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CONTENTS & FEATURES



14

TATTOO 1730s-1970s

Hanky Panky's immense new book of his collections



26

ALBERTINO DA BOLOGNA

contemporary twist on Bauhaus graphics and Italian Futurism



36

TATTOO PODCASTS

We chat with four podcasters broadcasting to the tattoo world



44

NARESH BHANA

The much-loved London tattooist on racism, teaching guitar, and livin' la vida lockdown



53

GALLERY

Inspirational tattoos from all over the world



60

OLIVIA CHELL

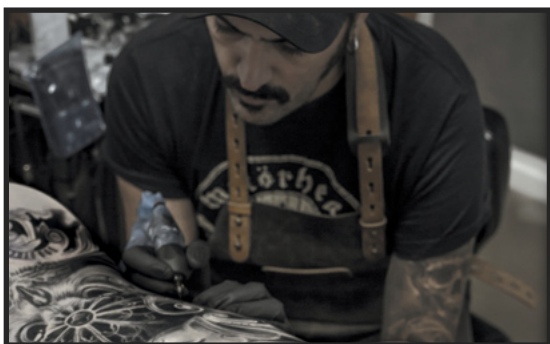
Shining new star of the UK tattoo scene



70

SHANGRILA - INMORTAL TATTOOING

A beautiful limited edition book of tribal and ornamental tattoo art



80

RAUL MUMIA

Taking black and grey gothic to new heights



94

ALEXEY MASHKOW

Russia meets New York in an explosion of colour.

REGULARS

8

NEWS & REVIEWS

If it goes on in the tattoo world, it goes in here

92

A COLUMN BY DIRK-BORIS RÖDEL

This month - Appreciating great tattoos

103

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Total Tattoo Magazine

44 Albion Road

Great Yarmouth

Norfolk NR30 2JD

www.totaltattoo.co.uk

Total Tattoo Magazine No. 190 Mar/Apr 2021

Published by KNT Publishing Ltd.

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

Distributed by Seymour Distribution

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Cover: Illustration by OLIVIA CHELL

EDITORIAL 190

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With spring around the corner and brighter days ahead, we're waiting patiently for permission to restart our lives, following our third and hopefully last coronavirus lockdown.

I think it's fair to say that for many this has proved to be the more difficult of the three. Some have managed to remain positive and productive throughout, with many tattooists I know branching out to start new ventures or going back to a previous career to keep their individual wheels of industry turning. But many have been struggling to find the motivation to break out of the repetitive 'groundhog day' existence that we seem to find ourselves trapped within.

For many old-timers, talk is turning to finally hanging up their machines. Some don't wish to continue with the undoubted challenges that lie ahead in the changed – and changing – landscape of our craft. Additional PPE, the possibility of a cashless society, and an empty calendar of postponed conventions all contribute to the bleak picture that overpaints the colourful world of tattooing we once knew.

It saddens me that so many are finding it so hard. But how easy would it be simply to walk away?

For many, employment is the thing they do to facilitate their lifestyle outside of work. The tattoo world is different. It demands far more. To really become involved, you literally have to commit your life to it. You have to allow it to take you over if you want to get the very best that is available from it. At least that's how I see it. Tattooing is not what you do to facilitate a life away from work. It's the life and the work combined. You have to commit to the passion if you want to reap the rewards.

Very few have the ability to make it to the top in tattooing without first making huge sacrifices – in terms of time, money and effort. As with many things, if you really want to win, you have to give it your all. The great thing about tattooing is that it gives back like no other industry. The rewards are always there and you only have to reach out and take them.



The road travelled by an aspiring tattooist is forever winding – presenting, at every turn, opportunities to grow artistically, financially and emotionally.

Tattooing is an amazing world of community, colour and life, but beware... it will also suck you in and hold you in a vice-like grip that seems to become ever tighter the longer you're involved. A bit like the song 'Hotel California' – you can check out any time you like, but you can never leave.

Many do manage to move on to other things of course, but the thought of not being part of the tattoo world is unsettling and I know it's the same for many old-timers.

Right now, it feels very much like our world has been taken away from us. Usually by this time of the year I would have started attending conventions and be getting my fix of conversation and creativity. Instead, like so many, I find myself unable to do the job that I love. I just have to stay at home tormenting the cat! Our worlds have changed. We're unable to spend time with family, friends, loved ones. The careers we've built over years are on hold.

But we're a hardy bunch. And we're standing at the beginning of a brand new chapter. As we wait for the world to restart, it's good to remember that all those challenges that lie ahead are really golden opportunities. I know the cat can't wait!

Perry

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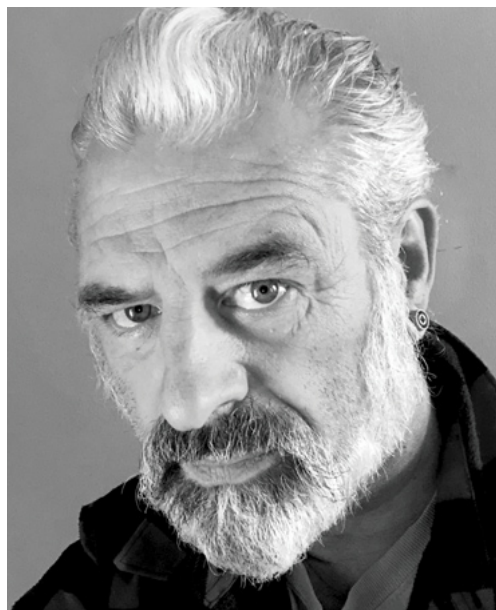
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NEWS & REVIEWS



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, 44 Albion Road, Great Yarmouth NR30 2JD** or **totaltattoo@totaltattoo.co.uk**

COPYRIGHT COPYWRONG?

You've probably read the media reports from the USA about the lawsuit that Kat Von D is facing, for alleged copyright infringement due to a photo she reproduced in a tattoo. Here in the UK, tattooist Katriona MacIntosh (based in Wakefield) is also finding herself in the legal spotlight over a potential copyright issue, not because of a tattoo, but because of the image depicted in one of her paintings.

Of course it's by no means certain how either of these cases will play out, but any legal precedent that is set could obviously have far-reaching – and devastating – implications for the whole tattoo industry. Here's the background to each story, as currently being reported in the media.

Kat Von D used an iconic image of jazz musician Miles Davis as reference for a tattoo, which she then posted online. That was in 2017. The original photo was taken in 1989 by Jeff Sedlik, who owns the rights to the image and has granted non-exclusive licences for it to appear in many publications on numerous occasions over the years. According to press reports, he is suing for damages because Kat Von D allegedly used the photo without his consent and without obtaining the necessary licence and, furthermore, used it to create a new artwork – which was of course then widely distributed through social media etc and consequently, as claimed in the lawsuit, used to build her brand and promote her business.

In essence, the same kinds of charges are being levelled at tattooist Katriona MacIntosh, although perhaps on a smaller scale. Katriona is known for her watercolour style, and recently offered for sale a painting she'd done depicting Prodigy front man Keith Flint. As we understand it, the painting was based on somebody else's photo, and the photographer is now threatening legal action.

This copyright issue is by no means straightforward. It's a can of worms – one of those conundrums where the more you think about it, the more complicated it gets. This is borne out by all the comments on social media, which range from those who think the photographers are simply trying it on and that once a photo is 'out there' nothing can be done to stop others creating their own artistic interpretations of it, to those who feel the photographers have a point and that other artists should not have carte blanche to profit from their original work.

Clearly this one is going to run and run. Let's hope a satisfactory resolution can be found for all concerned.



MAGNA FORCE



In Total Tattoo Issue 189 we brought you the story of Aron Walton of Holey Skin in Bristol, who was taking a stand against having to close his shop during the coronavirus lockdown. He was determined to remain open for business despite police raids, fines and the seizing of his equipment, believing that he was protected by historic rights conferred by the Magna Carta. We understand from recent news reports that he has now been forced to close his premises for the duration, although he continues to deny the veracity of the pandemic (calling it a "scamdemic") and has vowed on social media to continue his fight.

BOOK REVIEW

TATTOO 1730s-1970s:
Henk Schiffmacher's Private
Collection of the Art and its
Makers

By Henk Schiffmacher and
Noel Daniel (ed)
Taschen, 2021
ISBN 9783836569354



Many years ago Hanky Panky, aka Henk Schiffmacher, produced a book called '1000 Tattoos' that took the world by storm. Now, 25 years later, he's done it again.

I'd heard this new book was amazing but I never realised quite how good it was going to be. Publishers Taschen very kindly sent us a copy to review, and the first thing that struck me was its sheer size! The book weighs in at a colossal 5.5kg and arrived in its own specially printed box measuring some 33cm x 47cm. It's split into five beautifully laid out and easily readable sections, and just one look at the lush metallic pages that interleave these chapters shows the care that has been lavished on the book's production. The word 'opulent' springs to mind.

Each section is a pictorial history book in itself. 'Tattoo: 1730s-1970s' starts with Henk explaining his journey through tattooing, talking about his travels, and describing how he amassed his collection of amazing artefacts. There's a chapter dedicated to primitive and tribal tattooing, with illustrations from the early explorers; another looks at the ancient art in Japan; then there are chapters on the tattooed men and women of the travelling circuses, and on early Western traditional tattoos. The final chapter shines a light on the beginning of modern day tattooing in the West, right up to the 1970s, with

particular focus on pivotal figures such as Les Skuse and the Bristol Tattoo Club, and Tattoo Peter from Amsterdam.

The book includes a representative selection of Henk's huge collection of historical flash, flyers, photos and stories, all presented in English, German and French. All in all, it's a wonderful testament to his life and love of tattooing, and his foresight in collecting tattoo history long before it was fashionable or profitable to do so.

The moment it arrived, I opened this book and was lost in it for about three hours. The time flew by without me noticing. I still have so much more of the book to go; it's engrossing, fascinating and beautifully produced in a way that only a publisher like Taschen could do.

The love and respect that Henk has for the art of tattooing is tangible in this book. If you haven't yet acquired a copy, you should do so quickly. Individually numbered, and with a print run of just 10,000, it's set to be a major piece of tattoo history in itself – something to be treasured – and I simply cannot recommend it enough.

Perry

END OF THE INTERNATIONAL LONDON TATTOO CONVENTION



As most people will know by now, the organisers of the London Tattoo Convention have announced that it's come to the end of its run and won't be taking place any more. It's hard to take it in. No more London Tattoo Convention. It was the biggest tattoo show the UK has ever seen. It was the benchmark against

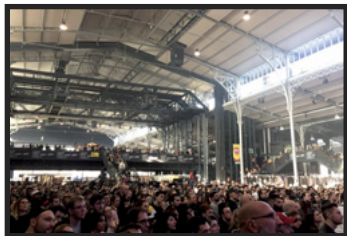
which every other convention was measured. No event in the UK have ever been able to match it. It's a real shame that it's not happening any more.

Organiser Miki Vialetto put an emotional statement online. He described the 15 years of the London Convention as "a chapter in my life that has deeply influenced me as a person," and paid tribute to his business partner Marcus Berriman who died last year. Miki went on to say, "Organising the convention was a full-time job that completely absorbed me. Each year,

the curtain would rise on the most beautiful show of the year, with all the finest tattooists in the world who were just as excited as I was to bring all this to life through a magnificent collaboration based first and foremost on mutual respect."

"The London Tattoo Convention never wavered, and was supported by the most widespread international community," he continued. "And then Covid blew in, bringing down all the highest towers of tattooing and leaving behind a blank slate. And this is where London ends."

MONDIAL DU TATOUAGE ON HOLD



In 2020, the great Mondial du Tatouage was expecting to celebrate its 10th anniversary. Every year, this enormous convention in Paris has drawn tattoo artists and tattoo enthusiasts from all over the world. It's truly a monolith in the international tattoo calendar.

But, as with so many things, the coronavirus pandemic brought the Mondial to an abrupt halt last year. Its organisers have now announced that the 2021 show is cancelled too, and in a heartfelt message

explained, "We're doing our best not to go bankrupt, and we're hoping to host a Paris Tattoo Convention in 2022." No date has yet been set, but it is hoped that an announcement to that effect can be made towards the end of 2021.

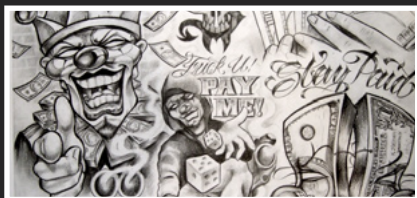
They described the current situation as changing on a weekly basis, and thanked everyone for their understanding and patience in regard to the delay in processing refunds, explaining that this was due to a temporary block on their bank accounts due to ongoing legal action. They expressed their deep gratitude for everyone's support over the years, saying "the Mondial wouldn't be the great event we love without you. Your passion and hard work truly motivates us to do everything possible to come back with an even more magical and unforgettable event."

BRA-VO!

"Every so often I try and do something worthwhile, even if that means making myself vulnerable," says Damien Collingwood on his JustGiving page. He's raising money for Cancer Research UK... by getting a bra cup tattooed on his chest (incorporating a pink breast cancer ribbon). Donations are now approaching £2,000 and Damien has said that if they top £5,000 he will have the other cup tattooed as well, to complete the bra. Damien's courageous gesture is in memory of his mother, who he lost to cancer. The tattoo was done by Sharon at Timeless Tattoos in Hampshire.



R.I.P. BOOG



Boog Deniro, known to us simply as Boog, sadly passed away at the beginning of February after a lengthy fight with cancer.

As the news spread around the world the outpouring of grief was amazing, such was his impact on the global tattoo community. He was one of the first truly international tattooists to take his art to the open road and it showed in the sheer number of lives that he touched. His inspirational script style and black-and-grey Chicano tattoos influenced a whole movement outside of America. He was a true pioneer, and his incredible artwork was matched only by his super friendly personality.

Our thoughts and love go out to his family and friends around the world.

SAVE THESE PIGMENTS



Imagine a world of tattoos without blue and green. And without the possibility of creating any colour involving those two pigments.

That's the stark reality facing European tattooists – and, in all likelihood, those in other countries too – if a new EU regulation take effect.

Tattooists and supply companies around the world are campaigning to save Blue 15:3 and Green 7, the pigments that give 'true' vivid blues and greens and also contribute to so many other colours in the tattooist's palette. Despite the fact that these pigments have been safely used in tattoo inks for years, they are to be banned under Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals). Yes, there are alternatives to these pigments, but nothing that's anything like Blue 15:3 and Green 7.

The Regulation came into force in January 2021. The industry now has a grace period in which to fight the ban, and a petition has been launched.

We encourage everybody to support this vital campaign. Visit the European Parliament website and sign the petition (you will need to go through a simple registration process first):

<https://rb.gy/lozvrk>

Petition No 1072/2020 by Erich Mähner (Austrian) on maintaining different pigments in Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (REACH)



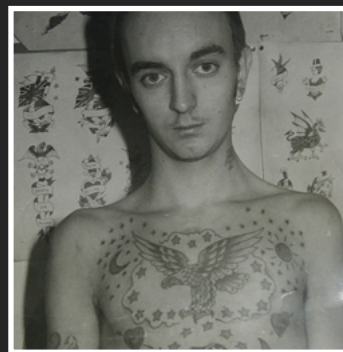
Mark Pettigrew R.I.P.



On January 26th the tattoo world lost another great old timer. Mark Pettigrew was a familiar face on the UK tattoo scene and a long-time tattooist at his studio in Benfleet, Essex. We used to see him frequently at conventions and he would always say hello. He was a super friendly guy, a true gentleman, a loyal friend to many, and an all-rounder who did some great tattoos. He always supported the industry and was a member of the exclusive Old Timers' Tattoo Club.

Mark will be sadly missed by all who knew him. He was a loving husband, father, son, brother, uncle and grandad.

He had five children and ten grandchildren. His family have expressed their gratitude for the extraordinary care that he received while in hospital fighting COVID-19.



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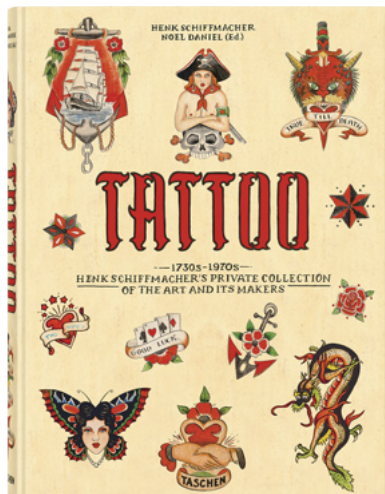
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25 years after '1000 Tattoos', the seminal book that opened the doors to the treasures of the tattoo world for so many enthusiasts, Henk Schiffmacher has collaborated with publisher TASCHEN once again. This time, the Amsterdam based tattoo artist and historian has produced a monster volume all about his own private collections.

Entitled 'Tattoo: 1730s-1970s' and weighing in at a hefty 5.5kg, Henk's new book comprises more than 400 pages and some 700 images, so there is some justification in Henk referring to it as his "bible". It's a landmark publication, and it also brings into sharp focus Henk's current concerns about the future of his priceless collections.



How are you doing Henk, in these coronavirus times?

Like everybody, I'm in jail! It's been the shittiest year of my life. I'm 68 years old, so I have to be very careful about Covid-19, and it's a very difficult time to be tattooing. I'm only taking a few small appointments and I'm mostly just tattooing people on the leg. I can't work with a fucking mask because my glasses get all steamed up. I'll be the first in line for the vaccine. I wanna travel again, see my friends, go to museums... I would have gone to Paris, Antwerp, Brussels, Madrid, etc, to promote this book, and we'd planned to baptise it at a party in Los Angeles, with the Red Hot Chili Peppers and movie stars like Johnny Depp... But this virus shit means you can't do that kind of thing right now!

At least you're alive. And the book's been published.

At the beginning I thought oh shit, if I catch this virus it'll be the end of the story. I might not even see the book finished. I was very worried about it. Louise, my wife, is very vulnerable too. So we closed everything and life sort of stopped. We used to have people coming to the shop from all four corners of the globe. Now we don't have walk-ins anymore. It's shit. This thing's stolen a year of my life! I talked to Bob Roberts on the phone, and he said, "I'm staying in the house". Then I called Ed Hardy and he said, "I'm locked up". Everybody's locked up!

A close-up portrait of Henk Schiffmacher, an elderly man with a long, grey beard and mustache, wearing a wide-brimmed hat and a brown shirt. He has his hand resting on his chin, and his hand is covered in numerous tattoos. The background is dark and out of focus.

HENK SCHIFFMACHER

TATTOO: 1730s-1970s



You tattooed Ed Hardy not so long ago, didn't you?

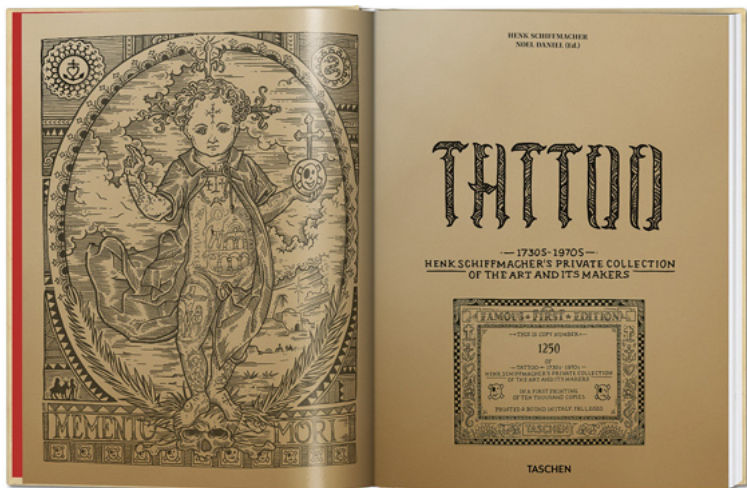
Yeah, he came to the Netherlands in 2019 with his wife Francesca to visit museums, and see all the Rembrandt stuff, and we went to Delft to see my Royal Blue Tattoo exhibition. [Henk designed a range of hand-painted earthenware for Royal Delft – ed.] He asked me to tattoo him during that visit. He had a little space, and it took me just 10 minutes to put in the Amsterdam coat of arms. We've known each other since 1974. He's part of the brotherhood that seems to be disappearing very fast now...

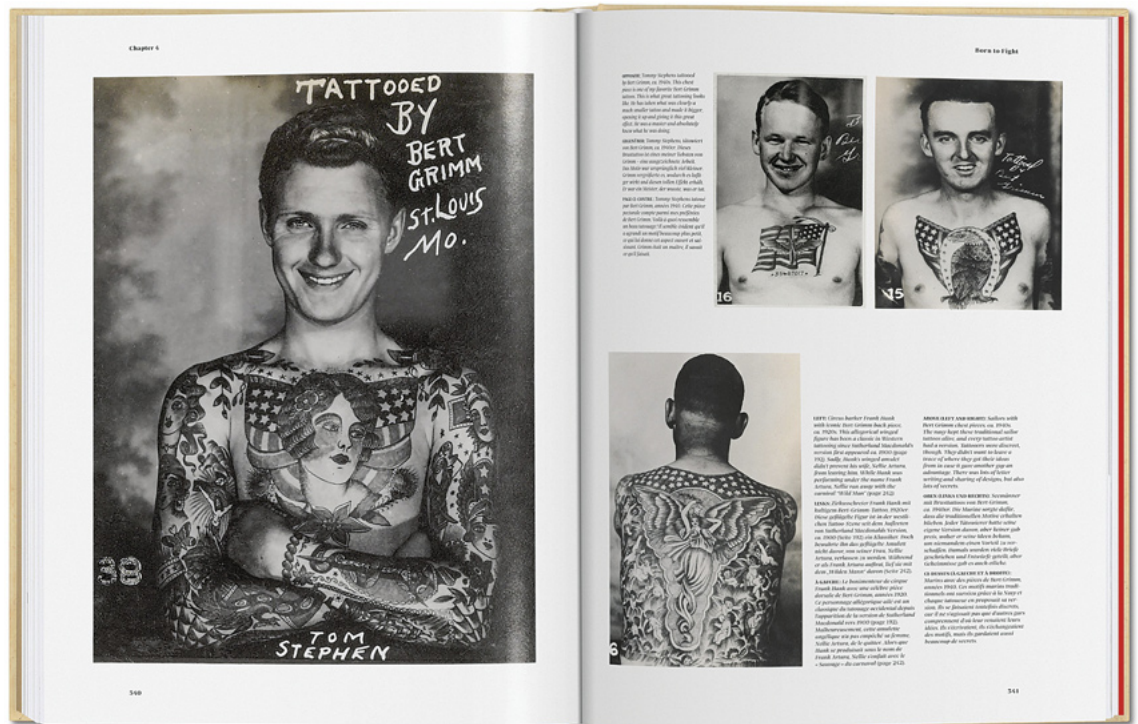
'1000 Tattoos' had a big impact on tattoo culture back in the day.

It's probably one of the best selling tattoo books ever. It inspired a lot of people to get tattoos! They would often call me to ask if they could use the photos. This was in the days before social media of course. That book certainly played an important role in the development of tattooing.

What inspired your new book?

People have always described '1000 Tattoos' as the "bible", but I thought this time I'll really make a bible. I'd seen Taschen's 'Circus: 1870s-1950s' and 'Magic: 1400s-1950s', which are about 7kg each, and I thought it would be great to have a book that size on tattooing! So I approached Taschen about it, and they said OK. They reduced it to 5.5kg though. They said customers don't like to carry big books.



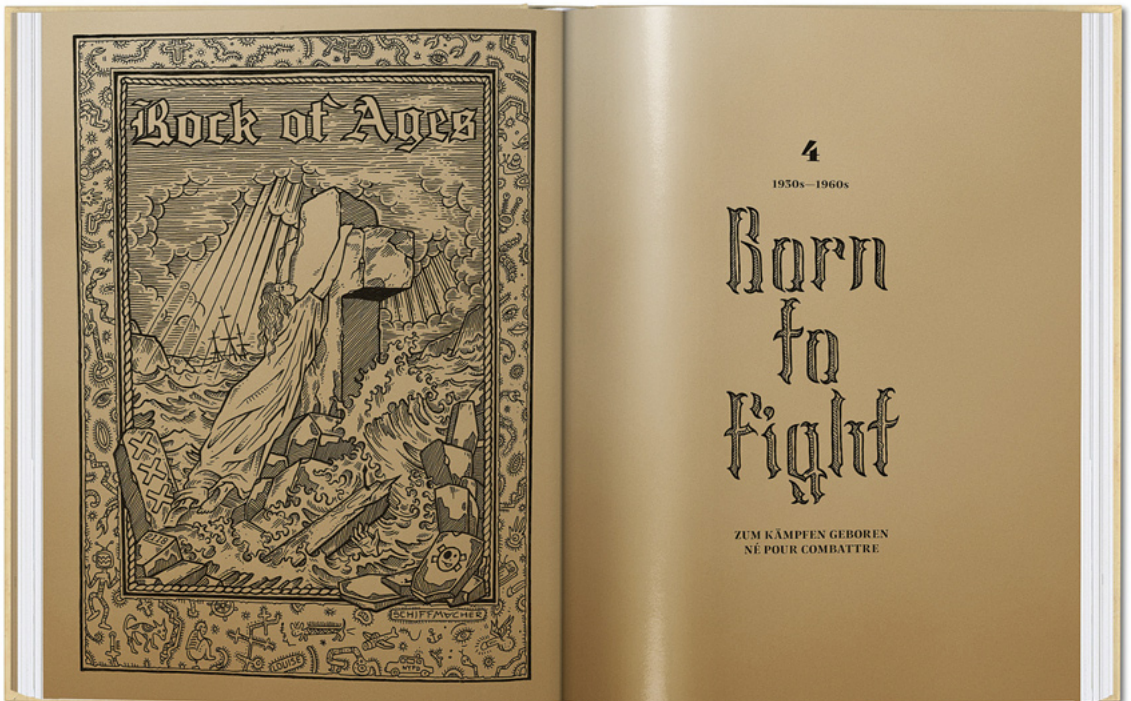


When did you begin working on it?

Really it all began during the time when my Amsterdam Tattoo Museum was open [2011-2013 – ed]. I had a large part of my collection digitised. In all, we had about 60,000 pictures done. There's still about 30,000 remaining. I could easily do two more books like this one!

Tell us more about how you compiled it.

We were working on it for around six years. Basically I did a lot of long interviews with the editor, Noel Daniel. These took place in San Francisco, Los Angeles and Amsterdam. She wanted to know all about where the items in my collection came from, what they are, who gave them to who, etc. A lot of conversations, a lot of talking, a lot of pages. I wrote some stuff for the book myself too. It was Noel who came up with the title of the book; she figured out that most of the objects, documents, drawings, etc, that I have are basically from between those dates, 1730 to 1970.





Tell us the story of how you became the curator of your own museum.

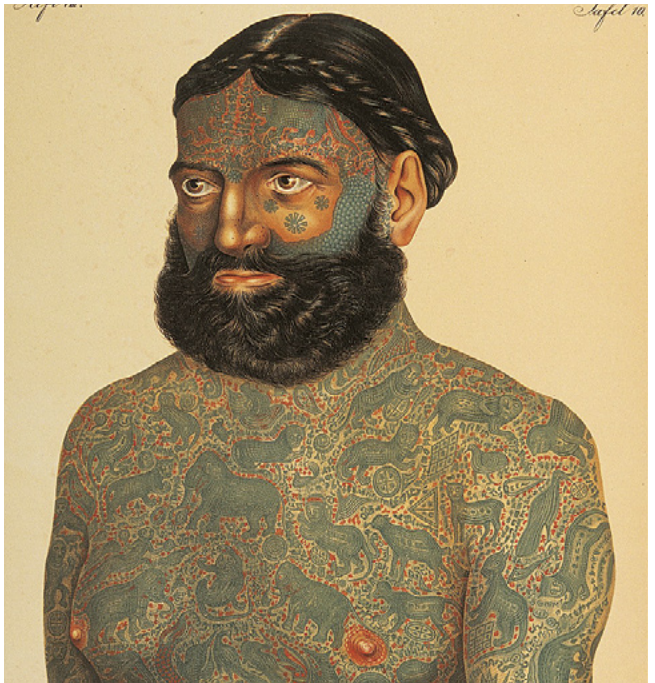
My first museum was a little collection of objects that I kept in my bedroom as a kid, which was all sorts of things from the natural world. I guess the story of my tattoo museum begins in about 1972. I was a photographer before I got into tattooing, and I was always taking pictures at Tattoo Peter's [the late Peter de Haan, one of Amsterdam's tattoo legends – ed]. Peter had only one leg, and he asked me to help redecorate and repaint the shop. When he replaced his flash sheets with new ones, he gave me the old ones, and I kept them. Peter and I travelled together to England. The tattooists we visited would give me a business card, a flash sheet, an old machine... and slowly my collection grew from there.

Were you already tattooed by then?

No, I didn't have any tattoos at that time. In fact I remember going to a small tattoo convention in Hamburg in 1971, Theo Vetter's Tattoo Trefen, and having the sudden realisation that I wasn't tattooed! I went back home to see Tattoo Peter, and told him he had to fix that right away. My first tattoo was a ram's skull, a reference to my zodiac sign, Aries. I don't believe in astrology, but it's all I could come up with on the spur of the moment. You can think too much about a tattoo and then it doesn't work. People seem to get so serious about tattoos nowadays! You have to do something stupid every now and then.

People take tattoo history very seriously nowadays too.

Yeah, when I first started to collect tattoo stuff, nobody was really interested in it. Now, you see people selling things online, and they're asking 50 euros here, 100 euros there. I have a shit load of stuff in my house. If I sold it all, I could live in a chateau in the South of France, with two swimming pools and a tennis court.



Some of your drawings feature in the new book.

I made drawings from the work of favourite artists such as Bosch. If you re-draw another artist's work, all of a sudden you have to be with *all* the elements in the picture. So while re-drawing, you discover stuff that you didn't know was there. I would recommend this to tattooists. If a client brings you a picture, re-draw it. Because then you'll quickly find out where the difficult parts of the image are. And you need to know that before you start tattooing, before it's too late.

Back to your collection. The Amsterdam Tattoo Museum was the world's biggest, wasn't it?

Yeah, it was. After it closed in 2013, I was declared bankrupt and the state took possession of the whole collection. It was a difficult time. I had to fight the Dutch government to get it back. But they did make it clear that none of what had happened was my fault. I have everything here in the house and I'm still going through all the boxes to see what came back from that adventure and what didn't.

What are your plans for the collection now?

I'm having to make one of life's big decisions. I'm having to figure

out what I'm gonna do with the collection. That's why I created Schiffmacher Tattoo Heritage, a group of people who are helping me work that one out. I've always found it hard to get rid of stuff, and I've never sold anything, but Covid-19 made me realise that we'd really have a problem if I died unexpectedly. Louise would suddenly be responsible for the collection, and it would be a shit world full of vultures and hyenas. For two years we had a great museum, and it looked really good. If I had a couple of million I'd buy the building. Renting in Amsterdam isn't viable as it's so expensive. We wouldn't be running a museum. It would just be a commercial venture. We'd be working every day just to keep the doors of the place open, and that wouldn't feel good. But the world definitely needs tattoo museums!

@schiffmachertattooheritage

TATTOO 1730s-1970s: Henk Schiffmacher's Private Collection of the Art and its Makers
Henk Schiffmacher, Noel Daniel (ed)
Taschen, 2021
ISBN 9783836569354
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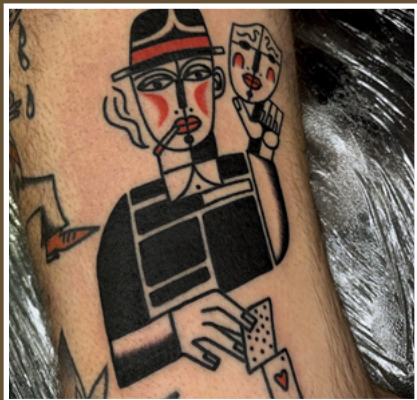
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Bologna arcades



Graphic, bold, brave, strong, crazy. These are all words that can be used to describe the work of Italian tattooist Alberto Lelli, aka Albertino Da Bologna. His solid designs and striking colour palette make his tattoos instantly recognisable. A suave and stylish character, Alberto moved to London at the end of 2020 and has joined the team at Seven Doors Tattoo.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I was born in February 1996 in Bologna, in northern Italy. Bologna is a medium-sized city with a vibrant artistic and cultural scene. Its university is the oldest in the world and it has a large student community. I think the unique medieval architecture of Bologna, with its famous arcades, is where I got my love of geometrical, regular shapes – something that is very evident in my work today.

What else influences your style?

During my childhood I spent a lot of time with my grandparents. They grew up during the sixties and seventies, so they educated me about the culture and aesthetics of those years. My style is hugely influenced by that.

'I HAVE A STRONG VISION OF THE CULTURE AND ETHICS OF TATTOOING'

ALBERTINO DA BOLOGNA

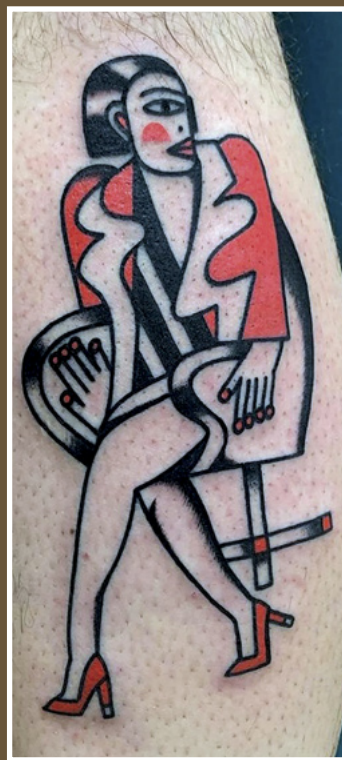


Tell us about your art education.

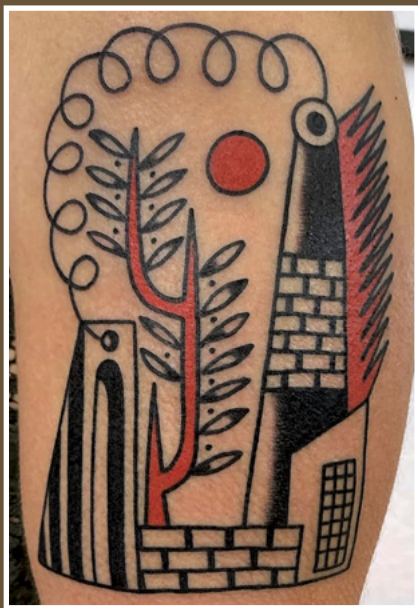
My secondary school was a 'Liceo Artistico', a high school where the emphasis was on art-related subjects. So for five years I was learning painting, drawing, graphics, etc, and I acquired a strong foundation of knowledge in the history of art and design.

Do you create art outside of tattooing?

Yes, very much so. I particularly like drawing and painting on different surfaces – wood, for instance. Last year, one of my pieces was featured in a gallery exhibition during ArteFiera, Bologna's annual international contemporary art fair. I've also created logos and graphics for food companies and restaurants. I'm currently experimenting with rug and carpet design.



'MY STYLE IS A CONTRADICTION BETWEEN THE PAST AND THE FUTURE'



How would you describe your tattoo style?

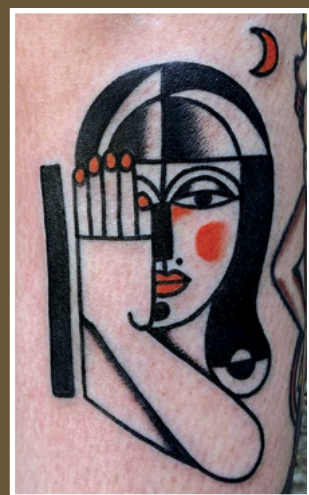
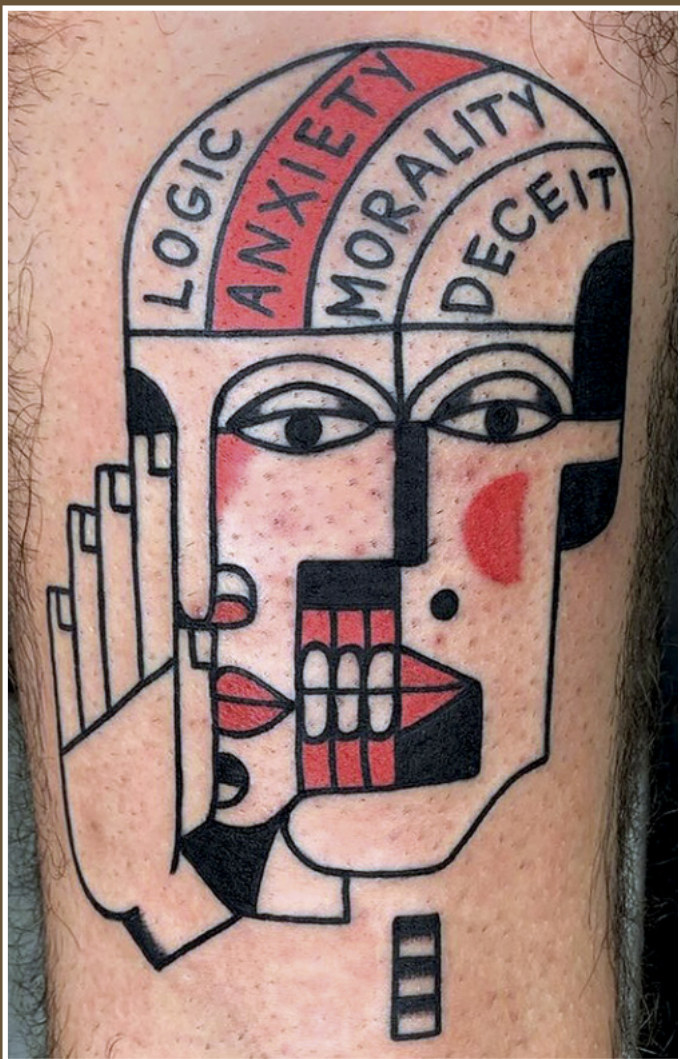
My favourite definition of my work is "a contradiction between the past and the future". My style conflates elements from the Italian Futurism and Bauhaus periods with the shapes of traditional tattooing.

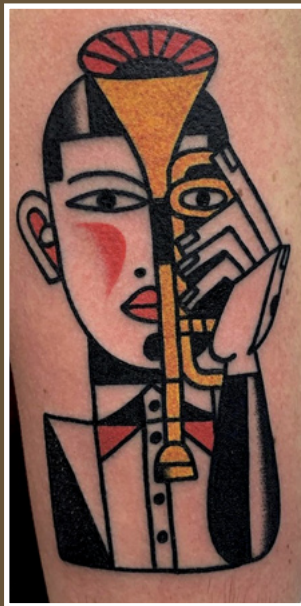
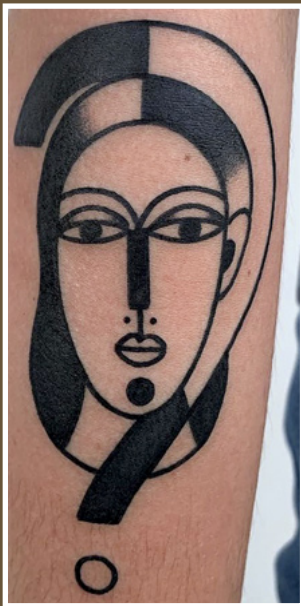
You use a very minimal selection of colours, and very strong lines.

Yes. In my view, it's of key importance that a tattoo is readable and understandable even when seen from a distance. My bold lines and colouring create a strong contrast with the tones of the skin and make the tattoo pop out. My choice of red and black, in particular, is inspired by the frequent use of those colours in Bauhaus artworks.

Is everything stencilled, or do you freehand any elements?

I always prefer to base my work on stencils to ensure that the geometrical shapes in my designs are preserved as accurately as possible. I accept that my tattoos won't be 100% perfect, but I do want them to look their best!





What are your preferences with regard to scale?

In general, I think my designs are most suited to either small-scale or very large-scale execution. I've started a couple of backpieces, but I'm yet to complete them. I hope to do more in the future.

Tell us about your equipment.

I've always used coil machines, but a year ago I bought my first Dan Kubin and since then I haven't used anything else. His machines run very smoothly, they have an easy set-up and I find they work exceptionally well.

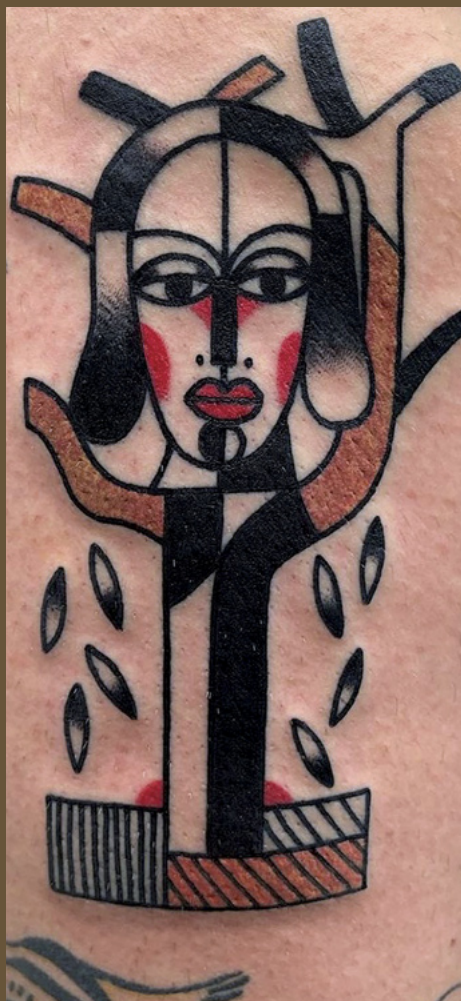
What is your view of sponsorship?

For sponsors, gifting their products to famous artists is obviously good promotion. Sponsorship can be good for artists too, because it allows them to experiment with different supplies and equipment. However, I believe that excessive commercialisation of your work should be avoided if we're to hold on to the true culture and ethics of tattooing.

How did you come to tattooing?

The first thing I did when I turned 18 was get a tattoo. I had to wait until then because my parents were so completely against it. I immediately fell in love with the whole tattoo world and I started visiting the studio on an almost daily basis. A year later, I finished high school and started my apprenticeship at that same studio. I'm 25 now, and a professional tattoo artist, and I'm still learning new things every day.





Tell us more about when you first started.

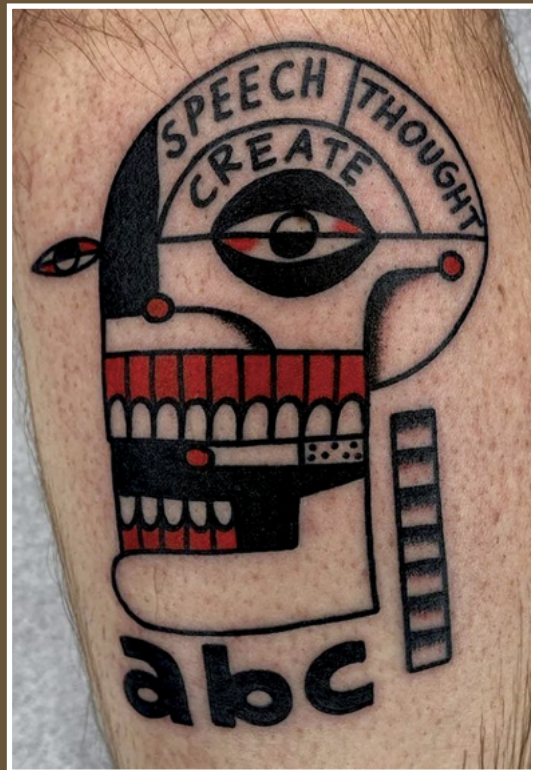
I was very fortunate to be at Bologna's Body Markings, a historic studio owned by Marco Leoni, a famous Italian tattooer from the eighties. My mentor in the shop was Mattia Marangoni. He taught me respect for the tradition of tattoo culture. My apprenticeship lasted eight months, and then I started tattooing my first customers.

Was there anything you found particularly hard?

If I had to pick something that I found especially hard, I'd say it was learning to use a magnum for whip shading. Early on, I really struggled with that.

Did you feel accepted straight away into the world of tattooing?

At the beginning it's always difficult to feel accepted, especially when you're as young as I was. You really have to show your commitment to the trade. It can be very challenging at times, but I believe it's a necessary stage in the training of any tattoo artist. It makes you tougher, and in the long run it makes you a better professional.



Have you ever attended or thought of presenting a seminar?

I fundamentally disagree with the whole concept of tattoo seminars. My background is strongly anchored in traditional tattoo culture (even though I regard what I do as an art form) so for me, learning the trade is a specific process that does not happen through seminars. Every tattooer has their own individual ways, and everyone must find their own path through their own journey.

So you wouldn't countenance the online tattoo learning that's now so prevalent?

No way.

How do you price your work?

The price of a tattoo is determined by the size, the placement on the body, and the amount of work going into the design. I'm pretty lucky because most of the time clients choose pieces from my sketchbook, but obviously if I have to do something custom the price is going to increase. The price is also linked to the cost of living in the particular city where I'm working. I would charge very different rates in Bologna, London and New York for example.



'I HAVE SOME BIG DREAMS FOR WHEN THIS PANDEMIC IS OVER'

Travel is obviously important to you...

Yes, it is. Travelling brings you into contact with all sorts of different life situations and cultures. Of course in some parts of the world tattoos still symbolise a 'dodgy' lifestyle, and all kinds of misunderstandings are possible, but I've always been pretty lucky. When I was in South Africa I had some minor interactions with local criminal gangs, but I've never had any really bad experiences.

How has the coronavirus pandemic affected you?

COVID-19 has meant all my travel plans are on hold at the moment, but I have some big dreams for the future that I hope I'll be able to realise after all this is over. Right now, in London, I'm not working at all as everything is closed due to the national lockdown. But I do think we'll slowly get back to the same rhythm as before, once enough people have been vaccinated.

Where do you see tattooing going in the future?

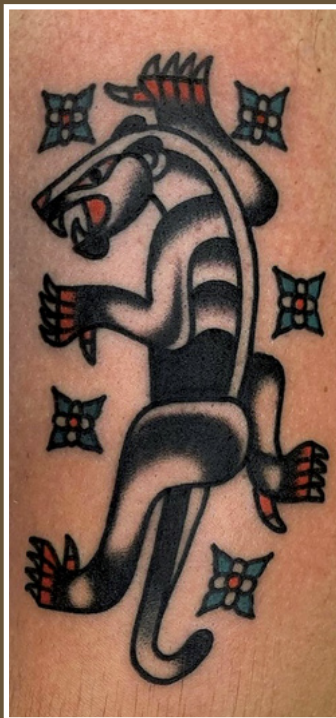
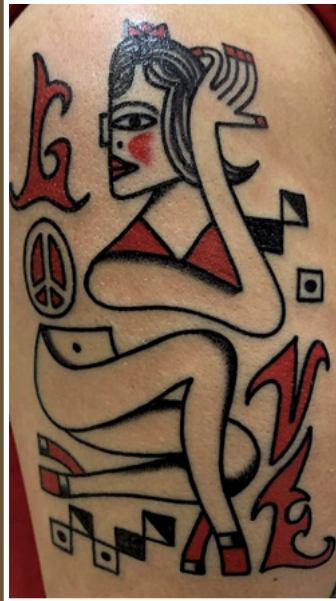
I think that we're very lucky because modern equipment is allowing us to achieve results that are visibly better than in the past and with much less effort. I don't know what the future holds and, to be honest, I don't want to know! I would rather just wait to experience it.

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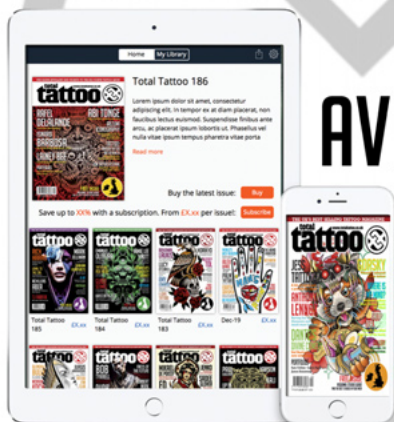


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TATTOO PODCASTS

If you possess a modicum of technical ability, the world of podcasting can bring a wealth of information and entertainment direct to your phone or computer. The hardest part is knowing what's out there!

There's a mind-boggling range of tattoo related podcasts. * We decided to have a chat with four podcast providers who are each offering something different to the tattoo community. Stef Bastian is interviewing the big names of elite tattooing; Jack Watts and Steven Stride are meeting up with tattoo legends and old-timers; Nick Whybrow invites us to enjoy a smartly edited fly-on-the-wall view of studio life; and Paul Talbot and Chris Harrison have launched the podcast equivalent of a professionally produced TV programme.

Paul Talbot - That Tattoo Show



Has the reality of podcasting lived up to your expectations?

Stef Bastian: Honestly, it's completely surpassed all my expectations. Apart from anything, I'm incredibly grateful to be spending all this time with these wonderful artists.

Jack Watts: So far we're super happy with how it's progressing. It's been a learning process, but it's really gathering momentum now. Our initial hopes were simply for people to be interested in what we were doing, but the feedback through social media has been amazing. We're definitely going to continue making podcasts until we run out of people to interview!

Nick Whybrow: I didn't have any particular expectations. All I wanted to do was put the podcast out there into

the world. I just wanted to enjoy the creative process, and anything else would be a bonus. Set yourself a goal and you set yourself up for failure... or else you achieve the goal and struggle with what to do after that...

Paul Talbot: We started the podcast with no expectations whatsoever, so everything is a surprise to us!



Brent from Dunstable as featured on Tattoo Traditions

*The word 'podcast' derives from a combination of 'iPod' and 'broadcast'. Podcasts typically come in the format of a series, with subscribers automatically receiving each new episode as soon as it's produced.

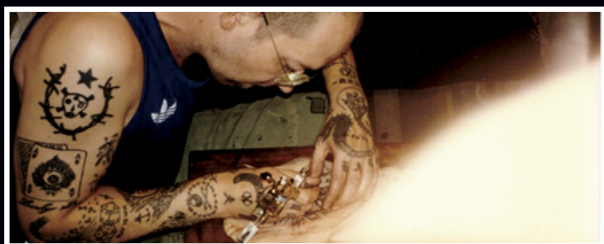
Tell us more about your podcast.
How long have you been doing it?
What was the idea behind it?

Stef: **Tattoo Tales** has been going for a couple of years now. The idea was born one day in Skovde, a little town in Sweden, where I was guesting at a friend's shop. He was telling me stories about the local old timers. During my ten years on the road I've encountered so many great tattoo artists all over the world, and heard countless stories just like those my friend was telling me, and it suddenly struck me that this beautiful cultural heritage needed to be recorded. It mustn't be lost. That's how 'Tattoo Tales' began.

Jack: The first episode of **Tattoo Traditions** (the one with George Bone) went up in September 2020. So it's relatively new. For me, tattoo history is just as interesting and important as the act of tattooing itself, and the podcast is all about the characters involved in that history. It's a way of documenting and preserving the stories of those who have paved the way and made tattooing what it is today.

Nick: **The Good Fight** podcast is simply the chats I have with my clients while I tattoo them. Very imaginatively, it's named after my studio. The idea began way back in 2016, when I was working in another studio, and myself and co-worker Claire Innit found ourselves nudged to a private room upstairs because the rest of the team just wanted a quiet life! We had a passion for debating anything and everything, and we used to have the funniest conversations with our clients. We often thought we should be recording them and making a podcast, even back then. Three years later when I opened my own studio the idea became a reality.

Paul: Chris Harrison and I started **That Tattoo Show** during the UK's first national lockdown in spring 2020. It's a YouTube channel. Shut in our houses, we'd been spending evenings chatting via FaceTime – about tattoos, life, the universe and everything – when one of us (we can't agree on who!) had the idea of filming our conversations and sharing them with other tattooists. So that's what we did.



How do you approach making each episode?

Stef: I put a great deal of care into selecting the artists, and I've been blessed that people I consider to be tattoo legends have opened their doors to me. My goal is threefold: I want the podcast to be entertaining, educational and inspiring.

Jack: I produce **Tattoo Traditions** with my buddy Steven Stride. He edits and mixes the audio, and I cover the research and interviewing side of things. In terms of decision making and coming up with ideas, it's a joint effort. The podcast is released monthly, which gives us plenty of time to get each episode ready.

Nick: I'm absolute amateur, figuring it all out as I go, so the production side takes me twice as long as it would if I was trained in this kind of thing. Unfortunately, recording has had to be put on hold right now because of the pandemic, so the podcast is on an extended hiatus until it's safe to start up again. But there's plenty of past episodes available to get your teeth into.

Paul: Over the past few months we've been working on getting the quality as close to a professional TV show as we can, and improving the content as much as possible. Chris focuses on the video side of things and I focus on the audio side. We're a good team. Of course we're learning as we go, especially from the feedback we get from our subscribers.

Why should someone tune in to your podcast? What makes it special?

Stef: There's a lot of great content out there, with people putting heart and soul into all kinds of different podcasts. The strength of *Tattoo Tales* lies in the experience and influence of its guests, and all the crazy stories they tell. I hope the words we record can inspire the younger generation of artists to become their best – from a place of gratitude to previous generations.

Jack: I definitely think older artists tell their stories in different ways. A lot of podcasts interview younger tattooists, which is obviously interesting and engaging in itself, but older artists led wild lives and they were working at a time when being a tattooist basically made you an outlaw. When you hear them speak it transports you back to that time. You can really imagine what the shops were like. The majority of our featured artists started to tattoo before tattooists had to wear gloves! But we're going to include more contemporary artists too – like Duncan X for instance, who featured in our most recent episode.

Nick: I've never been good at selling myself, so this is a tough question! When I started there certainly weren't any podcasts like mine, where tattooists record chats with their clients or other artists in a working studio environment. I don't know if it's unique now – with the 8 million podcasts that have started since then! – but I'd encourage you to tune in and eavesdrop on the fascinating, funny and occasionally crazy lives of ordinary people.

Paul: Chris and I are old friends with very different life experiences who consequently see things very differently. We very rarely agree on anything, and this often makes for extremely lively debates. We argue a lot and we laugh at each other, which of course usually reflects exactly how the audience feels.



Steven & Jack from *Tattoo Traditions*

TATTOO TRADITIONS



“Preserving and exploring tattoo history”



What have you enjoyed most about producing your podcast?

Stef: Every single interview I do is special to me for a different reason – the uncommon kindness of Stephanie and Virginia, Henk's honesty, Lal's flamboyancy, Deb's big heart... I could go on. I try not to limit the interviews just to tattooing; I want to portray the entirety of the person and their lived experience. Often the journey to meet the interviewee is a treat in itself, like cycling 30km to interview Gordon Toi on a little island in New Zealand, or talking to Rambo in a pub in Manchester. It can't get more authentic than that.

Jack: It's all been fun so far! Some artists are harder to track down than others, and it's pretty rewarding when you finally meet them and they're happy to be part of the podcast. We have some great episodes lined up to record, with some very important figures within England's tattoo history. So keep your eyes peeled.

Nick: I always feel honoured when people want to share their personal stories with me and the rest of the world, whether it's a harrowing tale about a past trauma or a funny story about losing their virginity in an embarrassing way...

Paul: It always feels good when our viewers thank us for something – whether it's some piece of advice we've featured, like how to create a better stencil, or just for helping to make lockdowns more bearable. The show has definitely been responsible for keeping us sane in these strange times!



Nick Whybrow - The Good Fight



What's been your biggest challenge?

Stef: I'll be honest, things fell into place right from the start. The hardest part was the very first step, getting everything moving. But as with anything, once it gained momentum it didn't look like an overwhelming task anymore.

Jack: COVID-19! That's been our biggest challenge. Being in lockdown has made it impossible to create new episodes. We always record our interviews in person, face-to-face; it just gives everything a more human feel and the tattooists seem more comfortable that way. Another challenge is when a tattooist turns down our invitation. That's unusual – most of them have said yes – but when they say no, it's so disappointing. But you just have to respect their decision.

Nick: The biggest challenge? Where do I start?! The single biggest challenge is finding the time to do all the editing for each episode. And competing for people's attention. That's hard too, as there's now a million podcasts on every subject. Having said that, it's still my view that if you have an idea you believe in you should definitely give it a try.

Paul: Simply getting the word out there is the difficult thing. It's very hard to get above the 'static' and constant noise that is the 21st century. We rely on our audience to tell their friends about the show, and we try very hard to make stuff that's worthwhile tuning into.



What advice would you give someone wanting to start a podcast of their own?

Stef: It's the same as any new creative venture: focus on the 'why', and the 'how' and 'what' will follow. Ask yourself, are you doing it for your ego or are you doing it because it makes you happy? Speaking personally, when I found myself doing it for the former reason (likes and followers – an easy trap to fall into) it just brought me stress and anxiety. When I reminded myself why I'd fallen in love with the idea in the first place, not only did I begin producing something far better, but I also had a blast doing it. And remember, you can't decide to have a great idea but you can make yourself receptive to great ideas.

Jack: My advice would be to choose your subject wisely. It has to be something you're passionate about, and something you have a deep understanding of too. And invest in good equipment early on. We've just bought two new microphones and the quality is amazing. It makes a huge difference. Deep down, making the podcast has to be enjoyable for you. We are so grateful that people listen to Tattoo Traditions, but we'd still make it even if people didn't because we love doing it.

Nick: The best advice I was given was to have several episodes produced and finished before publishing your first one. That way, if you run into any problems you'll be ahead with your episodes, giving you time to fix things and not miss any schedule you're trying to keep. And make sure you give yourself time off. Perhaps put out 'seasons' rather than trying to do continual episodes without a break.

Paul: My advice? Start today and just work it out as you go along!

What are your future podcasting plans?

Stef: I'd like to include a few special episodes involving artists working in other media. Their insights about the creative process, about marketing and promotion, about selling their art, etc, could all be helpful to tattooists. We're in a new world now that's presenting us with big obstacles and new possibilities all at once.

Jack: As soon as the lockdown's lifted we'll be able to record more episodes, which is very exciting. Looking ahead, we hope to create a website showing all the photos associated with each episode, plus short biogs and pics of all the people referenced (that was Lal Hardy's idea) in order to give people a visual. Maybe some merchandise eventually too!

Nick: I burned myself out early on by putting out an episode every week – it became a chore – so my plan is to try to get my mind back into enjoying the process, assuming I can rekindle the podcast post-pandemic of course.

Paul: We plan to continue figuring out what content our audience really enjoy best. We're aiming the show at tattooists, at all levels, but we want content that non-tattooists can enjoy too. The great thing is that we get feedback from viewers instantly. They tell us what they do and don't like and that gives us ideas for the direction in which to take the channel.

How do you see the future of podcasting as a whole?

Stef: I'm a big fan of podcasts in general. And information I consider to be valuable, I devour – and podcasts are a great alternative to books. You can learn a lot, you can be inspired, and you can be entertained, and it's all in a 'lighter' kind of way due to the talking format. Digital media will continue to have a stronger and stronger presence in our world (for better or worse) and I believe podcasts are a great way to access information that can improve your life!

Jack: I think podcasts will only get bigger and better. At least I hope so, for our sakes! More people seem to be using them as a way of learning or escaping, especially with everything that's going on at the moment.

Nick: In all honesty I don't know what the future of podcasts will be. With so many people attempting to 'cancel' anyone they disagree with, podcasting is becoming a challenge. I've had people threatening to ruin my business and my personal life just at the mere mention of certain subjects. It makes open discussions and honest conversations very difficult to have. And that's a shame, because the ability to be respectful despite disagreement is the key to society progressing.

Paul: The podcast format with a visual component is where we see the future. Particularly for things like tattooing. Listening is one thing (and you can just listen to YouTube if you want to) but being able to see what's being discussed adds another layer.

How can we find your podcast?

Stef: You can follow the updates on stefbastian.com and @tattootalespodcast on Instagram. You can listen to all the episodes on Spotify, YouTube, iTunes and Stitcher. Just look for **Tattoo Tales** or **Tattootalespodcast**.

Jack: Follow us on Instagram @tattootraditionspodcast and listen to the podcast on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Pocket Casts and SoundCloud. Just search **Tattoo Traditions**.

Nick: Search for **The Good Fight Tattoo** Podcast on your favourite podcast platform and you should find it. I hope you enjoy it!

Paul: You'll find **That Tattoo Show** on YouTube (www.youtube.com/thattattooshow).





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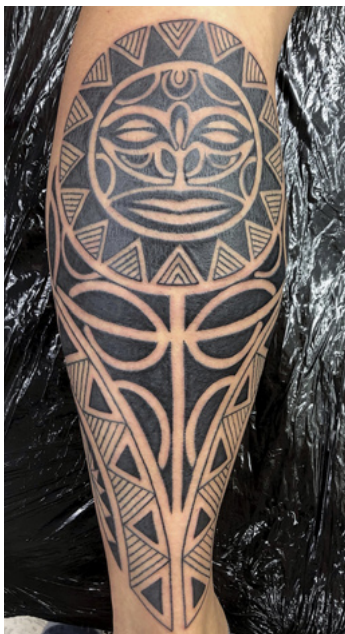


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NARESH BHANA FLAMIN' EIGHT



Naresh and Sonia

Naresh Bhana has been in and around the London tattoo scene for more than 30 years. During that time he has always had great respect for both the trade itself and the tattooists of the past whose shoulders we stand on. For several years he led the Tattoo and Piercing Industry Union and worked tirelessly to defend the rights of the tattoo community when the government saw fit to try and impose unwarranted restrictions back in the early 2000s. His Flamin' Eight tattoo studio in north London has long been known for its consistently excellent work.

'WE SHOULD JUST CHILL AND ENJOY THE TIMES WE HAVE, BECAUSE NOW IS WHERE IT'S HAPPENING'

Naresh tells me the first 'proper' tattoo he did was in the summer of 1988. "I progressed slowly," he continues, "then I landed a job in the early 90s at Original Skin with Cilla North. That was where I really cut my teeth. Until then I'd been flying blind, relying on books and dodgy how-to manuals from suppliers. Cilla helped fill in a lot of gaps, and opened up the tattoo community to me too."

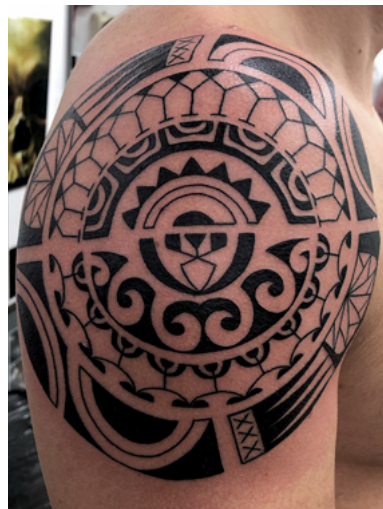
Who else inspired Naresh, and which tattooists continue to inspire him now? "I guess any tattooists who keep pushing the art and proving we're not yet at the end of the road!" is his immediate reply. "Going back over the years, it's hard to pick names. I don't want to leave anyone out. I've had so much help. I've worked with some great artists, and every one of them has influenced me in some way."

I ask Naresh to tell me about his membership of the Old Timers' Tattoo Club – unless of course it has the same rules as Fight Club, and you don't talk about it. He laughs. "I was introduced to the Old Timers' Tattoo Club by Lal Hardy. It's been running for about 30 years and it has a limited membership, meeting once a year for a weekend to have a bit of a jolly and take care of any club business. Mainly it's a fun thing to keep the history of tattooing alive and remember those who have passed on. We have a quarterly newsletter, and contribute articles and photos to keep that going and help build an archive of times past."



"It's the older generations who laid the foundations for where we are now," Naresh continues. "I love the history of tattooing, how it developed independently in so many places then cross-pollinated with the help of the early explorers, modern day travel, and now this incredible tool called the internet!"

"So many great characters have pushed the boundaries and opened up tattooing. Anything is possible now, from a blacked-out bodysuit to a postage stamp sized hyper-realistic tattoo. I hear artists moan about the instagram culture of faddy trends that won't stand the test of time - and don't get me wrong, I love a good moan myself - but we should remember that this tattoo world we occupy was built by showmen, impresarios, storytellers and bards. Larger-than-life characters who strove to be seen and heard via the communications media of their time - whether that was sideshow barkers, newsprint and photography, or TV and film. And now social media, and who knows what next."



"So we should just chill and enjoy the times we have, because now is where it's happening. There's no going back, or putting it back in a box, and I don't see a problem with keeping traditions alive whilst simultaneously celebrating the new and challenging. So enjoy the ride, I say!"

Naresh loves bold traditional work and Japanese, but tells me lately he's been doing a lot of Polynesian influenced designs, which he also enjoys. "I've never been one to turn down a project because 'it's not what I do'," he says. "I think the client's journey, and their experience, is as much a part of the tattoo as any vision I bring to the table."

"I've never felt tattooing was about a product or a clinically executed image," he continues. "A tattoo evolves as a process between the client and myself. Sometimes it can be difficult. It's not always a perfect fit. There needs to be compromise and understanding on both sides to achieve something of lasting worth. For me, sometimes just finding that balance is as rewarding as the finished result."



Inevitably, our conversation turns to the coronavirus pandemic. "The first lockdown was kind of a shock to begin with," Naresh tells me, "but all my various interests kept me sane. Much as I love the studio, it isn't my only creative outlet. I got the chance to finish some projects on paper, and I also played a lot of music. I even wrote some songs! My midlife crisis seem to be an obsession with the guitar, and I had plenty of time to practice."

"I also teach guitar – more as a mentor really – with some blind / sight-impaired groups. I do this via an organisation called Music.Prescribed. [www.musicprescribed.com] who are all about music for wellbeing – through the empowerment of learning and also through the social contact it affords. During lockdown it's been a real challenge as we can no longer meet learners face-to-face. Overcoming the limitations of doing things by phone has been great fun!"

"Being at home with Sonia 24/7 is pretty normal really," Naresh continues. "We work together, so it hardly feels any different. After clapping for the NHS, we entertained everyone with a weekly singsong out in the street, we helped elderly neighbours with shopping and odd jobs, and we redecorated at home and in the studio too. Sonia

signed up to be a volunteer on the NHS phone line and I did PPE and OXYtest deliveries and collections by bike – which was as much for me to get out and have a ride as it was doing something for the community! Like many people we decided we couldn't just sit on our butts so we allowed Joe Wicks to creep into our routine and we've continued doing that four or five times a week since last March. I'd like to say I'm now a sculpted Adonis, but the truth is it simply allows me to maintain my terrible eating and drinking habits whilst not feeling so bad about it. It's fun to do, and I would recommend it to anyone."

"So that's what we've been doing in lockdown. At one point we wondered if we'd ever find time to get back to work!"

Our conversation moves on to another subject that's quite rightly getting a lot of attention now: racism in tattooing. I ask Naresh if he thinks we're doing anywhere near enough to address the issue. "This is a tough one to answer," he says. "It's a big a question for one person. And it's too big a question for just one interview. But I'll give you my two penn'orth..."



"I think the main thing is for people to listen. Just because you don't feel personally impacted by racism doesn't mean it doesn't exist. If you live and work in an environment with little or no diversity, then it's easy to feel that the media is blowing things out of proportion, or it's all agitators and troublemakers. But the truth is, it's very real. It's impact is felt widely through different communities – to varying degrees, depending on factors both racial and socio-economic."



"If you feel challenged or angered by talk of BLM, just stop and check yourself. Why is this so hard to hear? Why is this so hard to understand? Maybe you're white and you feel more disadvantaged than some people of colour. But who really benefits from your anger and outrage? The truth is you have more in common with working class people of colour than you do with the rich elites and newspaper barons who peddle these divisive narratives! Try to listen and have some empathy. Your acceptance of someone else's pain doesn't mean your pain is less valid. It might even be lessened if it's shared."

"In tattooing, I think one of the most obvious issues is how we tattoo darker skin tones. I've heard of – and seen – realism artists refusing to work on darker skin, explaining to clients that the lack of contrast would make the tattoo look blurred or faded before its time. I'm not sure you can call this racism, and I do think it's important for clients to listen to any technical obstacles the artist might point out. Maybe get a second or third opinion, and listen to the consensus. Definitely don't just go with the artist who says yes."

"Look at an artist's portfolio and ask for examples of their work on darker skin. It may be that they don't post many photos of dark skin on social media because they feel those photos wouldn't have the same impact. But again, is this racist? It may feel like it, but many artists view a tattoo they've done as a 'thing' in its own right, quite separate from its wearer, and have no interest in the client as a whole person. Of course when it's on your skin, it's difficult to think of it as 'just a tattoo' and not something that's part of you."



"This brings me onto colour retouching. I have a bit of an issue with this for lots of reasons. Again, it could be argued that the artist just wants to represent their work in the best possible light (no pun intended!) – so the excuse for retouching might be that the original was badly lit, or there was a shine because of fluid, or swelling, bruising, etc. But for me any of this is a pretty poor excuse. Clients deserve to see a tattoo warts and all, and anything else is misrepresenting your work. It's frankly dishonest. Get better at taking photos! Allow your client's skin time to rest and recover, and if you're going to mess with the contrast or levels get the client's permission and put that in the photo's description."





I ask Naresh whether he has ever been on the receiving end of racism himself. "Growing up in the 70s and 80s, and being from a mixed background, I guess I had similar experiences to many kids like me. There was a tendency for other kids, and some adults too, to 'weaponise' perceived differences and try to dehumanise you, or make you feel like you were 'other'. Some of that was racism, but some of it was because I chose to look different."

"I've had some nasty physical clashes with actual racists. And in the old days of the Sus law I was picked up by the police and even threatened with deportation! Along the way, and as I've grown older, these things have become less frequent – but more subtle. What are now called 'micro aggressions' can still sting. But I guess because I feel safe and settled in myself I can usually just put it down to ignorance and move on."

"If I do challenge someone, I do it quietly. I try to steer them in the right direction by explaining how these little things – these micro aggressions that are usually not deliberate, and often just thoughtless comments or generational hangovers – continue to empower actual racists."

"But obviously each person's experiences are unique to them. Being half Indian, I'm fairly light skinned (I'm often mistaken for having Mediterranean or Pacific origins) so I don't claim to have the same experience as someone with darker skin or perhaps a strong accent. As with any form of prejudice, racism is very nuanced."

Naresh sums it up beautifully. "All voices should be allowed to be heard so that we can learn to be more tolerant and accepting of each other."

Naresh can be found at:
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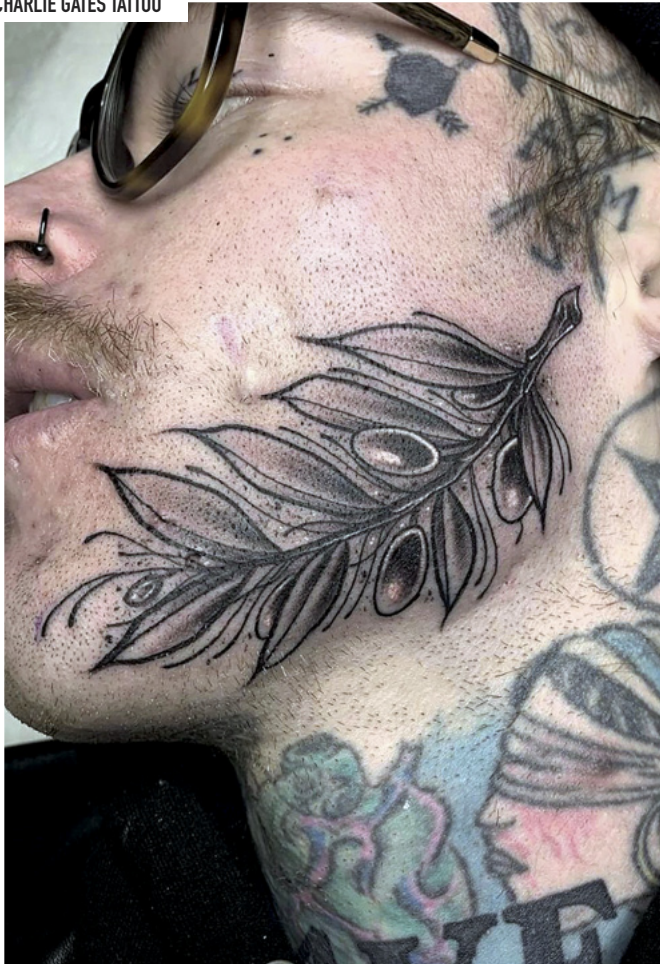
LUKAS KAY, TWENTY TWO VOLTS TATTOO



JENNA COFFIN (NETHERLANDS)



CHARLIE GATES TATTOO



SMASH, L'IMAGINARIUM



LAINEE BEE, CUSTOM CULT TATTOOS (NETHERLANDS)



R BETTS, THREE KINGS (USA)



HATTIE COX, DARK HORSE COLLECTIVE



BARTŁOMIEJ KLUCZYK (POLAND)



HEIDI HYOM, LITTLE SORPION STUDIO



SANDRO SECCHIN, SACRED GOLD TATTOO



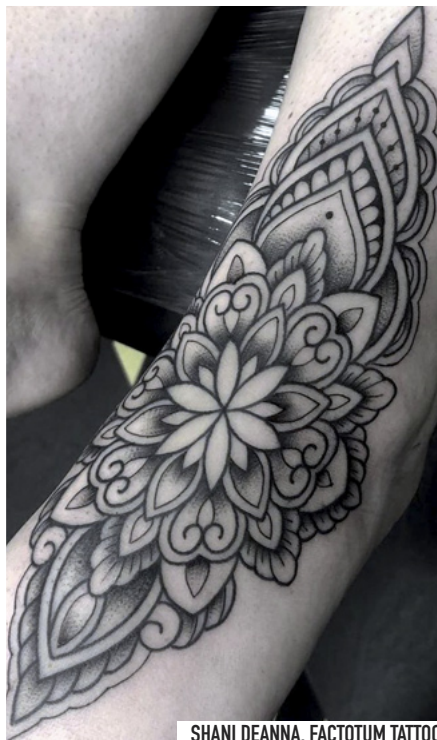
JULES BOHO LINZER TATTOO (AUSTRIA).



RICH KNIGHT, STUDIO 13



DOM JOEL, WHITFIELD TATTOO



SHANI DEANNA, FACTOTUM TATTOO

ALEKSANDRA SKUZNECOVAS, INK GENERATION TATTOO



ALEKSANDRA SKUZNECOVAS, INK GENERATION TATTOO



ADRIAN MONTANA, SMILEY DOG TATTOO (IRELAND)



AKUZNECOVAS, INK GENERATION TATTOO



BEN, THREE KINGS (USA)



BRANDON ARCHER, BW TATTOO STUDIOS



MATT ROBINSON, ANCHOR TATTOO (USA)

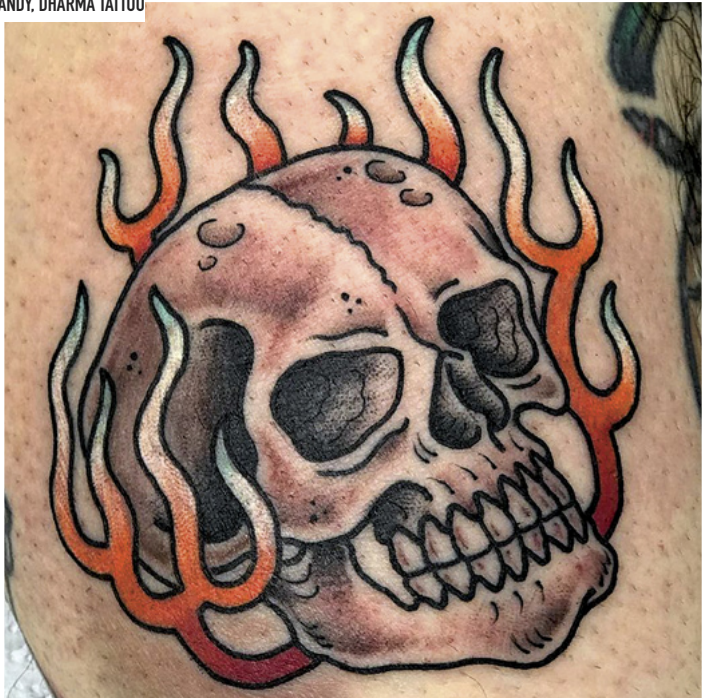


ANTHONY LENNOX, PROPHECY GALLERY

DIMITRIS PANAGOPOULOS, NICO TATTOO (GREECE)



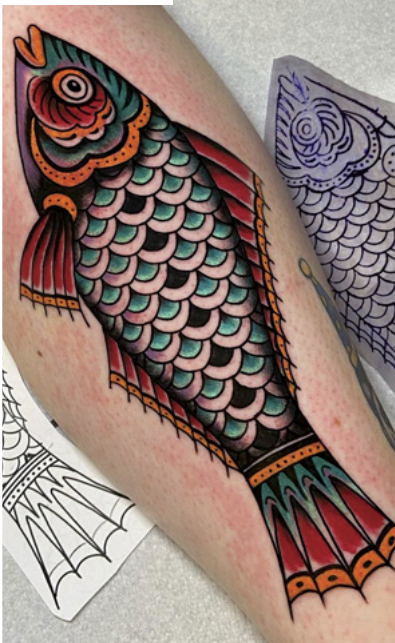
ANDY, DHARMA TATTOO



WANDEL, CRIMSON TALES TATTOO



CHRIS, THE INK FACTORY



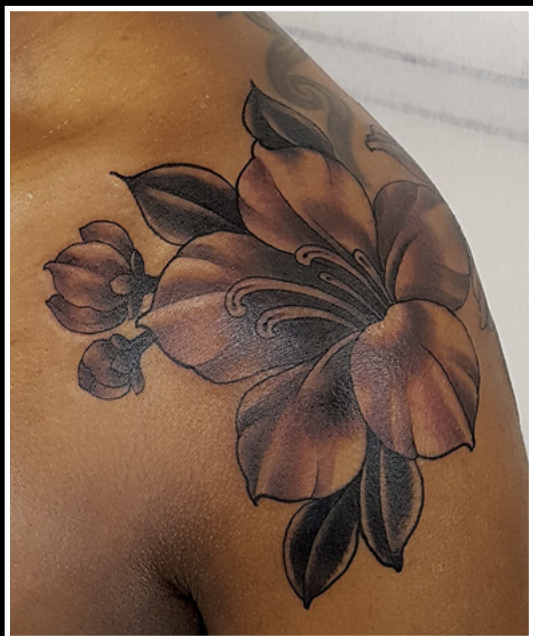


**'NOW THAT A WHOLE
GENERATION HAS
EMBRACED TATTOOING,
PERHAPS THE NEXT
GENERATION WILL
THINK TATTOOS ARE
UN-COOL...'**

OLIVIA CHELL

Olivia Chell is one of the shining lights of the UK tattoo scene. They create beautiful eastern inspired tattoos of the finest quality, and their sharp wit and bubbly personality make it an absolute joy to spend time in their company.

We first met Olivia ten years ago at the Portsmouth convention, right at the start of their career. "I was all front then!" they recall. "I was so overwhelmed to be surrounded by artists like Darren Stares, Kev Shercliff, Gill 'The Drill' Montie... people I'd never even imagined I might one day meet. I felt like I had to act like I belonged in that kind of company! I was desperate to prove myself. I was tattooing for next to nothing so that I would look super busy and popular. And I was so determined to fit in, I was working all day then partying all night. It was exhausting. I'm still drawn to that mental side of tattooing, just without quite so much drink. There aren't so many warriors in tattooing now like there once were."



Olivia grew up in Glossop, in the heart of the Derbyshire Peak District – a place which they describe with a smile as “beautiful and yet shite”. Glossop is a small rural town and, according to Olivia, “it’s great if you like hills and homophobia.” At the tender age of 13, a chance encounter with Tony Cohen’s book ‘The Tattoo’ blew Olivia’s mind. From that point on, they were obsessed with the idea of becoming a tattooist. “I’d hardly seen any actual tattoos in real life. All I had was this one book that was like my bible! I just loved the idea of painting tigers and naked ladies, and I set my heart on an apprenticeship in Japan. I never had a back-up plan. I just knew I would become a tattooist.”

Olivia’s tattoo passion has encompassed a respect for the history and tradition of the craft from the word go. “When I was 19, I went to work at Sacred Art in Manchester, under the watchful eye of Mark Armstrong. He was the perfect mentor for me. He would tell me stories about people like Herbert Hoffmann and all those old timers – I really loved that – and he showed me everything that tattooing could be, all the highs and all the lows.”



'I NEVER HAD A BACK-UP PLAN. I JUST KNEW I WOULD BECOME A TATTOOIST.'

At Sacred Art, Olivia also became best friends with tattooist Sandy Green. "Sandy's influence on me was immense. Mark taught me how to tattoo, but Sandy taught me how to be a *tattooist*."

"She's such a warm, compassionate human being. She showed me how to love and respect this trade. How to live it and enjoy it. What to prioritise and what to ignore. How to be open and honest, steer clear of the negativity, focus on pushing forward all the time, and find the joy in tattooing."

"I loved being at Sacred Art, but it was time to move on," Olivia continues. "My partner at the time, Helena, wanted to get into tattooing and was offered an apprenticeship in Edinburgh with Morag Sangster at Tribe Tattoo. Helena had stuck with me through my apprenticeship, so I said I would go with her to Edinburgh to support her through hers."

"I was very happy to be at Tribe, but I'm so passionate about my tattooing – it's my entire life! – so working alongside my partner as she was going through her apprenticeship did make things a little intense. I decided I had to go somewhere else, so that Helena could grow and become her own tattooist without feeling she was constantly in somebody else's shadow. Jason Corbett had already asked me to come to Insider Tattoo. I'd turned him down at first, out of loyalty to Morag, and also because I didn't see the point in just walking away from my job at Tribe. But the more I thought about it, the more I realised it would be good for me. Jason was the real deal and I knew I would learn a lot from him."





At Insider, Olivia's work has been pushed to new levels. "Working alongside Jack Peppiette is incredible. He is so focused and organised. His work has such a good feeling to it - that idea of everything being perfectly balanced. And Wes Vaughn! Those guys have so much faith in their own ability. They never seem to have any doubts in their minds. Jason has seen everything, been everywhere and knows everyone. He has so much knowledge, he's like a wizard."

"We're all so close and comfortable around each other, and I feel trusted and respected. Together we're really creating something unique."

Olivia is now producing work of exceptional quality, exemplified of course by those astoundingly beautiful large scale peonies. They have been tattooing for a decade now and are happy to be specialising. "I love the idea of trying to be good at everything, and for while that's what I wanted to do, but in truth it's not realistic. You need to focus." The Chinese and Japanese influence is very evident in their work. "I probably look at Chinese art even more than Japanese, especially for florals," they tell me. But they are keen to point out an important distinction between the imagery they choose to use in their paintings and the imagery they are comfortable to tattoo.

"In my paintings, I make a point of never using images of gods and deities, like Fudo Myoo for example," Olivia explains, "because that iconography has no personal meaning for me and I don't want to disrespect it. I am happy using more general imagery, like tigers, dragons and flowers, but I don't want to use anything with too much religious or cultural significance – because let's be honest, I'm from Derbyshire, not Asia! I don't feel comfortable making money from imagery that really means something to the people it belongs to, but doesn't have the same kind of relevance to my life. But that's my paintings. My tattoos are a different matter. Tattoowise, I will do whatever the client wants. After all, I don't know what special significance it has for them. But I always research as much as possible to get the most accurate representation I can."



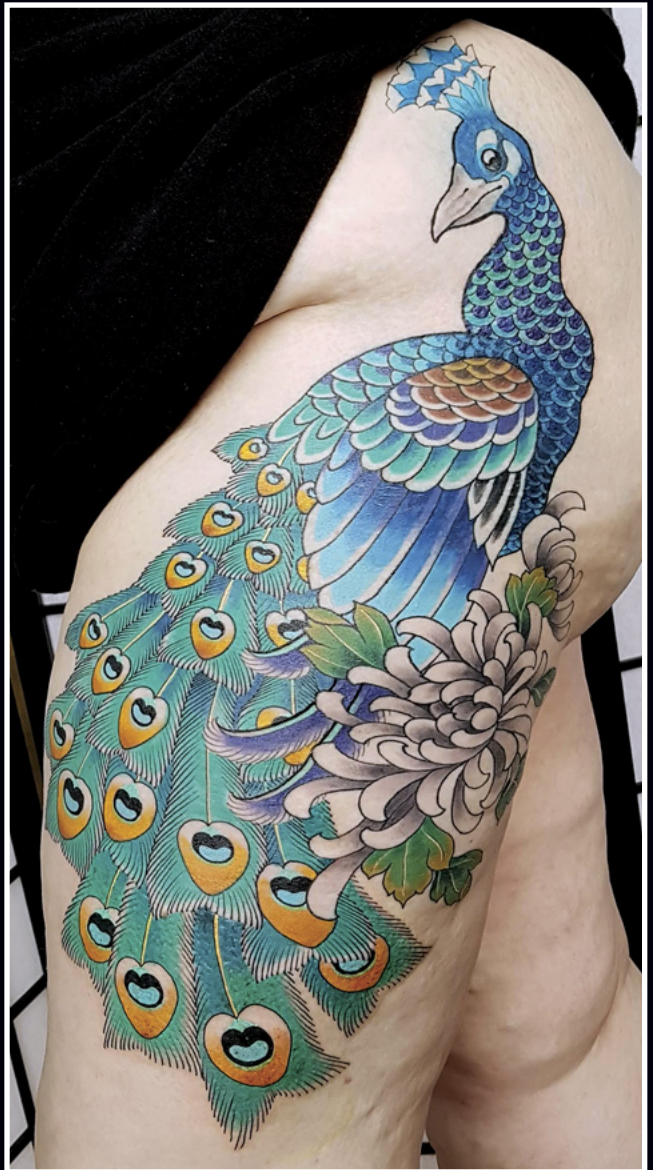
**'RIGHT NOW I CANNOT
IMAGINE ANYWHERE ON
THIS PLANET THAT
WOULD SUIT ME BETTER
THAN INSIDER TATTOO.'**

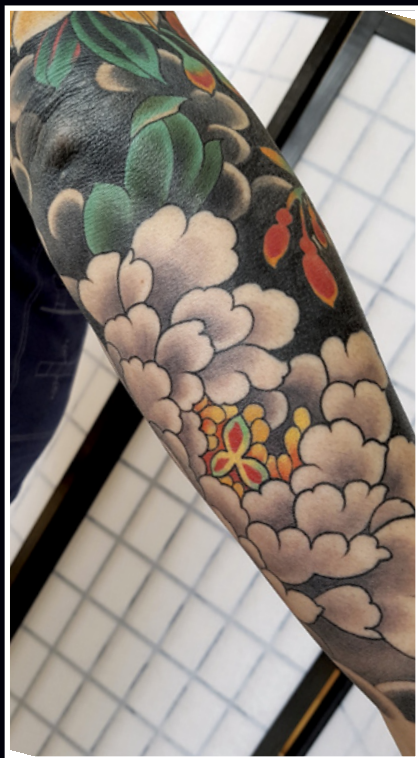


Olivia's work is constantly evolving, and they are taking on increasingly larger pieces. Everything they produce is of a truly international standard, but each tattoo is still a journey of self-criticism and doubt. "I finish the line work, I look at it and I think 'erm...?' Then I put in all the black, and I'm still not sure. By the time I've done the colour, and I've re-done all the lines and the black, I'm still reassessing it. I always look at a finished piece and think it could be better if I'd done this or that differently. But I absolutely believe that spending so much time constantly re-evaluating what I'm doing, and how I'm doing it, has taught me an incredible amount. My rule of thumb is that tattoos nearly always look better with more black!"

Describing themselves as "low-tech", Olivia still uses the original Kev Shercliff coil machines they learnt with. "I've added to my tool kit over the years, but those are still my everyday machines. People who know coils know they do an amazing job – even though they make such a racket! I wouldn't say I was good at tuning coils, but I know the voice of my machines and how they should sound and feel."

Many tattooists find that coil machines tend to cause pain or discomfort in their hands and arms, but this isn't the case for Olivia. "It took time to get used to the machines and build up the necessary muscles, and I did have problems when I first started, but after a year or so everything was fine. I've only been tattooing for 10 years though... so ask me again in 2030! The only time I get pain in my arms now is if I get a bad back, which can be caused by stress. But that hasn't happened for a few years, because I've changed my lifestyle to work a little less, eat healthier, not drink so much, and sleep more."

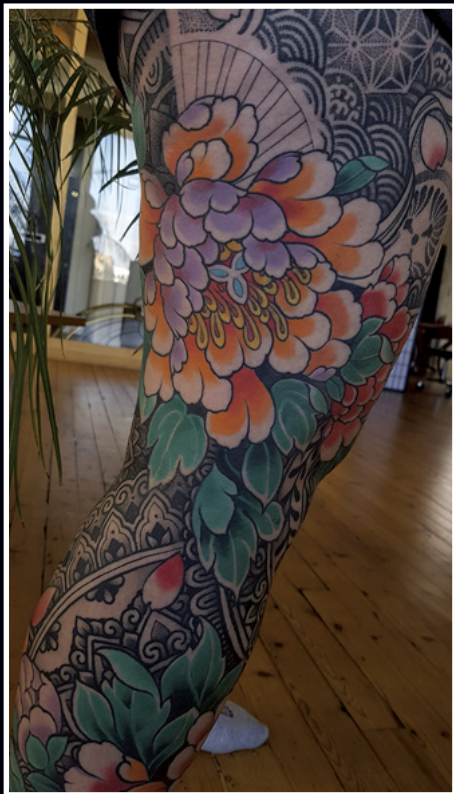




Attending a seminar by Shotsie Gorman was a bit of a game changer for Olivia. "He's been one of my biggest influences within tattooing. His words really stuck in my head and have been with me ever since. He told me, 'Perfection is an ego trip. No one has ever met the perfect being, and no one has ever attained perfection, so why should it be you?' Why have that big an ego to think that you are better? Shotsie showed me that everything in this world is constantly changing, and no two pairs of eyes see the same things. It's hard, because every piece you put out on social media can be zoomed into and scrutinised to such an extreme degree, and studied for the tiniest imperfection – which creates an unrealistic pressure. You have to let that go and just settle for a thing of beauty that has charm and creates happiness for both you and your customer."

Olivia hopes to stay at Insider Tattoo for a good long time. "I've worked in so many fantastic shops, with some amazing artists – people that I really love – but right now I cannot imagine anywhere on this planet that would suit me better than Insider Tattoo. I still love travelling and doing guest spots. But to be honest, I'm so charged at the studio I'm trying to travel less. I used to think that I needed to travel in order to progress. But now I just want to process everything that I've absorbed and gathered, and focus on my own work in my own space."





And how does Olivia see the future of tattooing? "It's been crazy busy over the last few years and there's definitely an over saturation of tattooists. It's inevitable that at some point the ones who are in it purely for the money, or some kind of fashionable status, will move on to something else. But the people who love tattoos and tattooing will stick with it of course. I do often wonder whether now that we've had a whole generation who have really embraced tattooing, perhaps it's only natural that the next generation will go the other way and think tattoos are so un-cool! But as we all know, it's impossible to predict the future..."

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SHANGRILA

INMORTAL TATTOOING

Shangrila Inmortal Tattooing is a beautifully produced, large-scale compendium of artworks from a select group of artists specialising in blackwork, ornamental, and what can be loosely be termed tribal styles. Despite low key publicity, it has achieved incredible success. We had a chat with Dasly, the artist behind the project.

Please introduce the book.

It's the first great book of its kind, and it's for all true lovers and collectors of tribal and ornamental tattooing. It's a collection of exclusive paintings by more than 170 international artists, all experts in their genre, published in a limited edition of just 1000 copies.

What is the aim of the book?

It's aim is to give voice to the tattoos of ancient cultures, which have for so long been such a source of inspiration in the evolution of modern tattooing. Each tattoo artist has drawn on their individual creative vision to provide a representation of a particular place or culture in a single painting. It's not our intention to teach anyone anything; perception of the essence is in the eye of the beholder.



'I DIDN'T JUST WANT TO MAKE A BOOK. I WANTED TO MAKE THE BOOK.'



Curly

Why 'Shangri-la'?

Shangri-La is an imaginary place name taken from the 1933 novel 'Lost Horizon' by James Hilton. It's a heavenly, harmonious valley, where human weaknesses such as hatred, envy, greed, and anger don't exist. Hilton is believed to have been inspired by the mythical Buddhist kingdom of Shambala. My choice of the word is based in a deep respect for the theologies and cultures that are the fundamental pillars of my life. If you want to learn more about Shangri-La, I invite you to embark on an interesting cultural journey that could open many doors!

'THIS BOOK GIVES VOICE TO THE TATTOOS OF ANCIENT CULTURES'



Deliperi

Brice Gomes



Where did the idea for the book come from?

November 2019, 9:30 am, and I was drinking coffee (like the good Italian that I am) on a terrace in Kathmandu. Nepal is one of my favourite places. It's timeless. Everything seems to have stopped in a bubble of mysticism floating between two worlds. And that was the moment when I decided that I would like to create something timeless too, something that would be around for ever. I started thinking about all the artists who do tribal and ornamental tattooing, and I thought surely they could share in my vision and passion. I wondered what kind of project could unite us. And that's when I came up with the idea of creating a book of paintings by those artists, and 'Shangrila Inmortal Tattooing' was born.

How did you select the artists to include in the book?

The choice of artists was the most important part of the book's conception. I contacted all the elite tattooists of course – I could give you a list of names, but I think you know who I'm referring to! – and I also included artists that I personally admire, even if they haven't been tattooing for many years. The only criterion was that they should have a clear and personal vision of what tribal and ornamental tattooing is.

Lindo Vicio



Elemental



Philip Milic





The list could have been never ending!

Yes, and the absurd thing was I also received almost 300 requests from artists who I hadn't contacted, who wanted to participate in the project! I obviously couldn't include all of them, but I do want to publicly thank all those people who got in touch with me.

Were there any artists whose work you were particularly pleased to include?

It was obviously a great pleasure and a privilege to include big name artists such as Curly, Guy Le Tatoer, Jondix, Jeroen Franken, Thomas Hooper... but I was equally happy to have all the other artists' work in the book.

Do you have a favourite piece?

It's hard to have a favourite among all these incredible paintings, not least because they're all so different in concept and execution. I think I have at least 30 favourites!

What was the artists' brief?

I gave them carte blanche. I didn't want to put any constraints on their creativity.



And how did you go about organising the contents of the book?

It was only once we'd received all the paintings that we began to discuss how the book should be arranged. Our graphic designer, Federico Epis, proposed the idea of organising them into sections using a kind of "common denominator" principle. I really liked that, so we went with it.

Clearly a lot of thought went into the book's design.

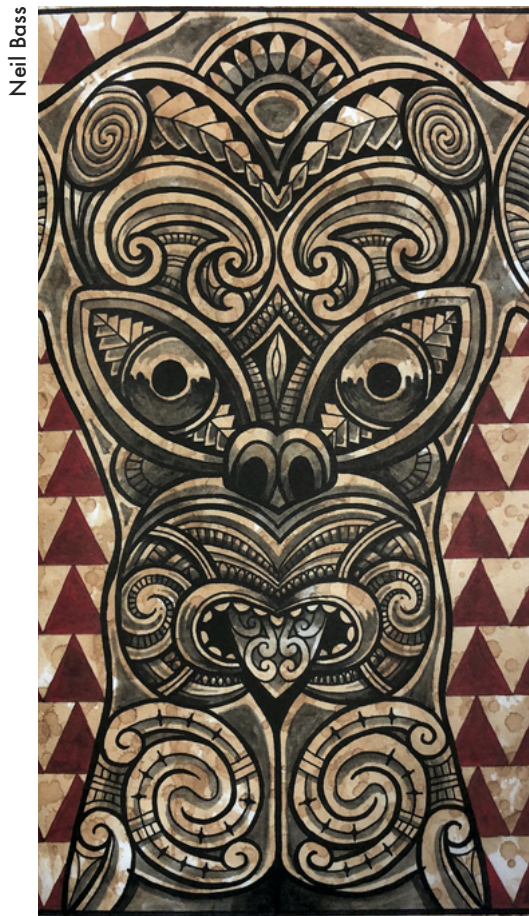
Yes. All our decisions – including the choice of paper – were made with the aim of the book keeping its value over time. The size and format of the book are a physical representation of its importance. The idea was not just to make a book, but to make THE BOOK. I imagined myself as a book collector, thinking about what I would want to put on my own bookshelf. It was testament to Federico's skill as a graphic designer that everything came together so perfectly – like a melodious song.

What was the timescale of the project?

The project started in December 2019, and the book was supposed to see the light of day in summer 2020 with a presentation at Seven Doors Tattoo in London and an exhibition of the original paintings at the London Tattoo Convention. But as we all know, the coronavirus pandemic came along and got in the way.

I guess there have been some low moments for you...

Yes, there have been many low moments – especially at the beginning of March 2020, when the hell that we have all experienced began, the Italian company that was to produce the book closed down, and I found myself out of budget, with work still in progress.



Neil Bass



Samsara

How did you turn things around?

It was thanks to the help I received from Terry of black bible books. After meeting with him, things started to go in a positive direction – still with many difficulties, but we succeeded in the end. And even though the presentation and the convention were both cancelled, we did the best we could.

Did you have a marketing strategy for the book?

No, I didn't really do any marketing and I wasn't really expecting the kind of success the book has had. Everything just flowed. The artists shared their stories, social media played its part, the pre-orders kept coming in, and the interest just grew by itself, without any kind of promotional strategy.

What kind of feedback have you received?

The book has had positive feedback from all across the tattoo world, from tattoo artists and collectors alike. When I got compliments from Miki Vialeto, I knew we must have done a good job!

Do you have any plans for another book?

Yes, I'm already working on another project but this next one's going to be just me. It's a book in which I share my vision of ornamental tattooing, the shapes I love, how I draw them, how I think about them, what inspires me, etc. I hope to finish it in the next few months.



Ricardo Pini



Marco Morini



Guy Le Tatoueur



'I'VE LONG BEEN DRAWN TO THE IDEA OF THE TATTOOIST AS AN ALMOST SHAMANIC FIGURE...'

Mark Jelliman



Tell us a little more about yourself as a tattooist.

I'm Italian, and I've been based in Barcelona for seven years now. I've been a tattooist for about 16 years, but my love of tattooing began well before that. I got my first tattoo in the mid 90s. I've long been drawn to the image of the tattooist as rebellious outsider, Easy Rider style, not interested in money, not interested in the same things as the masses who've been tamed by soccer and TV programmes... an almost shamanic figure, possessor of secret knowledge. For me, entering the world of tattooing was like a quest for the source, for ancient truths. It's a continuing journey, but one that's getting harder now that tattooing has become a "profession".

Do you regard tattooing as a spiritual process?

A tattoo can be both spiritual and simply a body adornment. In modern society, especially in the West, the word "spiritual" often gets misused. Spirituality as far as I'm concerned is not just going on holiday to Varanasi for two weeks, sticking a bindi on your forehead and posting a selfie. Fuck, it's just the opposite! But I'd better not say any more or people will think I'm an asshole. Speaking personally, I never like to tattoo spiritual symbols because I don't want to be responsible for any misrepresentation. My tattoos are ornaments for the body. Those who know how to read the designs will always be able to find the hidden meaning.

'Shangrila Immortal Tattooing' is available direct from:

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RAUL MUMIA

'BLACK AND GREY
REDUCES THE IMAGE
TO ITS PURE
ESSENCE'

Just when you think tattooing can't get any better... someone like Raul Mumia comes along. His intricate, beautifully balanced designs with their exquisite lighting effects take tattooing to a whole new level.

What attracts you to black and grey?

I've always had a preference for black and grey tattooing. From day one, I knew it was what I wanted to specialise in. I just feel more connected to the dramatic look, the power and the timeless atmosphere that a monochrome design can transmit. It reduces the image to its essence and pure form. I also think it suits the kinds of themes that I work with. It reinforces the dark nature of my style.

Did you do much colour in the past?

Yes, I did a lot of colour at first, in all imaginable styles. It was a solid foundation for my development as a tattooist, but I gradually just stopped doing it. I think it was probably six years ago that I did my last colour piece! I do still use some small colour accents in my work, but they're very muted and subtle. They act as a complement to the black and grey, to give a certain glow to the reflected lights and enhance the three-dimensional look.

Tell us more about how your work has developed, and where you see it going from here.

My passion has always been black and grey realism, with dark and surreal themes, but for the first three or four years I basically did everything that came through the door. I only began to specialise in black and grey when I started travelling. Back home in Portugal there wasn't so much demand for it. Guest spotting around Europe brought me a different kind of clientele. It took time to build this up, and a lot of hard work, but one project opened the door to another. Ever since then I've been on a constant quest to refine my art. I've gradually become recognised for my trademark style, and it's mainly what people ask me for nowadays. The other progression has been from individual small pieces to large-scale work. That's the direction I see my work going in. Bigger and bolder. Backs, fronts, full bodies. But I'll always be learning. That's the beauty of it.





Let's go back to the beginning. Did you always want to become a tattooist?

From my early teens, I always knew I would give tattooing a shot some day. All my buddies knew it was my dream. The idea of being able to put my art permanently on somebody's skin has always blown me away! Tattooing today is fashionable and mainstream, but back in those days it wasn't. And that was part of the charm for me. It was an artistic movement that was alternative and didn't conform to the established norm. But there weren't any tattoo shops in my town, so learning the traditional way wasn't an option. It was a good few years later that things finally started to happen for me.

How did you eventually learn?

I already had a solid artistic background, with a university degree in graphic design and illustration. I got together with a friend who also wanted to tattoo and we decided to buy some gear, help each other to learn, and see where it would lead us. After a few months of tattooing fake skin we began tattooing our other friends, then their friends, and all of a sudden we were in the game. I'd just turned 30, and I was at a point in my life where I needed to make a decision – to continue as a graphic designer, or become a tattooist. The choice was easy. Tattooing has always felt like a place where I can express my creativity, and make a living from it too, without having to compromise who I am.



'I WANT TO CREATE A PORTFOLIO PIECE FOR EVERY SINGLE CUSTOMER'



And now it's been your profession for 10 years.

Yes. I took it seriously from day one and I've never looked back. I'm doing what I love for a living! It's so rewarding seeing my personal artistic vision come to life every single day. Another aspect of tattooing that I really love is the freedom it gives me to travel. As long as I have a tattoo machine I can go anywhere. I've been to the most amazing places and I've made so many friends.

As a tattooist, what drives you?

The desire to create something new and exciting every day. I get motivated by looking at my work and acknowledging that there are flaws, but seeing that as room for improvement. Every tattoo is a challenge. Basically I want to create a portfolio piece for every single customer! So I always feel a pressure, and that's what drives me.

What keeps you ahead of the pack?

I give 100% every day, and I work on every piece like it was going to be my last, but I don't push myself to be ahead of anybody. I just do what I love and put all my passion and dedication into it. I do it for the art. I don't like the competitive or commercial aspects of tattooing. At the end of the day it's all about giving the customer the best work possible, and having both of us happy with the result.



Is it important to produce work with a distinctive style?

Yes. In my opinion, the key to having a trademark style is developing a strong visual language that unifies your work. It's been a very conscious process for me, and something I set myself to do right from the start. It's cool when you can look at a tattoo and identify straight away who made it! I think my tattoos are also characterised by their depth and contrast. But this isn't just a visual thing. It's what's going to give the tattoo its longevity, and that's something I keep very much in mind.

Which other tattooists do you particularly admire?

There are so many artists I admire and who have influenced me along the way – people such as Victor Portugal, Carlos Torres, Josh Duffy and Robert Hernandez, to name just a few. Over the years I've collected work from a number of them, and I have a few more on my wish list too. Every time I get tattooed I learn something – whether it's something technical, or just a simple trick with the preparation and set-up – because everybody works differently.

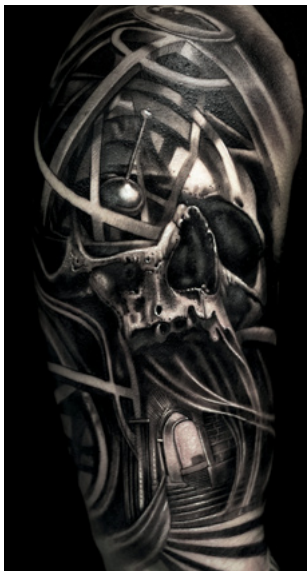
Does living in Denmark influence your work in any way?

No, I don't think so, not in any significant way. I only moved here five years ago, and the aesthetics of my tattooing were already solidly defined when I came here. I think I'd be doing the same sort of stuff wherever I was. Having said that, the Nordic/Viking imagery in my tattooing is of course very much related to Scandinavian culture – but I use it in an unconventional way, with my own approach and in my own style, and I'd probably be doing it even if I wasn't living in Denmark. The themes I explore in my tattooing are just an extension of my personal taste. I've always been attracted to the dark, the gritty and the fantastic. Whether the subject is Nordic, nautical, surreal or gothic, you can always see it's my work because it will always have the same visual language.

Do your clients usually give you carte blanche?

Yes, they usually give me complete freedom to do my thing, with just some basic guidelines – which is of course when you get the best results. The majority of my clients know my style, so they know what they're going to get.





Tell us a little about your design process.

I always take my time fine-tuning my designs. A lot of the architectural and ornamental elements that give my tattoos their texture and depth are based on images in my own database of travel photos. My designs are complex. I start with a base concept, but it can develop in multiple directions. Generally I design digitally, and I like to give my clients different options to choose from on the appointment day. I draw directly on the skin when I'm adding flow lines to connect multiple elements and give a sense of dynamic movement. And I love the final tattooing stage when a design comes to life and materialises on the living canvas!

What advice do you give your clients about aftercare?

When it comes to the healing process, it's really important to take good care of a tattoo to guarantee the best results. I normally tell my clients that it's teamwork. I do my part of the job - the tattooing - and they have to do their part, which is taking care of the finished tattoo. You've got to keep it clean, keep it moist, and avoid physical activity and sun exposure. You just have to use your common sense. Be cautious for two weeks and you're good.



'I'LL ALWAYS BE LEARNING. THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF IT.'

Tell us about your equipment.

I use FK Irons rotaries, Silverback ink, Ink-Eeze ointments and Killer Ink supplies. They all sponsor me, and I've really appreciated their support over the years. It's an honour to be part of their respective teams. I worked with coils during my first years as a tattooist, but switching to rotaries was a game changer for me. They're super light and have really low vibration, so I stopped having pain and cramps on my hands. I found my tattoos healed better as well, and the noiseless working environment was a bonus! Also, when I was using coils I always had to be tuning the machines. The rotaries give me a much more consistent workflow, where I can focus 100% on the tattooing without having to worry about external factors. Today's equipment is so much better than it used to be. There are options to suit everybody.



In general, do you like the way the tattoo industry has changed?

Today, tattoo artists are definitely more open with each other. You feel a sense of camaraderie. We work more as a community, a network that supports each other, and most of us aren't afraid to share our knowledge, so we all grow as a whole. And that's great. Tattooing is reaching new heights - which, in my opinion, is partly due to that. Before, there was more of an old school "cold war" vibe between artists. It was every tattooist for himself. That was already changing when I started tattooing, and I've always been pretty open about things.



It sounds like you find today's tattoo scene pretty inspiring?

Yes! The development within the tattoo industry has been enormous in the last couple of years. There are now almost no limits to what you can do on skin, and all sorts of artistic styles and forms of expression have found their way into tattooing. It's amazing. Brilliant new artists are appearing every day from all corners of the world, taking it to new levels. I love seeing what's happening on the tattoo scene, keeping an eye on what everyone's doing. It's one of the reasons I've always liked doing conventions and guest spots.



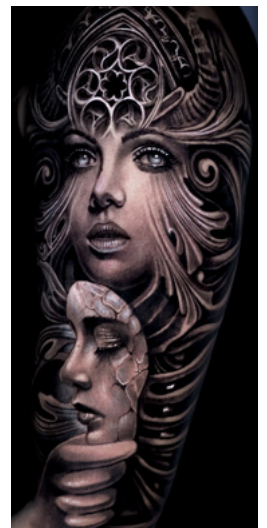
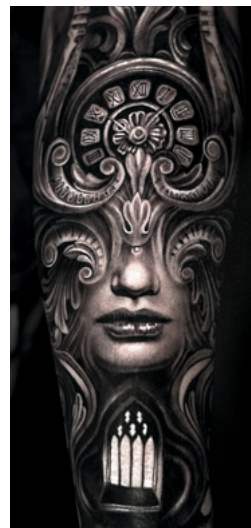
What do you like to do when you're not tattooing?

My biggest passion besides tattooing is music. I've played in bands since my early teens – mainly drums, but also guitar. At the moment I have a band in Denmark called Wölfblood, and another in Portugal called Battlescars, but there basically hasn't been any activity this past year because of the whole coronavirus situation. The pandemic has meant I've had a lot of time away from work, so I've been playing guitar and recording some stuff at home. Things that I don't normally have time to do! Usually I'd be going to concerts of course, and I also collect records, read comics and do a bunch of nerdy stuff... I'm a simple man.

If you could re-live your life, would you change anything?

I wouldn't change a thing. When I started out in tattooing it wasn't easy, but the positives and negatives are all part of the experience, and the path I've travelled has led me to where I am today. When I'm tattooing, I'm in my element. It's pure fun, it's challenging and it's always exciting. On top of that, it's always nice to work with my amazing clients. It makes me feel humbled and honoured that they are willing to travel from all over the world to get tattooed by me. I dreamt of becoming a tattooer, that dream has come true, and I'm really grateful for all the possibilities tattooing has opened up for me.

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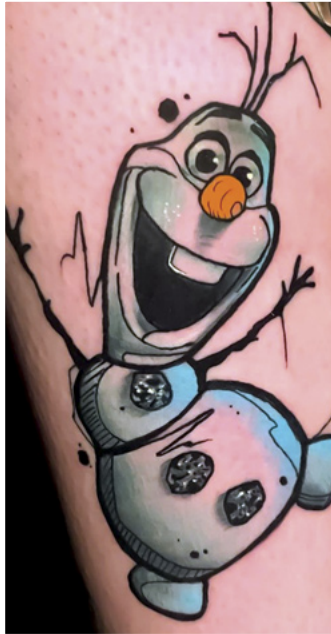


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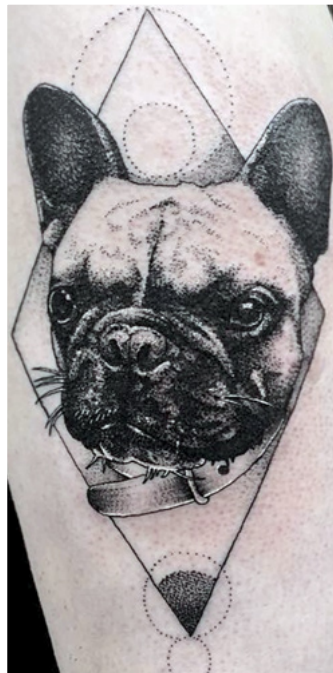
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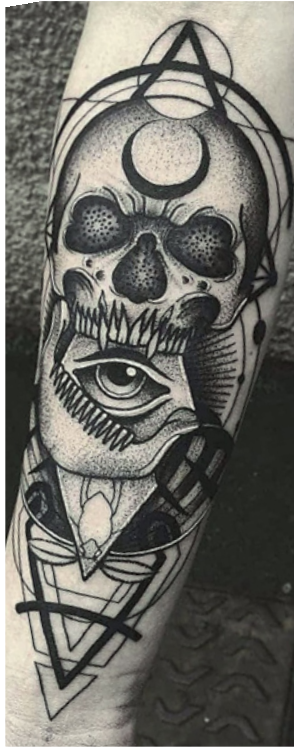




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TELL ME MORE

A COLUMN BY DIRK-BORIS RÖDEL

How to be generous with your positive feedback

Do you enjoy scrolling through your favourite tattooist's work on social media? It's fantastic how easy it is nowadays to compare different artists, discover new talents, see them getting better and better, and watch their individual styles developing. So much creativity, exquisite craftsmanship, and real art out there! Do you give tattoos a like or write a comment? That's good. It's important for the artist to get feedback.

But here's my point: I would estimate that 99% of the comments under even the most truly outstanding tattoos are along the lines of "great work", "awesome", "cool", "incredible"... which is very positive feedback of course, but also relatively redundant. It may pamper the artist's ego, but it says nothing at all about what is special about this tattoo.

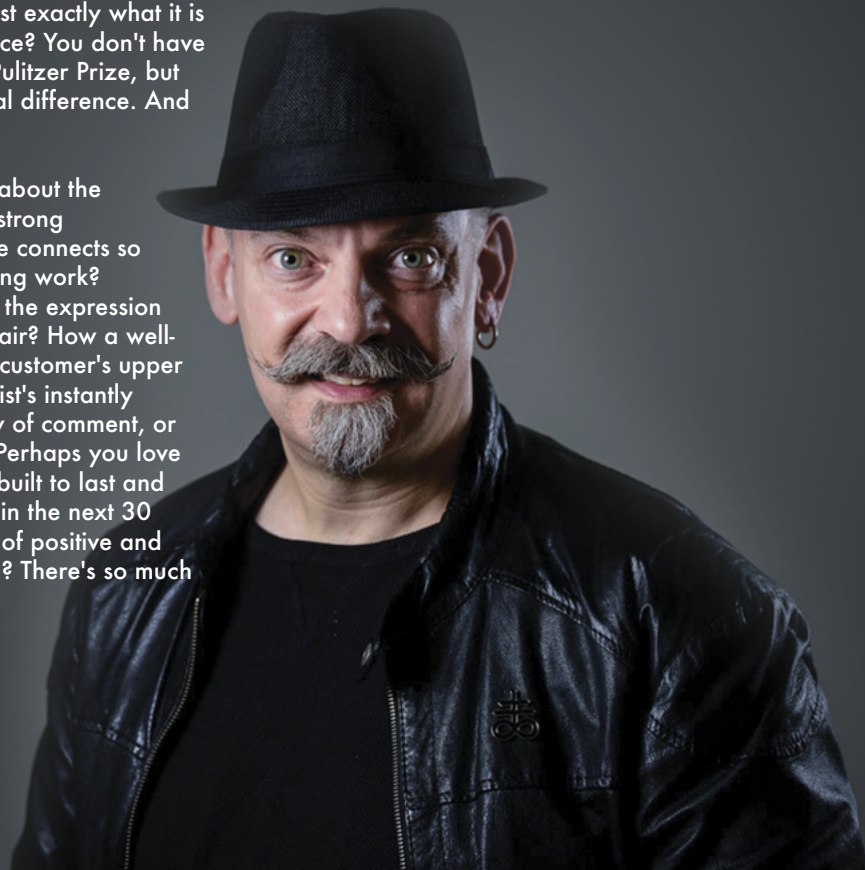
So why not take a few seconds more to write a sentence or two and tell the artist exactly what it is that you like about his latest piece? You don't have to write a novel or aim for the Pulitzer Prize, but those few words will make a real difference. And it's not that difficult.

Just ask yourself what you love about the tattoo. Is it the clean lines? The strong contrast? The way the new piece connects so nicely with the customer's existing work? The lifelike quality of a portrait, the expression on the face, the texture of the hair? How a well-placed dragon accentuates the customer's upper arm muscles? Maybe it's the artist's instantly recognisable style that is worthy of comment, or their interesting colour palette. Perhaps you love the way this tattoo is obviously built to last and looks like it won't change much in the next 30 years. What about the balance of positive and negative space in a tribal tattoo? There's so much you could say!

And when you mention these things in your comments, the artist will see that you really took time to appreciate their work. That comment will be valued. It will also help the artist see whether they achieved what they set out to do with the tattoo.

Other things will happen too. If you don't just look at tattoos in terms of "great versus shitty", but try to verbalise what it is that fascinates or impresses you about each individual piece, you will find your own appreciation of the whole art form deepening and expanding. And your comments will also help others to appreciate tattoos better, as you demonstrate some criteria by which a tattoo can be judged.

Maybe it will take a minute or two more than a simple "great work!" comment, but it took the artist several hours (at least) to do the tattoo – so show them it's worth a little of your time to comment on it!



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Alexey Mashkow is a revolutionary young Russian tattooist whose bright, brash street-inspired designs fall somewhere between Disney and disturbed. Born and brought up in Moscow, he now lives in the USA and works at L.O.V.E. Machine in New York City.

Were your family artistic?

Yes, I grew up in a very artistic family and I'm really glad I did. I always knew my life would be all about art. I knew I'd be an artist of some sort – maybe not a tattoo artist, but a fine artist for sure.

And presumably you studied art too?

I spent five years learning all the disciplines – drawing, painting, sculpture and so on. My art education gave me all that I have right now. It's the foundation on which I built my career.

Do you still paint?

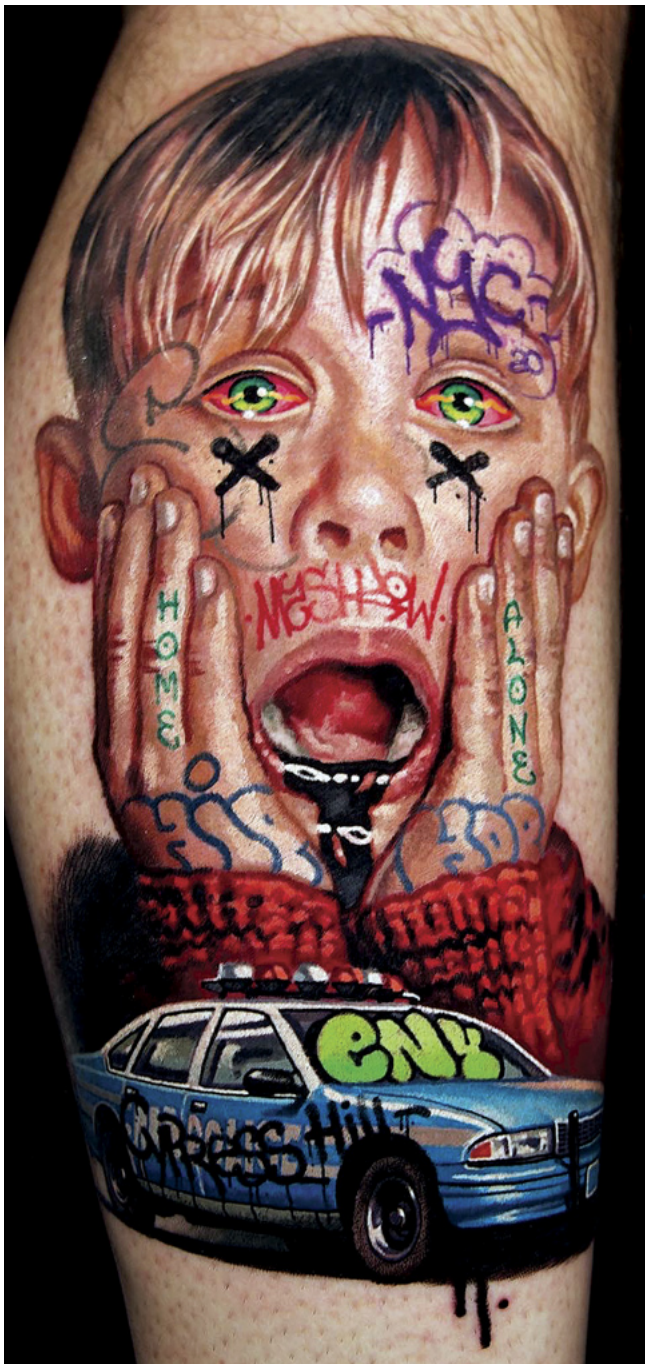
Yes, I do. I exhibit and sell my work too. You can check it out at Superchief Gallery NYC. I'm planning to have a solo show in the near future. I couldn't live without art. It's my passion.



ALEXEY MASHKOW



**'WHEN I CAME TO NYC THE
STREET ART BLEW MY MIND'**



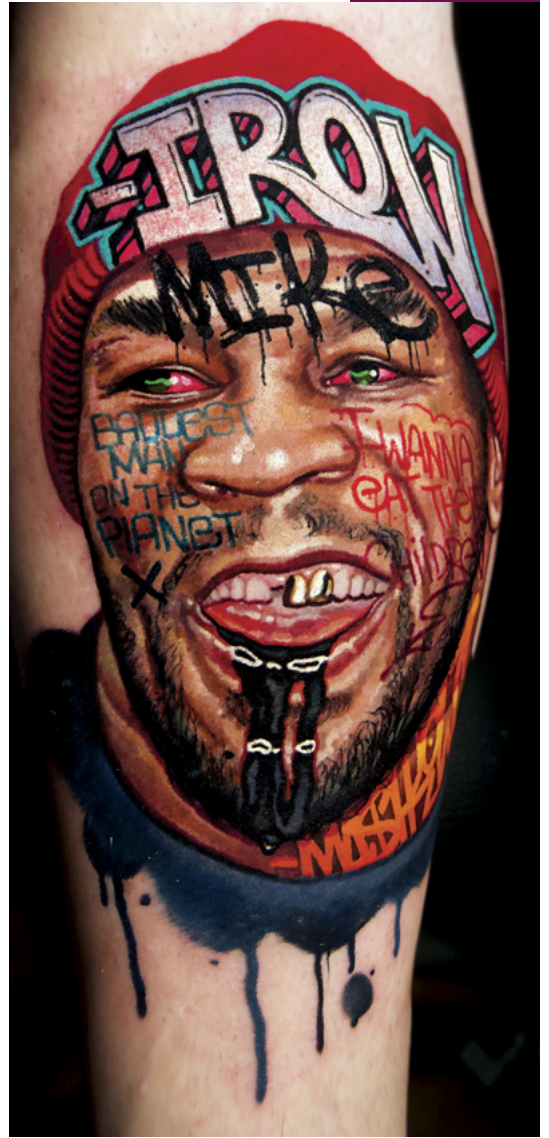
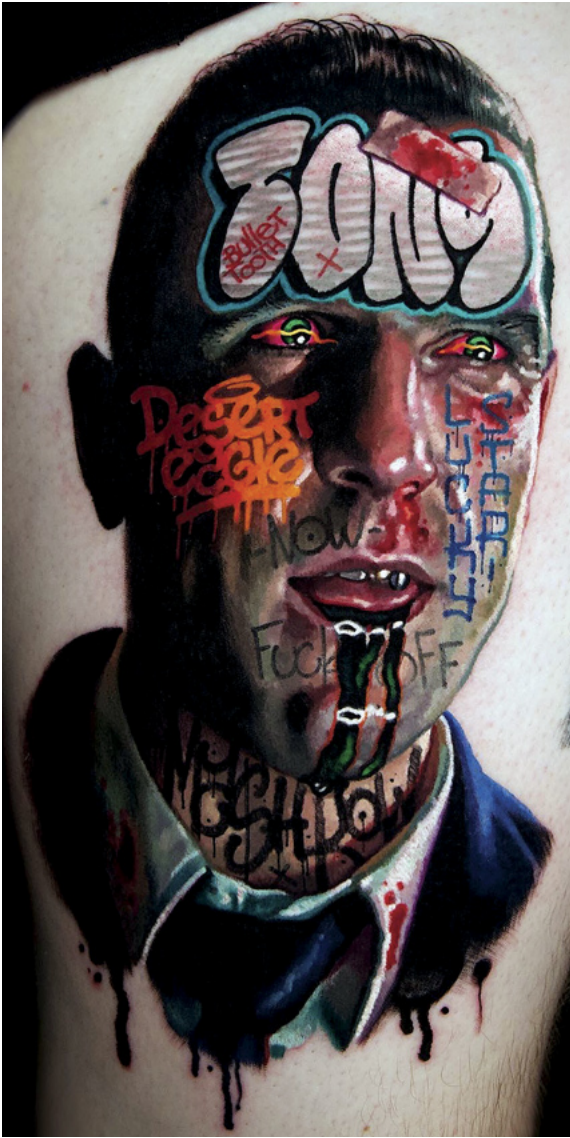
How did you get into tattooing?

It happened completely by accident. A friend turned up one day with some tattoo equipment and asked me to finish a piece he'd got from another artist. I had no idea what I was doing, but I kind of liked it. So I started tattooing my friends, roommates, neighbours, etc, and I really had fun. But for a long time I still thought of tattooing as Plan B. That was 10 years ago now.

Did you do an apprenticeship?

Back then in Russia there were no apprenticeships or seminars or anything like that. If you had a friend who could show you what to do, you were lucky. My first equipment was the cheapest Chinese trash, but after a year or so I figured out what I needed and I got a couple of really nice tattoo machines from the USA. The tattoo industry in Russia has grown and developed now, and it's very much more like Europe and the USA.



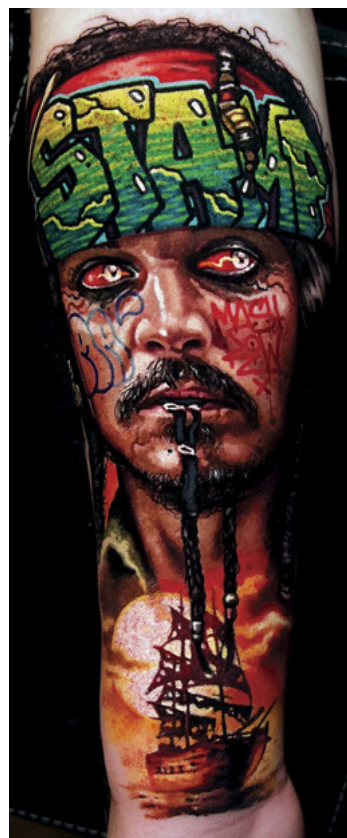


How did your move to America come about?

I'd always dreamt of visiting New York City. I came as a tourist for the first time in 2015 and fell in love with the place. So I started building my case for a work visa. It took about a year to get one. I was travelling all around the world, I got invited to so many tattoo conventions, collected trophies, got published in magazines... and now here I am working in the USA!

For you as a tattooist, what are the main differences between the USA and Russia?

The main thing is the huge appreciation of tattooing here in the USA. There are so many more opportunities for someone like me. I still love Russia, but I couldn't imagine having this kind of life there. I visit my family there when I can of course, but I haven't worked in Russia since 2019.

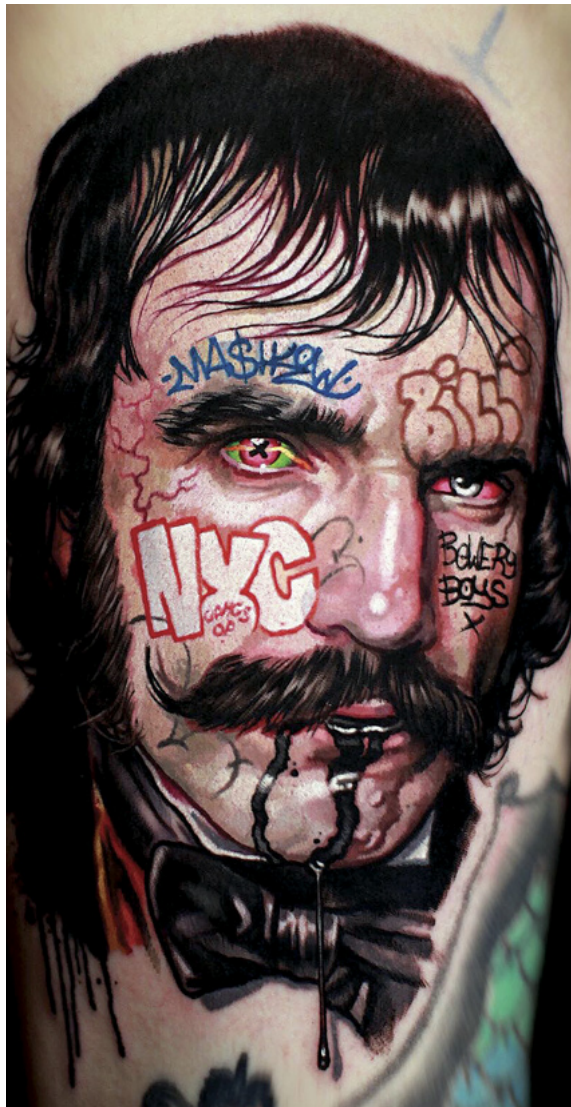


New York street art has obviously influenced your work hugely.

I was always a big fan of 80s and 90s hip-hop culture and everything connected with it, including graffiti of course. When I got to NYC the street art blew my mind. It was all over the place. It was crazy. I've been so inspired by this city and all its artists. In Russia there was nothing anywhere near as impressive.

Tell us how you developed your distinctive tattoo style.

I was just tired of tattooing the usual things – wolves, lions, pocket watches, etc – and I decided to have a change. I decided to tattoo the kinds of things I love. So I started tattooing portraits, graffiti, horror, trippy stuff. It just came naturally. I put it all together and then progressively honed the combination. I was just lucky that nobody had done this style in tattooing before. I really didn't expect such a strong positive reaction from the public.



'I COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT ART. IT'S MY PASSION.'

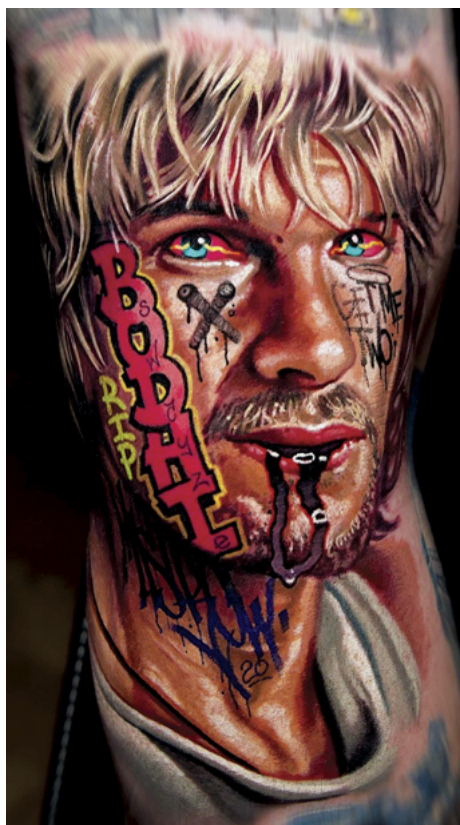
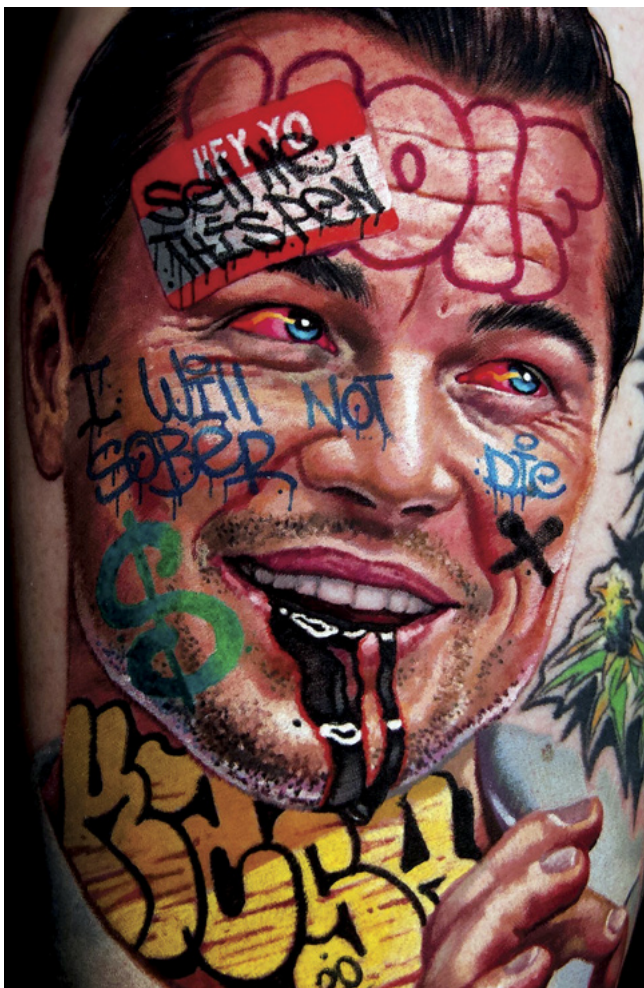


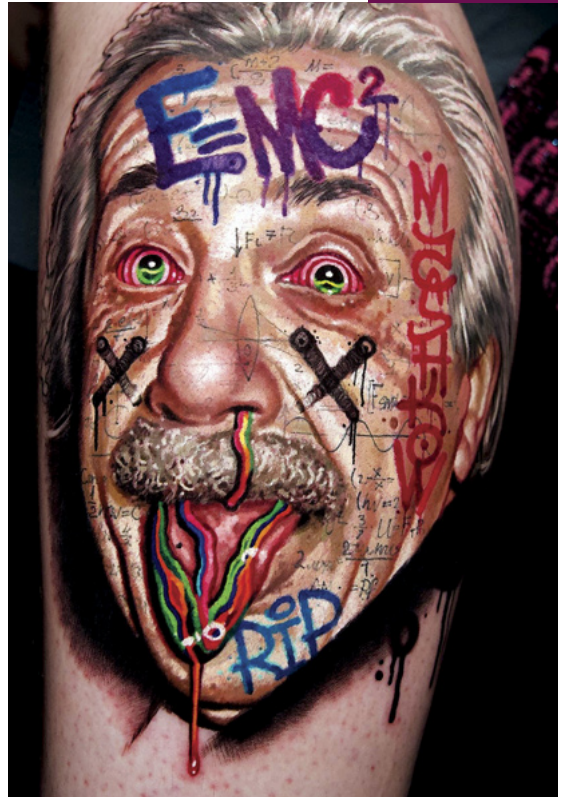
Most of your pieces are quite modestly sized. Do you have any plans for doing larger scale work?

Right now I'm fine with this size. I can finish a piece in a day and I'm good with that. I charge 3,000 US\$ per session for a regular size portrait. I don't really like the thought of starting on a larger scale project, because there's a risk that you'll begin a piece and then never see your customer again. And sometimes I know I'll just get bored with an idea and lose interest in it.

What equipment do you use?

I've tried so many different tattoo machines, power supplies and other stuff. At the moment I'm sticking with FK Irons Flux, which is a tattoo machine and power supply in one – so it's wireless, and for me that's a game-changer. I can literally tattoo on the streets. As for inks, I like to use Fusion. I love the saturation of their colours, and it's really easy to put into the skin.





Have you ever attended a seminar, or thought of presenting one yourself?

No, never. I think tattooists only do them to make a quick buck. I get a lot of invitations to do them, but I'm not interested. I just want to concentrate on my own art.

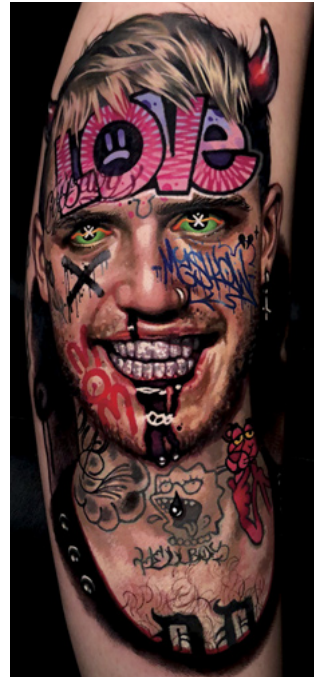
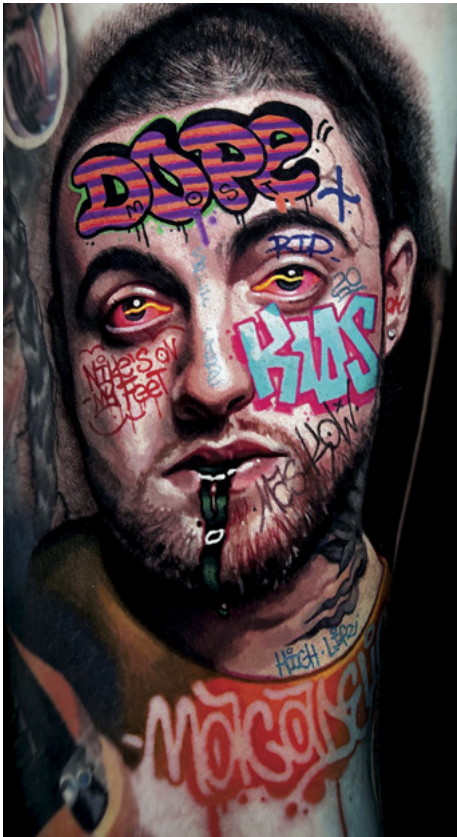
Where do you see tattooing going in the future?

Social media has enabled tattooing to take such huge leaps forward. People can see and compare each other's work, and the pressure of competition means artists are just getting better and better. As for the future, it's anybody's guess.

And your own future?

All I can say is that I'm feeling really good in myself, and really settled and happy here!

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FB: /triplexstudios666

YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER

Blue Collar Club Tattoo

Unit 7, 92 hardwood Street,
Sheffield, S2 4SE
bluecollarclubtattoo@gmail.com
IG: @bluecollarclubtattoo
FB: @bcctattoo

Crooked Claw Tattoo

734 Ecclesall Road, Sheffield,
S11 8TB
0114 327 1411
crookedclawtattoos@gmail.com
www.crookedclawtattoo.com

Easy Tiger Tattoo

003, Castleton Mill, Leeds, LS12 2DS
0113 887 0172
www.easytigertattoo.com
IG: @easytigertattoos

Electric Kicks

17 Front Street, Pontefract,
WF8 1DA
07725 029 567
electric.kicks@hotmail.com
IG@electric.kicks.crew
FB: Electric Kicks Tattoo Studio

Follow Your Dreams Tattoo

160 Devonshire Street, Sheffield,
S3 7SB
0114 216 8078
fydtattoo@gmail.com
www.fydtattoo.com

Gothika

7-9 Dundas Street, Redcar,
Cleveland, TS10 3AD
01642 498 572
IG: @GothikaTattoosRedcar
FB: /GothikaTattoos

Nigel Kurt's Fun House Tattoo Studio

140 Sheffield Road, Barnsley
S70 1JH
Tel no: 01226 779 595
nigelkurt1@gmail.com
www.nigelkurt.com
IG: @nigelkurttattoo
FB: /funhousetattoosUK

Pins & Needles

23a Market Place, Driffield,
YO25 6AR
01377 538 080
jamesnorry1975@gmail.com
IG: @pinsandneedles_driffield
FB: /pinsdriffield

Red Tattoo & Piercing

Leeds Corn Exchange
0113 242 0413
redtattooandpiercing@hotmail.
co.uk
www.redtattooandpiercing.com

Roadhouse Tattoo Studio

York House, 223 Bingley Road,
ShIPLEY, Bradford, BD18 4DH
07730 272 692
roadhousetattooostudio@gmail.com
www.roadhousetattoos.co.uk
IG: @roadhousetattooostudio
FB: /RoadhouseTattooStudio

Sacred Electric Tattoo

2-3 Mill Hill, Leeds, LS1 5DQ
0113 242 5553
Sacredelectrictattoo@gmail.com
www.sacredelectrictattoo.com

Tenacious Tattoo

296 Prince of Wales Road, Sheffield,
S2 1FF
0114 327 4060
www.tenacioustattoo.com

The Wolf Shed

19 Church Hill, Selby, YO8 4PL
01757 335 233
thewolfshed@hotmail.com
IG: @thewolfshed @neilwolftattoo
FB: /neilwolftattoo

Ultimate Skin

33 New Briggate, Leeds, LS2 8JD
0113 244 4940
ustattoo@gmail.com
IG: @ultimate_skin
FB: /ultimateskintattoo

Wills Customs Tattoo Studio

59 Nether Hall Road, Doncaster,
DN1 2PG
01302 344 907
IG: @willscustomstattoo
FB: /willcustsomstattoo

EAST MIDLANDS

Base Shade Tattoo

6 Church Street, Rushden,
NN10 9YT
01983 316 055
baseshadetattoo@yahoo.co.uk
FB: /baseshadetattoo

Bunraku Tattoo

1a Victoria Parade, Leicester,
LE1 5FG
0116 262 9401
info@bunrakutattoo.co.uk
www.bunrakutattoo.co.uk
IG: @bunrakutattoo
FB: /bunrakutattoo

Embody Tattoo

(handpoke and machine tattooing)
7 Canal Street, Derby, DE1 2RJ
01332 986 920
embodytattoo@mail.com
www.embodytattoo.co.uk
IG: @embodytattoo
FB: /embodytattoo

Epona Art and Tattoo

Waterloo Yard, King Street,
Southwell, NG25 0EH
01636 815 771
theresatattoo@btinternet.com
www.eponatattoo.com

Fat Fugu

24 Fish Street, Northampton,
NN1 2AA
01604 630 557
info@fatfugu.com
www.fatfugu.com

Hypnotic Art Tattoo

200 Queensway, Milton Keynes,
MK2 2ST
01908 989 695
hypnoticarttattoo@gmail.com
www.hypnotic-art.co.uk

Lewis Point Tattoo Studio

61 High Street, Daventry,
NN11 4BQ
01327 315133
www.lewispointtattoo.com

Nevermore Tattoo Parlour

Bishop Crewe House, North Street,
Daventry, NN11 4GH
01327 876 350
nevermoretattoo@hotmail.co.uk
IG: @nevermoretattoo
FB: /nevermoretattoo

Red Tattoo & Piercing

Leeds Corn Exchange
0113 242 0413
redtattooandpiercing@hotmail.
co.uk
www.redtattooandpiercing.com

ReiNKarnation

3b Station Road, Ilkeston, DE7 5LD
0115 837 7090
IG: @maria_perks_tattoos
FB: /maria.perks.52

EAST OF ENGLAND

All Or Nothing Tattoo and Piercings

80 Newland Street, Witham,
CM8 1AH
01376 519 602
aontattoo@outlook.com
www.aontattoo.com
IG: @1aontattoo
FB: /1aontattoo

Black Dog Tattoos

47 St Benedicts Street, Norwich,
NR2 4PG
01603 291 049
blackdogtattoos@gmail.com
IG: @blackdogtattoos

Black Galleon Tattoo Studio

22 Blackfriars Street, Kings Lynn,
PE30 1NN
01553 777 322
FB: /blackgalleontattooostudio

Braintree Tattoo Studio

148 Coggeshall Road, Braintree
CM7 9ER
01376 560 633
info@braintreetattooostudio.co.ukw
www.braintreetattooostudio.co.uk

Churchyard Tattoo

14 Churchyard, Hitchin, SG5 1HR
01462 338 781
cytattoo@gmail.com
IG: @churchyardtattoos
FB: /churchyard

Crossed Arrows Tattoo

21-23 St George Street, Norwich,
NR3 1AB
01603 762 636
crossedarrowstattoo@gmail.com
FB: /crossedarrowstattoo

Crow Temple Tattoo

85 Prince of Wales, Norwich,
NR1 1DG
www.corvidaetattoo.bigcartel.com
IG: @crowtempletattoo
FB: /crowtempletattoo

Cult Classic Tattoo

32 North Street, Romford,
RM1 1BH
01708 730 500
cultclassictattoo@gmail.com
www.cultclassictattoo.com

Eternal Art Tattoo Studio

42-43 Viaduct Road, Chelmsford,
CMI ITS
01245 355 166
eternal-art@hotmail.co.uk
IG: @prizemantattoo
FB: /PriZeMaN

Factotum Body Modification

5 St John Maddermarket, Norwich,
NR2 1DN
01603 618 188
contact@factotumbodysmods.com
factotumbodysmods.com
IG: @factotumbodymodification
FB: /factotumbodymodification

Five Keys Tattoo

8 Orford Hill, Norwich, Norfolk,
NR1 3QD
01603 958 814
fivekeystatto@gmail.com
www.fivekeystattoo.com

Good Ship I3

374 London Road Hadleigh,
SS7 2DA
07415 299 998
goodshipI3info@gmail.com
FB: /Good-Ship-I3-Tattoos

Indigo Tattoo and Piercing

2 Lower Goat Lane, Norwich,
NR2 1EL
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

St. Giles Tattoo Studio

3 St. Giles Street, Norwich, NR1 1JJ
01603 624 264
st.gilestattoo@gmail.com
IG: @st.gilestattoo
FB: /StGilesTattoo

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: /wolfandarrowsattoo

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@thefamilybusinesstattoo.com
www.thefamilybusinesstattoo.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
Tattooed_tota@hotmail.com
www.happysailortattoo.com
IG: @happysailortattoo
FB: /happysailortattoo

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

Nemesis Tattoo & Body Piercing - Buck Street

3 Buck Street, Camden Town,
NW1 8NJ
020 7482 0063
nemesiscamdentown@gmail.com
www.nemesistattoo.co.uk
IG: @nemesistattoo
FB: /mindtheink

Nemesis Tattoo & Body Piercing - Inverness Street

26 Inverness Street, Camden Town,
NW1 7HJ
020 7419 8621
nemesiscamdentown@gmail.com
www.nemesistattoo.co.uk
IG: @nemesistattoo
FB: /mindtheink

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
oldhabitsattoo@gmail.com
www.oldhabitstattoo.com

Seven Doors Tattoo

55 Fashion Street, Shadwell, London,
E1 6PX
020 7375 3880
sevendoorstattoo@gmail.com
IG: @sevendoorstattoo
FB: 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

Three Kings Tattoo

182 Deptford High Street, London,
SE8 3PR
020 3612 9123

london@threekingstattoo.com
www.threekingslondon.com
IG: @threekingslondon
FB: /ThreeKingsLondon

Ushuaia Tattoo London

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

SOUTH EAST

14 Arrows Tattoo Studio

69 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells,
TN1 2AY
01892 681 224
fourteenarrows@hotmail.com
IG: @14arrowstattoo
FB: /14arrows

1770 Tattoo

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

The Custom Propaganda Tattoo Company

Unit 7, Botley Mills, Botley,
Southampton, SO30 2GB
01489 325 341
IG: @custompropagandatattoo
FB: /CustomPropagandaTattoo

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

204 Whaddon Way, Bletchley, Milton
Keynes, MK3 7DG
01908 411 151
info@inkedmoose.co.uk
www.inkedmoose.co.uk

Keepsake Tattoo

145 South Street, Lancing,
BN15 8BD
01903 767776
www.keepsaketattoo.co.uk
IG: @keepsake_tattoo

Leo Rios Tattoo Studio

11 Lime Street, Bedford, MK40 1LD
01234 930 504
leoriostattoos@hotmail.co.uk
IG: @leoriostattoos
FB: /LeoRiosStudio

Lords Ink Tattoo Studio UK

91 London Road, Bexhill on Sea,
TN39 3LB
01424 224 233
lordsinktattoostudiouk@hotmail.com
IG: @lordsinktattoostudiouk
FB: /lordsinktattoostudioukbexhillonse

Magnum Opus Tattoo

51 Upper North Street, Brighton,
BN1 3FH
01273 271432
magnumopustattoo@gmail.com
www.magnumopustattoo.com
IG: @magnumopustattoo
FB: /magnumopustattoo

Rising Phoenix Tattoo

28a High Street Mews, Leighton
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@sevensinstattoo.com
www.sevensinstattoo.co.uk/

Skinned Alive Tattoo

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

Stay Much Better

1 Beaconsfield Parade, Beaconsfield
Road, Brighton, BN1 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, Edgware 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

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
purplerosestattoo@hotmail.co.uk
www.purplerosestattoo.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

Zeppo's Tattoo Studio

56 South Street, Pennington, SO41
8DX
01590 676 348
info@zeppostattoo.co.uk
FB: /zeppostattoo.co.uk

WALES

Broadside Tattoo

38 Singleton Street, Swansea,
SA1 3QN
01792 455 000
broadsideswansea@hotmail.com
IG: @broadsideswansea

Dexterity Ink

Unit 9, Indoor Peoples Market,
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
keeptheffaithsc@gmail.com
www.keeptheffaithsocialclub.com
IG: @keeptheffaithsc
FB: /keeptheffaithsocialclub

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 981 671
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.bigwillstatoos.co.uk
IG: @bwtattoostudios
FB: /BWTattoostudios

Blackfriars Tattoo

5 Maylord Street, Hereford, HR12DS
01432 278 330

blackfriarstattoo@gmail.com
IG: @blackfriarstattoo
FB: /blackfriarstatoos

Blood & Honey Tattoo Co

Winchcombe Street, Cheltenham,
GL52 2NE
01242 352 306

hello@bloodandhoney.uk
www.bloodandhoney.uk
IG: @bloodandhoney
FB: /BloodHoneyTattooCompany

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
IG: @fts_tattoo
FB: /folkloretattooostudio

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
IG: @viciouspinktattooostudio
FB: /ViciousPink

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.

56-60 Lower Bridge Street, Chester,
CH1 1RU

01244 297 528
theblackfreightertattoooc@gmail.com
IG: @blackfreightertattoo
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 1NN
01244 638 765

bridgestreettattoo@gmail.com
www.bridgestreettattoo.co.uk
IG: @bridgestreettattoo
FB: /bridgestreettattoochester

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.indelibleinktattoostudio.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,
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Market Quarter Tattoo

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Merseyside, PR8 1HJ

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Sacred Art Tattoo

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Manchester, M21 8AG

0161 881 1530

tattoo@sacredarttattoo.co.uk

www.sacredarttattoo.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

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