice I can give is to heal it how you heal your other tattoos, and just keep an eye on it. If you think it needs cream, cream it. If you think it just needs air in order to settle in, then that's what you should do. You know your body better than anyone, so listen to it. I always ask my clients to send me healing photos (as well as healed photos) so that I can see how the tattoo is getting on. I really like to monitor how different palms look during the healing process.





Is there any particular ink that best suits palm tattooing?

I've done a few red ink palm tattoos and they heal very nicely. I personally think look really good. I did a white ink palm tattoo recently, and I'm excited to see how that heals up as I've never done one before and it's definitely something I'm interested in doing more of. (I've seen some healed white ink palm tattoos and they looked great, but there are a lot of things that could go wrong...) My ink of choice is black though, because it stands out the most. I do also use a grey wash in some of my pieces, but I'm trying to use less of it to give the tattoos bigger impact.



Do you ever yearn to work in colour?

I love tattooing in colour! I'm currently doing a colour traditional sleeve that I'm having loads of fun with. I think I'm going to make a separate Instagram so that people can see both sides to my tattooing.

And how about other styles, or other parts of the body?

I love tattooing most styles, and I actually get to do a lot of cool 'not-palm tattoos' in my day-to-day work – but I mainly post my palms as that's what people are interested in, and I guess palms are probably what I'm best at.

What have been the highlights of your tattoo journey so far?

Moving to South City Market and meeting everyone here has been a massive high point for me. It's opened up so many opportunities that I'm so grateful for. I love everyone I work with and how we push each other to do better. I'm in a really good headspace that enables me to focus on my work. This year I've done my first international guest spots at Der Grimm Tattoo in Berlin and Seny Tattoos in Barcelona. They were great experiences. Berlin has a piece of my heart and I love going there, so I think I'll be back there a lot next year.



Are you a sponsored artist?
I'm not, but I'd love some free shit!

What are your hopes for the future?

I just want to be the best I can be. I want to enjoy each day and make sure I'm putting in the effort for each tattoo. I don't know what the future holds, but I like where it's heading. This year has been a big one for me, so if next year is going to be anything like it, I can't wait!

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NO REGERTS

Lettering specialist Tom Sorn (@mister_sorn) takes us through the steps required to create one of his designs.

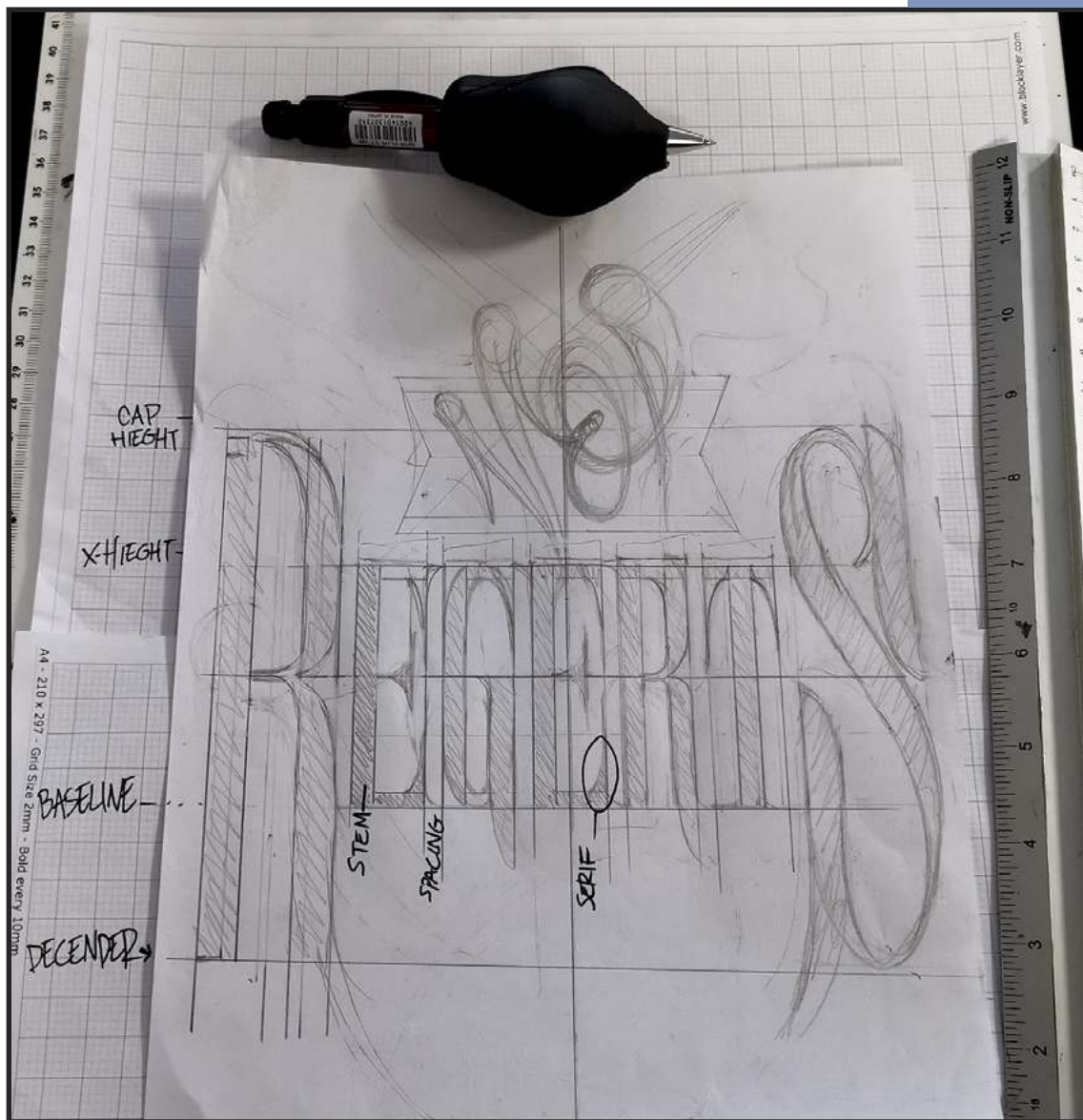
First, here's what you will need:

- A3 plain paper
- A3 gridded paper
- Lightbox
- Ruler
- Rubber
- Ink
- Paintbrush
- Mechanical pencil
- Graphical drawing pens (3 different weights)



STEP ONE **Composition and layout ideas**

I always start by simply writing down the wording. In this case, NO REGERTS. Look at how the words balance and flow with each other. What shapes will balance well as an overall piece? Should we stack the letters or keep them together in one line? If you want to use multiple styles or typefaces, ask yourself what will contrast well together and look interesting. Are any words more important than others? If so, highlight them. Create a hierarchy. Do you want the piece to be legible? How straightforward or complex do you want it to be? Think of the overall flow, and the style and symmetry of the words. Get a few rough compositions sketched out and pick the one you think works best.



STEP TWO Grid up and sketch in the lettering

Once you're happy with your composition, start on a fresh piece of paper with the grid behind it. Eye up a grid to fit your letters into. Create a horizontal x-height (the notional height of a letter x) and a baseline (the imaginary line on which the letters sit). If you are working in lowercase, you will need a descender line (for the tails of letters such as y) and you might also have a cap height (for the tops of the capital letters).

For the NO I've decided to go with my signature 'fatcap' graffiti-style lettering as the word has an attitude and sounds a little rebellious. When dealing with graffiti-style, my advice is to reference comic books and go simple as a starting point. Try not to over-complicate things with a million arrows or any other corny elements you might think look 'urban'. I did consider framing the word in a banner, so I've sketched that in too.

With REGERTS I wanted to go with a strong gothic-looking serif typeface to solidify the strength in the word. Start by giving each letter its own space; separate them evenly. Most letters have a main stem or backbone as shown; make sure these are the same width throughout. The serifs (the small lines or strokes on the ends of letters) should also be the same throughout. All the letters are aligned with the baseline and x-height. (Lowercase letters with a tail would touch the descender line, but for this example we are only using capital letters.) With tattoos, I usually make the first and last letters double the size for impact. Here, I'm using the cap height and descender line to work from – to balance the piece.

I've chosen to stack the two words and have a symmetrical balance within this composition so everything is justified from the centre line.



STEP THREE Refine the letters and add flourishes

Re-working angles and shapes is all part of the process – if you are unhappy with something, re-work it. I decided the banner behind the NO was unnecessary, so I ditched the idea. I also felt the word itself needed more dominance, so I made it larger.

A lot of gothic-styled typefaces 'double up' the strokes or stems of letters that are capitalised, so I decided to do this with the R and the S. I've also stylised the letters more, and added spikes, 'nicks' and leaves throughout to give the whole thing an even more gothic feel. The large R, the G and the smaller R all have tails that flick down, so I decided to extenuate them and flick them out into flourishes. Don't be too concerned with the flourishes if you are just starting out. They are complex on this design. The important thing to bear in mind is that the tails should curve down at the same angle from each letter. This creates repetition and makes the design flow nicely.



STEP FOUR Inking the letters

When you are completely happy with how the drawing is sketched out, you can move on to the 'inking' stage. Take another sheet of paper and overlay it onto your finished sketch with the lightbox behind. Start to ink at the top and work your way down so you don't smudge the work!

With 'fatcap' styled graffiti lettering, as a rough rule: the words flare out at the top like a cone and come down sharply into a point. The top flare parts are made up of lots of fine little dots that come down together into a solid stroke as the line becomes tighter, exactly like it would out of a spray-can. (I'm always looking for inspiration in the textures and marks that all sorts of objects make!)

To create the 'fatcap' lettering I usually start by lining in the 'tight' black sections. Then I begin to dot out with the thickest graphic pen. I then layer with finer pens that merge the dots together until they 'disperse' at the top of the letters into a circular shape. Notice how an overlap of a stroke would be darker as the spray-can would apply double the amount of paint to that area.

For the gothic-styled REGERTS you can ink in some kinks to make it look a little worn, and maybe add some ink splatters to give it more texture. Once you've got your base to work from, don't be scared to experiment and have fun giving your letters different styles of make-up!



STEP FIVE Create a background



I'm happy with the letters, and they're all cleaned up and filled in with ink, but I've decided the design needs some sort of background to bring it all together. Although many people see a background as unnecessary for lettering, it can create extra depth. Going this extra mile in your tattoos and drawing will always pay off. In this case, as the word NO is predominant in the quote, I thought a big fat 'X' would work well to solidify the saying and give it more emphasis.

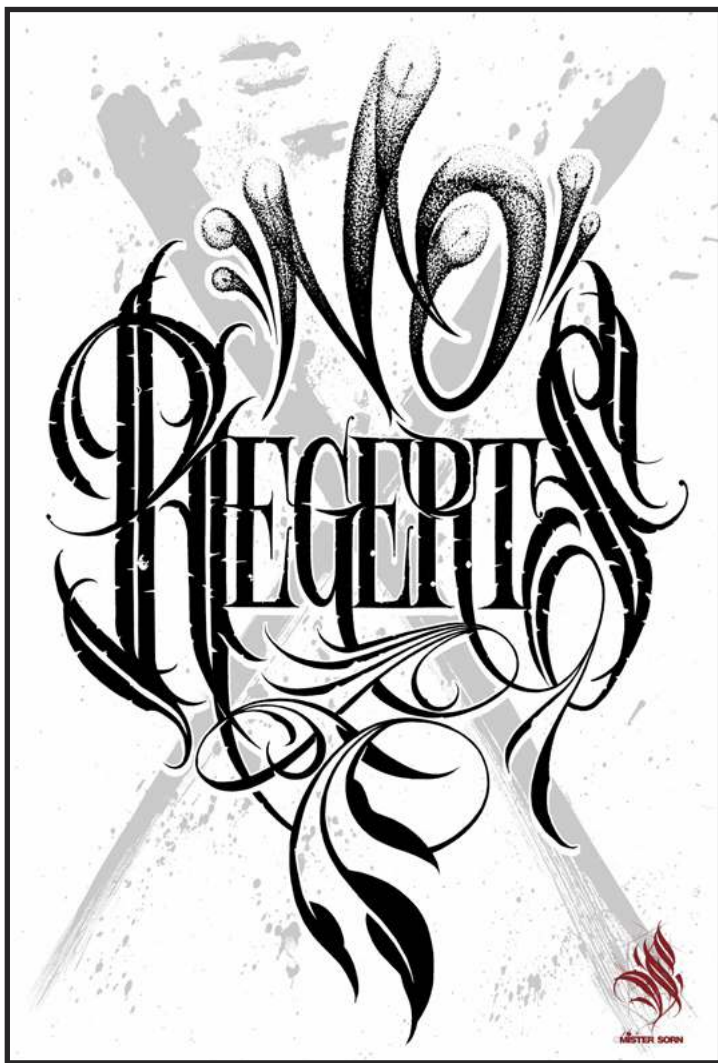
Start on a fresh piece of paper with your final inked drawing two sheets underneath (always double up for extra protection). Take your paintbrush and ink and have some fun. Create shapes, play around, splat and drip the ink, fill out the negative space that the main letters miss to give it some extra oomph.

STEP SIX Trace or Photoshop the elements together

I was planning on not using a computer for this step-by-step guide, but the graphic designer in me thought it was much easier to merge the letters with the background in Photoshop. I scanned the finished elements and layered them both into a new Photoshop file, with the 'X' behind the letters. I then selected the letters layer and masked off the white background so the 'X' was visible underneath. I decided to add a white drop-shadow to the letters to lift them off the 'X', and I muted the 'X' down into a grey so there was even more separation and depth.

You could create the same effect by tracing in your background through the lightbox on to the final inked letters. Or go really old school and cut the letters out with scissors and stick them on to the nice background you've created!

And there you have it – the finished piece.



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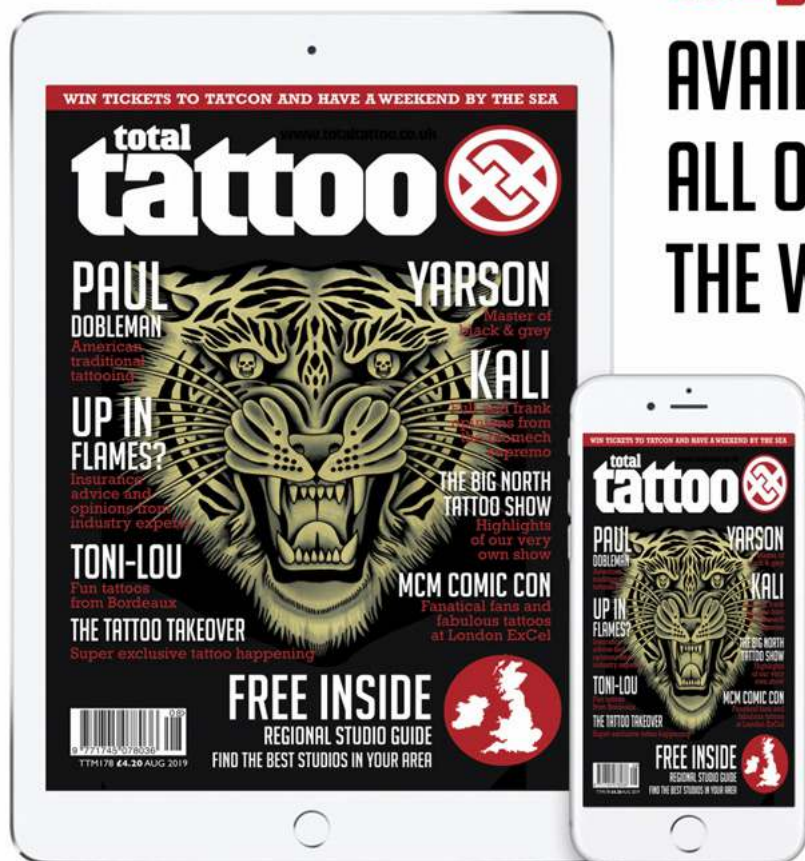
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**'WITH ANIME, YOU DON'T
HAVE TO BE VERY FAR OUT
TO BE COMPLETELY
WRONG.'**

AFFANITA

Tala Easton, aka Affanita, works at The Rising Tide Tattoo Collective in Poole. Although she is not long into her tattoo career, she has already established herself as a talented artist with a unique style.



Tala was born in Singapore and came to the UK at the age of 12. The unfamiliar environment of the south of England was in complete contrast to her Asian childhood home. "Yes, the transition was a bit weird," she recalls. "It was a massive culture shock. Singapore is full of the remnants of its British Empire past, but England seemed so different, and nowhere near as multicultural." Tala remembers going with her father to a local tattoo studio in Singapore. "It was a really tiny place called Johnny Two Thumbs, in a shopping centre. It was those visits, with my dad, that sparked my early interest in tattoos."

"When I was younger I was always creating art," Tala tells me, "and I was producing stuff to sell. That's where the name 'Affanita' comes from. It was my art name before I began tattooing, so it just seemed natural to keep it going."

"I wasn't interested in becoming a tattooist from the get-go," Tala continues. "That only happened after uni. I went to uni because I believed it was what I should do, but I actually hated it. I changed my course twice. I did video game design at first, and then I changed to illustration. But that didn't work out either, so I changed back to video game design again before finally deciding to leave uni altogether." Tala really wanted to get something out of higher education, but admits, "The only thing I got from it was a lot of free time to get into tattoos... and a lot of people who would allow me to tattoo them!"

And of course Tala was happy to tattoo her uni friends for free. "Charging for tattoos is something I'm still struggling to get my head around," she confesses. "I try to price myself moderately, but having done some guest spots in London recently I think maybe I'm too cheap. So I charge by the piece now, instead of an hourly rate. I tend to work quite quickly so it makes much more sense."



'RIGHT NOW, I'M MORE EXCITED ABOUT TATTOOING THAN EVER BEFORE.'



I ask Tala to tell me how her tattoo journey began. "I bought my first machine from eBay and tattooed myself on my leg with a shitty pigeon design... then I did an apprenticeship, but it was only for about a year. Early on, I was very drawn to blackwork, dotwork and stippling. Until I discovered this style I never knew you could tattoo with textures. Most of the tattoos I'd previously been exposed to fell into the conventional genres of Japanese, traditional, realism, etc. When I saw stippling, I began to realise there was a link between my illustrations and tattooing."



"When I started, my designs were much more cluttered. I've seen some of them recently, and I don't like them anymore! I would put in a lot more linear cross-hatching. Then I replaced that with a simpler, flatter grey wash. I used to do a lot of ink paintings using traditional bamboo brushes and when I saw those sorts of elements in Japanese tattoos I realised that I would be able to incorporate that kind of thing into my own work. At first it was hard to replicate, but I was lucky because at college I had a lot of willing victims to practice on. Now I use a lot of variable line weights and graduated areas of grey wash. That all came from working alongside a Japanese artist and seeing how well his tattoos healed compared to mine."





"I love the work of Kelly Violence and Scott Move. And I really like solid black. But now my work is much more Japanese-influenced. I got tattooed last year by El Dragon and I learnt loads from that experience."

What defines Tala's anime-influenced style? "The facial proportions need to be absolutely accurate," she explains. "Even if you don't stick to traditional proportions, if you do big eyes and a small nose and mouth the image will automatically have anime elements. It's the same with the hair. If you do it spiky and scruffy it will always look great."



"Most anime characters have very extreme stylisations within their clothing, etc. But the border between good and bad anime is actually very narrow. You don't have to be very far out to be completely wrong."

Tala is currently using a Cheyenne machine. But when it comes to ink she doesn't have any particular brand loyalty. For her, ink is ink. And black is black.



I ask whether it's a deliberate choice not to do colour work. "No, I'm game! I didn't use to care about colour, but since working with Tom here at The Rising Tide I've developed a real interest in it. The way he packs it in means it heals so well, and now I can see how I can apply it to my own work. But I've put shout-outs on social media requesting clients for colour work and nobody ever gets in touch. I'm more than happy to move into different styles too, especially if there's a chance that I can develop a new talent that will benefit my existing style. I also want to go larger, and do pieces that incorporate more detail, but at the moment people seem to prefer my work on a small scale."





So does Tala feel her creative freedoms are limited by the needs and wishes of her clients? "Not really. The only thing that I find limiting is time. I haven't been able to draw flash in ages because I'm doing so much custom work, but that's obviously great! And most of the work I'm doing is based on interests that I share with my clients - in gaming and anime - and that means I don't get bored or find it limiting in any way. In fact I feel more excited about tattooing at the moment than ever before. When I started out, I was interested in tattooing as a possibility. Now I'm actually involved in it! I really enjoy meeting all the people. When you're working on a human body, composition and placement matter so much more than on paper. And as I'm becoming better known, I'm finding that people are coming to me with more and more interesting projects. It's a really good vibe here at The Rising Tide. I just need to keep creating and growing my art and moving forward. There's a long way to go!"

Instagram: @affanita

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**'COMPOSITION AND
 PLACEMENT MATTER SO MUCH
 MORE ON THE BODY..'**

TATTOO EXTRAVAGANZA PORTSMOUTH



There have been many tattoo conventions in Portsmouth over the years. This was the tenth anniversary of the Extravaganza and it took place in the splendid Gaiety Bar on the South Parade Pier in Southsea.

The very first Extravaganza took place on the South Parade Pier too, but at that time the pier was in poor condition and in much need of repair. International artists such as Joe Capobianco, Hannah Aitchison, Dan Smith and the legendary Gil Monte shared the ramshackle interior with pigeons and punters alike. The following year, the structure was condemned. Now, years later, the Extravaganza has returned to its newly renovated first home and it was good to see the South Parade Pier resurrected in all its splendour.

The function room in which the convention took place was relatively small, with space for just 34 tattooists, but the large windows on both sides meant light was able to flood in, creating great conditions for tattooing. There was a bar at the far end and a low intimate stage for the entertainment. The bands were musically excellent (with a Rock 'n' Roll theme on Saturday and a Ska & Soul flavour on Sunday) but they were also incredibly loud for such a small room – so loud in fact, that the people outside on the pier could be seen dancing along!







There were some great tattoos being done at the show. Over the course of the weekend, the two guys from Hunters of Ink, who had made the long journey down from Ellesmere Port in Cheshire, created a leg piece combining colour realism and blackwork that certainly stood out as a potential prizewinner. And Simon Cooke from The Ink Spot in Newcastle-under-Lyme produced a wonderful sea scene from his ringside seat next to the stage. John Craig was busy putting on a sweet black and grey dog portrait and Steve Hunter's local studio Blood Eagle Tattoos had come out to show their support for the event. It was also really good to catch up with Brendan Mudd from Inkfish – and of course check out some of the newer studios on the scene too.

A lot has changed since the first tattoo show on the South Parade Pier all those years ago – not least the fact that the big international names no longer seem attracted to these grass-roots events. That makes the loyalty of local tattooists even more crucial, but sadly many of the south coast studios who have been so solid in their support for previous Portsmouth conventions decided to give this one a miss. And the unkind weather worked against the show too, meaning there were definitely fewer people through the door (especially on the Sunday). But none of that detracted from the friendliness of this event.





‘WORKING
HARDER
ISN'T THE SAME
AS WORKING
SMARTER.’

EARTH GRASPER



Earthgrasper is the enigmatic pseudonym of American tattooist Jonathan Penchoff. His surrealist, neo-trad tattoos have an unusual depth and magic, and our conversation took some pretty unconventional turns too...

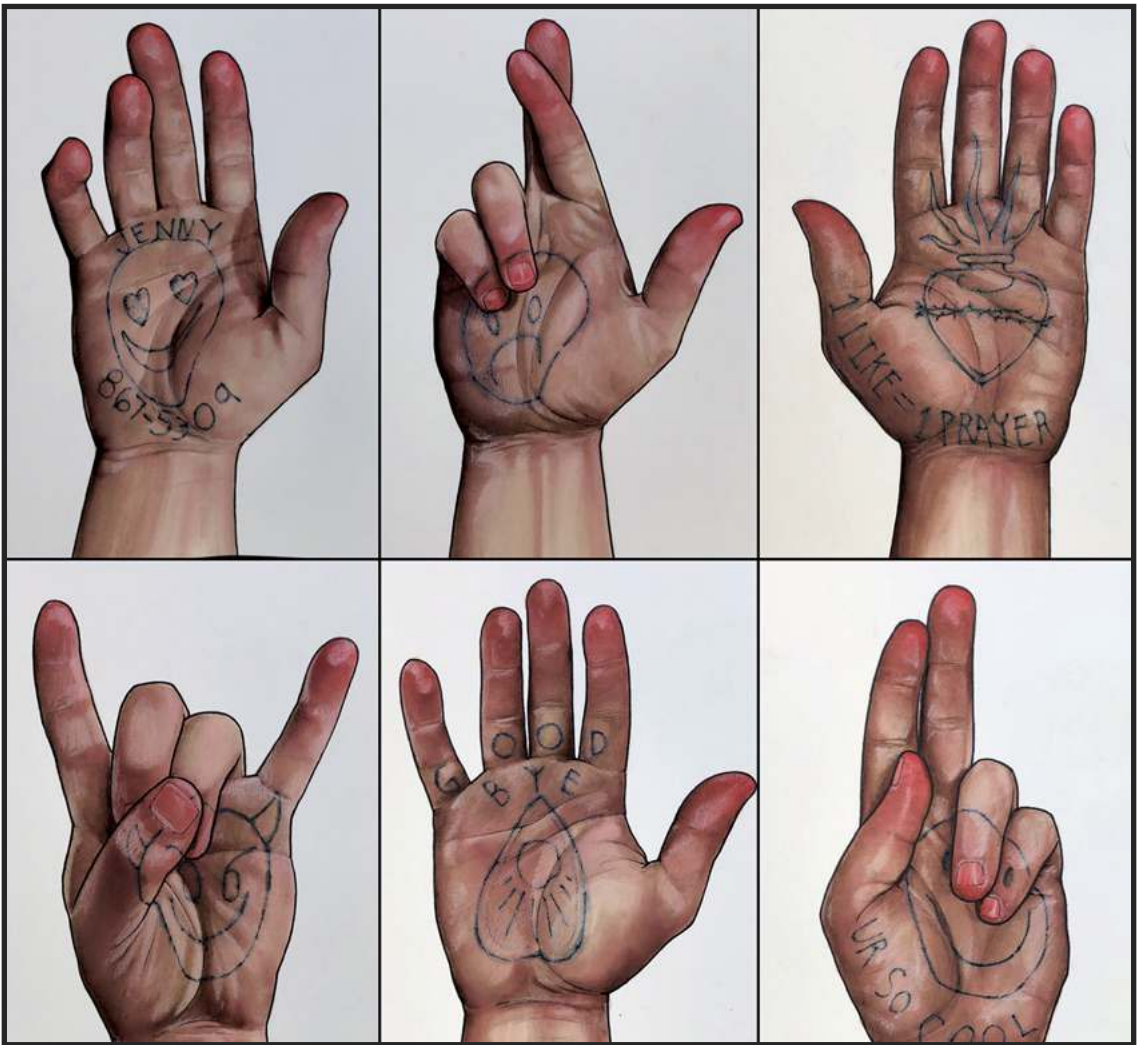
Jonathan Penchoff first picked up a tattoo machine 11 years ago. He's picked up a lot of wisdom along the way too. "Early on in your career, you feel like apologising for your lack of years in the game," he says, "then when you've been in it for a while those years become a badge of honour. I'm 32 now, and I understand how important it is to look after my body, plus I don't want to come home from a convention having spent all my money at the bar!"





"Like so many things, the development of my tattoo style has been a pendulum swing... You go so far in one direction, then you go right back in the other direction, and eventually you settle somewhere in the middle. At first I wanted to see how weird I could be with my tattooing. It was all about the image; my application was a little lacklustre. Then I became totally focused on my technique, and getting everything to heal perfectly. Now I've reached a third stage. I'm looking back at my earlier stuff and I can see the power of simplification. So I'm trying to pull it all back, but keeping all the elements and making sure it's beautifully rendered too. I'm in a transition phase at the moment, trying to refine my ideas. I'm having a lot of fun with it. But I want it all to fall into place naturally. There are actually guys who I've unfollowed on social media because I don't want to be influenced by their work."





Jonathan has an incredibly positive attitude. He likes a structured, disciplined lifestyle. Last year he set himself a sequence of monthly challenges – to run a mile every day, to cut out sugar, to cut down on carbs – but the most profound test was to cut out all social media. “It was crazy. I would still look at my phone like I had some weird nervous tic. It’s such a habit. Every spare moment we’re checking to see what everyone’s up to, and who is (or isn’t) contacting us. But nobody’s talking to the people they’re actually with. Human beings are so fucking lonely right now. We depend on Instagram likes to justify everything about ourselves. We need to take back control.”

“But it’s so easy to criticise when you’re in a position of advantage. Here I am, complaining about a free platform that has brought me such huge benefits. I wouldn’t have a sponsorship deal if I only had a few hundred likes on Instagram – and I’m super pumped to be part of the Cheyenne team and Eternal Ink. That’s the double-edged sword. I can argue with myself over Instagram forever!”



Jonathan [along with his friend Austin Spencer] was actually responsible for an intriguing Instagram innovation a few years back. "I don't know if you've heard of Tattoo Fight Club? I started that in the early days of Instagram. It began as a kind of joke, but it grew. The idea was that two artists would pick a subject and each produce their own interpretation of it. It was so interesting to see their different approaches. In the end we disagreed on the development of the whole thing, but I've got no regrets. I made so many friends through it, and it opened the door to so many visits with tattooists all over the world."



Jonathan exudes a real dedication to his work. But integral to that commitment is a deep knowledge of the importance of self-care – both physical and mental. He has even given seminars on the subject. He suffers from Seasonal Affective Disorder and is all too aware of the importance of good psychological health. "It's important to work hard, but working harder won't achieve the same thing as working smarter. You need to take care of yourself if you want a long and successful career." And part of that, Jonathan says, is getting good sleep. "There's been a lot of interesting research about how we process memories and information while we sleep. You create the muscle memory when you're awake, but you process the connections when you're asleep. So even though I might do the same action over and over all day long, the chances of me getting it right the next day will be much higher if my brain has been able to process the data. Tattooers who are trying to perfect their skills by working really hard and doing 20 tattoos a day would probably be better off doing 10 tattoos then sleeping on it!"





"But our industry seems to praise artists who never switch off – the guys who are constantly working, drawing all night, tattooing all day, and partying for the whole weekend. It's like some kind of martyrdom. I know artists who are living this lifestyle because it's what they think they should be doing, but they're going to fall apart."

Jonathan's own wake-up call was a six-week tour of Australia with a group of tattooist friends. He worked solidly. When he got home and everyone asked him what Australia was like, all he was able to say was that it was very much like the inside of every other tattoo shop!

Jonathan adopts a measured, considered approach to everything he does. "I spend a lot of time looking and studying, analysing what I'm doing and how I'm doing it, constantly focusing on trying to make the work – and the process itself – better." He is a firm believer in the link between physical and mental wellbeing. "For me, having a schedule really helps. I need a structured day. I go to bed at the same time and I get up at the same time. I allocate time for exercise. I make sure I eat a good diet. Going to conventions can be a problem of course, because then my schedule completely breaks down and everything falls to pieces."



"I have some problems with my back from riding choppers for so many years," he continues, "so exercise is really important for me. I work on my posture and I do a simple stretch workout where I lean as flat as possible against a wall and lift my shoulders. It kills but it's amazing." A short while back Jonathan had to take some time out from tattooing when he broke his foot snowboarding. This gave him an opportunity to introduce some healthy lifestyle changes and pursue new creative directions too (he took up oil painting, having previously only painted in watercolours and acrylics). "It's been the best year for me mentally," he says.

Jonathan has a passion for ancient history. But it's only recently that he's been able to find the time to really immerse himself in it. "I work four days a week now, and because I start my day very early I can be home by 4.30pm. Then I just sit and read. Tattooists are so pampered! I started with the fall of the Roman Empire and got so into it that I created a huge spider's web of all the names on a board on the wall... just because I could, because I had the time! I was telling my friends all these insane stories that I'd read, and they suggested I put it out there, and that's where the idea for my ancient history podcast came from. The first season is all about the Achaemenid Empire and the Greco-Persian Wars. It's impossible not to be inspired by all those amazing Greek heroes. And the Persians and Egyptians were so decadent with their garb... so now I can't draw a woman's head without wanting to add a gnarly headdress! I'm looking at this imagery every night, so how can I not bring it into my work?"





Jonathan's painting is also important to him. He's into photography too. "I've bought an expensive camera and I really enjoy setting up the shot, then maybe adjusting the contrast and a few other bits and painting from that. So I guess in a way I'm doing colour realism – which I would never do in my tattooing. Although I am starting to see influences from my painting going into my tattooing. I once painted a series of tattooed hands and people thought that was my version of flash!"

Jonathan then makes a very interesting point. "When I paint, it comes straight from my head. It's pure. I don't need to take anyone else's needs into consideration. Whereas if I design a tattoo for you, it's not an expression of my own thoughts or feelings. It's something I'm trying to convey on your behalf. That's why I don't regard a lot of modern tattooing as an actual art (although I know I'm in a minority). I view tattooing as a craft. And it's craft that I want to get better at."

Our conversation moves on to the subject of equipment and sponsorship, and Jonathan shares some strong opinions. "If an artist is spouting the virtues of one sponsor this month, and a different sponsor three months later... well we all see through that. But if a friend or colleague tells me about a machine that puts in a banging line, then I'm very likely to check it out. But there are sooo many sponsors it feels like Nascar sometimes. When you see a guy hashtagging 50 different things, you ask yourself how many of them are genuine. I wouldn't be sponsored by a brand I wasn't already using. I also really appreciate the human connection, and that's something I get from Cheyenne. It's personal. I know people's names and they know mine. I support them and they support me. It's a mutually beneficial situation."



Today's rotaries can seem very expensive when compared to the machines of the past, but Jonathan feels this is entirely justified because of their quality. "I went to the Cheyenne factory day and I saw them finishing everything by hand, screwing in the screws. I get how high the quality it is. And why would you not want the best tools for the job? Sure, machines are more expensive now, but they're far more complex and built to an amazing standard. I hear people complaining about the price, but you make back your investment with your first few tattoos. Do you want a machine that makes your job easier or not?"



Jonathan's got some strong views on other aspects of the tattoo scene too. Guest spots for instance. "As an artist who's spent many years on the road, I've noticed things changing. The term 'guest artist' doesn't always seem to mean what it used to. Too often, you're not treated like a real 'guest' anymore, and that bums me out. If someone guests at our shop, even if they're not working with me, I will always ask them to hang out, go for a meal. Anyone can work in any fucking city; the idea of being a guest is that you meet new people, you share their life a little, and you expand your tattoo family."

As we wrap up our conversation, Jonathan reflects on the importance of his current place of work, Til Death Tattoo in Denver, Colorado. "We have 11 resident artists. It's kind of like a collective, and it's so ideal for where I am in my career. We each have our own workspace, but we still critique each other's tattoos and share our ideas and thoughts, plus we have lots of guest artists coming through, so we are constantly topping up creatively. There's great camaraderie, but we don't hang out together all the time like you might in a street shop. At the end of the day I sometimes just want to go hang out with my dog... so it's a perfect balance for me."

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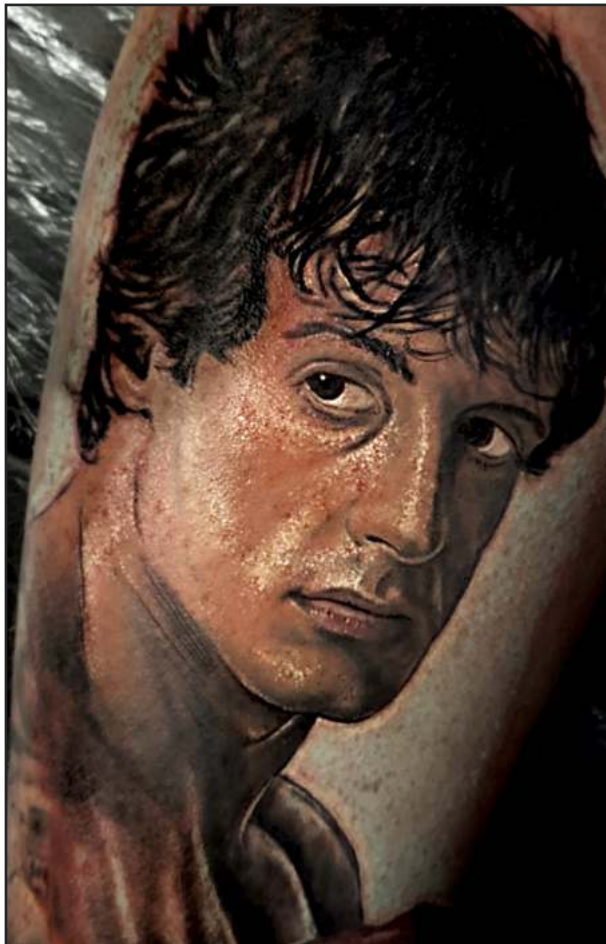
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SCOTLAND

Aberdeen Tattoo Collective

80 Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen
 AB25 1NU
 Tel no: 01224 635 672
aberdeentattoo@gmail.com
www.aberdeentattoo.co.uk

Bold and Gold

238 Leith Walk,
 Edinburgh EH6 5EL
 Tel no: 0131 629 0171
boldandgoldart@gmail.com
www.boldandgoldart.com

Dark Ink Gallery

160 Hope Street
 Glasgow
 G2 2TJ
 Tel no: 07492622582
darkinkgallery@gmail.com
www.darkinkgallery.com

Den of Iniquity Tattoo Parlour

47 Broughton Street,
 Edinburgh, EH1 3RJ
 Tel No: 0131 557 0077
denofiniquitytattoo@gmail.com
 Instagram: @denofiniquitytattooarlour
www.facebook.com/DenofIniquity-TattooParlourEdinburgh

FHT Bathgate

46 Hopetoun St, Bathgate
 EH48 4EU
 Tel no: 01506 654 442
fhtbathgate@gmail.com
www.fhtbathgate.co.uk

Empire Ink

11 East Fountainbridge, Edinburgh
 EH3 9BH
 Tel: 07540 290 234
 Email: via website
www.empire-ink.co.uk

Forevermore Tattoo

202, Hope Street, Glasgow.
 G2 2UG
 Tel no: 0141 332 9340
forevermoretattoo@gmail.com
www.forevermoretattoo.co.uk

Inkdependent

56 Dalry Rd, Edinburgh
 EH11 2BA
 Tel no: 0131 623 6565
inkdependenttattoos@gmail.com
www.inkdependent.eu/

Insider Tattoo

89 Henderson St, Edinburgh
 EH6 6ED
 Tel no: 0131 554 6083
info@insidertattoo.com
www.insidertattoo.com

Main Street Tattoo

116 Main St, Wishaw
 ML2 7LU
 Tel no: 01698 355 877
mainstreettattoo@live.co.uk
 Instagram: @mainstreettattoo

Nirvana Tattoo

9 Chisholm Street,
 Glasgow,
 G1 5HA
 Tel no: 0141 548 1543
nirvanatattooostudio@yahoo.com
 Instagram @nirvanatattooostudio

Body Piercing by Nathan

202 George Street
 Aberdeen
 AB25 1BS
 Tel No: 01224 6423477
 Email: sailormax13@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/sailormax13

Richards Tattoo Studio

3 Trinity Quay, Aberdeen
 AB11 5AA
 Tel no: 01224 575 599
info@richardstattoo.com
www.richardstattoo.com

Santa Cruz Kustom Club

Unit 3 Huntly Crescent,
 Stirling, FK8 1SU
 Tel no: 01786 357272
SCKCTattoo@gmail.com
www.SCKCtattoo.com

Semper Tattoo Studio

7 Grass Market,
 Edinburgh EH1 2HY
 Tel no: 0131 466 0370
sempertattoo@gmail.com
www.sempertattoo.com

Terrys Tattoo Studio

23 Chisholm Street,
 Glasgow, G1 5HA
 Tel No: 0141 552 5740
hello@terrystattooostudio.com
www.terrystattooostudio.com
 Instagram: @terrystattooostudio
www.facebook.com/TerrysTattooStudio

NORTH EAST

Apostle

23 Church Square
 Hartlepool
 TS24 7EU
 Tel no: 01429 271030
www.apostletattoo.co.uk
www.facebook.com/apostletattoo

Art La Vey

56 High Street, Gateshead. NE10
 9LT
 01914472490
art_la_vey@outlook.com
artlavayatattooostudio.bigcartel.com/

Heavy Duty Tattoos

38 Tubwell Row, Darlington.
 DL1 1PD
 Tel no: 01325 484 432
heavydutytattoos@gmail.com
www.heavydutytattoos.co.uk

High Bridge Tattoo

15 High Bridge,
Newcastle Upon Tyne. NE1 1EW
Tel no: 0191 261 9473
dean@highbridgetattoo.co.uk
Instagram: @Highbridgetattoo_ncl

Masamune Tattoos

29 Front Street
NE16 4EA
Tel no: 0191 488 6222
masamunetattoos@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/
masamunetattoos

Northside Tattooz

25 Station Road, Whitley Bay.
NE26 2QY
Tel no: 0191 2971327
hash@northsidetattooz.co.uk
www.northsidetattooz.co.uk

Northside Tattooz

(Newcastle -
The Private Rooms)
2 - Basement, Bewick Street,
City Centre,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5EF
Tel no: 0191 221 0328
low@northsidetattooz.co.uk
www.northsidetattooz.co.uk

No Love Lost Collective

8 Scarborough Street, Hartlepool.
TS24 7DA9
no.lost.love.collective@gmail.com
Instagram @no.love.lost.collective

The Tattoo Station

20 Ridley Place, City Centre,
Newcastle Upon Tyne.
NE1 8JN
0191 232 8491
www.tattoostation.co.uk

Triplexix

24 Fawcett Street,
Sunderland. SR1 1RH
Tel no: 0191 565 6665
Contact through Facebook:
triplexixstudios666

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER

Black Lantern Studio

4 Marshall Avenue, Bridlington,
East Yorkshire, YO152DS, UK
Tel no: 01262 674 045
Blacklanternstudio@gmail.com
FB: blacklantern tattoo studio

Crooked Claw Tattoo

734 Ecclesall Road, Sheffield,
S11 8TB
Tel no: 0114 327 1411
crookedclawtattoos@gmail.com
www.crookedclawtattoo.com

Easy Tiger Tattoo

102 & 103, Castleton Mill, Leeds
LS12 2DS
Tel: 0113 887 0172
www.easytigertattoo.com
Instagram: @easytigertattoos

Electric Kicks

17 Front Street, Pontefract.
WF8 1DA
Tel no: 07725 029 567
electric.kicks@hotmail.com
FB: Electric Kicks Tattoo Studio
Instagram: @electric.kicks.crew

Follow Your Dreams Tattoo

160 Devonshire Street, Sheffield,
S3 7SB
Tel no: 0114 216 8078
Email: fydattoo@gmail.com
www.fydattoo.com

Gothika

7-9 Dundas Street, Redcar, Cleve-
land, TS10 3AD
Tel No: 01642 498 572
Instagram: @GothikaTattoosRedcar
www.facebook.com/GothikaTattoos

Nigel Kurt's The Fun House Tattoo Studio

140 Sheffield Road, Barnsley
S70 1JH
Tel no: 01226 779 595
nigelkurt1@gmail.com
www.nigelkurt.com
Instagram: @nigelkurttattoo
www.facebook.com/funhousetattoos
UK

Red Tattoo & Piercing

Leeds Corn Exchange
Tel: 01132420413
Email: redtattooandpiercing@hot-
mail.co.uk
www.redtattooandpiercing.com

Sacred Electric Tattoo

2-3 Mill Hill,
Leeds LS1 5DQ
Tel no: 0113 242 5553
Sacredelectrictattoo@gmail.com
www.sacredelectrictattoo.com

Tenacious Tattoo

296 Prince of Wales Road, Sheffield,
S2 1FF
Tel No: 0114 327 4060
www.tenacioustattoo.com

Ultimate Skin

33 New Briggate,
Leeds LS2 8JD
Tel no: 0113 244 4940
ustattoo@gmail.com
Instagram: @ultimate_skin

EAST MIDLANDS

Base Shade Tattoo

6 Church Street, Rushden,
NN10 9YT
Tel No: 01983 316 055
Email:
baseshadetattoo@yahoo.co.uk
www.facebook.com/baseshadetattoo

Bunraku Tattoo

1a Victoria Parade,
Leicester, LE1 5FG
Tel no: 0116 262 9401
info@bunrakutattoo.co.uk
www.bunrakutattoo.co.uk

Embody Tattoo

(handpoke and machine tattooing)
7 Canal Street, Derby. DE12RJ
Tel no: 01332 986 920
embodytattoo@mail.com
www.embodytattoo.co.uk

Epona Art and Tattoo

Waterloo Yard, King St,
Southwell NG25 0EH
Tel no: 01636 815 771
theresatattoo@btinternet.com
www.eponatattoo.com

Fat Fugu

24 Fish St,
Northampton NN1 2AA
Tel no: 01604 630 557
info@fatfugu.com
www.fatfugu.com

Hypnotic Art Tattoo

200 Queensway,
Milton Keynes MK2 2ST
Tel no: 01908 989 695
hypnoticarttattoo@gmail.com
www.hypnotic-art.co.uk

Lewis Point Tattoo Studio

61 High Street, Daventry,
NN11 4BQ
Tel No: 01327 315133
www.lewispointtattoo.com

Lucky 13 Tattoo

192 Clarendon Park Road
Leicester
LE2 3AF
Tel no: 0116 270 0558
studio@wearelucky13.com
www.wearelucky13.com

Red Tattoo & Piercing

Leeds Corn Exchange
Tel: 01132420413
Email: redtattooandpiercing@hot-
mail.co.uk
www.redtattooandpiercing.com

ReINkarnation

3b Station Road, Ilkeston, DE7 5LD
Telephone: 0115 837 7090
www.facebook.com/maria.perks.52
Instagram: @maria_perks_tattoos

Second Skin

77 Ashbourne Rd,
Derby DE22 3FW
Tel no: 01332 242 688
info@secondskinstudio.co.uk
Instagram: @secondskinderby

Wet Paint Collective

7 Bowley Court, Melton Mowbray
LE13 1XY
Tel no: 01664 668110
wetpaintcollective@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/Wetpaintcollective

EAST OF ENGLAND

All Or Nothing Tattoo and Piercings

12 Church Street
Witham, Essex CM8 2JL
Tel no: 01376 519 602
Email :aontattoo@outlook.com
www.aontattoo.com

Black Dog Tattoos

47 St Benedicts Street
Norwich
Norfolk NR24PG
Tel no: 01603 291049
blackdogtattoos@gmail.com
Instagram: @blackdogtattoos

Black Galleon Tattoo Studio

22 Blackfriars Street
Kings Lynn
PE30 INN
01553 777322
www.facebook.com/blackgalleontattooostudio

Braintree Tattoo Studio

148 Coggeshall Rd,
Braintree CM7 9ER
Tel no: 01376 560 633
info@braintreetattooostudio.co.uk
www.braintreetattooostudio.co.uk

Churchyard Tattoo

14 Churchyard,
Hitchin SG5 1HR
Tel no: 01462 338 781
cytattoo@gmail.com
Instagram: @churchyardtattoos
www.facebook.com/churchyard

Crossed Arrows Tattoo

21-23 St George Street,
Norwich. NR3 1AB
Tel no: 01603 762 636
crossedarrowstattoo@gmail.com
Facebook: Crossed Arrows Tattoo

Cult Classic Tattoo

32 North St,
Romford RM1 1BH
Tel no: 01708 730 500
cultclassictattoo@gmail.com
www.cultclassictattoo.com

Electric Punch Tattoo

Unit 4, the Pavilion,
Tower Centre, Hoddesdon
EN11 8UB
Tel no: 01992 447 756
info@electricpunchtattoo.co.uk
www.electricpunchtattoo.co.uk

Eternal Art Tattoo Studio

42-43 Viaduct Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM1 1TS
Tel No: 01245 355166
eternal-art@hotmail.co.uk
Instagram: @prizemantattoo
www.facebook.com/PriZeMaN

Five Keys Tattoo

8 Orford Hill,
Norwich, Norfolk NR13QD
Tel no: 01603 958 814
fivekeystattoo@gmail.com
www.fivekeystattoo.com

Good Ship I3

374 London Road Hadleigh, Essex
SS7 2DA
Tel no: 07415 299998
goodshipi3info@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/Good-Ship-I3-Tattoos

Indigo Tattoo and Piercing

2 Lower Goat Lane,
Norwich, Norfolk NR2 1EL
Tel no: 01603 886 143
www.indigotattoo.co.uk
indigotattooandpiercing@gmail.com

Immortal Ink

39 - 43 Baddow Road,
Chelmsford, CM2 0DB
Tel no: 01245 493 444
contact@immortalink.co.uk
www.immortalink.co.uk

Next Generation

4 Wolverton Rd, Stony Stratford,
Milton Keynes MK11 1DX
Tel no: 01908 560003
info@nextgenerationtattoo.co.uk
www.nextgenerationtattoo.co.uk

Skin Sorcerer

116 High St, Maldon CM9 5ET
Tel no: 01621 842443
Instagram: skin_sorcerer

True Love Tattoos

16 Bridewell Alley,

Norwich NR2 1AQ
Tel no: 01603 613277
tlnorwich@gmail.com
www.tlnorwich.co.uk

LONDON

The Blue Tattoo

2 Studland St, Hammersmith, London, W6 0JS
Tel no: 0208 746 3133
Email: info@thebluetattoo.co.uk
www.thebluetattoo.co.uk
Instagram: @thebluetattoolondon

Briar Rose Tattoo

172 Manor Lane, London, SE128LP
private and custom only studio
www.briarrosetattoo.com
instagram: @briarrosetattoo
instagram: @tiggystattoos
instagram: @olivetats

The Family Business

58 Exmouth Market,
Clerkenwell, London EC1R 4QE
Tel no: 0207 278 9526
info@thefamilybusinesstattoo.com
www.thefamilybusinesstattoo.com

Frith Street Tattoo

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

Fudoshin Tattoo

158 George Lane, South Woodford,
London, E18 1AY
Tel No: 020 8989 6144
www.fudoshintattoos.com
Instagram: @fudoshintattoos
www.facebook.com/fudoshintattoos

Happy Sailor Tattoo

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

I Hate Tattoos

Unit 1, 400-405 York Way, London
N7 9LR
Tel no: 07904 174 819
herringfishbloke@hotmail.co.uk
Facebook: I Hate Tattoos Studio

Ink Lounge Tattoo Studio

310 C Green Lanes, Palmers Green
London N13 5TT, UK
Tel no: 0203 490 2663
info@inklounge.co.uk
www.inklounge.co.uk
Instagram - inklounge

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: 0207 372 3662
info@kilburnoriginal.com
Instagram: @kilburntattoo

Leviticus Tattoo Emporium

170 High Road (Cuthberts Alley)
Loughton, Essex, IG10 1DN
Tel no: 0208 502 4029
leviticustattoo@hotmail.com
www.leviticustattooemporium.co.uk

Lowrider Tattoo

311 Bethnal Green Road,
London E2 6AH
Tel no: 0208 739 5115
Inquiry@lowridertattoolondon.com
Instagram: @lowridertattoolondon

Low Tide

19 Market Place, Southend-on-Sea.
SSI 1DA
01702344060
lowtidetattoo@gmail.com
Instagram: @lowtidetattoo

New Wave Tattoo Studio

157 Sydney Road, Muswell Hill,
London N10 2NL
Tel no: 0208 444 8779
lalhardy@hotmail.co.uk
www.newwavetattoo.co.uk

Old Habits Tattoo

364 Kingsland Road,
London. E8 4DA
Tel no: 0203 609 0931
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

Tattoo Shop By Dan Gold

104 - 106 Oxford Street, London,
W1D 1LP
Tel No: 0207 637 7411
http://tattooshopbydangold.co.uk

The Good Fight

Cheriton, Queens Crescent, London,
NW5 4EZ
www.thegoodfighttattoo.com

Instagram: @nick_whybrow
@heidikayetattoo
@emilyrabbit.tattoo

Through My Third Eye

342 Hornsey Road,
London. N7 7HE
Tel no: 0203 417 2552
throughmythirdeye@outlook.com
www.throughmythirdeye.com

Ushuaia Tattoo London

486 Fulham Road, SW6 5NH, Lon-
don, UK
Tel: 020 8616 1760
www.ushuaiatattoo.london.co.uk/en
Instagram: @ushuaiatattoo.london
www.facebook.com/ushuaiatattoo.lo
ndon

SOUTH EAST

14 Arrows Tattoo Studio

55-57 Grosvenor Road
Tunbridge Wells
TN1 2AY
Tel no: 01892 458342
fourteenarrows@hotmail.com

1770 Tattoo

4 Little East Street
Brighton BN1 1HT
Tel no: 01273 710 730
info@1770tattoo.com
www.1770tattoo.com

Dead Slow

9 Boyces Street
Brighton
BN1 1AN
Tel No: 01273 208844
www.deadslowco.com
email: contact@deadslowco.com
Instagram: @deadslowco
www.facebook.com/deadslowco

Fine Art Tattoo and Piercing Studio

6 York Street, Ramsgate,
Kent CT11 9DS
Tel no: 01843 588 885
fine-art-tattoo@hotmail.co.uk
www.finearttattoo.co.uk

Forever Wear Tattoos

31 West Street, Buckingham,
MK18 1HE
Tel No: 01280 822695
forever-wear-tattoos@hotmail.co.uk
www.foreverweartattoos.com
Instagram: @foreverwear_tattoos
www.facebook.com/foreverweartat-
toosbuckingham

Higgins and Co

69 Terminus Road, Above

Coffee Republic,
Eastbourne BN21 3NJ
Tel no: 01323 301 973
higginsandco71@gmail.com
www.higginsandcotattoo.co.uk

High Tide Tattoo Studio

Unit 1 Reeves yard, Warwick Road,
Whitstable, CT5 1HX
Tel No: 01227 263864
zbreakspear@yahoo.com
Instagram: high_tide_tattoo_studio
www.facebook.com/hightidetattoo-
studio

Inked Moose

204 Whaddon Way, Bletchley, Milton
Keynes MK3 7DG
Tel no: 01908 411151
info@inkedmoose.co.uk
www.inkedmoose.co.uk

Keepsake Tattoo

145 South Street, Lancing, BN15
8BD
Tel No: 01903 767776
www.keepsaketattoo.co.uk
Instagram: @keepsake_tattoo

Leo Rios Tattoo Studio

11 Lime St, Bedford MK40 1LD
Tel no: 01234930504
leoriostattoos@hotmail.co.uk
www.facebook.com/LeoRiosStudio

Magnum Opus Tattoo

51 Upper N St, Brighton BN1 3FH
Tel: 01273 271432
magnumopustattoo@gmail.com
www.magnumopustattoo.com
Instgram: @magnumopustattoo
www.facebook.com/magnumopus-
tattoo

Rising Phoenix Tattoo

6 High Street,
Leighton Buzzard. LU7 1EA
Tel no: 01525 217 121
studio@risingphoenixtattoo.co.uk
www.risingphoenixtattoo.co.uk

Seven Sins Tattoo

10 High Street, Horley,
Surrey, RH6 7AY
Tel no: 01293 775 385
info@sevensinstattoo.com
www.sevensinstattoo.co.uk/

Skinned Alive Tattoo

24 Church Street
Brighton, BN1 1RB
info@skinnedalivetattoo.com
www.skinnedalivetattoo.com
Instagram: @skinnedalivetattoo

Stay Much Better

1 Beaconsfield Parade, Beaconsfield Road, Brighton, BN1 6DN
Tel No: 01273 564494
www.smbtattoo.com
Instagram: @smbtattoo
www.facebook.com/smbtattoo

Tattoo FX

32 Middle Village, Bolnore, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4GH
01444454411
info@tattoo-fx.co.uk
www.tattoo-fx.co.uk

The Hidden Tannery

10-11 Lewes Road, Brighton, BN2 3HP
hello@hiddentannery.com
www.hiddentannery.com

Valhalla Tattoo

215 High Street, Bromley, Kent. BR1 1NY
Tel no: 0208 313 9470
info@valhallatattoo.co.uk
www.facebook.com/valhallatattoo215

SOUTH WEST

Black Chalice Tattoo

Unit 4, Plaza 21, Edgeware Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 1HE
Tel No: 01793 671 432
blackchalicetattoo@hotmail.com
www.facebook.com/blackchalicetattoo

Blackfriars Tattoo

5 Maylord Street, Hereford. HR1 2DS
Tel no: 01432 278330
blackfriarstattoo@gmail.com
Instagram @blackfriarstattoo

Crow Quill

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

The Custom Propaganda Tattoo Company

Unit 7, Botley Mills, Mill Hill, Botley, Southampton, SO30 2GB
Tel No: 01489 325341
Instagram: @custompropagandatattoo
www.facebook.com/CustomPropagandaTattoo

Eightfold Tattoo

1 Heanton Street, Braunton, EX33 2JS
Phone: 01271 523732
www.eightfoldtattoo.com
Instagram: @eightfoldtattoo

Infernal Rites Tattoo

71 Market St, Westhoughton, Bolton, BL5 3AA
Tel No: 01942 811132
infernalritestattoo@gmail.com
Instagram: @infernalritestattoo
www.facebook.com/infernalritestattoo

Needle and Fred Tattoo

22 High St, Littlehampton BN17 5EE
Tel no: 01903 733 622
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 300 123
purplerosetattoo@hotmail.co.uk
www.purplerosetattoo.co.uk

WALES

Broadside Tattoo

38 Singleton Street, Swansea, SA1 3QN
Tel No: 01792 455 000
Email: broadsideswansea@hotmail.com
Instagram: @broadswansea

Dexterity Ink

Unit 9 Indoor Peoples Market LL13 8 Wrexham
Tel no: 01978 447 100
www.facebook.com/DexterityInkTattooStudio09

Keep the Faith Social Club

14-16 Royal Arcade, Cardiff, CF10 1AE
Tel No: 029 2140 6954
Email: keepthefaitthsc@gmail.com
www.keepthefaitthsocialclub.com
Instagram: @keepthefaitthsc
www.facebook.com/keepthefaitth-socialclub

Physical Graffiti

124 City Road, Cardiff. CF24 3DQ
Tel no: 029 2048 1428
pgct@hotmail.co.uk
Instagram: @physicalgraffititattoos

Stronghold Tattoo

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

Surrealistic Sanctuary

144 City Rd, Cardiff, CF24 3DR
Tel no: 07413 383 323
sstattoocardiff@gmail.com
www.surrealisticsanctuary.co.uk

Sursum Tattoo

11 Market Square, Narberth, SA67 7AU
Tel No: 01834 860 616
www.sursumtattoo.com
sursumtattoo@gmail.com
Instagram: @sursumtattoo
www.facebook.com/sursumtattoo

WEST MIDLANDS

B.W Tattoo Studios

9 Eastern Avenue, Lichfield, WS13 6TE
Tel No: 01543 898766
www.bigwillstattsos.co.uk
Instagram: @bwtattoostudios
www.facebook.com/BWtattoostudios

Blood & Honey Tattoo Co

Winchcombe St, Cheltenham, GL52, 2NE
Tel no: 01242 352306
hello@bloodandhoney.uk
bloodandhoney.uk

Cosmic Monsters Incorporated

Mitre House, the courtyard 27 The Strand, Bromsgrove B61 8AB
Tel no: 07863 135814
cmittattoo@gmail.com
www.cmi-tattoo.com

The Church Tattoo

11 Church Road Redditch B97 4AB
Tel no: 01527 759 852
thechurchtattoo@hotmail.com
Facebook: facebook.com/thechurchtattoo

Folklore Tattoo

119 Lichfield St, Tamworth B79 7QB
Tel no: 01827 768446
folkloretattoos@live.com
www.folkloretattooostudio.co.uk/

Modern Electric Tattoo Co

147 Golden Cross Lane Catshill, Bromsgrove Worcestershire, B61 0JZ
Tel: 01527 759434
info@modernelectrictattoo.co.uk
www.modernelectrictattoo.co.uk

Nala Tattoo & Piercing Studio

81 Bolebridge Street
Tamworth, B79 7PD
Tel no: 01827 68 353
contact@nalastudio.co.uk
www.nalastudio.co.uk

Sweet Life Gallery

80 Bristol Street,
Birmingham.
B57AH
Tel no: 01216921361
Enquiry@sweetlifegallery.co.uk
www.sweetlifegallery.co.uk

The Inkspot

Number 6 the Parade,
Silverdale,
Newcastle Under Lyme.
ST5 6LQ
01782 619144
tattoosbycookie@hotmail.com
www.theinkspotuk.com

Tokyotattoo® Studios (Cheltenham)

13 The Courtyard, Montpellier,
Cheltenham, GL50 1SR
Bookings & Enquiries: 01242 300165
www.tokyotattoo.co.uk

Tokyotattoo® Studios (Birmingham)

50 - 54 St. Paul's Square,
Birmingham, B3 1QS
Bookings & Enquiries: 01242 300165
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Vicious Pink Tattoo

Suite C, 9a Willow Street,
Oswestry,
SY11 1AF
Tel no: 01691570427
viciouspinktattoo@gmail.com
www.viciouspink.co.uk

NORTH WEST

Ace Kustom Tattoo

78 Church Road
Manchester, M22 4NW
Tel no: 0161 945 8433
acekustomtattoos@gmail.com

All Style Tattoos

28 Crellin Street
Barrow in Furness, LA14 1DU
Tel no: 01229 838 946
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

Black Freighter Tattoo Co.

56-60 Lower Bridge Street
Chester, Cheshire
CHI 1RU
Tel no: 01244 297528
theblackfreightertattoo@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/TheBlack-FreighterTattooCo

Bold As Brass Tattoo

Charleston House, 12 Rumford Pl,
Liverpool L3 9DG
Tel no: 0151 227 1814
boldasbrassattoo@gmail.com
www.boldasbrassattoo.com

The Butchers Block Tattoo Parlour

14 Crompton Street, Wigan,
WNI 1YP
Tel No: 07849 114 380
www.ButchersBlockTattoo.co.uk
ButchersBlockTattoo@hotmail.com
www.facebook.com/ButchersBlock-Tattoo
Instagram: @ButchersBlockTattoo

Dabs Tattoo

78b Eastbourne Road
Southport
PR8 4DU
01704566665
Dabstattoos@btconnect.com
https://www.facebook.com/dabstattoo/DABS Tattoo
@tattoosatdabs

Indelible Ink

3 York Avenue,
Thornton-Cleveleys, FY5 2UG
Tel No: 01253 280457
www.indelibleinktattooostudio.co.uk
Instagram: @indelible_ink_tattoos
www.facebook.com/indelibleinkuk

Inkden Tattoo & Piercing Studio

50 B Coronation Street,
Blackpool FY1 4PD
Tel: 07957 021 702
inkden.tattoo@gmail.com
www.inkdentattoo.co.uk

Inked Up Chester

21 Eastgate Row North,
Chester. CHI 1LQ
01244638558

info@inkedupchester.co.uk
Instagram @inkedupchester

Marked for life

45 High Street, (Winpenny house)
Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1SB
Tel no: 01642 641 235
tattoomfl@gmail.com
www.marked-for-life.com

Market Quarter Tattoo

14 Market Street, Southport,
Merseyside. PR8 1HJ
marketquartertattoo@gmail.com
Facebook - Market Quarter Tattoo
Instagram - @marketquartertattoo

Sacred Art Tattoo

497 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton,
Manchester. M21 8AG
Tel: 0161 881 1530
tattoo@sacredarttattoo.co.uk
www.sacredarttattoo.co.uk

Skin Kandi Tattoo Studio

50a Westfield Street, St Helens
Merseyside WA10 1QF
Tel no: 01744 734699
skinkandi@hotmail.co.uk
www.skinkandi.co.uk

Studio78 Tattoos

15 Earle Street, Crewe, CW1 2BS
Tel No: 01270 581 581
email: studio-78@hotmail.co.uk
www.studio-78.co.uk

True Colours Tattoo Studio

14 Guildhall Street,
Preston, PR1 3NU
Tel No: 01772 378565
www.truecolourstattoo.co.uk
Instagram: @truecolourstattoo

True 'til Death

13 Whalley Road
Accrington, BB51AD
Tel no: 01254 433 760
Email: via Facebook - True 'Til Death
Tattoo
www.accringtontattoo.com

CONVENTION CALENDAR

16th-17th November Wrexham Tattoo Show

Wrexham, glyndwr Sports
Mold Road, LL11 2AW
www.facebook.com/events/1142455825926608

OVERSEAS CONVENTIONS

8th-10th November Florence Tattoo

Convention
Fortezza Da Basso
Viale Filippo Strozzi, I 50129
Florence, Italy
www.florenceattooconvention.com

8th-10th November I Love Tattoo Expo

Kaohsiung City, Taiwan
www.ilovetattooexpo.com

8th-10th November International Brussels

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

7th-8th December Cesenatico Tattoo Convention

Palacongressi Bellaria Igea Marina
Via Uso I - 47814 Bellaria Igea
Marina, Italy
www.tattooconventioncesenatico.it

2020 UK CONVENTIONS

February 28th-1st March Tattoo Tea Party

Event City, Manchester
www.tattooteaparty.com

25th-26th April Portsmouth Tattoo Fest

Pyramids Centre

25th-26th April Big North Tattoo Show

www.tattooofest.co.uk
Utilita Arena, Newcastle Upon-Tyne,
Arena Way, NE4 7NA
www.bignorthtattooshow.com

24th-26th April Kent Tattoo Convention

49-51 Marine Terrace
Margate
CT9 1XJ
www.facebook.com/The-Kent-Tattoo-Convention-401403340342372/

2nd-3rd May Brighton Tattoo Convention

Brighton Centre,
Brighton BN1 2GR
www.brightontattoo.com

23rd-24th May Totally Inked Tattoo Convention

1 Kingsway
Newport
NP20 1UH
www.facebook.com/Totallyinkedtattooconvention/

31st July-2nd August 16th London Tattoo Con- vention

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

2020 OVERSEAS CONVENTIONS

17th-19th January Goa Tattoo Festival

Tito's Whithouse, Arpora Mapusa
Road, Anjuna Goa India
www.goatattooofestival.com

17th-19th January International Lille Tattoo Show

Lille Grand Palais
59800 Lille,
France
www.lille-tattoo-convention.com

7th-8th March 10th Rotterdam Tattoo Convention

Rotterdam Ahoy
Ahoyweg 10,
3084 BA Rotterdam
www.unitedconventions.com/rotterdam

13th-15th March Mondial Du Tatouage

Grande halle de la Villette
211 Avenue Jean Jaurès
75019 Paris
France
www.mondialdutatouage.com

3rd-5th April Nepal Tattoo Convention

Heritage Garden
(Old Gyanodaya School)
Milap Rd, Sanepa, Patan 44600,
Nepal
www.nepaltattooconvention.com

7th-9th August Berlin Tattoo Convention

Arena Berlin
Eichenstraße 4, 12435 Berlin.
www.tattoo-convention.de

12th-13th September Tattoo Assen

De Bonte Wever
Stadsbroek 17,
9405 BK Assen,
Netherlands
www.tattooexpo.eu/en/assen/2020

21st-23rd March Prison Ink Tattoo Festival

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Horsens,
Denmark

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