

FREE INSIDE

SKIN SHOTS SAMPLER SUPPLEMENT

EST 1992
Manchester International
TATTOO SHOW
MANCHESTER COVERAGE INSIDE

skin deep

TATTOO MAGAZINE



15-MINUTE SLEEVES

Take control of your arms

MEGAN MASSACRE

On tattoos and TV

MIKE MOSES

Close encounters of the art kind

DAVE TEVENAL

Prepare to crave ink

MATT LAMBDIN

Ironclad from the heart

OCCUPY!

You say you want a revolution?

life is beautiful

Terri



ISSUE 230 • NOVEMBER 2013 • £3.95
MODEL: TERRI ALTILAR PHOTOGRAPHY: SCOTT COLE

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Andre Zechmann

BAD SEAMSTRESS BLUES

A little international travel can really broaden your horizons. Let me see if I can tell you what I learned this last week in less than the 700 words I have here.

Last week, I flew to Colorado for the Paradise Gathering. It's a long way—particularly when the clock keeps going back in time the more miles you travel. I went with my lovely colleague, Sarah, who some of you might know from our events. She had an iPod with her that her boyfriend had given her: this is known as “a lovely gesture”. Said iPod came “pre-loaded” with the soundtrack to just The Lion King which is not really known as a gesture of anything except terror, and in my house, means you would have to do all the crap chores for at least a month and get nothing but half a Twix for your birthday. Personally, I think he stole it from some kid in the street and couldn't wipe it clean, but that's just my opinion.

Sarah is also a vegetarian. This means that while the carnivores were tucking into hot slops masquerading as airline food in a metal tray, she got handed half a roll with one slice of tomato and one slice of cucumber in it. It was

so heartbreakingly pathetic that the guy sitting next to her handed over his cheese panini so that she would stop crying. Seriously, U.S. Air have got a lot of work to do when it comes to service. They seem more concerned with making sure you're not listening to The Circle Of Life while landing (because apparently that can bring a plane down) than seatbelts and explaining clearly where emergency exits are. Simply waving your hands around like you got

your fingers trapped in the car door is not helpful. I know none of us really watch what they're doing, but the last thing you want on a long flight is a waitress who thinks she's a copper—but I guess that's not half as bad as a copper who thinks they're a waitress.

These things are all about managing expectation. I expected a comfortable professional flight and aside from getting up in the air and back down again with the wings still on, that's not what I got. When you fly to the States, you kind of expect 'home of the brave, land of the free',

but what you will actually get is frisked like a dime-store hooker and asked if you have anything that can be used as a weapon on the flight... such as The Lion King soundtrack perhaps, but nobody found that particularly funny when I pointed it out at security.

Coming back is just as bad. Every single time I come in through immigration, they always say “Why are you at this counter? Why didn't you go to the fast counter because you're a UK citizen?” Well,

IT'S OK TO BE 'PRETTY GOOD' AT TAKING A BATH, CUTTING YOUR OWN HAIR AND WATCHING TV BECAUSE NOBODY CARES

maybe if you put a sign up that said 'British? Come to this counter', I would—along with the 400 other people that are also holding your immigration queue up you fools.

It's a weird world out there. Most people are just getting by and doing their thing, but because some people aren't doing what they're supposed to be doing, the world is falling apart at the seams.

Topically-ish, the office just took a call from a guy who decided he has to feed his family better and will be a tattooist. When told there was a lot more to it than hanging

out a sign, his reaction was that he would simply buy his supplies from eBay. That's just what the world needs, right? Another person with the balls to call themselves a chef and hand you a roll with a solitary slice of tomato on it. “I think I'm pretty good” is not a licence to do anything. Drive a car, tattoo, make airline food... nothing. It's OK to be 'pretty good' at say, taking a bath, cutting your own hair and watching TV, because it doesn't matter—nobody cares.

But when you want to get in the sandpit with all the other kids, that roll had better be looking damn tasty. People will talk when you're not there and those people will say—“he calls himself a chef, but all I got was this roll with a slice of tomato on it.”

Sen



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36 MIKE MOSES
Out in the wilds of America, where the land meets the sky, there's a little pocket of nothingness—a vacuum if you will—and then Mike Moses moved in... brace yourself.

60 MATT LAMBDIN
Experiencing the art of Matt Lambdin is like turning up the radio when a great song comes along—this one goes up to 11.

8 DAVE TEVENAL
Creativity can be a very cruel mistress. Dave Tevenal understands this concept—as he

rightly points out, "I feel like I would die if I didn't have tattooing in my life."

00 PEPPE
For 20 years Peppe at Left Hand Tattoo in Piteå has been adorning skin with realistic motifs, a direction he found early on in his career via the legend of Paul Booth.

SPECIAL FEATURES

12 15 MINUTE SLEEVES
Having a large tattoo has become very popular and modern customers want to play their part in designing it. This article contains a simple and clever method of creating a sleeve concept but it is relevant for all large-scale pieces.

24 TERRI AND MARTYN ALTILAR
Terri and Martyn are no strangers to the tattoo scene. Nice work if you can get it we hear you say... but it ain't easy out there...

00 OCCUPY!
You say you want

P30

OCCUPY
YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION?

THIS MONTH'S PULL OUT:
SKIN SHOTS SAMPLER

a revolution, but what exactly does that look like? Well, rather like this, and it's very, very real...

24 MEGAN MASSACRE
When Megan Woznicki, better known to the world as Megan Massacre, walks into a room, it's hard not to be drawn to her. True, the blindingly bright orange and yellow hair doesn't hurt, but there's more to it than that.

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MANCHESTER TATTOO SHOW
48 HOURS OF TATTOOING IN FIVE PAGES

00 MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL
The significance of the Manchester International Tattoo Show should never be underestimated. For

many years, it's been a mainstay in the tattoo calendar, and now, in the hands of the people who bring you Tattoo Jam, it only continues to get better...



1 Marcher Court, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 6BS Tel: 01244 881888 Fax: 01244 646016 www.jazzpublishing.co.uk info@jazzpublishing.co.uk

EDITOR
Sion Smith
editor@skindeep.co.uk
07841 999334

ART EDITOR
Gareth Evans
gareth@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 204

PRODUCTION EDITOR
Fergus McShane
fergus@jazzpublishing.co.uk

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Justine Hart
production@skindeep.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 235

ACCOUNTS & ADMIN MANAGER
Emma McCrindle
accounts@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 207

ADMINISTRATION
Jan Schofield
jan@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 219

Katie-Marie Challinor
katie@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 232

CREDIT CONTROL
Pam Coleman
pam@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 215

MAGAZINE ADVERTISING
TEAM MANAGER
Mark McCarthy
advertising@skindeep.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 304

EVENTS MANAGER
Shelley Bond
shelley@jazzevents.co.uk
01244 881895 ext. 303

EVENTS CO-ORDINATORS
Wendy Marks
wendy@jazzevents.co.uk
01244 881895 ext. 305

Sarah Shawcross
sarah@jazzevents.co.uk
01244 881895 ext. 239

Sarah Golden
sarahg@jazzevents.co.uk
01244 881895 ext. 298

Richard O'Brien
rich@jazzevents.co.uk
01244 881895 ext. 313

WEB MANAGER
David Arthur
david.arthur@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 208

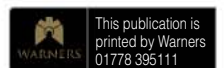
DIGITAL CONTENT
Gareth Williams
gareth.williams@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 302

SUBSCRIPTIONS & BACK ISSUES
Katy Cuffin
magazines@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888 ext. 501

PUBLISHER
David Gamble
david@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888

MANAGING DIRECTOR
Stuart Mears
stuart@jazzpublishing.co.uk
01244 881888

DISTRIBUTION
Susan Saunders
susan.saunders@seymour.co.uk
0207 429 4073, ISSN 0966-4351
Can't find Skin Deep magazine in your newsagent?
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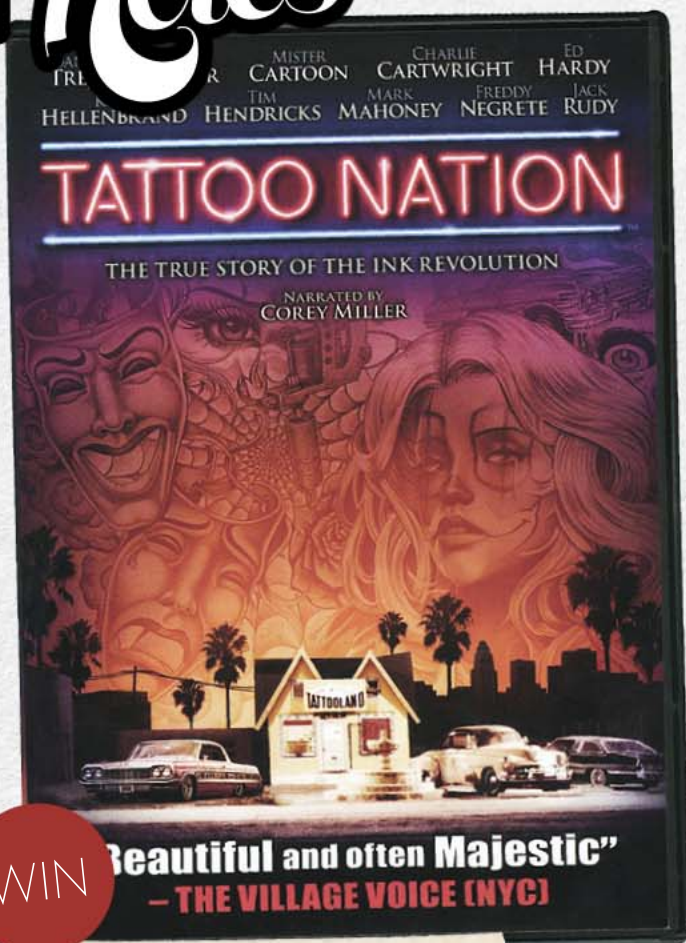


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Sleeve Notes

twitter.com/skindeepmag f www.facebook.com/tattoomagazine

ALL SUBMISSIONS TO SLEEVE NOTES GRATEFULLY RECEIVED. BE IT NEWS, AN EVENT, NEW MERCH, A STUDIO MOVE... WE'LL DO OUR VERY BEST TO LET EVERYBODY ELSE KNOW ABOUT IT TOO. EMAIL: EDITOR@SKINDEEP.CO.UK OR IF YOU WANT TO BE ARCHAIC ABOUT THE WHOLE AFFAIR: SKIN DEEP, 1 MARCHER COURT, SEALAND ROAD, CHESTER CH1 6BS. BRING IT.



WIN

WILDCAT TATTOO NATION DVD GIVEAWAY

Our good buddy, Giles at Wildcat, has given us five copies of the Tattoo Nation DVD—plus, we also have an extra copy that is due to be signed by Danny Trejo, which is worth its weight in cool that's for sure.

Much as we'd like to keep it for ourselves, it's with a heavy heart that it must be given away. Such is its value that the comp this month is a little harder than normal (mostly because I like to see you work for free swag every now and again). All you have to do is send an email to editor@skindeep.co.uk with the subject line being the answer to this question (though judging by some past entries, there are some out there who struggle with figuring out which one the subject line is, but you will learn...): Name the movie in which Danny Trejo plays the mighty character of Machete. Think hard... While you're still online after you've done that, go check out the Wildcat collection here: wildcat.co.uk.



SHORT SLEEVES



SHARP PRACTICE GUEST SPOT

From October 14–19, The Sharp Practice in Salisbury are having the Swedish tattoo artist, Daniel 'Munken' Liothe, doing a guest spot. For more information: 01722 410148.

GOD HAS MOVED

OhhMyGod Tattoo has moved to the new location of Archway in North London. The studio is now fully up and running with new artists having been added to the OMG Tattoo roster. Word on the street has it that they will also soon be selling custom built tattoo machines (not to any old bloke that walks in off the street... obviously.) OhhMyGod Tattoo, 123 Junction Road, Archway N19 5PX or check them out online at ohhmygod.co.uk.

COPYRIGHT PROTECTION

There's a neat article on Alternative Press from a couple of weeks back that investigates who owns your tattoos and how NFL players may need to seek copyright protection for displaying their tattoos. Whilst this is mostly relevant in the USA (due to obviously different laws to us and their innate ability to sue the ass off you just for thinking about it if there's money involved), it does make a good read. It would be good to hear your opinions on this from both sides of the Atlantic, so fire up the Quattro and get your thoughts down... The rather long link is this: altpress.com/news/entry/who_owns_your_tattoos_nfl_players_seek_copyright_protection_for_their_body

THE HOT LIST



SION

MY FAVOURITE TATTOO (ON ME)

THE FIRST OF THE RAVENS ON MY WRIST. NO BRAINER.

MY FAVOURITE TATTOO (ON SOMEONE ELSE)

THIS CHANGES DAY TO DAY IN THIS JOB, BUT AS I WRITE THIS, THE NINE-TAILED FOX FROM MATT AT IRONCLAD IS IN THIS ISSUE SOMEWHERE... DOOZY.

TOP OF MY WISH LIST

THAT THE ONCOMING DOCTOR WHO SPECIAL WON'T BE EVEN A LITTLE BIT SCHLOCKY. WELL, YOU ASKED...

MY IMAGINARY TIME MACHINE IS SET TO

1971. LET'S HOPE THIS TIME AROUND MY MA WANTS TO TAKE ME TO SEE THE DOORS DO THEIR THING—AND MAYBE ZIGGY STARDUST AS WELL WHILE SHE'S AT IT.

IF I RULED THE WORLD

THE INTERNET WOULD BE SWITCHED OFF AT SOURCE AT LEAST THREE DAYS A WEEK.

SORRY, I FORGOT

TO EMAIL YOU BACK, ANSWER YOUR TEXTS AND RETURN YOUR CALLS.

SHORT SLEEVES



LOST BOYS STUDIO MOVE

That vagabond of style Johnny D Matthews has a new studio and he'd very much like people to stop by for tea and cake. You can now find him here: Johnny D Matthews & Lost Boys Tattoo Lounge, 76 North Cliff Rd, Conisbrough, DN12 3JP.

... AND SO HAS OTTO

If you've ever been to one of our shows, you'll know who Otto D'Ambra is. Master of the bizarre but nonetheless, damned awesome single colour image. Anyway, by the time you read this, The White Elephant will be up and running—and he ain't the only craftsman there either. Here's what you need to know: White Elephant, 225 Well Street, Hackney E9 6RG London • Telephone 0208 533 6909 • thewhiteelephantstudio.co.uk.

Now get your ass down there...



ART DUELS

Art Duels: Tattoos, Graffiti and Illustrations is a charity sketchbook bursting with "battles" between up-and-coming and established tattooists, graffiti artists and illustrators. Each pair of artists has been given two elements to base their artwork on to duel with a second artist. The final products have been put together in this sketchbook and will be available for all to buy with 100 percent of sales from the book going to Macmillan Cancer Support.

Tattoo artists in the book include: Jo Harrison, Rachel Baldwin, Jamie Greaves, Mark Poole, Drew Romero, Xico, Matt Webb, Rich Warburton, and more. Street artists include Mr. Zero, simitchell, Squirrel, SP Zero76, SpaRock and Kid30. Illustrators include: Rootz, Business for Satan, Captain Bukioe, Gnash and Ene Ene.

The book is available at www.artduels.bigcartel.com for the price of £20—this is a great cause, so the least you can do is go check it out. It's very cool...

SICK PLUGS
GIVING AWAY STUFF
FOR A WHOLE YEAR

Sick Plugs is a whole year old! To help them celebrate their first birthday, they're giving one Skin Deep reader the chance to win £20 to spend at www.sickplugs.co.uk every single month for the next 12 months—you do the maths... whichever way you slice it, it sounds good to us if you're inclined to put things in holes you've made in your body.

The price for such generosity? Well, the plan was to make you listen to Tori telling you a little bit about her company, but it's all good... we figured we'd just show you some pictures instead—that way we all win! All you've got to do for this one is mail editor@skindeep.co.uk with the subject line of 'SICKPLUGS' and we'll mail the entries on for Tori to pick a winner. You will more than likely be added to their mailing list, but hey... you want free stuff, that's what it costs!

THE HOT LIST



SCOTT

MY FAVOURITE TATTOO (ON ME)

NECK TATTOOS BY KRISTIAN RICHARDS AT FRONTIER, CARDIFF

MY FAVOURITE TATTOO (ON SOMEONE ELSE)

TOO MANY TO LIST, MIKE GIANTS BICYCLE TATTOOS ARE PRETTY COOL THOUGH

TOP OF MY WISH LIST

A MIKE MCGILL, POWELL PERALTA DECK, PLEASE... ANYONE?

MY IMAGINARY TIME MACHINE IS SET TO

THE ROOTS TOUR OF 2003—WHAT GOES ON TOUR...

IF I RULED THE WORLD

I'D BAN MEN FROM WEARING SHORTS ABOVE THE KNEE, WAIT, REAL MEN DON'T WEAR SHORTS ABOVE THE KNEE!

SORRY, I FORGOT

I NOW HAVE INSTAGRAM: SCOTTCOLE PHOTOGRAPHY



PAULA

MY FAVOURITE TATTOO (ON ME)

IT'S ALWAYS THE NEWEST ONE, THAT WAY THEY ALL GET A TURN.

MY FAVOURITE TATTOO (ON SOMEONE ELSE)

ALMOST ANYTHING BY GUY LE TATTOOER.

TOP OF MY WISH LIST

AN IPAD THAT ISN'T CRACKED.

MY IMAGINARY TIME MACHINE IS SET TO

SEASON ONE OF THE SOPRANOS.

IF I RULED THE WORLD

I'D SPEND THE WHOLE BUDGET ON EDUCATION.

SORRY, I FORGOT

TO TURN THE IRON OFF. PERPETUALLY.

Conventions

All details correct at time of going to press.

by Nate 'Igor' Smith

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Canada

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Inntalhalle
Loretowiese
D-83026 Rosenheim
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www.tattoo-tage.de

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R. João Cavallari, 133 - Ponte Grande
Guarulhos - São Paulo,
07030-020
Brazil

October 25-27

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10901 Coral Way
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www.miamitattooexpo2013.com

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Messeplatz 1
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www.wildstyle.at

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Australia
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THE HOT LIST



BARBARA

MY FAVOURITE TATTOO (ON ME)

A TRIBUTE TO
ALEXANDER MCQUEEN
BY DAN SMITH.

MY FAVOURITE TATTOO (ON SOMEONE ELSE)

THE BOWERY HOTEL
LOGO ON KAT VON D.

TOP OF MY WISH LIST

GETTING TATTOOED IN
JAPAN.

MY IMAGINARY TIME
MACHINE IS SET TO

1976, SO I CAN PARTY
WITH BON SCOTT AND
AC/DC.

IF I RULED THE WORLD

IT WOULD BE LIKE
ONE BIG LIBERACE
PERFORMANCE.

SORRY, I FORGOT

MY TIME MACHINE IS
ALSO SET TO THE 1890S,
SO I CAN BE OSCAR
WILDE'S BFF.

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[Facebook.com/HalloweenTattooBash](https://www.facebook.com/HalloweenTattooBash)

www.studio59tattoos.co.uk



Conventions

All details correct at time of going to press.

November 1-3

DUBLIN TATTOO CONVENTION

Red Cow Moran Hotel Dublin
22 Naas Rd
Dublin 22, Co. Dublin,
Ireland
www.dublintoattooconvention.com

November 2-3

EINDHOVEN TATTOO CONVENTION

Klokgebouw
Beukenlaan 1A,
5616 SH Eindhoven
The Netherlands
www.unitedconventions.com

November 2-3

HALLOWEEN TATTOO BASH

Coal Exchange,
Mount Stuart Square,
The Exchange Buildings,
Cardiff, CF10 5EB, CF10 5FQ,
United Kingdom
www.halloweentattoobash.co.uk

November 8-10

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Tour Et Taxis
Havenlaan 86C
B1000 Bruxelles
Belgium
www.brusselstattooconvention.be

November 8-10

FLORENCE TATTOO CONVENTION

Fortezza Da Basso
Viale Filippo Strozzi, 1
50129 Florence,
Italy
www.florencestattooconvention.com

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EAST COAST TATTOO EXPO

Highfield Grange Holiday Park
London Road
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CO16 9QY,
United Kingdom
www.eastcoastexpo.co.uk

December 14-15

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Allendale Community Centre
Hanham Road
Wimborne Minster, Dorset BH21 1AS,
United Kingdom
www.jurassiccoasttattooconvention.co.uk

TATTOO FREEZE

January 12, 2014

The International Centre
Telford, Shropshire TF3 4JH,
United Kingdom
www.tattoofreeze.com



DAY TWO



FAST FACTS:

*The Sailor Jerry presents Elm Street Music and Tattoo Festival took place in Deep Ellum, Dallas, Texas from September 13-15. *There was a 24-hour tattoo marathon of Friday the 13th. *50-plus tattooers, including Chris Nunez, and a whole bunch of bands attended the fest.



DAY THREE





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"Some sins don't wash away..."

15-MINUTE SLEEVES

CREATING YOUR OWN TATTOO: ONE IN A MINI-SERIES

Having a large tattoo has become very popular and modern customers want to play their part in designing it. This article contains a simple and clever method of creating a sleeve concept, but it is relevant for all large scale pieces. And the best part—it is fun, easy to do, and takes only 15 minutes...

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Let's jump straight in. What you'll need to do is to find a book with illustrations that you find exciting. Scan three or four interesting sections from the book into your computer, print them off, cut them out and piece them together with sticky tape. The size you print them off should match the area where the artwork will eventually get tattooed. Simple and done in 15 minutes. All of the images within this article were done in this way. What you will have done here is to create a concept.

Let me explain why this superficially basic idea is actually quite clever. In truth, big pieces are now in vogue and the standard starting point for the majority of people wanting sleeves or big panels is to go straight to the computer and do a Google search for imagery. This is not necessarily a great place to start because the internet is awash with unrelated imagery, and within your 15 minutes, you'll find you have come up with thousands of images that will confuse you.

Although you'll have lots of ideas you will not have a concept which—for a large piece—should be the starting point. By getting a book of illustrations you are actually gaining a clear direction because the author will have worked this out for you, which should guarantee that the concept will work. This is why all the designs shown here are clear and not a muddle. I always use books and prefer this to internet searches every time. Dover Books have a vast range of copyright-free



books and they are a great place to start your exploration of ideas.

What you will create in 15 minutes can be taken to a tattoo shop and they should be able to turn them into a clever piece of tattooing with ease. This does

away with the problem of getting someone to design something from your head, which rarely works out well—and with this method you are in control of the end product. Also the fact that this process takes 15 minutes means

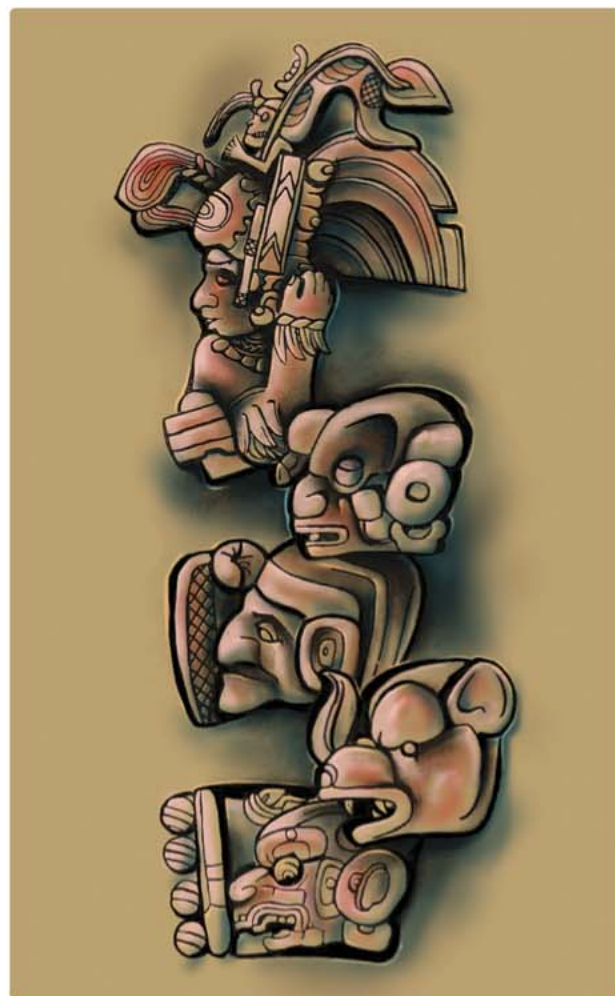


If your process is taking more than 15 minutes this is a sign that you are over-thinking things, something isn't working, and it is time to move on to a new idea

that it is quick and easy to make lots of sleeves, and if you don't like any of them you can go on to make even more with ease. This is better than floundering with a single idea for months which I often see.

It is important that each piece

of your concept has only three or four images knitted together as this limits the tendency to bring in too many elements: it adds a necessary control. If your process is taking more than 15 minutes this is a sign that



you are over-thinking things, something isn't working, and it is time to move on to a new idea.

As I said, the images on this page were all conceived in 15 minutes and your tattooist can work from these. The fact that I have turned them into full colour renderings and then turned them into the 3D models is not necessary, and serves only to show the potential of the idea. In fact each design, from scanned illustrations fully assembled with sticky tape, to full 3D model, took on average one-and-three-quarter hours. I tend to add smears of charcoal to my designs, which is why they take 15 minutes and not ten, but that's just me being me and is not a necessary addition when you're handing a preliminary design over to a professional tattoo artist.

Best of luck with your concept. 🐼



Mr P

BEHIND
CLOSED
DOORS

Rik Van Boeckel MrP



Hanging out at conventions in Belgium, I came to notice the remarkable neo-traditional tattoos of Mr. P. They are based on American traditional, but he gives his own twist to the style with elements from the baroque and sculptures; little paintings on the skin, that's the way his tattoos look like. He tattoos at Ritual Tattoo in Brussels and often has guest spots around the world



His entrance into the tattoo world came out of the skate and snowboard scene:

"I drew already, did the graphics for the boards and got myself tattoos in the period that I was part of that scene.

I've been tattooing for 12 years now—I started in a streetshop and later opened my own shop with Lynn Akura: Inkaddict. We

closed it again though because we did too many guest spots!

We travelled a lot and it was just impractical. At the moment I have a secure place at Ritual Tattoo. Luckily they give me enough freedom to visit conventions and to do guest spots in England, France and Canada. Last season, I visited 16 conventions. During my travels I meet a lot of artists and the ones where I work as a guest artist, are those who I look up to, from whom I can learn. It's also important that I can add something to their work. They do the same as I do or something completely different. I can learn from every artist that is as good as I am or better. It's absolutely worth working in other studios to see how they tattoo."

I drew already, did the graphics for the boards and got myself tattoos

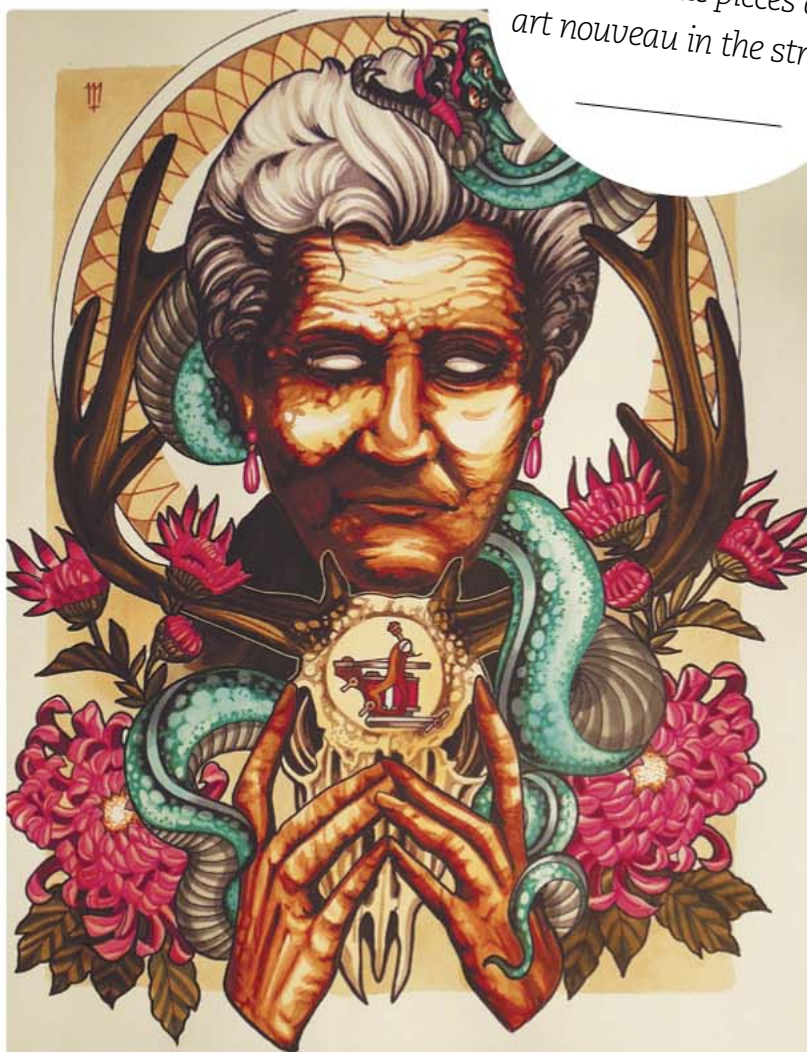


"My style is based on American traditional with the five colours and typical lines. What I add are elements from the baroque—so it's more refined than you will see in an original traditional tattoo. Sculptures of people and of faces also interest me because they show something quiet behind the scenes and there is a hidden sadness in them. I don't want to only look at tattoos—I rather look at art. I want to search for references much further than tattoos, to look to the origin of the image, to redraw it in a way that it can be tattooed."

**THIEVING MAGPIE**

"My customers have a clear idea what they want. I impose nothing on them. The customer is free and together we make a nice project out of it. I tattooed this on a woman who was robbed. The bird is the thief. The razor stands for revenge. At the same time the hand sets the bird free and symbolises in this way that she wants to forget and to forgive."

Brussels is a city with many artistic pieces and art nouveau in the streets

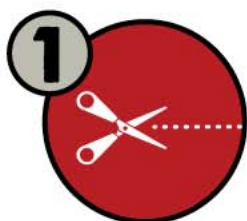


"I also look to the work of painters and sculptors. I admire the art nouveau of Alphonse Mucha and also the artistic work of Michelangelo and Da Vinci. They were great, were the last big classic artists. I also get my inspiration from books and the internet. For sculptures, I don't have to travel because Brussels is a city with many artistic pieces and art nouveau in the streets. I take the time to walk around—to see touristic things, to take pictures... I also go to Paris, that's almost the same as Brussels for me. So I find new references I can use in my tattoos all the time. 🐼"

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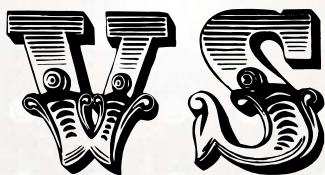


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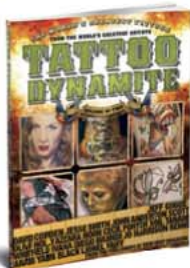
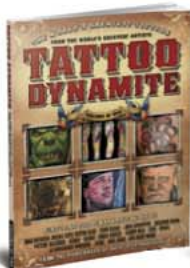
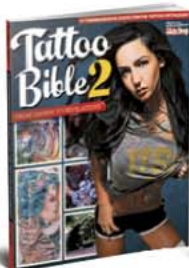
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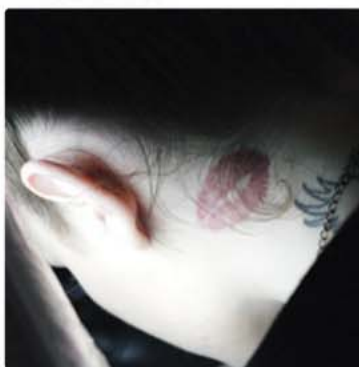
Paul Sweeney Ami Barwell: @musicphotographer.co.uk

Stand-up comic, socialite, debutante and Jazz Events tattoo show host, Paul Sweeney—the name may be familiar to you—starts the first in a (perhaps occasional) series in which we ship him around Olde London Towne in search of ‘the word on the street’. Finger on the pulse and all that...

Collaborating is an inherent part of custom tattoo culture, and in my opinion, there are very few studios embracing the word ‘collaboration’ to quite the same stratospheric extremes as The Circle Studio. Situated in the heart of social activity—London’s media and fashion mecca, Soho—the Circle’s latest incarnation; an amalgamation with ‘Converse UK’ to celebrate their recent rock ‘n’ roll rebranding of the hugely iconic and much loved Chuck Taylor All Star sneaker, now newly kinked up, with zips and studs, for the Rock Craftsmanship collection.

The one month long schedule, entitled ‘Get Loud’, offered up a four-course subculture platter of hard rock live music, events featuring Metz, Pure Love, Bring Me The Horizon, as well as a press launch DJ set courtesy of skeleton-faced Zombie Boy, photographic displays straight from the lens Ami Barwell, along with more than a skin full of one-off custom tattoos hand-crafted by a select swarm (my new collective noun for a group of tattoo artists, namely down to the associative buzzing of their machines) including: Adrien Edek, Matt ‘Oddboy’ Barrett-Jones, Kamil Mocet, Frederick Reinel to name but a few.

With the queue stretching out beyond the neighbouring buildings, giving Madame Tussaud’s a run for their money in the ‘biggest static conga line in London competition’, the press night was awash (so



IT WAS SO WELL ATTENDED, WE WERE SPILLING OUT ONTO
THE STREET BEFORE EVEN HALF THE EVER INCREASING
QUEUE HAD BEEN ADMITTED



hot we all needed one by the end) with tattooed flesh, hairy faces, and jet black hair, not forgetting the light smattering of suitably uncomfortable looking media/business types. It was so well attended, in fact, we were already spilling out onto the street before even half the ever-increasing queue had been admitted.

As I politely and unintentionally frutted (def: To frut, stress someone out or unnerve them with your actions) my way through the heaving mass of hot bodies, I could just make out the event-inspired transformation to the shop floor. The Circle Studio is no stranger to the odd face lift here and there,

given that Ash (co-owner of The Circle) regularly curates exhibitions, renovating the space in accordance with each new show—delivering a variety of bi-monthly free bar events, where no one goes thirsty due to a plentiful supply of rum and ginger beer, which I regularly attend to admire the innovative artworks on display and not just to consume my own bodyweight in ginger beer... that's just an added bonus.

As I'm sure you're all well aware, there's a supremely rich history to the Converse brand that has maintained popularity throughout the decades by continuous association with popular trends earning Converse its much deserved cult status. With that in mind, my only criticism of this particular exhibition/promotional event would be that the tapestry documenting the inspiration for the re-invented Chuck Taylor All Star sneaker was sadly lacking.

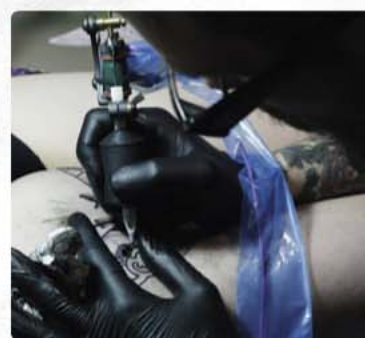
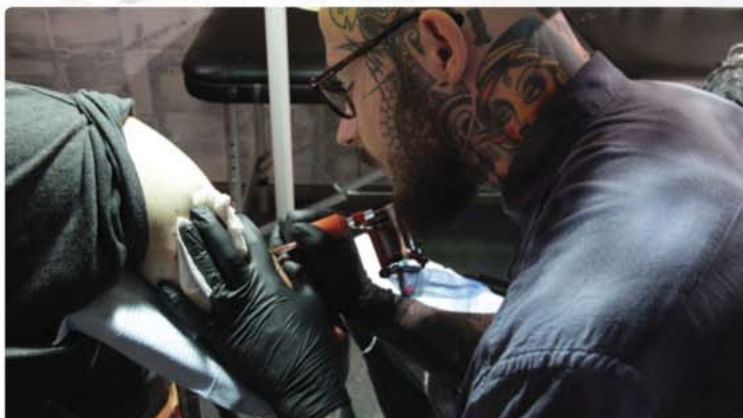
Call me a sentimental, vintage-obsessed old fool if you like (You're a vintage-obsessed fool. Ed), but I stand firmly by my opinion that it would've been nice to see a little bit of history. However, let's not lose sight of what this collaboration was really about, Converse's 🍷

CONVERSE'S BRIEF WAS TO CELEBRATE THE "SPONTANEOUS CHAOS" INHERENT WITH ROCK 'N' ROLL, OFFERING FANATICS OF SPONTANEITY THE CHANCE TO EMBRACE THEIR CREATIVE SIDE BY MAKING A PERMANENT MARK IN THE ULTIMATE UNCOMPROMISING MANNER



SWEENEY'S TOP PRESS LAUNCH TIP

Turning up fashionably late at a free bar event is only going to leave you thirsty, as a few familiar (but clearly not familiar enough) tattooed hipsters unfortunately found out.



brief was to celebrate the 'spontaneous chaos' inherent with rock 'n' roll, offering fanatics of spontaneity the chance to embrace their creative side by making a permanent mark in the ultimate uncompromising manner—getting inked! 60 tattoos were on offer to those lucky enough to be picked—of which I was one—to receive a unique design from internationally renowned artists. What did I have done? Where did I have it? Who did it?

All very good questions! I had a dagger piercing an apple with a worm through it, just above my elbow on my right arm, and I was fortunate enough to have it permanently etched upon me by an artist I have admired for a very long time—Adrien Edek. It was an absolute pleasure to be tattooed by Edek, it was a complete surprise; even to the point where he wouldn't let me look at it until the custom piece was done and dusted. Fortunately I trust him implicitly, I definitely wouldn't advise you to replicate this process with any Tom, Dick or Harry/Ed Sheeran!

I believe this is a solid step in the right direction for custom tattoo culture; the association of popular, credible, mainstream brands with quality artists, in an appropriate environment, makes for a very positive



experience. Converse gave each of the artists the total freedom to create their own custom pieces without restrictions such as including obvious related logos; not an 'All Star' star in sight, no Chuck Taylor portraits to be seen, not even any Converse-inspired fonts, all the tattoos available were one hundred percent original, the way it should be. It could be so easy for a large company of the likes of Converse to push their weight around and back an independent studio, such as The Circle, into a corner, so the fact that this couldn't be further from how this particular collaboration was handled should serve as prime example of the plucky determination and professional optimism of the modern independent studios. I for one would be more than a little hesitant about

going into business with a worldwide company, but for this intrepid troop of tattooed warriors they seemed to take it all in their stride, not a shaky hand in sight!

My personal feelings regarding presentation and my anal history buff obsession aside, the miraculous feat achieved by all involved in maintaining a fully-functional tattoo studio by day and a live music venue/ temporary bar/ leather-clad hostel for the alt community by night, is something truly deserving of high praise indeed—this uniquely devoted studio and its staff have an almost 24-hour attitude to progression and promotion. I have no idea what they're on, but I want some! 🍻

THIS INTREPID TROOP OF TATTOOED WARRIORS THEY SEEMED TO TAKE IT ALL IN THEIR STRIDE, NOT A SHAKY HAND IN SIGHT!

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Terri and Martyn Altilar are no strangers to the tattoo scene—in fact, take any Jazz show you care to shake a stick at and you'll find them doing their thing. Nice work if you can get it we hear you say... but it ain't easy out there...

Mr Smith: Scott Cole
Hair: Nathan Pithers • Makeup: Eve Marie Parry • Lingerie: Monster Ladies • Latex: Catalyst
Shoes: Hades

I first met Terri and Martyn at Tattoo Jam last year. I'll admit I was kind of dismissive of both of them at first—I'll be the first to say that it was nothing personal, but when everybody wants a piece of the action, it takes time to separate the facts and make sense of the hundreds of requests for page space—time that's already loaded with a list as long as a piece of string.

But time moved on, and there they were again... and again and again. I watched Martyn perform with his band and liked what I heard. I've seen Terri jump through hoops of fire (not literally, but time will probably prove me wrong on that too) to make her sections of shows work as they should.

Despite their claims that they're just a couple of ordinary people doing the best they can, there's 'ordinary' and there's 'Ordinary' with a capital letter. They belong with the latter.

Anyway, after shipping them out to sunny Cardiff for a shoot with Mr Cole, I figured I'd try and dig around in their relationship

a little and see what makes them tick—and tick they do...

For the purpose of this story, let's head back 12 months and kick off with the TV show *Don't Tell The Bride* in which they both appeared. For overseas readers, this is a show in which the groom gets handed a stack of cash and has to organise an entire

wedding without the bride knowing anything about it. Let's see what Terri made of it all:

"We got married on July 22 last year and the show was aired in September—God knows where the time went."

So with that in hand, I'm curious as to how being on a show like that can change your





'It did change everything, but mostly from the point that it made everything happen that much quicker

life? Does it change everything?

"It did change everything, but mostly from the point that it made everything happen that much quicker. We got so well known because of the show and we were lucky enough to have been heading in the right direction when it did, that doors opened a lot faster for both of us.

"Before the show, I had a loose five-year plan about where I wanted to go as a model and a performer, but I reckon once the show had been aired, that knocked at least a year off the plan. TV just makes it a little bit easier to open some doors

because there's some kind of substance there for the people you'll be working with to play with."

The TV part of this is not the end of the story. They were both clued in enough to see it for what it was and keep moving and that's important because it can be very tempting to see that as an end-game in itself and that's not really how people in the real world see TV shows.

"It's not like we had a strict plan. Neither of us wants to plan anything so hard that it becomes boring because you're too busy trying to make it happen. The plan is more like us being ready to handle whatever happened to come our way. Do you have a plan?"

Hmm. I thought I was asking the questions here, but



it's a good point. Maybe it's bitter experience that makes 'having a plan' not such a great idea—in fact, it all sounds a bit corporate and that's one thing these guys certainly aren't.

"What the plan actually consists of is freeing myself up to model and perform more instead of holding down a nine-to-five to pay the bills, so it's quite a simple plan really! Nobody wants to get old while they're trying to get things accomplished as a model—it's just the way it is out there and I'm not the sort of person who would even think about plastic surgery!"

One of the very cool things about these two, is how much they've managed to keep in sync with each other as they move along. It's absolutely not a case of something not happening if the other isn't involved, but rather a case of support. You don't see it too often in this game—hell, you don't see it happening too often in life in general really.

MARTYN: "It's not on purpose at all. Terri's got way more chances of going where she wants to go than I do, but that's mostly

because I don't ever push what I want to do. I'm older than Terri and I feel like I've had my time with music and I want to settle into my tattooing and the art side of my life but I'm always ready to be where she is and I've got her back if she needs it."

TERRI: "I need him as a roadie! He's a much better judge of character than I am and he'll always tell me when something doesn't seem right. I don't always listen but he'll tell me all the same. There's a lot of mistakes you can make on the road—you must know that more than anybody doing what you do, so it's good to have somebody who will watch out for you."

Kind of like having a manager that you don't have to give 25 percent to I guess—but she's right. It can be bad-ass out there so to have somebody you trust in your corner is no small thing—which brings us to the performance part of things. The Chaos Dolls—a relatively new thing for Terri—will make their first appearance at Tattoo Jam who is keen to class things up a bit:

"It's a cross between burlesque

There's a lot of mistakes you can make on the road—you must know that more than anybody doing what you do, so it's good to have somebody who will watch out for you

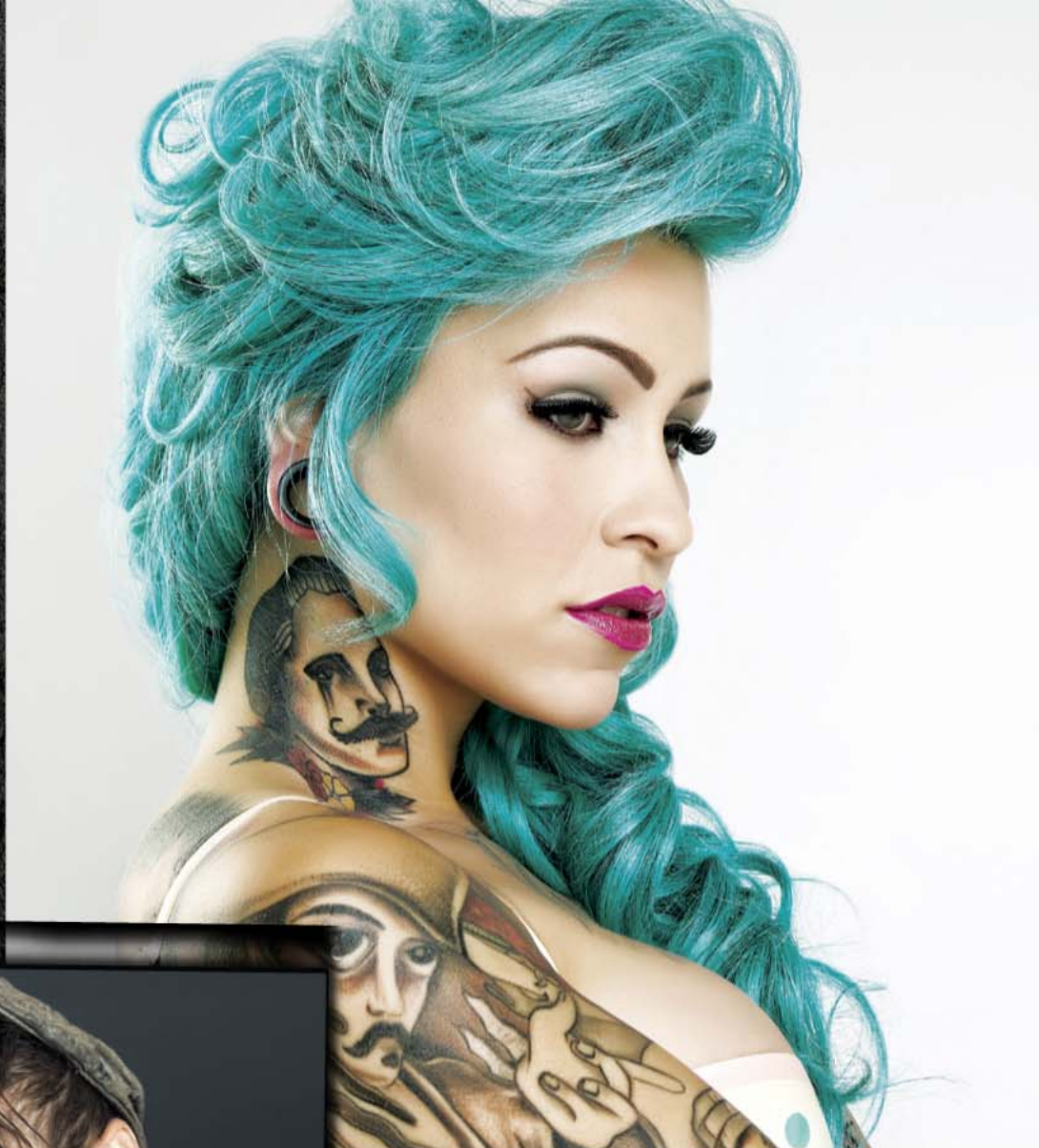
and a fire-act, but they're combined together to be classier than usual. We started it up about seven months ago and we're really looking forward to seeing where this part of the adventure will take us. Now that time has moved on a little bit, I want to take it somewhere else.

"We've got boyfriends and husbands now so that kind of changes the way you want to approach that kind of act. I don't know where it's going or what will happen with it, but that's part of the deal as well. Once you start a ball rolling with a new act, anything can happen and I thought that the whole performance aspect needed a new angle so this is me developing a niche for us." There then follows a portion that I'm not going to print about Terri's

own recipe for her hair colour. That's for her to tell you about, not me—but it leads us down the path of how often she gets asked for advice... which is a lot.

MARTYN: "Terri's very good with people who come to her for advice; it's very easy to make enemies in the modeling game as you go along, but both of us would much rather make friends. What's the point in the journey if you don't?"

TERRI: "Maybe I'm a bit too easy with giving away my secrets but they're not really secrets to me—who doesn't like to be asked how they did something? It means you're doing something right. When I first started, nobody would help me. I didn't know where to go or who to turn to and everybody was so secretive—so when I got to a



As much as I want to be successful, and as much as I'd like to be rich, give up the day job and all those other things, I'll take a bunch of good friends as a bonus any day of the week

place where others would ask me... well, I love to help if I can.

"As much as I want to be successful, and as much as I'd like to be rich, give up the day job and all those other things, I'll take a bunch of good friends as a bonus any day of the week."

To wrap this baby up, two more genuinely lovely people (who are sickeningly still in love) you could never hope to meet—and despite the terrorist beard he's desperately trying to hide behind, Martyn's also a bit handy with the tattoo machine.

I like it when people are able to make hard work look easy. 🐼



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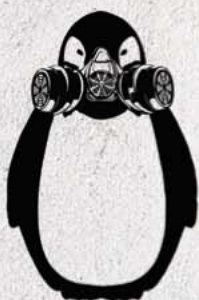
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REBEL YELL

At the end of May, Turkey witnessed in all its major cities the greatest demonstrations of its modern history. The ignition point? A planned destruction of the Gezi park—an historic place of gathering near Taksim Square in Istanbul, midpoint of the capital—in order to build yet another mall



#OccupyGezi

Laure Siegel P-mod, Translation: Sharlyn Gals

Several hundred people gathered in the park to protest against this decision. For a few days, a world of its own emerged and settled there, with debates, libraries and artistic performances—until violence broke out. One night, police evacuated the park with a great deal of batons, tear gas and water cannons.

The ecological battle then turned into a fight against public violence, governmental policy, and more particularly against Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Quickly named 'Chemical Tayyip', he is the controversial leader of the AKP right-wing party. His first reaction on live TV was to call the protesters drunk anarchists

and "çapulçu"—thugs. The speech gave birth to one of the most popular slogans of the movement "We all are çapulçu!"

The government absurdities and insults did not stop here: a presidential spokesman even tried to convince the public there had been a conspiracy to kill the Prime Minister using telekinetic powers. In response to this public displaying of textbook bad faith, angry Turkish people chose to react using creativity: movies, T-shirts, graffiti, video clips... and tattoos. Let's take a tour and visit the 'OccupyGezi' tattoo artists.

THE SYMBOLS... THE PENGUIN

In Turkey, because they are owned by companies close to the power, the media is in great majority and pro-government.



Therefore, at the beginning of the events, TV channels ignored what was happening in the streets of the country, and while the battle was raging around Taksim Square, CNN Türk chose to program a documentary about penguins instead. The animal has become the symbol of the state's censorship, to the greatest pleasure of caricaturists and the paper Penguin, an 'Onion'-like newspaper that played an important role in the contestation.



GAS MASK

A few days after the protests began, everybody had their own gas mask, bought from army surplus stores, on the internet or off the street. Gas masks allowed people to stay in the streets even when they were completely smoked out. Few admitted having bags at home filled with gas masks, bottles of water, bepanthen and serum, so they are always ready to join the demonstrations.

THE TREE

Everything started from there. Istanbul's green space has disappeared as fast as snow melts in the sun in the past decade, and large shadowy spaces have become hard to find. Instead, new buildings

have mushroomed, encouraged by the construction craze—the second strongest economic sector of the country. Before the '50s and the beginning of Istanbul's speedy urbanisation, Gezi Park was the second biggest park in the world after Central Park, NYC. Today, it is only five percent of its original size. Sometimes, the top of the tree is extended with a fist or a V of Victory.

SLOGANS... OCCUPYGEZI

OccupyGezi—or DirenGezi in Turkish—is the sign of the rallying of the protest on social networks. It is related to the Occupy movement that condemns injustice by occupying different squares

AT THE BEGINNING OF JUNE, GATE TATTOO OPENED ITS DOOR FOR FREE 'REVOLUTION' TATTOOS

and parks all around the world. Some people got the dates they started getting involved with the movement tattooed on them.

BLOOD TYPE

Bloc 1 was a group of tents located at the edge of the park and devoted to first aid, where volunteering doctors advised the protesters to write their blood type on their arm with a sharpie, so that they could be 🩹



I TATTOOED ABOUT 100 PEOPLE
WITHIN TWO WEEKS—WE WOULD
NEVER HAVE HOPED SO MANY
PEOPLE WOULD GATHER AT THE
SAME PLACE WITH THE SAME IDEA

taken care of more efficiently
and rapidly in case they
were found unconscious.

GARSI

The name of Besitkas' hooligan club that is—with Galatasaray—one of the main football teams of the city. The demonstrations had another unexpected turn; that of the city's hooligans uniting. More used to smashing each other's faces in the weeks before the events, than joining forces, together they were involved in a few devilish acts, such as the 'borrowing' of a tractor on a construction site in order to block a convoy of police cars. As a testament to them, Garsi's logo has become a symbol of Istanbul's counter-culture.

LET THE ROAD TRIP BEGIN

The first stop on our trip is at Gate Tattoo, located in a little street at the end of the avenue Istiqlal. A young man comes out of the shop, a cigarette in his mouth, and a hand on a tree trunk freshly inked on his leg. Kerem is 17 and his whole family is part of the Republican People Party. "The protest born in Gezi represents hope to me. I like the people I demonstrated with, even though I am not sure something is going to come out of this," he says.



At the beginning of June, Gate Tattoo opened its door for free 'revolution' tattoos. Boris has been working there for four years, with his friends Hakan and Aliçan. "The protest inspired us to pursue realistic patterns. Those are the most important tattoos to me, the most meaningful ones. Keeping a record of those events is essential. We were raised by our parents as apolitical, but this government made us angry. Enough is enough."

The pony-tailed shop owner, glasses hanging around his neck, started tattooing in Marmaris, a seaside resort in the South of Turkey, across the Island of Rhodes. He has been in Istanbul seven years. "We realise that the new generation's centre of interest is not sex

and alcohol. They don't want to live under pressure, like in Egypt or Saudi Arabia. They want to fight for their future."

In the fancy neighborhood of Caddebostan, Levent Candas sips his tea with his friend and partner, comfortably sitting in front of window at Elephant Tattoo. The flag of Mustapha Kemal Atatürk—founder of a democratic and secular Turkey—is hanging behind the window, and the tattoo of an elephant wearing a gas mask is forever engraved on his right hand. Both tattooists closed the shop for a whole week to demonstrate, "just out of curiosity". "At first, we were afraid, we didn't have any militancy experience, and I don't follow social networks, so I didn't know what was really





IF HE GETS RE-ELECTED
IN 2015, I BELIEVE IT WILL
BE THE END OF THE
EXISTENCE OF TATTOO
SHOPS IN TURKEY



had disappeared in Istanbul. All year long, nobody respects the traffic line, everybody cuts the road, cusses at each other. And there, every time I was sneezing, somebody would say 'bless you'. I was shocked!" he laughs. "I really liked the slogan 'Don't remain silent, soon it will be your turn'. Our turn is now, and we cannot remain passive," Levent concludes.

On the other side of the Bosphorus, in the Kadıköy neighborhood, Bunny King is also pissed. With his labrador, Tyler, always by his side, he made rabbits and red and black graphic designs his trademark. All of his friends have been wearing his new designs for a few weeks now: on Serdar, the V of victory; on Eda, a cat with a gas mask on. Shirtless and hairy chested with a rabbit mask and baseball bat on his shoulder, while he is always ready for fun, his determination is flawless. "We are apolitical," he explains. "We fight in favour of justice, and against fascism and police violence. The government was elected by cheating, paying people, fetching the elderly and disabled from their nursing homes so they would vote for them. More than half of the population is against them, and we are first in line."

Danny Garcia confirms this 🇹🇷

going on. But we went together and got gassed together.

"People were screaming 'go ahead, gas us!' There is no country in the world where the government used gas against civilians they way the did here," tells the man who is considered by many the best bass player in Turkey. His friend, Berkay Yazici, ACAB cap on his head and a Borat mustache above his lips, adds: "It is a movement of the '90s generation, where people have recreated the solidarity and manners that





PEOPLE SHOULD BE GIVEN A POLITICAL AND CRITICAL EDUCATION AT SCHOOL, BUT IT IS PROHIBITED TODAY

commitment. He welcomes us with his whole crew, surrounded by about ten cats dozing on red and gold couches. "I tattooed about 100 people within two weeks. It came to me as something I had to do. We all went to the demonstrations, and we would never have hoped so many people would gather at the same place with the same idea. It was all very positive. During New Year's Eve, it is rather dangerous for a girl to wander alone around the Taksim Square, but here, in a crowd of about 10,000 people, nothing happened. I believe that everybody should have the same rights. Religion shouldn't interfere with politics, and elections shouldn't be fraudulent. People should be given a political and critical education at school, but it is completely prohibited nowadays."

Danny Garcia was trained in Germany and is yearning for more experience in foreign countries, and is not very optimistic about the future. "All the time Erdogan is at the head of the country, people's way of thinking is going downhill. If he gets re-elected in 2015, I believe it will be the end of the existence of tattoo shops in Turkey. He started



with the prohibition of alcohol, raised taxes on cigarettes, canceled concerts, and soon it will be our turn. If I were given a flight ticket to Europe, anywhere, I would go open a shop somewhere else in a heartbeat."

For now though, everybody in Istanbul is rushing to his door

to get a piece from the master. However, in a country where a tattoo is also a political act, nothing can be taken for granted.

The remainder of the Turkish journey will be delivered in the next issue, dealing with the Ottoman cultural heritage, emergent artists and the weight of religion. 🇹🇷



"ART IS NOT A THING; IT IS A WAY"

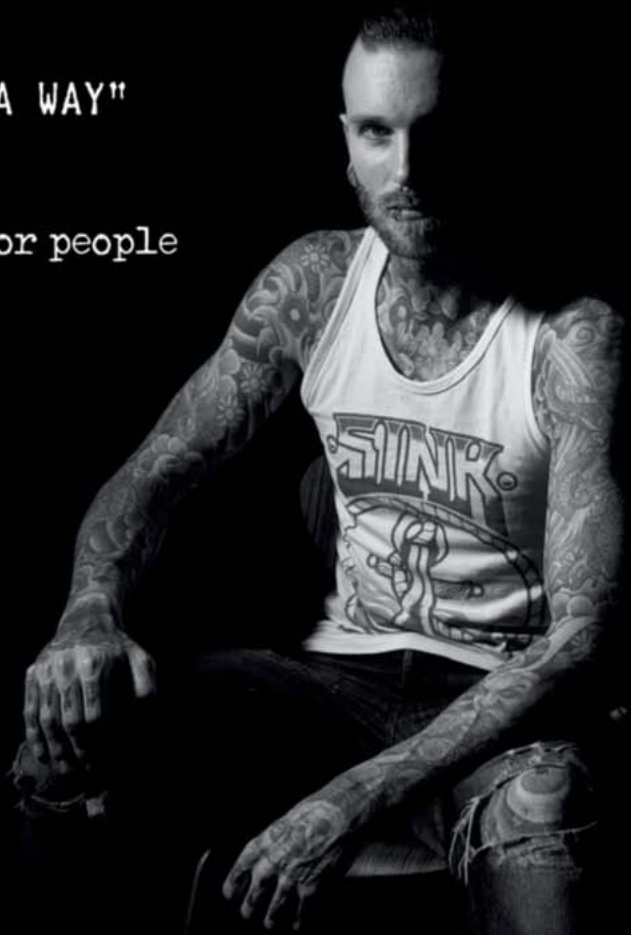
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THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE

Out in the wilds of America, where the land meets the sky, there's a little pocket of nothingness—a vacuum if you will. For the longest time, that void was empty—it simply sat there watching what was going on in the universe... and then **Mike Moses** moved in. Brace yourself...



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Around six months back, I hit Mike up (or 'reached out' if you want to use the worst expression in the world. If you ever hear people use the term 'reach out', proceed with caution) for a feature in the Best Horror Tattoos book I was writing (available in all good bookshops, etc.). I'd seen Mike's

work around the place and to say I like it a lot would be an understatement—what I didn't bank on was getting on so damn well with the man, to the point that we can now call ourselves 'friends'. I like it this way. We get to talk about what goes on under the covers of the art in a properly authentic way and that's a good thing.

The things we chew about in that book will give you as good an introduction to Mike as you're ever likely to get—neither of us wanted to go over any of it again here, so instead, we're jumping in at the deep end. Somebody once told me it was wrong of me as a writer to assume people knew what I did, but if we all took that on board, we'd never get anywhere would we?

When we last spoke officially and seriously about Mike's art, one of the biggest things that came out of that for me was Mike addressing what 'horror' or 'dark' actually consisted of to people like us—was it something that people could really get a grasp on? Thus, in the short time lapse between now and then, I'm curious to see if the 'artist' has noticeably moved on, leaving some themes behind as done, dusted and spent in their entirety?

"I've always hated doing things more than once, which is why my mother's dream of me being a Disney animator



MIKE SMITH © MIKE MOSES



**I DON'T MAKE A
HABIT OF LOOKING
AT OTHER PEOPLE'S
WORK BECAUSE I
DON'T WANT IT TO
START SEEPING INTO
MY OWN**

never came to fruition. I can't remember exactly how long ago it was that we last spoke, but I think it was about March? It's now the beginning of September... just six months later, and yes, I've succumbed to my regular schedule of self-loathing induced change.

"Six months was all it used to take for me to wear myself out on something and move on, but these days I see myself gagging on things more rapidly. There is an obvious culprit and it is well known to me: The Internet.

"I don't make a habit of looking at other people's work because I don't want it to start seeping into my own; the same thing happens to everyone. You can't walk through the yard



without getting dirt on your feet. Whether it's deliberate or not, I can't tell you, and to avoid sounding pompous I won't muse on anyone ripping me off, personally. One thing I know for sure though, is the more you look, the more you see other people clearly doing

things you only used to see from one person. It happens all over the world and at an alarmingly progressive rate.

"I actually wrote a piece about this recently due to my strong feelings on the subject. It's a very short manifesto of sorts about being a tattooer in the 🍷

**MR MOSES ON
INTERVIEWS**

Filthy Martini in hand, fresh out of the shop and having a casual art night with my lady. YOB is playing over the speakers and the mild hum of my lady's rotary tool as she works down a piece of wax for casting... these are the accompanying sounds of my thoughts...

digital age. It's currently slated for some space in an upcoming post from tattoosnob.com which may have come out before this interview gets published. If you care to know more about the specifics, that's where you'll see it. A post script sum-up to that would go like this: 'There are people whom I follow on social media that serve as my litmus test for idea saturation. When I see something trickle into their work, then I know it's time to move on.'

"For years I've tried to perfect ideas that were so far from whatever anyone else was doing that it couldn't possibly be confused with anyone else's work, couldn't be imitated and would always be mine. Guess what: the only act that can't be followed, the only trick that can't be swiped, the only thing that you'll ever get to keep... it's called changing the game constantly, and drawing better than anyone you know of..."

and that is something I'll be working at the rest of my life."

Hopefully, you're starting to get a good grip on why Mike and I get along now. You can't simply walk away from that statement. When everybody swims in the same pool, you all get wet with the same water. Fact. For an artist, that's really important to know and something that I think—I know—is totally lost in all the social media pushing and shoving that goes on out there. I'm not just here to make all the other writers look ugly you know. Anyway, let's turn left—you can muse over that in your own time.

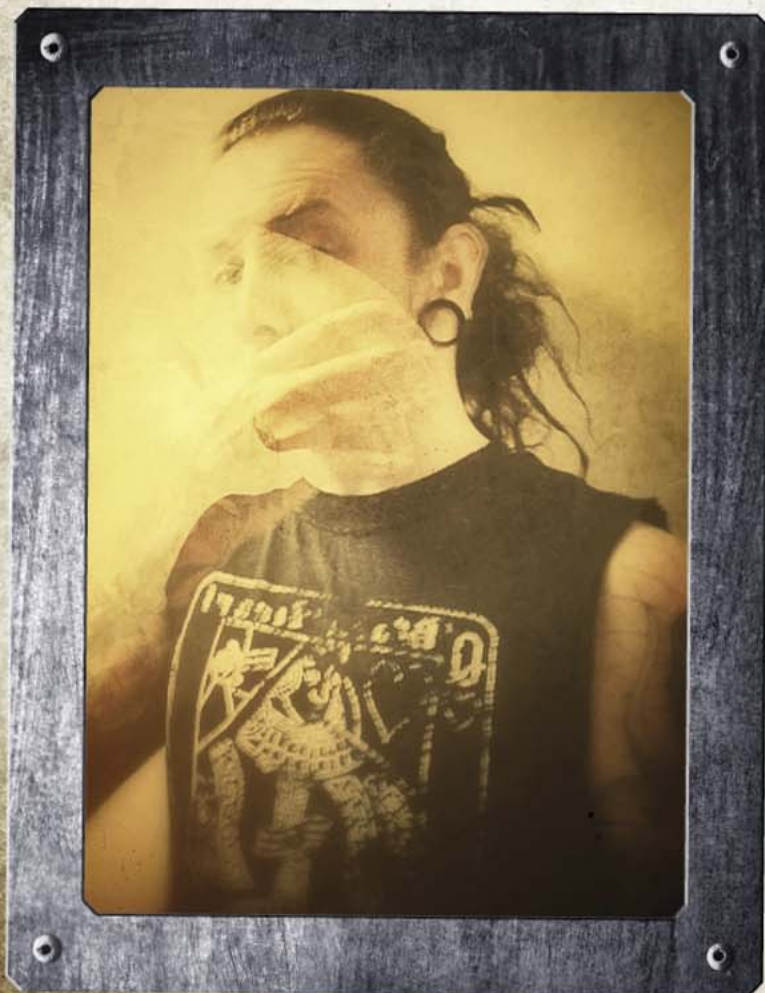
Mike is also pretty damn hardcore over interplanetary life-forms, conspiracies and generally very proactive over the 'don't believe a fucking thing they tell you' train of thought—this surely has to spill over into how a man interprets art. He also bandies around a phrase I wish I had thought of myself: SEND WISEMEN



NOT WARRIORS. What gives?

"The fact that I know we're living in a manufactured and force-fed dreamworld is a huge influence on my art because it's a huge influence on my subjective reality. You can tell what I think about most things just by looking at what I choose to define in art, even if I simply ignore it... that's a clear commentary there too. If art is an expression of your psychology, and your psychology tells you that you're behind enemy lines because the world is happily asleep around you, your work... your world... your countenance will show that. What may look like a stylistic change may not be coming from the same place as my answer to your question about evolving style. It may come from a change in tactics to communicate with the world.

"When I was younger my work was more war-like. It was metaphoric daggers and arrows. I've always liked the idea of the silent knife. Observers were just minding their own business when suddenly they feel the blood pooling in their shoes. Things changed though. War gets old and I think people eventually turn inward. After you're done tearing yourself up, maybe you'll decide that




EMAIL FROM MR MOSES TO MR SMITH:

"My computer thinks you misspelled 'colour', which is hilarious... fucking British!"
 "You think that's funny... wanna see it in Welsh?"



tearing up anything isn't the right way to do things. Maybe you'll decide that things are more likely to change through mediation... and that's partly where 'send wisemen not warriors' came from.

"I'm sick of violent people. I'm sick of seeing my nation destroying the world one country at a time. The wrong people are in charge and have been for a long time and it's painfully evident. I don't watch television. I don't read the papers. I don't allow any mass media into my world at all if I can help it. I am—officially—over it. I suppose a religious person would say that all you can do now is pray... but I'll go one better.

"Those 'wise men' patches aren't just nifty merch to sell, they're my propaganda. Hopefully people get the message (it's only written in plain English) and when they tie it to their own favorite 'whatever', they align themselves with the new nation. The hopeful and peaceful sapiens of earth.

"The ones in charge will remain in charge until we all turn and face the other way and form our own new view of reality. 'The wolves of truth' is something along the same lines, but more to the idea that


I THINK A MUCH MORE PERTINENT QUESTION IS: WHY DON'T PEOPLE RECOGNISE ART WHEN THEY SEE IT?

we are in fact under the wool with everything from 'aliens' to the origins of humanity. We have to be hungry for the truth, and hunt it down together."

At this point, we get a little too involved in other worldly life-forms and neither of—as much as we would like to—wants the show to go down that road, so I've diverted some last thoughts on that to the box copy in this feature. That put to rest for the time being, let's drive down a different road. Recently, there's been an idea that's come up that I've been chewing around with a few people—is there a point at which

a tattoo becomes not a tattoo, but rather art on skin? There's a train of thought that's surfaced with me that simply because you used a tattoo machine to get the art there, some work can rise so far above what the term 'tattoo' means that when complete, it's simply 'art' and should be described as such.

I'm still trying to work this out for myself and I suspect it will take many, many years until you could get the concept into the public consciousness as well, but... well, what does Mike make of it?

"You know, I caught myself kind of rolling my eyes at this, 🙄"

CLOSE ENCOUNTER?

"As much as I would love to make all of this interview about other life forms from other planets or dimensions or even just others from Earth, that's a conversation that is very difficult to have publicly without having a very long and immediately provable fact sheet attached. Do I believe 'aliens' exist? Unequivocally, yes. Do I believe that they are here on Earth as we speak? Absolutely. Have I ever seen anything to back any of that up? Yes I have, and so have many members of my family. Do I think that there is much more going on out there than most people are aware of, and do I think that people are deliberately covering that up and keeping the majority ignorant or at least skeptical? I certainly do. Undoubtedly. Can I prove any of this? No, I can't, least of all through a magazine interview majoritively distributed in a country I don't live in.

"If anyone wants to know anything about any of that all I can do is point you at a handful of books to read and to never take your eyes off the sky (but please don't trip over anything or walk in front of moving vehicles). Here is that book list: *UFOs: Generals, Pilots, and Government Officials Go on the Record*, Leslie Kean; *Hunt for the Skinwalker*, Colm A. Kelleher and George Knapp; *The Flying Saucers Are Real*, Maj. Donald Keyhoe. All of them are available on amazon.com. Most are available as Kindle books too. That's a good start. Read them yourself, come get tattooed by me, and we'll talk about it till the cows come home."

and it surprised me. I started to think about why, and honestly I can't decide if it's more due to the frustrating lack of an answer to it that has plagued me for so long or if it has something to do with what I was taught coming up as a tattooer.

"So many angles to take that from. Let's see: It was very easy for people I came up around to label anyone trying to elevate tattoos to 'art' as an 'art-fag'. For those people, tattoos were proudly low-class and honestly still are to me and many people I know. I really don't know why we feel that way beyond the pride of tattooings seedy history in America. All I can say is that the same love for that dirty and unrighteous aspect was totally engrained in me as well, so clearly unveiled by my own instinctual reaction to the idea.

"When you stop and think about it though, of course it's art. It's so obviously art that I can't really imagine how other people would see it any other way. A huge part of that problem is that an unfortunately large percentage of the people on this planet don't understand art to any capacity at all, so why would something relegated to the scum of society (or so



I'D LOVE TO DIG THROUGH THE WASTE BASKETS OF TIME AND FIND THE FUCK-UPS OF THE MASTERS... THE THINGS THEY BURNT OR THREW AWAY

it used to be) ever be allowed to elevate itself to the highest expression of humanity?

"Tattoos are more than just pretty pictures, and so is art. They mean many things, even if they mean nothing at all... an absence is still a statement in my mind, as I've already said. I think a much more pertinent question is: Why don't people recognise art when they see it? Additionally, and on a personal note: I am totally one of those 'art-fag' tattooers. For those of you that aren't, you clearly don't understand what you're doing for a living. You need to stop bitching about people that get it. Stop copying other people's work, and learn to stand on your own two feet. Think for yourself. If anyone has a good counter argument, then email me. I'll totally talk about it with you... it would make a great interview!"

Again, we wander off in search of more answers, but this is a magazine and not a languishing weekend at the beach in wetsuits. Space and time constraints? I hate them but onwards all the same.

"As for the shop and business, things have been going great. We've been open for about seven months now, and there's no

end in sight. We (my business partner, Kat Marie Moya, and I) are fully booked a few months out. I'm only committing myself to two months of booking at a time and wait-listing everyone else. I don't want to have eight months booked out ever again—it's impossible to do anything spur of the moment. You wake up one morning and realise that you have absolutely no freedom at all and you'll start to hate what you do all over again.

"I just hired an assistant for the first time in my career, and it really helps. Krystal is awesome! She's great about handling all of my emails and keeping me on track with what's going on. I guess eventually you get to a point where just keeping the ball rolling starts to take over your whole schedule. It was really interfering with my work. Instead of being able to go home and work on projects or tattoos and art, I'd be answering emails for five hours and then have to run errands for the shop as well.

"I actually started resenting it and ended up not answering my emails for about two months. I totally went into hiding! I was afraid of my inbox, and I know so many tattooers who are in the same spot. Don't misunderstand—I'm thankful

for where I am and having all of the people supporting me and what I do. It means the world to me that people care about my art and like to see what I'm doing and get things that I produce. It blows my mind that people buy that stuff, because in all honesty, I only produce things because I think whatever I'm making is cool and I want one!

"Let's not forget though... I'm just an artist. By that I mean I'm a procrastinator, I'm semi-unreliable, I get caught up in things that don't really matter. I'm easily distracted. I'm more interested in feeding my own curiosities. I'd rather be digging through other people's garbage, summoning the dead, and hiding from nearly everyone in forts I made out of blankets. Office work does not compute! If I wanted to deal with any of that shit, I'd have become a lawyer.

"Solution: Hire someone to do all of that crap so I can focus on my art. It's been the best business decision that I've made in a long time, and I'd recommend it to any artist/tattooer that's feeling overwhelmed. Due to that one move, I've been able to successfully finish so many more projects and I'm a lot happier. There are always a million things on the horizon for me and I like it that way. Thankfully, I have an amazing woman who is also an artist and understands that need.

"All of that aside, I'm really proud of my latest book, *The Right Way To Do The Wrong Thing*. I just released it about two weeks ago and much to my surprise it sold out entirely in just a couple days. I'm currently looking for a local printer to produce the second edition, so hopefully those will be done and available within the next month or so through my bigcartel site (thedowntown.bigcartel.com). It's a full-color, 94-page book of sketches from the past twelve months or so.

"With this one I tried to

really focus on my process for drawing and put majoritively just sketches in it. A lot of people would omit the failed attempts, the bad drawings, and all of the process leading up to something final.

"I did just the opposite in that I really tried to showcase all of those things. I'd love to dig through the waste baskets of time and find the fuck-ups of the masters... the things they burnt or threw away. You could wring knowledge out of that stuff that you just couldn't learn any other way. That is what I would want to see from other artists that I admire, in conjunction with the finished pieces of course.

"I've never tried to portray myself as someone above reproach, artistically or otherwise. I feel like it shows people that it's OK to still be learning. It's a process that's continual... something unending. I've always thought that potential is something you will always be hunting down. If you ever catch it, you might as well go home. The hunt is over.

"Let the hunt be unending."



And as far as I'm concerned, ladies and gentlemen, this is what the future looks like. Let's not fight it... 🤖



I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT POTENTIAL IS SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO BE HUNTING DOWN. IF YOU EVER CATCH IT, YOU MAY AS WELL GO HOME





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My inspiration was HR Giger, his imagination has no limits.



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DAN ARIETTI, BLACK SAILS TATTOO



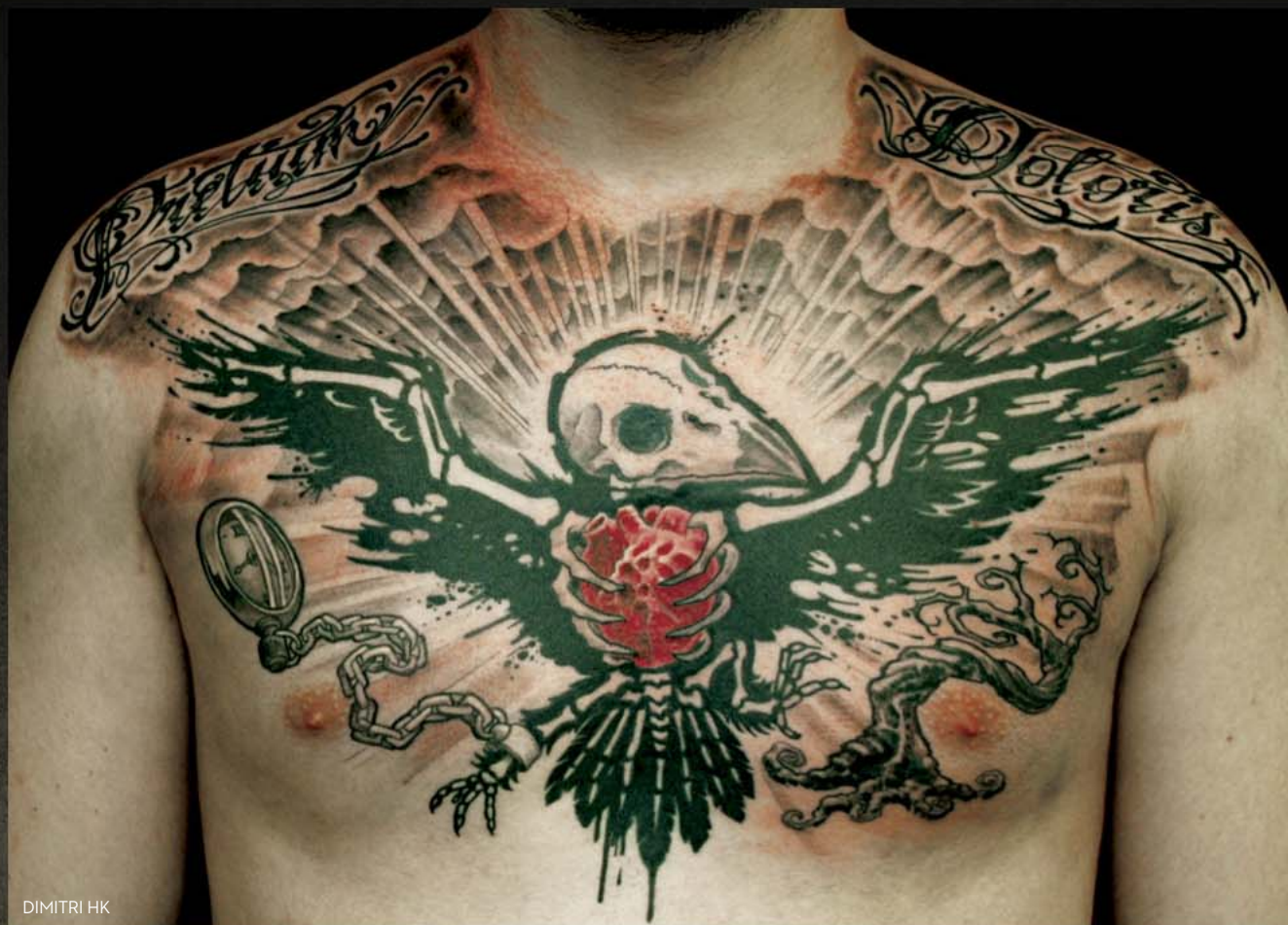
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CHAD MISKIMON



DIMITRI HK



ADE, NINE TATTOO



JO HARRISON



ARLIE, MONARCH, HAWAII



KYLE COTTERMAN



MARK BESTER



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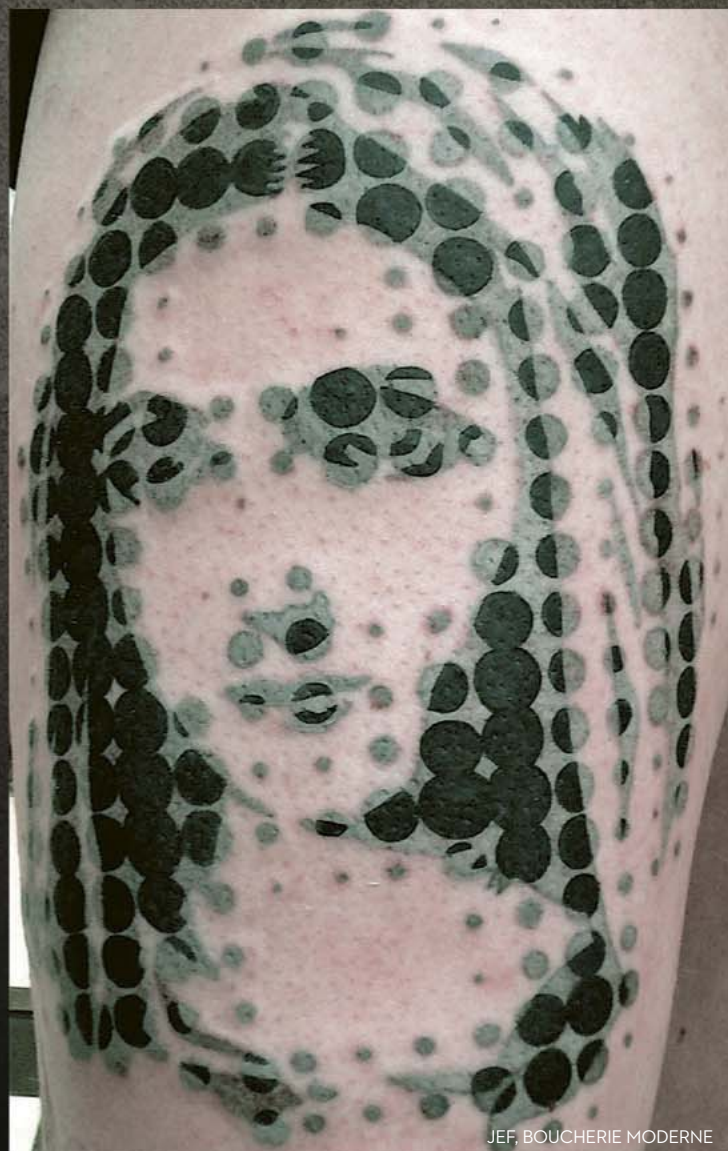
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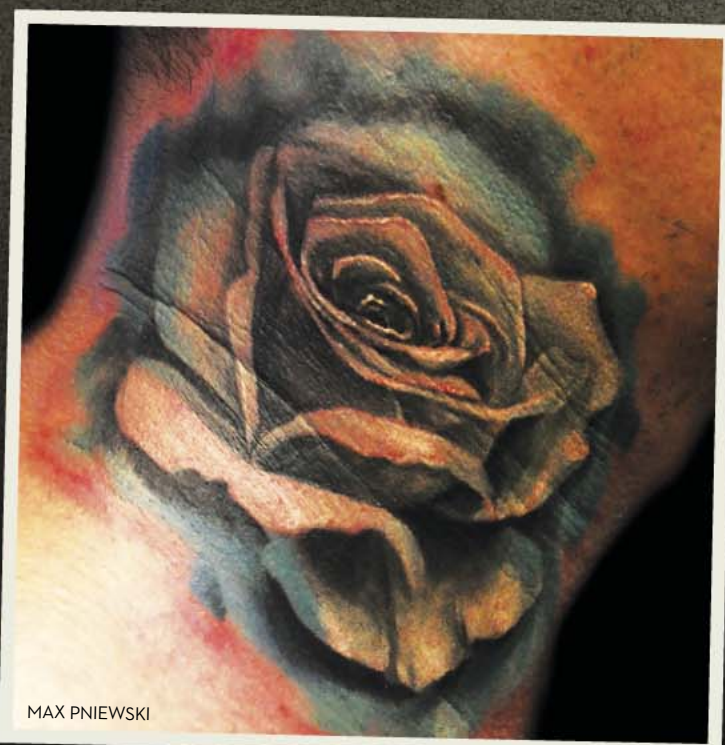
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When you're working with tattoos all day long, you can kind of get a little bit 'blind' sometimes when you've seen about 1,000 of them before lunch. So when you find something that appeals to you on a personal level, you sit up and pay attention just that little bit more. It's like turning up the radio when a great song comes along



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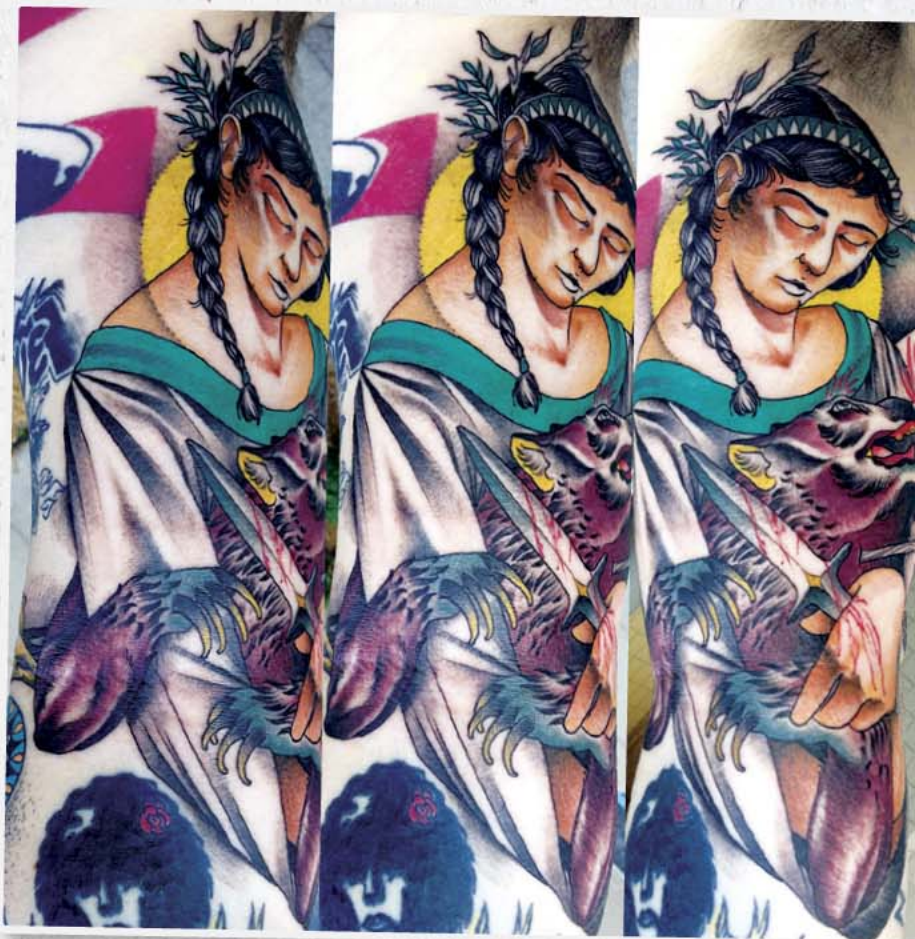
Does it happen a lot? Not as much as you would think but when it does, you're in a pretty good position to do something constructive about it. Let me tell you about it in real time. I was putting together the latest edition of Skin Shots, which although it plays host to something like 500 tattoos, actually means sifting through two month's worth of submissions. That probably amounts to something like 8,000-plus submissions—so when I pulled out a little fox with nine tails and put it somewhere safe to investigate more, I was feeling pleased with myself, because finding material that I love personally is a lot different to the professional side of the job.

Turns out that the hand behind the fox is Matt Lambdin. I dig a little deeper. Michigan. Damn, that's a fair few miles away but not impossible. I need to find out more about Matt, so I mailed him expecting a time zone stutter of a response. But no... he replied immediately. We trade some laughs, talk a little and then he tells me that it might be difficult to do an interview right now "because I'm not at home, I'm in London".

I assume he means London in Canada, so respond: "London in Canada?"

"No, London, UK."

By a stroke of good fortune, that's only about an hour from where I happened to hang my



hat 15 years ago. What's a man to do but put his shoes back on and jump on a train before this other man disappears to Physical Graffiti in Cardiff for his guest spot.

The rest of Matt's portfolio is as good as this little fox I found (which in reality is rather large), if not better—but you know how things go with the 'first' one. With the niceties over, we get down and dirty sooner rather than later. I

don't usually like to ask the obvious question of inspiration and "where did you get it"—so let's phrase it differently; do I see Japanese influence at work here or is Matt nothing more than the product of the 'fuck it' generation (good a phrase as any) in which mashing things up as the ideas come to you is a normal state of affairs?

"There could definitely be some Japanese influence in my work,



Maybe it's because even though the art is pushing forward, the theme behind is rooted in something else...

"Well, like you said, imagery of that sort really is timeless. Themes and ideas that are typically known by all are always a good bit a subject matter if you want it to be easily recognisable. While sticking to the conventional idea of what should be displayed in the design, I try to at least put a small twist on the execution. For instance, very strange, uncomfortable body positions for animals, etc."

As a spin off from that question, it seems to me that the dividing line between being a tattooist and an



AS AN ARTIST MYSELF, I WOULD NOT BE SATISFYING MY ARTISTIC HUNGER IF I WERE ONLY MANIPULATING THE POPULAR IMAGES OF THE GENERATIONS BEFORE ME

although I cannot necessarily say that I intended it to be that way. I do often find myself gazing at books of woodblock prints and paintings from the Japanese culture. The way they portray cloth is flawless.

"That said, I will say I am totally guilty of basing most of my design work purely on aesthetic value. I try to stay away from specific culture's forms of symbolism, mainly because I may not know

everything that I should about it."

So, for instance, if we take a look at the 'wolf howling at the moon' that he posted online back in May and then suppose that in five years time, somebody is figuring out where it fits art wise in the big scheme of things—does Matt think the future will treat him kindly? From where I'm looking this kind of art imagery is—and will remain—timeless, though I'm not sure why.





artist that tattoos is getting wider. So, to put a stake in the ground over it, I'm saying that some look on tattooing as an art form in its own right but more and more it seems that the 'newer generation' doesn't actually care that much about what came before—(although they will nod their head to it. What the new generation is concerned with is art—and the tattoo machine is just another tool for getting your message across, rather than being

image, not necessarily one that has never been created, but one that I haven't myself made before. Each and every time I tackle a new project, I intentionally try my hardest to make it different than the last time I did a similar subject matter. At times, one will become comfortable with the ways he does certain things while drawing—and eventually, that process just becomes an assembly line.

"I think it's very important

IF YOU'RE NOT MOVING FORWARD, YOU'RE GOING NOWHERE

the whole story in itself. Agreeable?

"You've got a point, and I agree that the craft is taking on more of an artistic approach to everything. Now, I would have to say that I belong to the younger/newer crowd, being that I just turned 23 in August. I will also add that I have PLENTY of history and tradition to learn about the trade that I partake in.

"But as far as my opinion on the newer ideals of tattooing, I think of it just as progression. As an artist myself, I would not be satisfying my artistic hunger if I were only manipulating the popular images of the generations before me. While they should never be taken for granted, if you're not moving forward, you're going nowhere.

"My entire goal, is to create an



to have your own style, but not to become so comfortable with it that you fear variation. Not to mention your clientele may become accustomed to a certain way you do something, and will not allow you to play around with what's in your head.

"I stay away from too much symbolism. As the viewer, you are free to pick apart and decipher an image however you choose. But that's the beauty of it; it may mean different things to different people. My job is to make a unique, clean and appealing tattoo, and that's how I feel with all of my art. There is no hidden agenda."



EACH AND EVERY TIME I TACKLE A NEW PROJECT, I INTENTIONALLY TRY MY HARDEST TO MAKE IT DIFFERENT THAN THE LAST TIME I DID SOME SIMILAR SUBJECT MATTER

My original reason for asking is simply that I love the train of thought in art whereby something can be more than it appears to be. To come back to Matt's work though, does he take all of his cues from the client or has he gotten to a point where his clients know exactly what they're going to be in for when they arrive?

"I've been lucky with my

clients—they've been giving me very much artistic freedom. All I ask for is the size and at least a small bit of subject matter to start. To further address the symbolism topic though, I find that popular symbols are very strong and may mean many different things at the same time.

"They can be offensive to some, while others see them just as

design. Unless a client is specific about wanting a certain symbol or group of symbols, I'm going to leave them out. A great example is the swastika. By now, we've all heard the stories and explanations of the roots of the symbol and the disassociation with the Nazi party of WWII. Whether or not origins of this symbol are for good reason, through time and exposure, these 🙄

things change. The general public sees this image as what we all wish I didn't. It's a touchy subject."

Time to move on from the symbolism thing I started! If we look back in time, what does Matt's portfolio look like? Is it something that he's happy with or—as tends to happen a lot these days—has he buried a lot of it as "work that will not be seen anymore" based on the fact that if you don't show it to people, they won't ask for it?

"I'm fairly happy with how my portfolio is looking as of right now. I look forward to adding more larger pieces and everyday one-session tattoos. We've all done our fair share of tattoos that aren't necessarily our favourites. And it's sometimes true; if you don't want future clients asking for it, don't show that you can do it. But sometimes you want to display that you've got other sides to yourself than what's commonly known.

"Me specifically though, no longer do I enjoy doing dreamcatcher tattoos! Not that they look bad, by any means, but I've nearly run out of ways to make them unique to themselves. So, I've taken those out of my portfolio for sure!

"This is a good place to add that tattooing was definitely an



MY JOB IS TO MAKE A UNIQUE, CLEAN AND APPEALING TATTOO, AND THAT'S HOW I FEEL WITH ALL OF MY ART. THERE IS NO HIDDEN AGENDA



unexpected surprise for me, or at least for it to be of the importance that it has become. I started off the way that we all look down on—which was by getting my hands on some equipment and practicing on myself and some 'cheap' friends. I've always been at least mediocre at most mediums of art, so I figured I'd give it a shot. Let's just say I didn't catch on very quickly. I had no knowledge of my



AS THE VIEWER, YOU ARE FREE TO PICK APART AND DECIPHER AN IMAGE HOWEVER YOU CHOOSE. BUT THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF IT



tools, not to mention the processes of making a proper design. I was very unhappy with my rate of progress and ended up getting a job at a small health food store, so I stopped for a while. But something in me wanted to succeed, so after a few months I began to ask around some local shops for apprenticeship opportunities.

"After a handful of uninterested shops, I finally found one willing to take me in. I didn't tell them right away that I had already been tattooing, though. I finally showed my mentor some of the pieces that I had done before, and he wasn't necessarily repulsed by how they looked. He could easily point out my flaws and errors though. Luckily, that convinced him to shorten my bitch-work period and get right to the how-to's



and I started doing small walk-ins after about four to five months."

So there you go. Strange things can happen when you grab hold of the lightning and simply move with what's put in front of your face. As far as Matt goes, I suspect—in fact I know—that he's better than he thinks he is, but that's not unusual. The other thing I know is that in a couple of years, Matt will see how good he was now—and by then—he will have moved on leaps and bounds. File under one to definitely watch out for on the global stage.

Now, let's talk about that fox... 🦊



GOOD VIBRATIONS

Matt Vinyl, psychology undergraduate and tattoo professional at Good Vibrations, talks his past, present and future

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In terms of my personal life and how it's affected me and my passion for tattooing I'd definitely say that my mum's death had a massive impact on, not only my drawing, but in my tattooing as well. She was the first person that I ever saw getting tattooed."

Inspiration and drive are key elements in the progression of all tattooists. The origin of Matt's inspiration was clear; a naturally gifted artist, he had the wherewithal

to come through a turbulent period in his young adulthood with the support of his family to push for success both academically, at Sheffield Hallam University, and artistically, enjoying quick progression from practising on fake skin and himself to joining Sheffield's Good Vibrations and making ripples on the show scene.

"Confidence is definitely the key to my success. I never back down from the challenge of a tattoo and this is how I've progressed so quickly in the first year of my professional tattooing career." At only 20 years old and relatively new to the scene, Matt has already held spots at the Great British Tattoo Show in London and at Tattoo Jam this year, where he continued to build his reputation and reach for his personal goal—"to employ a Barney Stinson sort of mentality... which is simply to become awesome!"

Citing Japanese and bio-organic as

some of his personal favourite styles, flipping through Matt's portfolio, you'll find it already contains some very high standard portraiture work; "When it comes to portraits I think the thing I love most are the fine details, wrinkles and creases around eyes and just the faintest hints of shading that accentuate things like cheek bones or eye sockets. But I honestly don't mind what it is that I'm tattooing, as long as I can put some sort of my own twist on it and give the client something original."

To check out Matt's portfolio, pop into Good Vibrations at 233 Crookes, Sheffield, S10 1TF.



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Judd Ripley was born into a family with miner parents. His upbringing was spent in various small towns in the Australian outback, more or less wherever there was work, but sometimes it was more than just the people leaving a dying mine community.

"The village I spent most time in was levelled to the ground when the uranium mine it was built on had produced its last radioactive ore," he says. "Otherwise we stayed as long as the mines were profitable and there was money to be earned." A typical upbringing for an Australian his age, according to Ripley.

"Young men in the '80s, who weren't academics, often chose to do traditional apprenticeships within the mining industry or at sea, for instance. Like anyone else, I yearned for a life of travel and adventure, to see all the corners of the world. And without a hometown to return to, I started to explore the mysterious Orient before I ended up on the American and European continents."

Ripley chose the sea, but it wasn't actually the life on the ocean that made him start tattooing—it was a different stereotypical tattoo target group that got him initiated in the profession.

"I know it's a cliché, but I mixed with people who literally hung out on the wrong side of the tracks. It was in a shady, dodgy little harbour town on the Australian east coast, where the tattoo artists were involved in pit bull fighting, prostitution and drugs. Although I didn't really realise this, that's how caught up in tattooing I was. Long before I went through a proper training, I got pointers from





a smart and generous guy in the business. I actually built my first tattoo machine from different crap lying around and used a single AA battery to run it. I only did one tattoo with it, on myself, and I still have it. It's actually not too bad. I've seen worse done today by so called professionals."

Time passed, and in 2000, the Australian turned up in Denmark on what turned out to be a very significant pit stop on his way to Norway.

"I stopped off in Denmark and it ended with me tattooing in a small studio with a very talented girl who also happened to be the most beautiful girl I'd ever seen. I came back to Denmark many times in the years after that and when I proposed to her and promised to buy her a pony, she finally agreed to marry me. I kept my promise about the pony too."

Now he works full-time with his wife, Marija, at The Sailor's Grave in Copenhagen.

"She annoys the crap out of me," he says with a smirk. "But I'm the luckiest guy in the world. I go to work with my best friend and get to hang out with her every day. If she's away for a couple of hours, I really miss her. She's the funniest and most talented person I know, a real professional within the tattoo industry with old school 🍷"

CREATIVE INFLUENCES

The Marvel Universe captivated me as a child, but I collected outside of that as well. Artists I grew to admire were Jack Kirby, Frank Frazetta, Brian Bolland, John Romita Sr. and Jr., Jim Lee, and the list can go on and on. Anime/Manga was a big influence as well. Masamune Shirow, Akira Toriyama, and Yoshitaka Amano were some of my favourite manga artists.

TATTOOING IS ROOTED IN A RICH AND COLOURFUL HISTORY AND THERE WAS THIS MYSTIQUE TO IT THAT DREW ME IN





values and attitude, but also with a big heart. I'm hopelessly in love with her, so I guess it's ok."

And to prove exactly how much, he's even learned Danish now.

"It was pretty hard. I come from a country where people only speak one language and I wasn't very young when I got here, so it hasn't been easy. The hardest part was to find a school where the classes fitted my working hours—which didn't really exist—so I've mostly been picking up what I hear around me and on TV. The hardest part has been to distinguish separate words, but once I put some effort into it, I realised it wasn't as hard as I'd thought. I still speak English in the shop, but it might change."

A glimpse through Judd Ripley's portfolio gives a quick overview of what is created by the needle, ink and artistic mind of this Australian. It's more or less exclusively Japanese and old

SKIN FLOW

Much of my work is drawn on the skin to accommodate areas of the body that share real estate with other tattoos. I draw thumbnail sketches and loose sketches ahead of time and sometimes I'll stencil the entire design if need be. But I feel that when marker drawing on the skin, prior to tattooing, I get a more natural flow of things. It was something that I got used to doing over the years.



school we're talking about. The love for Japanese art has been around for a long time and was enforced during his time at sea.

"What an adventure it was to be in Japan. Seriously, that country is like no other country in the world. I've revisited it many times and it never ceases to amaze

I FEEL LIKE HAVING THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OWNING A BUSINESS COMBINED WITH MY PRESENT WORK LOAD WOULD BE TOO OVERWHELMING

me with its rich cultural heritage and wonderful people. I fell in love with the Japanese art and craftsmanship and have since been a huge fan of wooden prints and how it has influenced the Japanese tattoo style we all know today. I was fascinated by Japan 🇯🇵





long before I went there, but after having worked with real Japanese tattoos, I felt I had the guts to really explore the art on a serious level.” Although not to its fullest extent perhaps: “Many years ago I decided not to do traditional Japanese style, but only borrow the imagery that I love, and use it where it fits and is tasteful. To be a true Japanese tattooist involves a lot more than just drawing a dragon or doing a back piece. It’s a philosophy.”

Talking about back pieces, Ripley’s done more than a few.

“I’m most comfortable doing big tattoos. In the beginning they were the most frightening ones, but now I prefer them to the small ones. We do walk-ins in the studio as well as custom tattoos, so while the others are working their asses off

TATTOOING BROUGHT ME KNOWLEDGE THAT I COULD NEVER HAVE ATTAINED IN A TRADITIONAL ART UNIVERSITY SETTING—I FEEL LIKE A FISH IN WATER WITH IT

in the studio, drawing up different designs for customers and finishing the job in a couple of hours, I only need to do one drawing and spend the next four, five sessions tattooing. It’s just laziness, I guess,” he says with a laugh. “Most of all, if you really love the tattoo you’re doing, it will be the best tattoo you’ve ever done, and I really love doing big back pieces.”

Contrary to other back pieces, however, his aren’t very detailed.

“It’s because of the visual impression it makes. I like how it looks, but it’s different depending

on what style I do. A Japanese back piece also gives a fantastic visual impression, with the combination of details, layers and imagery, but they also take over 50 hours to finish, while my old school backs take about 15 hours in total. They can be finished in four sessions, which makes them popular among tattoo collectors who want to spend as little time and money as possible on their back. I love both styles and am equally interested in doing them both.”

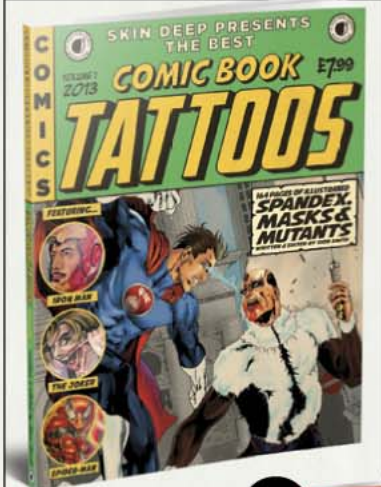
If you’re passing, stop by for a few hours—there’s gold in these hills. 🐼

CARY ALDRIDGE ON DAVE T.

Dave is a hilarious man. We’ve worked together for three years now. I should mention that there’s not a boring second at Memento when Dave is there. We have an awesome time while tattooing with tons of laughs. He’s one of the busiest and hardest working dudes I know. Seeing him constantly churn out amazing artwork is a huge inspiration to myself and the whole Memento crew. If you ever have the pleasure of getting tattooed by Dave you already know that it’s an experience that will be remembered.



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www.MeganMassacre.com



Meeting Megan Massacre on her 24-hour whirlwind visit to Montreal, first at eatery La Belle & La Boeuf where she judged a tattoo contest, then at her hotel the following morning, one thing was instantly clear—this girl is the definition of a hard worker, a passionate artist and, dare I say it, a superstar.

Some may be quick to question Massacre's merits or cast shadows of doubt on her talents, but what they don't realise is that she's been a part of the industry for nearly a decade. Sure, she shot to mainstream fame as the sole female tattooer on TLC reality

series *NY Ink*, then as an artist on new TLC show *America's Worst Tattoos*, but that all came after she had already proven herself as a solid tattoo artist.

Given the pleasure to join Massacre for breakfast, we jumped right into interview mode, as she munched on a tiny mountain of fruit as bright as her personality.

HELLO, NEW YORK

"I get there and I didn't know anybody on the production, I didn't know anybody on the cast, and I'm just standing outside and somebody out there's like, 'Oh, you're Megan, nice to meet' 🍌"

Tattoo Vixens

When the first season came out, there were a lot of people that were like 'Fuck you and they were other tattooers, but they weren't my friends'

like, 'Fuck it, let's do it!' and I kind of dive into it headfirst. If it doesn't work out, whatever; and if it does, then awesome."

Filming for the first season began that very first day she arrived at Wooster Street Social Club and continued for a month, five days a week, ten hours a day.

Forced to figure things out as she went, Massacre admits, "I was really stressed and I hated it and I wanted to quit. The entire month I was like, 'TV is not for me, I can't do this, this is not how I live my life'."

But one thing this young tattoo starlet is not is a quitter. Support from her peers and the clear goal they tasked her with helped Massacre keep pushin' on.

"I actually sat down with a bunch of my friends in the tattooing industry and I was like, 'What do you think?' and everybody kept saying, 'There's gonna be people that are gonna hate on you, but at the same time, you have the opportunity to try and do it the right way. Just don't lose who you are, don't make the industry look stupid'."

"I think I've succeeded in that because I still have all of those same friends. Don't get me wrong, when the first season came out, there were a lot of people that were like 'Fuck you'





'If you're gonna take part in a TV show and be part of the public eye, it's your responsibility to be the best example possible. If you say 'I never signed up for being a good example,' well, you did

and they were other tattooers, but they weren't my friends."

Becoming tight with the cast and crew also helped her overcome her doubts—"At that point, all of a sudden, it became really fun"—and getting mad props from viewers not only solidified the fact that she had made the right choice, but that she needed to keep going forward with the show.

"I'm not gonna be like 'I'm the best tattooer', I'm definitely not like that, but I'm confident in my ability and I think that as long as I'm representing tattooing in a good light, that's really all that matters.

"I think a lot of tattooers on TV are hit or miss. There's some that are great, but there's a lot that are not and it's not that I care if you're a great tattooer or not, it's more I care what they represent to people. I think if you're gonna take part in a TV show and be part of the public eye, it's your responsibility to be the best example possible. If you

say 'I never signed up for being a good example', well... you did."

THE REAL WOOSTER STREET SOCIAL CLUB

"It's actually really awesome," says Massacre when talking about what Wooster Street Social Club is like once TLC has left the building.

"It's huge! A tattoo shop should never be as big as ours is," she laughs. "We just need a lot of space when we shoot and there's actually almost two separate tattoo areas. One we use when we're filming, which has soundproof doors that come down, and the main part is open and running like a regular tattoo shop even when we're shooting.

"There's a lot of really cool people that work there and whereas on the first and second season the people you see don't live in New York, the third season is mostly everyone that actually works and lives there all the time. I'm glad they got to be on the third season. Not that I didn't like the people on the first and

second, I loved everybody, but it's kinda cool to give them a chance to show their talent!"

LETZ MASSACRE, YOU SAY?

When she's not tattooing, filming, designing or modelling, Massacre makes time to travel to conventions, as well as to numerous special events, but the latter was, admittedly, becoming a little too mundane. So she got creative.

"I get asked to do a lot of appearances and a lot of them are just parties where people want me to go and sit at a table and have drinks for an hour or two, but I'm a worker. If I'm part of an event or party, I like to contribute to the atmosphere," she says. "So I was like, 'What could I do at these things that's more than me just standing there?' and I thought, 'Well, they always have me go in the DJ booth and take pictures, why don't I learn how to DJ?' You don't have to be some big crazy dubstep DJ, just play a couple songs at a party." 🌸

MEGAN MASSACRE ON... TATTOO CRITIQUES

Because there are so many game shows in tattooing, a really funny phenomenon that I'm dealing with right now is I'll post pictures of my tattoos online and some people are like, 'Yeah, well, the left side should be a little more this shade.' So people who have no fucking clue what they're talking about are critiquing and nitpicking details. I'm just like, 'Jesus, you're watching way too much Ink Master!'

Tattoo Vixens



Tattooing has become so accessible; they sell tattoo machines at Sears - that shouldn't be allowed



Meeting her now boyfriend, Joe Letz, the drummer of CombiChrist who has a penchant for doing DJ gigs while off tour, Massacre began learning the ropes by accompanying him to shows. Once the two began dating, Letz had the rather ingenious idea to create the Letz Massacre side project. "He said we should just DJ as a duo, which is good for a couple that's really, really busy and both work and travel all the time, because it's kind of an excuse to get to do that together," explains Massacre and smiles, "it's a win-win for us."

LOOKING AHEAD

"I just hope that people remember me as a well-respected tattoo artist," starts Massacre when asked about what kind of legacy she'd like to leave behind. "Megan, the girl who was a really good tattoo artist and one of the first artists on TV that really respected the industry'. And I just really hope that when people remember me, they're still looking at my work and still appreciating it."

"I hope that I leave positive impressions. I see that I inspire a lot of young people to tattoo, or so they tell me, and I'm happy about that, but at the same time, the industry is being flooded with people that want to learn

to tattoo and they're awful. And it's not even necessarily because they're awful artists, it's just because they're not going about it the right way. I try so hard to tell those people they gotta learn the right way. You can't just get a tattoo machine and say, 'I don't have time to get an apprenticeship, so I'm gonna do it this way'. Well, no, you don't really have the option. At that point, you don't get to learn how to tattoo."

"Tattooing has become so accessible; they sell tattoo machines at Sears, that shouldn't be allowed. It's kind of like when somebody's a hair stylist, if they want serious product, they have to have a license to go buy it and that's how it should be with tattoo equipment."

"I'm sorry, but people don't wake up one day thinking, 'I wanna be a lawyer, but I don't have time for law school or to take the bar exam, so I'm just gonna buy a couple law books, figure it out and then just say I'm a lawyer and work as a lawyer'. It doesn't work like that. That's illegal and that's how it should be for tattooing."

"There are so many crappy tattoos out there that now I have a show, America's Worst Tattoos, all about covering up those crappy tattoos—come on, that's telling you something! But what I like about doing that show is it's showing people that, you know what? Your tattoo may not be as good as you think and hopefully, people will start to understand the difference between good and bad tattoos." 🐼

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LEFT HAND TATTOO

In the far north of Sweden dwells one of the best realistic tattooists in the country. For 20 years, Peppe at Left Hand Tattoo in Piteå has been adorning skin with realistic motifs, a direction he found early on in his career via the legend of Paul Booth. So good are his skills now that he was named 'Tattooist of the year' at the convention, Svenska Tatueringsmässan, in Norrköping...



LEFT HAND TATTOO

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www.lefthandtattoo.se

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In 1994 Peppe decided to try out the art of tattooing, but it wasn't something he immediately thought he'd be doing the rest of his life.

"I think it started during my school years, when I was face down in my drawing pad instead of paying attention in class," he explains. "When I started getting tattooed myself I remember thinking that this was something I could do myself. It didn't look

that hard, so a friend of mine lent me his tattoo machines when he was out of town. I sat in his seat and tattooed, and it went very well. In those days, of course, everything looked like shit and I didn't really realise that it was something I'd do for ten, 20 years, but it just went on from there."

After having practiced on friends for a while he met a colleague named Daniel Sundling, with whom he moved

his business to a cellar facility.

"People started showing up, which made us realise that we needed to open up a proper studio. And so we did. It didn't even have a name. The sign outside only said 'tattoo', but it became like a studio."

Realism was the name of Peppe's game, more or less from the start, or semi realism, as he labels it himself.

"I'm somewhere in between, I guess. If you take an image from





PEOPLE STARTED SHOWING UP, WHICH MADE US REALISE THAT WE NEEDED TO OPEN UP A PROPER STUDIO

the internet and copy it, it's not very fun. I like taking a realistic image and draw on it. I could draw a proper face from scratch, but it would take a really long time. If you work every day you need to

take some shortcuts. Your energy should be on both drawing and tattooing, so that's why it isn't hyper-realism, but semi-realism. Even when I don't do designs like that I build them up with shading and stuff that make them realistic." Sometimes, however, it does become 'hyper-realistic'.

"If you do portraits you most often can't add something personal, but then you have the challenge of making it precise, and that's 🍌"

fun because you get a positive response from the customer."

The inspiration to do realistic came early on from the legendary Paul Booth, now at Last Rites Tattoo in New York.

"I ordered flash from him straight away, more or less. His style appealed to me, but when I started tattooing he wasn't the name he is today so I mostly did what hung on the wall. I've done many Spaulding & Rogers designs that you had to enlarge like 100 times in the computer just to see the details."

He also does other styles—except for old school.

"I do some Japanese, although a lot of people say that what I do isn't in fact Japanese. It's the same thing as with my realistic work. I work with shading and stuff that adds some realism to it. Old school I would never do, however. I just don't like the motifs. If I look through a magazine I quickly scroll through those pages. They don't appeal to me, and I've never had to do that either. There hasn't been much of a request here in Piteå, and nowadays we have Tobbe working here in the studio. He's an old school tattoo artist. Even so, I've done my share of crap, since I did a lot of tribals and Chinese signs for many years.



I'VE PROBABLY DONE TEN TIMES MORE TRIBALS THAN THE OTHERS AT THE STUDIO—AS THE ONLY STUDIO IN TOWN WE HAD TO DO EVERYTHING

I've probably done ten times more tribals than the others here at the studio. This was the only studio in town, so we had to do everything."

Peppe worked with Daniel from 1997 to 2005, until the latter decided to move south.

"I decided to get my own place," Peppe says. "When a guy named Fredrik Edin moved back from Stockholm I asked him if he wanted to work with me. He

then worked under the name Left Hand Tattoo, so we started using that. Three, four years ago he decided to move on and open up No Remorse Tattoo. Tobbe started working with us before that."

This brings us up to speed, a well-established studio in the far north of Sweden, with few neighbours to be inspired by. This makes conventions especially important for Peppe and his colleagues.



"We don't meet other tattoo artists on a daily basis. It's not like you go to the next town very often, so it's important to go to conventions and keep yourself updated. It's very inspiring."

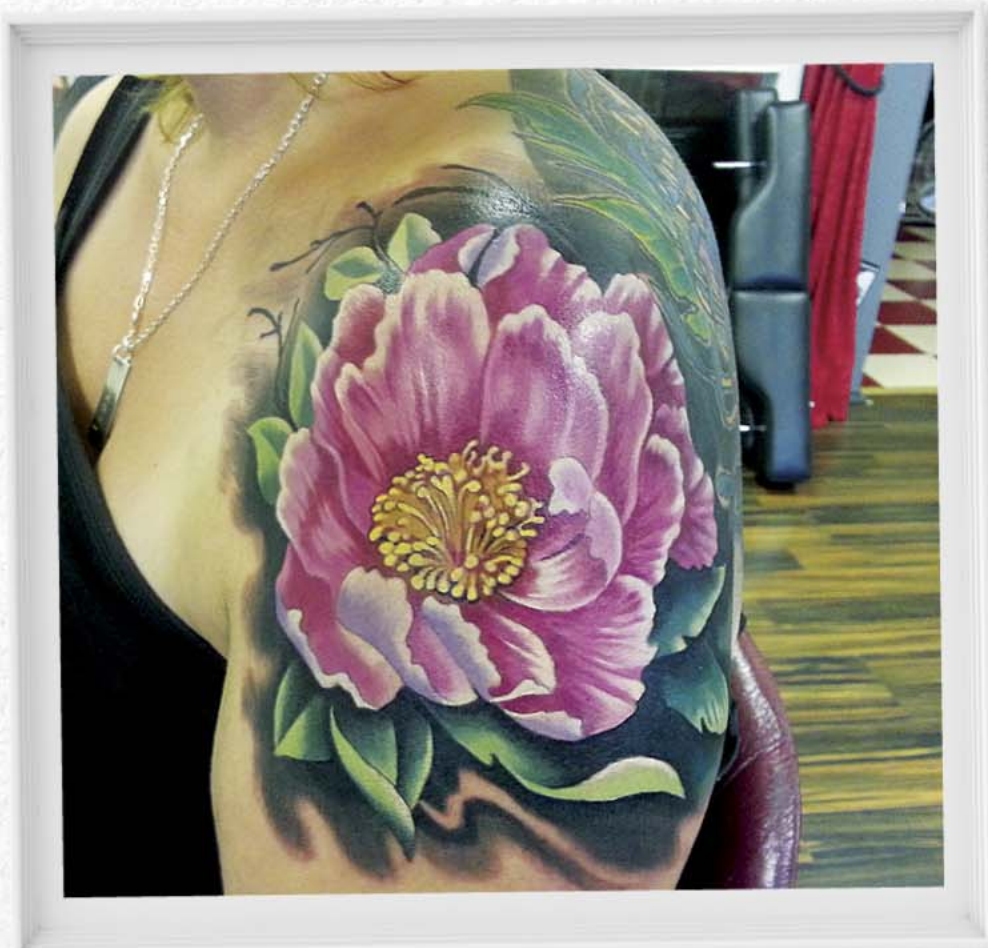
It did however take fairly long before he actually participated at one.

"It took over ten years. I always felt like I wasn't good enough, but when we finally went to the first one the response was good. We ended up in a magazine and definitely developed a taste for the whole thing."

The convention visits have, however, been kept within the borders of Sweden.

"We've for instance gone to Norrköping, Trolhättan, Stockholm, Göteborg and Kalmar. With a big family, that's all I can do. We have three kids and stables with horses. My parents-in-law will probably resign if I start going abroad. But one day I will go, damn it! I'd probably have to pass up on one of the Swedish ones, something I don't know if I dare do considering how many good artists there are in Sweden." 🐾

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TATTOO SHOW

The significance of the Manchester International Tattoo Show should never be underestimated. For many years, it's been a mainstay in the tattoo calendar and now, in the hands of the people who bring you Tattoo Jam, Tattoo Freeze and the Great British Tattoo Show, it only continues to get better...



I FOUND MYSELF CORNERED BY THE BOSS OUTSIDE A FORTUNE TELLING BOOTH AND BEHIND ME THERE'S A GUY WITH A FREAKING HUGE SNAKE AROUND HIS NECK

You ever flown across a few times zones—not for a holiday—but on a trip where you have to get back on a plane a couple of days later. It kind of leaves you feeling like you stuck your wet hand in the nozzle of a hair dryer.

That's what it's like spending a weekend at a Jazz show these days. They're pretty full-on, with the events team making sure that if you're not getting tattooed there's something to see or do at every turn of the screw.

So, I figured I'd start the Manchester show a little bit

WINNERS LIST (I)

**BEST SMALL
BLACK & GREY**
Otto D'Ambra at
White Elephant

**BEST LARGE
COLOUR**
Emils Salmins at
Portside Tattoo,
Liverpool

**BEST LARGE
BLACK & GREY**
Akos Strenner
at Primitive
Origins, London

differently than usual. Normally, it's very much a case of hitting the venue the night before, but when you do that, you see things under construction and that gives you a completely different mind-set. This year, I arrived (un)fashionably late—if you can call an hour 'late'—and it certainly gives you a much different perspective. After shaking hands with dozens of friends not seen for a few months (though it really does seem like only

yesterday most of the time), I find myself cornered by the boss outside a fortune telling booth and behind me there's a guy with a freaking huge snake wrapped around his neck.

This is a new addition to proceedings; a fun and welcome one, but snakes really are viewed best when you know they're there. I'm not big on reptilian surprises.

Moving swiftly along, my time is best served with things I understand. My first 🐍







THE VENUE

The complex was originally Manchester Central railway station, one of the city's main railway terminals. It was built between 1875 and 1880 and was closed to passengers on 5 May 1969. The station served as the terminus for Midland Railway express trains to London St Pancras. The station's large arched roof—a huge wrought-iron single-span arched roof, spanning 210 feet (64m), 550 feet (168m) long, and 90 feet (27m) high—was a noted piece of railway engineering and is the widest unsupported iron arch in Britain after the Barlow London St Pancras. At its height in the 1930s more than 400 trains passed through the station every day. The station operated for 89 years, before closing in May 1969 following the 'Beeching' cuts. It became derelict and the train shed was used as an indoor car park. Now however, it makes a mighty fine venue for a tattoo show—come 2014, come see. It will be fun—promise!

stop is with my convention buddy, Derek Nelson—after his monster creation of ‘the globe’ at GBTS, I find him stashed away with none-other than Trent making a wasp look sexy on his wrist. If you’re gonna be sexy, a wasp is surely the way to do it. Not so far away, I stop by at Rock ‘n’ Roll Tattoo and find them doing great things—but more about that later.

Also worthy of note before I get cornered again, Rob Bates (who can officially stay awake as long as Derek and me) was tuning-up for some brilliant work; Ravi from Finland made his first appearance and was mighty pleased to find the Manchester natives both friendly and interested in his work—that's always good to see when people travel far to join us at the circus.

On the friendly kudos circuit, I have made no secret that I think Otto (now in his own place called White Elephant) is a fine and wonderful artist. Professionally, I probably shouldn't have favourites, but his work captivates me personally and it was good to see him win something this weekend. Talking of which,

ONE ARTIST WHO I'VE ALWAYS MANAGED TO MISS WORKING IN THE FLESH WHO I SPENT SOME TIME WITH WAS MARK BESTER—HOLY COW, THAT GUY IS A CLASS ACT IN THE MAKING



one artist who I've always managed to miss working in the flesh who I spent some time with was Mark Bester—holy cow, that guy is a class act in the making. Watch out for extremely good things from him in the coming years. Fact.

Somewhere along the line, Sunday turned up. I grabbed a coffee with Louis Molloy—always a pleasure to shoot the breeze with him. If you ever want to know what's

going on in the world, he's always a good place to start.

Meanwhile, if there were awards for ‘randomly but fascinatingly put together booths’ there would have been a real life Mexican stand-off between Woody and Fade FX. Fade is very, very cool; turns out she has quite a unique life—one that we’ll be catching up here with sooner rather than later. Mark my words, she’s one artist that is going be high in 🌻



I'D NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT BEFORE, BUT PIOTR GIE'S FOUR AWARDS IN A ROW WERE MORE THAN WELL DESERVED—HE MIGHT AS WELL'VE HUNG OUT BESIDE THE STAGE

demand as we hit 2014. As usual, the sheer weight of the weekend stopped me from hanging out quite as much as I would like—that's nothing new but one of these days, I've promised myself to sit down with every single artist for at least ten minutes. That will be the day... Anyway, as promised: a word about Piotr Gie at Rock 'n' Roll Tattoo. I'd never seen anything

like it before, but his four awards in a row was more than well deserved. It felt weird to me, the other judges, and even Piotr himself. He might as well have just hung out at the side of the stage—the first to pique my interest (pique! I must use that word again sometime) was the little rabbit that won best small colour. It was indeed small so didn't break the rules, it was most definitely colour, but more

WINNERS LIST (II)

BEST ORIENTAL
Sid Siamese 1 at
Infinity Tattoo

BEST PORTRAIT
Richard Guy at The
Tattoo Lounge

BEST OF SATURDAY
Andy Walker at
Creative Vandals

BEST REALISM
Williams Jones
at Body Art

BEST OF CONVENTION
Piotr Gie at Rock 'n'
Roll Tattoo, Dundee


than anything, it was a great design and cleanly executed—which while that might seem obvious to say, sometimes gets the better of a few artists in a convention atmosphere. It's not always easy doing your thing when people keep stopping by to look at what you're doing. Having said that, it was tough call between that and Andy Walker's brilliant execution of a Minion-ised Iron Man. When a tattoo can effortlessly bring a smile to four burned out judges, you know you're doing something right. Next stop—the mighty Tattoo Jam. Let's get it on... 🎧

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Reviews

THIS ISSUE, WE HAVE SOME ALTERNATIVES TO THE ALTERNATIVES—GATHER THESE THINGS AROUND YOU AND BECOME INSTANTLY CULTURED!



RUSH

IN CINEMAS NOW

Set in the days of Formula 1 when racing was more about the sheer bloody minded courage (or stupidity) and brilliance of the man behind the wheel rather than the technology under the bonnet, Rush is exactly that—a thrilling rush of speed, power, adrenalin and excitement mainlined straight to your stomach.

It's based on the intense rivalry between two of Formula 1's more interesting characters; Germany's coldly logical but technically talented Niki Lauda (Daniel Brühl, uncannily resembling the real man) and England's hot-headed hedonist, James 'the shunt' Hunt (Chris Hemsworth proving there is far more to him than hammer-wielding Thor).

Director Ron Howard manages to capture the sheer, breathless excitement and terror of all this—at the time Formula 1 was an intensely dangerous sport with plenty of fatalities—and yet add a supremely human dimension. Lauda and Hunt are not simply a cold, humourless German and a heavy-drinking, womanising Brit, but complex, multi-layered men driven by personal demons, beset by doubts and yet absolutely focused on one thing—winning. It's testament to the talents of all involved that the quiet scenes within the film are just as compelling as the utterly amazing race sequences when you feel you can smell that petrol, sense



that heat coming off the engines and hear that deafening roar.

One stroke of genius from writer Peter Morgan is that the film is very even-handed; it doesn't take sides and make Lauda the baddie and Hunt the hero. You never feel you are being invited to root for one or the other, but that you want them both, in their own way, to be the victor.

You don't have to be a fan of Formula 1 to enjoy this film because even though it's all about the racing, in reality it really isn't—it's about a battle of wills, about seeing how far an individual is willing to go in order to defeat a rival and about the all consuming thrill of pushing yourself to the utmost limit.

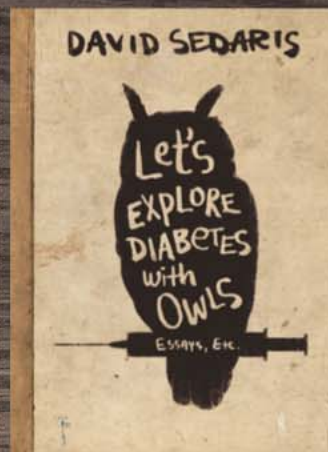
Dee Pilgrim

AIN'T THEM BODIES SAINTS

ON GENERAL RELEASE

From the opening shots of dappled sunlight through leaves falling on the heads of two young lovers you know this is going to be a film of moments and spaces rather than relentless action. The lovers are Ruth (Rooney Mara) and Bob (Casey Affleck), two small-time felons living in the sleepy backwater of Meridian, Texas. They are hopelessly, foolishly obsessed with each other and seemingly relish their roles as a latter day Bonnie and Clyde.

Bob, in particular, seems to find the notion of being an outlaw incredibly romantic and, in a way,



LET'S EXPLORE DIABETES WITH OWLS

DAVID SEDARIS, ABACUS BOOKS

If you're looking for something to get your teeth into for the next few weeks, allow me to point you in the direction of a gem that I picked up on a whim—not least because the cover is wonderful—one of those books were the booksellers start staring you down because you've been reading it for too long in the store. It's called Let's Explore Diabetes With Owls from David Sedaris and it's a doozy. Now there's a word that doesn't need reincorporating into the English language.

Sedaris is quite well known as a humourist and essayist of some repute but having chewed this up faster than it took anybody to typeset the book itself, I think it's fair to say that he's nothing more than a brilliant observer of the human condition—and that's something I can really get my teeth into. While he really is genuinely funny (as opposed 'not just because the publisher say he is') more than this, nearly everything he writes about is aimed at pointing out just how small and inconsequential the human race is when it faces the mighty universe and all the things it can throw at us.

From relationships to a simple visit to the zoo or choosing a present for your partner—his stories spin wildly out of control with a guarantee that you could put yourself in his shoes at any given moment in time and identify with him—which makes Sedaris kind of a 21st century Woody Allen if you're looking for a peg to hang it on.

This collection of essays won't take you long to plough through. He has a genuine fan in me and if you give him a try, I can pretty much guarantee he will hook you in as well. Owls isn't his only book and if you like what you find, you should hunt the others down.

I'm sitting here wishing he had even a vague interest in tattoos so I could offer him some work—now that would be a game changer...

Mr Smith

heroic. But one day the police are on their tails and they hole up in a rickety abandoned house and a shoot-out ensues. Ruth injures the local sheriff, Patrick (Ben Foster), but when the pair subsequently surrender, it is Bob who takes responsibility and is sent to jail.

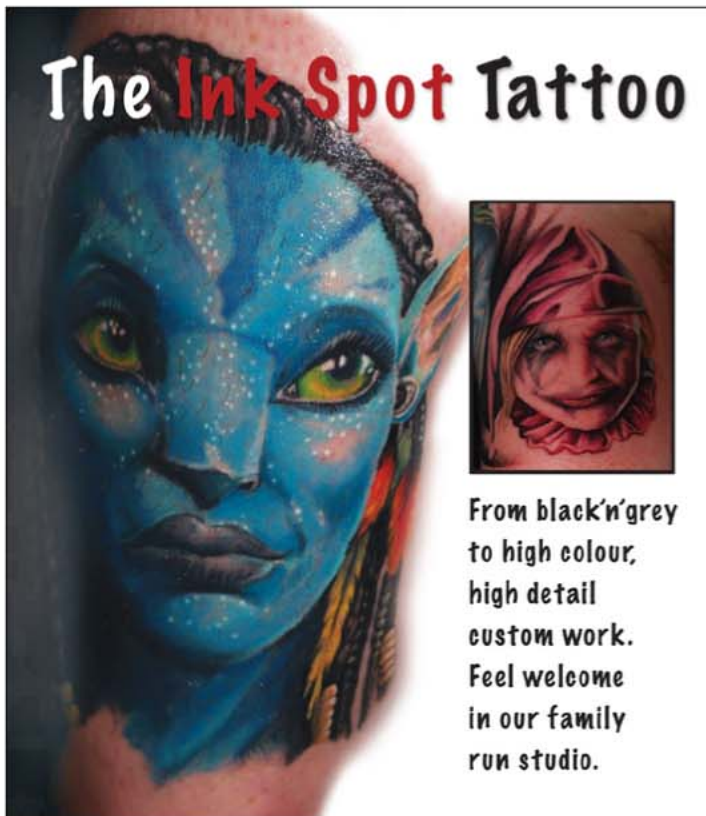
Four years later, Ruth is still living in Meridian and in Bob's absence she has given birth to their daughter, whom Bob has never seen. The one-time bad girl has turned out to be a wonderfully attentive and loving mother, a state of affairs Skerritt (Keith Carradine) the owner of the local hardware shop, and also Patrick, the sheriff she shot, want to maintain. So when news arrives that Bob has broken out of jail and is making his way across country back to Meridian and his family tensions and emotions run high.

That tension—although never expressed verbally by Ruth—is so palpable in every carefully constructed shot of the film, you find yourself holding your breath waiting for the inevitable collision of the past and present. Although it is set in the 1970s the film has a timeless feel to it and could just as easily be telling a tale from the 1870s; a tale of love and loss and sacrifice and new birth and redemption.

Like Malick's Badlands and Days of Heaven, echoes of which reverberate throughout this movie, Ain't Them Bodies Saints is cinema as a sometimes baffling, but always beautiful, work of art.

Dee Pilg

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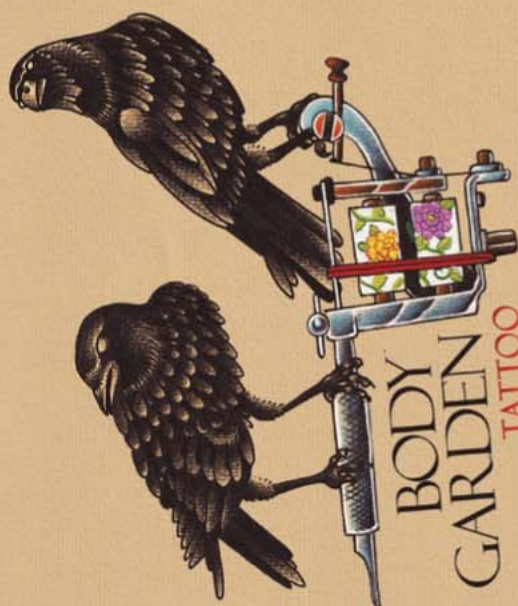
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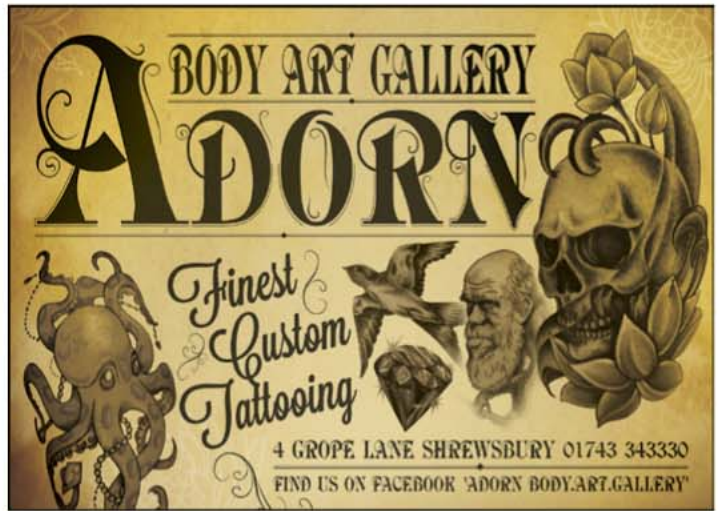


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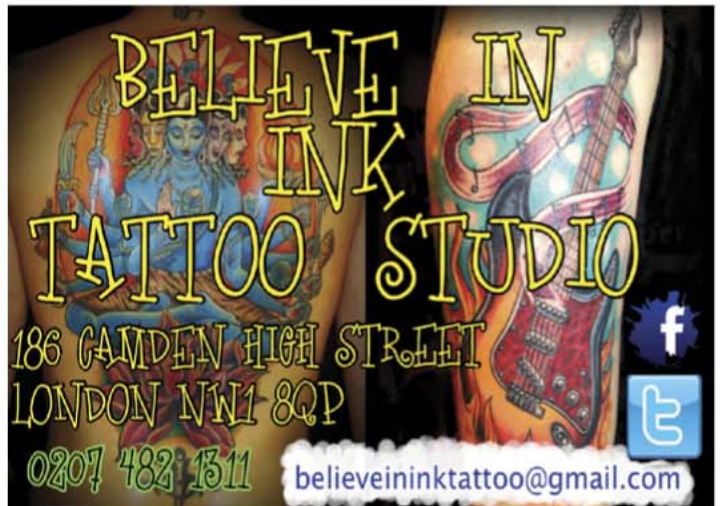


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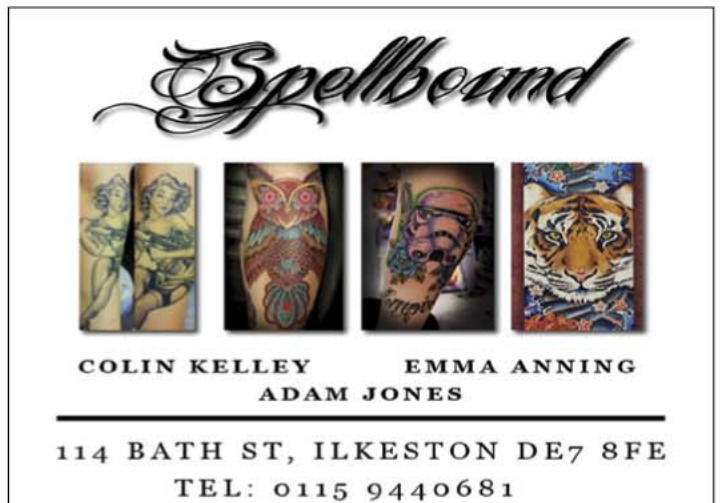
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NO CHEATING

I don't like pain, I don't enjoy the sensation of being tattooed. I consider it an unavoidable chore with a desirable end point, like housework—I hate cleaning, but I love a tidy home, and I hate getting a tattoo, but I love being tattooed. Like a horrible bus journey to a lovely destination, I put up with it because it's worth it



Paula Hardy Kangelos

One of my most used responses to the “does it hurt?” question is, “not as much as having babies”, because almost everyone instinctively understands that the intense love for a new baby far outweighs the pain of childbirth. To work, labour, suffer and endure is intrinsic to our biology and our culture—working a job you hate in order to save for a holiday you’ll love is essentially the same thing as sitting for a tattoo, yet negative associations regarding tattoos, pain and self harm still pervade. I often find myself denying the

injury is to release hormones—endorphins—which act as natural pain killers (presumably so our Palaeolithic ancestors could run away from the beast that had just bitten them) and it makes sense that a person suffering from emotional pain might seek comfort by deliberately triggering the biological response to physical pain.

The same feel-good endorphins are activated by fear, (explaining the joys of rock climbing, snowboarding and sky diving) and by strenuous exercise—they make running not just tolerable, but enjoyable. Endorphins calm us down and make us feel great and they allow us to carry on when we are ready to give in or give up. I’m a regular gym-goer (I’m currently obsessed with spinning) and when I’m tired or not at my best, I start out hating each minute and telling myself that I can’t continue. Yet I know that if I power through, I will start to enjoy it, and afterwards I’ll feel amazing.

Sitting for a tattoo is almost exactly the same experience—I don’t want to do it, I know it will hurt and that I’m going to have to work hard to keep still, but I know that sitting well brings lasting benefits, even the most talented artist will struggle to do their best work on a fidgeting canvas

Some sessions are easier than others, a bad day, being in a rush, or a bit run down, not getting enough sleep, the placement, the tattooist’s technique or ‘bedside manner’ can all make the

process more difficult to endure. As customers we develop little rituals to minimise the anticipated discomfort, taking along certain foods, wearing particular kinds of clothing, listening to specific music. It allows us to feel in control and keeps us occupied whilst we wait for the endorphins to kick in and help out—and they really do help. More than once, I’ve been surprised by the sound of my own voice saying, “Sure, I’m fine to carry on” when just moments earlier I was silently pleading for a power cut.

After the stencil is applied and the hectographic paper peeled away, I often think, ‘Wouldn’t it be great if that were it? Tattoo done, 20 seconds, no pain’. But if it were that easy, would I still want to be a tattooed person? Or is at least some of the value directly related the difficulty? I’ve never used topical anaesthesia, to me, it’s cheating—but if the pain is just the route and tattooing my whole body is the destination, why do I insist on taking the more difficult path?

Maybe one day, as I get older and the remaining blank spots get increasingly tender I will be tempted to bend my self-made rules, until then, I’ll just get by with my endorphin high—maybe I do love pain after all.

‘Endurance is not just the ability to bear a bad thing, but to turn it into glory’—William Barclay, 20th century theologian.

“You have to push yourself to feel the benefits”—Pete, 21st century spinning instructor. 🐼

I’VE BEEN SURPRISED BY THE SOUND OF MY OWN VOICE SAYING, “SURE, I’M FINE TO CARRY ON” WHEN JUST MOMENTS EARLIER I WAS SILENTLY PLEADING FOR A POWER CUT

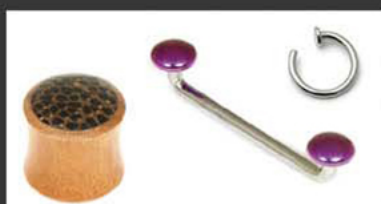
assumptions of strangers who tell me that I “must love pain”.

Of course, some personal narratives do connect self-injury with tattoos, but rarely are they presented as two sides of one coin. Instead, tattooing oneself is often linked with recovery; it can be an effective way to conceal or transform old scars, can restore previously eroded self-esteem and replaces old shame with new pride.

A ‘love of pain’ is not what motivates those that self harm anyway—it’s a coping mechanism, intended to provide relief or distraction from emotional anguish. The human body’s physiological response to



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