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WE ARE THE PEOPLE OUR PARENTS WARNED US ABOUT

wenty years of Skin Deep, huh. I wonder if back in 1994 anybody ever considered that one day in the future, the lid would be forced open on Pandora's Box and all hell would be let loose.

Actually that's not true. It's hardly Judgement Day with the tattooed dead walking the earth or anything, but then again...

Look at us now. Old enough to know better and young enough not to care. Back in 1994 - as demonstrated by this image of the very first issue - this 'large' shoulder tattoo was considered cover worthy as a great example of what you could get tattooed. It wasn't until a few vears later that I discovered Skin Deep for myself and never in a million years did I imagine I would be driving the car for our twentieth birthday - or the 200th issue actually, which happened a while back - funny how things turn out.

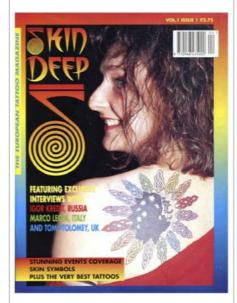
Taking a snapshot of those twenty years, a lot has happened and at the same time not very much has happened.

Somewhere around 2003, I interviewed Paul Booth and then Guy Aitchison for another project entirely. Back then, they were not the giants they are now but I could tell they were going to be. Their work ethic, output and contribution has been astounding - unlike Guns n Roses who finally got their shit together to release one whole album in all that time. You couldn't get away with that in tattooing - or maybe you could if the 14 tattoos you produced were of the same quality. Actually, if an artist turned up with just 14 bodysuits they had spent twenty years on, I think I would be interested in that in the extreme.

I've painted myself into a corner. Shit. Anyway, I think the biggest change out there is that tattooing is not all that shocking or rebellious anymore and that's the biggest favour ever done for the art across two decades. It's now about the art itself, the statement you wish to make to the world and exactly how

artist and client can work together to achieve that - at least in our ideal world.

I've been driving Skin Deep for four years now - or is it five? That in itself has gone in the blink of an eye too but I have no intention of going anywhere else. Aside from being a hairdresser for Catherine Zeta-Jones, this has to be the best job in the world.



There are rough days - like the ones where the first thing you see in the morning is a message from somebody who loves their new tattoo of Spiderman web-slinging through Manhattan but sadly, in the real world, it looks like a hobbit in an ill-fitting knitted suit but it's always been that way and probably always will be. It comes with the territory. On the great days, hours at a time can disappear in an instant when you stumble upon an artist that excites you enough to move heaven and earth to parade their work in front of the readership, or a collector turns up and they have done ALL the right things. That's heart-warming.

Man, I've nearly used up all of my word count and haven't said even a fraction of the things that I wanted to. Let me raise a few flags here and see who salutes and then we can all get on with our lives:

Thanks must first go to Sally who

stabilised Skin Deep in the early days before moving on to launch Total Tattoo. Many imagine there is animosity between us but far from it. There's always room for quality magazines to sit next to each other on the shelves. I also have to shake the hand of (not buy a drink for) every writer, photographer, tattoo artist and model that has wanted to ride in the car long before I ever walked in the door and naturally, during all the time I've been here too.. Without all of you, I'd be much like a king in Game of Thrones - all dressed up and ready to roll but looking out of the window, wondering what the hell was going on outside.

Finally, I'm going to sincerely say thanks to Stuart who owns Jazz Publishing - not because I want his shoes to be shiny and clean (he can clean his own freaking shoes) but in thousands of days gone by, he saw something in Skin Deep and nurtured it into maturity - that takes balls of steel. For all of you whiners and complainers out there, sure, the company made money - but the company that isn't making money isn't publishing any magazines either. It's tough out there.

Mostly though - thanks to you reader type people who have stuck with us, had faith in us, generally have a ball with us and all those other things that sound fucking creepy when I write them down, but if you weren't out there, we wouldn't be either.

Life is short. Be cool to each other...





@mrsionsmith

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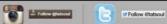
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TATSOUL ARTIST CHAIR



THE USUAL SUSPECTS

- 06 SLEEVE NOTES
- 18 BEHIND CLOSED DOORS
- 118 HERE IN THE NOW FRONTIER
- 127 CRAIGY LEE SOAPBOX
- 130 AN EYE IS UPON YOU

We like this kinds
of feature - a lot.
The ones in which
tattoos do something
great and change
somebody's life
for the better.

\odot INK ON SCREEN

This being our 20th anniversary issue, we decided to trace tattooing's TV roots and its subsequent ups and downs on the small screen in an effort to answer the million-dollar question: What sort of impact has television had on the industry?

DAVE PERRY

LO One of the best things about hanging out with Dave Perry is the quality of conversation. We have hung-out

on innumerable occasions and talked about almost everything under the sun - everything but his own work it seems. So, Torquay? Yeah... we can do Torquay

SHOPPING AROUND

There's a parallel universe where Marilyn Monroe sported a full body suit straight from Sailor Jerry's wall, James Dean underlined those glowering eyes with prison-style ink and even Audrey Hepburn went under the needle. A lot. Welcome to Cheyenne Randall's Shopped Tattoos.

CHET ZAR

Monsters are a curious thing. As we wander through this world from cradle to grave, not one of us has (probably) ever seen a 'monster' as we would obviously term it - and yet, we instinctively know what one is supposed to look like. Enter Chet Zar - one of the greatest monster 'revealers' of our time.



O BEHIND ME

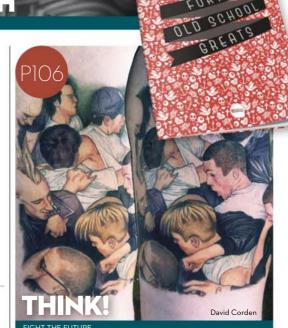
Laser removal
- despite the
information
superhighway doing
its thing out there,
we found scant good
information when
it came to tattoo
removal - so we
sent Paul Sweeney
into the jungle to
find out more.

○○ VINYL FRONTIER

Whether you're a
Goth, punk or indie
kid ... whether skate
decks, manga or old
school rock floats your
boat, you can't fail
to have noticed the
rise of the art-toy. It's
a scene that draws

body art and street style and increasingly feeds back into work of tattooists and designers.

its inspiration from



onlenis

THIS MONTH'S PULL OUT: FORTY OLD SCHOOL GREATS

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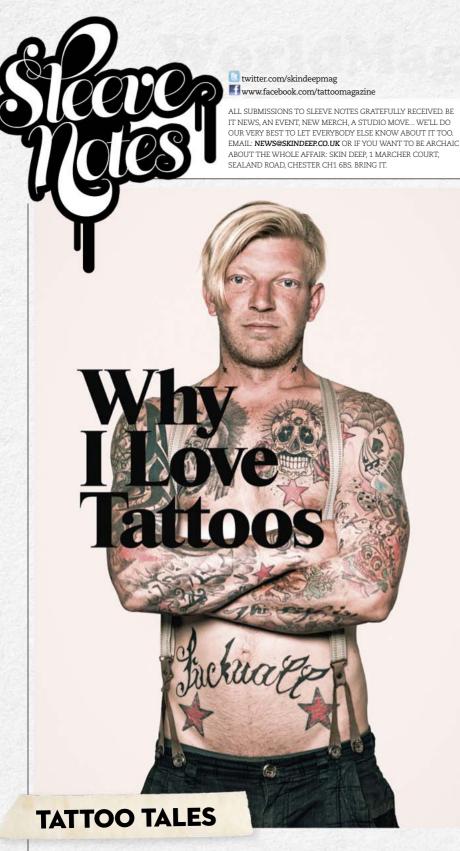
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One thing you can say with reasonable certainty when it comes to tattoos is that you can always be surprised. There's always going to be something – a choice of design, motto or perhaps placement – that gives even the most seasoned bodysuited collector a moment's pause.

That sense of wonder, surprise or just plain bafflement was the starting point for 'Why I Love Tattoos', a new book from photographer Ralf Mitsch. Fascinated by what he describes as "outspoken" tattoo art, he went on a two year journey, speaking to collectors about their pieces and the stories behind them.

The end result is more than 50 profiles of collectors from all over the world, of all ages, each with a tale to tell about their ink. As you'd expect from a snapper, the accompanying images are arresting: no-nonsense, frank portraits of real people and real tattoos, offering an intriguing glimpse of the lives behind the lines.

You can find out more about the project, and order your copy, at whyllovetattoos.com.

SHORT SLEEVES





OUT WITH SPEAR, IN WITH KARMA

Birmingham's Spear Studio has been renamed, remodelled and rebranded as Karma Collective. The all-female studio is still in the same location on Alcester Road South in Kings Heath but now boasts a fresh new look and will be offering piercing and body modding alongside tattoo artistry.

Check them out at karma-collective. co.uk or call 0121 443 3211.



REVOLUTION NO.9

After years of being a self-confessed "tattoo gypsy" at establishments including Opulent Ink, Painted Lady Tattoo Parlour and State of Art Tattoo Emporium, artist Becky Adelaide has come to rest in the sleepy town of Malvern.

Her new private studio, No.9 Custom Tattoo, is appointment only (with late night slots available) and all custom work. Check out Becky's art at beckyadelaidetattoo. co.uk or give her a call on 07790 132677.

SHORT SLEEVES



BRINGING THE BLACK

London's newest studio, Black Onyx, has opened just off Holloway Road, and is designed to make a bold first impression. "We think the studio has a much different look to anything that the tattoo scene in London or the UK is accustomed to," says owner Steve Tefis.

You can call in to see for yourself, or visit blackonyxtattoostudio.com to find out more. The studio will also be hosting Uncl' Paul of IronBrush Tattoo in Athens, Greece from 11-20 August this year.





SMALL IS BEAUTIFUI

Boutique tattoo, piercing and body mod studio Valonia has just had a facelift and is open again for business. Head down to Frederick Street in South Shields for ink by Lady Valerie and metal bits from Cheryl the Needle.

See valoniatattoos.co.uk for more info or call 07794 045917; you'll also find them on the social medias.



EXTREME MAKEOVER

London's Extreme Needle have refurbished and expanded their Covent Garden branch. The team now comprises eight artists covering traditional, neo-trad, realistic and Japanese tattooing, as well as being home to two piercers.

Pop in and see them at 36 St Martin's Court, visit extremeneedle.co.uk or call 020 7240 6177 to get inked.



ALL NEW KICKS

Electric Kicks studio, home to artist Dek Kent (profiled in issue 234), has had a facelift. The studio remains in the same location in Pontefract, West Yorkshire, turning out quality custom work; visit electrickickstattoostudio.co.uk to find out more, or call 07725 029567.

At the time of writing Dek and Sam were on the lookout for a new artist to join the team, give them a call to find out more info.



READING TATTOO SHOW

7 - 8 June 2014

Rivermead Leisure Complex Richfield Avenue Reading RG1 8EQ readingtattooshow.co.uk

WATERFORD CITY CONVENTION

6 - 8 June 2014

Crystal Sports & Leisure Centre Cork Road, Waterford Waterford, 00353 Ireland facebook.com/WaterfordCityTattoo

CROYDON TATTOO CONVENTION

7 - 8 June 2014

Fairfield Halls Park Lane Croydon CR9 1DG

croydontattooconvention.com

NORTH EAST TATTOO EXPO

14 - 15 June 2014

ARC, Stockton Arts Centre Dovecot Street Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1LL facebook.com/northeasttattooexpo

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INKFEST

13 - 16 June 2014

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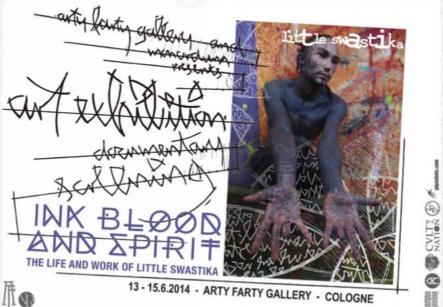
12 - 13 July 2014

MK DONs Arena Stadium Way West Bletchley Milton Keynes MK1 1ST mktattooconvention.co.uk

CARDIFF TATTOO AND TOY CONVENTION

19 - 20 July 2014

Mercure Cardiff Holland House Hotel and Spa 24-26 Newport Rd Cardiff CF24 ODD cardifftattooandtoycon.co.uk



DEBUT ART SHOW FROM LITTLE SWASTIKA

Marc 'Little Swastika' Lu is up with there with some of the most enigmatic and challenging artists we've ever featured in Skin Deep, so news that the notoriously reclusive fellow is mounting a gallery show is very exciting indeed.

This is the man who specialises in full body group tattooing (among other things) after all, so we're curious to see what else his creative mind might contain.

It's a busy time for Marc, as his current projects include an attempt to tattoo a design over ten people in the space of a week; at this point he hasn't decided if the finished piece will be shown to the

public or not. He's also suggested that his tattoo career might be coming to an end as he focuses on other forms of art. In other words: catch him while you can.

The exhibition will run at the Arty Farty Gallery in Cologne, Germany from 13-15 June and will include a screening of doc film 'Ink, Blood and Spirit – The Life and Work of Little Swastika'. Keep an eye on artyfarty-gallery.com for info.



RUSSIAN CRIMINAL TATTOOS NEED YOU

Design and publishing outfit FUEL has already produced several tomes of inmate art in their Russian Criminal Tattoo Encyclopaedias (currently running to three volumes). For their latest project they're compiling a selection of original police photographs of tattooed inmates, along with a textual analysis of the ink and its meaning.

Russian prison tattoos carry unique coded meanings, each one signifying an inmate's past, current standing within the system, affiliations, crimes and much more. The stories of their creation (razors, ash, guitar wire, tape player motors and more) are pretty hair-raising in their own right.

It's a fascinating area and FUEL are seeking funds via kickstarter to get the new book off the ground. Look them up via kickstarter.com if you'd like to get involved.





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MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL TATTOO SHOW

2 - 3 August 2014

Manchester Central

Petersfield, Manchester M2 3GX manchestertattooshow.com

TITANIC INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION BELFAST TITANIC BUILDING BELFAST

15 - 17 August 2014

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DUNDEE TATTOO CONVENTION

16 - 17 August 2014

Abertay Union 1-3 Bell Street, Dundee DD1 1HP dundeetattooconvention.co.uk

NORWICH BODY ART FESTIVAL

16 - 17 August 2014

The Open Youth Venue 20 Bank Plain, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 4SF norwichbodyartfestival.co.uk

TATCON BLACKPOOL

22 - 25 August 2014

Norbreck Castle Hotel Queen's Promenade Blackpool FY2 9AA tatconblackpool.co.uk

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL DEAF TATTOO CONVENTION

05 - 07 September 2014

St. John's Deaf Community Centre 258 Greens Lanes Manor House, London N4 2HE deaf-tattoo.com

TATTOO JAM

10 - 12 October 2014

Doncaster Racecourse Leger Way, Doncaster DN2 6BB tattoojam.com

WANT YOUR SHOW FEATURED IN OUR CONVENTION LISTINGS? JUST SEND IT TO: EDITOR@SKINDEEP.CO.UK AND WE'LL DO THE REST

🔰 BE AWARE BEFORE YOU BARE

A recent case from Sri Lanka highlights the importance of cultural awareness when it comes to displaying your tattoos in public.



British tourist Naomi Coleman, 37, was left facing deportation from Sri Lanka after she was reported to local authorities for displaying a Buddha tattoo on her arm. According to a police spokesman, she was arrested on a charge of "hurting others' religious feelings" and was subsequently moved to an immigration detention camp to await removal from the country.

Sri Lankan attitudes to informal dress are generally relaxed, although nude / topless sunbathing is prohibited. However, attitudes towards images of the Buddha are strict and the Foreign Office has updated its travel advice for the region, stating that 'the mistreatment of Buddhist images and artefacts is a serious offence and tourists have been convicted for this. British nationals have been refused entry

to Sri Lanka or faced deportation for having visible tattoos of Buddha.'

It's certainly not the first case of its kind: last year another British man didn't even make it beyond the airport in Colombo when his Buddha tattoo was spotted by officials. We're sure you don't expose your ink to the sun anyway (factor 50 and long sleeves for long life, folks), but this kind of incident is worth knowing about so you can choose when and where to unveil your art.

Following on from last issue's tale of leopard man Artur Mrozowski putting his own pelt for sale on an auction site, here's a new twist: a 21-year-old student has offered tattoo space on her body to local groups to raise money for charity.

Jess Buckland, a student from Quedgeley, is aiming to raise £3,000 to help fund her trip to Africa with the Dig Deep charity, which aims to improve access to clean water and sanitation in East African communities. In return for a donation to the cause, she's offering skin space to donors to place their logos on.

So far a local rugby club has paid to have their crest inked onto her ankle (by Gods of Ink studio, who did the work for free), and she's hoping to attract others. "It is a novelty and not that many people will get the opportunity," she told the Gloucester 'Citizen'. "If the donation is right, I would get anything done within reason."

See for yourself (and donate) at mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/jessicabuckland1.









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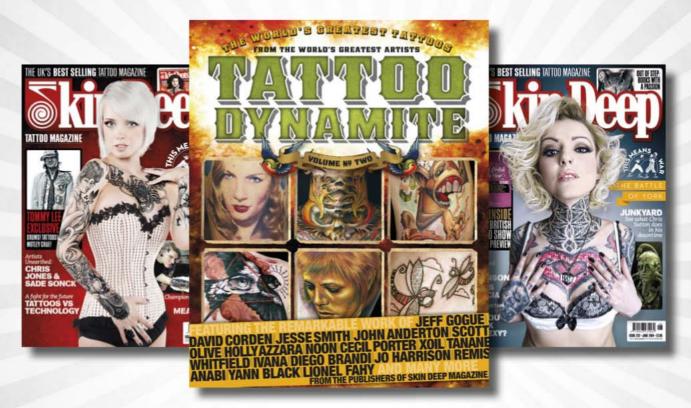
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Mick ROSE (left) with his eager subjects Martin Scargill and John Baker (right)

Making

Tattooist Mick Rose took his needles and inks down to Barnet General Hospital's social club for a spot of fund-raising on Sunday.

The deft designer from Ashwood Road, Potters Bar, spent nearly ten hours deco-rating people's bodies in aid of the club.

And judging from the queues stretching almost into Wellhouse Lane the young artist certainly had his hands

"The longest break I had all day was about five minutes," said Mick.

Roses, jokers and cartoon characters were the most popular requests as Mick got straight to the point.

CHANGING

We couldn't let a twentieth birthday pass us by without taking at least a little look at the changes two decades have brought upon us. For good or bad, there have been many - were they really the good old days or is nostalgia having nothing but its wicked way with us? It turns out that Michael Rose has kept a box full of the past in his studio, so who better to ask!

et's take 1994 as a highly convenient benchmark/ starting point for our purposes here. What do you think is the single biggest influence on how tattooing has progressed since then? TV shows? Social Media and the web? Or just the simple passage of time and the ambition of tattoo creatives?

"In my opinion all of them, without ambition, creative artists and forward thinking people tattooing never would have moved forward. In 1994 when I started, there wasn't social media or the popular Tattoo TV shows - they have helped inspire the new breed of tattoo artists and have given the clients a taste of what they can decorate their body with other than what used to be available on the walls or flash racks. Famous

people showing off there new ink in magazines and on the TV has also definitely brought tattooing into the populous."

Back then, I think it's safe to say a tattoo would essentially "look like a tattoo" - I think those battle lines very much depend on when you joined the party. Was there a 'warning sign' that things were beginning to change? I suspect there will have been a few.

"Yes there were several signs. The main one was how easy equipment became to buy and the large amount of business men/women opening studios but didn't tattoo themselves - in some cases, didn't even have tattoos!

"Another thing was that eventually, I couldn't tell who had done the tattoo. What I mean by that is, I could always tell by the



A classic Taz from back in the day



LOOKING AT THESE **OLD IMAGES MAKES** ME FEEL REALLY OLD, BUT IT GOES TO SHOW JUST HOW FAR TATTOOING HAS COME IN A REALLY SHORT SPACE OF TIME

Getting the point

MICHAEL Rose considers the subject of pain and leans forward

"If you ask me you have got to go through it. It's all part of the ritual," he says gravely.

We are sitting on the first floor of a semi-detached house in Ashwood Road, Potters Bar, as Michael surveys his armoury of guns and nods towards a cluster of needles sitting in a sterilising bath. I shift in my seat - in Potters Bar no-one can hear you

A slow grin pulls across the 19-year-old's face as he points to a certificate on the spotless wall and I let out my breath in a long spill of relief.

A few weeks ago, at Michael's bidding, the people from the council came to inspect his workplace. When they left they rewarded him with a certificate which makes him the only regis-tered tattooist in Potters Bar.

It is a privilege the young artist has adopted with pride and a sense of responsibility which belies his tender age.

"A lot of people come in and they are always a bit worried, so I coach them through it. Most of them are alright after this and they come back a month later," Michael explains.

Michael's sense of destiny and flair for art steered him away from an office job when he left Mount Grace School in Potters Bar at 16

Instead he tumbled into the hallowed, secret world of tattoing quite by chance when he went to work as a designer for a jewellery company and met Steve

Steve was a former tattooist who had some old equipment to sell and some free words of advice to give to an aspiring body-artist. Michael siezed his chance, bought the gear and began to practice on friends.

In April he started looking for

new equipment and was tacted by a tattooist called Tyson Taylor who had heard that Michael was selling his old gear.

A friendship grew and Michael's interest in the craft expanded as Tyson taught him a few tricks of the trade.

Michael got in touch with sup-pliers and decided to take the plunge, so he saved up and bought a complete set of new equipment.
The tattooist sits in his office on

JEREMY KAY

the first floor of his home, which has been adapted to house his table, chairs, sterilising bath, two tattoo guns and a host of

gadgets.

The walls are swathed with designs and mythological creatures leap out from all sides to vie with Celtic symbols for the honour of ending up on a cutomer's arm, leg or back. Some of the drawings are taken

from books, others are originals grinning clown, inspired by the dreamed up by Michael, like his east in horror guru Stephen King's novel It.

One such circus entertainer resides on Michael's forearm, part of a tapestry of tattoos which will soon cover or "sleeve" the artist's arm.

Other designs on his body, some of which he has done himself, depict animals, stars, a ring of roses around his neck. Sensibly there is nothing on his hands and head and not a loved one's name in sight.

He will not tattoo hands, faces or any part of the body responsible for increasing the human population, and says: "I cannot see the point. Tattooing is an art and I don't want to give it a bad name by drawing rude designs or drawing on these parts of the

Michael's clientele ranges from the obvious bikers to business types in suits. "Once this bloke came in who was polite and welldressed and when he undid his shirt his arm was covered with

tattoos," chuckles Michael

The whole process of doing a tattoo varies in length from half an hour to longer projects which may take up to ten hours and demand several sittings.

Once you have chosen what you want Michael presses on a transfer of the design.

Then, pulling the skin tight, Michael removes the transfer and follows the outline with one of his guns filled with black ink.

Michael then adds shading, before going to work with the colour ink gun.

A different number of needles are used depending on the area to be covered. If it is fine work a large point of seven needles will be used, but for thicker colouring as many as 14 or 21 soldered needles will go in the gun.

When the tattoo is finished it is bandaged and you will be told to follow strict instructions about hygiene.

Prices range from £10 to more than £100 for the larger pieces not bad for a work of art which stays with you for the rest of your life.

Which reminds me...I put it to Michael that it is all very well having a fancy design on my body now, but wouldn't I be riddled with regret, not to say embarrassment, when my great-grandson asks me why I have a two-foot puma on my leg?

The answer comes almost immediately: "Old age is full of

Michael Rose is based at 161 Ashwood Road, Potters Bar. He opens at 10am. Call 0707 645173 to make an appointment.



A fine line in tatooing - Michael Rose in his studio

outlines or the way it was coloured or even the way someone had shaded it as to who the originator was but now, I have no idea. There are so many amazing artist coming onto the scene, but they kind of all look the same to me.

"Tattoo shows on TV really changed everything as well, some things for the better and some not."

What are you still using on

pretty much a daily basis from the mid nineties? What's stood the test of time out there - and did it deserve to? Is there anything you were glad to see the back of?

"I can honestly say that I don't use anything now that I used in the nineties. There's no need to. Needles are pre-made and soldered better than I ever made them. Burning my fingers every morning 🧀

Fashion makes mark on society

Alex O'Connell on how tattoo artists cleaned up their act and appealed to the middle classes

appealed to the

IT is not often that you see a
buildog sidling up to a Barbarella lookalike positioned
astride a monkey wrench, especially on the streets of a North
London suburb.

Tattoos, made fashionable
by the Spice Girls, All Saints
and B'Witched, are bringing
what was previously considered the percogative of bad
girls and rough boys to the
middle classes. To meet their
customers' needs, tattoo studios are cleaning up their act
with rigorous hygiene routines, contracts between the tattooist and client and likea-style
sofas in the waiting rooms.

Michael Rose, a 22-year-old
lattooist and body-piercer who
set up shop in High Barnet
five months ago, is one of the
new school. Looking more like
a well-scrubbed member of a
boy band than an ink-stained
gargoyle, his workwear consists of a chocolade-brown
sweatshirt from Gap and walking boots.

Mr Rose, a former wedding-

ing boots.

Mr Rose, a former wedding-ring maker who has been a tat-tooist for six years, said. "If

you had a tattoo IS years ago, you were either a freak or had been in prison, but now that has all changed. The Spice Girls have definitely helped. Loads of kids are going to spend their Christmas money on tattooine and piercine and

Loads of kids are going to spend their Christmas money on tattooing and piercing and we have a private girl's school down the road, which helps."

Mr Rose has brought tattooing out of the basement and on to the high street. Barnet High Street. His studio floor is light, lacquered wood and the modern chairs are a present from his accountant. He sees his clients by appointment. They must all be over 18 and he has a no-hands, no-face policy. Since Zara Phillips had her tongue pierced, the body-piercing side of his bassiness has taken of the high street in the high properties. The properties walk out of here saying. I haven't got Aids, I haven't got hepatitis, but I've got a bloody nice tattoo."

His clientele includes housewises, pop-loving tecnagers and secretive businessmen.



Mr Rose said: "I've even had magistrates in my chair who want their nipples pierced. One said it gave him a kick to be sitting there in court without anyone knowing."

Clients include a member of a girl band: "No, she wasn't a Spice Girl, but I promised her I'd respect her privacy."

Baby Spice, Emma Bunton, lives in nearby Finchley and the family home of Posh Spice, Victoria Adams, is down the road in Chisholm. Mr Rose is hoping that they will visit.

Although he heard rumours that the shopkeepers of Barnet High Street were petitioning against his shop, he says that they have now accepted him.

Continued on next page

TOP TEN TATTOOS



- Daisy chains around arm
 Tribal bands around arms
 and neck
 Small rose

From previous page
Lilia Achilleos, 38, owner of Baboucha, a store that sells handmade bridal shoes, said: "He
should be allowed to do what
he wants, although I wouldn't
have a tattoo because they are
too permanent.
"At one point, it was only for
the rough and ready, but now
everyone has them. I even saw
a woman in Marks & Spencer
with cherries on her back and
it looked very nice."
Simon Newell, a salesman
who works next door at Hadley Green Garage, a RollsRoyce and Jaguar showroom,
said: "I think initially people
though it would be full of less
salubrious people, but it hasn't
could be a served to be a salesman
to be a served to be a served."

37, landlord of Ye Olde Monken Holt, opposite Mr Rose, said: "It doesn't bother me. Most of the girls who work bere have one somewhere."

Mr Rose charges anything from £15 for a rose, to thousands of pounds for a full-body designs are tribal patterns, roses and dolphins. He has sympathy with worried parcus." If you want body piercing, you should go to a professional and not into a hairdress ers or a beauty salon."

Not everyone is happy with the results. Cher is having a cross removed from her arm Removals are not eartied out on the National Health Service and private laser treatment.

is expensive, painful and does not always work.

Ian Barfoot, 43, a spokeman for the Association of Professional Taitoo Arrists and former editor of the tattoo magazine Buzz, said: "Tattooing is about choice, the choice of who to go to and what to get done. If you choose a dingly backstreet place, you may get a bad latitoo and risk contracting all kinds of blood-related diseases from VD to kepititis."

Nicola Appleton, of All Saints, said: "I have a discreet taitoo in a diserret place."

Mel C, of the Spice Girls, said: "I got a new tattoo, a lottus flower with Chinese writing at the base of my spine. That makes six IVe got now."

She added: "I thought my Mum would freak when she first saw my tattoo. I was shocked when she wanted one." Recently Mel C had an angel tattoo. "It really hurt, but it was worth it."

In fashionable circles even the gold wedding band looks set to be replaced by an inky inscription. The Spice Girl Mel B and her husband Jimmy Gultar displayed matching taitoos during their wedding reception. They had "MJP" written on their fingers by Claudio Mamochi, a London fattoo artist.

WHAT'S HOT?

Flash art was the way back then and there was no shortage of red devils on lady's bums and dolphins around navels, followed by the good old British Bulldog which was actually one of my first. Tribal armbands and barbed wire were for the hip and trendy fashion followers that started getting tattoos in the late nineties - followed by a huge interest into Celtic designs which seemed to disappear as quickly as it came.

and having solder and flux spitting in my face wasn't great when making my needles - and that was before I even tattooed anyone. Inks are pre-made too which saves me buying powder and mixing it with vodka or Listerine and then trying to bottle it. The fucking mess I used make! Machines are much, much better too - they're lighter, run smoother and look stylish which is a far cry from the old rusty heavyweight door stop coils I used to use.

"Strangely though, I miss it. Someone once said to me "be carfeul what you wish for" and how true this is. I think we all wish for better things but once the better replaces the old, it's gone forever."

A lot of people hung up their gloves along the way. What kept you going - or more importantly, what do you think kept you relevant to an increasingly demanding and evolving market?

"This question is easy, My fantastic clients and friends, the support they have given me along the way has been amazing. I'm only relevant because they keep me so by asking me to tattoo them. I've had to learn new methods, invest and probably a whole ton of things I never even think about, but without them I would be nothing."

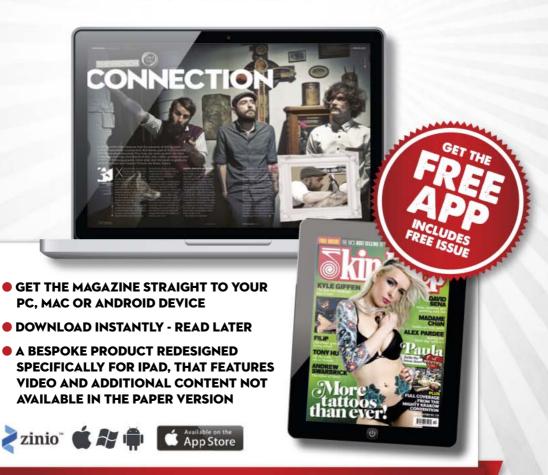




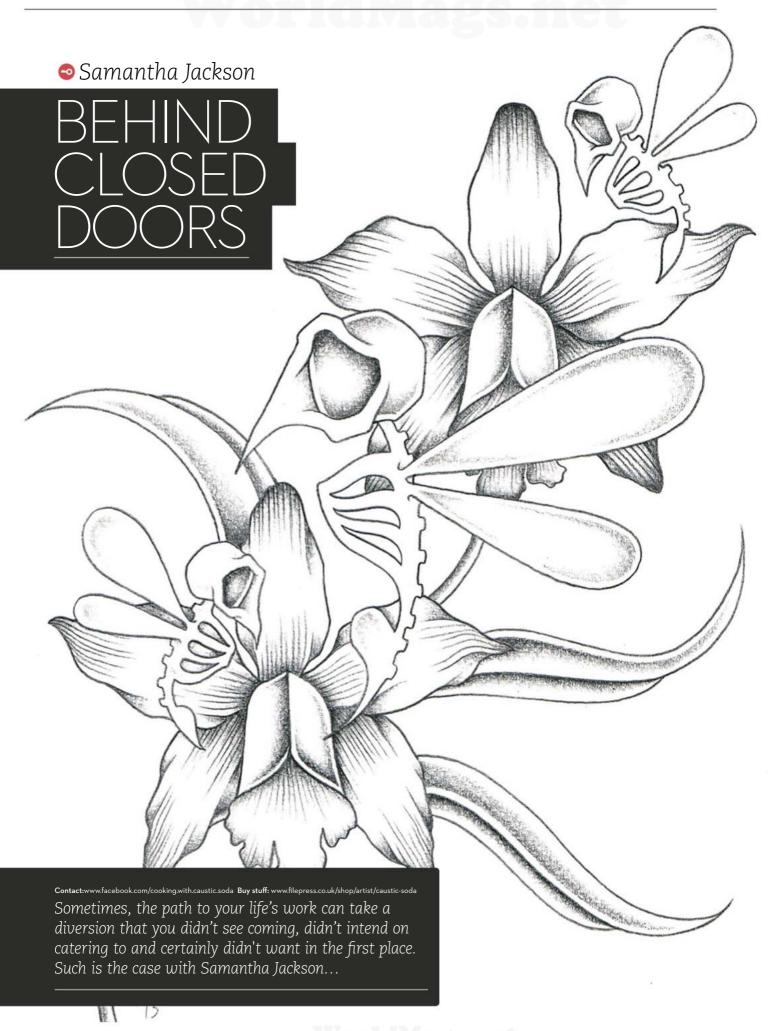
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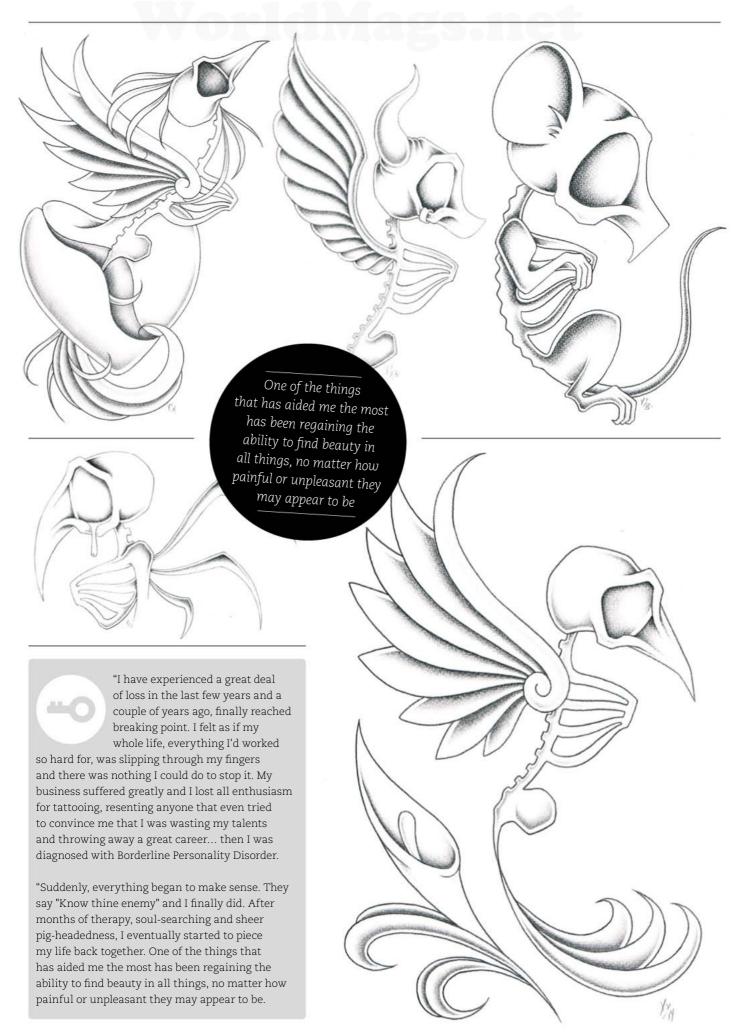
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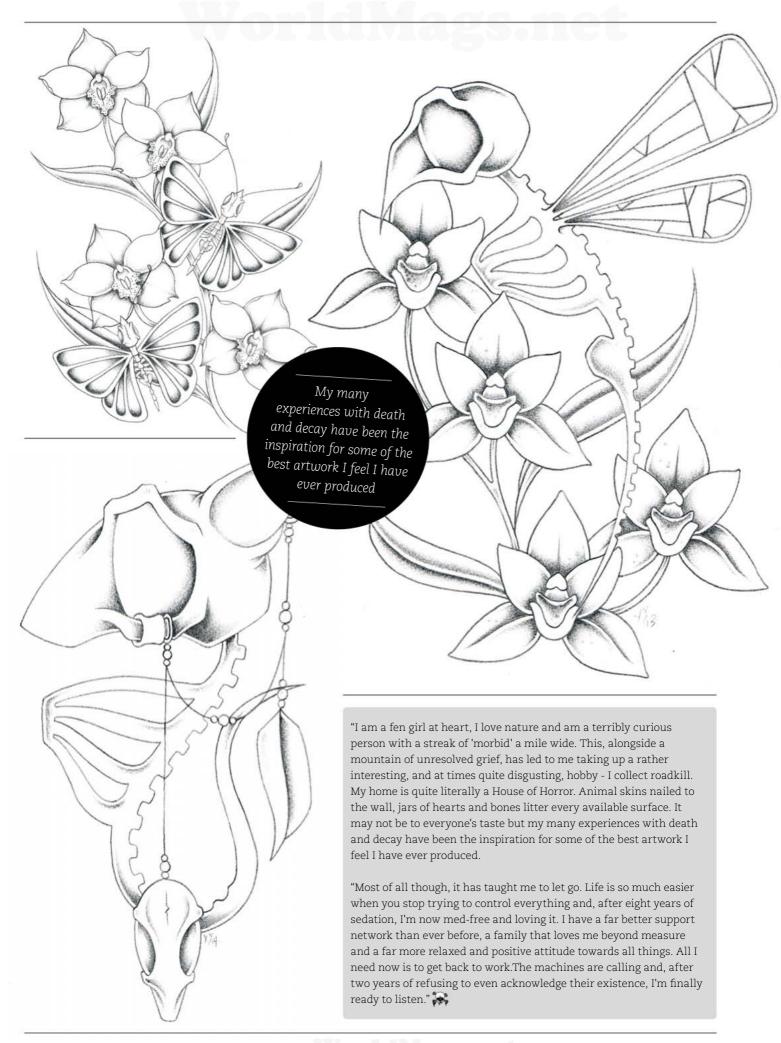


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A thousand virgins (ATV) true grey wash system was developed by twenty year tattoo veteran Cesar Morales. The goal for this project, was to achieve smooth and consistent grey wash for the tattoo professional. After four years of development, this grey wash system was blended to the best consistency using the finest ingredients to achieve overall smooth application. When using ATV grey wash system you will notice smoother blending, accurate tone consistencies and your clients will notice shorter healing times and greatly improved tattoo longevity. The portrait system was developed for you, the artist achieving realism style tattooing with four different gradient levels.

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The standard system, an overall application for the tattoo professional, was developed to achieve different gradient levels of light, medium and dark tones. This set includes G1-light tone, G2-mid tone, G3-dark tone, available in 2.5 and 4.5 oz. sets.

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Sponsored Artist Spotlight

Tattoo Artist: Adam Jeffs

Tattoo Artist at La Familia Tattoo Studio Oxfordshire www.facebook.com/fafamilia.fattoostudio.3 www.facebook.com/adamtat2

"Starr are an awesome company who have every product I need with friendly staff and super quick delivery."

"A team who know their products and have an ever increasing catalogue to meet everyone's needs."



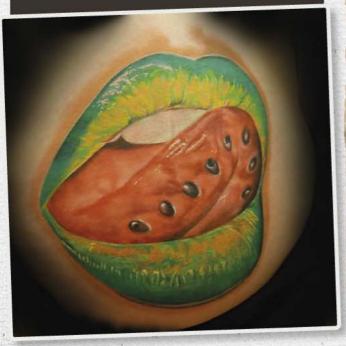




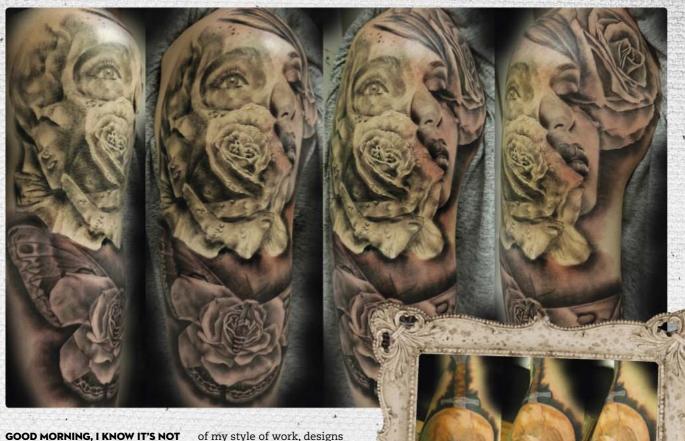
In the first in a new series, we pre-arrange an early morning snack with a tattoo artist to see what their diary looks like for the rest of the day. Hey, we'll do pretty much anything for coffee around here...

ON THE MENU

8AM IS NOT TOO OUTRAGEOUS - IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE FOR BOTH OF US. I AM FASHIONABLY LATE BUT MY CO-CONSPIRATOR IN THIS EXERCISE, RAKHEE SHAH HAS BEEN POLITE ENOUGH NOT TO BEGIN WITHOUT ME OR IN FACT, MENTION THE FACT THAT I'M LATE AT ALL...







GOOD MORNING, I KNOW IT'S NOT EXACTLY ON YOUR WAY TO WORK BUT THOSE ARE THE BREAKS HUH. THANKS FOR BEING MY GUINEA PIG FOR THIS DUMB IDEA - WHAT DOES YOUR DAY LOOK LIKE FROM HERE ON? HAVE YOU GOT A PRETTY EXACT IDEA OF HOW THE DAY WILL GO FOR YOU?

...it is slightly out my way and I sure do love rush hour on the underground. It puts you in a great frame of mind before work! I actually do have a pretty exact idea of my days for the next few months. It's the pleasure and pain of being a artist that is booked up. Some days, it's frustrating that your life is so meticulously planned out for most of the year, no room for spontaneity, illness or dramajust a very precise schedule.

I have a lot of gratitude though for actually being booked up - that drawing on people on a daily basis is actually work, paying the bills and giving me the lifestyle I choose to have. I'm pretty fortunate that I'm also a creature of habit, so knowing what my days are like is quite comforting. Due to the nature

of my style of work, designs have to be finalised way, way before the day of application, so how the tattoo (and day) will run is fully in my control. I have no room (or tolerance) for last minute changes and decisions. Saying that, anything can happen but it usually doesn't.

I'll most likely have a full day session (6 hours), we start at 11 and go through till around 6pm with a one break in the middle. As I've now given up the cigarettes, the breaks have lessened too. I believe I'm doing a sugar skull themed charm necklace today - with feathers and trinkets hanging off. It's quite large, so I can get loads of my gnarly signature detail in there. I then usually have a consultation with a potential client at the end of the day - this is usually when I do my consultations.

ON A TYPICAL DAY - LET'S TAKE YESTERDAY AS AN EXAMPLE - DO THE PEOPLE WALKING IN THAT HAVEN'T GOT A CLUE WHAT THEY WANT SEVERELY OUTNUMBER THOSE WHO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT?

PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE CLUE WHAT THEY WANT CAN BE A LOT EASIER TO TALK AND CONVERSE WITH THAN PEOPLE WHO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT

THAT'S THE IMPRESSION I GET FROM A LOT OF STUDIOS.

There's a little bit of a catch 22 with that question. People who don't have clue what they want can be a lot easier to talk and converse with than people who know exactly what they want. People who don't have a clue what they want are easier to educate and are more open to ideas. You can explain to them how custom studios work and steer them easier towards the right artist.

When a person is dead set on what they want - which is

Skin Deep Magazine Issue 238

something they've probably seen on someone else or is someone else's design - they are a lot harder to work with as they have something concrete in their heads, have taken time to imagine it on themselves and don't want to budge on the idea. Our studio is almost deliberately set up not to look like a tattoo studio, thus cutting out a lot of typically walk-in trade that may bring that problem. Most of the serious clients that come to the studio have already clued themselves up on the types of work we do and our work ethic. so we find we're not struggling so much with that issue anymore. Then again, I'm usually always tattooing so I'm not the one that initially talks to people that come in!

XOTICA TATTOO COMPANY

737 High Rd, North Finchley, London N12 OBP 020 8445 0022 xoticatattooing andpiercing.com DO YOU EAT OR JUST GO WITH THE FLOW OF WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO DO - HANG ON, THERE'S NOT JUST YOU IN THE STUDIO IS THERE? I GUESS YOU CAN ALWAYS SEND OUT FOR LUNCH.

Lunch is very avant-garde at the studio, everyone has odd eating

KILLING YOURSELF AT THE SHOP AND GRAFTING IS VERY IMPORTANT BUT YOU CAN BURN OUT AND LOOSE PASSION VERY FASILY patterns during the day. I'm more of a breakfast person, so I'll just go with the flow - but I don't send out for lunch - I'm not that kinda boss! Someone almost always brings in something to share though, so we do actually eat at some time during the day.

IF I AM JUDGING CORRECTLY, BY SOME OF THE EMAIL WE EXCHANGE, YOU APPEAR TO WORK LONG HOURS THERE. WHAT ARE WE LOOKING AT? IN AT 11 AND HOME AT 11? SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

Not that bad. I'm in at 11 and home around 7. I only live a few minutes walk from the studio, so I'm not having to commute. I do however work 6 days a week which makes for a pretty long stretch. My hours were a lot longer when I was training my apprentices as most of the heavier training had to be done outside of my own tattooing hours. They've now started letting go of the apron strings, so my time is slightly more free - which I've now efficiently replaced with planning trips abroad for guest spots and shows - no rest for the wicked!

URN OUT AND LOOSE IS THIS A REASONABLY TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF A DAY AT THE SHOP?
PASSION VERY EASILY DO YOU THINK YOU SHOULD CUT

BACK BUT EVERY TIME YOU AIM TO GO HOME EARLIER ACTUALLY END UP STAYING LATER?

There's not really a 'typical day' as such. The clients and tattoos are different everyday - which in turn brings it's own challenges but the schedule and day to day running is quite typical. As for cutting back - no. I actually wish there were more hours in the day so I could go for longer, but hey ho. I do however truly believe that balance is important as well. Killing yourself at the shop and grafting is very important but you can burn out and loose passion very easily which will in turn ruin the hard work you put in in the first place. Traveling and guest-spotting around the world has helped me hugely. Last month, I took 10 flights in one month and it totally revitalised me and in turn my work. So even though I was working harder in a sense, it didn't feel like that. I also plan on taking six months off at the end of the year completely to work on my art again. Going to life drawing classes and restarting my canvases at home, no tattooing just painting. It's been something I've wanted to do for a while and it feels right now. I just have to hope I can stay away from the studio!







alan

Never go back. I've tried to live my life by that rule but sometimes, the siren song is simply too much to bear. With this being our 20th birthday issue and all, I figured I might make an exception and revisit one of my favourites simply because Sian can dish answers back to inane questions faster than I can come up with them.

SINCE WE LAST SET THE WORLD ON FIRE, I HEAR RUMOURS THAT YOU'VE BEEN PAINTING THE **SCREEN SILVER AGAIN - TELL US** MORE ABOUT MERMAIDS FROM MARS. THAT SOUNDS LIKE A VERY **SERIOUS PROJECT TO ME...**

It's deadly serious! It's from the makers of Zombies From Ireland, so people need to buckle up their seat belts as it's going to be one hell of a crazy ride.

WITHOUT GIVING THE PLOT AWAY TOO MUCH, I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT WATER WAS A LITTLE HARD TO FIND ON MARS? MAYBE I'VE BEEN WATCHING THE WRONG SCI-FI SHOWS.

ै । । In 2008, global news reported a statue of a mermaid on Mars. The ្ខឹ film is the horrific story that leads to the discovery. Didn't you know that images taken over the past ្នុំ តំបេខ years by a camera aboard

NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, seem to indicate the presence of water there? I thought everyone knew this...

I WAS WASHING MY HAIR THAT DAY. EVERYBODY KNOWS IT'S A STUDIO SET IN A PARKING LOT IN SANTA BARBARA ANYWAY. LET'S MOVE ALONG, I ALSO SAW THAT YOU'VE BEEN EDITING? IS THAT RIGHT? PROPER **EDITING - LIKE, TECHNICAL SKILLS AND STORY-BOARDS?**

Is it so hard to comprehend that a blonde with tattoos can do proper technical stuff? Yes, I have been editing with storyboards etc - I even have a little mouse that allows me to drag and click stuff too!

YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT - IT WAS LEADING QUESTION SO THAT YOU CAN SAY **SOMETHING LIKE "I'VE BEEN** DOING IT FOR YEARS, I LOVE IT. IT'S HARD WORK SOMETIMES **BUT I LOVE IT!" THAT'S HOW** THESE THINGS WORK. SHEESH. ANYWAY, HAS THIS BECOME **SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE SERIOUS FOR YOU THESE DAYS? I GOT THE IMPRESSION** THAT PREVIOUSLY IT WAS JUST SOME FUN... BUT NOW? IS IT **SOMETHING TO TAKE PERHAPS** A LITTLE MORE SERIOUSLY?

Originally, I was a camera girl and one day I had a deadline and there was no one around to edit apart from the junior editor. I asked him if he could show me the basics as the footage had to be in on time. So I sat there with a bunch of instructions which I ploughed through and got on with it and made the deadline. So I guess I'm an editor too now!

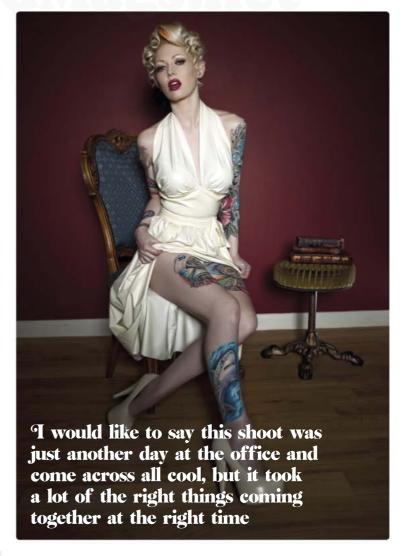




VERY IMPORTANTLY, THAT BACK PIECE YOUR SOME OF THE WAY THROUGH, IS - QUITE FRANKLY - PHENOMENAL - AND VERY BEAUTIFUL. A REAL HUMDINGER. HOW LONG HAS THAT BEEN IN THE MAKING? PLEASE FEEL FREE TO NAME AND SHAME YOUR EXCELLENT CHOICE OF ARTIST HERE.

Thanks, I love it! I really wanted a showstopper - a 'humdinger' as you say - a piece of art that was classic and timeless. I gave it a lot of thought and wanted it to be elegant and girly, to compliment my curves. I chose a peacock in the moonlight which starts from the top of my neck and goes down right down to the bottom of my bum. I already look hotter!

I went on a tattoo road trip to Newquay, Cornwall and had three days back to back on my back (and bum). The first day was the whole outline, which stung a bit I must say (in a good way) the next day was background and the last day - start the colour! In total, we did around 20 hours until the downside of



being humans stopped us.
My artist is Shakey Pete whose work stands out head and shoulders to me. I've already started making plans for my return to finish the masterpiece - can't wait for all of you at Skin Deep and the readers to see the finished result.. let's just say I'll be proud as a... see what I did there?

PROUD AS A PLATE OF NACHO'S? I DON'T GET IT. NEVER MIND. I'M ALWAYS INTERESTED IN WHETHER **BEING A SKIN DEEP COVER GIRL HELPS WITH ALL THE THINGS** YOU'RE DOING WITH YOUR LIFE. AND I MEAN THAT... GENUINELY INTERESTED. WE HAVE A TENDENCY TO JUST KEEP MOVING FROM ONE MAGAZINE TO THE NEXT WITHOUT LOOKING BACK TOO MUCH **BECAUSE THE SCHEDULE SIMPLY DEMANDS IT. DOES IT HAVE A LIFE** THAT PEOPLE PAY ATTENTION TO **OUTSIDE OF THE TATTOO WORLD** WORTH TALKING ABOUT?

Being a Skin Deep cover girl is an honour and a privilege and it's up to the individual how you use it. For example, the BBC news team always phone me now when there is a tattoo related story and I've been on numerous TV and radio shows resulting from my cover. Some people like to bask in the glory of the moment, but I like to see how far I can take it and maximise and exploit every opportunity to promote myself and my association with Skin Deep and together...we can rule The World!

IT'S PRETTY COOL BEING WELSH AT THE MOMENT BUT YOU LIVE UP IN ANGLESEY IF MEMORY SERVES ME RIGHT. YOU MUST BE ON THE ROAD A LOT - LAST TIME I WAS IN THAT NECK OF THE WOODS, THE ONLY PEOPLE TO ASK DIRECTIONS TO THE BURIAL MOUND FROM, WHERE SOME COWS. ARE YOU WELL RECOGNISED AROUND THE ISLAND THESE DAYS OR







HAVE YOU MANAGED TO KEEP WORK AND HOME SEPARATE?

It's always been cool being Welsh, even cooler if you speak it! But yeah, I get what you mean - we do seem to be trending at the moment. I still live in Anglesey and with it being a small island, it's pretty hard not being recognised but I really enjoy the attention and am having fun with it. I have always loved travelling so getting in my car and independently whizzing around the country is a real buzz. I think I know the cows you speak of and the burial chamber, It's where I hung out growing up...

FINALLY, I THINK THIS SHOOT IS SOMETHING ELSE! I'VE WANTED TO PLAY WITH THE "CLASSIER" SIDE OF THINGS FOR A LONG TIME BUT IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO DO IT. I HAVE TO SAY, YOU NAILED IT TO THE POST... DID IT COME EASY? DID YOU HAVE TO APPROACH IT DIFFERENTLY - OR (DAMN YOU TO HELL AND BACK) WAS IT JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE OFFICE?

Thanks! This shoot really was another level. Scott Cole told me the brief was classy and suggested a Marilyn Monroeesque style. I absolutely loved the idea and ventured that we up the sexy stakes by making the dress latex. Having worked with an amazing designer on my last Steampunk shoot (ASD Latex), I knew that we would be able to pull this off, so the late night facebook ramblings began!

After a week of honing and measuring, we had the prototype: The classic Marilyn dress - in latex! Then, I began to study Marilyn's trademark poses and worked on incorporating it with my own style of lace and pearls to create something fresh and unseen before in the industry.

Scott pulled his dream team together - which consisted of hair maverick Nathan Pithers and the lovely Victoria Fox for the unique 50's make-up, then the shoot was set up with new backgrounds brought in just for this and lights reminiscent of some cool old B movie which made the whole shoot feel like it was in the 50's. Brilliant!

So I would like to say it was just another day at the office and come across all cool, but it wasn't. It took a lot of the right things coming together at the right time, a brilliant team and

of course my amazing hotness to make it peak at boiling point!

After the shoot it felt different than usual - like we had created something truly amazing - as you so elegantly put it - we nailed it to the post!

I SAID 'FINALLY', BUT I LIED. OUT OF INTEREST AND BEING AS IT'S OUR TWENTIETH BIRTHDAY ISSUE, I'M GOING TO ASK THE MOST STUPID QUESTION IN THE WORLD. ANY IDEA WHAT YOU MIGHT HAYE BEEN DOING IN MAY 1994?

Hmm. May 1994 let me think... I was trying to match the colour of my outfits to my shoes whilst trying to avoid the cow shit on my way to the burial chamber to play.

Let me finish by wishing Skin Deep a very happy birthday! 20 years! That is some achievement and here's to the next! By the way, just to turn the interview on its head Mr Smith, what were you doing in May 1994?

UM, I BELIEVE I WAS JUST
LEAVING A CLUB CALLED THE
LOST HORIZON IN SYRACUSE,
NEW YORK AFTER BEING
SNOWED IN FOR FOUR MONTHS
BUT HONESTLY, THAT'S A
REALLY LONG STORY...





I'm a sucker for a tattoo story that makes a life better than it was previously - whatever reason might be behind it. We discovered English teacher Matthew Timbs as part of a bigger story we were working on with Dave Perry (see page 50) and were struck by his fortitude and determination to 'fix' himself using some clever tattooing. His story bears repeating...

was about 10 months old when I had my accident. I was able to walk at an early age (about 7 months old) and on a spring day, I walked into the kitchen of our cottage - which was under refurbishment - reached up at an alluring blacks flex hanging over the kitchen side and pulled a kettle of boiling water directly over me. My mother heard the scream of pain and instantly removed the terry-toweling baby-grow off my drenched body. Unfortunately, my skin, which had melted into the fabric, was removed too. After this my parents rushed me to the hospital where I remained for six months.

"I spent those six months in an isolation unit at Torbay Hospital to prevent infection on my severe third degree burns. I was so badly burned the skin at my sternum had melted to the bone. The wound went from my collar bones, tapered to my navel and covered the centre of my chest and destroyed a nipple. The only treatment I had was wearing a pressure garment for

two years: this smoothed and flattened the scar tissue, but left the hole at the centre of my chest.

"I lived with the scar for over 30 years before the plastic surgery and tattoo. It's wonderful to use the past tense to describe the scar! I always felt different at school and was bullied as a direct result of the scar. Swimming and gym lessons were hell. Actually in secondary school, a cruel PE teacher made me take my top off and humiliated me in front of the entire year. This meant that the lads who didn't know I had a scar, now did – which made my life hell for the rest of my time there.

"As a teenager a plastic surgeon said nothing could be done unless I opted for skin grafts: this meant two or three other areas of my body would become scarred too. I said no.

I learned to 'shut up and cover up' from then on. If I didn't have to see it, then it couldn't bother me. But I found that over time, I would never take my top off, not even at home, and would cover my chest as soon as I left the shower. I never went swimming or enjoyed the beach/beach holidays.

"On a beach holiday in my late teens, a woman sitting by the pool said as I walked past: 'he'd be attractive if it wasn't for that scar'. I didn't go on a beach holiday after that for over a decade.

Then, in 2012, my friends talked me into a beach holiday with them. They all knew of my anxiety regarding my chest and were very supportive, but the horrors of the past came back to haunt me. I would scour the beach or pool for a place near the water so I wouldn't have far to walk. I could feel people looking at me around the pool and on the beach. My confidence was rock bottom and I felt so terribly upset and 'trapped' in a body I was starting to hate that I knew I had to do something about it. This, on top of a number of set-backs relationship-wise (I had experienced partners say things liked 'could you keep your top on' or 'I don't like to touch it), was the catalyst for finding out what I could do to feel normal and attractive

INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

Obviously everyone

heals differently and I would always recommend seeing a specialist. I know for a fact that natural coloured skin tattoos are used on people with scars on the necks/hands/faces This injects flesh tone pigment into the scar site. I was informed of this my a plastic surgeon Dave also re-sited and created the impression of a nipple as mine had been destroyed by the scald. It now looks very realistic. I thought it important as it shows how tattoos can reconstruct and give the impression of something that is no longer present. I did a lot of research on the internet, but a lot of the info out there is very contradictory. There didn't seem to be a definitive answer. This is why I have created a facebook page to show people what can be achieved, what to do, where do ao. expectations etc Check in here: facebook.com/



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for the first time in my life.

"I was at home a short while after the holiday and stood looking at my chest in the mirror. I was thinking about options: what could be done to remove it. Then I thought 'why not cover it?' At that moment I had the idea of a tattoo - I had no idea if scar tissue could be tattooed but I was going to find out! Then there was the problem of the dip/indentation located between the nipples at the sternum. How could that be improved? That evening I mixed some polyfilla with flour, made a thick paste and smoothed it into the dip. After it had set I removed it and, voila - a perfect cast!

The following day I made an appointment to see Dr Judy Evans, a plastic surgeon specialising in skin reconstruction. During the appointment I pulled out the strange little object I had made and said 'could this be made out of silicon and inserted beneath the skin to smooth the area?' When she said yes and that she would get on to a prosthetic specialist straight away, I could have cried. For the first time in 30 years I felt hope.

I then had the task of finding a tattooist who would undertake this mega event in my life and have the compassion to understand its importance.

After sending numerous emails to tattooists in the area I would always draw a blank when I mentioned the word 'scar'. A pure 'no thanks' was the response. However, I had overlooked Dave's place in Market Street and on one



afternoon, I decided to actually visit in person, with a folder full of ideas, to see if he'd be interested.

I'll never forget the moment I walked into the Dave's studio. I was struck by the cleanliness and antiseptic smell in the air. The staff were so friendly that when I explained what I wanted I found myself lifting my top to show them - something I would NEVER usually do. I made an appointment to see Dave and a few davs later met the man himself. In a private area I removed my top and told him my story. Dave was very compassionate and didn't flinch at all. I immediately felt at ease and we chatted about designs, size, shape, pain and cost - though cost didn't factor at all as this was so important.

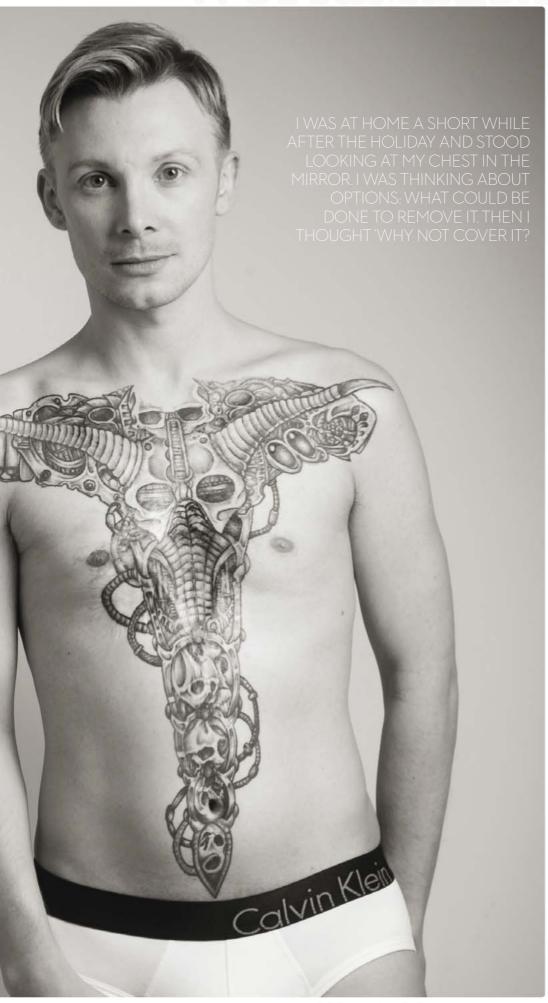
"I was a little worried about infection – would it be open to infection more than regular skin? Dave told me that as long as I looked after the tattoo during the healing process and took his advice it should be like any normal tattoo. I found that my scarred

skin didn't really 'scab' like the normal skin. This was amazing as I thought it would; however, the scarred skin seemed to heal very quickly. What I have noticed is the shine, often associated with scars, has greatly diminished since the tattoo, which is a bonus.

"The only medical verification I had was from the consultant who made my prosthetic implant. He informed me that scars can be tattooed as long as they are mature (2 years old). Also, when I had the implant put in by Judy Evans, I had already had part of the tattoo started. She said it looked wonderful and the theatre staff were admiring it while I was under anaesthetic! Even some of the nurses showed me theirs afterwards.

As this was my first tattoo, I had nothing to compare it with. Many people have quite small areas done as their first foray into tattoos, whereas mine is pretty extensive and very detailed. So far, I have had four, six hour sessions. The first was definitely the most

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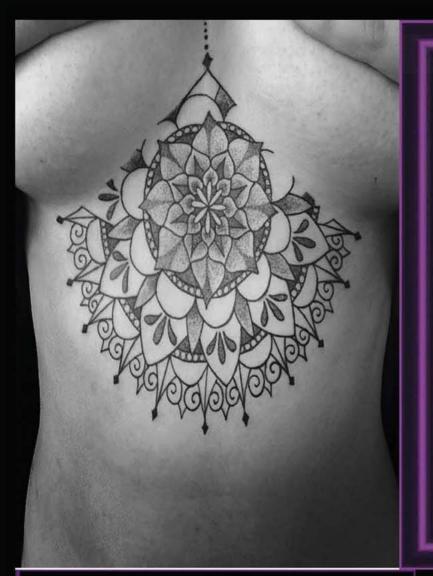
uncomfortable. Some areas of my chest were not sensitive to the needles at all, whereas others made me want to fly through the roof. I really couldn't predict the severity of the discomfort. I did wonder what I was doing after the first session but two weeks later, after that section was shaded, I was over the moon and so very glad I had started on this journey.

"I no longer feel 'scarred' but have an amazing tattoo! It had been a long process as I also required some surgery during the tattoo. Dave had done it in stages working around the areas worked on by the surgeon.

"The compliments have been amazing. No one EVER said 'I love your scar' but the amount of people who like my tattoo and enquire about it is amazing. I opened an account on a dating site recently and posted a torso shot (for the first time ever) as my main picture. I had over 60 messages in the first hour all mentioning the tattoo. That, for me, was the moment I felt normal for the first time ever. At the end of last year I went on a beach holiday and proudly took my top off, swam in the pool/ sea and walked along the beach. I felt liberated and overjoyed.

I have had some criticism towards my tattoo. One guy said he thought they were ugly. I replied 'it's people like you that would have stared at the huge scar I have under my tattoo'. This is my choice and I don't care what your opinion is so keep your mouth shut'. Another person said I should have accepted it and not messed around with my body. I asked him about his scars to which he replied 'I don't have any' to which I replied 'then you can't have an opinion about mine'.

"I suppose people are surprised I have a tattoo. Not many of my friends or acquaintances knew about the scar, because it was always covered up, so when I unveiled the tattoo it was shocking for them. A straight-laced English teacher with a huge tattoo covering his chest is reasonably unusual I suppose..."

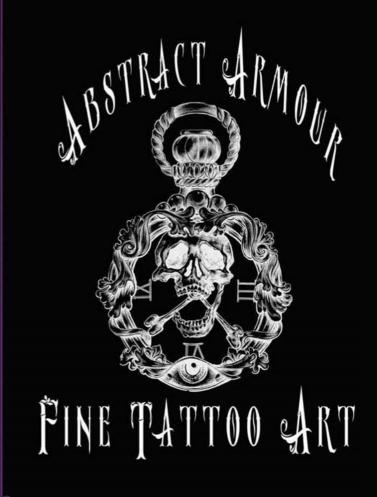


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INKON SCREEN

This being our 20th anniversary issue, we decided to trace tattooing's TV roots and its subsequent ups and downs on the small screen in an effort to answer the million-dollar question: What sort of impact has television had on the industry? Seeing as I've interviewed my fair share of artists who've spearheaded the movement, as reality show stars, judges and contestants, the job somehow landed in my lap.

f you want to talk stereotypes, let's talk tattoos.

When was the last time you saw a tattooed actor saving the day on your favouritew TV show? I'm not talking about them having a full-blown sleeve or back piece, either. Even the tiniest of marks would do.

Nothing? OK, how about the last time you saw someone with ink - real or fake - playing a criminal, drug addict, deviant or all-around hazard to society?

The number of examples you can come up with for the latter outnumbers your mental 'Good Guys' list, doesn't it? You know

what, you don't have to answer that, I'm quite certain it does.

Whether we want to admit it, to ourselves and to others, or not, the truth goes a little something like this: Tattoos only showed up on TV because casting directors worldwide needed a way to ensure that viewers could immediately spot suspicious characters.

Call me pessimistic, but I think people in the entertainment industry saw only one use for ink on screen and that was as a visible marker that allowed anyone watching a movie, tuning into a TV show or even reading a

book to take a nap, grab a snack and turn off for a few minutes, then come back and know exactly what was going on and who was going up against who.

Don't believe me? You don't have to, but allow me to offer up a couple prominent examples of this sort of typecasting.

From the literary realm, there's Ray Bradbury's The Illustrated Man, a series of stories released in 1951 that were tied together by "a vagrant with a tattooed body." I repeat, a vagrant with a tattooed body.

On the big screen, there was Bob Brooks' Tattoo, a 1981 film







characters that were out to harm others. A rule of thumb that didn't change until actual artists began taking over the airwaves with help from a reality show boom in the new millennium. First came documentary-

style series, which followed the day-to-day activities of tattooers and showcased the inner workings of their shops, then, as the popularity of shows like NY Ink grew, all sorts of new programs were spawned.

WAVES OF CHANGE

Prison Break aside – the drama in which Wentworth Miller played a man who sent himself to jail to help his wrongfully accused brother get out, but not before tattooing an elaborate escape plan on his entire body - ink has never really starred in any sort of fictional series and has reality TV to thank for its lengthy small screen career. It was July 2005 when A&E premiered Inked and brought viewers inside Las Vegas' Hart

& Huntington Tattoo Company, which made history by being the first shop to ever open inside a Sin City casino. The series, however, didn't seem all that interested in documenting the unique merits of Hart & Huntington and instead focused on any and all drama the artists and customers could provide. After just two seasons, Inked was no more.

Meanwhile, a much more powerful storm was brewing over at TLC. Miami Ink, which also premiered in 2005, stepped beyond the threshold of Miami's 305 Ink and featured the talents of owners Ami James and Chris Nuñez, as well as of Chris Garver, Darren Brass and apprentice Yoji Harada.

Unlike Inked, the show was wholeheartedly dedicated to the art of tattooing, at least at the beginning, and viewers were drawn in at lightning speed. Running for a stellar six seasons, Miami Ink's success cannot be argued, but if you're



ill tattooer obsessed with leaving

of the same throughout the '90s, although, some research did admittedly lead me to find two exceptions from earlier years.

William Neeley, a Denver, Colorado-based tattoo artist, appeared on What's My Line? in 1956 while Duchess Geyer, a tattoo artist from Ogden, Utah, stopped by the panel game show in 1958.

Other than that, any time tattoos popped up in the limelight they were solely tied to

INK ON SCREEN 39



not impressed by the whopping 114 episodes that aired or the fact that the show was a hit in numerous countries, including Japan, Australia and Brazil, you may appreciate the fact that it lead to two successful spinoffs, LA Ink and London Ink.

Once Miami Ink brought a female tattooer on board, tattooing's image began to change (for the better) at an even faster rate and, like it or not, it has to be said that the show was in great part responsible for a lot of the conventions, magazines and fads that followed. By exposing the ancient art form to mainstream masses, Miami Ink changed society's overall perception of tattoos and opened them up in such a way that every other person and their grandma were now sporting one.

The success of ink on screen was so obvious that once Miami Ink came to an end, the spinoffs just kept coming.

LA Ink premiered on August 7, 2007 and saw Kat Von D returning home to Los Angeles to begin work on her own shop, High Voltage. Joining Von D were Hannah Aitchison and Kim Saigh, who further crushed misconceptions about tattooing by being fierce female artists, as well as the great Corey Miller.

London Ink, although not as globally or commercially successful as Miami Ink and LA Ink, also deserves kudos for being the first to attempt to export the concept outside of the United States. Mashing together Louis Molloy, Dan Gold, Nikole Lowe and Phil Kyle, the British take on tattooed reality TV first aired in 2007, around the same time as LA Ink, and lasted for two seasons.

SWAPPING FORMULAS

Around 2011, audiences began growing tired of reality shows – there's only so much shop drama one can take! - and it was time for networks to find a new angle and adapt or throw in the towel.

Enter Spike TV. Just as people seemed to start moving away from tattoo-related shows, Ink Master debuted and sucked them back in by flipping things on their head and introducing an element of competition into the mix.

Pinning real-life artists against one another and having them compete in challenges testing their artistic skills, Spike hit a goldmine. Enlisting heavyweight judges Oliver Peck, Chris Nuñez and Dave Navarro didn't harm their cause any, either. Choosing solid artists to both compete and judge really solidified the show as serious, made it totally legitimate and has kept people coming back for more with season four premiering just about now.

Oxygen's Best Ink chose to follow the same pattern and first aired in 2012 with Joe Capobianco and Sabina Kelley at the helm. Hannah Aitchison was soon added in season 2.

Then, lo and behold, producers upped their game once more. Cashing in on the fact that tattooing's growing popularity was sparking unwanted side effects, namely unqualified artists with as much talent as a doorknob, they turned the focus from great art to grave mistakes.

Documentary was out, competition was wearing thin and that's exactly when TLC came up with a whole new concept – bad ink.

America's Worst Tattoos, which brought a familiar face - NY Ink's Megan Massacre - back into our living rooms, kicked off in April 2013 and documented artists trying to fix others' mistakes while educating the public on the importance of looking at portfolios and taking care when choosing a tattooer because you always get what you pay for. Always.

A&E's Bad Ink followed suit and stuck to the same recipe for success, showing off Dirk









REVITALISE TATTOO
ORIENTED TV AND GIVE IT
A FOURTH SHOT AT FAME?

Vermin, owner of Las Vegas' Pussykay Tattoo, and his efforts to cover up terrible tattoos.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

It seems that even the most popular shows are starting to run out of content now (not to mention too much of a good thing tends to get boring quick), so where do we possibly go from here? Will a hot new idea revitalise tattoo-oriented TV and give it a fourth shot at fame or will it just quietly die off and become a thing of the past?

It's hard to say, but judging by the amount of attempts to cash in on the tattoo trend that have been miserable failures, there aren't that many innovative angles left with which to attack the subject in the future.

For every popular show mentioned above, which helped to educate the public, raise standards, make tattoos more accessible and bust through age-old myths and stereotypes, came a greedy idea that was so ridiculous and desperate, it forgot to be relevant.

One great example is VH1's Black Ink Crew. Never heard of it? That's OK, almost no one has either. First airing in January 2013, Black Ink Crew documented an African American-owned shop in Harlem, New York, but never really caught on. Shocking.

Then there's A&E's Tattoo Highway from 2009, which starred Thomas Pendelton and followed him around the country as he traveled in a – wait for it - mobile tattoo parlour i.e. a converted 1970s Silver Eagle Tour Bus. Brilliant.

And who could ever forget the shows that managed to reach entirely new levels of low? Like Spike TV's 2012 flop, Tattoo Nightmares, which had the worst re-enactments known to mankind, and 2011's Tattoo School, which proved TLC was trying to push the limits a little too far by attempting to teach people how to tattoo via a two-



week training programme.

Sorry to say, but all of these, umm, let's call them mishaps, certainly helped accelerate the beginning of the end of tattooed TV's golden age.

But back to the question at hand: What's next for ink on screen and has the industry really seen any kind of change in the past 20 years thanks to television? Let's start with the



MAYBE WE'RE ALL SCREWED

AND WE HAVEN'T COME

second half - it's easier.

All of the above mentioned shows had an impact on tattooing's modern-day history and yes, it was positive, at least for the most part. Whatever your calling in life may be, if you're tattooed, chances are you would not have had that privilege two decades ago.

From pop starlets to chefs, doctors, toy designers, managers, journalists – you name it – everyone who loves tattooing can support it freely and grow their own collection as they please without getting all that many raised eyebrows.

Nowadays, there's also more access to world-class artists than ever before and with all the material that's out there, making an educated decision about your next tattoo is easier than ever. Truth be told, without TV shows paving the way, chances are you wouldn't have that amazing piece of art you're currently sporting on your skin.

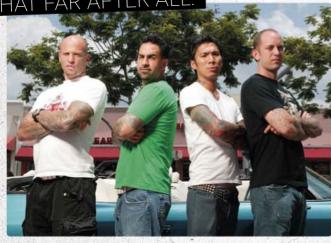
Now, for the first part of

that question: It's hard to say what the next 20 years have in store, but I'm pretty confident in expressing my opinion that tattoo's days on TV are numbered, unless ink begins to be accepted on sitcoms, dramas and beyond.

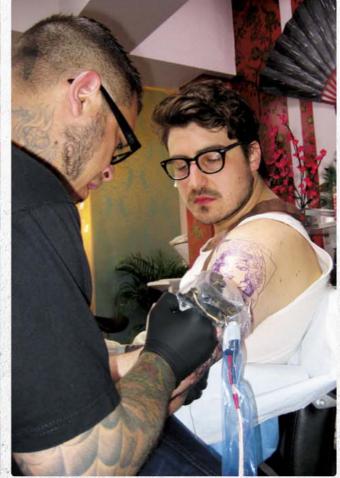
It's now up to a brave writer and actor to come out of left field at full throttle and kick major ass with plenty of wit and intelligence while proudly showing off some mind-blowing tattoos if we're to take the next step forward.

For whatever reason, writing this piece has reminded me of a clip I recently happened to see of Ellen DeGeneres interviewing President Barack Obama. The topic of tattoos came up and I thought 'This guy really is cool!' until he started talking about how he's pretty much forbidden his daughters from ever getting any.

Which makes me think that A) Maybe it's time we started judging those whose skin is as naked as the day they were born or B) Maybe we're all screwed and we haven't come that far after all.







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The collector

At some point, the heavily tattooed will begin to think of themselves as 'collectors'. Our part in all of this is to track the great stuff and bring it to your door. We'd like this to be the start of an ongoing series of collectors knocking it out of the park - so we thought we might set the bar quite high...



first met Jeremiah 'Guaco' Rothschild when he approached me after one of his tattoos, by Jesse Smith, appeared in Tattoo Master. He wrote saying he was a collector, asking if he was able to get his hands on a copy of the magazine. We got chatting and I soon realised he was an avid tattoo collector. I get this kind of thing a lot but it was only when he sent me a list of the folk that had tattooed him that I realised what an amazing collection of artists he had got to work on him - but it was only when Jeremiah sent images of his collection, that I knew we had to cover him and

find out more about his living

gallery, dedicated to the best of

the tattoo world working today.

deviant art, but he only started

Jeremiah has always been

attracted to art, especially

collecting tattoos relatively late, at the age of twenty-five.

"I got into tattoos a lot later than most people. Growing up it was a mix of other rebellious, or creative, activities first; like hip-hop culture, playing the sax and hacking computers that held my attention. As I got older, I realised all of my friends seemed to be weirdos and artists too. So I guess it was just a matter of time and exposure until things started turning visual. It definitely felt like a natural evolution."

But starting late in this game is not such a bad thing. Unlike art where you can 'store' or sell your earlier choices that you might no longer be happy with, in the tattoo world your only options are laser removal, or cover-ups. Costly and painful mistakes to make when there is no return on them.

Jeremiah's first tattoo was by Tycho Veldhoen, Amsterdam, who scripted his last name and though he wishes he had thought more on the tattoo, he is still happy with what he describes as a solid tattoo.

"My first tattoo was definitely an 'in the moment' type of thing. I was touring Europe with friends, all of whom already had tattoos,

Trant Aithen-Smith



and they suggested that if the opportunity presented itself, I should get tattooed with them. They found Tycho, who had some super solid script in his portfolio, and the rest is history. I really had no idea what I wanted to get though and at that time I couldn't comprehend the concept of wearing something 'without meaning'. So I went the old last name route. Looking back, I wish I would have planned it out better.

Still Jeremiah was cautious, the bug hadn't bit yet and it was only after his second tattoo that things started getting serious.

"A fella named Giovani from Columbus, Ohio, did my second tattoo. I met him through a heavily tattooed friend of mine while I was in town visiting. At this point I still didn't know anything about tattoos but my Mom had recently passed and he had a cancellation so taking the opportunity made sense to me. He gave me my first colour tattoo and first imagery based piece. That experience really opened my eyes up to the possibilities and pulled me in. After that tattoo I realized I didn't



THERE'S AN INFINITE AMOUNT OF WAYS TO PUT TOGETHER A SUIT AND IT'S A TRUE TREAT TO WATCH IT ALL COME TOGETHER

have a reason to stop adorning my body. That's when the geek in me took over and started trying to absorb as much as possible."

Since then Jeremiah has spent over 200 hours in the big chair adding to his collection. With names that run from Gunnar to Jeff Gogue, Robert Hernandez to Timothy Boor, we're talking some serious ink by some serious artists. Eight years on and Jeremiah has most of his upper body and about half of his lower body completed and though he admits he is starting to slow down so that he can make the most of the space he has left, and "to tighten up" what exists, he is still going strong. Saying that, in the short space of time I have known Jeremiah, he has had three more added. So how

does he choose his next artist?

"I spin a little wheel. No, seriously, the industry is overflowing with talent. It's easy to find art I'd wear. A lot of it is based on opportunity, you never know when your favourite artist is going to do a guest spot or convention nearby. The rest is narrowing down a goal and going after it. After that, it's style and placement. I try to group certain styles together. So, for example, if I want to work on my left leg then it's going to be some crazy black & grey. If I'm in the mood for something colourful, then it's gotta go on my right side with the rest of them. That's part of the beauty of collecting. There's an infinite amount of ways to put together a suit and it's a true treat to watch it all come together."





I MANAGE I.T. NETWORKS AND IT HASN'T BEEN AN ISSUE. THEY UNDERSTAND THAT IT'S ABOUT MY INPUT AND OUTPUT, NOT MY APPEARANCE

And with all that ink, is it possible to have a favourite? Mine is the massive Jesse Smith piece that runs down the side of Jeremiah's body, but he is not committing to any one particular tattoo, yet.

"Of course I can't pick a favourite. Everyone's so good at what they do and I love them all for different reasons. I'm glad I got a few large-scale pieces though. Those really stand out.

Being an avid collector, who has enough ink that it shows, even with long sleeves, I wonder how this has affected his employment possibilities. Now days most companies seem quite relaxed on tattoos but I feel there is still a stigma attached to them. But, thankfully for Jeremiah, this hasn't seemed to affect him.

"I manage IT networks and it hasn't been an issue. They understand that it's about my input and output, not my appearance. I'm definitely aware of what I'm doing though. Both

of my hands are full and it's not possible for me to cover up, and eventually I'll do my neck and dome. I'm not interested in hiding though. Tattoos can be a very personal thing and it is up to each person to do their share of soulsearching. If you know why you do what you do and you truly believe in it, then the only question left is to which degree will you stand up for it? Sure, my tattoos could be an obstacle but the last thing I'm going to do is let someone get the best of me because I'm covered in art. That's absurd."

Sound words and good advice. After all, art is art and there are worse things than wanting to put it on your body. So after all his experiences building his suit, is there any advice Jeremiah has for new collectors out there?

"Above everything, make sure it's safe. Getting a bad tattoo is one thing but putting your health at risk is another. Besides that, it's really about putting the time in to get what you want out of it.



TATTOOS CAN BE A VERY PERSONAL THING AND IT IS UP TO EACH PERSON TO DO THEIR SHARE OF SOUL-SEARCHING. IF YOU KNOW WHY YOU DO WHAT YOU DO AND YOU TRULY BELIEVE IN IT, THEN THE ONLY QUESTION LEFT IS TO WHICH DEGREE WILL YOU STAND UP FOR IT?



WISHLIST

The last tattoo I got was with Russ Abbott at the Hell City convention. He finished up my torso for me. Otherwise, my top three desired artists at this moment are Victor Portugal, Lu Lips, and James Tex. But the bittersweet part about collecting is knowing I'll run out of space before I get tattooed by evervone I'd like to! Still, I hope I can save a couple spaces for the future. Who knows who or what will be happening in 5 or 10 years?

The more research you do, the better your tattoo will be. New or not, always keep researching and learning. The medium of skin is a tricky one, it has its own rules and limitations. Not even someone with an art background can just jump in and know what makes a good tattoo. It's a real evolution that takes time. Be patient. Also, diversify your understanding; look at every style, even if it's not something you want to wear. Look at healed and aged work, fresh and photoshopped photos only tell so much. And, finally, soak up some history, respect your elders, and stay humble. And most of all, get something you'll be proud of."

And finally, the big question, what happens when he runs out of space? And once again, Jeremiah is optimistic about that path.

"It really does seem like it could go on forever. When I talk to my peers, with complete bodysuits, a lot of them say they've gone over them two or three times. It is living, ageing art after all. Beyond that, I think I'll just enjoy them!"

48 JEREMIAH READER PROFILE



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SIX GUNS

LOADED

One of the best things about hanging out with Dave Perry is the quality of conversation. We have hung-out on innumerable occasions and talked about almost everything under the sun - everything but his own work it seems. So, Torquay? Yeah... I can do Torquay:

Mr. Smith Vicki Boulter

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laveperrytattoo

first met Dave Perry as he was taking over the editorial seat of Tattoo Master. In between then and now, which is something like four years, both of us have always suffered from the "too busy to really sit down and examine" state of mind that you get sucked into at a show. Nevertheless, I've always admired what he does down here in Torquay - so the first thing is to make the comparison between off the beaten track and the very beaten track:

"Ha - being located away from

the major cities certainly means that I have to charge less! As far as customers go, I think that there is always less affluence in any rural location, so you get less opportunity to carry out really big pieces of work than you do in major cities simply because not many people can afford them.

"I think the type of tattoos you get asked for in a more urban environment tend to be a lot more varied also. In smaller towns, you often get a lot of people following what everyone else is doing - whether they realise it or not.

REVOLVER

ROOMS I am very lucky to work with a fantastic team of people at Revolver. Danny Kidd has been with me since I first signed the lease on the studio in 2007. He dropped out of Grammar School to dedicate his life to tattooing, and is now a wonderfully solid and creative artist in his own right. Always trying new things and hungry to improve his own work he never fails to surprise me and is a loyal friend as well as colleague. cus Dodd had been a friend of the studio for years before he finally joined us in February 2013. A hardworking and innovative artist he specialises in solid old school tattoos and wonderfully colourful comic book images. A lover of dodgy campus rock and hair metal, he also turns out a mean Mandela. Lauren Moxon was my second apprentice and has worked at the studio for over four years now. Currently on her way back from maternity leave, she's certainly much nicer to look at than Danny and Marcus and has a wonderfully calm manner. A compulsive neat freak she turns out some really clean soft shaded tattoos for her loyal customers Shelley Jorda is our queen of piercing and resident 'muscle' Unquestionably the best piercer have ever worked with, Shelley is meticulous about her work and extremely careful to ensure her customers' welfare

post piercing. A former bouncer she also deals with any troublemakers Rural areas are not so isolated as they once were though - the advent of the internet has seen to that. So I don't think that regional influences in content exist like they once did. There is a chance that smaller outlying studios may get overlooked by the media, but that is just a matter of learning how to project yourself and present your work. With the vast social networking opportunities that exist literally at every artist's fingertips, there is no excuse for not climbing towards the 'rock star' status you may crave...

providing your work is up to scratch of course. But if all you are going to just sit there studiously and graft away every day, you can't expect to be 'discovered'. You have to play the game a little if you want the profile."

Which is something both of us know a fair amount about with publishing backgrounds that go back further than either of us care to mention. You can shout loud - sometimes you are heard, sometimes not - editorially speaking, it's hard to hear a singular voice when

the whole world is shouting at the same time. Fact.

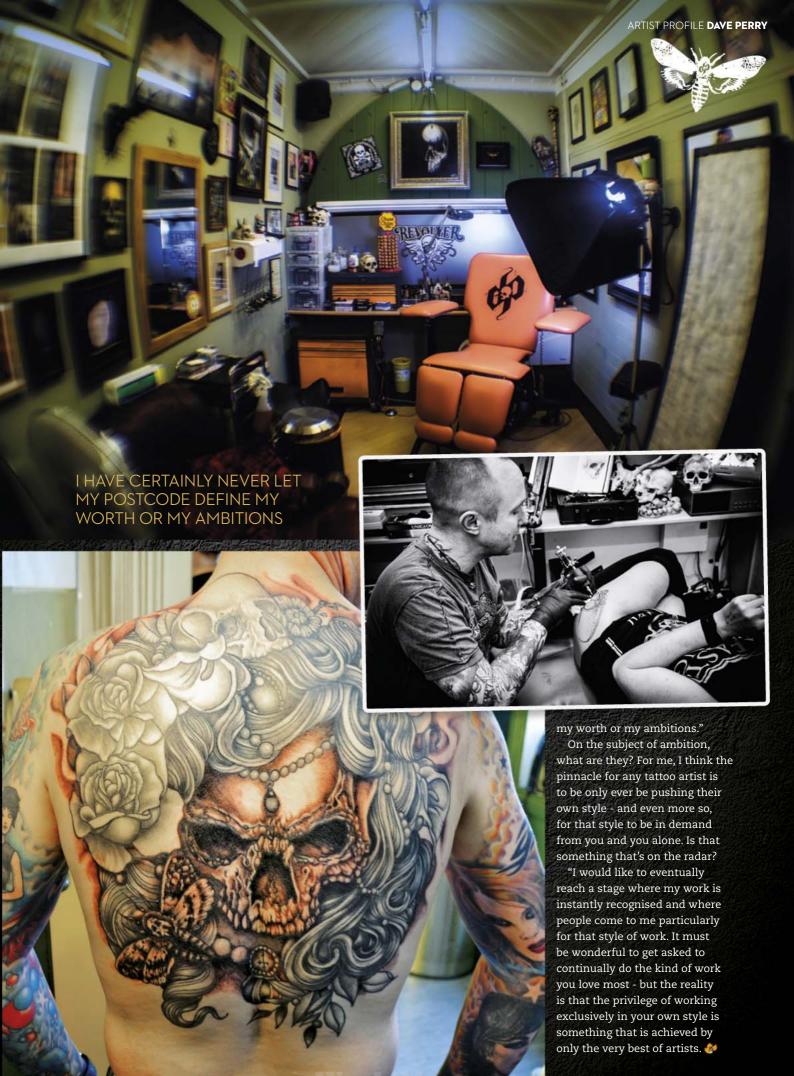
"Well, it's much like you may think a footballer playing for Manchester United is more likely to get an England call-up than one playing for Norwich - it's true that there is a tendency to think that all the 'big players' are working in shops in big cities. Certainly this follows through if you look at the attention certain artists and studios get, but ultimately I believe that the only person responsible for your own mindset is you. Especially now, with all the social networks, e-magazines and conventions at your disposal. The thing that will ultimately always hold you back is you, not your location. I have never felt 'rural' as an individual, and I have certainly never let my postcode define

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DAVE TV You really want to know about the TV career? Eight years almost 200 shows and a nomination by the readers of Company magazine as one of Britain's 50 Most Elligible Bachelors in 1996. True story. Happy days. It all started in 1990, at a time when I was playing way too many videogames. I was writing for a variety of games magazine and taking part in professiona tournaments all over the country when I was asked to join a five man team to help create the UK's first ever videogames TV show -Games Master Being a bit showy and never one to miss an opportunity, I quickly moved to being in front of era and over the following years worked on six seasons of GamesMaster for Channel 4. three seasons of Games World on Sky One as well as appearing regularly on shows like The Net for BBC 2 and working with Denise Van Outen on Massive for ITV. At one point I was on TV four nights a week, while also overseeing five national magazines a month. I was dating page 3 girls and opening Virgin Megastores all over the country with Gladiators and stars like Louise

Behr. In fact, you haven't lived until you've stepped limo on Oxford Street with Dani Behr while 30 or 40 photographers' flashbulbs go off in your face. At one point I even had the same manager as David Beckham which meant I got an endless supply of Predator football boots, and probably made me a target for just about every Sunday league defender in the area But then, in 1998, I just had enough. I'd worked with the likes of Dexter Fletcher, Vinnie Jones and Robbie Williams, but I'd lost my passion for the television world and walked out halfway through my contract on Seasor 4 of Games World. I would go back to TV just one more time in 2001, when I worked for QVC for a year to pay for my wedding (damn, those things cost a lot more than you propose), before finally shutting the door on that side of my life completely Would I go back to TV now? I've turned a few shows down, but yes, I think I would, if the right opportunity came along. I have an amazing concept for a tattoo show - completely different to anything that's been done before, so vou never know. Never say never. I reckon ľve still got it!

"Like the majority of tattoo artists, I need to be a jack of all trades if I want to pay the bills, but as I get older I have become a lot more particular about the work I take on and the work I turn away. I am slowly tailoring my customer base towards the work I not only enjoy the most, but also feel I do the best."

Over coffee - naturally - we flick back through some old editions of Tattoo Master. In my opinion, Dave did a fantastic job on it, taking it on in rather difficult circumstances and turning it into a magazine that actually

times? It must have opened the doors to conversations he would never normally have in the course of a working day?

"I absolutely loved my yearand-a-half at the helm of Tattoo Master. Although it was tough working five days a week at the studio as well as putting together a 132 page magazine, it was actually just what I needed at that moment in time. Being the Editor gave me an 'in' to contact and chat on first name terms with some of the best artists in the world. I was also able to give a great number of up and coming young artists their first coverage and front covers.

had a future. Good times? Bad

THE TALENT POOL IS VAST, AND GROWING. IT'S INSPIRATIONAL



Redknapp and Dani











DONE WELL, A TATTOO CAN BE A LIFE-CHANGING MOMENT. IT SHOULD BE MEMORABLE FOR ALL THE RIGHT REASONS

"Getting the front cover of a magazine is a really big deal for a male tattoo artist. A pretty female artist always has a chance of getting front cover exposure, but a male artist never does... except for on Tattoo Master.

"It certainly influenced how I saw myself as an artist too. It made me realise I had so much to learn, and probably always would - and that the amount of years an artist has been working for is certainly no measure of the quality of his or her work. There are artists who have been working for over 20 years that clearly can't draw for shit, while there are guys only two years in that are putting the most amazing artwork into their customers' skins. The talent pool is vast,

and growing. It's inspirational."

Inspirational it may be, but whatever field of the arts you work in, seeing talent paraded before your eyes and raising the bar when you never thought it could get much higher can make you start to question yourself. What happens from there, very much depends on what lies in your heart:

DAVE PERRY & DOWNTIME

"I love to paint with oils or sketch with Promarkers while watching movies. As the former owner of DVD Monthly magazine, I like to consider myself something of a movie aficionado and I always work with movies playing in the background, I can go through a couple of movies a night. "I also love to read. I can never be without two or three books on the go at a time. Generally I read biographies or autobiographies; I hate fiction. At the moment I am just finishing Morrissey's book, and starting Steve Jobs autobiography I am also in the middle of Nick Baxter's realism oil painting hardback I play a lot of pub skittles since I no longer have the legs for football and ice-hockey (which I played to British League standard). I have always loved and played competitive sports, but as you get older, you find the options at your disposal become even thinner than your hairline! I still play the odd exhibition game of football, but am always in agony for days afterwards I also have a teenager and two dogs to keep me on my toes.



"I tend to be pretty relaxed about the whole 'bar raising' thing. I know that there are a whole bunch of artists out there that are working to a standard I don't think I'll ever be able to reach, so it's not worth worrying about catching them. I just enjoy those guys for what they are; geniuses.

"As an artist I hate almost everything I do within seconds of completing it anyway. I'm never happy. I always look at others work and think 'damn, that's so much better than mine', but that's just the way I





THERE ARE ARTISTS WHO HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR OVER 20 YEARS THAT CLEARLY CAN'T DRAW FOR SHIT

am, I think that's what drives me and many others forwards.

"I always want to be better, for myself and for my customers. I don't just work hard on the artwork, but on the quality of the whole experience that the customer has. I think that's an important element that many artists overlook. People pay good money for their tattoos, and really look forward to the sessions. The whole time that they are sat with you should be an enjoyable experience.

"Done well, a tattoo can

be a life-changing moment. It should be memorable for all the right reasons."

While the entire world can't help itself from begging for attention via as many social networks as they can lay their hands on - whether they deserve it or not - and demanding space in magazines simply because they've put the hours in, it's a pleasure to catch up with an artist who can see from one side of the forest to the other without worrying too much about the trees that stand in the way.

SKULLAGE

The Skullage project is an idea I developed in my head for many years I have always loved high production value coffee table books - the are packed from and are easy to flick through and browse. I wanted to produce a similar body of work that combined both tattooing and photography, but I wanted it to be 'concept heavy The idea is one of 'beauty and

decay.' The skull representing decay and the female form representing beauty. The models involved would be of varying ages and looks, and would have no other visible tattoos - which meant of course that they would to having a real, permanent tattoo They could choose from several skull sketches, all of which have been kept very simple and stylised to ensure that the 'concept' remained more important

than the tattoo or the model in all of the final pictures. The fact that every model was and trusted me enough - to agree to having a tattoo as part of this project, simply gives the final product importance. In my eyes, all good art has to come with an element of risk and/or sacrifice. excitement in safety Of course, I had to wait until I came across a like-minded

photographer but as fate would have it. Vicki Boulter moved into a mezanine studio above my shop. We already knew each other from time spent at art school in our late teens and when talk turned to this project, we just clicked. No pun intended. The idea was to spend a year and a half putting together what would be the contents for a coffee table book launch. To this end, I made sure that we photographed

not just the final images, but also behind the scenes reportage footage of the tattoos being carried out etc. There would be 20 final images, from 20 different models, with all sorts of background content showing how we came to produce each one. These would then also be used to put together an exhibition and eventually entered into a variety of photographic competitions. However, as the great John Lennon

once sang, "Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans" and Vicki found herself becoming increasingly busy as she continued to pick up award after award for her work. In the end, we only finished to of the images, which is nowhere near enough to complete the plans that I had for the project. So, in the year ahead I hope to resurrect things with 10 new models and hopefully finish what I started. "At the moment,

Skullage exists as a series of 10 beautiful final images, with a lot of background material. These images will be shown via magazine interviews (like this one), social networks and maybe the odd small exhibit or two, while we look at how best to begin working again on completing the final 10. Once all 20 are finalised, the plan is to pull a book together and put together and respectively.



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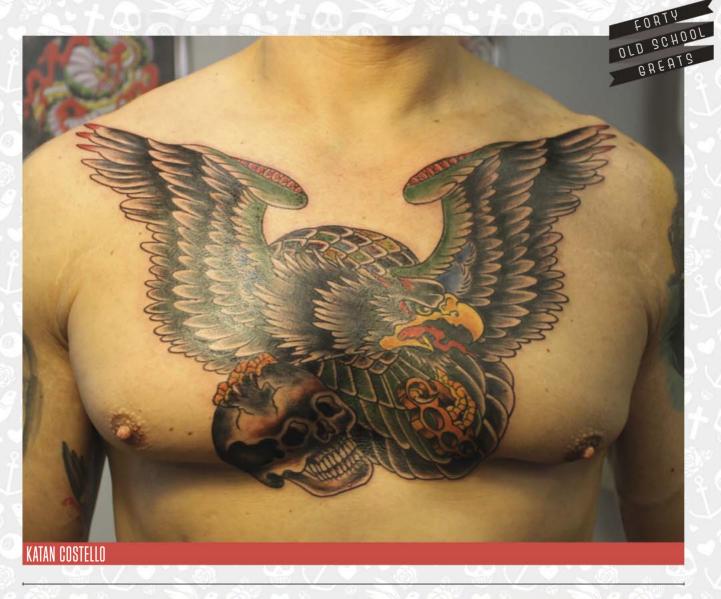
Children's competitions

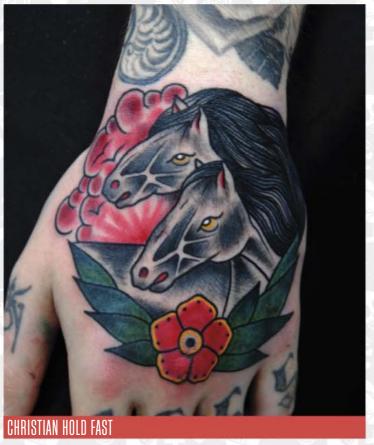
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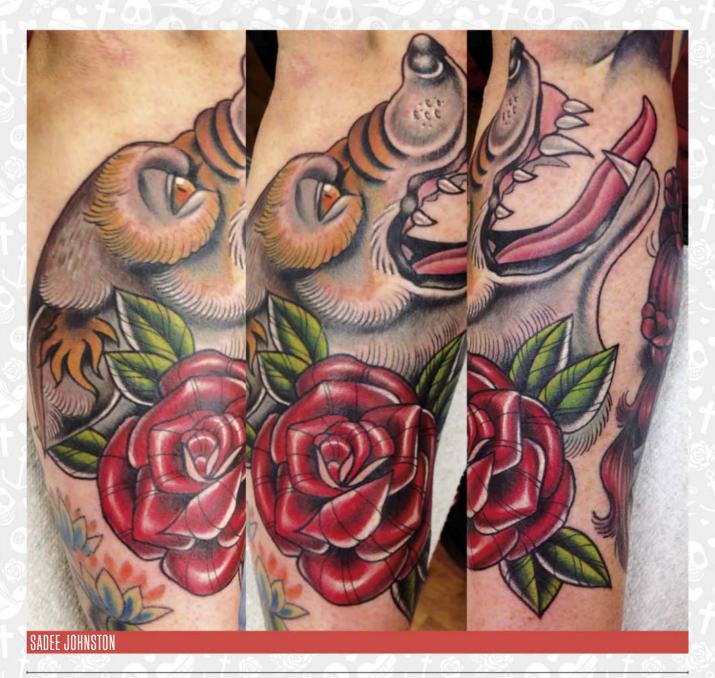








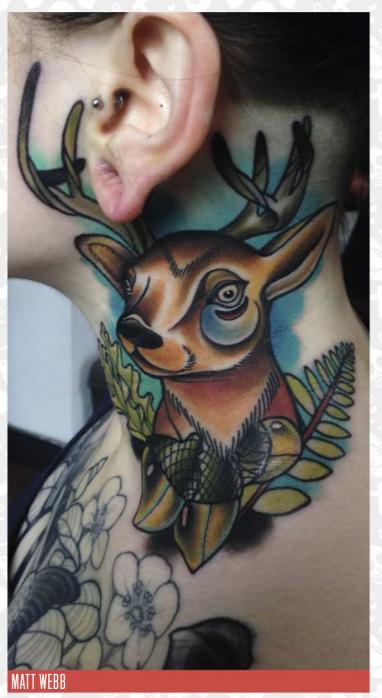




















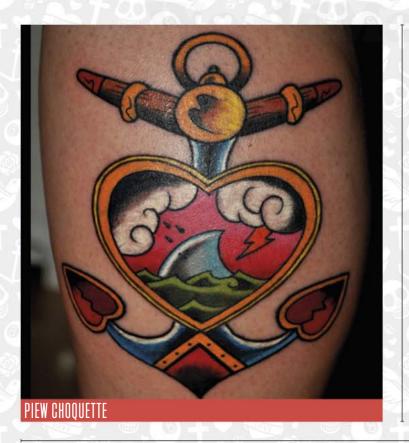


















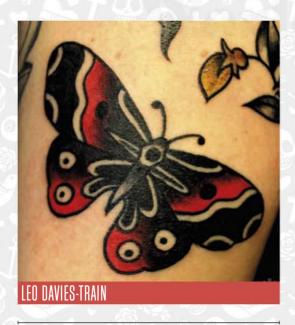








SUPPLEMENT 7



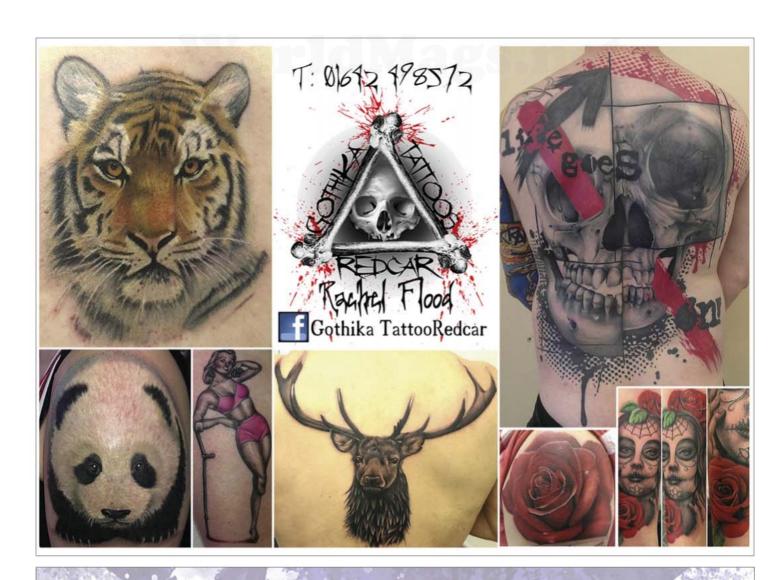












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SHOPPING AROUND

There's a parallel universe where Marilyn Monroe sported a full body suit straight from Sailor Jerry's wall, James Dean underlined those glowering eyes with prison-style ink and even Audrey Hepburn went under the needle. A lot. Welcome to Cheyenne Randall's Shopped Tattoos, a project that started as a way to alleviate boredom and quickly became a talking point all over the world.







4

If you've already encountered some of Randall's images of re-imagined icons,

you'll be aware that they've done that 'internet meme' thing that gets people awfully worked up these days, popping up on sites as varied as the Facebook-saturating Buzzfeed to the normally vengefully anti-ink Daily Mail. In a few short weeks they brought the mixed-media artist a wholly unexpected level of recognition, particularly for a project that only began due to enforced bed rest.

It's like something lifted from 'The Princess Bride' or a

Spielbergian summer movie: laid up with a dislocated knee, Randall wasn't able to sit at his usual drawing table and so his imagination started running riot. "I couldn't work on my mixed media pieces and like any artist, ya gotta generate something or you start to get all cooped up inside," he says.

The initial spark came from his existing habit of drawing on magazine photos, something Randall links to both artist and tattoo artist Dr Lakra's tweaks on found objects, and a love of Mike Giant's tattooed girls (drawn with Sharpies). "I thought it would be rad to see some of my favourite

icons with tattoos on a more realistic level," he says. "Not just one or two but full body suits. I started with just one image and went from there, I never really planned a body of work."

LOVE/HATE

Given the lack of planning, is he surprised by how popular Shopped Tattoos has become? "Yes and no. It was pretty apparent how much these images had an effect on people from the get go."

It seems dismissive to refer to the rest of Randall's work as merely his 'other art', given that it came first and was doing

The The second of the second o



well in terms of commissions and sales. Yet in terms of sheer impact, his tattoo images quickly eclipsed it. "When I started to post my Shopped Tattoos on Instagram, from an analytical standpoint they dominated in likes and comments," he says. Hazarding a guess as to why, he suggests that the images are more approachable. "One doesn't have to really have an imagination to get it. Its all there for you. One does however have to have a slight appreciation for body art."

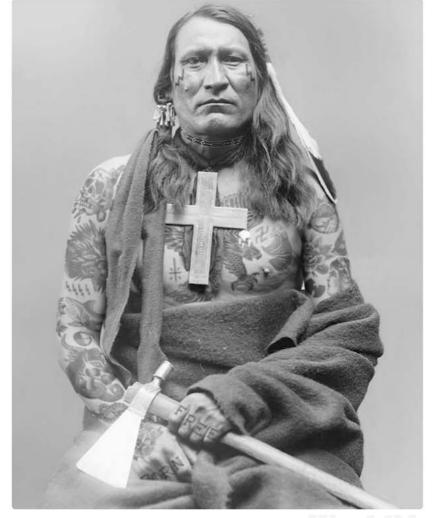
Which begs the question, what if people don't appreciate body art? "I've seen some nasty crazy comments in opposition to these works," he says, "which is still an effect on people. I'm not looking for likes necessarily."

People, he explains, are quick

to be vocal about the images at both ends of the love and hate spectrum. This being the anonymous shriek show of the social media comment columns, you can imagine the stuff that gets written, but Randall is mainly positive about the responses he gets. "It's definitely great to receive support and accolades. Originally I was posting them with a tiny tiny audience with no real intentions for the Shopped Tattoos to go anywhere but there. So I'm stoked for sure that it's led to some pretty awesome opportunities."

He's philosophical about the less supportive comments, too. "Screw 'em. I don't have time to worry about what some guy on the other side of the planet or some girl that knows jack shit about tattooing thinks of what I've accomplished.

Originally I was posting them with a tiny tiny audience with no real intentions for the Shopped Tattoos to go anywhere but there. So I'm stoked for sure that it's led to some pretty awesome opportunities."



HONOR THE TREATIES

The story of the two peoples of North America those who settled the country from overseas and those who were already there - can be hard for people beyond the US to get a handle on. It makes it easy to assume that a Native American producing art that prominently features that culture's iconography must have a political agenda.

Not all of Randall's work away from Shopped Tattoos does have explicit points to make, he says. Some however, definitely does - he works with a group of Native artists "to bring environmental issues happening in Indian Country to the forefront." for example. Through 'Honor the Treaties' (honorthetreaties, org), the group raises funds to provide protest propaganda. "It's a creative non-profit street level art campaign. I've done some poster work and a mural in South Dakota and plan to do some murals this summer with some youth groups."

The relationship between Native Americans and alcohol is another issue he tackles by working with young people. "Alcoholism has completely decimated my family. So it's important for me to get to the youth and talk with them about the dangers of alcohol to our blood line. We haven't had the hundreds of years to adjust to metabolising it, so it really is an allergy in many of us."



All that time it takes for them to spend energy talking shit and giving gumball machine critiques, I'll spend making more images. In the end it has no effect on what I want to see come to life."

CELEBRITY TAKEDOWN

When it comes to the alchemy of making the images themselves, it starts with an icon. One thing is clear, though: this isn't about venerating 'celebrities'. "I try to keep away from the word 'celebrity', because I don't really celebrate fame, or at least fame alone. Sounds too tabloidy," he explains. "There are a fuck load of dipshits famous right now that in my opinion don't deserve a lick of attention," he continues, adding that the same might be said of those consuming celebrity media.

Instead, he prefers to find what he calls "an iconic personality" and go from there. "I tend to select people of real substance and talent," he says, and when you look at the roster – Ali, JFK, Lennon – it's hard to argue. Whatever your view of Kate and William, who also appear, there's no denying their status – or the tastily subversive effect of rebooting them as Camden trendies, complete with purple hair and full sleeves.

Once the subjects are locked, it's a bit of a collage process, with the tattoos mostly mined from the web. He's quick to address the creative and copyright questions





this throws up. "I have to state that this never started as a money making project and still to this day I don't sell any of the works, so I never considered copyright," says Randall. "Now that it's gained ground it's really important for me to say that to the tattoo artists who might see their work in a piece."

UNDER THE SKIN

There's a definite theme running through the art he eventually selects, much of it traditional American style work. "I'm mostly inspired by vintage old photos of people with body suits. It's impressive. I love the look, I can only imagine some of the stories behind much of the work."

Given that interest in the 'story' of people's ink, is he trying to say something about his subjects through the adornments he gives them? "It really depends. Sometimes yes, there are little remarks I can make within a piece, but they're usually very subtle if they're there at all. A notable one is the initials MJ [for 'Michael Jackson', younger readers] on Elizabeth Taylor's bosom - they were bosom buddies after all."

Other examples include quote-cum-catchphrase 'Boop' on Marilyn Monroe's knuckles, a 'Slaughter' scroll on Janet Leigh's arm in her shower still from 'Psycho', and 'Chem Life' and 'Say No' slogans on Bryan Cranston's Heisenberg shot. There's a cancer

Skin Deep Magazine Issue 238

ribbon on his forehead, too. "I don't think I necessarily try to subvert the image but perhaps I try to take someone like Princess Di, someone we can't really imagine ever having a full body suit of tattoos, and do just that. People that it doesn't fit on. I like to do that."

The 'what if?' conceit is central to the success of the Shopped Tattoos, working as both a fun idea and an intriguing artistic exercise at the same time. It could all be much different – a bit more of a zany flash in the pan, without the strange fascination that Randall's images inspire – if the photoshopping wasn't done with such attention to detail, or if the original pics were of lesser quality.

Getting the right image is certainly a part of it, he says. "There's what I call the 'DNA' of a photographer or subject in an image from the get go. That telegraphs through whatever I end up doing, most definitely."

Get it wrong and it would show. "I could do the same thing to a red carpet paparazzi shot and it would just feel cheap," he insists. "Portrait shots and a great film still are my favourites, they just have the lighting and the angles down already!"

ORIGINS

As his name might imply, Randall is a member of the Native American Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. His father

Portrait shots and a great film still are my favourites, they just have the lighting and the angles down already

was raised on a reservation in South Dakota, where according to Randall he was thrown into boarding schools and beaten by missionaries before fleeing to Minneapolis in his twenties.

Once there Randall senior began to create art, which offers one potential origin for his son's talents. "Once I had arrived I'd sit and watch him work," Randall recalls. "He was an incredibly talented artist and would do these amazing graphite drawings incorporating our culture. I do much of the same type of drawing - perhaps it's me carrying on his craft since he passed away before his time."

Native American icons and his people's ancestors form a large part of Randall's work, and it's unsurprisingly something he takes seriously. "I care very much about my people's past and our present. I think there's much to be learned from the way Native Americans respected the Earth and are fighting to continue to do so here in the States," he says. "There's an absolute beauty and power to my people's beliefs as well as imagery. Hopefully my father and I have harnessed it in our art as an inspiration to look within, to move along with respect 4

BEYOND THE HEADLINES

When the dust has settled on Shopped Tattoos, Randall will be on the lookout for other roads to roam down, "I'll always be creating art work with native type imagery in it, but it's also important for me to expand on my ideas and do whatever comes to mind. Tattoos just happen to be another avenue that I'm passionate about." Check out his

Check out his original art work at cheyennerandall. tumblr.com.

SHOPPING AROUND ART SHOWCASE



to our planet and each other."

With Shopped Tattoos he's "just having fun," on the other hand. However, it's not without a serious undertow – "I've placed my thoughts on the wrongful imprisonment of Leonard Peltier [a Native American imprisoned for murder in the 70s – human rights organisations including Amnesty have raised serious concerns over the legitimacy of his trial and conviction] inside many of my works, some more obviously than others." JFK and Jackie both wear 'Free Leonard Peltier' slogans, for example.

So where does he go from here? Are there no-go areas? "Yes, there are some people that I just don't wanna touch. Gandhi, Ian Curtis, Kurt Cobain ... out of a type of respect, I suppose. There's no real algorithm to it, I guess it just depends if it feels kitschy." That said, it's not always tattoos. Sometimes it will be patterns - "and in that case I may end up doing Gandhi, Curtis and Cobain at some point."

He's the first to acknowledge that spending hours photoshopping tattoos onto the



great and the good is something of a strange labour of love. "It's a bit nuts really because I'm doing it for my own satisfaction, to see how a young Muhammad Ali would looked covered in tattoos. Nobody's paying me to do these!"

Indeed, Randall hints that he may soon have had his fill of Shopped Tattoos - even as someone who has the patience "to sit on a computer and tediously tweak levels and such." If that's the case, it's been a thoroughly refreshing glimpse

There are some people that I just don't wanna touch. Gandhi, Ian Curtis, Kurt Cobain ... out of a type of respect, I suppose

into another world and a chance to look at well-established pop culture images in a new way. It may even have raised some questions about how we viewed them in the first place, sans ink.

Or it could be none of the above. "Maybe I'm an idiot," says Randall. "But it's been a lot of fun."



BonBon

Holly Dosdale





DARKNESS FALLS



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As an artist determined to play on a global stage and provide for your family,

perhaps the first sign that you picked the right stone to chip away at is when your fan-base begin to have your creations tattooed.

With a background in effects that you will all be familiar with, Chet has created movie magic for (to name but few) Fantastic Four, X-Men: The Last Stand, The Day The Earth Stood Still and potentially the crowning glory on that part of his career, being hand-picked by del Toro to create Hellboy's Right Hand នុំ of Doom. When you're talking credentials, that's enough. If you're in the mood for an afternoon of wallowing in front of the TV, Chet also sculpted the freaky Cathedral

Head that appears in Hellboy II. This is all worth mentioning to back up my simple statement that Chet knows monsters.

It's his art that is inspiring tattoo fans the world over right now and Chet Zar sits right at the heart of a self created hurricane - but as with all stories that feature monsters and dark creatures from the underworld, we need to work our way back to the beginning...

Chet's folks split when he was pretty young - something that he's very open about. My story is exactly the same (there are millions of us) and I know that I spent a lot of time trying to prove myself in some way - which was totally pointless because eventually, when you get to forty, nobody is listening any more. When Chet talks about this however, he colours that period as being not too harsh on his





I like to keep things vague enough to allow the viewer to come up with his or her own story

emotions - so a good and obvious question is to ask if he has ever noticed the creatures evolving out of these emotions? Being as he is being honest with me, in return, I can also admit that I don't think mine ever went away - I just learned how to harness them and put them to work.

"I feel the same way. I don't think childhood trauma ever leaves you completely and I do feel that the emotions my characters feel are often left over from the pain I felt as a kid.

"If nothing else, the childhood pain became a starting point from which I work, but I also see so much suffering in the world and that is usually the kind of feeling I am trying to capture. Maybe my own early suffering is why I am so sensitive to the suffering of others. I work primarily from an intuitive place so I'm never quite sure why I paint what I paint, but I would agree that my initial impetus to paint comes out of trying to cope with that left over pain from childhood which I view as a positive thing. I like to say "Take your pain and turn it into art". It's healthy."

In the introduction of recently published art book (Black Magick), del Toro uses the phrase "stern &





TATTOOED MONSTERS CHET ON HIS CREATIONS BEING TATTOOED:

Of course some are better than others - the ones that aren't so good don't bother me at all. I am just honoured that anybody would want one of my paintings permanently attached to their body! It's an added bonus when the tattoo artist really nails it though. I definitely get a rush from that.

determination" to describe how some of Zar's creations appear - and they all, without question, have a look of purpose about them. I'm curious as to whether there are life-stories that run alongside each of these creations that are only for him to know?

"Well, not necessarily. Some of them have more developed backstories in my mind but for the most part, I'm more interested in capturing a feeling or emotion that the character is experiencing. I love the idea that these creatures have background stories - and I'm sure in some way they most certainly do - but I'm not as interested in the story as I am in the emotion of the character. I like to keep things vague enough to allow the viewer to come up with his or her own story. I think it's more fun that way and it also makes the art experience more of a collaborative one with the viewer." This is no big reveal for Chet he is more than aware of the distractions of life and some time ago, began his quest to find 'a way to get back to creating art the way I did when I was a kid'. That's



I also see so much suffering in the world and that is usually the kind of feeling I am trying to capture

surely the purest art-form there is - for artists to get in touch with who they were before the world got their hands on them. That statement from Zar is worth more than any lesson you can sit in on. Aside from his childhood, what does he find himself drawn to most from back then? Is it something like the work of Harryhausen?

"Even though I was initially only able to experience it through my older brother's hand me downs, I love the monster craze of the 60's. The Aurora monster model kits, the monster toys, Big Daddy Roth and all that stuff. I was totally into it.

"Of course, the Harryhausen stuff was an influence as well. I was primarily interested in the fantastic, the strange and the early 70's had a lot to offer in that regard. Even the bad low budget horror films of that era still fascinate me."

I am terrible for digging into things too much, but it appears to me that Chet is trying to work his way back to an innocent/safer place (as I said) by revealing any and all monsters that might be lurking so he may recognise them when they show their faces again. Like some kind of bastardised Rumplestiltskin

Skin Deep Magazine Issue 238

CHET ZAR ART SHOWCASE 85



CHET ZAR ON ME COMPARING HIM TO FRANK FRAZETTA:

Being viewed like Frazetta would not be such a bad thing. He finally got the respect he deserved at the end of his life. Like him. I don't really care how the art establishment views my work anyway. I make it for myself and the fans of my work. If I am happy with my work and the fans are digging it and I am able to make a living doing it, then that is all I really care about.

theory of knowing their names means you have all the control.

"I'm not sure if that's why I am doing it now but I think it's why I started making monsters when I was young. If I could create the monsters myself, I would be the one in control of them and therefore less frightened of them. It was probably a way for me to be less afraid in what I felt like was a scary world - and yeah, I still kind of do feel that way!"

At 46 - which seems to me a good age (even if I say so myself) to be making a mark on the world and leaving a legacy - it's more than enough time to have some decent life experience under your belt - so on that front an important things rises: My whole world view, even down to the way I work and live, changed the day my daughter was born. Did it get Chet in the same way?

"Having a kid definitely changes

Once you have a kid your life will never be the same again- ever. I don't know if it affected the way I work but it definitely affected how seriously I took things

things. Once you have a kid, your life will never be the same again - ever! I don't know if it affected the way I work but it definitely affected how seriously I took things. You can't really mess around when you have another human being's life that is completely dependant on you. I stepped into that role pretty easily, though."

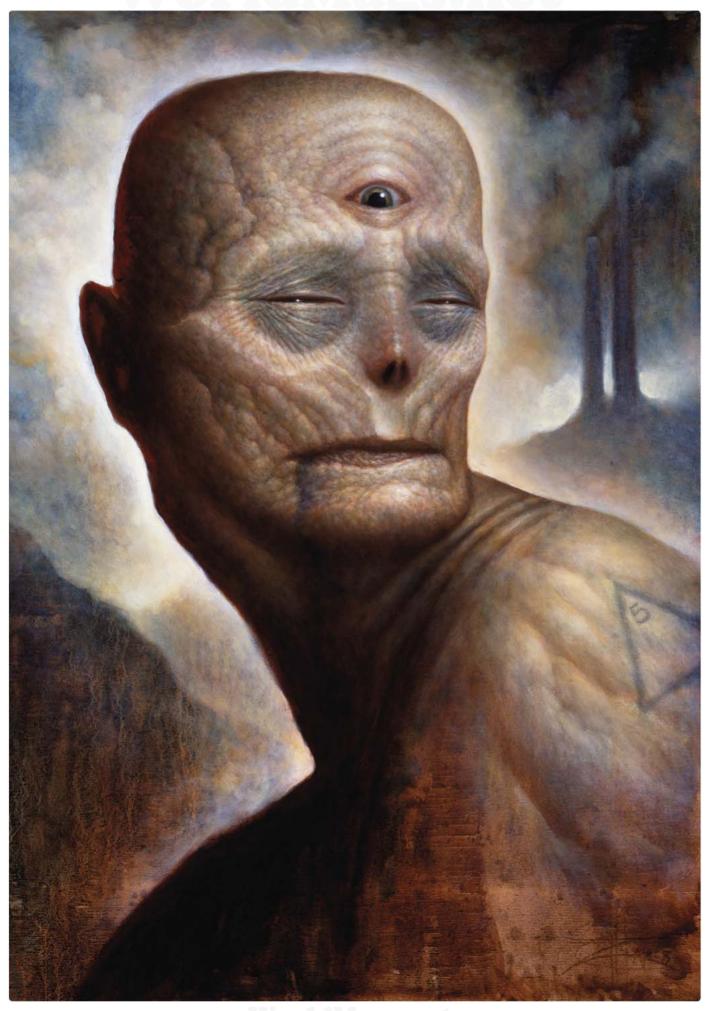
Is it possible to project forwards from here as well as backwards? Twenty years?

"Twenty years from now... I have no idea. Hopefully by then I will have gotten the resources to really go big. Nearly everything up until now has been created on a shoestring budget and with major time constraints. My last

big solo show - Ego Death - was the first time I actually had the money to do a show up right - through a Kickstarter project I created to fund the project. It was so much easier to paint for a show when I didn't have to worry about paying the bills. I wish it was like that every time."

There's a great interview with Chet from back in 2007 where Creep Machine asked him if he thought something was lost in the creative process when trying to give birth to a painting.

He very honestly replied, that's not really what you have in mind in the first place - that you just "turn up at the canvas and see what happens". That was seven



years ago now. Does he still feel the same or has time made the approach to his work differently?

"Yeah, I do approach things differently. Part of why I was taking the 'unplanned' approach back then was because I really didn't have enough technical knowledge about what I was doing to really know what I was doing!

"It worked well for me at the time. I could tell when something was good or 'right' - I just wasn't sure how to get there. So painting without a plan was the only way I knew how and I learned a lot about painting that way. But once you start understanding exactly what you are doing, you begin to want to make things easier on yourself and you want to make better and better paintings.

"For me that meant planning pieces out ahead of time so now I always create a small study to work the problems of the painting out and to have have some kind of roadmap to refer to while I am painting on the main piece. It makes things much easier - and more fun too.

"I still allow for the happy accidents to happen. I don't plan every detail out - just the broad strokes, colours and basic composition."

I've done a lot of interviews with many people over the years but I think Chet may be the first to actually truly share my passion for exactly how fantastic and creatively free MAD magazine used to be - and how influential it was in so many ways. There's nothing quite like it out there anymore and I think that's a shame for the younger generation - in Chet's case, I think this is extremely relevant because there's a certain dark humour to more than a few of his creations.

"MAD magazine was so amazing on so many levels. It had a sarcastic and actually a quite sophisticated sense of humour - and the artwork was unbelievable. It was also actually very subversive, which is one of the things I really liked about it. Definitely one for the history books and I am proud to say it is an



influence in my work. When I was a kid my two favourite comedy things were MAD magazine and Monty Python's Flying Circus. Both had a lot of dark humour - there is no doubt that has found it's way into my work.

Finally - being as we're wandering around this interview pretty damn naked, I have to ask how - being buddies with Paul Booth and all - he has gotten away with not being heavily tattooed? He's definitely one of those guys that people would expect to be covered...

"Yeah, kind of funny, huh? I do have a couple of small tattoos - nothing special but they do have meaning for me. I love tattoos and would love to get more but the truth - the main reason I have not gotten any - is because I don't have time! I'm

I don't really care how the art establishment views my work anyway. I make it for myself and the fans of my work

always working and I rarely take a few hours off to do anything.

"It's really just that simple. I am 100% focused on making this career creatively and financially viable. Other than my family, everything else goes behind that. So if I ever get to that point where I have free time and don't have to work so hard, you will probably see lots of tattoos popping up on my body."

Given the amount of time Chet actually contributes to revealing the true face of the world, I think that's a reasonable pay-off.

Chet Zar. Love what he does. That's an order...



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GETTHEE BEHIND ME!

Over the last twelve months (and counting), we've been 'busy' behind the scenes experiencing first hand, exactly what having a tattoo removed by laser entails. Our first guinea pig - the adventurous Paul Sweeney - hooked up with Wayne Tatzapa at The Reset Room - and uncovered some kind of magic.



THE RESET ROOM
The Circle London
21 Noel St, London

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wayne@resetroom.com

hile I am more than willing to entertain the fact that the average human mind will not operate to quite the same quirky extremes as mine, I am more than confident that there are a substantial number of you who, upon hearing the word laser, will be more naturally inclined towards thoughts of; the classic super villain's number one weapon of choice and the scenarios within which the aforementioned super villain would use said laser to inflict all manner of pain and torture on his heroic nemesis.

By that very same slightly twisted logic, I can confidently presume that the association of that very same word "laser" with the equally paranoia inducing REMOVAL will undoubtedly create a literary cocktail, capable of sending the mind of even the most logical realist, into a spin of irrational hypotheses, akin to the memory of that first fateful trip to the dentist.

Fortunately for me my first experience of laser removal couldn't have been further from the cinematically thrilling, torture scenes of a classic good guy vs bad guy Hollywood blockbuster. In the first instance,

the villain's are nearly always foreign* and while the laser wielding, tattoo removing professional, I'm entrusting the future of my forearm with - Wayne Tatzapa is of South African decent - that's not conclusive proof of his inherent sadistic streak. Maybe if he was completely bald then we might have some reason for concern - I couldn't confidently say if he is or not, because he's always wearing a hat. Hypotheticals aside, I can honestly say that out of the numerous times I've visited Wayne at The Reset Room, not once has he greeted me by revolving a swivel chair one hundred and eighty degrees and announcing that he's 'been expecting me', whilst stroking a cat and that's proof enough for me!

Please don't be discouraged by the James Bond Pantomime opening. It honestly couldn't be further from my intention to discourage you from finally committing to removing that one of a kind original tribal tattoo, you had done on the base of your spine ten years ago, that's recently redefined the meaning of 'Tramp Stamp' after a close friend recently pointed out to you This cat has had several sessions with a passive switch machine, hence the scarring and hypo-pigmentation

that they'd seen the very same design emblazoned, just above the intimate area, of a less than desirable adult film actress. This article is part one of a two part piece documenting mine, and in a future issue, Mr Smith's (yes, that Mr Smith), personal experiences within the controversial, relatively

Paul Sweeney Wayne Tatzana/Paul Sweeney



taking great pride in displaying their amazing tattoos and saying positive things about the talented artists at the welcoming studios where they had them done, than be subjected anymore to the continuous barrage of negative publicity focused at those in and around the tattooed community.

Thus, since hearing the distant murmurs of 'affordable' laser removal, five or so years ago, it's fair to say my intrigue was aroused. Way, way back - a long time before my induction to the sacred in circle of the Skin Deep

ashamed to say that I made some frighteningly ill advised tattoo choices that, as my love of custom tattoo collecting has increased, have only become all the more apparent. One piece in particular had always been a burden; a black and grey mess of shading, swirls, stars and a couple of butterflies, positioned on the inside of my right forearm, a tribute to what I've since categorised as 'the footballer' - a style primarily popularised to mainstream status by David Beckham, the main difference being that mine looked like it could've been designed by a boss-eyed, thumbless, chimp, on a roller-coaster [insert image] You can see why I was so keen to have it removed!

STEP ONE:

LOCATING LASER REMOVAL

The Located inside of The Circle tattoo studio in Soho, these guys run a tight ship, with amazing guest artists, as well as sterling regulars. A business that

ONE PIECE IN PARTICULAR HAD ALWAYS BEEN A BURDEN; A BLACK AND GREY MESS OF SHADING, SWIRLS, STARS AND A COUPLE OF BUTTERFLIES, POSITIONED ON THE INSIDE OF MY RIGHT FOREARM





maintains a staple of consistent, trustworthy and receptive custom tattoo artists will surely apply the same ideology to having laser removal on the premises.

STEP TWO:

GAIN THE KNOWLEDGE

Before we can get started with the full removal sessions, Wayne recommended giving a small area of the incriminating ink a test blast, to see how my skins reacts. Once we step into the reassuringly sterile environment that is Wayne's place of work, he begins to talk me through what I can expect to feel during the removal process:

"I'll be honest, it's not going to tickle" he says with a wry smile and a knowing look. Wayne speaks from his own first-hand experience as is evident from the faded skull on his arm. "The pain you're going to experience has been described as feeling similar to the sensation you feel from an elastic band pinging on your skin or hot fat spitting at you" - both reassuringly familiar references that go a little way to calming fear the unknown.

Wayne continues by giving me the science behind what is actually happening during the laser removal; "The pigment (colour) in your tattoo is selectively broken down using a wavelength of laser light. A high amount of energy is absorbed by the tattoo in a very short duration of time causing microexplosion of the pigment in the skin. The exploded pigment is then removed naturally by

the body. It's a bit like trying to swallow a whole steak without chewing it first" - He's full of little nuggets of wisdom like that...

STEP THREE:

THE TEST PATCH

Wayne's definitions couldn't have been more exact. My experience of the pain definitely registered towards a hot-fat-spit-sensation (great name for a band), but on a positive note - it wasn't entirely unbearable. Within a matter of seconds, an area the size of a postage stamp had been successfully zapped, already leaving a noticeably fainter patch in comparison to the remaining tattoo, so much so that I was audibly astounded, at which point my naive optimism was expertly reintroduced to reality courtesy of another example from Wayne's infinite laser related wisdom;

"Don't be fooled by this reaction. The apparent lightening of the test area is a result of the moisture in your skin reacting from the intense heat generated by the laser, creating steam. It's very similar to how spectacles can steam up when you come in from the damp and cold."

Boom! There's another one. Brace yourselves, there's more to come.

STEP FOUR:

TEST(UAL) HEALING

Despite being warned to expect some blistering and told to resist the temptation of popping them should they occur, my experience of the healing process was relatively trouble free. I'm putting that more down to the minimal amount of skin trauma caused by size of the test patch, rather than the possibility that I am in fact, super-human. As advised by Wayne, I sparingly applied Aloe gel (two for one at my local pharmacists - bargain!) a couple of times a day and just like a fresh tattoo, avoided getting it drenched in water, piece of cake!

STEP FIVE:

FULL SESSION

As we had agreed, I waited around six weeks before visiting Wayne



again to let him to see the full effect of the treatment over the recommended healing period. The full removal session was going to take between ten and fifteen minutes - I know my arms are far from fully grown man size, but I imagined it would take at least thirty minutes. Much like with the test patch, the pain was exactly the same only it lasted longer, but knowing what to expect helps - which is exactly the same thought process that you have when getting a tattoo.

STEP SIX:

(AW)FULL HEALING

My arm looked like it had taken a serious beating and felt like it too. With the increase in size and duration of the laser treatment, as you can imagine, there had been a substantial increase in the trauma. Thankfully still no blisters, but some hefty swelling - I looked like a shit version of HellBoy. Not only swelling, but for a good twenty-four hours afterwards, I had a tingling, pins and needles meets stinging nettle, sensation.

Wayne advised against any form of anti inflammatory and recommends an ice pack or a bag of frozen peas to reduce the swelling and cull any uncomfortable feelings, the heat generated by my arm was cooking



through petit pois like nobody's business, my hot tip would be to have a few bags in the freezer and keep them on a steady rotation. After the first full day it all became far more bearable and by week two the swelling reduced leaving me with two arms both the same size. Hello again, forearms of a prepubescent, teenage, chess club member.

STEP SEVEN:

REPEATING STEPS FIVE AND SIX

We repeated this process five times in total, each time he would increase the power of the laser and gradually, over the







following year, my black and grey mess of shading, swirls, stars and a couple of butterflies, positioned on the inside of my right forearm disappeared. I'd like to say "as if by magic" but we all know it's not magic, it's science. What's the difference? Magic doesn't hurt, because

IF YOU TAKE ANYTHING AWAY FROM READING ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE, IT SHOULD BE THAT LASER REMOVAL AND SUBSEQUENT COVER-UPS TAKE A VERY LONG TIME

it's made up and science really fucking hurts, because it's real!

STEP EIGHT: THE COVER UP

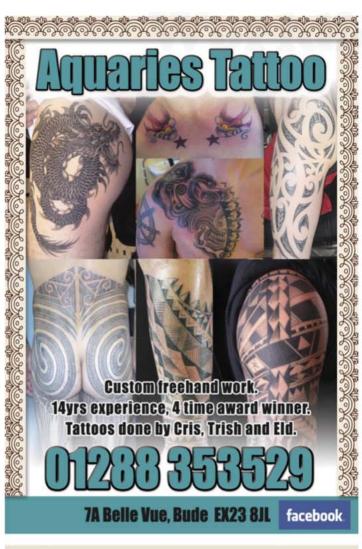
After the fifth and final session my arm was placed in the expert hands of Math who took care of the cover up. Owing to the inherent masculine nature of my lower arms, I opted for the most masculine tattoo I could imagine - an eagle fighting with a massive snake. The process was painful for both Math and I in very different ways. As result of the extensive amount of laser removal, the skin on my forearm had become very difficult to tattoo, a cause of much frustration for Math and more discomfort than I was used to experiencing in comparison to previous tattoos.

This it must be noted, is nobody's fault but my own. Due to my lack of patience, I had not given my skin enough time to heal 100% - making the cover up a much longer process than it would have been if I had just waited. Lesson learnt the hard way!

If you take anything away from reading about my experience, it should be that laser removal and subsequent cover-ups take a very long time. Rushing through and into either, will result in them both taking even longer - be patient!

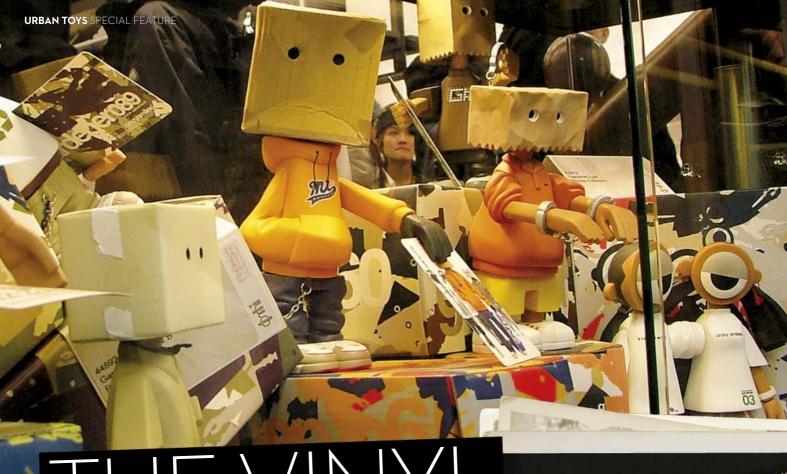
If you made a mistake once, you're very fortunate that now you can do something about it, but don't rush into it and make the same mistake twice.

Excluding of course those, typically American films where, in the absence of a Russian, a German, or a generically Arabic looking baddie the directors cruelly manipulate the sharp wit and charm that occurs so naturally within British passport holders to personify evil - poor Alan Rickman.









THE VINYL FRONTIER

Whether you're a Goth, punk or indie kid ... whether skate decks, manga or old school rock floats your boat, you can't fail to have noticed the rise of the art-toy. It's a scene that draws its inspiration from body art and street style and - like some ever-hungry Worm of Ouroboros - increasingly feeds back into work of tattooists and designers.



Michael Lau is the acknowledged Godfather of the 'urban vinyl' but let's get one thing straight: he doesn't make action figures. His work isn't based on characters from films. They're not maquettes or scale models. You won't find any lifelike hair or gripping hands here.

It's this that's made the work of Michael - and others like him - not only distinctive but downright desirable. It's also made it difficult to categorise. Are urban vinyls art or toys? The

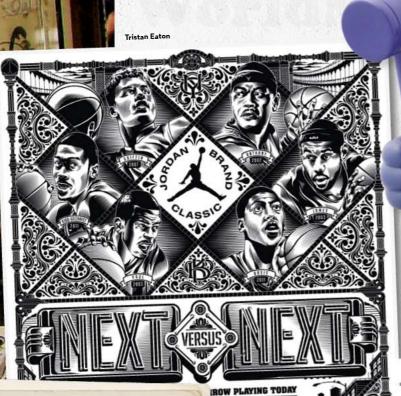
truth is, a bit of both.
By placing bold, colourful
figures, made from 'throw-away'
materials into galleries vinyl
artists, like tattooists before
them, have challenged the
concept of what qualifies as art.
They've also proved that toy
collectors are interested in more
than just points of articulation.
It's thanks to artists like Michael
that memorabilia stores now
look like mini art installations.

It all began back in the late '90s when Michael Lau was asked to produce a cover for the "hysteria

rock band" Anodize. "I've always loved toys, especially GI Joe, but couldn't afford to buy them" he says. "Then in 1998, Anodise were looking for new ideas for a CD cover. So we sat down together and thought maybe it would be interesting make the whole band as toy figures and take photos of them. That was the start."

Michael had made one-off pieces for friends before but this was the first time he'd shared his

Lostboro A Promont cline



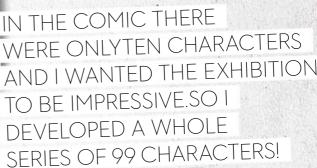


vision with the rest of the world. The crowd, as they say, went wild.

The following year Hong Kongbased magazine "East Touch" asked Lau to create a comic strip. The result was "Gardenergala" (Gardeners) which took its cue from urban fashion and global street culture. Michael: "I live in Hong Kong, which is a place without its own culture, so I'm influenced by Global Culture. I like Jamie Hewlett - Tank Girl - Simon Bisley's Lobo... Hellboy... By then, I'd exhibited every three years and was getting a bit bored with drawing. I decided for my next show, to turn the Gardener characters into 12-inch figures. In the comic there were only ten characters and I wanted the exhibition to be impressive. So I developed a whole series of 99 characters! Because the original Gardeners weren't for sale I also made some six-inch figures to help pay for the show."

RCLAYS CENTER

That first figure was called "Tattoo". His collection of six-inch Crazychildren figures launched in 1999 and have since acquired a frenzied following. He's also produced figures sponsored by the likes of Nike, Sony and Diesel. And it's perhaps this which reflects the real power of Michael's work. Not that he's managed to bag big sponsors, but that they respect his reputation enough to resist flooding the market with Michael Lau bath towels and undies. "I'm not Hello Kitty or Mickey Mouse! And I'm not greedy. The most important thing is that I make enough to continue to work in the way I like. It's freedom and control versus money."



TRISTAN EATON

"I studied at the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit and The School of Visual Arts in New York. Along the way I developed a habit for vandalism ... colourful vandalism that is." Restlessly creative, mischievous and boldly individual, if there's an archetypal urban vinyl designer, then Tristan Eaton is that man. From tagging dumpsters to creating collectable canvasses for corporate giants, he's done it all.

Although he started out designing toys for-Fisher Price, it was his work with Kidrobot that established his reputation. It was Eaton, with Kidrobot owner Paul Budniz, who dreamed up the collectable toy classic: the Dunny. Conceived as a type of "pop art canvass" these three-inch soft vinyl figs. have since become one of the most desirable toys on the urban scene, with new and established artists lining up to create their own unique editions.

Since then the LA-based artist has moved away from

Skin Deep Magazine Issue 238

URBAN TOYS
SPECIAL FEATURE

PICKLEBABY FOR INSTANCE IS A
PERSONAL HYBRIDIZATION OF CUTSIE
JAPANESE FOOD BASED TOYS, ALIEN,
AND GIANT MONSTERS LIKE GODZILLA

design to focus on fine art and mural work. His art often has graffiti and tattoo-esque motifs. "I like", he says, "organic shapes and beautiful colour combinations. With the vinyl toys I created (Dunny, Munny, Fat Cap, Thundermutt etc.), we were literally designing tattoo style paint designs for them.

In fact, I would love to learn how to tattoo. I think it's a timeless art."

Unlike plastic, soft vinyl has a beautiful matte quality, which gives it a delicate feel. It also happens to be relatively inexpensive, which is an important consideration for independent artists. Tristan: "I feel so lucky to have been a major part of the art-toy movement. It brought my art

to the world and even got

me into the

Museum of

permanent

collection!

time, it

helped

other

artists

At the same

Modern Art's

careers as well. It's such a crazy phenomenon and I love that that's still going strong."

LEECIFER

Originally from Southern
California, Lee 'Leecifer' Gajda
grew up in a backwoods town
in central Ohio where he
spent much of his formative
years testing his ability to
be excommunicated by
the Lutheran Church.

Tattooing has always been a big influence on his work. In fact, he's dipped his own fingers into the inky blackness on occasion.

Lee: "I should point out in regards to tattooing, that I haven't done it in more than 20 years and - truth be known - I didn't stick with it long enough to be any good. I'm sure I gave plenty of artists cover up business! However I have

designed flash and have had some of my own designs tattooed on me by Jon
Highland of 12 Monkeys."
Leecifer's sublime

Leecifer's sublime sculpts are inspired by a riot of cultural mashups: tattoos, hotrods, graffiti, gig posters, B-movie aliens and a dash of vintage kaiju. He works in both vinyl and resin, designing his own figures as well as pieces for other artists.

comes

draw turtles walking on two hind legs. He's yet to be produced in vinyl as I make them all out of resin."

from all over for me", he says.

"I often find myself drawn to weird textures and shapes.
A slightly desiccated orange,

Aqua Gammy. Lee: "Gammy is obviously based on Gamera, although even as a little kid I used to

a rusty panel on an ancient pickup truck, the pads on a dog's foot ...PickleBaby for instance is a personal hybridization of cutsie Japanese food based toys, Alien, and giant monsters like Godzilla. The Honoo or Flame Spirit was a fun collaborative

Godzilla. The Honoo or Flame Spirit was a fun collaborative piece based on my sketches and produced in vinyl by Super7."

Sublimely textured, with multilayered hues, tints and colours, Leecifer's work represents urban vinyl at its most eclectic and irreverent. 'It is" Lee comments "my very own fucked up vision of urban contemporary art."

DAVE PRESSLER

"When I was a kid I so badly wanted human skull ..."

. Dave Pressler is taking about what

Dave Pressler:

URBAN TOYS

Albino Cyclops

www.skindeep.co.uk





SUSHI

LIKE TATTOOING, THIS IS ONE ART FORM THAT ISN'T ABOUT PLEASING AN ELITE FEW

an actor. Then a couple of friends decided they wanted to make some cool, weird TV shows with puppets and animation and remembered that I used draw. That's when I really had to learn how to do this 'art stuff' for real."

LA's self-titled 'lowbrow' art scene is, in many ways, unique. Some of its artists are self-taught, with backgrounds in underground comix and tattooing. Others are propmakers and storyboard artists from LA's movie machine. The result is an eclectic mélange that confounds critics. In it, Dave found the prefect antidote to TV work with all its "corrections and notes from Producers." His first works were massive canvasses based on his animation characters. But what drew him to the urban vinyl scene (tho his preference is for small run DIY resin pieces) were the possibilities. Original, narrative and fun; Dave's figures are all these things but he also loves the inclusiveness of urban toys. Like tattooing, this is one art form that isn't about pleasing an elite few. It's about expression and individuality and in that world, Dave says, "all art is equal."

fuels his fire - artistically speaking. It basically boils down to "Skulls, Robots and Stupidity!" he laughs. Which is perhaps not that surprising from the man behind the Nickelodeon cartoon "Robot and Monster", along with a range of magnificently manic collectable toys. What's surprising is that Dave doesn't consider himself a natural-born artist.

Dave Pressler: Gas Powered Dragon

"Ever since I can remember I have been drawing, painting and sculpting but I was always bad at drawing people so it was more interesting to me to make and draw creatures and robots. However, I didn't really 'pursue' art until the early 90's. My focus was really on being

LED

Art has always been JLed's - Joe
Ledbetter's - ticket through life.
As a kid, he may have given a
terrible book report but he'd
be sure of a passing
grade by making
an awesome
diorama of
a scene from
that book.

Working his way
up from underground
art shows he's now
been at his craft, fulltime, since 2004 and can
boast of works sold at Christie's
and featured in "The LA Times"
and "People Magazine". But



he's perhaps best known for his insanely inspired collectable toys. Joe is the man who gave the world Lava Bunny and other subversively cute 3D sculpts. "That was my very first original toy release, it received lots of attention, and truly launched my career. Nothin' like the first time!"

JLed first discovered vinyl toys when he wandered into the Kidrobot store in San Francisco back in 2002. He knew instantly that this was something he had to be a part of. The appeal is obvious. Here was a whole new frontier in creative expression. Joe: "There was also the irony of using a production factory to create a rare, limited edition vinyl sculptures. It's like using the system against itself."

Inspiration comes from a wide spectrum: classic animation, comics, skateboarding and 80s video games and Joe's images have - in turn - inspired others. "It's really fun to see my work as tattoos and it can be a learning experience to see different takes on my style and characters.

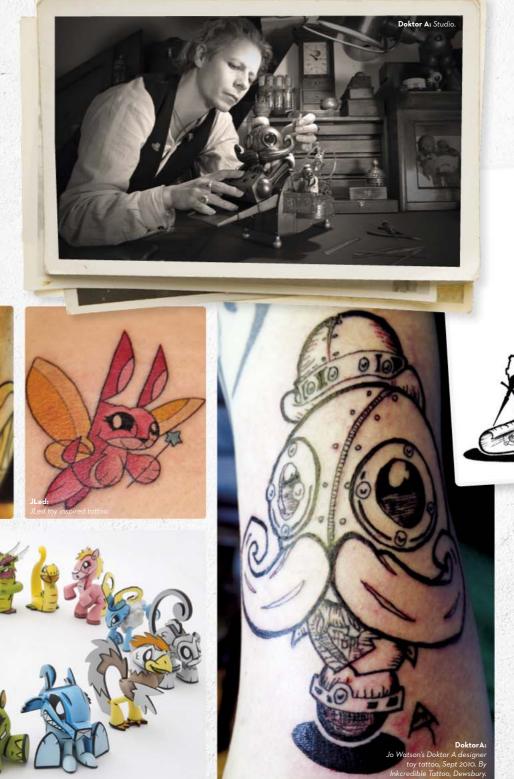
Sometimes I'll see a character that's been re-interpreted and it's such a great idea. Why didn't I think of that?!"

Does he have tattoos himself? "Yes, seven collaged together that I got between 2000 and 2003 - all based on my artwork. It might sound hippie-dippy or pretentious, but these tattoos serve as

talismans and bring magic to my drawing arm. Without them I feel like I would lose my art powers."

DOKTOR A

In the urban vinyl scene it's not unusual to find artists turned toy designers. Doktor A - otherwise known as Bruce Whistlecraft - is that rare beast. A toy maker turned artist, whose



Chinese Zodiac toy serie





was a 'Gwin' tuxedoed penguin (called Hard to Swallow) created for October Toys in 2005. At that point, he'd been creating designer vinyls for his own amusement for a couple of years and loved the grass roots approach of the 'industry'. "It was a few dedicated people doing things they were interested in and delivering direct to the customers. After working with big toy companies, where I'd sit through endless

and direct and above all fun."

The Doktor's characters arrive "in one for three different ways". A written biography, a sketch which forms the basis for the sculpture, or "a particular piece of junk" which inspires the whole creation, look, story and all. The result is a steampunk synthesis of Ray Harryhausen, 50s horror movies, sci-fi. Hammer films and the artwork of people like Brian Froud, Ian

faces in most sorts of machinery and that's inspirational. Odd but inspirational." That's clearly something that resonates with tattoo artists. Bruce: "I have seen many tattoos based on my artwork. People often come up to me at conventions and show me their pieces. It's very flattering that someone likes my work enough to have it permanently added to themselves. It's extraordinary really."

URBAN TOYS SPECIAL FEATURE

TARA MCPHERSON

Tara McPherson's art is the art of tension. Candy crush colours wash over dark, Delphic images. Dead lovers lie, supine, with gaping holes where their hearts should be. Sinister nudes emerge from amniotic-fluid like pools. Cleaver-welding Goth chicks vomit up fountains of pink puke. Frankly it's all very cool.

Despite being sought after by the likes of Nike, Warner Brothers, Swatch, Wyden+Kennedy and Pepsi, Tara remains a firm believer in affordable, accessible art. She's drawn gig posters, comic covers and a colouring book which has proved hugely popular with tattooists. "I think", she says, "that there's something about my line style that lends itself to tattoos well and the coloring book almost works as flash."

Her introduction to collectable toys came when she was managing the Japanese animation store, Banzai Anime. "Seeing all these crazy figures we sold, I just thought 'Man these are so rad. I wanna do this'. That was at a turning point in my life path when I'd decided to go to college and really learn to draw and paint properly ... but making toys was always a goal."

Her first figure appeared in 2005 but it's undoubtedly Tara's 2012 award-winning Lilitu figure for Kidrobot, that demonstrates how collectable toy have evolved since Michael Lau's ground-breaking vinyls. Tara: "I think I'd painted a canvas for a dark

SINISTER NUDES EMERGE
FROM AMNIOTIC-FLUID
LIKE POOLS. CLEAVER
WELDING GOTH CHICKS
VOMIT UP FOUNTAINS
OF PINK PUKE. FRANKLY
IT'S ALL VERY COOL

themed all-female show. I was looking up female goddesses and I found this myth of the Biblical Lilith who in Ancient Sumaria was called Lilitu. She's this incredibly venomous creature. Depending on where the story was coming from, sometimes she had poison for milk. Sometimes. she would seduce and kill the men. So the translation from paint to sculpture worked really well. I was even able to use the painting on the packaging." The focus now may be less on urban culture, more on individual artistic expression, but either way, it's a win-win situation for figure and tattoo aficionados.









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FIGHT THE FUTURES

Back in issue 236, we published an article entitled The Social Network. It looked at how technology, in particular social media, was influencing and affecting the culture of tattoos in the modern age. Paddy Vipond - the man we have locked into perpetual research - looks at it now through a different window.

t is clear that technology is coming to play a greater role in our lives as time progresses. Long gone are the days of having to stay up to record something on a VHS, there is no more map buying and route planning before a journey, and school homework is being completed in record time thanks to broadband and websites such as Wikipedia. Technology is all around us, it is shaping and changing every aspect of our lives, and gradually creeping into areas we never thought it would be necessary. Brushing our own teeth for example, used to be a fairly mundane task but now electric toothbrushes do the jobs for us, clothing has the ability to include LED displays, and there are now pens that allow the user to listen to the radio as they are writing. My great-uncle has recently bought one of these, despite the fact he is basically deaf.

A Forbes article I recently read used the term the "uncontrollable evolution of

emerging tech", and that is the perfect description of what is happening. Technology is progressing, and, whether we like it or not, it will continue to grow and play an ever-larger role in our lives. If technology can, for want of a better word, "invade" the everyday activity of brushing ones teeth, then it will most certainly "invade" the business, and culture, of tattooing.

Where is it likely to go? What innovations will occur that allow future generations to take tattoos to the next level? Are there businesses already looking to bring technology into this ancient art form?

The famous saying goes "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" but this is precisely what some companies are doing in the modern age. If we take glasses as an example, they have been around for hundreds of years, designs have changed slightly, but the basic principles remained the same. From its original inception, up



until now, the spectacle has changed very little. However, this is about to change as Google are set to unveil their product Google Glass. These are high-tech specs that are set to revolutionise the eyewear market.

Technological innovations can go even further still, blending the lines between a



IF TECHNOLOGY CAN INVADE THE EVERYDAY ACTIVITY OF BRUSHING ONES TEETH, THEN IT WILL MOST CERTAINLY INVADE THE CULTURE, OF TATTOOING

humans body and a product.

Prosthetic limbs are the obvious example but there are also would more unique, individual ways of to store to store within the ring.

Could reinver impact would with le

merging the latest technology with a persons body. Jerry

Jalava is a Finnish software developer who lost part of his finger in a motorcycle accident. He hit the British news in 2009 because he had a 2GB memory stick inserted into his new finger, allowing him to store and carry around data within his body, hidden inside the ring finger on his left hand.

Could Google's desire to reinvent the wheel (spectacle) impact on other products we would normally be content with leaving as they are?
Could the blending of human and technology "invade" the

culture of tattoos? After all, if any area of life were to provide the perfect opportunity to place technology within people, it would surely be tattooing. What could this mean for the future of ink?

Companies are already in the process of researching and developing products for these areas. This hypothetical future that I hint at, may not be so far away. With the tremendous growth in numbers of tattooed individuals, and the seemingly endless rise in popularity, it would make sense for big

Skin Deep Magazine Issue 238



business to get a piece of the

action. They are looking to see how tattoos could be used to serve a purpose, rather than simply being a piece of art.

One of the most recent

innovations has come in the form of new inks. Said to have become popular due to the rise of clubbing, UV tattoos use ink which is next-toinvisible in sunlight, but which glow brightly when under ultra-violet light. Technology Guide states that the popularity of UV tattoos has been increasing steadily, and this may be because of its appeal to those who both work hard and play hard. Though attitudes are improving, the workplace and the office are still rather unwelcoming to those with visible tattoos, and so UV tattoos allow the wearer to hide in plain sight.

As the clubbing generation matured, a new generation of innovative and boundary pushing upstarts began to take their place. This new generation had grown up with the internet, they had almost always been the owner of a mobile phone, and dishwashers were a necessity in their house, rather than a luxury. Surrounded by technological innovation this new generation of tattooists and tattoo enthusiasts further

incorporated technology into the process that they love. Rather than just using ink which is responsive to certain light, why not have a design which is able to interact with technology? Thus was born the QR code tattoo.

QR codes are the strange looking, black and white pixelated squares that you sometimes see on products. One of the uses of the code is that when it is scanned by a smartphone, the user is directed to a webpage, or an image, or a video online. This ability meant that as long as the tattooist was accurate enough, QR codes could be inked directly on to clients, and linked to any material the client wanted. Want a tattoo that when scanned shows your latest tweet? It is possible. Want a tattoo that when scanned plays your wedding video? Also possible. Want a tattoo that shows you the latest weather reports in your area? It is possible. In one of the most famous examples (4.7 million YouTube hits isn't bad) a tattooist named K.A.R.L. inked a QR code on to a man's chest, which when scanned, revealed a video of a cartoon man in a top hat singing and dancing. The worlds first interactive

THEY ARE LOOKING TO SEE HOW TATTOOS COULD BE USED TO SERVE A PURPOSE, RATHER THAN SIMPLY BEING A PIECE OF ART

tattoo had been born.

In November of 2013, the concept of technological tattoos went even further. Under Google's ownership, Motorola filed a patent for "coupling an electronic skin tattoo to a mobile communication device". It is believed that this "tattoo" would be on the throat or neck, and would allow a person to connect with a smartphone or gaming device. Incredible as it sounds this electronic throat tattoo would work in a similar way a bluetooth headset does, via a transceiver, the "tattoo" would directly capture sound from the persons throat and send it to their smartphone.

Though Motorola's definition of "tattoo" is on the very fringes of what we currently think of when we say the word, technological innovations and



advances are going to continue to push the boundaries. A hundred years from now, who knows what may constitute a tattoo. Motorola, however, were not the first communications company to explore the avenue of tattoo usage. With a more familiar use of the term, Nokia patented a tattoo innovation of their own a year earlier in 2012.

In March of that year a patent was uncovered that showed Nokia had been researching the idea of magnetised tattoos that would vibrate when your phone received an incoming call or text. PC Mag stated that the tattoo would generate a "tingling feeling" in a users arm, and could be used for alarms. appointment reminders or to signal low phone battery. The patent read that special "ferromagnetic inks" would be used in the design of the tattoo, which, once healed, would be magnetised, after which the phone would be adapted to send a magnetic signal when certain functions occurred.

Whether or not Nokia and Motorola have decided to continue with this research is unknown. There are those, such as Tech Crunch, that believe these companies are "just cooking up concepts and patenting them to prevent any opportunistic outsiders from trying something similar". But whether the companies are acting on them or not, the patents alone give an example of the train of thought developers have gone through. Tattoos are being clearly identified as a market ripe for technological investment and innovation.

I don't suppose we will see graphic, 3D images moving along peoples skin for quite some time, but it would be naive to think it will never occur. Tattoos are here to stay, and they are a multi-million pound industry, and when you have the three factors of popularity, longevity and



profitability, it is never long until the products receive high-tech make overs. The possibilities for the future of tattoos and technology are seemingly endless. Anything that could be incorporated into ink, or placed under human skin, has the potential to revolutionise the industry.

Perhaps in the future, tattoo designs will be able to change colour at the users preference, providing perfect camouflage during those heated paintballing outings. Perhaps a tattoo could be used to monitor key functions of a humans body, providing statistics on vital signs that could greatly reduce health problems. Or perhaps in the future, there will be chefs slaving away in the steamy kitchens of Swansea, who do not have to worry so much about burning their hands on the hot pans, because the heat resistant tattoos provide some protection for their skin.

As ever I do not have the answers - simply more questions. All I know is that change is inevitable, and even the ancient art of tattooing will not escape technologies relentless advances. CHANGE IS INEVITABLE, AND EVEN THE ANCIENT ART OF TATTOOING WILL NOT ESCAPE TECHNOLOGIES RELENTLESS ADVANCES













LEE PICKLES & NEKO

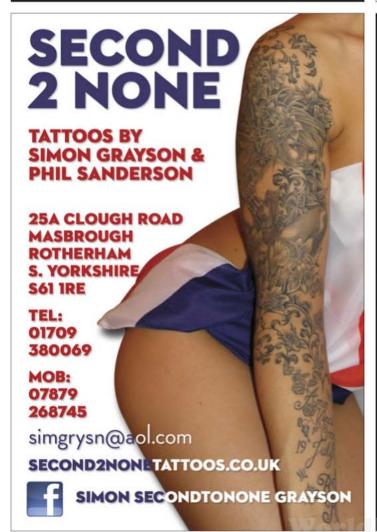
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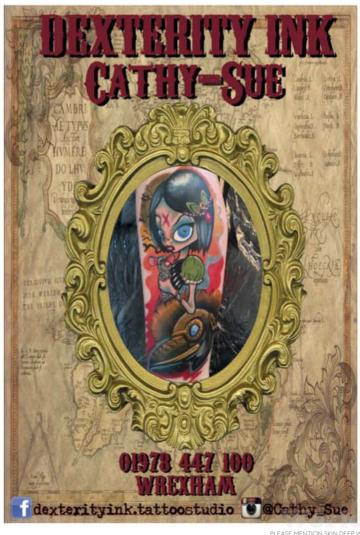
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WorldMags.net

face to face

ARCHER AND NOBES

ARCHER AND NOBES IS A LONG-TERM PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLABORATION BETWEEN LUKE ARCHER AND SAM NOBES, WHO ARE EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN APPEARANCE AND IDENTITY AT NATIONAL EVENTS AND CONVENTIONS.

The photographers met while studying photography in Bristol and a mutual love of portraiture has seen them photograph at diverse events such as the European Elvis Championship and The UK Beard and Moustache Championship.



"This was our second year photographing at the Brighton Tattoo convention and this time we chose to focus solely on attendees with face tattoos. However we feel that face tattooing, despite its rich heritage in many of the world oldest cultures is still too far for many, perhaps making it the last taboo of tattoo. "We hope our studio style portraits help focus the viewers'

attention on the artistry of the tattoos, particularly how well the designs fit the owners face. For all involved, the choice to get inked on the most visible of places was not one taken lightly."

The following pages takes a look at some of the work from Archer & Nobes, whilst the Faces themselves comment on their decisions...

WorldMags.net



I FIRST REALISED I WANTED TATTOOS WHEN I WAS 7 AND I SAW A GUY ON FELIXSTOWE PROM WALKING WITH JUST A PAIR OF SHORTS ON COVERED IN TATTOOS. HE WAS IN MY EYES THE COOLEST PERSON I'D EVER SEEN. FROM THAT MOMENT I KNEW I WAS GOING TO GET A FULL BODY TATTOO.

JIM

aying that it still took many years of being tattooed for me to get my hands, neck, head and face tattooed. I count myself lucky to work for a company that have no tattoo prejudice. I got my clockwork tattoo done by Chris Cracknell of New Image Studio in Felixstowe - I chose the clockwork design as it seemed appropriate. I was

told I looked like I was always thinking and people could hear the cogs turning. I got the teardrop done on my face by Chris Straugheir of Magnums Tattoo Studio in Felixstowe - this is in memory of my father who passed away. Chris Straugheir also did the Life's for Living script on my chin, I chose this to show that you can do anything and live your life to the fullest.



I BEGAN HAVING TATTOOS JUST OVER A DECADE AGO, I ALWAYS WANTED A FEW BUT NEVER REALLY GOT UP THE COURAGE. THEN ONE DAY AFTER SOME RESEARCH, I WALKED INTO WOODY'S TATTOO STUDIO AND PICKED A DESIGN OFF THE WALL.

MARK

bout 4 years passed of regular tattooing, I wanted my neck done which took a lot of thought as it meant that my ink would always be on show and could potentially affect future employment. Then I concentrated on covering my legs with portraits, until I got to the stage where I felt I needed a big piece - something that would make me quite

different to those around me.

So, about two years ago I decided to start my head. We jumbled around a few ideas and drew on many designs, but the bio-mech was the one. It's quite a slow process but using a rotary helped ease the pain and the healing was quicker. I love the end result, it turns a lot of heads in good and bad ways but I don't look back.

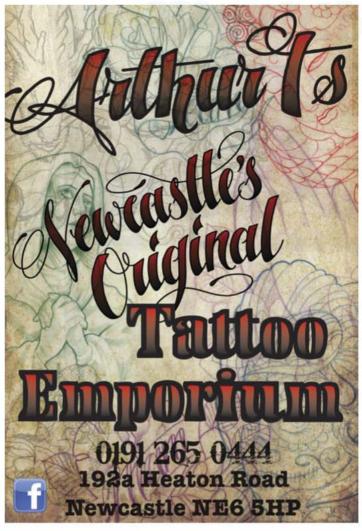


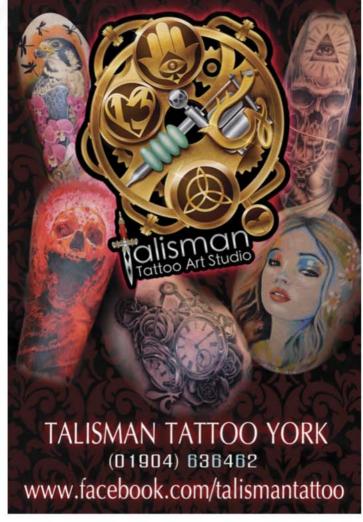
I WANTED A REPRESENTATION OF 'MARK MAKING' ON THE SKIN IN ITS SIMPLEST FORM SO AS NOT TO DISTRACT FROM SO MANY IMPORTANT FEATURES ON THE FACE. IT HAD TO BE OBTRUSIVE ENOUGH TO BE A SUCCESSFUL FACE TATTOO WITHOUT CAUSING DISRUPTION TO THE FACE.

JACK

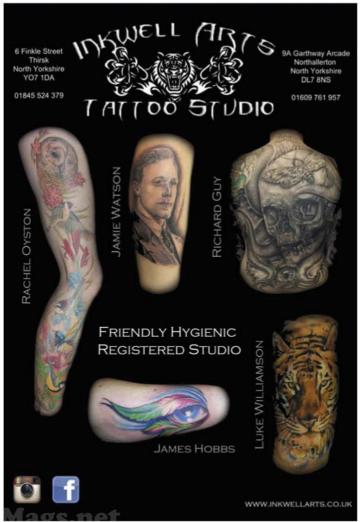
chose Nigel at Nine Tattoo. After working with him for five years, I knew he was the one for the work. He has an incredible approach to design and tattooing - totally uncompromising which we both understand.

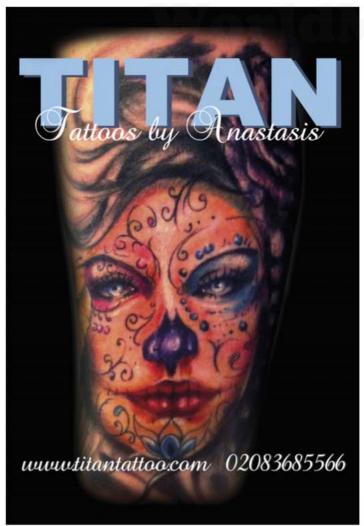
For me, tattooing on the face is no different than anywhere else on the body, only that it is far more familiar to me as I see it more often than any other part of my body. It's changed my appearance but also my self-identity.





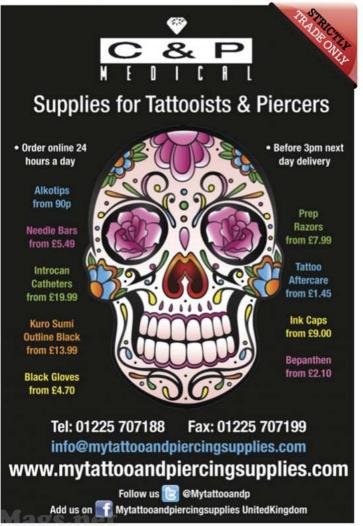












Here in the now frontier

BY PAUL TALBOT

Continuing our (slightly technical) series into looking at this relatively new style of tattooing, Paul Talbot drains the brain of Dan Chase. Watch and learn... that's all we have to say.

s far as I'm concerned tattooist and graphic artist Dan Chase really needs no introduction. His signature style that combines Photoshop, Illustrator and hand drawn sketches is so individual and easily recognised you're bound to have already seen his work - maybe without even realising that he's the artist behind it. We share very similar 'workflows' and attitudes to working digital - probably from our similar design backgrounds - so it was an absolute pleasure to be able to chat design and working practices with my favourite artist in the UK at the moment.

YOUR GRAPHIC DESIGN AND GRAFFITI BACKGROUND IS FAIRLY EVIDENT (AT LEAST) TO ME IN YOUR STYLE. DO YOU THINK THIS SKILL SET LENDS ITSELF WELL TO TATTOOING? HOW DID YOU FIND CROSSING OVER?

I think any skill set that involves art will lend itself well to tattooing. Tattooing is an art form, all art forms involve learning a new tool, whether it's a type of brush, paints or digital input device. With tattooing it's the machines and how those machines put the various inks into skin. Once you understand your tools then you can convey your art better. If you have a history which includes lots of different forms of art then I think those forms naturally come through in the tattoo. I'm a firm believer in learning as much as

you can from any situation or workplace, no matter how boring the job. I've always found that the skills learned have come in useful and normally when I least expect it! If you can find a way to incorporate past skills into a new one then you'll only improve. As for me specifically, my history in graphics helps

with composition, placement, flow or

deconstruction of the design, also how to converse with clients and make sure we're both getting as good a solution as possible and finally in the speed with creating the design. I know a few tattooists prefer not to use computers, and that's cool, each to their own, but I find the attitude of 'the computer does it all for you' pretty negative really; the computer is a tool, same as the tattoo machines we all use. It's there to make life easier. It doesn't do the hard work for you, if you walk away it isn't going to keep designing but it can speed things up a hell of a lot. As for the graff work, well that's where you can go as crazy as you want, there are no guidelines, clients or deadlines and the colour theory present in the graff scene is the best there is - pure expression!

I found the crossover pretty straight

forward if I'm honest, the only shock was the workload, really wasn't prepared for that! But as I said above, once you learn your tools it's more about figuring out what works on skin and what doesn't. It's all experience, every time I think I know something I look back a year later and realise



WHEN I STARTED TATTOOING, I IMMEDIATELY USED THE COMPUTER TO TRY AND CREATE THE WORK AND SOON FOUND OUT THAT WHAT LOOKS GOOD ON SCREEN DOESN'T NECESSARILY WORK ON SKIN

how little I knew. If you don't question yourself, your work and how it's gonna heal then you're never going to evolve. The best tool an artist has is a critical eye.

YOU APPROACH INVOLVES HAND DRAWING THE INITIAL SKETCH AND THEN REFINING IT PHOTOSHOP OR ILLUSTRATOR WHEREAS I DO ALL MY DESIGNS WITHIN THE DIGITAL DOMAIN. WHAT BENEFITS (IF ANY) DO YOU THINK YOUR APPROACH GIVES YOU?

I'd been doing graphics for so long that I hadn't picked up a pencil to do a proper full on sketch in around 7 years. When I started tattooing, I immediately used the computer to try and create the work and soon found out that what looks good on screen doesn't necessarily work on skin, your work is all digital but it still has movement and excitement because of it's style. At the time I wasn't producing work like yours - more akin to computer based traditional designs - and they just didn't work, they looked flat and had no flair. When I started hand drawing everything I realised that the difference in line weight and the 'movement' from hand drawing add so much more to my designs. I try to capture that in my tattoos, I spend a lot of time sculpting out lines so they carry that hand drawn element through. I still use Illustrator to



create certain elements and will embed them within the hand drawn design and I use Photoshop pretty heavily to compose, highlight and colour the sketch, the benefit here is that if an element isn't what a client wants I can loose it easily without having to redraw the design, same for the colour, if the client doesn't like the colours I can just rework over the sketch, this is what I mean by the computer making things faster. I only need to draw something once, I can add or subtract as the client and I see fit.

YOU USE A LOT OF ORGANIC ELEMENTS AND HEAVY LINES IN YOUR WORK COMBINED WITH YOUR UNIQUE ILLUSTRATIVE STYLE, THIS SEEMS HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY THE 'VECTOR' GRAPHICS SCENE





ONCE YOU LEARN YOUR TOOLS IT'S MORE ABOUT FIGURING OUT WHAT WORKS ON SKIN AND WHAT DOESN'T. IT'S ALL EXPERIENCE, EVERY TIME I THINK I KNOW SOMETHING I LOOK BACK A YEAR LATER AND REALISE HOW LITTLE I KNEW

> BUT YOU SEEM TO BE ABLE TO KEEP THE SPIRIT OF CLASSIC BLACK AND GREY TATTOOING IN YOUR WORK, IS THIS A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO TRY AND BRING THOSE TWO WORLDS TOGETHER?

I can see how my work may appear as a hybrid of vector and hand drawn work but wouldn't say I've combined vector work with my sketch style, vector is normally so clean that I think they'd conflict somewhat but lately I have been working on creating two distinctive styles, one which uses solely vector.

naturally evolved from just producing a lot of black and grey work. It's always been my favourite tattoo style and the one I always knew I'd focus on, I'd say my work has evolved from classic black and grey so hopefully will always embody the spirit of it. The latest big stylistic change for me came about from switching to drawing with a mechanical pencil. I'd already been doing my 'shattered' style of shading for some time and this switch gave me a much more defined edge to

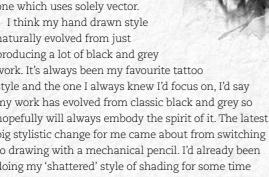
the shaded areas. I recreate that look in my tattoos by using a super tight 3 and shading in the same way. It heals up really nicely too, I find it doesn't fade as much as when using mags and the final healed piece is a lot closer to the levels put in on the day. I used the organic

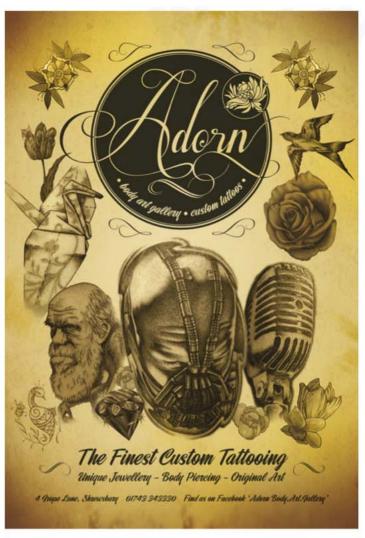
elements to help fit the design to the body but to be honest, the past six months

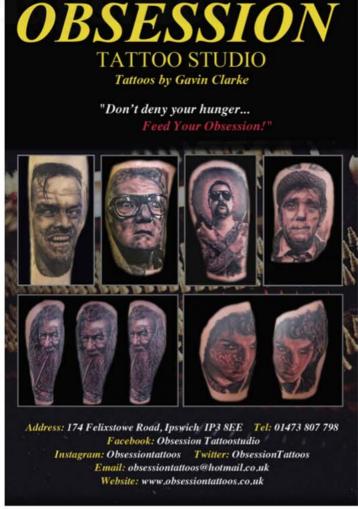
> have seen me get away from those as I've seen a lot of people using them - now I've started going in the opposite direction and incorporating straighter lines and angles to help blend things out. The bold lines came about from looking at my healed work, I want to know that what I produce for someone will still look good in the future and not just on the day it's done. The other style is where I wanted to get back into Illustrator as a program, I'd got a bit rusty on it, so took what I'm learning from tattooing and am now creating

super clean vector designs that have no shading and just use the solid blocks to define the shape, again, drawing heavily on the 'line weight' idea from earlier. These designs are super bold so I know they'll hold up well and I have had a play with combining these two differing styles but I'm not sold on whether they work yet, I'll get back to you on that in a year or so...

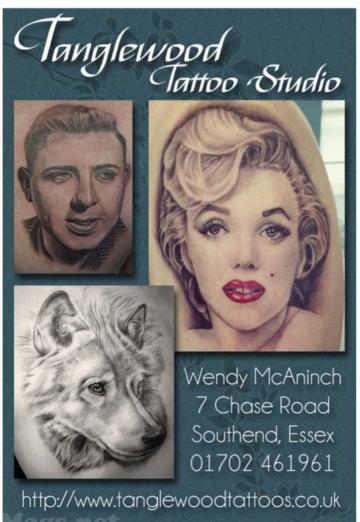
Check out more of Dan's work: n9ne.co.uk





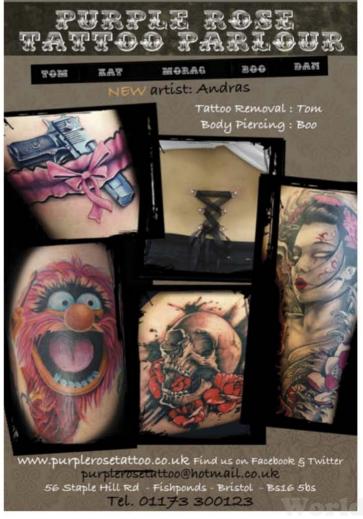












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Reviews

LET'S CRANK UP THE ACTION AROUND HERE. IF YOU'VE RUN OUT OF CULTURE AND ARE DESPERATE TO IMPRESS A FUTURE MATING PARTNER WITH YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF CURRENT AFFAIRS, YOU'RE SHIT OUT OF LUCK HERE - BUT WHILE YOU'RE SITTING HOME ALONE WITH YOUR CAT AND COUNTING YOUR POKEMON CARDS, YOU CAN AT LEAST SURROUND YOURSELF WITH THESE WONDERFUL THINGS:



BLACK STONE CHERRY • MAGIC MOUNTAIN

ROADRUNNER · OUT NOW

God knows I have tried often enough to broaden my horizons when it comes to music but you know what? There ain't nothing that compares to a great brontosaurus of a rock album - and this is exactly that.

If your bag of ruin happens to be low slung grinding guitars that have you considering winding the window down a little more and letting the foot press just a little harder on the gas, welcome to the big show.

Magic Mountain is the band's fourth album and not an awful lot has changed since the first. The sound has been refined a little and the production is getting better with each release but that's what we wanted y'know... the same but different.

Much like Nickelback, I don't think I'd be very appreciative of a new album that didn't sound like it was supposed to but that's not to say that the songwriting isn't getting better because it is. Sonically and lyrically jumping forwards at a great pace.

Having said all of that, if you're new to the idea of Black Stone Cherry, jump the hell on. You have have missed much but that simply means that there's plenty to go back to dig up at your leisure.

In a nutshell: Magic Mountain is a serious rock album for people who wished the seventies would never end and like to pretend there's nothing wrong with that.

Which there's not... unless you're a tattoo artist.

MR SMITH



THE ART OF IAN MILLER

TITAN BOOKS · PRICE: £24.99

Do you need to have hit your forties to know who lan Miller is? Probably but if you've got your wits about you, you'll know his work simply because of the standard he brought to the table.

The fact that Ian Miller had a unique toy box growing up certainly hasn't done him any harm in the long run - due to his mother's job at a theatrical costume company, instead of playing with toy cars or dolls, he found magic in the props and costumes from various plays and films like The Wizard of Oz and Sinbad the Sailor. A sound upbringing if you ask me because Miller is still working today. If you're looking for role models, they don't come classier than this, that's for sure.

He's one of those rare breed of artist these days whose style you can point at and identify as belonging to him - with over 150 pages at your disposal here, it will be hard not find something to fall in love with.

There's no shortage of his classic pen and ink illustrations to get your mouth watering here - for me: his H.P. Lovecraft paperback contributions for At the Mountains of Madness and The Haunter of the Dark short story collection, his work on Gormenghast is second to none and there's also some wonderful Tolkien set pieces but sitting at the top of the tree, has to be his Hollywood Gothic series.

If you're a fan of great art, you could do a lot worse than add this to the library but there are also some regular contributions over on his site at ian-miller.org - however, if you're serious about how to work with black lines, Ian Miller is the bomb.

Interestingly, if you're an artist yourself, you might want to chew on this from the mouth of the master: "I have said several times recently that the world I grew up in no longer exists. I could say it was a special time, a transitional time, but I suspect that each generation experiences something similar, and says the same. I know it was slower. There was more time to think, listen, to talk then."

Make of that what you will.

MR SMITH



LOCKE

ON GENERAL RELEASE NOW

Confinement (of the main protagonist and the audience's point of view) is nothing new in cinema, but there has never been another movie that locks us (sorry) so rigidly or so compellingly into one location as Locke.

That this car-bound movie actually works on any level at all is down to three things: an intelligent script that starts as a mystery and slowly and almost inevitably gives up its secrets; direction (by Steven Knight) that understands we do need outside perspectives other than solely watching from within the front seat of a car (so

we get shots of the road ahead and motorway signs); and a mesmerising performance from Tom Hardy as the eponymous, everyman hero/antihero Ivan Locke - a decent, honest, solid man who has made one mistake that is now causing repercussions that are having disastrous effects on his life.

Locke works in concrete and on the eve of the biggest ever pour of concrete in his career he receives a phone call that brings his rather normal, humdrum existence crashing around his ears. He should be on site in the Midlands seeing the foundations going in for a massive structure; instead he finds himself on the motorway to London, having to make hands-free calls to his boss, his second in command, his wife and children trying to explain why Locke the dependable, the man who always delivers, is not going to be there when he's needed - because he's needed somewhere else entirely.

It is this dichotomy in Locke that makes the film so watchable - mainly because Tom Hardy makes his character so human, so fallible, you can't bear not to observe as the wheels come off.

As he sits driving his car, calmly talking while those around him lose it mega-big time, it really is like watching a car crash that is about to happen. But the thing is, the crash never occurs; in his slow, deep Welsh tones, Locke talks it all through and because you believe in him and in the fact he really is a good man at heart, it's almost as if you are willing him down that stretch of road, wanting him to make it to the end of the journey and for everything to be all right.

Tom Hardy is the only actor you ever see in this film, everyone else is only ever heard as a voice. Some of the voices work better than others, but all are secondary to Hardy - he is Locke; an ordinary man thrown into extraordinary circumstances, and if he doesn't win every accolade going for his equally extraordinary performance, then there really is no future for intelligent, understated, compelling movie-making in the modern world.



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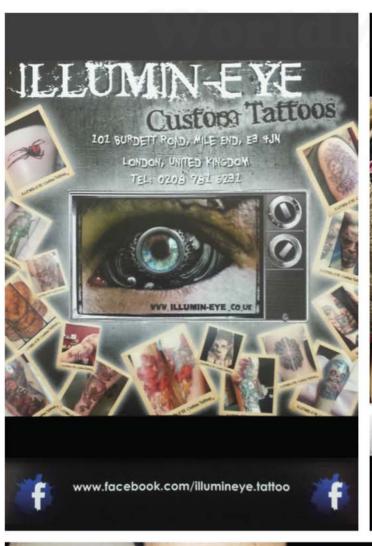
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CRAIGY LEE

Craigy Lee 🚨 Ash Springle

Live Music has an impact on people. When you go to a gig and your favourite band comes out and play the opening chords to 'that song' it gets into your soul, it gets your foot tapping and your head bopping.

worked in the music industry for over ten years playing, driving and teching for different bands on tour in the UK. Being around it all the time kind of put me off going to gigs - bear with me this is tattoo related eventually - it kind of took the magic out of gigs and concerts for me. Then I moved to New Zealand and it is like being on a desert island! The amount of international bands that come here is minimal, so this month, when American "Pokey Lafarge" played in town, we went along and I had a damn good time. Not being around music for many years made me see and experience the show with fresh excited eyes and it felt damn good to enjoy some live music.

Every single tattoo we do as tattoo artists has an impact on our customers in the the same way as a concert does on the crowd. We take it for granted because we do it everyday. Depending on the day, I tattoo between two to seven people, but while those customers are one of seven in the day to me, to them I am one of one. They are only getting one tattoo that day - and to most, probably that week, month or even year. That tattoo is special. It's that hit single that gets you excited and jumping around like a lunatic.

We have different customers bringing in the same tattoo design several times a week - at the moment it's feathers, bird silhouettes and all the jazz. It's kind of hard to get excited when you see that on an iphone or a piece of

paper. However, I spend my working week in a tattoo shop, my Instagram and Facebook feed are filled with amazing tattoos. I eat, live and breath this job. The average Joe on the street doesn't and to them coming into a shop to get tattooed is a big deal. Remember walking into a tattoo shop for the first time? You were probably a little intimidated and nervous; the white cabinets, tiled floors, strange buzzing sound and smell of Dettol kind of made it feel like a dentist, but it was all an experience. An experience I have now lost from spending every day working in such a place. I honestly can't smell the Dettol anymore. I could literally snort the stuff and still there would be nothing! So my point to all artists out there is that you should treat everything that walks through the door of your tattoo shop with enthusiasm and give it 100%. It may not be a big deal to you as an artist but it is a big deal to your customer. How would you feel if you went to see your favourite band and they couldn't be bothered playing and only gave you 85% instead of 100%? Got a burning issue or topic you want me to talk about? Want to get your voice heard? Well don't just sit there do something about it. Drop me a line craigylee@skindeep.co.uk and find me on

instagram @craigy_lee

CRAIGY LEE

















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In *The Best Comic Book Tattoos*, we've got Cecil Porter, Mike DeVries and Chris Harrison clashing heads with industry big shots such as Timothy Bradstreet and Jim Mahfood proving that there's more than meets the eye when it comes to comic books. It's another 164 pages of masked mayhem to get your teeth into!



Pages shown from The Best Horror Tattoos and The Best Comic Book Tattoos.

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II FANTASY FIGURES

Becoming tattooed, rather than having tattoos, is an inappreciable process. Like a lazy vine creeping over the family home, it grows little by little...



teadily, gradually, languorously - we only really notice its spread when we can no longer see out of the windows. As the inks sweep across our skins, transforming us, leaving behind who we were, in order to instead prove who we are, our attitudes and outlooks change. To be tattooed is to bring about a new mien - it's not just our outsides that are altered forever.

As I start to (finally) discover that the surface area of my body is finite, finding myself with less and less space to author, my sense of completion, of comfort and acceptance with myself and my physicality continues to grow. I no

I SAT FOR MY FIRST TATTOO ALMOST 17 YEARS AGO, BUT THE FEELING OR STATE OF BEING TATTOOED IS A FAR MORE RECENT REALISATION

longer feel as though I am truly naked. I am never exposed, my flesh is still present, but it is no longer recognisable - it's now at the edge of visibility, concealed under patterns, pictures and colours. These choices reveal far more about me, of course, than plain skin ever could.

My last few gaps are awkward, fleshy, intimate, and (dare I say it?) private. My forearms and calves have long been covered, what is left to inscribe is under my dress, not outside of it.

I recently had the left side of my ribs tattooed, waist to armpit (my armpits already sport a rose, and a horse, respectively) and my newest piece has united my existing torso tattoos sufficiently to allude to clothing itself. Sited here on the body, my tattoos are almost a protective shell, armour for the ego, a shield for my heart.

To be tattooed in such areas is not without practical concerns, shirts stick, bras rub, gym-sweat pools and stings - I recently leapt off my spinning bike at the end of class, turned to the mirrored wall and yanked up my top to examine my uncomfortably salty, fresh ink - only after several minutes of careful, reflected examination did I realise that I had pulled my top up so far as to be standing, left breast exposed, in front of 30 people. My relaxed attitude to my body, to nudity and to privacy - the triple pathway to my accidentalgym-flashing incident - has been constructed by the confidence that is a side effect of my body's transformation - I sat for my first tattoo almost 17 years ago, but the feeling or state of being tattooed is a far more recent realisation, and my contentment with my appearance is at odds with what much of popular culture is demanding of us all.

Intellectually, we all understand that beauty and desirability are concepts and as such, are not fixed to a set of standards but are instead able to change and adapt, ebb and flow. Yet culture, media and society do not reflect this understanding and those that are presented to us as attractive, worthwhile or sexy are increasingly homogenous. This reduction in the breadth (and emotional depth) of our aesthetic, cerebral and visceral experience is further compounded

by the enormous growth of internet pornography. Now, images of naked people are nothing new, much like tattoos, dirty pictures have been around as long as humans have and our technology, from scratching into cave walls with primitive tools, to early bellows cameras, to smartphones and the internet, has always been employed in the making of risqué material, but it's somehow different now. The proliferation of images tells us not just what we should desire, but how we should behave, and how we must look. A friend of mine, a college worker, describes the young women students on his campus as, 'pornificated', big hair, bigger heels, fake tan and tiny skirts. Is this really a fantasy worth living?

Being tattooed offers an alternative, a way to exist, and to understand ourselves and to be read outside of the limits imposed upon us by advertising, and our increasingly hyper-sexualised culture. Advertising works by exploiting our weaknesses and immediately offering a solution - one that we can oh-so-conveniently purchase, right here, right now. It creates a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. Pornography works by separating us from our bodies and our shared physical experience, and by immediately offering an alternative that allows us to denv. or even relish that separation. To be tattooed is to always be with one's physicality, to know it, to experience it at its limit, and to respect it.

Maybe I should be embarrassed about my accidental gym exposure - but how can I be ashamed of my body? It's a work of art, not a work of fiction.



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