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ISNARD BARBOSA

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LAINY BEE

Glowing painterly realism

PORTFOLIOS

Guus Mandigers • Inky Joe
Tattoo Tom

ABI TONGE

Intricate blackwork patterns

IREZUMI ICONOGRAPHY

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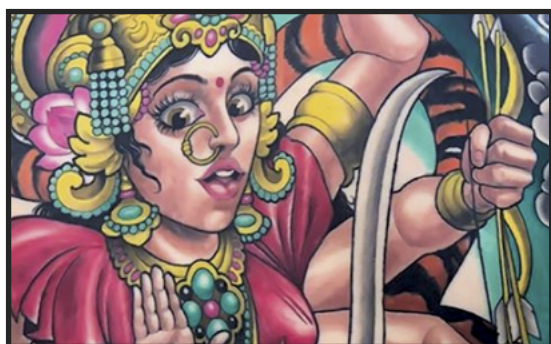
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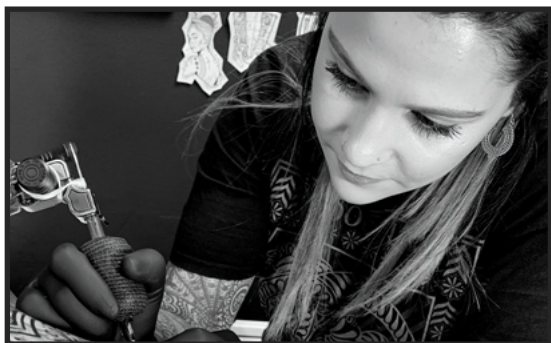
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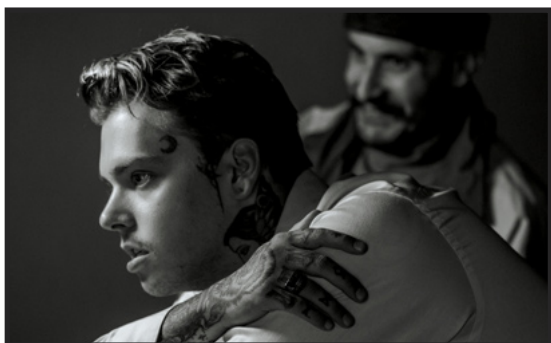
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EDITORIAL 186



The tattoo world is awash with messages and posts about being kind, spreading positivity, taking care of our mental health and reaching out to others. I seem to be reading or hearing about this kind of thing all the time. Most of my friends (both in life and on social media) are within tattooing, and therefore the comments I see or hear come mainly from them, which is great.

But there is also a contradictory, uglier trend which I feel is important to address. Alongside all this empathy and compassion I've also noticed an increasing number of tattooists out there who feel a need to shame their clients and their peers. What started off as a bit of a moan about people copying work, or not turning up for appointments, or asking all the obvious questions about a first tattoo, has evolved into an almost mob-like online frenzy of outright mocking.

To be fair, we're all two-faced gossipmongers. It's always been like that in any workplace. However, speaking to Nance from accounts over the photocopier about Bob's foot fetish is one thing, but publishing it online, to a large audience with the ability to share it in every direction, is much more harmful.

It's one thing to make your peers aware of a tattooist who is problematic, or who could damage the reputation of a studio. But it's a whole different matter to be making memes, posting screenshots of online conversations, and naming names. And shaming members of the public takes it to a whole new level of low. Sure, you can block these people so they themselves can't see what you're writing. You can edit the screenshots so they don't include names or faces or people's profile pictures, or whatever other identifying information is on show. But 99% of these things eventually get back to those who are involved.

Young tattooists copy designs, often because they don't know any better. Appointments get forgotten or missed (just ask my dentist). And new customers will always ask all those predictable questions. But behind the naivety, the mistakes and the forgetfulness there are real people with real emotions, thoughts and feelings. Instead of exposing their vulnerabilities online, maybe just have a word with Nance next time you're at the photocopier.

Editorial team

Perry Rule
Jill Feldt
Sean Campbell

Editorial enquiries

editor@totaltattoo.co.uk

Advertising enquiries

advertising@totaltattoo.co.uk

Gallery submissions

gallery@totaltattoo.co.uk

Subscription enquiries

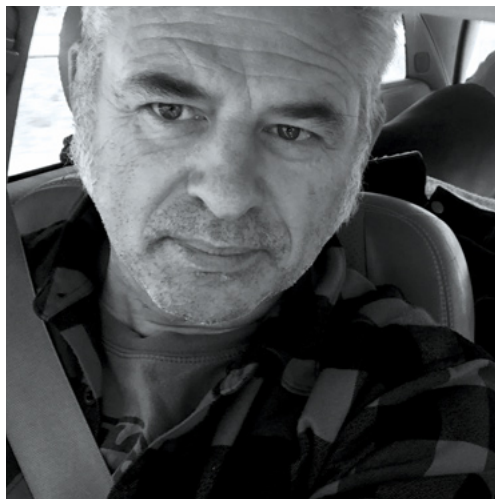
subs@totaltattoo.co.uk

Social media

Instagram: @totaltattoo
facebook.com/totaltattoo

Contributors

Lizzy Guy • Michael Luppi • Paul Sayce
• David Audsley • James Musker



Perry

Editorial Team

editor@totaltattoo.co.uk

NEWS & REVIEWS



Send your news, studio announcements, books or products for review, and items of general curiosity and intrigue for the tattoo cognoscenti to: **NEWS, TOTAL TATTOO MAGAZINE, 96 Glendenning Road, Norwich NR1 1YN** (totaltattoo@totaltattoo.co.uk)

TRIBUTE INK



The Royal British Legion's touring tattoo exhibition, 'Tribute Ink', is now on at the National Army Museum (www.nam.ac.uk) where it runs until 17th April. This powerful show (which we covered in depth in Total Tattoo Issue 180) features 50 photographs of serving and ex-serving Armed Forces personnel all of whom have military-related tattoos with poignant personal meanings – offering, in the Legion's own words, "a modern and fresh way of looking at Remembrance."

The exhibition will be shown at the following venues later in the year:

York Army Museum:
30th June to 5th September
Gloucester Cathedral:
8th September to 18th October
Cardiff Castle Museum:
23rd October to 9th November
It will also be touring to military bases across the country in 2020 so keep an eye out for further information.

www.britishlegion.org.uk



BRIGHTON MARATHON



Tattooist Wurz of Shoreline Ink in Hove recently took on the challenge of a 12-hour tattooing marathon and raised £1,415 for the Sussex Cancer Fund. He himself has gone through treatment for throat cancer and, as he said, wanted to give something back. The designs on the day were based on cancer ribbons and, in true Wurz style, there was also one with the defiant message F*** Cancer!



WIN TICKETS TO THE BIG NORTH TATTOO SHOW

Coming up again in April, it's Total Tattoo Magazine's very own Big North Tattoo Show!

Join us at the Utilita Arena in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on 25th and 26th April. There'll be 300 world class tattooists there for you to watch or get tattooed by, plus a fantastic selection of entertainment and merchandise on offer – and kids under 14 go free. This is the 4th year of the show, and we can't wait to get back to Newcastle and feast on that ever-popular Geordie delicacy, the stottie!

Why not win yourself a weekend ticket? We've got five to give away, and all you have to do is answer this simple question to be in with a chance.

Which of these local foods is associated with Newcastle-upon-Tyne?

- (A) Stilton Cheese
- (B) Bakewell Tart
- (C) Stotties

Email your answer and your postal address to comps@totaltattoo.co.uk with the subject line BIG NORTH to reach us no later than 31st March, and the first five names out of the hat will be on their way to the Utilita Arena to join in the fun (usual terms and conditions apply).

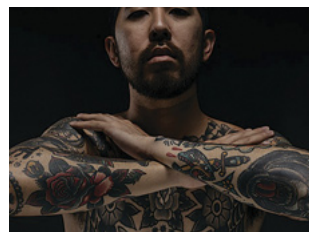
Check out bignorthtattooshow.com for all the latest details.



BODY OF WORK



The Museum of Pop Culture in Seattle is currently hosting 'Body of Work', a fine multi-media exhibition exploring tattoo history and contemporary tattooing across North America (including indigenous tattooing) with large-scale infographics, photographs, interviews, short films, and interactive experiences. The show also includes original works of art created by tattoo artists based in the Northwest and working in a wide range of styles. Featured artists include @aaron_bell, @dustinburtart, @coryboersma_art, @localboytatau, @lollipopattoos, @thesarakay, @nateleslietattoo, @alenchun, @onholliday, @lizard_milk and @la_tigresse_. The exhibition runs until 25th May. Take a look at Museum of Pop Culture website www.mopop.org for more details.



MARCO MANZO SCULPTURE FAITH IN TATTOOS



Italian tattoo artist Marco Manzo, who is also a highly regarded designer and sculptor, recently unveiled a brand new work of art – a bronze sculpture on the theme of love for the picturesque hillside town of Nemi, near Rome. It's an outdoor piece, located in the historic town centre with a panoramic view of the nearby lake. Nemi is famous for its wild strawberries (which thrive in the warm sheltered microclimate of this old volcanic crater) and every May the town celebrates its 'Fragoline di Bosco' strawberry festival.



The strawberry also symbolises the human heart – there's a touching myth about the tears of Venus transforming the blood of her dying lover Adonis into the tiny red heart-shaped fruit – so it was a potent image for Marco to choose for his sculpture. And this bronze strawberry is pierced with an arrow, symbol of the goddess Diana the Huntress whose temple on the shore of Lake Nemi was a famous place of pilgrimage in ancient Roman times. An arrow piercing a heart is also of course a powerful signifier of romantic love.

The sculpture, which was officially unveiled on Valentine's Day, also features a tattooed arm, strategically placed as an ideal photo-opportunity for visitors.

Baylor University in the USA, in collaboration with Texas Tech University, has been carrying out research into faith-based and religious tattoos. They've made some interesting findings.

Analysing hundreds of photos of Christian students' ink, it was found that tattoos with deep religious significance for the wearer are more likely to face inward – positioned inside the wrist, for example – because they are usually a personal reminder of values to live by, rather than a public proclamation of belief.



The most common placements for religious tattoos were the wrist, arm, foot and back. Women's religious tattoos tended to be smaller; men's religious tattoos tended to be larger. Nearly half the tattoos photographed incorporated words, and half of these were purely lettering (with no other images at all). Since the students were all Christian, it's not too surprising that most of these texts were from the Bible. New Testament references were slightly in the majority, but the most popular source overall was the Old Testament Book of Psalms.

The hope is to broaden out the study to the wider population. This initial research was published in the journal *Visual Studies* (of the International Visual Sociology Association). For more details, visit www.baylor.edu/artsandsciences and look under Arts & Sciences News.

PLAYER ONE

Give your PlayStation 4 the bodysuit treatment! To celebrate the launch of the beautifully remastered Yakuza 3, 4, and 5 in 1080p and 60fps – and the availability of Kazuma Kiryu's saga on one console for the first time in history – SEGA is offering The Yakuza Remastered Collection dynamic theme free with all purchases of the collection. Check out store.playstation.com for details.



EYE EYE



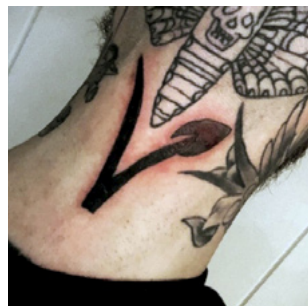
The provincial government of Saskatchewan in Canada has banned cosmetic eye tattooing, the implantation of eye jewellery, and other types of body modification directly involving the eyes (following similar legislation in the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba).

According to a statement by the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists (SAO), health professionals are now dealing with increasing numbers of complications and serious problems following such procedures and the SAO supports the new legislation. "It's a proactive decision to protect the public's vision and prevent unnecessary cases of injury and blindness," said SAO president Dr. Nathan Knezacek.

VEGAN TATTOOING

Passionate vegan Benjamin Patience is aiming for a Guinness World Record by tattooing the word VEGAN on himself 100 times. It will be an eye-catching block of script on his lower leg, to raise awareness of plant-based living as a healthy, compassionate and environmentally beneficial way to be. Benjamin lives in Ipswich and volunteers for Anonymous for the Voiceless –

www.anonymousforthevoiceless.org – a peaceful activism organisation that campaigns for total animal liberation.



SUICIDE AWARENESS FUNDRAISER

The Tidy Tattoo Parlour in Bude, Devon, held a two-day fundraiser in February in memory of Ricky Gamage, who died at the age of 23. Eldmer Gill was tattooing suicide awareness ribbons, with proceeds going to a special fund for Ricky's newborn son. More than 30 tattoos were completed, and well over a thousand pounds was raised. Our thoughts and wishes are with Ricky's friends and family, and all those affected by this devastating loss, at this sad and difficult time.

YOUNGEST TATTOOIST IN THE WORLD?

Maya Lu creates tattoos with a beautifully naive, child-like aesthetic... but maybe that isn't so surprising, because she's only a child herself! What is truly astonishing though, is the adult skill with which she executes her designs. Now nine years old, Maya Lu has been tattooing since she was a toddler; she started as soon as she could hold a tattoo machine. She now has her own clients at Psyland 25 in Germany, the well known studio where Little Swastika and other avant-garde artists are based, and she is building quite a following. Check out her video here: psyland25.com/en/



NEW STUDIO

Our good friend and occasional Total Tattoo contributor Dan Stone has now opened his new studio, R2 Tattoos, at 16 Northway, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO11 1JL. Tel 01723 369243 Email r2tatt2s@gmail.com



COVERING RACIST TATTOOS



Here's a nice optimistic news story from the USA. In Orange Park, Florida, Trevor Thompson at Fantasy Tattoo and Piercing Shop is offering free cover-ups for anyone who wants to obliterate racist or neo-Nazi tattoos. He describes it as paying off his debt to the world, having been involved in hate groups himself in a past life. As he says, "Life's too short to spend yours going around hurting people."

BUSHFIRE FLASH

In a crisis, the tattoo community always digs deep to help those in need. Shops and studios (in Australia and all around the world) have been raising money to support both humans and non-humans affected by the Australian bushfire nightmare. There have been loads of flash days and other fundraisers going on during the last couple of months, donating to charities such as the Australian Red Cross, New South Wales Rural Fire Service, wildlife rescue charity WIRES and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Australia.

We've just heard about an ongoing year-long donation scheme at Ancient Marks Tattoo Parlour (@ancientmarks) in Melbourne. Mac Lawless (@lawless_tattoos) is offering to tattoo any designs from his Bushfire Relief Flash Sheet for AU\$150, of which AU\$50 will be donated to Victoria's Country Fire Authority emergency service – for the rest of 2020! Another year-long scheme at Ancient Marks is Mac's offer to plant a native tree for every tattoo appointment of AU\$250 upwards.

Let us know about any charity happenings at your shop or studio, and please send high res photos too. If you want us to publicise the event in advance, we need to know by the 12th of the previous month. (Total Tattoo goes on sale the first Thursday of the month.) Email totaltattoo@totaltattoo.co.uk



ICING ON THE CAKE

Check out this video from The Bake King (aka tattoo artist Ben Cullen). If you're of a nervous disposition it's probably not for you – but don't worry, all is not as it seems.

www.instagram.com/p/B73_kNXAAYt/



WIN A HELLCAT JEWELLERY VOUCHER!

Hellcat Jewellery creates high quality, handmade alternative jewellery for guys and ghouls. Their collections range from heavy signature skull rings and iconic tattoo-inspired necklaces to marvellously macabre wedding rings set with stunning stones – all designed and handmade in Hellcat's humble workshop in Birmingham's historic Jewellery Quarter.

Jo the jeweller, owner of Hellcat, has generously given us a **£50 voucher** for one lucky reader to win. To be in with a chance of getting your hands on this prize, simply email us your answer to the following question:

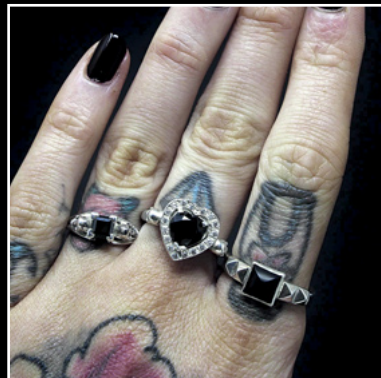
Where is Hellcat's workshop?

- (A) Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter**
- (B) Birmingham's Jewellery Half**
- (C) Birmingham's Jewellery Third**

Email your answer to **comps@totaltattoo.co.uk** and include your postal address. Your answer must reach us by 31st March, and the first entry drawn out of the hat will win the voucher. Usual terms and conditions apply.

And even if you don't win the voucher, you can still get a bargain. Hellcat are offering ALL Total Tattoo readers a massive 20% discount on any purchases throughout March. Just head to **www.hellcatjewellery.co.uk** and use code TOTALTATTOO20 at checkout!

For custom jewellery made to your requirements email **jo@hellcatjewellery.co.uk** and follow Hellcat on Instagram: **@hellcatjewellery**



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Isnard Barbosa's work is a combination of neo-trad and realism, with elements of Japanese thrown in for good measure. Born in Brazil and raised in Portugal, he worked all over the world before coming to live in the fair city of Dublin. Isnard's strong, illustrative style and warm, funny personality make him a highly sought-after artist.

Tell us about your journey into tattooing.

I started with street art a long long time ago. Then one of my friends asked me if I would be interested in tattooing. And that's how it all began. It's been a roller-coaster ride. A whirlwind. And so many people have supported me in my journey.

What made you choose to settle in Ireland?

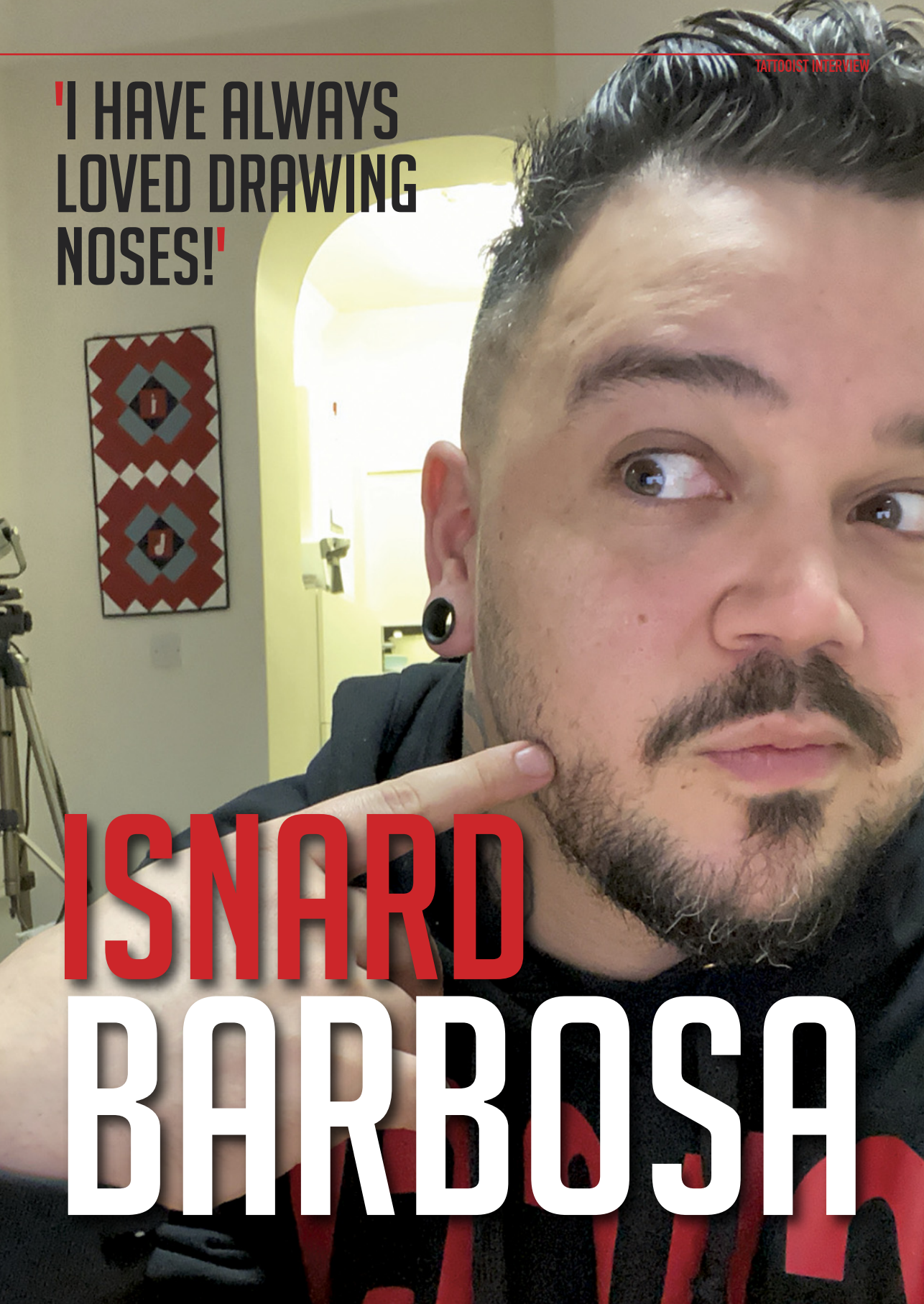
After being here for such a long time, it's become home. The main reason I've stayed in Ireland for so long is the people. Clients, colleagues, they're some of the coolest people I have ever met. This combined with the wonderful weather of course...

What's the tattoo scene like in Dublin?

It's awesome. And it's really growing. More and more people are getting great tattoos. A big part of that is down to the hard work of the tattooing community here, always pushing each other forward.

'I HAVE ALWAYS
LOVED DRAWING
NOSES!'

ISNARD
BARBOSA



How would you describe your tattoo style?

Isnard style, baby!

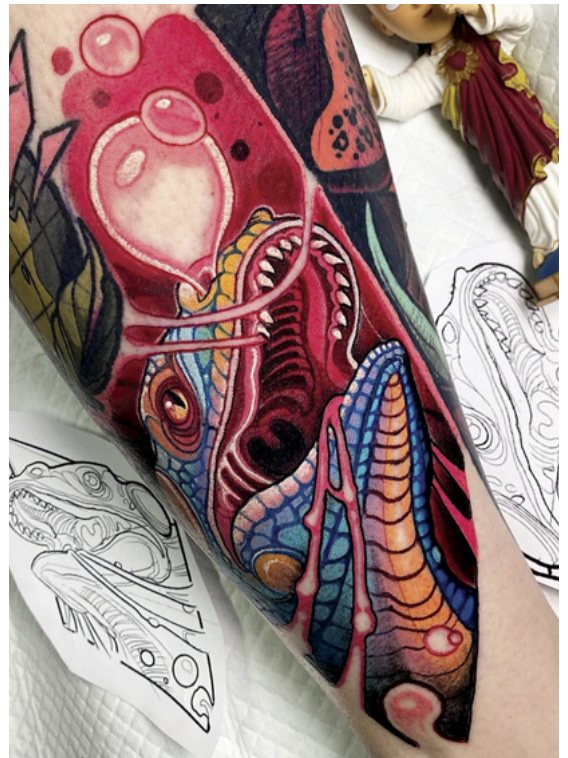
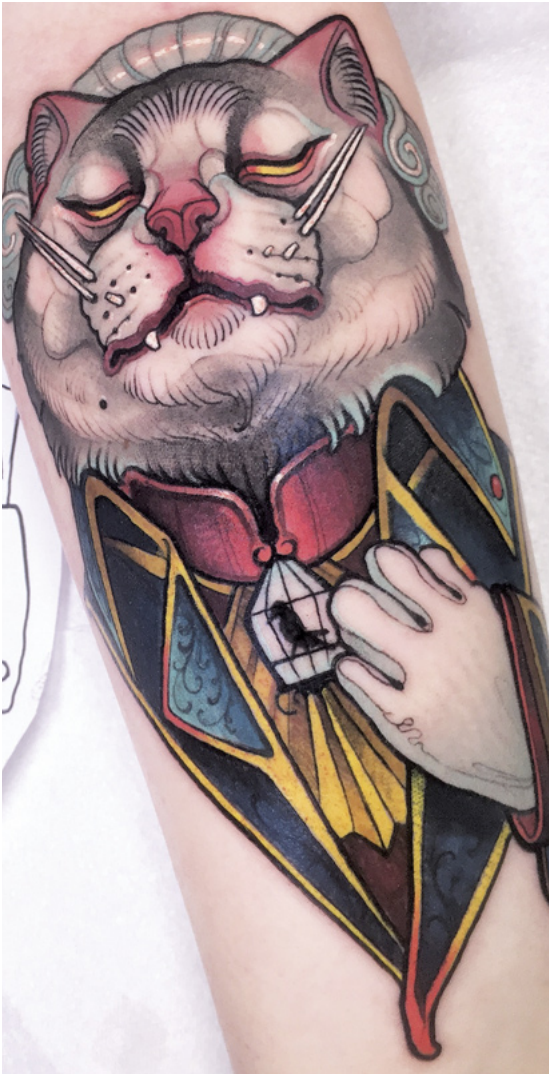
How did you arrive at your current style?

Simply through consistent practice. I'm eternally grateful to my amazing clients who challenge me and bring me such great ideas.

Who or what influences your style?

I am heavily influenced by art nouveau, and have been ever since I was very young. More recently I've merged Japanese stylings with my neo-trad elements. I do many characters from video games, anime, etc, but I always try to create something in my trademark Isnard style. I believe it's important to keep learning new things. If I didn't, I'd feel like I was getting stale. I've learnt so much from my co-workers and tattooist friends. I love having guest artists in the studio, both to hang out, and to trade tips and techniques.



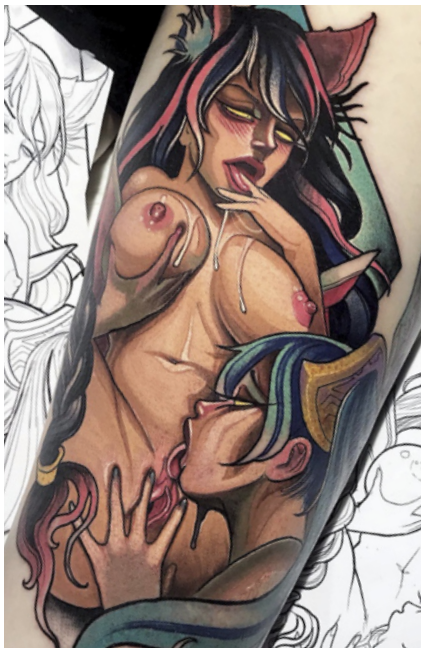


Tell us more about your guest artists. Why do you think they come to the studio?

I can only imagine they come here because of me. It's tough being as popular as me... No, for real, I feel blessed that we have such talented people coming to the studio. The creativity only increases when new people come. There's always a wonderful exchange of ideas - especially when we have guests who specialise in styles we don't often do in the studio.

For you, what are the most important elements of your designs?

Personally I have always loved drawing noses! But I would say colour balance is a major element as well.



Where do your distinctive colour choices come from?

Lots of practice and study. It's important to understanding the skin, and to know how certain colours will work – and heal – in different areas. So placement is crucial. I try my best to keep my colours consistent and 'true' when I'm working with characters, but I sneak in my own twists whenever I can.

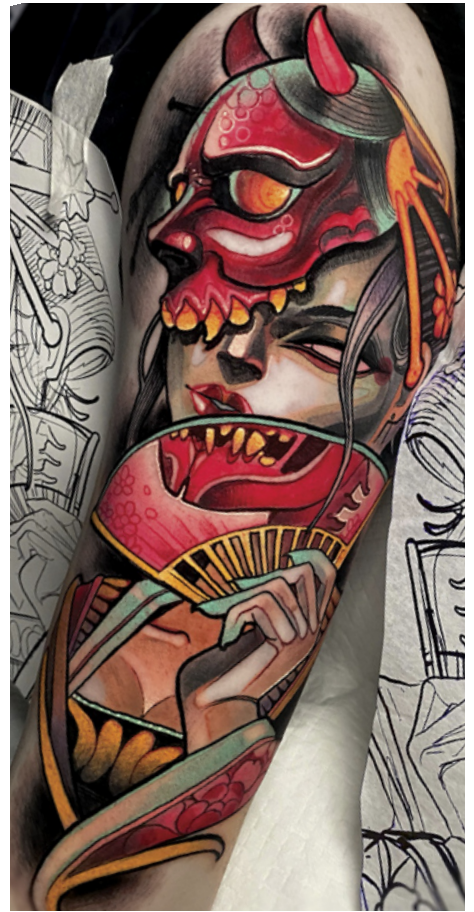
How do you balance the beautiful and the sinister in your tattoos?

On a case-by-case basis. I work with each client to meet their individual expectations. When it comes to the more wacky elements, some of the ideas they come up with are absolutely crazy... I'm sure you know the kind of pieces I'm talking about...

Do you ever hit a creative block?

Yes, sometimes if a client gives me too much freedom I might get stuck making decisions. But I also love this. I just keep hammering away until I settle on a direction I'm happy to pursue. That's usually how I go about it.





You use an iPad to design. How easy was it to transition to this?

At first it was a little difficult to adjust. But I watched countless videos, got help from those around me, and kept practicing. Now I couldn't imagine living without it.

What's the biggest challenge in your work?

I've always found it difficult to feel happy with my own work. I'm sure every artist can relate to this. But it's one of the main drivers that pushes me to keep improving.

What tattoos have you done recently that you are most proud of?

The Baby Yoda for sure. Baby Yoda memes are my life. He's just the greatest thing to happen to the world in a long long time.



Your work is very often copied. How do you react to this?

Honestly I do my best to ignore it. I don't have the time or energy to get angry. I prefer to direct all my energies into my creativity. If someone wants my work, it would be great if they came to me so that we could do something unique and amazing together... Something original...

Tell us about your machines.

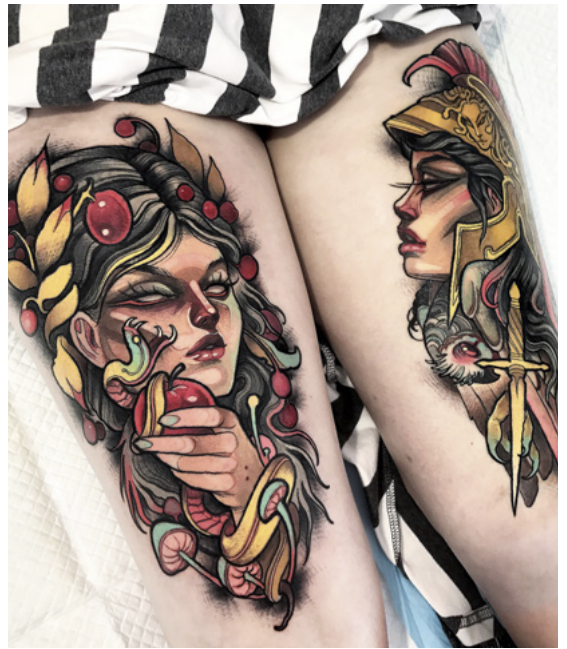
I use Cheyenne machines. They're the machines that I'm most comfortable with, and they allow me to do my absolute best work. I couldn't imagine working with any other machines right now.

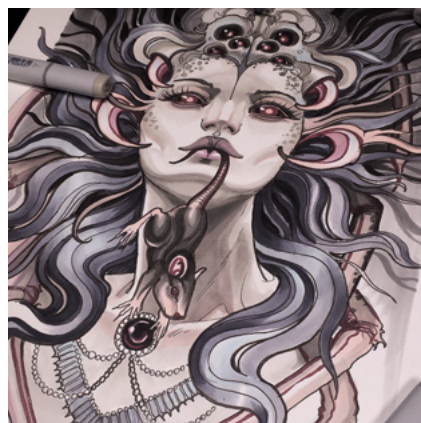
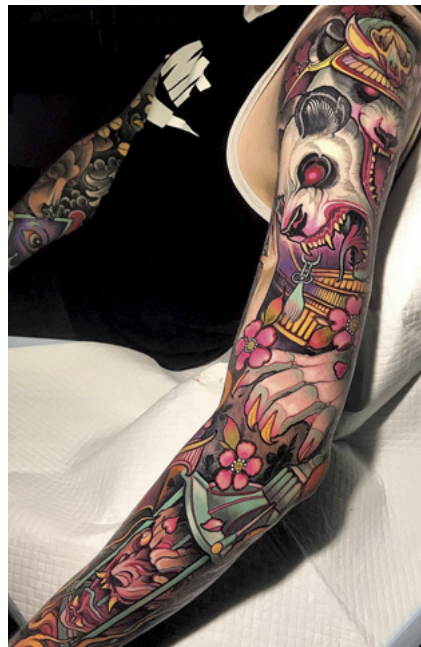




You work a lot of conventions. What do you get from them?

Conventions enable me to work with clients nearer to their home, if they can't travel to Dublin – and that's always a joy. Being surrounded by a hurricane of creativity for a couple of days, with friends old and new, gives me the energy to put out my best work. And wherever I am in the world, I love trying the local food. The after parties aren't too shabby either.





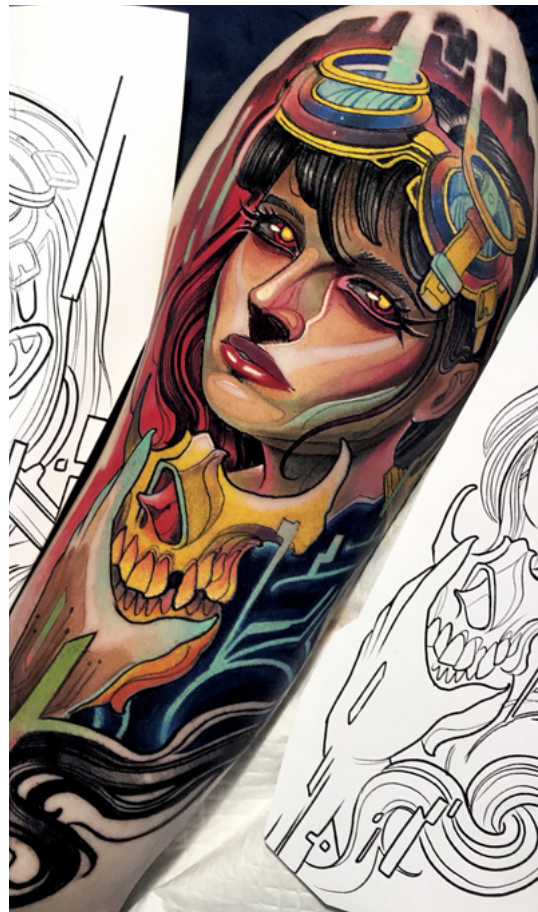
How do you deal with the emotional and physical demands of tattooing?

I exercise a lot and I eat healthily. Because of the pressures of my work, I believe it's extremely important for me to take care of my body. I want to keep tattooing for as long as I can!

What are your interests outside of tattooing?

Drawing. The grind never stops. I also do Muay Thai, and I have an unhealthy relationship with Dragon Ball FighterZ.





Tell us about **Legendary Tattoo Studio**.

Legendary Tattoo Studio is my home base. It's artist-led and artist-run. I always wanted to create my own space for my own tattooing, as well as being able to work alongside other top level individuals in the industry. Being able to share ideas so openly, and constantly push each other, is huge. It's like one big happy family. Especially with Luiz Lacorte, Matsy and Johnny Domus. They might drive me up the wall at times, but I couldn't imagine working with a better bunch of people. And the icing on the cake is having some of my amazing tattooist friends come over here to work and hang out. It's not a studio anymore, it's a home. And I hope everyone who comes here feels the same.





Anything else you'd like to add?

I want to offer my thanks again to all my wonderful clients, even the perverted ones. They're the reason I do what I do. Here's hoping the tattoo scene keeps on growing like this for a long time!

Legendary Tattoo Studio
64 Georges Court
South Great George's Street
Dublin 8

D02 F880

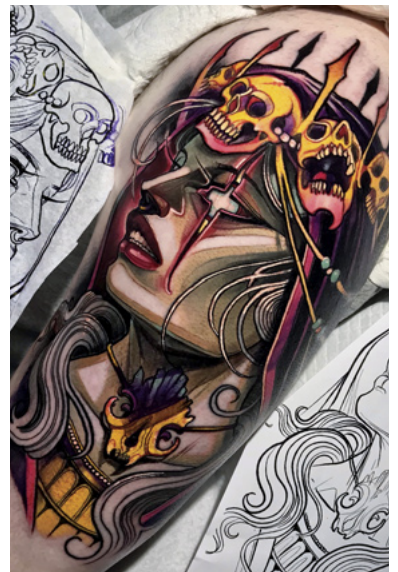
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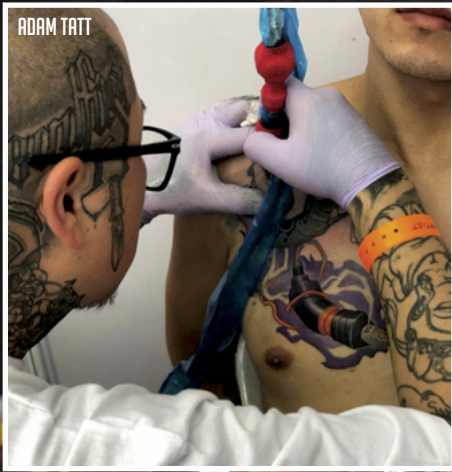


SUNDAY 5TH APRIL

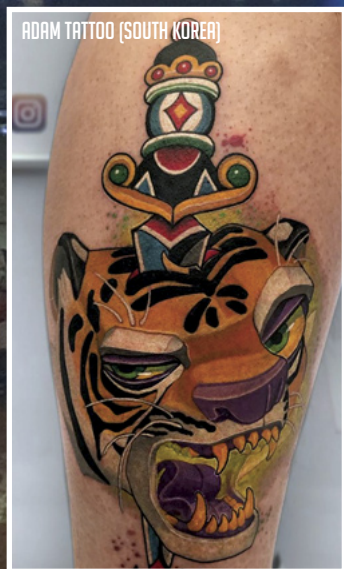
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GOA TATTOO FESTIVAL 2020

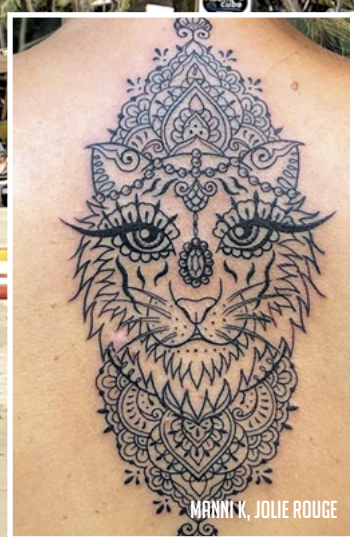


The Goa Tattoo Festival, on the southern Indian coast, is definitely one of the more interesting conventions in the world. It is without doubt, as its tagline suggests, 'not just a tattoo convention, but an experience' and this January was its 5th edition. In its short lifespan it has attracted some of the world's best tattooers including Julian Siebert, David Corden, Hanumantra, Marek Pawlik, Remis, Hwadam, Samantha Ford to name but a few.





JIM DILLON





So, what makes the Goa Tattoo Festival unique for artists? Well, aside from its location in such a beautiful part of the world, the organisers won't let you attend unless you visit for a minimum of seven days – to ensure that you get to participate in at least some of the trips they organise before and after the show. Ancient forts, waterfalls, temples, beaches, even a now famed 'Disco Night' are all on the menu, and everyone is made to feel extraordinarily welcome. Overseas visitors get the chance to feel the true atmosphere of India, experiencing as much as possible during their trip rather than flying in, tattooing for a few days and leaving straight away. And it works. This convention is incredibly social, and strong bonds are made between artists from all over the world. The Indian tattoo community (artists and collectors alike) is one of the friendliest you'll ever come across, which just adds another beneficial dimension.



Royal Enfield sponsor the Goa Tattoo Festival, and the Monday after the show there's an artists' motorbike 'ride out' to a stunning heritage fort for lunch, followed by a ride back down to Royal Enfield's riverside showroom and restaurant – and this alone is worth the trip!

Goa itself explodes with colour whichever way you look at it. Painted temples are scattered along sun drenched beaches, rainbow markets buzz with excitement, there's the faint smell of incense and spices surrounding you, and the distinct hum of Royal Enfield motorcycles providing the soundscape as the



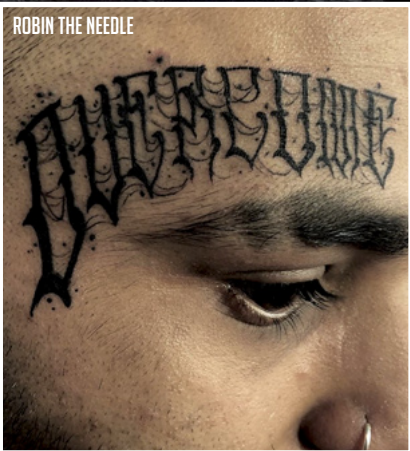
preferred mode of transport for many. Cows (yes cows!) are sacred in India and infiltrate the beaches and streets just as people do, but it's the cows that get right of way. There is magic here, and a little tattoo history too... Fun fact: The Leu family used to live and tattoo only 10 minutes away from the convention site itself – drawn here, like many, by the freedom and the bohemian lifestyle of Goa, chilled and creative in equal measure. Goa now attracts a large western alternative crowd and is full of backpackers, hedonists, creatives and spiritual adventurers, and tattoos are literally everywhere to be seen.

The convention's entertainment roster included performers from all over the world – France, Greece, Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Australia, Italy, Croatia, Russia and of course India – all very talented, and all in Goa to combine their love of performing with their love of this truly special place. Stand-out acts included Sitarsonic, an amazing Greek sitar player, Jyoti, a French magician, The Tantric Monkeys, a brilliant gang of traditional Irish musicians, Transeleto, an Indian/Italian duo with an Indian fusion vibe, and fire acts from India, Australia and Ibiza... you get the idea!

The Festival also featured the YogiXIII 'Hands' exhibition (which many of you will have seen at the London Tattoo Convention), a custom bike show and famed German tattoo models Makani Terror and Alice La Douce. So there was lots going on.



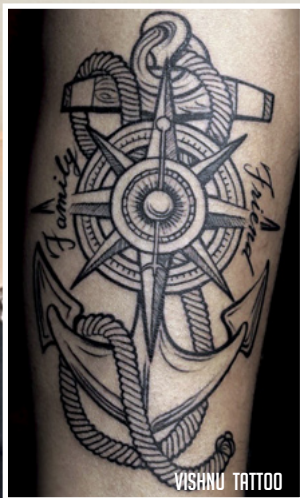
ROBIN THE NEEDLE



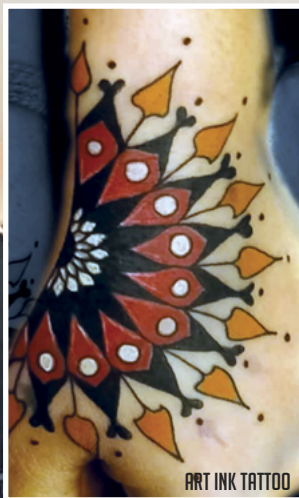
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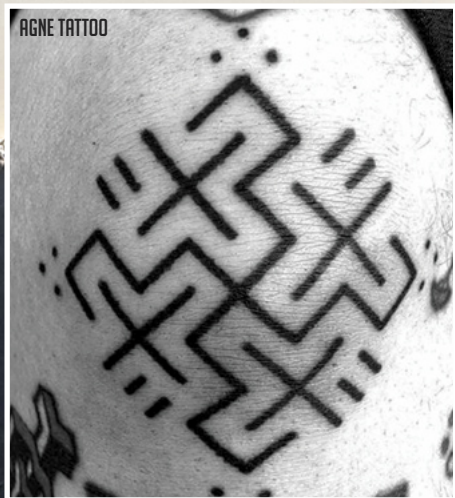
KAMALDAS, BLACK PEARL TATTOO



VISHNU TATTOO



ART INK TATTOO



AGNE TATTOO



LINES AND SHADES TATTOO



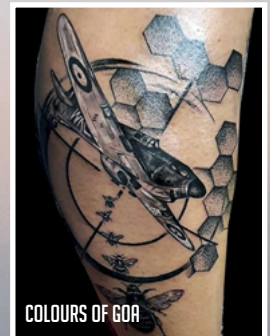
OMECHIVA



This uniquely cosmopolitan part of the country, with all its overseas visitors and residents, also gives Indian artists attending the show the chance to work on lighter skin. For them, the opportunity to create vibrant colour pieces (which is not always possible when working with their regular clientele) is an important aspect of the Goa Tattoo Festival's attraction. Being able to mix with, work alongside and exchange creative ideas with international artists is a big draw for everyone. Indian tattoo artists find it hard to travel to many western countries

because it's too difficult to get visas – a fact that is sadly in evidence in the artist line-ups of most of the world's tattoo conventions. There is real talent here in India that the west doesn't often get to see.

Tattoo conventions of note are fairly new to India, and so the competitions are always very busy. There isn't the jaded attitude you find at a lot of shows elsewhere. Indian artists take tattoo competitions very seriously and this adds a freshness to what is the mainstay of most tattoo events. Participation means everything; winning means even more. Best Of Show at Goa was won by Amey Acharya for a stunning avant-garde dinosaur piece. Mitesh Khondalker, Sandy, Trishal Babu, Sam Yengkhom and the ever present Moksha Tattoo Studio (with two category wins) championed Indian tattooing, whilst Marek Pawlik, Hwadam and Guido Schmitz were among the international winners, making a truly eclectic roster of achievement.

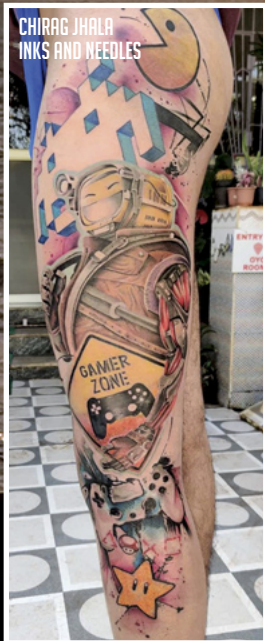




GUIDO SCHMITZ

India has an enormous and inspirational heritage of ancient and traditional art. This massive 'back catalogue' of mythology, pattern work and symbolism permeates every square inch of this wonderful country (even the trucks are works of art) and now India's tattoo artists are starting to present it on skin. It's exciting to see such an untapped reservoir start to flow into the tattoo world from its true source – and believe me, there is much more yet to come. India is a sleeping giant, and when it fully awakes the worldwide tattoo community will benefit greatly from its contribution. The Goa Tattoo Festival is a very worthy part of that wake-up call.

Simply put, if you want to combine an amazing holiday, a fun tattoo convention, and a break from the usual – and make it a real 'experience' as the Festival tagline says – then this trip is one of the best you can take.

CHIRAG JHALA
INKS AND NEEDLES

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IREZUMI ICONOGRAPHY

A BOOK BY IAIN MULLEN & ALEX REINKE

Presenting 50 paintings by Iain Mullen with written descriptions by well known Japanese specialist Alex Reinke, this book from Atonement is a great source of reference, a brilliant guide and a visual treat. It's beautifully produced and comes in a slipcase that's a work of art in itself. It even includes a sticker. This is a super book, and highly recommended for anyone who wants to learn more about Irezumi iconography or simply enjoy a collection of smooth, bold, high quality images. We chatted to Iain about how it all came together.

Is this your first book?

Yes, it's my first book other than some shitty sketchbooks I did years ago.

How does it feel to have your work published in this way?

It feels good to give back to tattooing, and also to offer younger tattooists a little knowledge on Irezumi.

Why did you choose to illustrate a book on Japanese iconography?

I work most styles of tattooing. This book came about because I found a frame that would fit five masks I painted, and I just couldn't stop painting... and then a sort of style emerged because of the format of the first five. I started to redraw and cramp in the pieces more to fit.

Tell us how you chose the images.

I chose images from Hokusai, and I also drew from netsuke - which I recommend.





Were the images challenging to draw?

These are mostly images that have been seen and done so many times, so the challenge was to draw them in a more personal looking way.

And then you added the text...

Yes, as I was completing the last 20 or so paintings I decided it would be good to add descriptions. I knew Alex wouldn't decline or I would have kicked his arse as he is soft and hides behind lots of hair. He has a black belt in Kamasutra but I'm not scared of him or his kids. I'm pretty hard and he knows it!

How long did the book take to produce?

It took two months in total. I kind of get a buzz from projects like this and I can't stop until it's done.

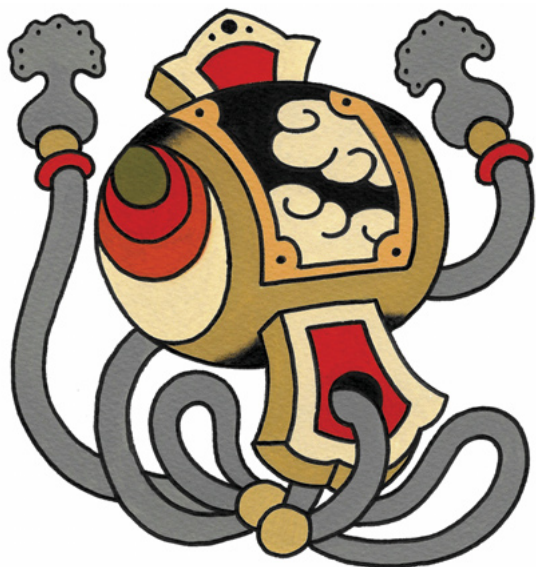




Do you have any other projects in the pipeline?

I have another book being published by Atonement, with 500 weird drawings exploring the more progressive side of tattoo imagery. It also has a lot of tattoos and daft photos of me doing daft shit to dafter people when they're least expecting it. This book also took about two months to draw and paint the cover.





We hear the Irezumi book is really popular and has been selling well...

I have no idea how the book went as far as numbers go, but I can retire if I want to. I don't even like tattooing anyway. I just took up flutar – which is an invention of mine combining the guitar and flute. I'm pretty good at it too.

Anything else you'd like to add?

People say I'm the best skin mechanic in the world, but I mean c'mon folks that's a bold statement to make. I'd say that I'm close though, very close. Thanks to Alex and Ash at Atonement for making me even more awesome!

IREZUMI ICONOGRAPHY

By Iain Mullen & Alex Reinke

Published by Atonement Books

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LAINEY

BEE

'THE CLIENT'S PERSONALITY AND STORY. THAT'S WHERE A TATTOO DESIGN STARTS.'

There will usually be a whole group of people chatting around Lainey Bee's booth at a convention. She is one of those exuberant, warm-hearted, sociable souls who draws other people towards her like a magnet. Owner of Flowinkstudio in Nijmegen, in the Netherlands, she has become known for her rich, painterly style, imbued with the most astonishing light and detail – creating images that are so silky-smooth and sophisticated you can hardly believe they are tattoos. For Lainey Bee, tattooing really is a medium for fine art.







What are the most important elements of a Lainey Bee tattoo?

I describe my style as realism with a painterly twist. Full colour artwork with high contrast. Brushstrokes that complement the body of the client. Fruit, flowers, anything from nature, faces, candles... these are some of my favourite things to tattoo. And of course the grapes are important! I love tattooing still life pieces and I got the nickname 'the grape lady' from Mike DeVries. There are endless possibilities within my style of tattooing. I can transform any idea or image into a full colour realistic piece. The only thing I don't use in my tattoos is lettering or dates; I use symbolism to capture my client's story. And there's a million ways to do that.





Tell us more about your encounter with Mike DeVries (one of the forefathers of modern realistic tattooing).

Yes, the one and only Mike DeVries! He saw me do my collaboration with Kirsten Pettitt as part of the Chaos Theory Project and he loved the grapes so much he asked me to tattoo him! So the pressure was on. He even asked me to tattoo the grapes on his lower arm as a cover-up. Such an honour to get such a visible spot. And then he asked me to design a still life piece for his full lower arm. It took me forever to make a design of course, but as soon as I started tattooing him the pressure was suddenly off and we had a lot of fun. We did the first part, the grapes, at the Chaos Theory Project. Later on he flew into Las Vegas for the second session and I tattooed him during my guest spot at Seven Tattoo. And to top off this amazing experience he asked me to be in the Wipe Outz pro team.





Can you tell us how your work has developed since you began tattooing?

It has developed a lot. The first few years, I tattooed exclusively in black and grey (which taught me a great deal about values and smooth shadings). I didn't know the endless possibilities of colour work. Then about two and a half years ago I did a colour piece, and I fell in love. Now colour is all I do.

That was quite a transition.

Yes, I began to explore what other colour artists were doing. I saw artists like Nikko Hurtado for example doing colour portraits that healed beautifully. A whole new world opened up for me. I started doing oil painting to learn colour theory. I added new dimensions to my tattoos - different colour palettes, warm and cool tones, vibrancy... Let's be honest, what's more real than tattooing in the colours of the actual things being depicted? A rose isn't black and grey in real life! It's a hundred shades of red. I adore tattooing highly contrasted pieces with lots of black in them to make the colours pop even more. And I'm now developing my very own style using brushstrokes to complement the form of the body. I'm sure this development will continue. I don't think I'll ever stop learning new techniques when it comes to art.



Tell us how you go about designing a tattoo.

A lot of study and preparation goes into creating a tattoo. In my opinion, a tattoo should fit the anatomy. It should fit the shape of the body part where it's placed and it should flow with the lines of the muscles and skeleton. This is why I design onto a photo of the body part itself. That way, it won't matter if the client loses or gains weight. The tattoo will always sit well on their body.

Your work seems to be mainly quite large in scale.

Yes, go too small and you will lose the details over time. I love to tattoo details. This is what makes a tattoo look realistic. There are also other aspects of course, such as colour contrast, that will help keep a piece readable over the years.



How important is the relationship between you and your client?

For me there's no tattooing if there isn't a good relationship with the client. Every one of my designs is personal, unique and one of a kind. So there has to be some kind of connection between the client and me. I always begin with a face-to-face consultation (either in person at my studio or through a video call) to see who's in front of me. Their personality and story are fundamental to the tattoo design; that's where it all starts. Of course the client gets their say in placement and subject matter. And I always explain my reasons if I feel that an idea needs to be changed. Not all ideas will look good as a tattoo. Luckily my clients put their trust in me to create something beautiful for them. They understand that to get the best result they have to give me some artistic freedom.

Which part of the whole process do you find most satisfying?

I find the very last part of the application the most satisfying. The final details in the tattoo, like the highlights, really make it all come together – and of course I love seeing the reaction of the client to the finished tattoo.



You've been tattooing for a while now. Are you as passionate about it now as you were when you first began?

Yes, but in a different way. In the beginning I was excited and nervous about every tattoo. Now I'm still excited, but I feel more relaxed. It's especially exciting when I get to do a tattoo (or work at a convention) that's on my wish list!

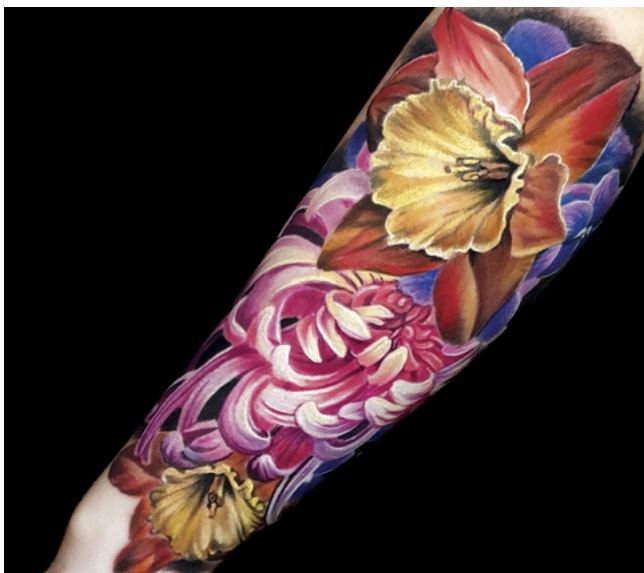
What inspired you to take up a tattoo machine in the first place?

I was looking for a new career. After being a child psychologist for years, I needed a new challenge. Something creative that would make me happy, instead of dealing with other people's problems day in day out. I got a job as a manager at a tattoo shop. In my spare time I got inspired by the artists there to start drawing again (after many years) and when they saw what I was producing they told me I should be tattooing! From the moment I first tried using a tattoo machine (on fake skin of course) I couldn't stop.



And now you own your own studio.

Yes, I love being a business person, but I do find the deeper you go into your art, the harder it is to run the studio. That's why I asked Robert to be the manager, so that I could focus on my tattooing. (At conventions people still seem to think he's the artist, even when I'm tattooing right in front of them... It must be the effect of his big beard...) Flowinkstudio houses four separate private studios, fully equipped with everything we need and then some. It's a really good place to call home.



What advice would you give to others growing their business in this way?

Don't do it! No, just kidding. Having other artists around you is a good thing. It's nice to share tips and tricks with friends. But like I said, it's hard to focus on your tattooing and deal with a business at the same time so I would recommend not going too fast. Take your time. Develop your own art before anything else.

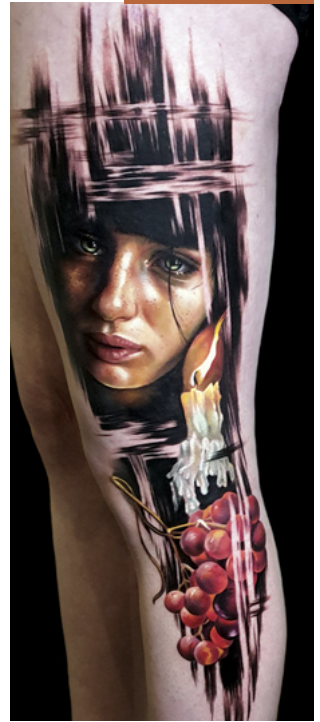


Who (or what) influences and inspires you?

I think I'm influenced by everything and everyone around me. I'm surrounded by some of the best tattooists in the industry. And all of them, regardless of their tattoo style, inspire me - with their subject matter, their tattoo techniques, and even their lifestyles! My clients inspire me with their ideas. I'm inspired by painters, sculptors, florists even... and I love exploring new artforms and working with different media myself. I like to challenge myself to do things I've never done before. I believe we never stop learning. That's one of the reasons I like trying out all the best products our industry has to offer, doing guest spots in other studios and attending so many international conventions.

You recently won at Randy Englehard's Zwickau Tattoo Expo. What does winning mean to you and your client?

Winning a prize like that is a real honour. It's a great feeling to be recognised by people in the industry who know what they're talking about. That being said, at a convention like Zwickau you're already a winner because you got invited to work there! My client was super happy with winning that prize. Not only is she the proud owner of a piece of art that she loves, but she knows other people love it as well. It was the cherry on top of an amazing weekend, and she's a badass lady for sitting for three days.



Tell us about being part of Ryan 'The Scientist' Smith's Kaos Theory Project.

I've been invited to participate twice now. It's a great experience and I feel super honoured to have been a part of it. Being able to collaborate with artists of that calibre is amazing; working side-by-side with them, you learn such a lot. And combining tattoo styles creates a whole new style in itself. Sharing tattoo tips and tricks in such a friendly setting, but also talking about our everyday lives – it's something we, as tattooists, don't get to do enough. It isn't easy to explain to people who aren't in the industry themselves exactly what this job entails. The pressures we face on a daily basis can be overwhelming. Being able to talk to others who are experiencing the same thing really helps. We come together at conventions of course, but it's very special to be able to spend a whole week doing this.

What inspires you about the industry right now?

One of the best and most inspiring things happening right now is that tattoos are being viewed more and more as an artform. There's less of a taboo around tattooing. But there are still countries and cultures in which it's frowned upon. And all those television programmes that use 'bad tattoos' as entertainment. However, I do feel that people are getting more informed about what a 'good tattoo' is, and maybe fewer people are getting drunken tattoos from the scratcher next door...

What do you see as the most valuable change happening in the industry?

All the product development work being done by companies that really care for our art and our clients! I've just joined the Fusion Ink pro team and I couldn't be happier to be supported by one of the best brands in the industry. Colours of that quality, which are so vibrant and remain so strong over the years, make my work a lot easier. And no harmful ingredients. I've never seen a single





allergic reaction. And then there's Ohana Organics, a small family company that makes the best aftercare products. Organic and vegan. These are the kinds of developments that we can be proud of as an industry.

What equipment do you use?

I'm in the FK Irons pro team, and I've been tattooing with the Xion for a couple of years now. I got the Flux at the 2020 Milan convention in February. Their newest wireless machine. I've only tried it out a couple of times, but I'm absolutely in love with it! No more hassle with cables. It's got to be one of the best practical developments in modern tattooing. Also I'm in the Dirk Cartridge pro team. Needles that have a good membrane, stay sharp even during 12-hour sessions, and load a lot of ink because of the long tip. And they're so easy to change and safe to use, for both client and artist.

When, in your opinion, has been the best time for tattooing?

For me, right now. There's no better time than now. I am focused, there are endless possibilities, and the industry's filled with amazing products and shows. And social media makes it possible for everyone to access it all. Yes, the world is a strange place and there are the Photoshoppers and haters... but through it all I feel a lot of love being spread.

What memories of your tattoo career will always stay with you?

I will always remember how exciting it was to start my new career, open up my own studio, win prizes for my work, and be invited into the most amazing pro teams. The best tattoo memories are created with the friends we make in the industry – our tattoo family – and Black Cat Tattoo in Hawaii has a very special place in my heart in that regard. And of course I love working with my dear friend Samantha and my man Robert!

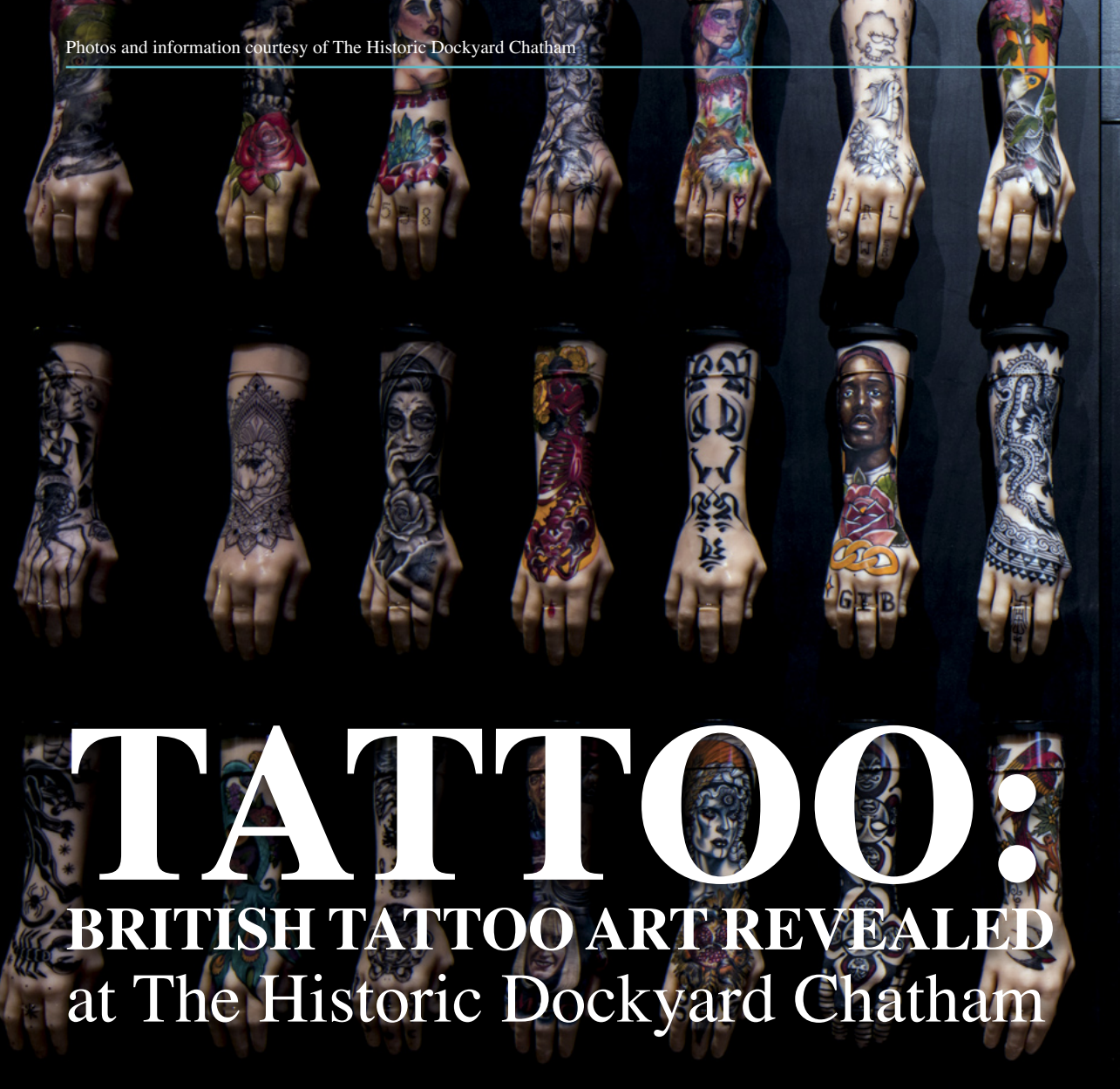


If you could go back in time and give yourself some advice when you started out, what would it be?

Just breathe. As long as you work hard you will get there. There is nothing to prove. Just love every moment of it.

Flowinkstudio
Bloemerstraat 88
6511 EM Nijmegen
The Netherlands
Tel +31 6 83942985

www.flowinkstudio.nl
www.laineybee.com
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TATTOO:

BRITISH TATTOO ART REVEALED at The Historic Dockyard Chatham



TATTOO: British Tattoo Art Revealed, the National Maritime Museum Cornwall's touring exhibition, opens this month at its latest venue: The Historic Dockyard Chatham. With tattooing's age-old connection to seafaring, it couldn't be hosted in a more appropriate place!

The Historic Dockyard Chatham (in Kent) is the only place in the world where you can explore a complete dockyard from the age of sail



and beyond. It's a unique museum site that celebrates Great Britain's magnificent maritime past and the Royal Navy's shipbuilding excellence. At Chatham you can see and climb aboard the ships that shaped the world – from a Victorian anti-slavery sailing vessel and a nineteenth century warship to a Second World War destroyer and a Cold War submarine – and discover the stories of the people who built them and sailed in them. There are historic buildings too, including the remarkable Victorian Ropery where the rigging for HMS Victory was made (and where you can learn and try the skill yourself, the way it's been done for 400 years).





TATTOO: British Tattoo Art Revealed is on display in Chatham's No.1 Smithery Gallery and takes visitors on a ground-breaking and comprehensive historic tour of British tattooing (challenging some familiar myths and preconceptions along the way!) The show also celebrates the astonishing richness of tattooing as an art form.

The exhibition is guest curated by Dr Matt Lodder, lecturer in Contemporary Art History and Director of American Studies at the University of Essex (and well known to readers of *Total Tattoo Magazine*). "In this exhibition," Matt says, "we have finally been able to match the most current and cutting-edge research on British tattoo history – which challenges all the most deeply-held perceptions about the practice, its origins, its extent, and its reception – with unparalleled access to the true custodians of tattooing's history: the artists and their families who have cared for these objects and their stories over decades."





Showcasing the work of major artists from George Burchett, via the Bristol Tattoo Club, to Alex Binnie and Lal Hardy, this is the largest gathering of real objects and original tattoo artwork ever assembled in the UK. The exhibition features items from the private collections of Willy Robinson, Jimmy Skuse and Paul 'Rambo' Ramsbottom and also delves into the archives to reveal the incredible story of Britain's pioneering female tattoo artist, Jessie Knight. As Matt says, *TATTOO* gives visitors rare access to "vast but hidden troves of tattoo ephemera kept closely guarded in private collections."

And there's another treat in store for visitors: Alice Snape's '100 Hands Project' – one hundred silicone arms, each tattooed with an original design by a leading UK tattoo artist. It's an installation that has been aptly described as a "sculptural map" of contemporary tattoo art in this country.





TATTOO also includes three major contemporary art commissions from tattoo artists working in very different tattoo traditions. Each artist has created a unique design on a hyper-realistic body sculpture which speaks to the historic artefacts and artworks around it. Tihoti Faara Barff's work celebrates the modern revival of Tahitian tattooing; Matt Houston's commission is a heroic celebration of the sailor tattoo; and Aimée Cornwell explores how tattooing is itself breaking down artistic boundaries.





Tattoos and tattoo art have always held a significant place in Britain's history and historical imagination. Going way beyond tattooing's maritime and seafaring heritage, *TATTOO* explores this history in depth. With over 400 original artworks, photographs and historic artefacts, this is a truly spectacular and informative show.

TATTOO: British Tattoo Art Revealed

21st March to 14th June 2020

No.1 Smithy Gallery, The Historic Dockyard Chatham

(Visitors to the exhibition also have access to the rest of the Dockyard's galleries and attractions. Check website for details of opening hours, etc.)

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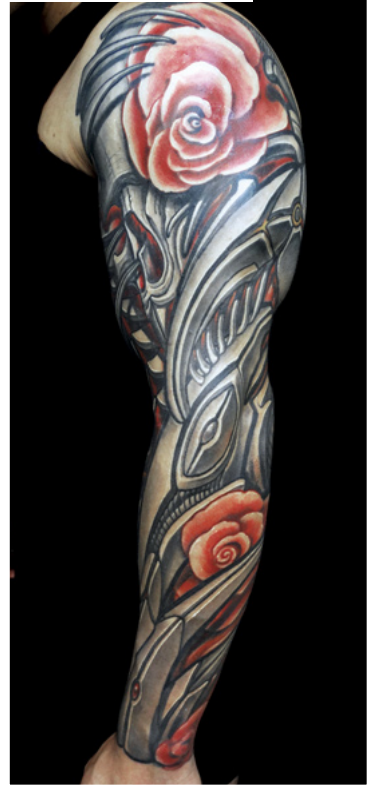
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RIA BARRENECHEA TATTOO

JAIRO CARMONA, MORNINGSTAR TATTOOS



ANTHONY LENNOX, PARADISE TATTOO



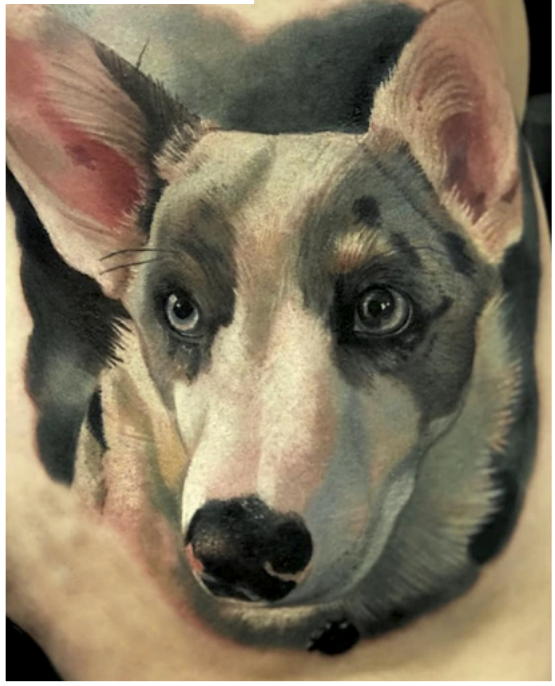
COLIN WHITFIELD, WHITFIELD TATTOOS



SAMMIE JONES, SAMMIE JONES TATTOO



CLAIRE GRIFFIN, INKSANE (IRELAND)

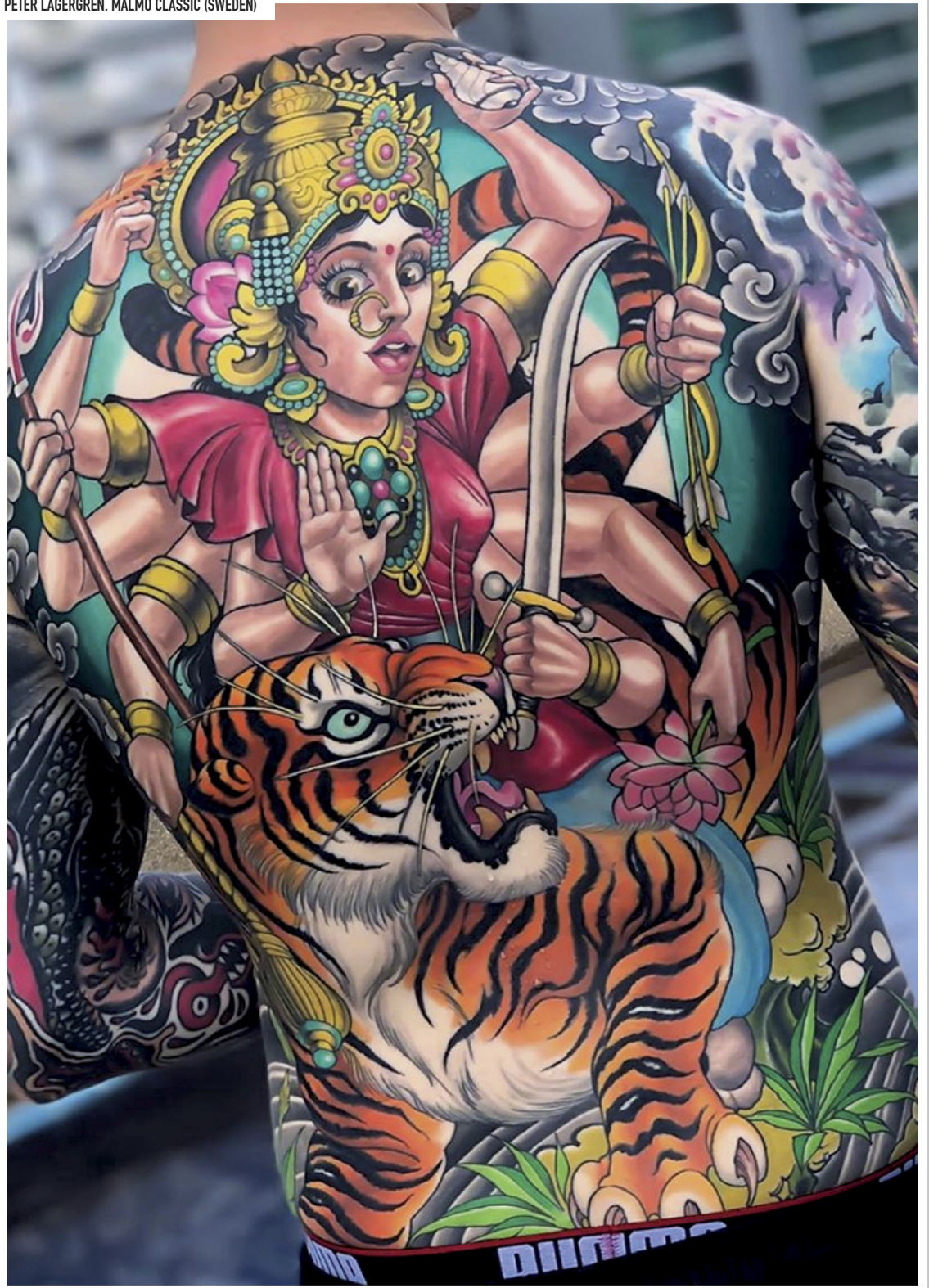


TRYSTAN SMITH, BLACK HAUS GALLERY

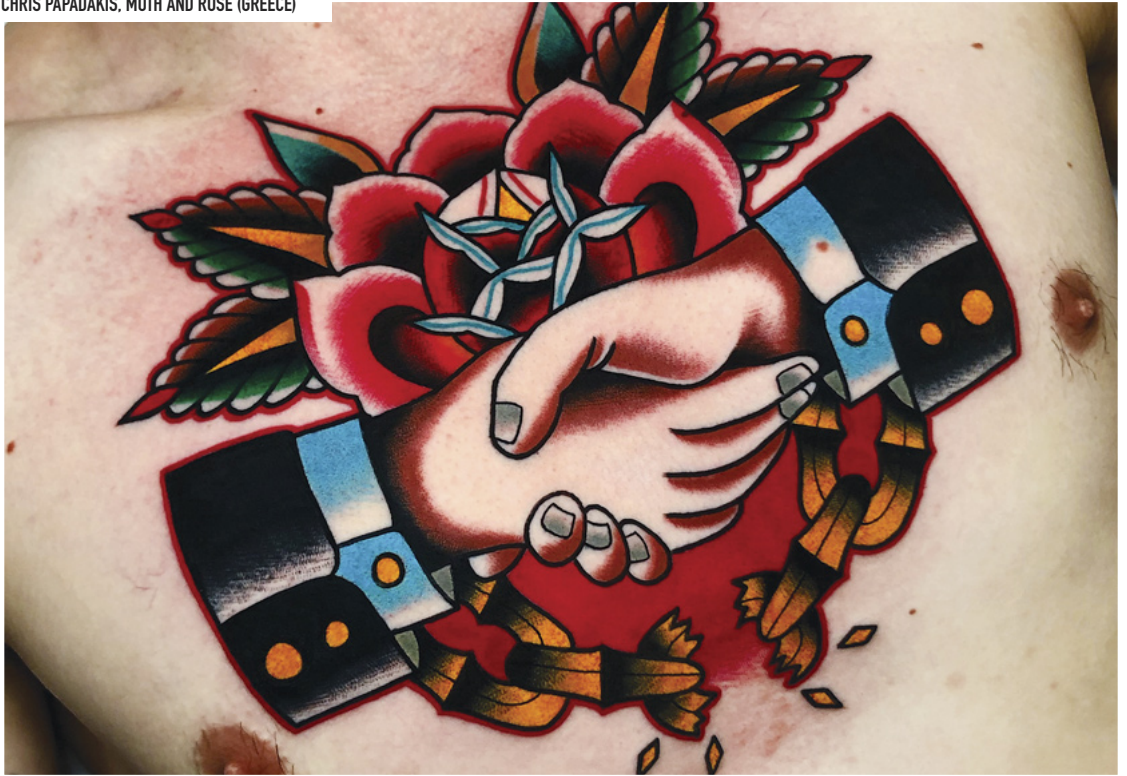


TAMMI FOXTON (AUSTRALIA)





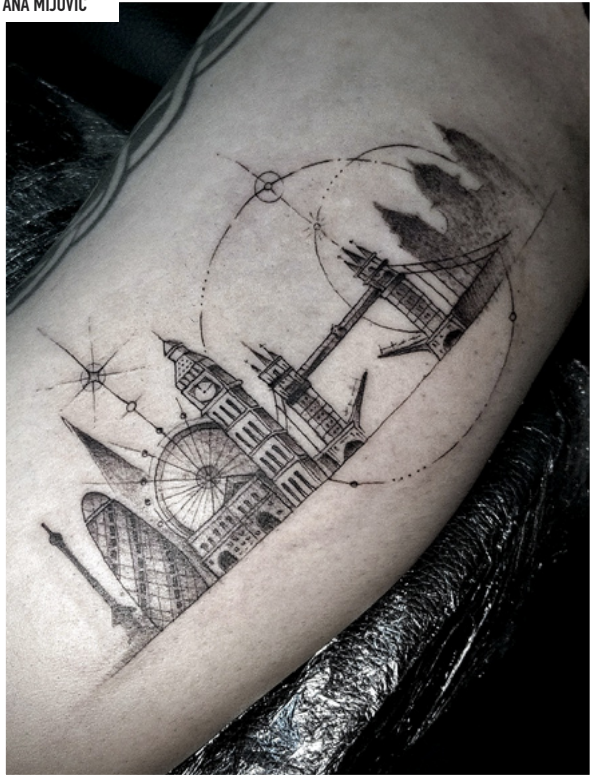
CHRIS PAPADAKIS. MOTH AND ROSE (GREECE)



KAROL. INKDEPENDENT



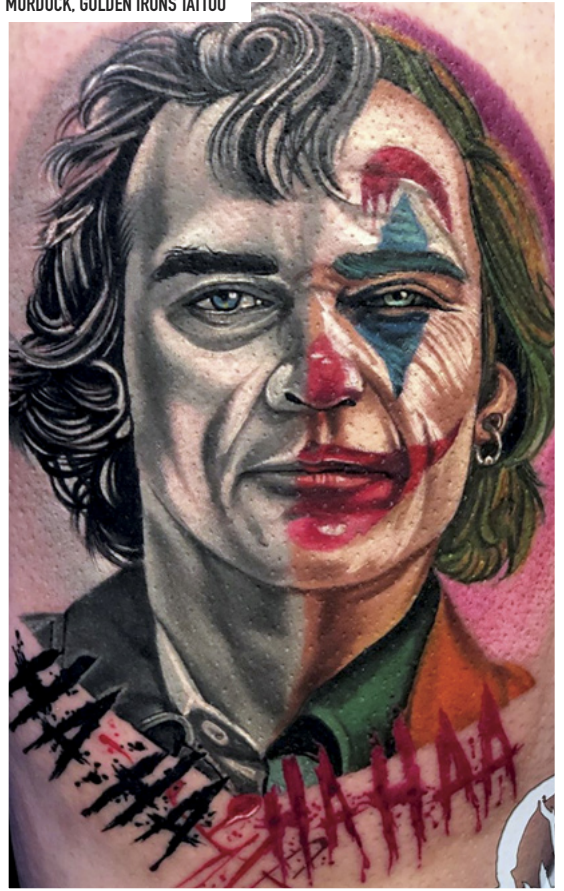
ANA MIJOVIC



BURCH, FIVE KEYS



MURDOCK, GOLDEN IRONS TATTOO



AMY SAVAGE, CATHEDRAL TATTOO



DIME RECK (FRANCE)

EMMA RIDLEY, WILLS TATTOO



JP BARLOW



SEAN SPARKS, MERLIN TATTOOING



LUCA ORTIS, PRIVATE STUDIO



NEIL WOLF, THE WOLF SHED

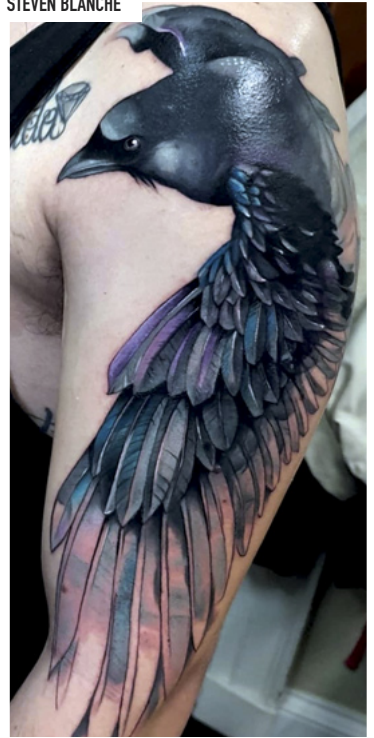
HATTIE COX, DARK HORSE COLLECTIVE



CALLUM BERRY



STEVEN BLANCHE



ALEX STEPHENSON (NEW ZEALAND)



HORISUZU (JAPAN)



DAVE WINN, MARKET QUARTER TATTOO



JOE DICKINSON, EARL OF PIGMENT



SLAVA STARKOV, SMILIN' DEMONS (GERMANY)



EVA SARDI



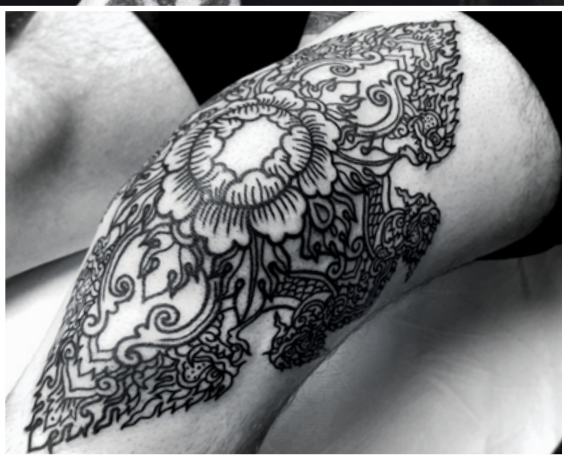
**‘I DON'T THINK I'LL
EVER GET OVER THE
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WANT MY
WORK ON
THEM.’**

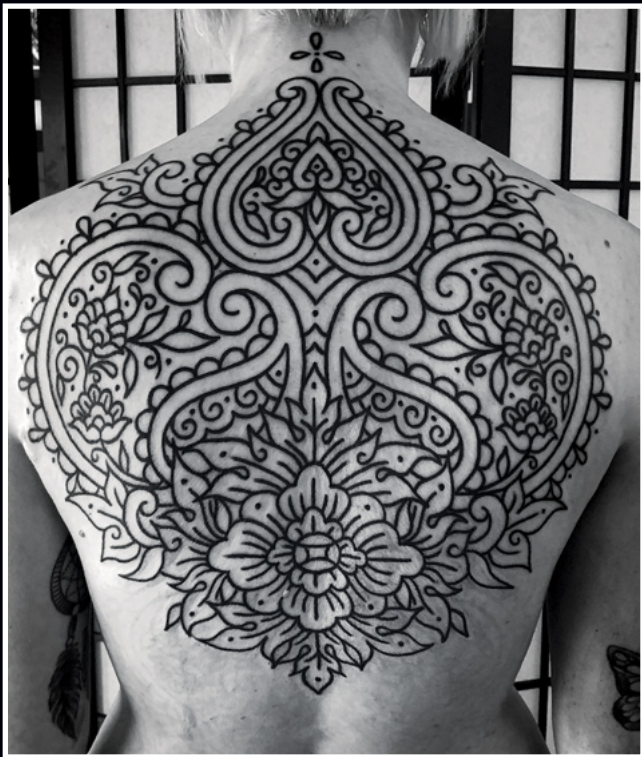
Leeds tattooist Abi Tonge creates intricate blackwork tattoos. As we found out in our conversation with her, Abi's design aesthetics echo her philosophy of life in fascinating ways. And the love and care that she lavishes on her craft – and her customers – is very much in evidence.

ABI TONGE

Abi has been tattooing for just five years. "The time has flown by so quickly. I think that's because I live and work at 100mph. It's just how I am. But in a way it also feels like a lifetime," she adds. "I'm a dramatically different person to the one who started out..."

"Before getting into tattooing, I was a fashion graduate," Abi continues. "I studied the construction of garments, how they look on people, how to draw them, things like that. But I think all my tutors at uni got tired of me incorporating tattoos and tattoo-related designs into all my projects in whatever way I could. Even my dissertation was on the history of tattooing!"

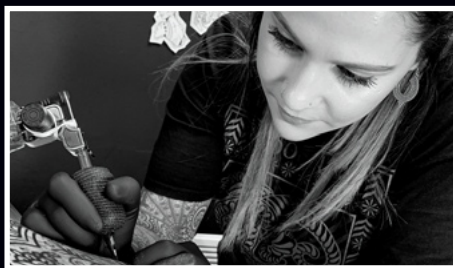




"From the age of three I was obsessed with art. I used to copy the illustrations out of my Beatrix Potter books," Abi tells me. "And as I got older I became obsessed with tattoos as well, mainly because my Auntie and Uncle were heavily tattooed. For me, tattoos were an unknown world that I wanted to discover. But at that point in my life I had no idea how tattooing could become a career. Some people seem to stumble into it, but for me it was by no means easy. But then nothing worth doing ever is."

We talk about Abi's upbringing, and how it gave her a spirit of independence and self-reliance. "I lived in lots of different places," she tells me. "I was born in Crewe. We lived in Northwich, Cheshire, for a few years, then we moved to Cumbria and the Lake District. Then I was fostered for about 10 years and I moved around some more, ending up in Leicestershire and Rutland. Basically, as soon as I hit 16 I began my life. I figured that no matter what else I did, I was gonna take control. If you can remain strong and positive, then you're doing alright."

"Everybody has a story," Abi continues. "People come through adversity, and they believe they're happier for having done so. I definitely feel like that. It's a cliché, but it's true! I knew from a young age that whatever I did I was gonna try my hardest. I don't want to reach the age of 70 feeling I've never achieved my true potential or pushed myself to the limits of my capabilities. That's my biggest fear. It's not about money or followers or this or that; it's just about being the best I can be." Abi laughs. "Obviously, being a nice person helps too!"

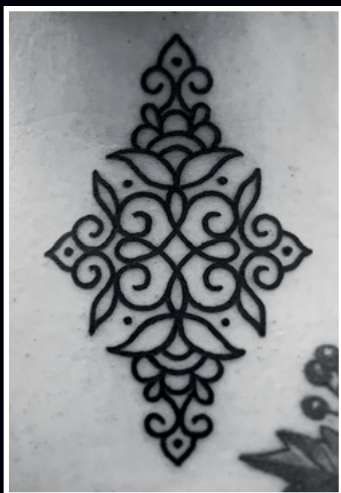
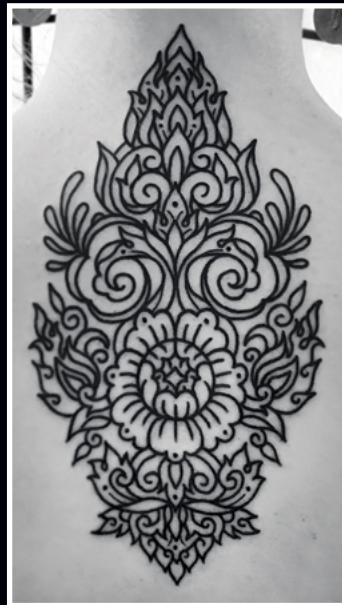




Abi's work is characterised by meticulous attention to detail. I ask her if she has an organised and methodical approach to life in general. "Absolutely," she replies. "When I turn up for a guest spot, for instance, instead of just taking 'everything' with me, I'll consider what I actually need. I'll make sure I have my things prepared and laid out in an orderly fashion. For each design, I'll know exactly which needle sizes I'm going to use; I'll also make sure I've got a bigger and smaller size set up, just in case the person themselves is smaller/bigger or the design thickness needs to change. So yes, I'm very particular. But I'm OK with that. For me, it's just a symptom of how much love and effort I put in."

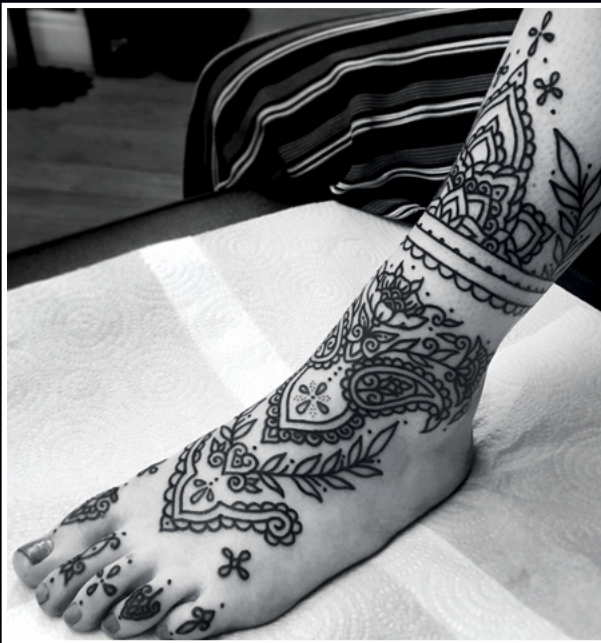


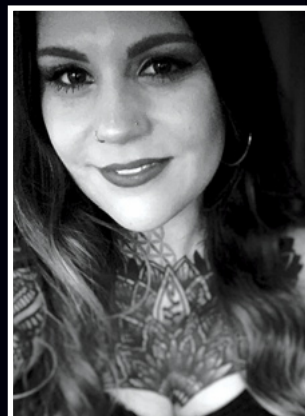
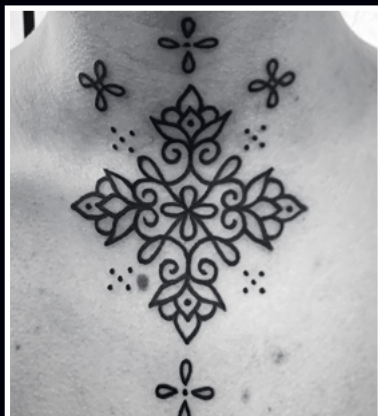
I'm intrigued to know if things have ever gone wrong... "It depends what you mean by 'going wrong'," Abi says. "Stuff happens all the time, and you can always learn from it. It can often be down to people moving unexpectedly! I had someone recently who was really twitching. I had to figure out an appropriate way of saying something to them about it. I know some tattooists would just be blunt and say "Stop fucking moving!" but I think that's selfish. If you're gonna be like that, you're not really caring for your customer. I like helping people and making the appointment more personal. I always try to give advice on how to manage the pain or discomfort – for example using a pillow for stability, or controlled breathing. I've even breathed along with the customer as we've done the line work! I swear to God, it works. To get through a session, you do whatever you have to do."



"I do a bit of a prep talk before I begin tattooing," Abi continues. "I tell the customer how it's going to be, how it might feel and how much we'll get done before we take a break. It's important for people to know there are 'checkpoints'. I don't want people just to be sat down for four hours straight. It's good to let them know that there will be breaks to have a stretch, eat some food or have something to drink. Compassion is a big thing for me. I'm definitely an empath. I always try to put myself in other people's shoes. I try to think about how I feel when I get tattooed, and what I would want to hear from my tattooist."

I comment that Abi's designs are very unforgiving, and that everything has to be 'just right'. "Yes, and I've definitely had times when my passion has been in danger of coming across as anger! I'm part Italian after all," Abi laughs. "I'm a feisty person. But I know when I need to rein it in and tell myself 'Don't be a bitch!' Obviously people are gonna move about and there's going to be problems now and then. But every single tattoo is a learning curve. It's important to focus on what you're doing and not let things get in your way."





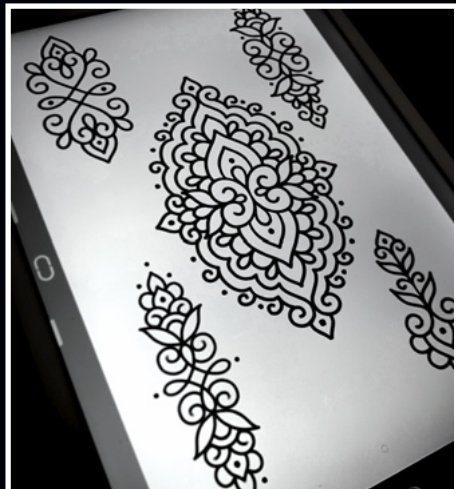
Abi has always done blackwork (although she did do a little bit of colour work at the beginning of her career), and her tattooing has evolved naturally into more pattern-based imagery. I ask her if this has been a conscious, deliberate development and whether she is pleased with her progress. "A hundred percent," she replies. "If I could have gone in any direction, it would have been this one. It truly makes me happy. I've always been into patterns, right from when I was studying fashion." But she is realistic and keen not to be a 'one trick pony'. "I know that my particular style may not always be in demand. I'm always questioning what might be coming next. It would be stupid to think you could be doing the same thing for ever. In any case, creativity-wise you'd want to be changing and evolving."

I ask Abi if she ever gets compared to other others who work in a similar style. Does she see that as a compliment? "Yes, it's always a compliment," she replies. "A customer of mine gets tattooed by Mark Jelliman. The thought that she comes to me too... well that's mind-blowing!" [Check out our recent interview with Mark Jelliman in *Total Tattoo Issue 185* if you want to find out more.]

"I don't think I'll ever get over the fact people want my work on them," Abi continues, "especially when they travel to

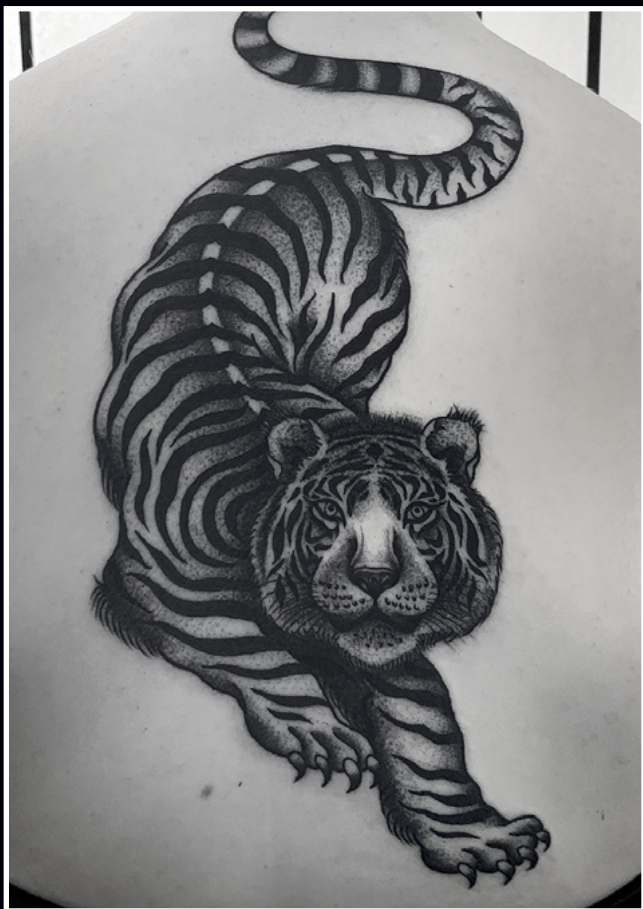
see me from other parts of the world. It's weird how you can find it so hard to accept praise, no matter how level-headed you are. Criticism can be difficult to hear too, but it's very important. You have to use it to better yourself and not let it destroy you. That's one of the valuable things I learned on my fashion course at uni. You can use constructive criticism. If someone tells you that you can't do something, why the fuck would you let that stop you? You learn to do it better and come back in force! Obviously there's an initial defensive reaction, but it can soon be overcome."





I ask Abi how she matches her symmetrical tattoos to her client's non-symmetrical bodies. "Oh God! I'm a bit obsessive over this actually," she confesses. "I love the pressure. I need it. I'm really weird like that. The more complicated something is, the more I enjoy it. Maybe this links back to my childhood; when things were going smoothly I'd be thinking 'What the fuck's going on?' The pressure makes me feel like I'm doing something worthwhile. It gives me a sense of achievement. When I first began tattooing, I used to hate traditional because simple designs make me freak out."

"When I do my drawings," Abi continues, "I work in my spare room, away from the television. I make sure there's nothing visual to distract me from what I'm working on. I do all my patternwork on an iPad. I like the efficiency and accuracy, but the downside is that it can make you too focused on correcting mistakes. With an iPad the lines can be too smooth. You wanna see the authenticity! For me, it's all in the 'squiggly bits'. Recently I had some prints made and I was really disappointed because they looked too perfect. For the next convention, I'm doing them by hand and I'm getting much more enjoyment from the process. It makes me remember exactly why I love doing art."





Abi is channelling her creativity in other directions too. "I'm utilising my fashion degree! I'm already designing socks, and I'm working on the idea of doing homewares – table mats and coasters for example – over the next few years. But I will never get bored of tattooing. I want to focus more on Thai-inspired pieces, which I love. I'd like to travel around Asia, learning more about patterns and imagery and developing my understanding of the meanings behind them."



A few years ago Abi had surgery on her back. "I slipped a disc doing a fitness class," she tells me. "It went undiagnosed for about ten months, but then I got sent for an MRI and found out what it was. This was while I was learning to tattoo; it couldn't have happened at a worse time. I had the surgery and did everything I was supposed to do, but even now it's sometimes so painful I wonder how the fuck I'm gonna be able to sit and draw. I do things like weights to help strengthen my back so that I can do long tattoo sittings, and I also do stretches, go swimming, and so on. I see a personal trainer two or three times a week, which is expensive in the short term but, looking to the future, means my career won't be cut short."



And on 5th April, Abi will be jumping out of a plane... She and fellow tattooist Iris Lys are doing a sponsored skydive in aid of the brain injury charity Headway. "In 2005 my sister was involved in a hit-and-run accident," she explains. "She's now disabled and will need care for the rest of her life. I've always wanted to do a skydive, and I figured I might as well make it a sponsored one and raise money for Headway at the same time!"

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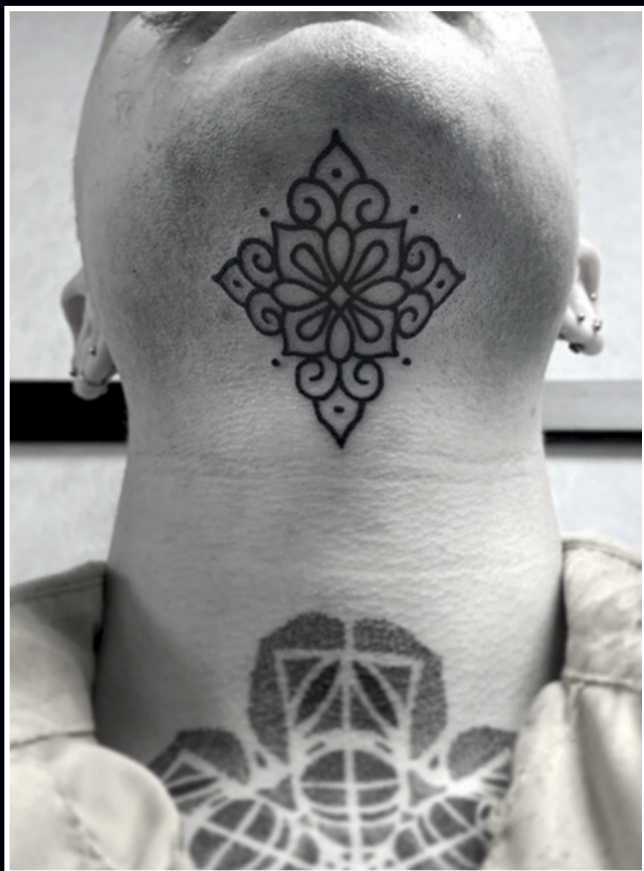
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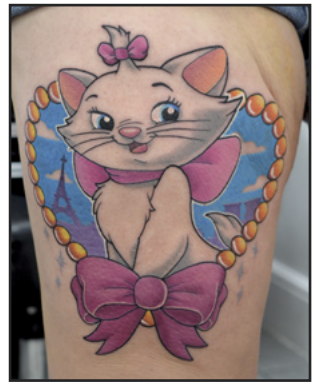
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PORTFOLIO-TATTOO TOM

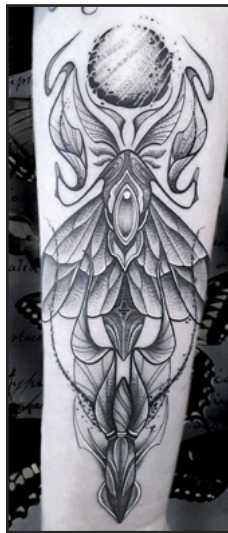
RISING TIDE TATTOO COLLECTIVE





PORTFOLIO-INKY JOE

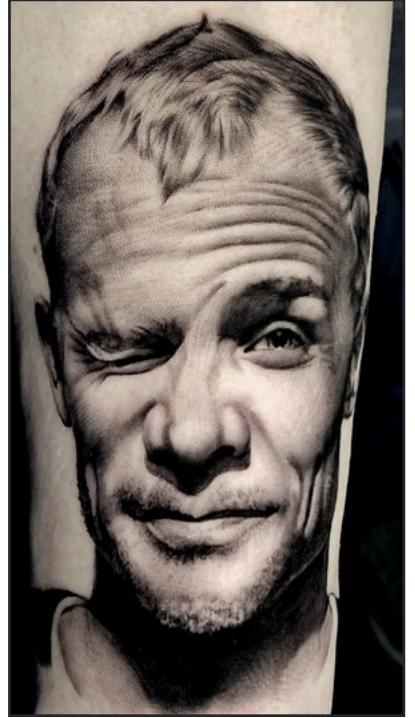
FIVE KEYS





PORTFOLIO-GUUS MANDIGERS

TRUE BLUE TATTOO (NETHERLANDS)





**‘WITH A TATTOO, YOU ARE GIFTING
A PART OF YOURSELF TO YOUR
CLIENT.’**



AARON HARMAN

Aaron Harman has a studious approach to tattooing, a lifelong love of art and a passion for showcasing his work in theatrical style. We talked to him about inspiration, art history and his recent film project. Is there a line between reality and imagination?

Tell us about your approach and your artistic goals.

I've been pushing the boundaries for a while now, and I came to the realisation that all my many creative interests seemed to be converging. I saw an opportunity to work across multiple fields of expression, perhaps in an unexpected way. I'd taken some time out to study art in more depth, and this gave me a new perspective on my tattooing. I saw possibilities that were much greater than I'd previously allowed myself to believe. I began to notice a complete shift in my focus – not necessarily a change in the direction of my work, but a new understanding of tattoos, and in particular what makes a tattoo design timeless.

Can you elaborate on that?

Timeless designs represent timeless dramas. Very early on in my career, I'd tried working with similar concepts of storyboarding and narrative. But it was beyond me at that time. I didn't have the skills to put my ideas into practice. I was overly ambitious and I just got frustrated. Now, however, I feel like I'm getting somewhere.



You've expanded your comfort zone?

Yes, it was important for me to realise that it's not necessarily a bad thing to be unsure artistically (and also that being unsure isn't an excuse for doing nothing!) In other words, I decided to learn how to be comfortable with being uncomfortable.

Tell us about your love of fine art and your passion for art history.

The Museum of Art in my hometown of Toledo (Ohio) was a kind of surrogate parent for me! From as early as I can remember, I was always there. Even as a child, I found it utterly inspiring. The galleries seemed endless and the corridors went on for ever. I still enjoy revisiting the place, looking again at all the pictures that so captivated me when I was younger – paintings such as *Venus and Cupid* by Guido Reni, *The Holy Family with St John* by Nicolas Poussin, *The Crowning of St Catherine* by Peter Paul Rubens... I could go on. But the piece that I've probably spent more time staring at than any other is Ferdinand Bol's *Self Portrait*.



Self Portrait, by Bol (detail)



The Crowning of St Catherine, by Rubens (detail)



Do you have a favourite artist or a favourite period in art history?

I've never really gravitated towards a specific period in art history or an individual artist. I've always just taken it all in. But among the paintings I most connect with are those by my favourite Italian Renaissance and Northern Renaissance artists. Rubens holds an additional fascination for me – quite apart from the paintings themselves – because of the story of The Monuments Men, who rescued so many threatened works of art during World War II.*

* The Allies' Monuments, Fine Art and Archives section (MFAA) – which came to be known as The Monuments Men – was set up in 1943 to safeguard cultural property during the War and to recover (and return to their rightful owners) works of art that had been stolen by the Nazis or hidden away during the fighting. Numerous academics and museum curators were involved, both men and women, and countless pieces were saved. Rubens' 'The Crowning of St Catherine' is in the Toledo Museum of Art thanks in part to the Monuments Men. Stolen by the Nazis from the collection of Jewish banker and industrialist Leopold Koppel, it was returned to his son after the War. In 1950 it came up for sale. Others doubted its authenticity, but Otto Wittmann, Associate Director (later Director) of the Toledo Museum of Art, who had encountered the painting during his work with the MFAA program, knew it was a piece of major significance and was instrumental in acquiring it for the Museum. It's well worth checking out the fascinating story of The Monuments Men and their heroic work, without which so much of the world's art could have been lost to us. – Ed

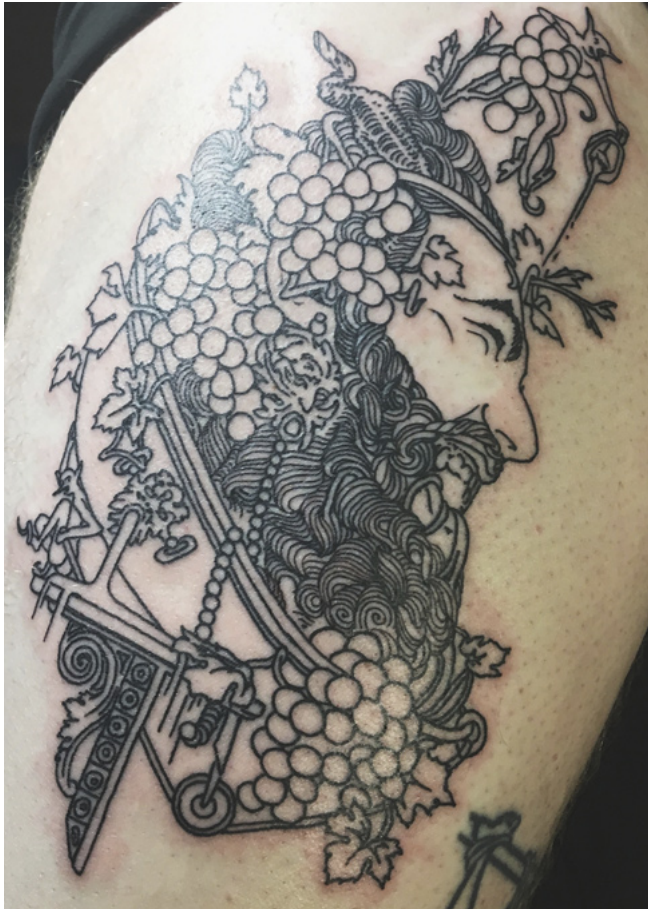


Can you pinpoint how these paintings have influenced your own art?

I'm always trying to understand what it is about a particular painting that inspires me (in other words, what I take from each image that I see) but it's impossible to analyse it. I'm like a fisherman who's left his net out too long and ended up catching a little bit of everything. There is a common theme though. I've noticed that regardless of the historic period or the place in which the painting was produced, or the subject matter or narrative chosen by the artist, these pictures always have a strong emotional focus, transcending time and space.

Is it important to you to inject emotion into your own work?

Yes, very much so. Everything I do comes back to capturing emotion in some way – whether it's in a hidden narrative, the sense of drama I'm trying to evoke, or simply through the balance and harmony within a design. It's all about telling a story. But the emotion within a piece can also sometimes be a happy accident, simply due to the circumstances on the day. I generally work best when I draw inspiration from what's happening around me. Sometimes just the expression on a friend's face will be enough! In the scenes that I create, I introduce fabrics, jewellery and other random objects that allude to what I like to call the 'old world', but I usually avoid referencing any particular period in history (unless of course I'm featuring a recognisable character or a well-known narrative) because I want the focus to remain on the emotional expression within the work.



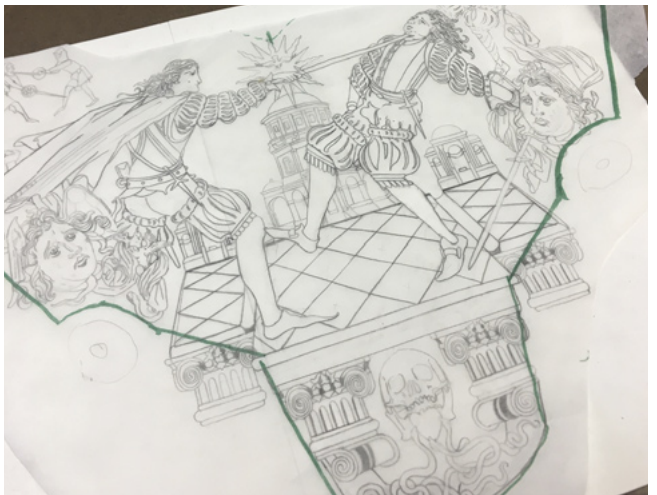


Do you share in the current enthusiasm for designing digitally, or does that kill the romance for you?

With digital tools it feels as if almost anything is possible, but I've always enjoyed being more hands-on with my work. Ever since childhood, the idea of bringing an image to life on paper has been something of an obsession for me.

You've recently been working on a tattoo-related film project, *I Tasted Life*. How did this come about?

I've spent years listening to clients telling me about the images they want on their bodies. They know what they like – what's for them and what's not for them – but they usually don't know why. That's the basic premise that led to me making this film with my talented director friend, Marcus McAninch. We just felt we could work with that idea and try to pull something from it.



Have you always been interested in the cinema?

As my friends will tell you, I watch the same few films obsessively, over and over again, while I'm working: *Cleopatra*, *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, *Romeo and Juliet*... When I was growing up, I used to really enjoy watching all these movies with my father. He was the one who introduced me to the classics. I particularly remember Kirk Douglas and Anthony Quinn playing Paul Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh in *Lust for Life*. I'm sure that's what inspired me to become a travelling tattooist!

How would you describe *I Tasted Life*?

I Tasted Life isn't a conventional short film. Far from it. It's more of a cinematic collage – a depiction of how an artist's mind works. But it's more than simply a visual representation of where inspiration comes from. It's all about how it feels when that inspiration hits you like a freight train.

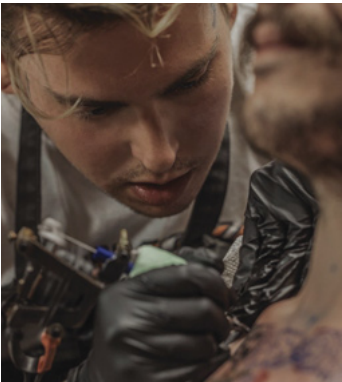
Do you feel you've achieved what you set out to do with this film?

New creative endeavours always flourish best without expectation. You need structure, but you have to be free of constraints. That's really just another way of saying we have no fucking idea right now what the final outcome of this project is going to be. But that's what makes it exciting.

What fires your imagination?

Curious as it may sound, both my commitment to the craft of tattooing and my excitement as a tattoo artist derive from the simple fact that pretty much everything has been done already. I like the challenge of that! It's what makes it so interesting. When everything's been done before, what's going to come next? I'm always striving to touch something higher. My goal is to make my designs strong, and to instil good intentions into every single one of them. I believe that with a tattoo, you are actually gifting a part of yourself to your client.





Do you remember what it was about tattooing that first drew you in?

Yes, it was when I first experienced the small, intimate environment of a tattoo studio, with artists tucked away, surrounded by inspiration, making something special – special enough for someone to want to wear for the rest of their life. From that point on, I was in.

Is your working environment crucial to your creativity?

I believe you need to have plenty of wood close by to keep the fire stoked. In other words, I feel most inspired when my work environment matches my own aesthetic preferences – and that includes all the objects around me, even down to the things on my desk. After working out of a duffel bag in coffee shops for a good while, I decided to rent a loft for a year, a single giant space, just to see what I could do with it. I wanted something stripped down and raw, so that whatever I created would be a real contrast. I knew it was only a temporary space, but that's exactly what I needed, to see what I could accomplish. I could do anything I wanted. I could experiment. I poured hours into studying and making art. And I fought hard against thinking about what the end result would be. It was exciting to think there might not even be any end result...

Out of your comfort zone again?

Yes! And looking back I realise that what I thought was a comfortable hammock was a slingshot all along!

www.instagram.com/aaaronharman



The Wrexham Tattoo Show, in North Wales, is fast becoming an event that's too good to miss. We thoroughly enjoyed our trip!

The impressive Wrexham Glyndwr University Sports Centre was where all the action and fun was happening. Close to the train station, it couldn't have been easier to get there. Just three stops from London Euston – Milton Keynes, Crewe, Chester – then a quick change to a train already waiting on the platform for the short ride to Wrexham General (in Welsh, Wrecsam Cyffredinol). There was also a massive free carpark for those travelling to the convention by road.

The venue is right next door to Wrexham Football Club's historic Racecourse Ground, which is the world's oldest stadium still hosting international matches. Wrexham FC itself is the third oldest professional football team in the world. Indeed, if you fancied a fascinating read, its long history is displayed all along the walls of the stadium... but of course that wasn't really why we'd come here!



WREXHAM TATTOO SHOW







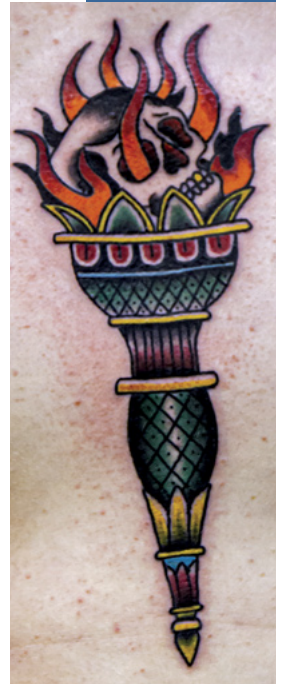
It was great to be back at the Wrexham convention. This was its third year, and it was put on once again by Nick, Liam, Harley and Delyth Green – a fantastic family team who really know how to make a tattoo event swing. It was a wonderful gathering of everyone from new kids on the block to the older generation artists we all know and love. Friday was reserved for artists and vendors to set up their booths and make sure everything was shipshape and Bristol fashion, ready for the Saturday and Sunday when the visiting public were welcomed into the show. Everybody was looking forward to a couple of days of relaxation and jolliness and the chance to mix and mingle with friends old and new.





With more than 90 tattoo booths, the convention was given an international flavour by the likes of Dana and Dot Brunson working alongside fellow American Jim Hawk, and Svanur Gudrunarson who'd come over from Iceland. Paul McNab, George Steven, Zara Dickson and others had travelled all the way down from Scotland. Gayle Copper, Joe Slatter, Martin Girolami, Dave Alexander, Kev Weston and Tony 'The Ted' Tatum were just a few of the well-known Legends to be seen tattooing alongside talented artists of the younger generation including Charlie Mills, Conan Dopadlik, Joe Gilbert, Rambo Williams, Edward Black, Megan Tremarco, Dave Junior Nicholls, Jolene Watkins, Holli Sirena Lee, Simon Haggett, Megan Sanchez, Max Slatter, Kyle Egg Williams, Lee Bacon, Hannah Kill, Chris Barrett, Ash Wilkinson, Kerrie Em Hibbert, Benj Ashmead and Gary Johnson. Apologies to anybody I've left off the list; there simply isn't enough space to list everyone here.

Welsh wizard John Treharne was laying down some first class ink as usual, and fellow Welshman and tattoo legend Doc Price tattooed throughout the weekend and donated all his takings to Hector's Greyhound Rescue. This was the Wrexham convention's chosen charity this year, and in total nearly £1,500 was raised at the show. We also had tattoo duels that went down very well, and a number of different tattoo competitions each day – the funniest being presented by Darren Lovell and Glyn 'Tattooligan' Thomas of cult tattoo club the C-U-N-T-S society, who really know how to party!





Steve and John Crane were selling their massive range of tattoo supplies, and healing creams came via the guys from Tat2Nut, alongside stalls offering everything from fudge to t-shirts. If you fancied it, you could even get a haircut from the skilled hands of Cara Wilson and her band of sisters. Traders located in the carpark catered to everyone's needs in the food and drinks department, and of course Wrexham's shops, restaurants, hotels and pubs weren't that far away.

Entertainment came courtesy of fire eaters, dancers and a bit of burlesque, plus Tim 'Eddy' Humphrey Jones reciting his own amazing poetry, and some very good bands and musicians. One singer going by the name Alisha Bleue (also known as Aleighsha-Maie) had a truly magnificent voice that had to be heard to be believed. She's got real class, and if there's any justice in the world she'll have a big future.

So there you have it. All I can say right now is that the Wrexham Tattoo Show had the lot – and all for the ticket price of just ten pounds a day on the door.

See you next year, Wrexham! I for one just can't wait.





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RAFEL DELALANDE

Portrait by Michael Luppi

‘FOR ME, TATTOOING IS THE CLOSEST THING I HAVE TO A RELIGION.’



Psychedelic, sinister and demonic are all terms that can be used to describe the work of Rafel Delalande. But that would be to miss the point. He's also an artistic, articulate and incredibly respectful person. Our thoroughly enjoyable conversation took place in his small studio room at the back of the famous Seven Doors Tattoo (home to such artists as Jondix, Deno and Tomas Tomas) in Fashion Street, East London.

Raf has recently returned from a two-month trip to Thailand, travelling with his good friend, legendary blackwork specialist Guy le Tatroer. "It was amazing," he tells me. "Being an old tattooer isn't easy. Anyone can be a tattooist nowadays, but to have been tattooing for so many years and still be in demand... well that's something else. But I tattooed so many people while I was there! People came from Singapore, Hong Kong, all over. That's the power of social media."

A lot of tattooists can chart their time in the trade by developments in social media. Raf started tattooing just before Myspace became a 'thing' in the early 2000s. "It was the beginning of social media and I kind of grew up alongside it. First I showed my work on Myspace, then it was Tumblr, then Facebook and now Instagram. If I'd wanted to be busy in Bangkok 20 years ago I'd have had to build up a client base, work conventions, or guest at a known studio and have my visit advertised in advance. But now I just put it on Instagram and people all over the world know exactly where I am and how long I'm staying there, and they can contact me directly."



Tattooing and travel are perfect bedfellows of course, and Raf has done his fair share of globetrotting, including eight epic years on the road with Guy. The two first met when Raf (whose own tattoo journey was still in its earliest stages) went to get tattooed by Guy in Toulouse. Over the years they've had a massive influence on each other, despite their very different styles of work.

Now living in London, Raf was born and brought up in Majorca then moved to France when he was 13. It was in France that his tattoo career began. He was at art school, but realised after only a few months this conventional route into a creative career wasn't for him, and that was when he discovered tattooing. "But getting equipment then was very difficult. I had to go to a convention with a tattooist friend so that he could introduce me to the guys selling the machines. I'd already left art school and was working as a builder to earn the money I needed. Those early years were really hard."

"I was a terrible tattooer when I first learnt," Raf confesses. "It took me more than five years to get to the point where I was doing tattoos I felt happy with. Nowadays people get good so quickly, but it wasn't like that for me! That's one of the benefits of social media. We can all see and be inspired by great work. But social media can also make people lazy. It can be a tattooist's worst enemy. When they reach a certain number of followers by doing one particular style of work, some people just stop trying and simply stick to what they know."

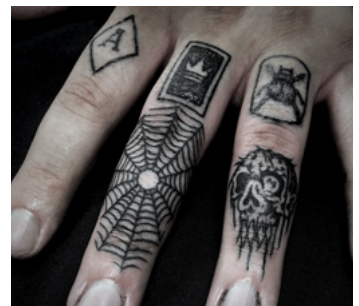




"Another thing that's so different now is the customer relationship. I worked in a street shop in Paris at one time way back and what I saw was really terrible. It was so disrespectful. It would be impossible to be that rude to your customers now. I thank my mum for bringing me up to be respectful and have good manners. I'm sure it's the reason I have customers who have been coming to me for years. My character is nice! But it's just basic human relations. As it should be in all walks of life."

Raf moved to the UK to work at Shangri-La Tattoo before moving on to join Liam Sparkes. "I'd already guested in London on a number of occasions, but it wasn't until I actually moved here that I realised there were so many good tattooers! I remember thinking fuck, I need to up my game!"

"I first met Jondix at Le Mondial du Tatouage in Paris," Raf continues. "He came to my booth and we chatted. He gave me a book; I gave him a print. Right from the start he encouraged me. It's partly thanks to him that my work has become so much better. And he made me feel so welcome here at Seven Doors. I've been here for five years now. I've stopped all the partying and I really focus on my work. It took some time for me to realise, but tattooing is the thing that makes me the most happy."



Seven Doors is an exceptional studio. Every artist is massively motivated to create great art – in the skin, on canvas, wherever! “And everybody here is treated like an adult,” Raf tells me. “I’m trusted to be professional, and I will always do my best for my customers and the shop. They supply all the disposables and I supply my own machines.” Raf tells me he has no thoughts of moving on any time soon, not least because of his close friendships with Jondix and Deno, whom he also respects and admires as artists in their own right.

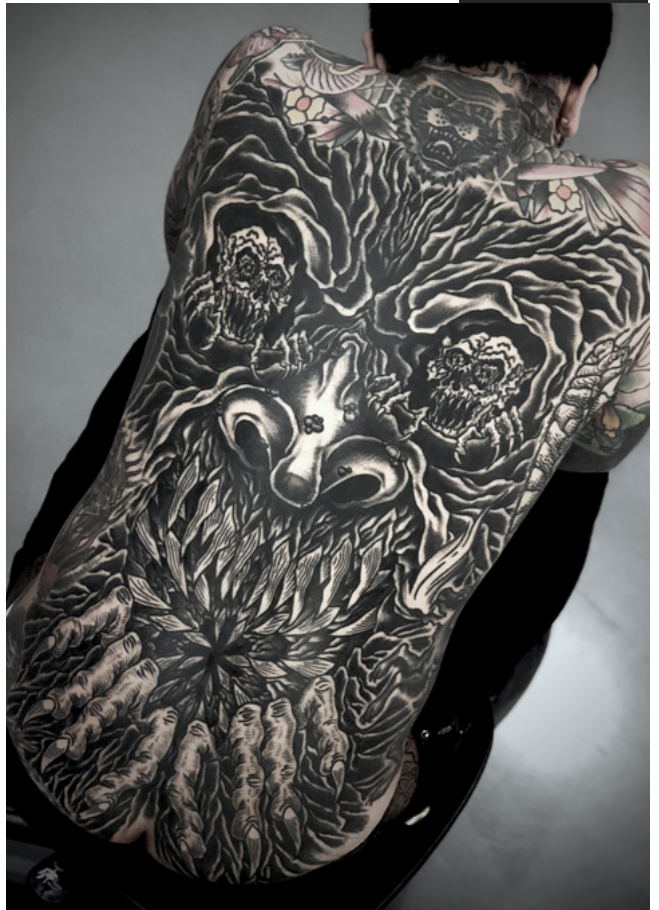
Despite being based at such an influential studio, Raf is surprisingly accessible to new clients. “I’m not booked up for months and months,” he tells me. “I can usually fit people in quite soon if they want.” It seems that Seven Doors is a shop with a shared ethos that isn’t focused on the commercialisation of art. A true collective spirit of tattooing. I ask Raf if that’s a fair description. “Absolutely,” he says. “And that’s another reason why I’m staying here. We often use the word ‘temple’ in this shop. I think Jondix and Deno have created a very special space.”



"I like tattooing to be a very organic and human experience," Raf explains. "A tattoo is for ever, so it has to be right. If on the day the client is not ready or not feeling it, then sometimes we won't tattoo. Of course it costs me money not to tattoo, but you have to decide what you love most – the money or the tattoo. If it's the money, then maybe you're not doing it for the right reasons. My very individual style – horror with a naïve twist – isn't for everyone, and I am very grateful to my clients."

To ensure a happy tattoo experience, Raf likes to design his tattoos fully so that his clients know exactly what to expect and never leave the studio dissatisfied. "I do an initial consultation, then a second consultation with the drawing done. That's the point at which I need to know if there are any alterations required. With a backpiece, I take photos of the client's back and then do my sketch on to a print of the photo. Or I sketch directly on to the body and then take a photo of that. This means the client can see how the design will look and make sure they're completely happy; so when they come for their appointment everyone's prepared and everyone knows what to expect. That takes all the stress away."

Raf has been involved in some very successful collaborative tattoos. "It's always good to learn and grow with other respected artists. Some have a better vision, some have better technique. The big collaborations at conventions have another purpose too. People are there to see a show. It's like theatre, or a Mass. I'm doing Le Mondial du Tatouage again this year and I'm working with a good friend who I haven't seen for many years. We're doing a backpiece together. It never ceases to amaze me that I can share a space like this with so many incredible artists. It's something I could never have dreamed of when I first began..."





I ask Raf which artists inspired him in the early years. "When I first started to tattoo I was very inspired by Yann Black," he tells me. "It sounds silly now, but because of the type of things I was drawing I never thought I could become a tattooist. I never thought people would want what I did. Yann was one of the first to tattoo only in black (in a style other than Polynesian or tribal). And there weren't that many tattooists at that time specialising in crazy, comic book, graphic style work. Then along came other artists like Jean-Luc Navette and shops like Into You and they changed tattooing forever. For me, Alex Binnie has always been a massive influence, both as an artist and as a shop owner. The artists at Into You - Tas, Duncan X, Xed LeHead, Tomas Tomas - opened the door to whole new creative movements."

Many of the aforementioned artists have not only influenced the tattoo world but also been directly copied. They've had their work stolen and replicated many times over. I ask Raf if he experiences the same thing with his own work. "It sounds big-headed to say it, but yes, it has happened," he tells me. "Not so much now though, because I think I've pushed my designs into a much darker area. Actually, it was being copied that forced me to develop my work, which in turn helped me to further establish my style. And it's also great to know that I've influenced others! But ripping off other people's work just isn't cool, and if you do it you will never develop your own creative spirit."

Raf comes from a very conservative and religious family. For him, tattooing was very much an act of rebellion. "Because of the way I was brought up, it made sense that my work would feature images of the adversaries of good," he explains. "Most children have a basic fascination with monsters and demons and that's pretty much what I'm still drawing! Although I do of course incorporate a lot of religious iconography. Interestingly my father has never seen me with tattoos, but my mother has always been very supportive of me having a creative career and she's pleased that tattooing saved me from a possible life of trouble. She's also the one who is very religious and believes in the Devil. I think if you really believe in those things then you're probably not going to get a big Devil backpiece."

With so many visible tattoos on his face, hands and head, I wanted to know whether people's reactions to Raf had changed over the years. "I had my hands and throat done very early on," he tells me, "so the novelty has long since worn off for me. I don't mind what other people think, but of course there are times when their reactions can be annoying. But you just have to expect it and accept it. After all, it was my choice to have these tattoos. I'm always being asked if people can take my photo. Interestingly, I find my tattoos are much less of an issue in London than in Paris."





I first met Raf when we covered the Calvarium project he co-curated last year at Seven Doors [see *Total Tattoo Issue 176*]. 100 tattooists created art pieces based on the theme of the human skull, for a fast-and-furious selling show. I asked if there were any plans for a follow-up. "Yes, we are planning to do another one. More than 200 people want to take part next time, and we will definitely do a book about it too. First, though, we're organising a big kimono design exhibition here at the shop to coincide with the London Tattoo Convention, and that's taking up a lot of time at the moment! I get asked to participate in numerous art projects, but sometimes I just have to turn them down because they can be so time consuming. If you agree to be part of a project, you owe it to everyone (including yourself) to give of your very best."



And what of the future? "Just as the hippies slowly faded away and were replaced by the punks, nothing stays the same forever," Raf says philosophically. "As I get older, I know there'll be a time when I tattoo less and less - either because the demand slows, or because it becomes physically more difficult for me. But by then, I hope to have built something strong enough to sustain me. Maybe I'll get more time to paint. I know I'll continue to create art. I do think about the future... I loved my time in Mexico and I would be happy to move there one day..."

"Right now, in terms of tattooing, the ultimate goal for me is to do more bodysuits," he continues. "I'm lucky because I'm getting more and more large-scale pieces, but it's not often that somebody with no tattoos comes in wanting a complete body piece. It happens for Tomas Tomas and Guy, but it hasn't happened for me yet. It's getting closer though!"

Many of the artists we meet hold tattooing close to their hearts, and Raf is no exception. "People who abuse tattooing simply as a way to make money are like the merchants in the Temple. It makes me so angry. For me, tattooing is the closest thing I have to a religion. It means everything to me, and I like to think that part of my role is to protect tattooing and carry it forward."

"For all of us here at Seven Doors tattooing is something very sacred. We're not saving lives, we know that, but tattooing does have a soul that needs to be cherished. I owe so much to tattooing and to all those who have helped me along the way, and the only way I can honour them is by pushing myself and respecting the craft. I really want to be tattooing when I am old!"

@rafeldelalande
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01603 886 143
indigotattooandpiercing@gmail.com
www.indigotattoo.co.uk

Immortal Ink

39 - 43 Baddow Road, Chelmsford,
CM2 0DB
01245 493 444
contact@immortalink.co.uk
www.immortalink.co.uk

Jayne Doe Tattoo

60 Station Lane, Hornchurch,
RM12 6NB
01708 479 366
jaynedoessex@gmail.com
IG: @jaynedoetattoo
FB: /jaynedoetattoo

Next Generation

4 Wolverton Road, Stony Stratford,
Milton Keynes, MK11 1DX
01908 560 003
info@nextgenerationtattoo.co.uk
www.nextgenerationtattoo.co.uk

Skin Sorcerer

116 High Street, Maldon, CM9 5ET
01621 842 443
IG: @skin_sorcerer

True Love Tattoos

16 Bridewell Alley, Norwich,
NR2 1AQ
01603 613277
tlnorwich@gmail.com
www.tlnorwich.co.uk

Wolf & Arrows Tattoos

57 St Johns Street, Bury St Edmunds,
IP33 1SJ
01284 701643
IG: @wolfandarrows
FB: /wolfandarrowstattoo

LONDON**The Blue Tattoo**

2 Studland Street, Hammersmith,
London, W6 0JS
0208 746 3133
info@thebluetattoo.co.uk
www.thebluetattoo.co.uk
IG: @thebluetattoolondon

Diamond Heart Tattoo Studio

223 Broadway, Bexleyheath, DA6 7EJ
0208 304 1414
bookings@diamondhearttattoo.com
www.diamondhearttattoo.com
IG: @diamondhearttattoo
FB: /diamondhearttattoo

The Family Business

58 Exmouth Market, Clerkenwell,
London, EC1R 4QE
0207 278 9526
info@thefamilybusinessstattoo.com
www.thefamilybusinessstattoo.com

Frith Street Tattoo

18 Frith Street (Basement), Soho,
London, W1D 4RQ
020 7734 8180
frithstreettattoo.london@gmail.com
www.frithstreettattoo.co.uk

Fudoshin Tattoo

158 George Lane, South Woodford,
London, E18 1AY
020 8989 6144
www.fudoshintattoos.com
IG: @fudoshintattoos
FB: /fudoshintattoos

Happy Sailor Tattoo

17 Hackney Road, London, E2 7NX
020 7033 9222
Email: Via website
www.happysailortattoo.com

I Hate Tattoos

Unit 1, 400-405 York Way, London,
N7 9LR
07904 174 819
herringfishbloke@hotmail.co.uk
FB: /IHateTattoosStudio

Ink Lounge Tattoo Studio

310C Green Lanes, Palmers Green,
London, N13 5TT
0203 490 2663
info@inklounge.co.uk
www.inklounge.co.uk
IG: @inklounge

Inksmiths Of London

8 Chequers Parade, Eltham, London,
SE9 1DD
020 8617 3338
Inksmithsoflondon@gmail.com
IG: @InksmithsofLondon

Kilburn Original Tattoo

175 Kilburn High Road,
Kilburn, London, NW6 7HY
0207 372 3662
info@kilburnoriginal.com
IG: @kilburntattoo
FB: kilburnoriginaltattoo

Leviticus Tattoo Emporium

170 High Road (Cuthberts Alley)
Loughton, Essex, IG10 1DN
0208 502 4029
leviticustattoo@hotmail.com
www.leviticustattooemporium.co.uk

Lowrider Tattoo

311 Bethnal Green Road, London
E2 6AH
0208 739 5115
Inquiry@lowridertattoolondon.com
IG: @lowridertattoolondon

Low Tide

19 Market Place, Southend-on-Sea,
SS1 1DA
01702 344 060
lowtidetattoo@gmail.com
IG: @lowtidetattoo

Morning Star Tattoos

Unit 3a, 6 Hornsey Street, London,
N7 8GR
07702 390 788
info@morningstartattoos.com
www.morningstartattoos.com
IG: @morningstartattooslondon
FB: /Morningstar-Tattoos-London

New Wave Tattoo Studio

157 Sydney Road, Muswell Hill,
London, N10 2NL
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
020 7375 3880
sevendoorstattoo@gmail.com
IG: @sevendoorstattoo

Tattoo Shop By Dan Gold

104-106 Oxford Street, London,
W1D 1LP
0207 637 7411
www.tattooshopbydangold.co.uk

The Good Fight

Cheriton, Queens Crescent, London,
NW5 4EZ
www.thegoodfighttattoo.com
IG: @nick_whybrow
IG: @heidikayetattoo
IG: @emilyrabbit.tattoo

Ushuaia Tattoo London

486 Fulham Road, SW6 5NH
020 8616 1760
www.ushuaiatattoo.london.co.uk/en
IG: @ushuaiatattoo.london
FB: /ushuaiatattoo.london

SOUTH EAST

14 Arrows Tattoo Studio

55-57 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge
Wells, TN1 2AY
01892 458 342
fourteenarrows@hotmail.com

1770 Tattoo

4 Little East Street, Brighton,
BN1 1HT
01273 710 730
info@1770tattoo.com
www.1770tattoo.com

Dead Slow

9 Boyces Street, Brighton, BN1 1AN
01273 208844
www.deadslowco.com
contact@deadslowco.com
IG: @deadslowco
FB: /deadslowco

ElectricThaiger Tattoo

2 Station Parade, Tweedy Road
Bromley, BR1 3NN
0208 460 6160
info@electricthaigertattoo.co.uk
FB: /Electricthaigertattoo
IG: @electricthaigertattoo

Fine Art Tattoo and Piercing Studio

6 York Street, Ramsgate, CT11 9DS
01843 588 885
fine-art-tattoo@hotmail.co.uk
www.finearttattoo.co.uk

Forever Wear Tattoos

31 West Street, Buckingham,
MK18 1HE
01280 822 695
forever-wear-tattoos@hotmail.co.uk
www.foreverweartattoos.com
IG: @foreverwear_tattoos
FB: /foreverweartattoosbuckingham

Gold Irons Tattoo Club

41 Preston Street, Brighton,
BN1 2HP
01273 809 903
goldironstattooclub@outlook.com
IG: @goldironstattooclub
FB: /goldironstattooclub

Gun & Pedal Brighton Tattoo

21 Ditchling Road, Brighton,
BN1 4SB
01273 692 171
gunandpedalbrighton@hotmail.com
IG: @gunandpedaltattooostudio
FB: /gunandpedaltattoo

Higgins and Co

69 Terminus Road, Above Coffee
Republic, Eastbourne, BN21 3NJ
01323 301 973
higginsandco71@gmail.com
www.higginsandcotattoo.co.uk

High Tide Tattoo Studio

Unit 1 Reeves Yard, Warwick Road,
Whitstable, CT5 1HX
01227 263 864
zbreakspear@yahoo.com
IG: @high_tide_tattoo_studio
FB: /hightidetattooostudio

Inked Moose

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www.inkedmoose.co.uk

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IG: @keepsake_tattoo

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IG: @magnumopustattoo
FB: /magnumopustattoo

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Buzzard, LU7 1EA
01525 217 121
studio@risingphoenixtattoo.co.uk
www.risingphoenixtattoo.co.uk
IG: @RisingPhoenixLeightonBuzzard
FB: /rptattoo

Seven Sins Tattoo

10 High Street, Horley, RH6 7AY
01293 775 385
info@sevensintattoo.com
www.sevensintattoo.co.uk/

Skinned Alive Tattoo

24 Church Street, Brighton,

BNI IRB
info@skinnedalivetattoo.com
www.skinnedalivetattoo.com
IG: @skinnedalivetattoo

Stay Much Better

1 Beaconsfield Parade, Beaconsfield
Road, Brighton, BNI 6DN
01273 564 494
www.smbtattoo.com
IG: @smbtattoo
FB: /smbtattoo

Tattoo FX

32 Middle Village, Bolnore, Haywards
Heath, RH16 4GH
01444 454 411
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, 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, SN1 1HE
01793 671 432
blackchalicetattoo@hotmail.com
FB: /blackchalicetattoo

Blackfriars Tattoo

5 Maylord Street, Hereford,
HR12DS
01432 278 330
blackfriarstattoo@gmail.com
IG: @blackfriarstattoo

Crow Quill

63 Bedford Place, Southampton,
SO15 2DS
023 8034 0058
IG: @thecrowquill
www.thecrowquill.co.uk

The Custom Propaganda Tattoo Company

Unit 7, Botley Mills, Botley,
Southampton, SO30 2GB
01489 325 341
IG: @custompropagandatattoo
FB: /CustomPropagandaTattoo
Eightfold Tattoo
1 Heanton Street, Braunton,
EX33 2JS
Phone: 01271 523 732
www.eightfoldtattoo.com
IG: @eightfoldtattoo

Equinox Tattoo Collective

21 Bilbury Street, Plymouth,
PL4 0BH
01752 952 741
equinoxtattoocollective@gmail.com
IG: @equinoxtattoocollective
FB: /Equinoxtattoocollective21

Needle and Fred Tattoo

22 High Street, Littlehampton,
BN17 5EE
01903 733 622
needleandfred@live.co.uk
IG: @inkfred

North Gate Tattoo

13 Northgate Street, Bath, BA1 5AS
info@northgatetattoo.com
www.northgatetattoo.com

Purple Rose Tattoo

56 Staple Hill Road, Fishponds,
Bristol, BS16 5BS
01173 300 123
purplerosetattoo@hotmail.co.uk
www.purplerosetattoo.co.uk

Turquoise Blue Tattoo

112 Castle Lane West,
Bournemouth, BH9 3JU
01202 514 514 - 07812 938 174
artists@turquoisebluetattoo.co.uk
www.turquoisebluetattoo.co.uk
IG: @turquoisebluetattoo
FB: /turquoisebluetattoo

WALES

Broadsides Tattoo

38 Singleton Street, Swansea,
SA1 3QN

01792 455 000
broadsideswansea@hotmail.com
IG: @broadsideswansea

Dexterity Ink

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Wrexham, LL13 8BE
01978 447 100
FB: /DexterityInkTattooStudio09

Different Dimension

Unit 4, Pontcanna Mews
200 Kings Road, Cardiff
CF11 9DF
07413 383 323
patrykmazurtattoo@gmail.com
www.surrealisticsanctuary.co.uk

Keep the Faith Social Club

14-16 Royal Arcade, Cardiff,
CF10 1AE
029 2140 6954
keepthefaitthsc@gmail.com
www.keepthefaitthsocialclub.com
IG: @keepthefaitthsc
FB: /keepthefaitthsocialclub

Physical Graffiti

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

Stronghold Tattoo

2nd floor High Street Arcade,
Cardiff, CF10 1BE
07943 981671
www.strongholdtattoo.com
IG: @strongholdtattoo

Sursum Tattoo

11 Market Square, Narberth,
SA67 7AU
01834 860 616
www.sursumtattoo.com
sursumtattoo@gmail.com
IG: @sursumtattoo
FB: /sursumtattoo

WEST MIDLANDS

B.W Tattoo Studios

9 Eastern Avenue, Lichfield,
WS13 6TE
01543 898 766
www.bigwillstattoos.co.uk
IG: @bwttattoostudios
FB /BWttattoostudios

Blood & Honey Tattoo Co

Winchcombe Street, Cheltenham,
GL52 2NE
01242 352 306
hello@bloodandhoney.uk
www.bloodandhoney.uk

Cosmic Monsters Incorporated

3 High Street, Bromsgrove, B61 8AJ
07863 135 814
cmitattoo@gmail.com
www.cmi-tattoo.com

The Church Tattoo

11 Church Road, Redditch,
B97 4AB
01527 759 852
thechurchtattoo@hotmail.com
FB: /thechurchtattoo

Folklore Tattoo

119 Lichfield Street, Tamworth,
B79 7QB
01827 768 446
folkloretattoos@live.com
www.folkloretattooostudio.co.uk

Imperial Art Tattoo

20 King Street, Bedworth,
CV12 8HT
0247 664 0947
www.imperialarttattoo.co.uk
IG: @imperialarttattoo
FB: /imperialarttattoo

Modern Electric Tattoo Co

147 Golden Cross Lane, Catshill,
Bromsgrove, B61 0JZ
01527 759 434
info@modernelectrictattoo.co.uk
www.modernelectrictattoo.co.uk

Nala Tattoo & Piercing Studio

81 Bolebridge Street, Tamworth,
B79 7PD
01827 68 353
contact@nalastudio.co.uk
www.nalastudio.co.uk

Second City Tattoo Club

91 Vittoria Street, Birmingham,
B1 3PA
IG: @secondcitytattooclub
FB: /secondcitytattooclub

Seven Foxes Tattoo

3 Kingsfield Road, Birmingham,
B14 7JN
0121 610 0348
sevenfoxestattoo@gmail.com
www.sevenfoxestattoo.com
IG: @sevenfoxestattoo

Sweet Life Gallery

80 Bristol Street, Birmingham,
B5 7AH
0121 692 1361
Enquiry@sweetlifegallery.co.uk
www.sweetlifegallery.co.uk

The Ink Spot

The Parade, Silverdale, Newcastle
Under Lyme, ST5 6LQ
01782 619 144
tattoosbycookie@hotmail.com
www.theinkspotuk.com

Vicious Pink Tattoo

Suite C, 9a Willow Street, Oswestry,
SY11 1AF
01691 570 427
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
01229 838 946
allstyletattoos@gmail.com
FB: /allstyletattoosbarrow

Aurora Tattoo

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

Black Freighter Tattoo Co.

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CH1 1RU
01244 297 528
theblackfreightertattoo@gmail.com
FB: /TheBlackFreighterTattooCo

Bold As Brass Tattoo

Charleston House, 12 Rumford
Place, Liverpool, L3 9DG
0151 227 1814
boldasbrasstattoo@gmail.com
www.boldasbrasstattoo.com

Bridge Street Tattoo

32 Bridge Street W, Chester,
CH1 INN
01244 638 765
bridgestreetattoo@gmail.com
www.bridgestreetattoo.co.uk
IG: @bridgestreetattoo
FB: /bridgestreetattoochester

The Butchers Block Tattoo Parlour

14 Crompton Street, Wigan,
WNI 1YP
07849 114 380
www.ButchersBlockTattoo.co.uk
ButchersBlockTattoo@hotmail.com
IG: @ButchersBlockTattoo
FB: /ButchersBlockTattoo

Dabs Tattoo

78b Eastbourne Road, Southport,
PR8 4DU
01704 566 665
Dabstatoos@btconnect.com
IG: @tattoosatdabs
FB: /dabstattoo/DABS Tattoo

Indelible Ink

3 York Avenue, Thornton-Cleveleys,
FY5 2UG
01253 280 457
www.indelibleinktattooostudio.co.uk
IG: @indelible_ink_tattoos
FB: /indelibleinkuk

Infernal Rites Tatoo

71 Market St, Westhoughton, Bolton,
BL5 3AA
01942 811 132
infernalritestattoo@gmail.com
IG: @infernalritestattoo
FB: /infernalritestattoo

Inkden Tattoo & Piercing Studio

50 B Coronation Street, Blackpool
FY1 4PD

07957 021 702
inkden.tattoo@gmail.com
www.inkdentattoo.co.uk

Inked Up Chester

21 Eastgate Row North, Chester,
CHI 1LQ
01244 638 558
info@inkedupchester.co.uk
IG: @inkedupchester

Market Quarter Tattoo

14 Market Street, Southport,
Merseyside, PR8 1HJ
marketquartertattoo@gmail.com
FB: /MQTSouthport
IG: @marketquartertattoo

Rapture Tattoo

Unit 1, First Floor, Greenside Mill,
Droylsden, M43 7AJ
info@rapture.tattoo
www.rapturetattoo.co.uk
IG: @rapturetattoo
FB: /rapturetattoo

Sacred Art Tattoo

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

Skin Kandi Tattoo Studio

50a Westfield Street, St Helens
Merseyside, WA10 1QF
01744 734 699
skinkandi@hotmail.co.uk
www.skinkandi.co.uk

Studio78 Tattoos

15 Earle Street, Crewe, CW1 2BS
01270 581 581
studio-78@hotmail.co.uk
www.studio-78.co.uk

True Colours Tattoo Studio

14 Guildhall Street, Preston,
PR1 3NU
01772 378 565
www.truecolourstattoo.co.uk
IG: @truecolourstattoo

True 'til Death

13 Whalley Road, Accrington,
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CONVENTION CALENDAR

UK CONVENTIONS

28th-29th March 10th Scottish Tattoo Convention

Edinburgh Corn Exchange
10 New Market Rd
Edinburgh EH14 1RJ

5th April Ink & Iron Tattoo Convention

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

24th-26th April Kent Tattoo Convention

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

24th-26th April Portsmouth Tattoo Fest

Portsmouth Pyramids Centre
Clarence Esplanade,
Portsmouth PO5 3ST,
www.tattooofest.co.uk

25th-26th April Big North Tattoo Show

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

2nd-3rd May Brighton Tattoo Convention

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

23rd-24th May Totally Inked Tattoo Convention

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

30th-31st May UK Tattoo Fest

Marshall Arena, Milton Keynes.
www.uktattooofest.co.uk

4th-5th July Leeds Tattoo Expo

The first direct arena
Arena Way, Leeds, LS2 8BY.
www.leedstattoooexpo.com

11th-12th July Bristol Tattoo Convention

Ashton Gate Stadium
Bristol BS3 2EJ
www.bristoltattooconvention.com

31st July-2nd August 16th London Tattoo Convention

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

14th-16th August Tatcon Blackpool

Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool.
www.tatconblackpool.co.uk

OVERSEAS CONVENTIONS

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 Road, Sanepa, Patan
44600, Nepal.
www.nepaltattooconvention.com

24th-26th April Benidorm Tattoo Convention

Hotel Mediterraneo, Benidorm.
Spain
facebook.com/BenidormTattooConvention

7th-9th August Berlin Tattoo Convention

Arena Berlin, Eichenstraße 4, 12435
Berlin. Germany
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

Fussingsvej 8, Horsens, Denmark.

16th-17th May International Moscow Tattoo Convention

Sokolniki Exhibition and Convention
Center, Pavilion No. 4. Moscow, 5th
Ray Prosek 7, Building 1.
en.moscowntattooconvention.com

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