

# Inked

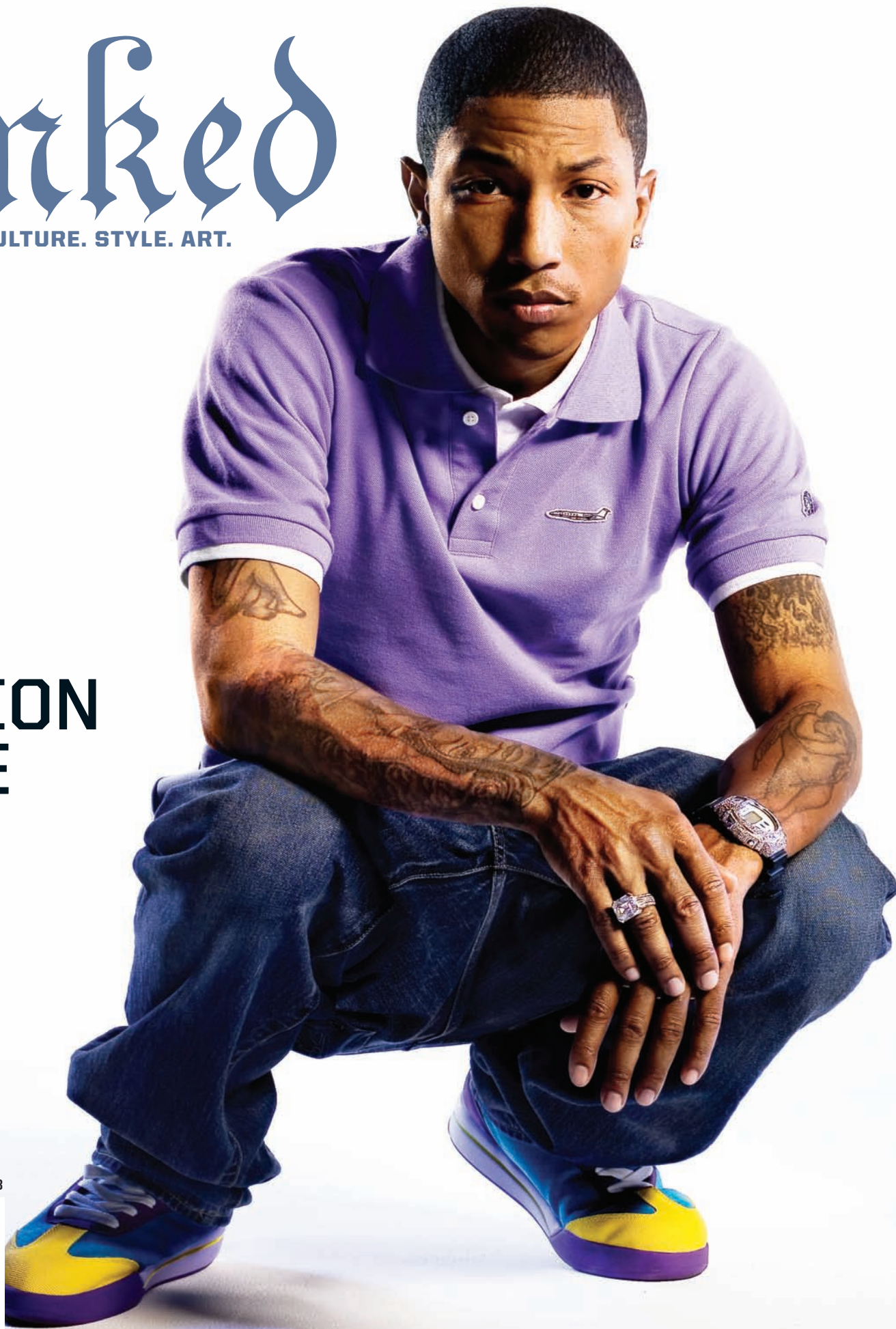
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CAR WAS THE  
FAMILY STATION  
WAGON. IT WAS  
GRANDMA'S AND  
IT SMELLED LIKE  
IT. WHEN IT WAS  
TIME TO BUY  
THE NEXT ONE,  
I COULDA BOUGHT  
SOME FOUR-DOOR  
ECONOBOX WITH  
LESS OPTIONS  
THAN A LOSER  
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MOTORCYCLE  
AND DECIDED  
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WAS GOING TO  
BE MY LAST.



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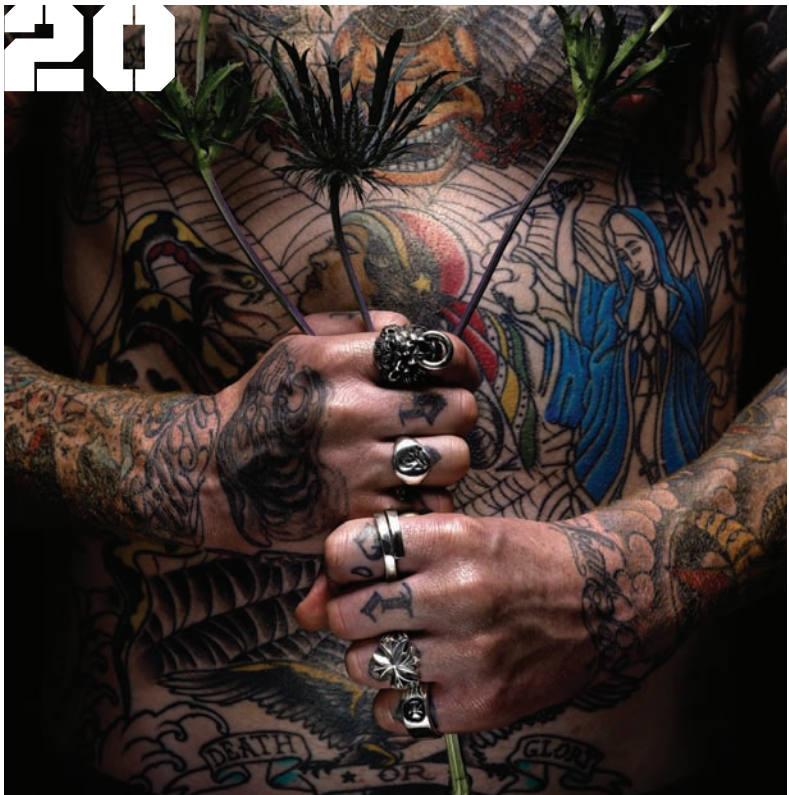
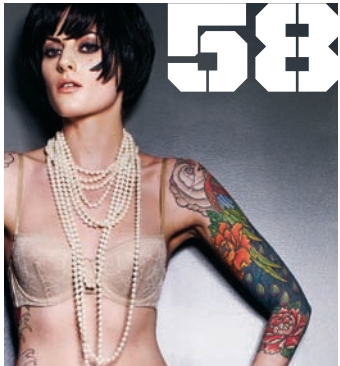


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# table of contents







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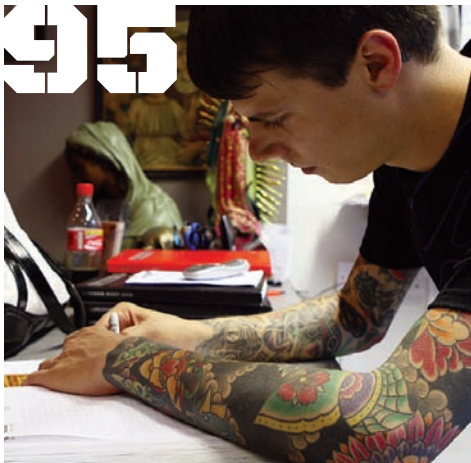
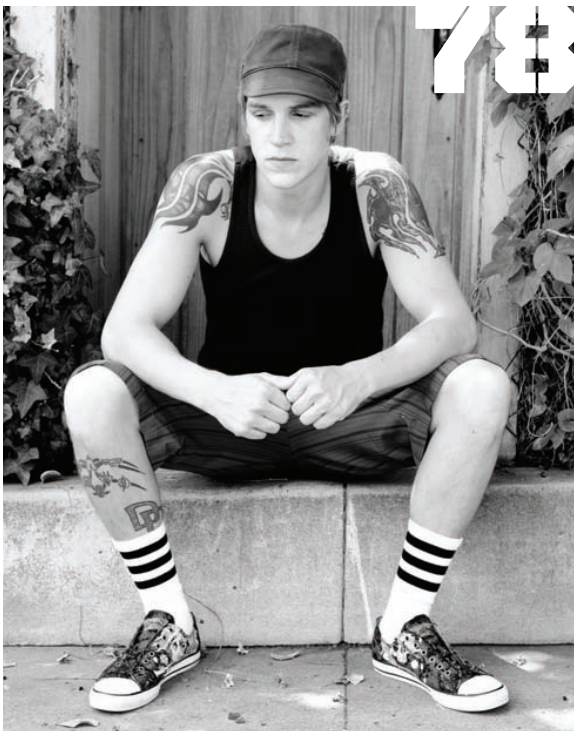


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# table of contents







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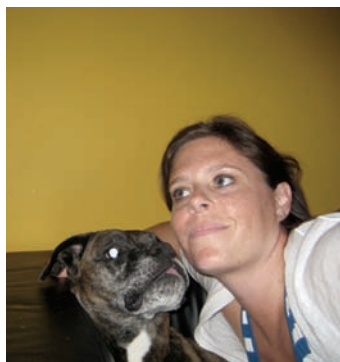
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# contributors



Top Row: "What surprised me about my interview with Agatha Blois was how little we spoke about fashion," says **Rachel Aydt**, who wrote "Intelligent Design" (page 66). "Instead we talked about more earthly things, like our sons. Her 17-year-old son, Angus, wants to be a helicopter pilot, and my 5-year-old wants to take me to Saturn for my next birthday." Rachel Aydt is the research director for *CosmoGirl* magazine, teaches journalism at the New School University, and also writes regularly for *Time International*.

"I absolutely love taking sweet, sexy images in beautiful locations," says photographer **Sarah Kehoe**. This month's sexy location? Her bedroom, where Kehoe shot "My First Ink" (page 19). Kehoe studied photography at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University and served as photo editor at several national magazines before becoming a full-time photographer. She splits her time between New York City and Los Angeles and shoots for *Maxim*, *Mother Jones*, *Fitness*, *Shape*, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, and others.

Photographer **Jeff Forney** needed to invent a few tricks for his shoot with Adriane Errera of Lucky Girl Handbags ("Intelligent Design," page 74). "She is a beautiful woman with a tattoo on her back, so I tried to figure out how to show both," Forney explains of the shot of Errera in front of a mirror. If Forney weren't a photographer, he would be "in the Sierras skiing my petunias off." His work appears in the *New York Times*, *YRB*, *SOMA*, and others.

For this month's feature, "Intelligent Design," we sent photographer **Evan Klanfer** into the fashion laboratories of Room 101's Matt Booth and Junker Design's Tod Waters and Giuliana Mayo. "Shooting people in their own environments can always be challenging, but these guys were really interesting, and each brought their own vibe to the images," Klanfer explains. "Tod had all of these weapons that were made for the movie *Gangs of New York* and was eager to use them to do some off-the-cuff images." Klanfer has shot for *Flaunt*, *Puma*, and others.

At least one person started taking off their clothes during **Alison Prato's** interview with actor Jason Mewes ("Q&A," page 78). "He wanted to talk via iChat so he could show me all of his tattoos and, of course, his adorable dog, who he held up in front of the camera." Prato has a fleur-de-lis tattoo on her ankle and a tiny star on the back of her neck. "It was an impulse decision when I was 21. It cost \$5. Yes, I'd been drinking." Prato's work appears in *Playboy*, *Maxim*, *Page Six Magazine*, *Giant*, *Chicago*, and others. If she weren't writing? "I'd be sleeping."

Bottom Row: Since **Emily Kate Warren** first started writing for *INKED*, she has had a recurring dream about a tattoo. "Each time, the dream keeps getting more real. The tattoo is a colorful phoenix. I just have to figure out where to put it!" Warren already has one tattoo on her lower back. "I paid \$40 to get it done by some schlub

at a sketchy tattoo shop in Baton Rouge. I promptly paid the same amount for blood testing after realizing what a dump the place was!" For this month's issue, Warren interviewed toy designer Jim Koch. "I thought I had a pretty colorful life until I learned about Jim's. He inspired me to want to do more fun things."

After studying art and drama in her native England, photographer **Patricia Heal** turned her focus to photography and has since shot for *Los Angeles Times*, *W Magazine*, *W Hotels*, *Martha Stewart*, *Neiman Marcus*, *Godiva*, and others. Her favorite photographers and inspirations have always been Richard Avedon and Sarah Moon. She shares a studio with her husband, fellow photographer, Anthony Cotsifas, and their English bulldog, Moses Oliver Dudley. For this month's issue, she shot jewelry on our tattooed models (*Inked Life*, begins page 21).

While he was arranging a photo shoot with hat designer Justin Smith ("Intelligent Design," page 70), photographer **Marius Hansen** discovered the two Londoners were already neighbors. "He's located in the heart of Soho, just three blocks away from my studio. It was a great little adventure," Hansen explains. "It was amazing to visit Justin's studio-flat, packed with interesting and weird things." Hansen doesn't have any tattoos and if he weren't taking photos he would be "fishing whale on the coast of Norway." He contributes regularly to *i-D* and *Qvest*.







# letter



The new ink of INKED. Visit [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com) to see which tattoo belongs to which staffer.

Talking about fashion and tattooing in the same breath can be dicey. Just as every tattoo is different, so is the style of every tattooed person. We can be found waiting in line for limited Air Force 1's, standing in front of a dresser full of black T-shirts, or hitting the streets in a \$3,000 suit. (Well, not us, personally but one of you out there might be.) The one thing we all appreciate? Good design, whether it's a T-shirt, a sneaker, a suit, or a tattoo.

For our first ever fashion issue we tracked down a major source of style for the past 10 years – Pharrell Williams (page 52). The head N.E.R.D. knows style, music, and tattoos. We also hooked up with seven young designers (page 66) who are making some of the coolest stuff for your closet, from leather and denim to jewelry and even hats. Elsewhere, we shot our hottest feature yet with tattooer Julie Becker (page 58) at New York's gorgeous Night Hotel and covered the intricate designs of ancient Filipino tribal tattoos that were nearly lost over the centuries but have been rediscovered by a passionate group of Filipinos (page 82).

And what does our interview with Jason Mewes (page 78) have to do with fashion? Nothing. He's just funny as hell.

There's also been an explosion of new tattoos around the INKED offices lately. Somehow while putting together this month's issue, we all managed to squeeze in tattoo appointments with everyone from Seth Wood in New York City to Kat Von D in Los Angeles. Check out the photos on the left and try to guess which tattoo belongs to which INKED staff member then visit [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com) to see the answers.

Enjoy!

Jason Buhrmester  
Editor



I'm looking for a male narny, who speaks Japanese  
can play the Accordion, and lives in London. We're  
onto. **I'm looking for a Tattoo Artist who designs tribal**  
**g and killer Fantasy Motifs, is searching for an impo**  
**r, and Apprentice, and lives in Los Angeles.** I'm looking  
I'm looking for a Biker, who works as a Botanist, loves to  
eat Sushi and lives in New York. I'm looking for a Doctor  
who specializes in Radiology for Infants and is located  
in the Bay Area. I'm looking for a Speech Therapist who  
can speak Chinese and works with Seniors. I'm looking  
for a Male International Student, who majored in  
Political Science and graduated in the Fall of 1989. I'm  
looking for a Grad Student, who attends UC Davis and  
Tap Dances. I'm looking for a Co-Worker, who worked  
for Apple as a Programmer from 1980-1986. I'm looki  
looking for a Masseuse, who knows Acupuncture  
Chinese Medicine and lives in Pittsburgh. I'm looking  
g Life. **Find Someone.** I'm looking for an experienced  
nts to **Be Found.** I'm looking for a Female who enjoys  
rks at **PeopleJar.com.** I'm looking for a Script Writer w  
for a Web Designer, who knows CSS and lives in Nevada



# mail



## INKED AT THE FRONT LINES

I am a tank commander deployed to Sadr City, Iraq, and a big fan of your magazine. I brought several issues of INKED with me on this trip (my second) and now my whole platoon is going crazy to get more issues. We have been carrying that beat-up issue of INKED in our MRAP truck since we traded our tanks in a month ago. Everyone in my platoon, Alpha Company 1-6 Infantry (tank platoon), is a big fan. Most of us have tattoos and are looking for new ideas to expand our collections when we return to Baumholder, Germany, in 2009. Once again, thank you for supporting us. You have 28 readers in Sadr City, Iraq, who know they haven't been forgotten.

**Staff Sergeant Andrew McDonald**, Camp Taji, Iraq

## MORE LOVE

I absolutely love your magazine. It's literally the only one I buy. It's a great mix. Keep up the amazing work!

**Jennifer**, Kings Creek, SC

I loved your feature on Denise Richards ["Wild Things," June/July]. She's still as sexy as she was in *Wild Things*, and it was fun to see behind the scenes from your photo shoot on her television show. You guys rule!

**Frank Garfield**, Oceanside, CA

The magazine looks absolutely amazing. Beautiful photography and a super swanky feel all over. Thanks for featuring me!

**Angelique Houtkamp**, Amsterdam, Netherlands

## LADIES' CHOICE

My husband and I are avid readers of your magazine and really enjoy the beautiful photos. You did a piece on female tattoo artists and shop owners ["The XX Factor," June/July], and I am sure all these women do nice work, but I can't believe you didn't include a piece on Kari Barba, of Outer Limits Tattoo in Long Beach, CA. She has been in the business for more than 30 years, has won hundreds of awards, owns several tattoo shops, and still finds time to design shirts and spend time with clients. She is definitely someone I think people would enjoy reading about in your magazine.

**Sarah Sather**, Santa Cruz, CA

## WE GET DOWN (UNDER)

I'm so glad to be able to pick up the new issue of INKED. I was surprised to see it all the way down here!

**Marie Von Zombie**

Tasmania, Australia

## DON'T BE A BOOB

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and there are several charities that organize tattoo-related events. The Keep a Breast Foundation ([keep-a-breast.org](http://keep-a-breast.org)) auctions off plaster molds of female torsos painted by Shepard Fairey, Shawn Barber, Mike Giant (see below), and other artists, and the proceeds go to breast cancer charities. The Foundation for Open Creation raises funds to provide tattoos for low-income, post-mastectomy women; check their website ([opencreation.net](http://opencreation.net)) for details on upcoming events that will feature charity auctions, musical performances, and a breast cancer survivor fashion show. Don't be a boob. Get involved!



## READER OF THE MONTH

**CHEROKEE MEADE**

**Portland, OR**

"Jason Bradbury and London Bellman at Atomic Art in Portland, OR, and Sumer Johnson at Dark Star Tattoo in Vancouver, WA, have done most of my tattoos. I got my latest with my girlfriend. It says 'Rose City' and it is on my forearm. She got hers on her butt (she has a real job). I am getting a banner on my collarbone next week that says 'No Rainbows Without Rain.' It's a saying that has inspired me through two heart surgeries and a lot of heartbreak. I love INKED. It is so high-quality and has the best interviews. You guys always find the most interesting people."

## SUBMISSIONS TO INKED

Send all letters of praise, notes of complaint, photos of Slick Rick, and random tattoo shop gossip to [letters@inkedmag.com](mailto:letters@inkedmag.com). All submissions should include the writer's name and address. Letters may be edited for clarity, length, and content.



# INKED LIFE

## MY FIRST INK

**NAME:** Kelly Feeney

**OCCUPATION:** Adaptive technology instructor for deaf and blind adults

**HOMETOWN:** Long Island, NY

I was a junior in high school when I decided to get my first tattoo. I was actually in study hall one day creating a sketch for my friend who wanted to get one, and he invited me along. I whipped something up in the car on the way there, and a couple hours later I had — wait for it — a lower-back piece. But this was before every chick started getting them. It was a 12-pointed blue-green sun with some tribal and Celtic knots. Ha! Aja Marlow, from House of Colour, in Bay Shore, NY, just covered it last year with some blue chrysanthemums that wrap around on my right side. One of my favorite pieces is the flowers on my ribs that my brother, artist Shawn Feeney, created. (Aja cranked them out in only two sessions). People usually love my tattoos and ask who did them. But I'm a little surprised more people don't recognize Gustav Klimt's "The Kiss," which is the big piece on my back. It's one of his most famous works, so it's nice to meet people who know it and are appreciative of the work.

HAIR AND MAKEUP, MELANIE HARRIS FOR OLIVERPIRO USING KERASTASSE.



From top: Father Panik brown rosary necklace with silver thorn crucifix; Royal Underground silver fleur-de-lis necklace, available through special order, Neiman Marcus, [neimanmarcus.com](http://neimanmarcus.com); Versani silver Medium Cuban Link necklace, [versani.com](http://versani.com); Giles & Brother by Philip Crangi black bead necklace with embedded screws, Barneys New York; Blak Prince Guilloche Cross Shield necklace, [blakprince.com](http://blakprince.com)

# ROUGH NECKS





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Left, from top: Versani round chronograph watch with leather strap, versani.com; Rado black True Deco watch, Rogers & Hollands Jewelers, 800-829-2600; Red Monkey The Ripper leather strap watch with studs; Corum stainless steel Admiral's Cup watch, Tourneau, 800-348-3332. Right wrist, from top: Ed Hardy Kool Steel watch, edhardywatch.com; Movado black dial watch with brown leather strap; Victorinox Swiss Army Infantry Vintage watch.

PRIME TIME



# ✠ TRAVIS WALKER ✠







Top hand, from left: Blak Prince silver Round Heraldry Cross ring, blakprince.com; Spragwerks silver Blown ring, spragwerks.com. Bottom hand, from left: Spragwerks silver Nail rings, spragwerks.com; Double Cross by Travis Walker silver Regal Cross ring, doublecrossjewelry.com; Versani silver Large Cuban Link ring, versani.com; Royal Underground silver Crowned Lion ring, select Neiman Marcus locations.

GROOMER, NICKEE DAVID; PROP STYLIST, BEVERLY HYDE; ASSISTANT, JARREN VINK AND KARL LEITZ; RETOUCHING, ROBERT WILLINGHAM; MODEL, SHON LINDAUER

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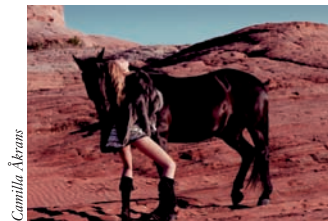
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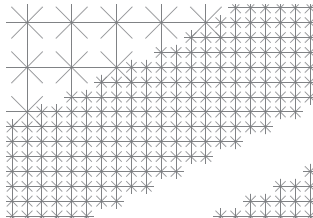
*Camilla Akrans*



*Nadav Kander*



*Michael Thompson*





From left: King Baby Celtic Knot silver belt buckle and King Baby Fleur De Lis Relic silver belt buckle, both kingbabystudio.com; Red Monkey brown leather and brass stud Time Bomb belt; Psycho Bunny sterling silver and black diamond belt buckle, psycho-bunny.com

# BUCKLE UP



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Jes Dwyer, bartender at The Levee, dares you to erase her menu.

# FALL INTO A PINT

When the temperature drops, look for something rich and malty.

"Autumn is a great season for serious beer drinkers," says Jes Dwyer, bartender at The Levee in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. That's because when the leaves change and football kicks off, beer lovers start thinking about chugging a new batch of autumn beers. While summer is the time for light lagers and hefeweizens, and winter is perfect for dark porters and stouts, autumn is the only time of year when you can put back a few pumpkin-flavored pints. "You always know it's fall when you can get an Oktoberfest or a pumpkin ale," Dwyer agrees.

So what makes a beer an autumn beer? "There are no official rules of how a fall beer should taste, but look for a rich and malty flavor," says Dwyer. And, since they're only available for a few months out of the year, beer fans usually stockpile anything that says "pumpkin" or "October" on the label. Don't be afraid to skip your old standby in the fall months in favor of beers with the deep, rich flavors that match perfectly with the dropping temperatures. "I'm a sucker for any pumpkin ale, all the spices just scream autumn," adds Dwyer. "Goodbye, summer. Hello, autumn beers." —Cory Jones



## AYINGER OKTOBER FEST-MÄRZEN

Since the Germans invented Oktoberfest, you can understand why this Bavarian märzen was a gold-medal winner at the World Beer Championships. Only slightly sweet, it has a long, dry finish.



## SAM ADAMS OCTOBERFEST

The sweetness of this autumn beer is balanced by the bitterness of the German noble hops, making this one of the more drinkable fall beers on the market.



## SMUTTNOSE S'MUTTONATOR DOUBLE BOCK

At 9.6 percent alcohol by volume, you won't want to drain this like Bud Light. Using something called a "double decoction" process, Smuttynose's brewers pack this beer full of sweet and rich maltiness. Sip it, but don't drink it to quench your thirst.



## LAKEFRONT BREWERY PUMPKIN LAGER

This is the only pumpkin lager in the world (all others are ales), which means it's richer and smoother than any pumpkin beer. The brewers use real pumpkin in the mashing process and spices like cinnamon and clove, so skip the pie and have beer for dessert.





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# CASH & CARRY



## HEAD EAST

Japan's influence on tattooing is undeniable, but most books dwell too much on the past. *Tattoo in Japan* (\$140, [editionreuss.com](http://editionreuss.com)) devotes 320 pages to all of the ink in the East, from traditional to modern, including the work of Horiyoshi III, Inkrat, Three Tides, and others. The book's four chapters are cleverly divided into regions, including Tokyo, Chubu, Kyoto, and Osaka. It's the best book on tattooing in Japan that we've seen yet.

## PROBABLE CLAWS

Redondo Beach artist Greg Simkins creates twisted characters and landscapes that feel like weird fairy tales or even weirder drug flashbacks. For his first vinyl toy, Simkins has created Cap'n Rotnclaw (\$59, [strangeco.com](http://strangeco.com)) for toy giant Strangeco. Part pirate, part crab, the mustached crustacean features working claw clamps, creepy lobster legs, and a bold chest tattoo. Tastes great with butter!

## VIDEO STAR

The next time you rack yourself skating a handrail, it will be even easier to upload the footage to YouTube. The pocket-sized Creative Labs Vado (\$99, [creative.com](http://creative.com)) video camera records two hours of Web-quality footage, and the simple controls are technophobe proof; push the button to record, push it again to stop. Plug the pop-out USB cable into your computer to upload footage or send them straight to the Net for ridicule.

## SWEET DREAMS

Saved Tattoo owner Scott Campbell inks more than just celebrities like Marc Jacobs and Lindsay Lohan and regular folk like us. Campbell uses a laser-etching machine to sear his artwork onto everything from sneakers to ostrich eggs to custom leather chairs. This pillow (\$200, [goodbaduglynyc.com](http://goodbaduglynyc.com)) features Campbell's custom skull design on cream-colored leather. Rest your skull here.

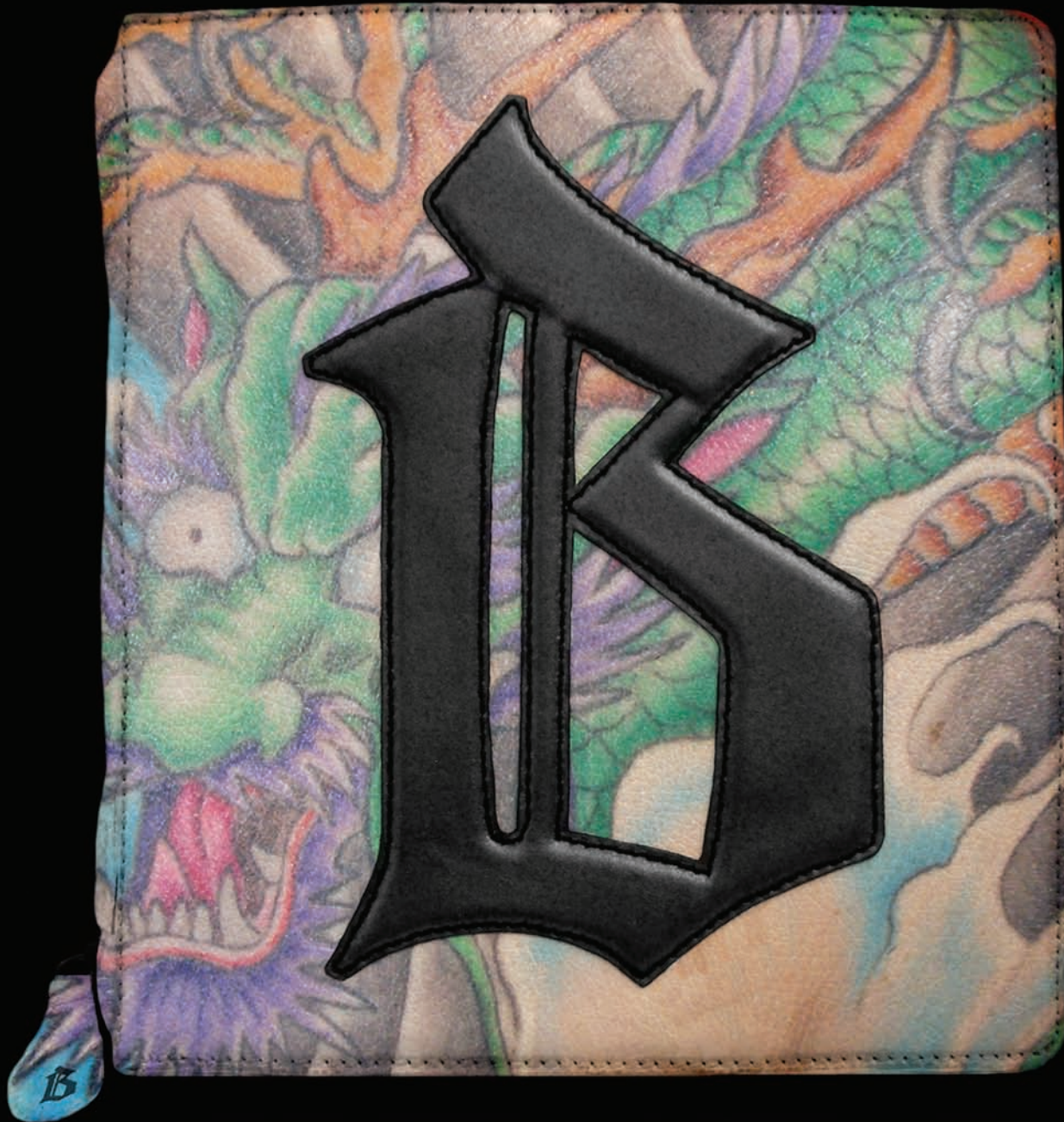
## HOME PLATE

In 2006, tattoo legend Don Ed Hardy shipped off to Japan's southern island of Kyushu to create porcelain. Using methods developed more than 400 years ago in Japan and a kiln passed down for generations, Hardy painted and glazed original artwork on plates, bowls, cups, and other wares (\$400–\$6,000, [kuambiance.com](http://kuambiance.com)). The extremely limited editions are designed for shelves, not microwaves.



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The Nokia E71 (nokia.com, about \$500) understands that the boss makes you cover up your tattoos. Like you, the phone has two modes, one for work and one for play. During your time at the office, the E71 gives you constant e-mail access and handles your workload with Microsoft QuickOffice. When 5 p.m. hits, switch modes and the device changes your settings for easy access to more laid-back applications, such as GPS and the 3.2-megapixel camera. Time to roll up those sleeves!

# WORK HORSE

PROP STYLIST, FABRICATOR



# SOUND ADVICE



**GASLIGHT ANTHEM**  
**The '59 Sound**  
**[Side One Dummy]**

It took long enough but punks are starting to treat Bruce Springsteen like The Boss. The Hold Steady and Lucero have picked up his influence, and Jersey's own Gaslight Anthem are true Bruce disciples. The band mixes classic rock and modern punk into songs about old cars, Elvis, and Audrey Hepburn (despite the members being born in the '80s). Gaslight's strength comes

from frontman Brian Fallon's songwriting, as he takes a romantic look at lost friends ("The '59 Sound") and road trips ("The Backseat"). On "Miles Davis & the Cool," the guitars twang and drums build as Fallon waits outside his woman's window, while "Here's Looking at You, Kid" is a gorgeous kiss-off to lost loves.



**ZZ TOP**  
**Eliminator: Collector's Edition**  
**[Rhino]**

Holy beard trimmers, it's hard to believe it's been 25 years since ZZ Top took over MTV with their breakthrough album, *Eliminator*. The Texas trio, with their beards, hot rods, and love of leggy women worked perfectly for music videos. But none of those videos would have mattered if *Eliminator* weren't such a killer album.

Hits such as "Gimme All Your Lovin'" "Sharp Dressed Man," and "Legs" are speaker thumpers, while album tracks "Got Me Under Pressure" and "T.V. Dinners" are Top classics. This collector's edition also includes live tracks, remixes, four original music videos, and TV footage of the trio. There are at least 10 CDs in your collection that can't stand up to this.



**SLIPKNOT**  
**All Hope is Gone**  
**[Roadrunner]**

When Slipknot singer Corey Taylor and guitarist James Root pulled together their mellower side project, *Stone Sour*, in 2002, metal fans worried it would mean the end of Slipknot or, even worse, a dilution of their sound. Neither really happened. While it has slowed the band (four years to finish *All Hope*) and the songs feature more of Taylor's

melodic vocals, the album is still all Slipknot. The group makes this clear with the opening blast-beats of "Execute" and "Gematria (the Killing Name)" and some of their best mosh starters ever, such as "Butcher's Hook" and the killer riff of "This Cold Black." Then they change things up. The keyboard break on the emotional "Dead Memories" and the acoustic strum of "Snuff" balance out the fury of tracks like "Vendetta." *All Hope* could go down as the group's best work yet.



**THE WALKMEN**  
**You & Me**  
**[Gigantic Music]**

The Walkmen are all about atmosphere. The New York City band's sound, a tangle of deep organ, swirling drums, and jangling guitars, is hard to pin down, and their albums are giant pieces of music that beg to be played straight through. *You & Me* is no different. "Seven Years of Holidays," with its rolling snare beat and references to suitcases, sunny

days, and holidays, blurs into the whirling guitars of "Postcards From Tiny Islands." The moody moments come on "Red Moon," as singer Hamilton Leithauser croons over sleigh bells and soft horns. Opening track "Dónde Está la Playa?" thunders as Leithauser sings, "There is still sand in my suitcase/There is still salt in my teeth," and the band breezes by. It's the first album you'll play after vacation.



**THE ENEMY U.K.**  
**We'll Live and Die in These Towns**  
**[Warner Bros.]**

As the first group signed to the re-launch of the legendary Stiff Records, this U.K. trio work straight from the blueprint that made the Jam so amazing—powerful guitars, working-class mentality, and choruses worthy of being shouted from the soccer stands. "It's Not OK" rants against the nine-to-five world in the explosive chorus "It's not OK to be this way/It's not OK to be

a slave." Title track "We'll Live and Die in These Towns" (a line guitarist/singer Tom Clarke found scrawled on a bathroom wall) distills the band's fury down to a moody chorus that Paul Weller would appreciate. Elsewhere, they nod to the Stone Roses, the Verve, and other Britrock greats. They just might be next.



**CHEMICAL BROTHERS**  
**Brotherhood**  
**[Astralwerks]**

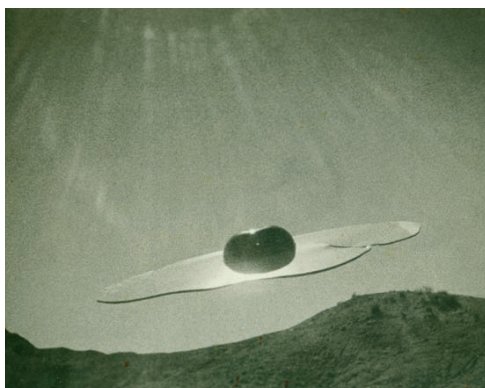
Over the past 13 years, influential electronic act Chemical Brothers have left a blizzard of 12-inches behind them as they dragged dance music to another level. This best-of collection rounds up 13 of the duo's tracks, from 2005 hit "Galvanize" to "Leave Home," from the group's breakthrough '95 album, *Exit Planet Dust*. The Brothers are at their best when collaborating, and *Brother-*

*hood* includes jams with the Flaming Lips ("The Golden Path") and Noel Gallagher ("Let Forever Be" and "Setting Sun") alongside new track "Keep My Composure," a blipping 16-bit frenzy featuring Spank Rock. The second disc of the set includes 10 tracks from Electronic Battle Weapons, the Chemical Brothers' more experimental alter ego. It's worth blowing out a pair of headphones.





Clockwise from top left: "Mel's Hole, A Love Story" Super by Marnie Weber; "Final Clearance.. Mel's Hole.. You are entering a supernatural void..I came upon a midnight clear.. must be the devils's daughter," by Georgeanne Deen; piece by The Firesign Theatre.



## DEEP THOUGHTS

In 1997, a man named Mel Waters called the syndicated radio show *Coast to Coast AM* to tell a story. He claimed to own a plot of land in eastern Washington with a magical hole. Waters said he had been throwing junk into the abyss for years, and when it never filled up, he decided to measure it. So he tied a weight to a fishing line and began unreeling. Several months and 18 spools (15 miles of line) later, he was convinced. The hole, he said, was bottomless.

During that radio show and in the following years, numerous stories surrounding the hole surfaced, each weirder than the last. Waters spoke of a hunter who dropped his deceased dog into the hole, only to have it return alive and well days later. Satellite photos of the land surrounding the hole appeared online with blacked-out sections. (Many claimed government intervention.) A man named Red Elk called *Coast to Coast AM* and said the hole had been part of Native American lore for years. And then Waters shared details of an experiment in which he lowered a live lamb into the hole and pulled back up a "cooked" lamb carcass with a "fetal seal" inside.

Whether these stories are true is almost beside the point; Waters and his hole captured the attention of thousands. "There were even people who formed exploratory parties to search for the hole," remembers artist and *L.A. Weekly* art critic Doug Harvey. "It took on a life of its own among my circle of artist friends, and I heard about other artists who were affected as well."



Years later, when the tale still wouldn't die, Harvey decided to organize an exhibition of works inspired by or related to the phenomena. This fall, *Aspects of Mel's Hole*, will be on display at Cal State Fullerton's Grand Central Art Center (GCAC) in Santa Ana, CA, from September 6 through October 19. The show will be, according to Harvey, an eclectic mix of "everything from complete abstractions to narrative art, symbolic art, and illustration."

Painter and architect Paul Laffoley, who asks viewers to use his works as "portals" to an elevated state of consciousness, contributes a hypnotic triptych. The Rev. Ethan Acres, a fundamentalist Christian, has created a sculpture that allows viewers to place a coin in a funnel and watch as it winds its way to a collection plate (his maze ends in "Satan's buttohole"). And Los Angeles multimedia artist Marni Rakes presents "Mel's Hole, a Love Story," an installation featuring the famed seal and lamb from Waters' experiment. There will also be contributions from the hip collective the Center for Land Use Interpretation, lowbrow painter Georgeanne Deen, and photographer Craig Stecyk, among others.

The exhibit will be a surreal experience, and visitors will ultimately come away thinking about Mel's Hole the way Harvey does: "At the center of our materialist, rational world, where everything is studied and examined and documented, the idea of this big emptiness that can't be explained is so compelling." —Jennifer Chapman



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Looking sharp starts with being clean and these big bars get the job done. From top: Pangea Organics Indian Green Tea with Mint and Rose Petals Bar Soap, (\$8, [pangeaorganics.com](http://pangeaorganics.com)); One With Nature Hemp Soap (\$3, Whole Foods); Caswell-Massey Lemon Verbena Soap (set of 3 for \$28, [caswellmassey.com](http://caswellmassey.com)); Zirh Body Bar (\$15, [sephora.com](http://sephora.com)); Lever 2000/Vaseline Men's Skin Hydrating Body & Face Bar (two for \$3, at drugstores).

PROP STYLIST, FABRICATOR



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# FINE PRINT

PROP STYLIST, FABRICATOR, INSET PHOTOS, MARYA GUILLO



# GAME ON



## **Tiger Woods 09 [Electronic Arts]**

Platform: PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, PSP, Xbox 360, Wii

Tiger may be taking it easy on a recovering knee, but the world's best golfer is still hitting the video game links. This year, Tiger brings his coach, Hank Haney, to help clean up your abysmal swing. As you make your way through the PGA Tour, he'll critique your performance, guide you through slumps, and recommend training for improving your weaknesses. Golf's true glory lies in competing with friends, and for the first time the game includes a simultaneous-play-mode. You and three friends can hit Pebble Beach online together to play the course at the same time. By ditching the turn-taking format of old, the game preserves all the fun of golf without the bore-inducing wait for your friend to shank his shot.



## **Midnight Club: Los Angeles [Rockstar Games]**

Platform: PlayStation 3, Xbox 360

Sorry, NASCAR, the thrill is gone. Illegal street racing is where it's at. After all, who wants to drive in circles when you can weave a Lamborghini through traffic at 200 miles per hour and use on-ramps to jump over warehouses to the finish line? The latest in the Midnight Club series includes a dizzying array of customization options, including tires, rims, spoilers, and lighting effects. And, for the first time in the series, you can modify interiors, right down to the dashboard lighting. The rest of this open-world racer is packed to the rims with features, including day-to-night cycles and weather effects. And forget drilling through menus to start a race: Simply pull up alongside a car, flash your lights, and step on the gas.



## **Mercenaries 2: World in Flames [Electronic Arts]**

Platform: PC, PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360

It's amazing how well a bullet to the ass motivates a man. After a drug lord refuses to pay for your mercenary work and shoots you in the ass on his way to becoming a Venezuelan dictator, you vow to rid the world of this fascist. Mercenaries 2 picks up right where its predecessor left off—in a hail of gunfire, vehicular mayhem, and crumbling buildings. As you pit rival political factions against one another in pursuit of revenge, your lucrative merc work will fund a military contracting business, allowing you to hire mercenaries to handle some of the dirty work. With dozens of heavily armed vehicles at your disposal, a massive arsenal, and the new co-op game-play mode, Mercenaries 2 is nothing short of explosive.



## **Spore [Electronic Arts]**

Platform: Apple, PC

Video game legend Will Wright, the mad genius behind SimCity and The Sims, has concocted his most ambitious project yet. In Spore, you create a new species in the creature creator (the early favorite: penis hands) and guide it through life. Your creature starts as a cellular organism then experiences the phases of evolution, including the formation of tribes, the birth of a civilization, and space travel. Make the wrong decisions, and your race of penis-handed creatures will face extinction. It sounds like science class, but Spore plays like gaming's greatest hits, including the Pac-Man vibe of the cellular stage and the Diablo feel of the creature phase. It doesn't take a genius to understand this is amazing. —Matt Bertz





Clockwise from top left: Gauges of the Yamaha V-MAX; side view of the V-MAX; close-up of the stylish exhaust pipes.

## TO THE MAX

### ENGINE

1679cc liquid-cooled V-4  
197 horsepower

You couldn't have fit more muscle on the original Yamaha V-MAX. With its massive V4 engine crammed into the frame, the V-MAX was one of the most muscular bikes on the streets back in 1985. And with the exception of a few tweaks and cosmetic touches along the way, the model remained largely unchanged until it was pulled from the Yamaha lineup last year. Now, when the first of the 2009 versions hits showrooms this fall, the MAX will be back—bigger, badder, and more boisterous than ever before.

The new V-MAX doesn't back down from the original's supermacho looks or beefed-up horsepower. The old 1198cc engine has bulked up to 1679cc, which kicks up the power output from a hefty 145 horsepower to a nerve-rattling 197 horsepower, making the V-MAX the most powerful bike on the planet.

This kind of mega-muscle doesn't come dainty. The new V-MAX has a dark, gothic quality. Designers were careful to look for opportunities to rein in the sheer size and bulk of this hulking

street rod. Particularly slick engineering went into the hybrid chain/cam drive, which deftly saves space and weight, and the gnarly looking air intakes on the side of the gas tank; they were previously little more than Hollywood props, but they're now fully functional and add to the efficiency of the new engine. And while the new liquid-cooled V4 is similar in appearance to the earlier editions, the use of advanced alloys and electronics ups the performance. To stop this overmuscled ride, engineers have decked out the V-MAX with big Brembo wave-type disc brakes strong enough to wrestle with the bike's massive horsepower.

Over the 23 years since the Yamaha V-MAX was first introduced, the bike's legend and appeal have grown disproportionately to its sales; there are always more riders who long for a bike this powerful than riders who can actually afford it. At a list price of \$17,990, the Yamaha star V-MAX is definitely in the discretionary purchase category. Then again, it's a small price to pay for a massive amount of power. —George Polgar





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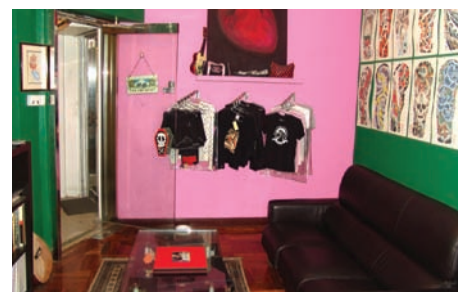
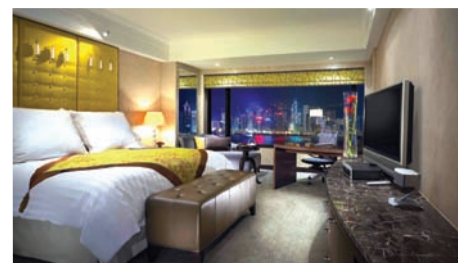
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Clockwise from top: The Star Ferry Company; room at the Intercontinental Hotel; Star Crossed tattoo; Hong Kong at night.



For all the feng shui and tai chi, Hong Kong isn't just about traditional pastimes. The massive city is awash in cool bars, amazing attractions, and an all-around progressive flair. Often referred to as "the melting pot of Asia," Hong Kong is a hybrid of Chinese and Western cultures (the city was under British rule until 1997), so the city of 7 million is packed with expats. Some of our favorites are the Brits who run the popular Star Crossed Tattoo & Piercing. The shop frequently hosts guest artists from the States, and artist Julia Wilson often promotes local punk shows. One warning, if you choose to go elsewhere for a tattoo: There are no laws or regulations governing tattoos in Hong Kong, so many shops skip the autoclave and the hygiene.

After getting inked, head to Victoria Harbor, one of the most popular attractions in the city. The harbor is Hong Kong's main lifeline and offers a stunning view of the skyline, especially at night. For the best view, cross the harbor on a Star Ferry; these antique vessels have been crossing the waters since 1898. Later, visit Sik Sik Yuen Wong Tai Sin Temple, a Taoist temple constructed in 1921. The

gorgeous grounds include a labyrinth of walkways and bridges, smaller temples, a turtle-filled pond, and a traditional fortune teller. The major shopping districts are along Canton Road and Nathan Roads, areas that thrive during the day as traffic hustles past hundreds of shops, including designer boutiques and local markets selling crafts, knock-off goods, and knickknacks.

At night, make your way to Wyndham Street, a buzzing district packed with bars and restaurants (including the new hotspot Tivo) and wander all the way down to Lan Kwai Fong, a hub of pubs and clubs. Dim Sum is best had at Super Star Seafood restaurant, and the award-winning Wing Lai Yuen noodle shop is so good that there's a limit of one order per person.

If you need a break from the frantic pace of the city, the InterContinental Hotel offers an outdoor terrace with a heated swimming pool and two hot tubs that overlook the harbor. The modern rooms are stylish and have the best views in the city, with glass thick enough to drown out the noise until you're ready to hit the streets again. —Jimmy Im

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858-2116-8055  
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**STAR FERRY**  
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# INKED PEOPLE

"I got a tattoo for Natalie.  
It's of Ganesh, a Hindu god.  
She loves elephants."  
—Nicole Albino, Nina Sky



# NINA SKY

When music wonder twins Nina Sky took over dance floors with their 2004 hit, "Move Ya Body," even they weren't sure what they were doing. "Our first album was written about things we hadn't yet experienced in our lives," says Nicole Albino, one half of the duo. "We were 18, straight out of high school." After an exhaustive 2004 tour, Albino and her identical twin, Natalie, holed up in the studio to write a follow-up album that was more mature and filled with experiences that the duo had, well, actually experienced.

Four years later, *The Musical* is finished and ready for release this fall. The album mixes Nina Sky's love of R&B, pop music, and hip-hop beats and features several top producers including Kerry "Krucial" Brothers, Cool and Dre, and Ryan Leslie. "Music is changing," says Nicole. "A lot of hip-hop artists are experimenting with house or techno; more beats are overlapping. And musicians are speaking outside the box, becoming more innovative. It's great for music." *The Musical* also contains a heavy influence by one of the duo's favorites—Madonna. "She's constantly reinventing herself. We hope to have that longevity in our career."

Finally free from the studio, the sisters are back cruising the streets of Queens, NY, where they were born and raised, deejaying in New York City, and getting tattoos by Andreana at Supernova Tattoos in Astoria, NY. Natalie got a tattoo tribute to her sister—a pin-up girl on a record on her forearm with Nicole's name on the other side. Nicole returned the favor. "I got a tattoo for Natalie," she says. "It's of Ganesh, a Hindu god. She loves elephants." It's now Nicole's favorite tattoo and elicits none of the regret she has over the tattoo of someone else's name she had inked on her arm (which is now covered). "I recommend no one ever, ever doing that. It was a *huge* mistake." —Jimmy Im













# YUNG BERG

Fifteen is a tough age to get anything right, let alone to handle the lifestyle and responsibilities associated with landing a major record deal. Christian “Yung Berg” Ward signed his first deal as a teenager and felt all was cool with his adolescent fame and fortune, though his parents didn’t quite share the sentiment. “I was wild’n out and they had enough of it,” admits Berg. “The deal wasn’t as important to them as my behavior. They shipped me off to military school to get straight.” After re-emerging from a Montana military school, Berg signed on as the tour hype man for fellow Chicago artist Shannna and channeled his newfound discipline into hip-hop. His breakout single, “Sexy Lady,” and guest verse on Ray J’s “Sexy Can I” signaled his return, and recently, the 23-year-old lyricist released his debut album, *Look What You Made Me*.

Like his early stardom, Berg’s first tattoo didn’t go over well with his parents. “I got it when I was 13,” he explains. “It’s two Japanese letters of my initials, ‘CJ,’ on my right arm.” As expected, his parents freaked out, though at the time it didn’t matter to him. Since then, Berg’s tattoo collection has grown extensively, thanks in part to his favorite artists, Freddy, of Chicago, and Randy, of Tattoos by Randy in Atlanta. “I never really know what I’m about to get until I’m in the chair,” he explains. “But those two guys I can trust to do whatever it is I come up with, and do it right.”

Music notes line his neck, along with the portrait of late R&B princess Aaliyah, while the logos of all the Chicago professional sports teams down his left arm show his love of his hometown. The name of his music venture “Yung Boss” is emblazoned on his chest, and Berg plans on being completely covered from the waist up. So what do Mom and Pop, whose names adorn his left and right hands, respectively, think of all the ink? “I’m grown now,” says Berg. “There’s no point in even asking. But, yeah, they cool.” —Willie G.



# LEA VENDETTA

"I don't like to do nice, clean tattoos or realistic stuff. A tattoo should look like a tattoo," says Lea Vendetta, the Paris-born 37-year-old tattoo artist whose journey has taken her from the City of Lights to Key West, FL. Vendetta started in tattooing in 1989, when, at the age of 18, she got her first ink—a Celtic piece that she has since had lasered off. In 1992, while in the South of France, she was introduced to Dave "Bastard" Archer by a mutual friend and tattoo artist. She married the native Floridian three years later and moved with him to West Palm Beach. "I was drawing and painting and getting tattooed. I was just surviving," she remembers. When one of the artists tattooing her suggested she try the trade herself, she "did what nobody should do" by ordering a machine from the back of a magazine. Soon, she was hired by Lucky Devil and working on her first pieces. "It was mostly tribal and simple black stuff that if you messed up, you could fill it up with more black," she laughs.

Since those early days, Vendetta and Archer have lived, worked, and tattooed each other in a handful of Florida's beach towns. In 2000, they opened

their own shop, Big Kahuna Tattoo in Boca Raton, and enjoyed a busy, seven-year stint until they started to long for a slower pace. "I didn't have a chance to develop my own style," explains Vendetta. "Hopefully now I can do more drawing and painting and focus on it."

After selling the shop last year, Vendetta traveled the country, doing guest stints in Seattle and Dallas, before setting up at Paradise Tattoo in Key West. She arrived after a 1966 law banning tattooing on the island had been struck down, and tattoo parlors were eager to bring in talented artists. But even though the opportunity offered Vendetta what she was looking for, she wasn't sure about the island at first and didn't know if she'd even be able to make it a month. "I'm more of a city kind of girl," she says. "But it [Key West] is awesome. It reminds me of Europe a little bit." The temporary home has also given her a chance to work on developing her own style celebrating her unconventional idea of beauty. "I love old, really tacky things from the Old World," Vendetta explains. "Picasso said if it's in good taste, it's not art." —Rebecca Swanner

HAIR: JESSICA WHALEN FOR ARROJO STUDIO











# JIM KOCH

Long before he worked with everyone from Mötley Crüe to Marilyn Manson and designed skate decks and high-end toys, graphic designer Jim Koch (pronounced *cook*) worked with his hands in another way—as a lumberjack. “I was buckin’ and haulin’ logs and I said, Fuck that! I want to draw,” he remembers of his teen logging years.

Koch traded in his ax for a sketchpad and pencil and began doodling cartoon figures of clowns. He became obsessed with them after watching Red Skelton, a clown who became famous in the ’40s for dressing like a hobo, and he later tattooed three vintage clowns on his biceps and forearm. Koch also names ’60s classic television (like *The Addams Family* and *The Munsters*) as inspiration for some of his other cool-but-creepy sketches, and he has a big Frankenstein heart, complete with stitches and bolts, tattooed on his chest.

Much of Koch’s design work features hot rod imagery, and he picked up his love of the art (thought not the racing) from his dad. “My dad built stock cars, so I grew up around the track,” he says, before explaining that he didn’t find track racing very exciting. “The races just go in circles,” he laughs. Instead,

he rode BMX and skated, and eventually relocated to Hollywood, where the self-described metalhead dug into the rock scene and got his first tattoo of a “little heavy metal dude” on his triceps. He also began designing his own concert posters for bands he liked. The hair band scene caught wind of his talent, and Koch was commissioned by Ratt, Skid Row, and Poison to design album covers and T-shirts. Eventually, he bridged into screen printing for iconic ’90s brands like No Fear, Jetpilot, and Vince Neil’s line Bad Bones. Koch even designed album art for Vanilla Ice, who loved the project enough to get a tattoo of the album logo.

Koch recently completed a sleeve of gun-toting hillbillies, a headless chicken, and a “white trash girlfriend” hanging out of her trailer window, and he just got a tattoo of a toy monkey character inspired by the artist Gary Taxali. “I love the dynamic color of Guy Aitchison and the demonic style of Paul Booth. Chris Spriggs of Rage, here in Spokane, has done a lot of my tattoos,” says Koch from his Washington home. And as an artist himself, Koch knows to give a tattooer room to create. “I like to let them just go for it,” he says. —Emily Kate Warren



A full-body photograph of a man with short dark hair and a light complexion. He is wearing a green and black camouflage blazer over a bright pink button-down shirt and a black bow tie with small white dots. He is also wearing a green belt with a large, ornate silver buckle and dark blue jeans. He is holding a cigarette in his right hand. The background is a solid blue color, and the man's figure is cut out from the background, creating a white silhouette effect.

# PHARRIEL





# WILLIAMS

The music and fashion wunderkind talks bling, the clothing biz, and his plans to grow pig skin to cover old ink. BY TOM CONLON PHOTOS BY DAVID SHADI PEREZ





**f there's one man the entire music**

world wants a piece of, it's Pharrell Williams. From Jay-Z and Kanye West to Gwen Stefani and Justin Timberlake, the Virginia Beach, VA native is a Top 40 kingmaker, a sonic architect who has built career-making hits for some of music's most elite players. His own project, N.E.R.D, just released their third album, *Seeing Sounds*, and toured with Kanye West, Lupe Fiasco, and Rihanna.

But it's not just the record industry that's clamoring for Williams—the fashion world is also after the head N.E.R.D. Factories can't stitch his Billionaire Boys Club and Ice Cream clothing lines quickly enough to keep up with demand, and Williams has twice collaborated on signature collections with the distinguished French design house Louis Vuitton. In 2005, *Esquire* magazine named him the world's best-dressed man.

Any one of these reasons would have compelled us to feature the producer-singer-songwriter-designer in this issue of INKED. But we also had to get to the bottom of the recent tattoo-related headlines he's been making. In case you missed it, reports surfaced that the N.E.R.D frontman was planning to have new skin grown for him in a laboratory as a way to cover his tattoos. What the hell?

**INKED: So, we hear you're on the scientific forefront of tattoo removal.**

WILLIAMS: I knew you were going to go there.

**We had to ask, man. Can you tell us what you're up to?** First of all, I was tired as hell when I did that interview. I had just seen this story on CNN about this pixie dust, which is something being worked on at the Wake [Forest] Institute for Regenerative Medicine in North Carolina. It's basically a process for burn victims where they blend your DNA with something from a pig—the dermis, I think—and use it to grow skin. I saw it and had the bright idea [to cover my tattoos with it]. I was kidding around, but the guy reported that I was serious. That said, if there is a procedure you know of besides laser, please let me know.

**Why? Are there a couple of tattoos you're itching to get rid of?** Yeah, I have a big one that's total shit. It's a couple of angel faces, but they were really badly drawn, so I tried to cover them up with

fire. I got it lasered, but it takes, like, six or seven goes, and I don't want to do it anymore.

**What about another repair job?** Oh man, that's what the fuck got me into the position I'm in now. I tried to cover it with fire, and now it just looks like a big blur of shit. After that one is when I started getting tattoos from great artists. I met [Mister] Cartoon, and he did one on my leg, which is cool. And I met Anil Gupta, who to me is the king of all tattoo artists. He did the guardian angel on my neck.

**What got you started tattooing?** DeVante Swing, who was an R&B producer from this group called Jodeci, he had tons of tattoos and I thought it was the coolest in the world. When I saw Lenny Kravitz's sleeves, I was like "Yo, I gotta have that." Then when I met Fred Durst. Fred had tattoos everywhere. I was like, "That's it. I'm doing it." All my friends thought I was out of my mind.

**When you collaborate with musicians, is there ever tattoo talk in the studio?** Yeah. You know what? One of the guitarists from Good Charlotte has crazy tattoos. Not Joel or Benji, but their guitar player. Joel and Benji have great tattoos, but their guitar player has all of this Tim Burton *Nightmare Before Christmas* stuff. He has them everywhere, and they're so fucking dope. He had them done by his tattoo artist friend who he took on the road with him. It's so sick.

**Between your Billionaire Boys Club and Ice Cream fashion labels, you're a full-fledged designer these days. Do you design your own tattoos?** Actually, I was talking to Kanye recently, and he was telling me I should get all of the BBC and Ice Cream logos tattooed on me. I was like, "Yeah, if I had some fucking room!"

**Why name Billionaire Boys Club after one of the most famous Ponzi schemes in history?** I liked the name, and I thought there could be so much more behind it than that one connotation. Just like N.E.R.D—I like the way it sounds phonetically, and I like parts of what it represents, but I thought there could be another version of what a nerd could be. That's always been my thing.



**"When I saw Lenny  
Kravitz's sleeves,  
I was like 'Yo, I gotta  
have that.'"**





"I thought it was cool  
that [Marc Jacobs]  
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**“I was talking to Kanye recently, and he was telling me I should get all of the Billionaire Boys Club and Ice Cream logos tattooed on me. I was like, ‘Yeah, if I had some fucking room!’”**

**What connotation are you trying to evoke with BBC?** I'm trying to insinuate that true wealth is a wealth of education. Wealth is of the heart and mind, not of the pocket. That's the wealth that no one can take away from you, no matter what happens.

**Coming from music into fashion, was there a lot of on-the-job training, or were you a natural?** Yeah, it's been natural. Without having any design experience when I started, I looked at it from another perspective. I was like, “What don't I have, what do I really want, and what can't I get?” It's worked.

**What's hot today is lame tomorrow in the world of fashion. How will you keep BBC from turning into the next FUBU?** We go beyond the boundaries of what's expected of us. We've done collaborations with people like Turnbull & Asser, which is a hugely prestigious English brand that's been around for hundreds of years. We've got a crazy, crazy collaboration that I can't talk about right now, but that you'll see at the top of next year. It's incredible. People are going to be like, “What the hell?”

**You collaborated with Louis Vuitton recently on a line of incredibly expensive jewelry. Were you attempting to produce the blingiest bling on planet Earth?** I wanted to do something that was aristocratic and monarchical. You know: old money, old royalty, old English—even though Vuitton is French.

**Your pieces seem like an odd genre for Louis Vuitton.** But that's what makes for good collaborations. Think about it. They just did a collaboration with Richard Prince, which was far different from anything they do. They did Murakami too, which was different but fit in wonderfully.

**When you worked with Marc Jacobs, did you talk tattoos? Between the M&M and the Simpsons stuff, he's got some interesting ink.** I thought it was cool that he doesn't have any boundaries. That's what I admire about his tattoos. They're just different. If I had to do it all over again, I'd probably get Japanimation all over myself. There are probably so many kids that have done that already, though. I'm so mad I didn't think it out first. There are so many other things I could

have done. I could have done all of the BBC icons and all of the different brands that I like that are iconic. But then I'd probably be feeling this way now wanting to do something different.

**If you did have a blank canvas, what would you do with it?** I'd probably get “The Last Supper” across my shoulder blades and back.

**In 2005, Esquire voted you the world's best-dressed man. Did you get a trophy?** No trophy. But it was prestigious for me. I had no idea I was going to win. I believe I was standing with Josh Lucas and Owen Wilson at the photo shoot. I was standing between them thinking, “One of these two guys is going to win for sure.” I asked *Esquire* what it was [that helped me win], and they said it was based on a lot of the galas and red-carpet events that I went to where I dressed up in traditional suits. It was a big deal.

**Before you were the world's best-dressed man, you must have experienced those same awkward tween-age years we all do. Looking back, what were you worst fashion faux faux?** When you're unafraid to express yourself and be edgy about what you wear, of course you're going to have moments where you look back and say, “Okay, that worked. Okay, that didn't work—what was I thinking?” You can't take yourself so seriously, man.

**So nothing gets to you?** At the end of the day, I know that I'm lucky to do what I do. I wake up every day and get paid to do what I love to do. Right? That's an incredible feeling. Not everything is always going to be perfect. There are going to be people who report things about you that aren't true. Sometimes you'll miss your flight. Sometimes you'll be in another country where they don't have any fucking room service after 12. There are all sorts of tedious experiences. I won't call them trials and tribulations because they're just experiences. But when you look back at all of the fun you had making music and living your life and being able to provide for your family, you can't complain. When you look at the nations of kids who support you and the things that you do, you can only say, “Wow, I'm a lucky dude. Who cares if I have a piece-of-shit tattoo on my left bicep?”





Sexes black leather vest; Calvin Klein black underwear; YSL patent leather shoes; Manny Winick & Son diamond necklace.



# into the Night



*Photos by Warwick Saint  
Styled by Risa Knight  
and Ariane Dallal*





Manny Winick & Son  
diamond necklace.





Jezebel bra and underwear; Charter Club pearl necklace.



Donna Karan black  
lace underwear  
Manny Winick &  
Son earrings and  
necklace





Vintage kimono;  
Victoria's Secret  
underwear; Manny  
Winick & Son  
diamond ring.







Adrienne Landau black fur stole; Manny Winick & Son diamond necklace and bracelet; Donna Karan black lace underwear; Steve Madden patent leather shoes.

The black-and-white interior of New York City's Night Hotel seems to have been designed specifically as a contrasting backdrop for the colorful work of tattoo artist Julie Becker. But the hotel's sexy brand and its decor, both created by architect and interior designer Mark Zeff, came into existence several years before Becker languidly roamed its halls. "When I first saw the space, I pictured it as an urban manor, like a big home done only in black and white," says Zeff. The hotel also has touches borrowed from the tattoo world, such as the temporary tattoo of the hotel's gothic "N" logo, which all guests find in their rooms, and the large lobby photo featuring a tuxedoed man, his masked entourage, and a tattooed muse. "I guess everyone has their own version of sexy," says Zeff. "But to me, the fight between the pure white and the black, with that bit of Gothic inserted ... it all feels slightly German and 1940s ... it's almost suggestive of, well, not S&M exactly, but it has that sensibility." Visit [nighthotelny.com](http://nighthotelny.com) for reservations and more information.







Vintage kimono; Gucci obi;  
Devani shoes; Wolford stockings.

**Hair:** Kevin Woon for Woon NY/Jed Root Inc.

**Makeup:** Kristin Gallegos for Bryan Bantry

**Model:** Julie Becker

**Location:** Night Hotel New York  
Kimonos provided by Abigail Gullo



# Intelligent Design

Tattoos and couture collide in the work of these fashion designers. Some are up-and-coming and some have already come up, but they all stay true to their art with designs that are irreverent, witty, and anything but ordinary.

By  
Rachel Aydt





## Matt Booth

### Room 101

**M**att Booth, a Los Angeles-based jewelry designer and former Marine, twice deployed to the Far East, now finds his muse in the Japanese theater. His masculine line Room 101 is heavy on thick chains, locks, gargoyles, and faces from Japanese theater. And tattoos of Fu temple guards watch over his body as they do the Great Buddha back in Japan.

Booth's jewelry has its roots in what he calls "The L.A. silver soap opera," a name he coined for a cliquey small group of local jewelry designers. "When I first moved to Hollywood, I was working at the Whiskey as a sound engineer. I was meeting designers, and I became obsessed with the idea, so I began making my own [jewelry]." Combining his Far East influence and love for music into his designs, Booth's work has been spotted on everyone from Chuck Liddell to members of Cypress Hill and Coal Chamber. Room 101 is sold online, but

Booth also has showrooms in L.A. and Japan. "I go back to Japan a lot, and there's this massive movement of silver freaks who will literally stand in line so I can engrave their pieces. They really get it over there."

"My roots are in the L.A. silver world, but ... there's a cap with silver, and I'm already doing so much more," he explains. These days, Booth favors pricier materials and crafts his still-masculine pieces with platinum, rose, white, and green gold, and lots of stonework.

"When people limit their influence, they limit their output," says Booth. "The more well rounded you are, the more you can produce." As he continues to shift his style, the tattooed guards on his body will also expand. Jack Rudy did his sleeve while he was in the service, and Robert Atkinson did a Fu guard on his forearm. "Next, I'm going to do my entire carcass," he says.





photo by RUSS QUACKENBUSH





## Agatha Blois

New York City Custom Leather

Dubbed the "First Lady of Leather," Agatha Blois has custom-fit her garb to every punk, rock, and pop god under the sun, from Slash to Billy Idol to the Shakira and J. Lo set. And this designer got her start early. "I've always said I started designing when I was 19, but recently I remembered that when I was 9, I used to make my grandma trace me on the floor, like I was a pattern," Blois says. "I never wore clothes I bought, except for this one pair of Levi's, which I wore until my grandma made me throw them away. So I guess I've been at it since then."

Lately, she's feeling a bit more introspective about her career. "Every day I'm thinking, 'Aren't I really an artist? Can't I just make art? But when I think of art I don't think of just paintings ... I dream of doing interiors and furniture as well as clothing.'"

She's already branched out with a fragrance called Carnival Wax, whose mascot, "Ol' Rudy," is a skeleton man donning a top hat. The packaging is gothic French Quarter. And the smell itself? When asked to describe it, rather than rattling off top notes, she reads a poem written by her dear friend Blackie Pagano: "Ol' Rudy drove the carriage ... the smell of greasepaint, wild beasts, sugary treats, western saddles, and burning gypsy witch candles, old damp canvas, through Spanish moss and Southern groves of orange and peach, on dirt, on asphalt, on an African priestess in Brooklyn in 1965, her black leather panties in his liquored hand ... If I could only bottle these bright beauties and blinding evils." Sounds intoxicating.



# Justin Smith

J Smith Esquire Millinery

Justin Smith creates hairstyles, but he'd rather be covering them up. The hair stylist turned hat designer received a master of arts degree from the Royal College of Art in London in 2007. Before that, he'd spent six years cutting hair for Toni & Guy, dabbling in hats on the side. "For me, millinery was really a hobby that spiraled out of control."

Smith's debut collection, "Dance with Me," was an homage to ballroom scenes of the '20s and '30s. The vibe of his runway show was all sepia tones, feathers, and literary ephemera—basically, dashing dudes in suspenders and dandy pants who looked like they'd leapt out of an F. Scott Fitzgerald novel.

The designs grow from the raw materials he uses, like rabbit fur, felt, calfskin, and gold leather, and it's all served up with vintage trimmings that make his work cohesive.

His most recent showpiece, "Creatures," which will debut in Japan, features five animals. "It's space age ... sort of tribal in reference," he explains. He's used a coyote jawbone, a baby alligator, an ibis skull, as well as some peacock wing feathers. But don't banish Smith to the taxidermy museum just yet. His work can be quite matrimonial, and he recently outfitted a Gothic bride with a black beaded headpiece.

Asked about his tattoos, he utters a nearly inaudible, "Oh, dear," before describing his work at largely leaning toward the "biomechanical," with influence drawn heavily from Swiss surrealist H.R. Giger.

Now Smith is looking for an investor. If you're interested in financing a lovely hat shop for him in SoHo, London, he's game. He'd finally be able to leave haircuts behind. Until then, check out Justin's hats at Henri Bendel in New York and the posh Maria Luisa in Paris.







photo by MARIUS W. HANSEN





lipstick proph

NCH

photo by RUSS QUACKENBUSH  
hair: Anton David  
makeup: Stephanie Kilmer





## Ali Barone

### Lipstick Prophets

**S**On September 11, 2001, Ali Barone, the Buffalo-raised designer behind the Lipstick Prophets, was living in downtown New York City. Two days later she was barreling across the country in a borrowed 1983 Jaguar XJS with a Chevy engine. She drove all the way to Los Angeles and never looked back. "It was a nightmare. I jumped in my roommate's amazing Jaguar. I didn't have a driver's license, but I dumped 35 pairs of shoes in the trunk, found a map, and drove the whole way. I never thought anything through. It was just, 'I'm getting off this fucking island.'"

When she got to L.A., Barone started working in fashion for Agatha Blois. "I was her assistant for a couple of years and learned so much," Barone says. After that, she started the Stiletto Killers T-shirt line with a partner before eventually branching out on her own. Her brand, Lipstick Prophets, made its mark with saucy T-shirts and hoodies that say things like "Property of Fuck U. Athletic Dept."

"My new season is going to be a more high-end collection," explains Barone, who also hosts an Internet radio show called "Leave Your Weave" on compoundradio.org. In fact, music shapes a lot of what Barone is currently creating. "I'll be listening to music and then this transfer happens. I visualize myself in the outfit, enjoying the song, and the song becomes an outfit." Expect to see "a lot of British inspiration" in Barone's newest designs, which include old-school late-'70s looks, "with that dirty feel," as well as some '80s-inspired pieces like a bright satin jacket.

Says Barone of her future, "If I think about something for too long, then I'm too scared and I'm not doing it. Fear is so debilitating. You have to stop thinking and just do it."



# Adriane Errera

## Lucky Girl Handbags

**C**ruising the website for Adriane Errera's Lucky Girl Handbags is a little like walking down a boardwalk during military R&R. Young recruits should be spilling out of tattoo shops, sore from their first "I [Heart] Mom" tattoo. There's the pirate girl and nautical star wallets, panther bags, and leather belts.

Errera, from Long Island, has lived in Long Beach, CA, for the last six years. She works out of a shop in her backyard making very small runs of layered leather goods that include handbags, wristbands, and wallets. Although her work uses "a lot of tattoo flash" as of late, it's leaning more toward the feminine. "I'm trying to get away from all the young stuff and do more adult designs," she explains. Lately she's been exploring Asian imagery, including a "geisha ghost" and koi fish. She's also collaborating with other artists. Jim McLeod, a former tattoo artist who lost his eyesight but is still painting, created the geisha ghost girl while Erik McLeod designed the koi fish.

"I'm also getting more interested in using recycled and repurposed leather. I'm doing the '70s patchwork thing in a more modern, edgy way. The way I work is still primitive. I screen print the image in black and then hand-paint the art before it's sewn down like an appliqué," she explains.

Errera has managed to bridge her early harder-living single days with a more domestic lifestyle of marriage and motherhood, but getting tattooed is still important to her. Brad Schneider, of 454 Tattoo in Encinitas, CA, is working on a large piece that's similar in style to her new direction in fashion. "I have some Japanese flowers with flames and pin striping, and a tiger with peonies around it." And her work? "It's getting more sophisticated, but there's still a child-like whimsical twist to everything."





photo by JEFF FORNEY











## Tod Waters and Giuliana Maya

### Junker Designs

"I'm a bit more clean and Tod's a bit dirtier," Giuliana Mayo begins, speaking about her Junker Designs business partner of more than five years, Tod Waters. Dirty's good, especially when it comes to their latest project, creating tour designs for Mötley Crüe.

Mayo and Waters, who both moved to L.A. in 2000, say fashion was an accident (Waters was a tattooist for a decade in Houston, and Mayo studied theater in Florida.) Their *modus operandi* is making custom-fitted leather and denim, and their vibe is *Mad Max* with a vintage twist. "Our stuff is super, super dirty," says Waters. "We mutilate most of it. We sand it, we do lots of treatments on it. ... Each piece definitely has a life and a story."

Some of the recurring images that set their clothing apart from other like-minded designers, such as old airplanes and bombs, stem from Waters' obsession with World War II. "The Germans had these Stuka dive bombers that used to annihilate the Poles, and they called these airplanes Junkers," he explains. Enter the name.

"We want to expand, but not hugely," says Mayo. "We don't want to become Von Dutch or Affliction, or, God forbid, Ed Hardy. In this time of mass production, we want to keep things made in America, and keep our quality. ... We have plenty of competitors who [manufacture] their stuff in Bali, but it doesn't have the soul."

Waters adds a refreshing twist to Mayo's ethos: "When you die, you're not taking your money with you. The greed that we see here in L.A. knows no bounds. It's really messed up. In Texas, ... people put you in your place."

Of this ethically minded twosome, Waters is the tattooed one. "I have a lot of bad ones," he says. "On my bicep, there's something that's supposed to be mufflers, but it looks like something out of *Looney Tunes* ... And I have some crappy skulls. The good ones are done by Richard Stell, who I worked with in Houston at a place called Scorpion Tattoos."

"We were both always into stuff that wasn't mainstream," says Mayo. "Everything from the subcultures we were attracted to has gone into our clothes. Our jeans? They don't look like Levi's, that's for sure." ■





# Jason Mewes

Silent Bob's better half talks Kevin Smith, comic books, tattoos, and kicking his drug habit.

BY ALISON PRATO PHOTOS BY MIKE PISCITELLI

Actor Jason Mewes is standing in the living room of his Los Angeles home, taking off his shirt. Positioned in front of his laptop's webcam, he shows off the "15 or 16" tattoos he's acquired during his 34 tumultuous years. He lifts his shirt and motions first to an elaborate tribal design on his shoulder. "I got this one in Santa Cruz ... and this one in Des Moines," Mewes says. "This one's from when I was 20, and I got this one in Utah after playing a prisoner with all these fake tattoos. The guy was gonna do a solid tribal on me, but I was like, "You know what, I want a face in there. Nothing too happy, though, not like a clown, you know?"

The irony is that Mewes is best known as Jay, the clowning, weed-dealing, cuss-spewing half of Jay and Silent Bob, the stoner movie icons made famous in director Kevin Smith's 1994 indie classic *Clerks*. The role launched Mewes' career while his real life became jagged, drug-addled, and far from hilarious.

Born in New Jersey in 1974, Mewes was an average hockey-and-comic-book-loving high schooler when his friend Smith, three years his senior, mentioned he was writing a movie featuring Jay, a character based on Mewes. *Clerks*, famously made for just \$27,000, became a massive hit, and Mewes went on to reprise the role of Jay in nearly all of Smith's other movies, including *Mallrats*, *Dogma*, *Chasing Amy*, *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back* and *Clerks II* (lucky for him, he dodged *Jersey Girl*), and land roles in little-seen movies such as *Feast* and *Paulie Shore Is Dead*. Mewes also developed a full-blown drug addiction. During that time, his mother was diagnosed with AIDS and later succumbed to the disease in 2002. Caught between professional success and personal hell, Mewes would pop up in a movie and then disappear for months. Rumors of his death circulated, and at one point a warrant was issued for his arrest. Now five years into his sobriety, Mewes has a new movie, the Smith-helmed *Zack and Miri Make a Porno*, that's already generating buzz. Like each of his tattoos, Mewes has a hell of a story to tell.

## **INKED: What was your very first tattoo?**

MEWES: My brother's girlfriend gave me this little dot on my wrist with a pin, some thread, and India ink when I was 12 years old. More than 20 years later, that thing is staying strong.

**You also have several tattoos of girls' names, including Jordan, your girlfriend. What if it doesn't work out?** Nah, it's not a big deal. Look, I have "Amy"—an ex—on my neck, and I have "Kat," too. They're all different chapters in my life. Jordan is the only girl I've ever had a real relationship with—we live together, we have a dog, we share bank accounts. She even knows the pass-

words to my bank accounts. All my other relationships revolved around drinking, drugs, and partying. The only time I think it would be a bummer is if I came home one day and Jordan was getting double-teamed by two big dudes.

**Would you ever have a tattoo removed or covered up?** Oh, hell no. They all have their own stories.

**What are your other tattoos?** I have Kevin Smith's daughter's name down my spine. I have Justice League stuff, Daredevil, Bullseye. And this is Batman. This one right here on my thigh is the Road Runner tattoo I got when I was 18.

**Have you ever seen any Jay and Silent Bob tattoos?** I have. I have a picture on my phone of a guy with one. I've seen three or four people with the Jay and Silent Bob animated characters, and one guy had an actual portrait of me, which is weird. It had the beanie cap and shit, sort of Jay, though, which was bizarre.

**Can you set the record straight about how you met Kevin?** We went to high school together, and I knew who he was, but we didn't hang out because he was three years older. After he graduated, he worked at our town's community center, and every day after school I'd go there to play hockey, kickball, and pool. Then a group of us started hanging out and going to comic shows.

**Is it true that he didn't like you at first?** Probably. Some of my friends were going to New York for a comic book convention, and Kevin was like, "I'm not driving a minor over state lines," because he didn't want me to go. But then our buddy Brian said he'd drive. So not only did I get to go—I called shotgun. I was being silly, and those guys were laughing at me. It wasn't that Kevin didn't think I was funny, it was that he was the funny one of the group and now there was this new dude.

**After doing seven of Kevin's movies, what's the best part of working with him?** I know him and I'm comfortable. I've done maybe 10 other movies with other directors, and, not that I don't enjoy myself, but it's a different vibe because Kev and I have been friends for so long. Some of the other directors are so stressed about getting the shots, they don't really care about the actors' performances. If there's tension, I'm tense. With Kevin, it's comfy.

**Aw, that's cute. So you'd never acted before *Clerks*?** I did a few elementary school plays, and then I did a talent show my freshman year of high school. We lip-synched to the Beastie Boys.







**Didn't you work at the Quick Stop, where a lot of *Clerks* was filmed?**

Yeah, Kevin and I both worked there, and then he got me a job at the video store next door, where *Clerks* was also shot. So I'd work there, and he'd be at the convenience store, and I'd shut down the video store and hang out with him.

**Were you freaked out making a movie for the first time?**

It was kind of a blur because I was so nervous. Even though Kevin wrote the character based on me, he remembers me being like, "Kev, I don't know if I can do this." I was so freaked out performing in front of the cameras with everyone watching.

**So you combated the nervousness with drugs and alcohol.**

Exactly. I'd get drunk every day on beer and blackberry brandy. I was also working as a roofer at the time, so I'd roof all day and shoot at night. I remember watching the finished movie in the video store, and I thought that was it. I didn't understand the process of making movies, and I didn't know about Sundance or Cannes. I went back to work and didn't think anything about it, and then Kevin was like, "Yo, we got into a festival and Miramax bought it, and it's gonna be out in some theaters." That was cool, but even after that, I still worked. It wasn't until *Mallrats* that I quit my job.

**How did your new fame change your life the most?**

It didn't hit me until *Mallrats*. This sounds corny, but I grew up in a small town in Jersey and I'd never been anywhere besides New York. I'd never been in a limo except for prom, and I'd never stayed in a hotel. The only things I knew about California were palm trees, *Beverly Hills Cop*, and 90210.

**What was your first impression of Los Angeles?**

I flew out to do a table read for *Mallrats*, and I remember they picked me up in a limo, and there were the palm trees, and the song "Hotel California" came on, and it was awesome. Then, in Minnesota, where we shot the movie, there were, like, 50 crew members, and everyone was like, "Can I get you coffee? Can I get you this?" On top of all that, we got \$400 per diem. It was surreal.

**Did all of that money go toward partying?**

Well, every night after shooting, we'd all meet in the lobby of the hotel to drink, but usually someone from production would pay for it. I mainly spent mine on CDs and action figures.

**You've been candid about your drug addiction. Do you remember the first time you used?**

I drank and smoked weed a little bit in high school, and I think I was 20 the first time I tried coke. The first time I did heroin was on my 21st birthday. My friend Mike was seeing this girl, and I started messing around with her friend, so the four of us were hanging out a lot. I didn't realize they were doing heroin every day. At first I didn't want to be around it, because I hated dope. I stopped hanging with them, but that lasted a week. Then I was like, "Let's hang out, but please don't do it around me." So on my 21st birthday, I wanted to go out drinking, and they were like, "We're just gonna sit in, man, and do dope." I got some beers, and they were all doped up, and I was sitting there by myself trying to drink and be loud and have fun while they were nodding out and shit. Finally I was like, "Let me get some. I don't get it, it doesn't look fun to me." But then I tried it.

**And?**

And it was awesome. I remember cuddling with the girl and it was this whole new.... But it was bad business. From there, I started doing it on weekends, and then three, four times a week, and the next thing you know, I'm fully strung out and needing to do it every day. That went on and off for like eight, nine years.

**At your lowest point, how much money were you spending a day on drugs?**

There were days when I had tons of money and I was doing a lot of crack. I was shooting crack and dope. You can shoot crack if you break it down with lemon juice, so I was doing both and spending tons of money. Some days I'd spend \$400 to \$500 in one day, and then the next day I'd spend \$200. At the very least, I was spending \$200 a day or \$1,400 to \$1,500 a week and maybe \$6,000 a month. Then I'd run out of money and I'd have to get by. When I'd get tight on money, I'd only do \$100 a day.

**Did you try to get clean?**

I would get sober and work for a few months, like on *Dogma*, but as soon as I'd get home I'd get messed up again. Or I'd quit dope for two months, but I'd still drink and smoke pot, then I'd start doing dope again. Finally, I realized I couldn't drink or do any mind-altering drugs. I was out in L.A., and there was a warrant out for my arrest for getting busted with a bag of dope in 1999, so I went back to Jersey and turned myself in. I knew they'd either put me in jail, where I wouldn't be able to get drugs, or they'd put me in rehab and it would all stop, which I was hoping. Luckily, I got six months in rehab.

**Were you ever tempted to jump the fence at rehab?**

Oh, yeah. But if I decided to take off, I'd have to do four years in jail, so that kept me from wanting to leave. After six months in rehab, I flew back to L.A. and moved back in with Kevin until I got back on my feet.

**Was it strange to read about your life in the tabloids? There were rumors that you were dead.**

It was weird. I don't read the tabloids, but I did have a cousin who'd read that I was dead in a paper, so she called me and was like, "We haven't heard from you and wanted to make sure you're okay." I try not to read anything, even now, because if 10 people say nice things but one person says something nasty, it bothers me.

**What ever happened to *Rock Bottom*, the HBO documentary about you kicking heroin?**

It got shut down. I was in a really bad place when this guy, who wound up being a crazy con artist, offered to pay me if I would shoot this documentary. I said yes, so he picked me up in a big Winnebago, and they filmed me going to rehab. After being sober for a few months, I was like, "Whoa, what did I do? That was retarded letting them watch me kick dope and shit." Now that my head was a little clearer, I called the dude. He had told me if I didn't like it, he wouldn't put it out. But that wasn't the case. I said, "Look, I don't want it coming out, I'm sorry. Squash it." He's like, "No, we're gonna do it." So we brought it to a judge, and we got the footage, and then the guy disappeared. I guess he had kept some of the footage, because a year after everything was settled, it leaked onto YouTube.

**Did you watch it?**

I did, and it was horrible—me all messed up. He put a hidden camera in the room when I was sick and going through withdrawal. Just stuff you never want to see. Luckily, YouTube took it down.

**Do you think you still would have been a drug addict if you hadn't started making movies?**

Oh, yeah. It didn't have anything to do with movies. I started doing this back in Jersey with friends I'd hung out with for years. When you go to California, no one really offers you heroin or anything. It's got nothing to do with movies or Hollywood or clubs.

**Your new movie, *Zack and Miri Make a Porno*, is the first Kevin Smith movie in which you're not playing Jay, right?**

Yeah, Kevin was like, "I'm making a new movie with all different characters—no Jay or Bob. No Brian or Dante." He wrote this character, Lester, for me, and he's totally different. He's got short hair and he wears a wife beater. I even have my clothes off in a few scenes.


**Whoa! Full frontal?**

Well, they're shooting a porno, and I audition for it. I don't know how much I should give away. I'm sure if I said certain shit, Kevin would be like, "Dude, why did you tell everyone that?" I will say that I've seen a rough cut and it's really funny.

**Have you ever filmed yourself having sex?**

No, I've never taped myself.

**But it says on your MySpace page that your interests are "sex, sex, sex."**

Yeah, I'm interested in having sex, but I'm not interested in *watching* myself have sex. I don't want to see my pasty little ass going up and down and shit. Do you? 







# CALL OF THE TRIBE

A new generation is reviving—and guarding—the ancient secrets of Filipino tribal tattoos.

BY MARISA DIMATTIA ■ PHOTOS BY ROGER CARTER

If you're looking for symbols and meanings of the elaborate art of Filipino tribal tattoos, you won't find it here. It's taboo to reveal the secrets behind the ancestral tapestry of patterns, and when that taboo is broken, there are dire consequences. In fact, five years ago, a tattoo artist trusted with the sacred meanings behind the patterns published some of the designs in a book, and since then, death and illness have come to those involved. So, we're not chancing anything.

We will, however, share the fascinating story behind one group that's taking special care to guard these secrets and the tattoo traditions of the Philippines. The Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon, or the Mark of the Four Waves, is a group of men and women with various backgrounds who pulled together to learn more about indigenous Filipino culture and tattoo practices, the details of which have been suppressed by colonization and religion. Today, the group has chapters across the United States, in Washington, Florida, Illinois, and Hawaii, and beyond to Australia, Europe, and the Philippines.

"The tattoos are icebreakers," says Mel Orpilla, 46, leader of the San Francisco Bay Area Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon chapter. But they are only a small part of what it means to be Filipino. "I can talk about all aspects of our Filipino culture: history, religion, colonization, racism, and oppression," he says before giving an example of oppression, the story of Igorot natives from the Philippines who were forced to be part of a "living display" at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.

At the core of group is Elle Festin, 29, a *manbatek*, or tattooist who works in the traditional hand-tapping method. Festin is one of 10 Filipinos and Filipino-Americans who formed the group a decade ago, pulling in members from Los Angeles who grew up together in the hip-hop and reggae scenes





Top left photo, clockwise from top left: Jason Chua, Maia Young, Charphil Q, Eric Barrios, Mike Encoy. Top right photo, clockwise from top left: Gamy Pascual, Mel Orpilla, Emily Baraan, Samantha Juan. Bottom photo: Ibaloi tattoos revived after 100 years.





Top left photo, from left: Kristin Tanpoco, Sam Juan, Maia Young, and Emily Baraan. Top right photo, from left: Just Ugalino, Jason Tauti, and Terrence Martin. Bottom photo: the tattoos of Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon members show the difference in styles between islands and regions.



and were looking for information about their tribal roots and tattoo practices. He grew up in San Jose, on Philippines' Mindoro Island, but moved with his parents to Watts, CA, in 1990, when he was 11. Growing up in California, he wrote and performed slam poetry, promoted reggae joints, and found other creative gigs to express his experiences. But, he says, "the whispers of his ancestors" followed him to the United States.

Looking back, he finds a lot of parallels between writing slam poetry then and creating traditional tattoos today: "These little [tattoo] lines and shapes express legend after legend, passed on for centuries in pottery, textiles, carvings, and tattooing—it's our oral history. The tattoos are our poetry."

Festin worked as a fashion consultant in the hip-hop scene, and it was during a consulting gig in Hawaii that he met two tattoo artists who would inspire the creation of Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon, one of whom was famed Tahitian tattooer Po'o'ino Yrondi, best known for needling Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. Yrondi talked with Festin about Polynesian tattooing and told him how the patterns and underlying stories bear similarities throughout the South Pacific, even beyond Polynesia to Borneo and the Philippines. When Festin asked for a Polynesian tattoo from Yrondi, he was told to look to his own Filipino roots first.

Festin began by reading everything he found on the indigenous cultures and tribal tattooing of his birthplace. While on the road promoting reggae shows, he would stop in university libraries to search through old copies of

sia. There are also differences in technique that he acknowledges. "I don't just want to apply the Polynesian way of tapping with Filipino tools," he says.

Since hand tapping is considered a sacred ritual, and the person receiving the tattoo must have "earned the right" to be tattooed, it's usually those who are already Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon members who are tattooed this way. Newer members typically have their tattoos done by machine.

To have a tattoo designed—and become a member of the Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon "tribe"—you have to meet the following requirements: You must be of Filipino ancestry; you must fill out a 17-question survey and provide information on your family background, personal goals, and what animal totem best represents your personality; you must pay for the design, which does not include the cost of the actual tattooing; and you must be patient. The group gets thousands of requests a month from people seeking a design that tells the story of their roots, and there are only so many members who are able to design tattoos (Festin is one of them). Naturally, the excitement in having a Filipino connection makes people anxious to get the work as quickly as possible, but the process can often take weeks or months.

Because some tattooists in the past have re-used the bespoke designs on others and even marketed them as flash, the group only allows trusted tattooists to tattoo members with designs created by Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon. These trusted artists are often responsible for bringing new members into the group.

Leo Zulueta, a Filipino tattoo artist who helped to modernize traditional

## **"THESE LITTLE [TATTOO] LINES AND SHAPES EXPRESS LEGEND AFTER LEGEND, PASSED ON FOR CENTURIES IN POTTERY, TEXTILES, CARVINGS, AND TATTOOING – IT'S OUR ORAL HISTORY. THE TATTOOS ARE OUR POETRY."**

*National Geographic* and visit antique bookstores to pick up books, adding to his collection of tomes from the 1500s with hand-drawn designs of Filipino tribal tattoos.

Armed with new insight into the art of his ancestors, Festin began to design and later tattoo the ancient motifs. As the second member of the Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon to receive a traditional tattoo (the first was Eric Barrios, who was tattooed by Big Rock of Speezy Tattoo in Los Angeles), Festin didn't limit his tattoos to one particular indigenous group but instead paid homage to "all four waves" of people who came to the Philippines: the Afro-Asiatic Aetas, the Proto-Malays, the Deuteron-Malays, and the Spanish settlers led by Ferdinand Magellan.

He also wanted to preserve the traditional method of tattooing, not just the art. In the Philippines, tattoos were traditionally hand-tapped, and the process varied among different tribes on the islands, according to anthropologist Lars Krutak. For example, the tattoo instruments of the Bontoc tribe were made from a piece of wood or water buffalo horn with three to five needles affixed to a part bent at a right angle. An artist would strike the stick with a wooden hammer 90 to 120 times per minute to create a wound, which he would then rub with soot made from tree resin. Other tribes, however, made their needles with thorn or bone.

Regardless of the type of tools used, the hand-tapping practice is difficult to master. Festin has been hand-tapping tattoos for five years now and finds the Filipino tools are much lighter and smaller than those typically found in Polyne-

island tattooing, is one artist who has referred clients to Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon for patterns. Bernard Runo, 41, is one such client. Runo has been getting tattooed since he was 15, and he says he wishes he knew about his ancestral tattoo practices earlier so all his tattoos would be reflective of them. But growing up, he couldn't find any information: "I remember searching the bookstores of Manila and was surprised that I couldn't find any books about Filipino tattoos. It was Leo Zulueta who first told me about the Mark of the Four Waves Tribe. He set me on my path."

These trusted tattooists also ensure that the traditional tribal designs don't suffer the same fate of as Polynesian and Maori tattoo designs, which have been changed largely by Westerners. Another reason the symbolic meaning and detailed stories behind the patterns are kept secret is that traditional tribes believed that when the secrets of a tattoo are shared, the power behind them escapes, gets forgotten, and is lost. "Traditional tattoos are timeless," says Festin. "People who just want what's trendy don't care about the meanings. They don't want to take the journey to learn the stories behind them. You can see pictures of the Sistine Chapel, but it doesn't compare to traveling there, entering the chapel, and smelling the candles. You need to take that journey."

Jayson Winborn, 32, of the Washington chapter of Tatak Ng Apat Na Alon, agrees. When asked about the meaning behind his tattoos, he says: "My tattoo signifies who I am, where I came from, what I am, what's important to me, where I intend to go, and how awesome it is to be me." ■



# Full Moon Fever

*Photos by Michael Dwornik  
Styled by Risa Knight and Ariane Dallal*





Fremont three-piece  
gray pinstripe suit;  
John Varvatos silver  
belt, gray scarf, hat,  
and gray boots.





Conference of  
Birds black vest;  
John Varvatos  
fringed scarf.







Rogan white shirt; Nudie  
Jeans Co. black jeans; Sexes  
leather bands; John Varvatos  
dickey; Target wallet and  
chain; Still Life hat.



Fremont sweater; Rogan  
gray pants; Conference of  
Birds fox tail; John Varvatos  
black jeans; Still Life derby;  
Sexes leather choker.







Clemont long black  
hooded trench;  
Rogan black jeans;  
John Varvatos black  
dotted shirt; Frye black  
mechanic boots.









Conference of Birds  
coat, jeans with  
suspenders, and  
brown tank top.

**Grooming:** Emily Warren  
**Model:** Tyler Riggs  
for Red Model Management



A surrealist artwork featuring Salvador Dalí's 'The Persistence of Memory' as a background. Two models, dressed in white, sleeveless, knee-length dresses with black abstract patterns and black high-heeled shoes, stand on either side of the center. Their heads are replaced by yellow circular discs. They are holding a large, purple, serif letter 'L' between their hands. The background includes the melting pocket watch, the large eye, and the landscape with ants.

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# INKED SCENE

FRITH STREET TATTOOS

"When I was a kid, all I wanted to do was hang out in a really cool tattoo shop all day. And that's what I do now." —Dante Di Massa, Frith Street Tattoo





Left to right:  
Stefano C, Stewart  
Robson, Dante Di  
Massa, Claudia De  
Rossi, Xam

# FRITH STREET TATTOO

18 Frith St., London  
011-44-20-7734-8180  
frithstreettattoo.co.uk

Long gone are the sex shops and beatniks of London's Soho neighborhood. Over the years, the notorious district has undergone a serious image overhaul, and between the office buildings and trendy restaurants sits Frith Street Tattoo and Piercing, the tattoo shop of owner Dante Di Massa's dreams. "When I was a kid, all I wanted to do was hang out in a really cool tattoo shop all day," Di Massa says with the noise from his busy shop in the background. "And that's what I do now."

Even though he's covered in tattoos and owns

"It's not uncommon for a kid to turn 18 [the required legal age] and come in wanting a sleeve, but that's good and bad. What do you know when you're 18? You know jack shit, don't you?"

—Dante Di Massa

a shop, the 40-year-old Di Massa has never felt the urge to pick up a needle himself. "I'm not an artist," he explains. "I could go out there and be just another scratcher, but that's the last thing the world needs." Instead, Di Massa filled his shop with some of London's most talented artists, like Xam, Stewart Robson, Valerie Vargas, Aaron Hewitt, and guest artist Ian Flower and Claudia De Rossi (who recently moved on to open their own shop, New Skool Tattoo).

Stocking Frith Street with a crew of talented artists didn't equal immediate financial success. "When we opened, we weren't very busy," Dante says, of Frith Street's 2003 opening. "But everyone we started with was willing to put in a ton of hours to make it a success." The hard work paid off as Frith Street Tattoo is now one of the most credible shops on the London scene.

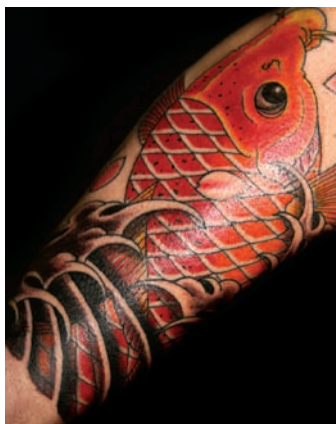
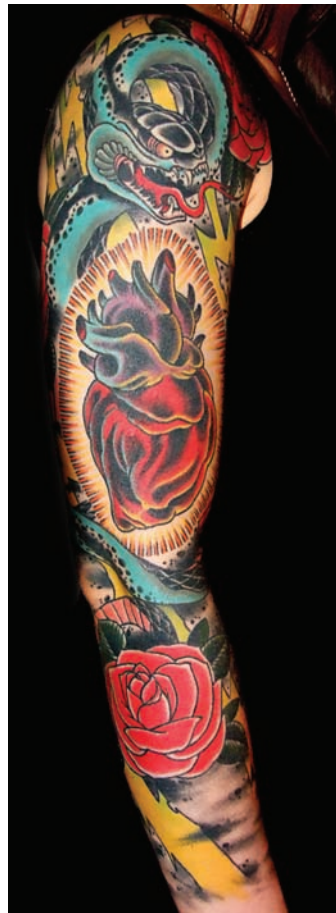
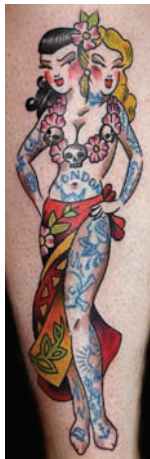
While the abundance of artistic firepower has kept the shop busy since those early days, England's accepting attitude toward tattooing also keeps the chairs full and the needles buzzing. "It's extremely acceptable to have visible tattoos here. It's not uncommon for a kid to turn 18 [the required legal age] and come in wanting a sleeve, but that's good and bad. What do you know when you're 18? You know jack shit, don't you?" Di Massa laughs.

With that in mind, Frith Street has rules to help dissuade people from doing too much too fast. Like many shops, they won't do anything on the hands or neck unless the customer already has lots of easily visible work. "A lot of kids come in and want their first tattoo on their neck because a lot of hip-hop stars have them," Di Massa says. "But it's a lot different when you're a multimillionaire."

Dante and company also make a concerted effort to uphold the ideals and traditions that drew them to tattooing in the first place. But keeping that grittiness and edge is getting tough as tattoos invade pop culture. "TV kind of ruined it. Some people come in expecting a tattoo shop to be full of bikers and Harley-Davidsons," Di Massa says, "but tattoo shops just aren't like that anymore. There are a lot of good shops that are more like tattoo boutiques."

Di Massa also worries that some people are just getting the wrong impression from their televisions. "There are many people in the industry right now just to make money, but once they've made their money, they'll move on," he says. "The good shops and the good people will still be around. All we can do is put our heads down and try to give the best tattoos possible." —Stan Horczek



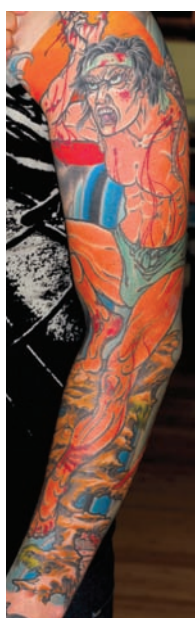


Clockwise from top left: Aaron Hewitt at work; hands by Stewart Robson; octopus by Claudia De Rossi; various Frith Street stencils; sleeve by Xam; koi fish by Aaron Hewitt; two-headed geisha by Valerie Vargas; boxer by Xam.



# GRIME

Skull & Sword, 3415 Cesar Chavez, San Francisco, CA., 415-552-4297  
theskullandsword.com, entertheblackclaw.com, grimemonster.com



## INKED: Where did you grow up?

**GRIME:** Grand Junction, CO. It was a small town. There wasn't a lot of stuff for kids to do, especially if you weren't a jock or a redneck. We were part of a small group of kids who were skaters and punk rockers. We caught a lot of shit for it.

## What career path were you headed down before tattooing? Was Grime nearly an accountant?

I don't think I knew what I wanted to do. Since middle school I had taken every art class I could, so I guess there was part of me that enjoyed it. I never really pursued it outside of that. Skateboarding took up all of my free time. It was when I got to college that I tried to figure out what it was that really made me happy. I was always really good at math, so I'd taken higher-level math classes. In college I realized I didn't even like math. I can be good at it but so what? The things that made me happy were art-related. It was a small epiphany to realize that in order to make myself happy, I probably needed to do something creative. Then the tattoo opportunity arose, and it all kind of jelled at once.

**How did you get into tattooing?** I was in Tempe, AZ going to school at Arizona State University. My buddy Chris Rupp taught me how to tattoo. It was pretty basic stuff. He wasn't that knowledgeable at the time because he was pretty much self-taught. It was a different time then, too. The information wasn't there. There was no Internet. You couldn't talk to people. Knowledge was very guarded. The tattooers we were around at the time were more of the old-school guys. They were the old guard in Arizona. They owned shops and were some of the only guys we could get equipment from. They were the kind of guys who would blow up your shop if you opened up too close to them.

**You dropped out of college to tattoo. How did your family react?** They weren't that psyched on it. [Laughs] I'm sure from any type of objective parental view, it looked pretty crappy. And especially at that time, it was a different thing. Now, tattooing can be seen as more of a viable way to make a living. There's all this bullshit fucking fame and TV show crap attached to it that you could use to "justify" it with. Back then, it was what it was.

## What was the tattoo industry like at the time?

It was starting to move into a progressive time for tattooing. Ed Hardy sort of started that move. And there was Marcus Pacheco, Guy Aitchison, and Eddie Deutsche. All these guys doing stuff that was really progressive and mind-blowing at the time.

## What was your style like when you started out?

When I first started actually tattooing, I looked at the magazines and the stuff that got me really amped was stuff by the guys I mentioned—Marcus Pacheco, Filip Leu, Ed Hardy, Aaron Cain, Timothy Hoyer. Those were the guys that I remember seeing in magazines and thinking, This is sick. This is amazing! I want to do stuff like this. I didn't have the artistic capabilities to do that, but it was something that I had goals about. That was a big drive.

## The culture of tattooing stresses tradition. Does that make it hard for you to push the limits of what tattooing can be?

Yes and no. When I think about tradition, I think about tattoos that look good as a tattoo. I don't think, "If it has more than four colors in it, it's not good." I'm not hung up on any preconceived dogmatic notions about tattoos. It doesn't matter what the art is or how fancy it is, if it doesn't have good impact as a tattoo, then it's not a good tattoo. I don't care if it's a Duchamp painting. If it doesn't look good as a tattoo, it's still a piece-of-crap tattoo.

## At what point were you able to making a living off tattooing?

I think I was able to do that a few years into it. That really happened when I started working at Primal Urge. I paid the rent before that, but I wasn't ever really making good money. All the pieces I wanted to work on, I always did really cheap. I remember when I was potentially going to work at Primal Urge and Marcus and I were going through my portfolio. He would ask me what I was charging, and I'd tell him \$100 or \$200. He was like, "You've got to charge more!" I'm sure I had 40 tattoos in my portfolio, and they were all from the size of your palm to half-sleeves. I added up what I charged for all of the tattoos, and it was a little over \$3,000 for every tattoo in the book. [Laughs] To my credit, it was nothing that I planned. That's what you do when you love doing something.





**How do you feel about the tattoo TV shows?**

I definitely think it's detrimental. It's a horrible tattoo education for the general public. It's some fucking TV show with an agenda from producers who don't give a fuck or know jack shit about anything. The whole goal is to make a product that is going to be the most appealing to the most numb-minded people because they want to have Snickers buy their ads. It's a bunch of bullshit. Does tattooing need a TV show? No. It doesn't need it at all. Not even a tiny fraction. It's not like they're doing a bunch of really horrible work. But it doesn't do anything that tattooing needs.

**What about the Ed Hardy clothing line? Does that serve tattooing?** I don't know. I think it's go-

ing to have a slight backlash because it's going to be oversaturated with Ed's designs. Maybe people will start to be a little bit tired of it and people will rebel against it. Maybe in five years people won't want as many Ed-type designs. They'll push for something else. Or maybe tattooing will slow down a little bit. I can only assume it will anyway as the shows and tattoo-related cultural stuff has run its course. Right now, you have so many people throwing a crappy skull, a swallow, an anchor, and a rose on a shirt. Everything has tattoo imagery on it now. It's reached a peak. But tattooing has lasted since the beginning of time. This isn't going to kill it.

**You collect vintage skateboards. What's the pride of your collection?** I think my favorite is

an old Natas Kaupas. I have an old Natas from SMA. That's probably my favorite board because it's a board that I've liked since I was a kid. At this point, I only have a few boards left that I really want. There's a Black Flag deck that was made by Rip City and says "No Net Ever." And I want the World Industries Rodney Mullen "Rock Is King" board. I'm interested in any unused, vintage skateboards. I will move someone to the front of my two-year waiting list and work a fair trade for the board or simply pay them well for it.

**So if I walk into your shop with one of those decks, I can get some tattoo time in trade?**

Damn straight. Oh, yeah. We'll make a party on your skin. —Jason Buhrmester





**NAME:** Ying

**SHOP ASSISTANT AT:** Daredevil Tattoo, New York, NY

**Headlocks** are part of the job. It can be a boy's club sometimes, so you end up getting teased, bullied, and put in headlocks. It's all in fun.

**Penis tattoo requests** usually start as a phone call. You get a few every month. They always want to know if a female tattooist can do it. You never know if they're just getting off on the call.

**Drunks** stagger in now and then. We're on the Lower East Side near a lot of bars and clubs. A drunk Canadian woman with no shoes wandered in about 11 p.m. the other night. We turn them away.

**The first time I** tattooed myself was on my leg. It's a cherry blossom. I've been here a few years, but ultimately I want to tattoo.

Know a stellar shop assistant who keeps the autoclave humming and the tattoo stations organized? Email us at [shopgirl@inkedmag.com](mailto:shopgirl@inkedmag.com).

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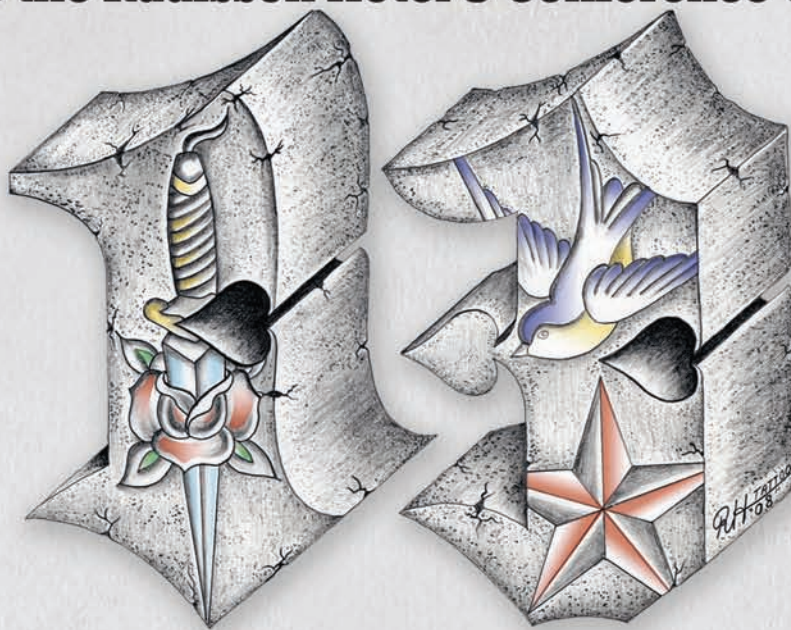
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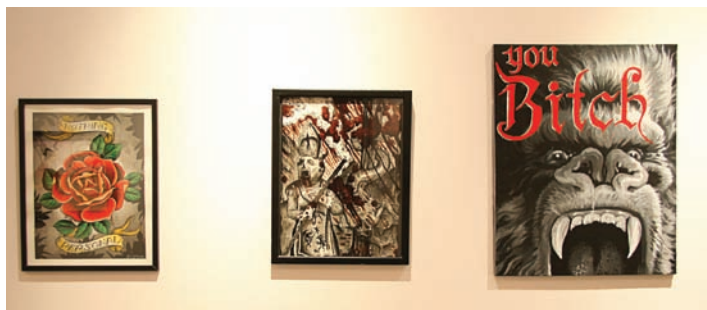
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# EAST VS. WEST ART OPENING

Tattooing doesn't have any of the East Coast vs. West Coast fighting that plagues hip-hop. That didn't stop over 40 tattoo artists from trying to instigate it! The bicoastal art throwdown included East Coast tattooers such as Civ, Eli Quinters, Chad Koeplinger, Chris O'Donnell, and others, while the West Coast side featured work by Grime, Bob Roberts, Mr. Cartoon, Phil Holt and more. The entire show opened June 5 at Canvas Los Angeles art gallery and attracted a cool crowd who put aside their coastal differences in the name of art. We're glad to see everyone can get along.

For more photos, go to [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com).



Clockwise from top left: Grant Cobb, Brad Fink, Todd Noble Holloway, and Forrest Cavacco; Canvas Los Angeles' Todd Burnes with Nicole Merhej; Bob Roberts and Norm; crowd; Nikki Balls, Kim Saigh and Shawn Barber; party-goers with Greg Laraigne (second from right), and Christian Nguyen (right); Regino Gonzales (second from right) and Rick Walters (right) with revelers; art by Scott Sylvia (left) and Tim Lehi (middle and right); Dan Dringenberg, Mo Coppoletta, and Beppe Stromboli.



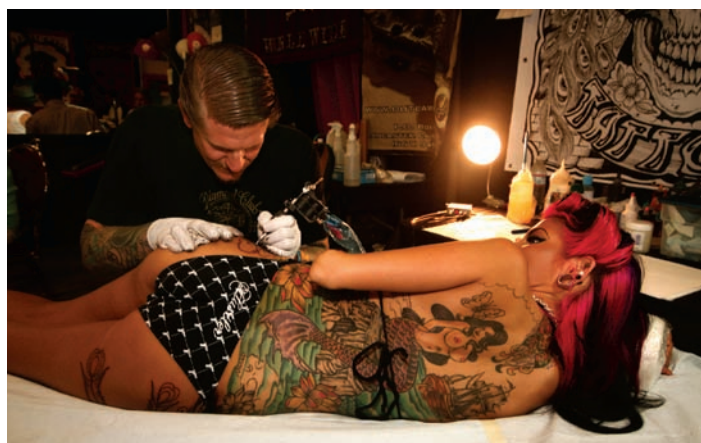




# INK-N-IRON FESTIVAL

There's a reason organizers call the Ink-N-Iron Tattoo and Kustom Culture Festival in Long Beach, CA, the "Granddaddy of 'Em All". Held on the Queen Mary Ocean Liner docked in Long Beach Harbor, the convention includes tattooers, bands, a car show, a pin-up pageant and even on-the-spot weddings. The fifth annual festival, held June 6-8, featured 280 tattooers such as Horitaka, Mark Mahoney, Bob Roberts, Juan Puente, Jack Rudy, and others along with performances from Black Rebel Motorcycle Club, Wayne Hancock, Dave Alvin, the Blasters, and Junior Brown.

For more photos, go to [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com).



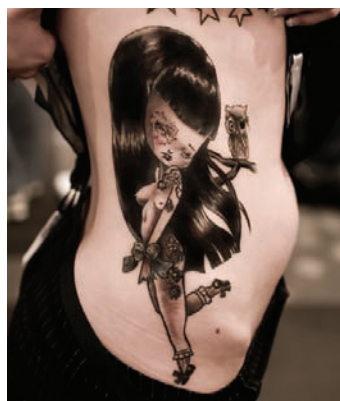
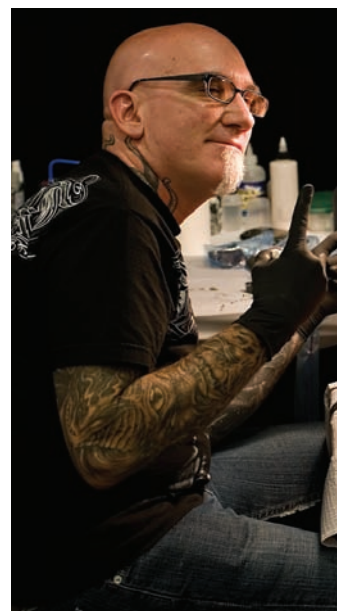
Clockwise from top: back piece; pin-up contest; Diahann being tattooed by Jojo Ackerman of American Made tattoo; David Oropeza; the Koffin Kats on stage; Shawn O'Hare with work by Roman of Artistic Element; Robert Flowers' work by Jojo Ackerman of American Made Tattoo; Horitada works on James Chien;



# NORTHERN INK XPOSURE

Toronto offers the best two-for-one travel deal around. Every year, promoters schedule the Northern Ink Xposure tattoo convention at the same time as the North By Northeast music conference turning the city into a mob of bands and tattooers. This year's events, held June 12-15, featured Paul Booth, Bob Tyrrell, and tattooers from South Africa, China, and New Zealand while clubs around the city hosted performances by My Morning Jacket, Ted Leo and the Pharmacists, Redd Kross, and others. The Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art hosted a tattoo exhibit and a God's Girls lingerie show.

For more photos, go to [inkedmag.com](http://inkedmag.com).



Clockwise from top: An entry in the Best Small Color competition; Bob Tyrrell of Night Gallery Tattoo at work; a sweet skull tattoo; our favorite leg tattoo of the day; a God's Girl shows off her tattoo; Marina Storme from Atomic Zombie Studio Tattoo Gallery; the God's Girls booth; amazing Tom Waits portrait.

photos by NIKKI JUMPER

SEPT/OCT 2008 | 105





## Lost in Translation: Is Your Design Idea "Tattoo-Friendly"?

If you're an ink addict, you've likely had a run-in with an idea or design that just didn't work well as a tattoo. Hundreds have learned this lesson the hard way as their tiny, hyper-detailed tattoo grew quickly into a messy, unidentifiable blob. Not all of the artwork that inspires you will be "tattoo-friendly" – that is, possible to recreate on the skin as you originally intended it and having the best potential to stay in good condition as it ages.

Artwork is naturally limited by the artist's equipment and the surfaces they work on – a tattooist creates their art with a mechanical tool and commercial pigments on an organic and ever-changing canvas. Ultimately, some designs will translate to skin more successfully than others will and a few constraints exist as to what will make your design idea last as a quality tattoo. Whether you're looking for your next or your first piece of ink, understanding tattoo-friendly artwork could save you some heartache, help evade a significant re-design and, in the end, keep the reins on your tattoo budget.

### Tattoo-Friendly Means "Skin-Appropriate"

As a canvas, the skin will only allow so much detail in any limited area. It will also age over time and your tattoo will change along with it. Many ink seekers unknowingly make the mistake of trying to fit their highly detailed design in too small of a space or force fine lines of their tattoo too close together. The end result is a tattoo that quickly evolves on your skin into a vague ink blob.

Designs that are tattoo-friendly should take the limitations of your skin into consideration and leave adequate space in your artwork for the lines and details to change over time and best retain your original image. Although most finished tattoos have some probability of being damaged by the sun, stretched with age and pulled by gravity, working with tattoo-friendly artwork gives your tattoo the best chance of holding up against the elements, over time and through the natural tattoo aging process.

### Tattoo-Friendly Means "Blueprint"

A tattoo-friendly design is also friendly to your tattooist, giving them the tools they'll need to accurately translate the artwork to skin. Knowledgeable flash artists (who are often tattooists themselves) are familiar with the tattoo process and the challenges in-

involved in the paper-to-skin translation. Their tattoo-friendly designs should include all of the references a tattooist would need to apply your tattoo, meaning both a clear, full-size image of the artwork, as well as a stencil.

Stencils, or line drawings, function as a "blueprint" in your tattoo process, using different nuances to give your tattooist subtle direction on line work and shading. Tattooists can create their own stencils from your design reference (a labor intensive process for them) but preparing your tattooist with a quality stencil will not only save them time and, quite possibly, save you some money. It also ensures that your tattooist works only with outlines that are consistent with your design reference – making it more likely that your finished tattoo will look as you originally expected it to.

### Tattoo-friendly Means "Realistic Ink Options"

Although some amazing advances have been made in tattoo technology and the inks used in the process, not every color will translate to skin as you imagine it to. Once it's applied, your tattoo may spend the first few days of permanency looking so vivid it may appear laser printed and glued to your body. But, once the top layer of your skin heals over the inked image and your tattoo naturally releases excess ink in the peeling process, the colors of your tattoo will dull slightly, react to your natural skin tone and take on a more organic look.

Tattoo-friendly artwork should only utilize a feasible palette of colors and effects that will translate well to skin and have the best chance of lasting over time. You should expect all pigments to naturally dull once they're tattooed to your skin, healed and aged, but very light colors (like white) may fade quickly if they translate at all. New inks – like black light responsive, glow-in-the-dark and easily removable pigments – have more recently hit the market and others are sure to follow. But keep in mind that these newly released products aren't time-tested and some reputable tattooists won't use them.

### And, Finally, is Your Tattoo-friendly Design Tattooist-Appropriate?

A tattoo-friendly design will make the application process easier for any tattooist, no matter what their skill level. But the more intricate

Tattoo-friendly artwork from *The Tattoo Sourcebook*, released in September. Clockwise from top: **Hudson Assis**, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil – *Milky Way Butterfly*; **David Walker**, Colorado, USA – *Windy Grim Reaper*; **Shane Hart**, Colorado, USA – *Born to Lose Live to Win*; **Friday Jones**, New York, USA – *Brooklyn Love*.



and detailed the artwork, the more complicated it is to translate that design to skin – and the more important tattoo-friendly artwork and the corresponding stencils become. Practiced tattooists are familiar with their personal skill level and the kind of challenges they're comfortable taking on. Depending on its complexity, your tattoo-friendly design could be appropriate for one tattooist and a tattoo-nightmare for another.

You can make sure that your tattoo-friendly designs are tattooist-appropriate by seeking out someone who is reputable and whose personal style reflects your tattoo vision. Most tattooists should also have a photo album of completed work that you can review and determine if their experience suits your already tattoo-friendly design choice. Once you do select your tattooist, they'll be pleased that you took the time to prepare tattoo-friendly design references and that you chose them as someone truly qualified to apply your ink.

This kind of preparation might also help keep your tattoo budget under control. When pricing your work, a tattooist will generally estimate their time required to complete the piece – sometimes not only for the actual tattooing, but for the design preparation process, as well. Being prepared with a tattoo-friendly design reference and stencil, and choosing a tattooist who is qualified to apply it, will make your tattoo experience more enjoyable... and might also save you some money. —From the Editors of *TattooFinder.com*

**Visit us online for over 22,000 tattoo-friendly designs and take 15% off your next TattooFinder.com purchase! Discount Code: inked0908**



Clockwise from top left: TattooFinder.com at Thunder in the Rockies 2007; tattoo patriarch Lyle Tuttle; celebrity tattooist Friday Jones inks former Kyuss drummer Brant Bjork.

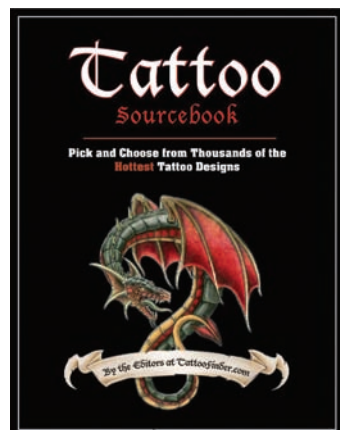


## DENVER TATTOO CONVENTION: Museum of Skin

TattooFinder.com is working with leading Denver studio Phantom 8 Tattoos on the first annual **Denver Tattoo Convention: Museum of Skin (DTC)**, bringing together nationally recognized tattooists and the top mile-high studios. The convention runs September 19-21, with an entire weekend of events that celebrate the release of the highly anticipated *Tattoo Sourcebook* and bring together the craft of tattooing with the artwork of the industry. The DTC is also marked as the first ever "green" tattoo convention, taking measures to use post-consumer materials, utilize hybrid transportation and offset carbon use.

In a whirlwind weekend, the convention brings Skinfusion to Denver for the first time, pairing TattooFinder artists – like New York's celebrity tattooist Friday Jones – with other nationally-renown and leading Colorado tattooists in a live, multi-artist tattooing collaboration. And in keeping with the museum chic, convention goers can see both live and fine art installations or check out some artifacts of the craft brought in by Lyle Tuttle, lovingly dubbed "the forefather of modern tattooing," for his free, public seminar on the history of the profession. They'll even get the chance to show off some of their own artwork with TattooFinder's **Hottest Inked Body** contest and convention kick-off party – a spicy exhibit that'll give more than an eyeful. [www.denvertattooconvention.com](http://www.denvertattooconvention.com)

## HARDBOUND AND TATTOO-FRIENDLY: *The Tattoo Sourcebook*



A new book hits shelves this September, bringing high quality and tattoo-friendly artwork to glossy pages, along with contributions and commentary from famed flash artists including Guy Aitchison, Friday Jones, Lyle Tuttle and Rand Johnson. **The Tattoo Sourcebook**, the first publishing project of TattooFinder.com and HarperCollins Publishing, showcases nearly 2,000 tattoo-friendly designs from 40 world-class flash artists.

"There are some lengthy books on tattoo history," says Jeannine Dillon of HarperCollins. "But what I really wanted was a book that showed the designs *before* they hit skin. I wanted a book that re-created the experience of being in a tattoo studio, but with more design variety and less pressure. TattooFinder.com was best to fill that gap, what with their huge stock of online designs, categories that are easy to search

and art that is beyond amazing."

Tattoo flash (the industry name for "tattoo-friendly" artwork) was traditionally found in carnival tattoo set-ups and later on the walls of studios. Ink seekers were offered a limited collection of tattoo designs and were forced to deal with the pressure of choosing one and getting inked on the spot. TattooFinder.com pioneered the single tattoo design sales model online and is an industry leader with one of the largest and highest quality collections of tattoo art in the world. Now with quality, tattoo-friendly artwork available online and at your local book store, you're able to take your time in your design search and access thousands of images from the world's best flash artists. Look for your copy of the *Tattoo Sourcebook* this September at your local Barnes & Noble. [www.tattoosourcebook.com](http://www.tattoosourcebook.com)



# SKETCH BOOK



## KHOI NGUYEN

High Voltage Tattoo, 1259 N. La Brea Ave., West Hollywood, CA, 323-969-9820,  
[highvoltagetattoo.com](http://highvoltagetattoo.com)

Even when the *L.A. Ink* cameras aren't rolling, the machines at Kat Von D's High Voltage Tattoo keep buzzing as a team of artists known affectionately as "The B Crew" continue working without appearing on camera. "It doesn't mean we are any different than the 'A Crew,'" explains Khoi Nguyen. "We are High Voltage. It really is a family." Born in Vietnam and raised in Orange County, Nguyen started tattooing four years ago and handles anything customers ask for, even *L.A. Ink* questions. "Some customers ask why we aren't on the show, but you know, the third season is coming. Don't be surprised if you see some new faces."