

TATTOO

armed forces



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- Regulations
- Ink reveals
- Tattoo styles

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Tattoo Regulations

in the Military



IF YOU ARE AN ACTIVE-DUTY SERVICE MEMBER AND ARE CONSIDERING GETTING A TATTOO, BE SURE TO INFORM YOURSELF OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS. BELOW YOU'LL FIND THE LATEST TATTOO POLICY ACCORDING TO THE U.S. ARMY AND AIR FORCE.

ACCEPTABLE

- ◆ No limit—in number or size—to the number of tattoos displayed on the chest, torso, arms and legs.
- ◆ One ring tattoo per hand. Note that for the Air Force, it is limited to one single-band ring tattoo on one hand that is no more than 3/8 of an inch in width, below the knuckle and above the finger joint.
- ◆ Permanent makeup (eyebrows and eyeliner) for women. Must be applied modestly and in good taste.

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- ◆ Tattoos, brands or body markings visible from the wrist down or the neck up (head, face, tongue, lips and scalp)
- ◆ Indecent tattoos, such as sexist, racist, obscene, religious and extremist illustrations.
- ◆ Chest and back tattoos that are visible through any uniform or visible while wearing an open collar uniform.

**For the latest in-depth regulations, refer to Air Force, AFI 36-2903, Army, AR 670-1, Space Force, Memo SPFGM2022-36-01, Marine Corps, Bulletin 1020, Navy, Uniform Regulations, Chapter 2, 2201.7 and Coast Guard, COMDTINST M1020.6K.*

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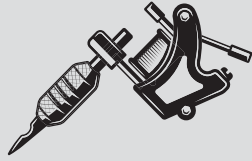
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TAT STATS

30%

> of Americans are tattooed.
That means over **100 million**
Americans have tattoos!*



Q The term **"tattoo,"** was a number one search term on the internet in 2002.

36%

of the **U.S. Armed forces**
(including military veterans)
have tattoos.



69% of people **don't see**
people with tattoos as any
more or less deviant than
people without tattoos.

43%

of people **need a personal**
meaning behind the tattoo
they choose.



CONVERSLY,

17%

of people with tattoos
regret having them
because "it's the name of
another person."

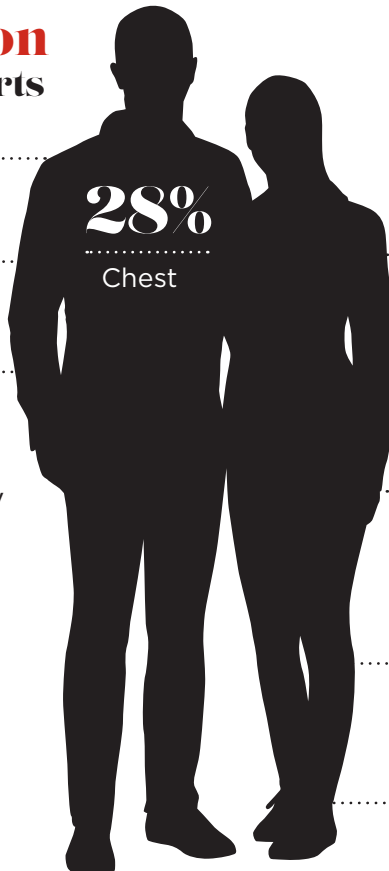
Most Common Tattooed Body Parts

28% Shoulder

33% Upper Arms

40% Forearms

Women are slightly
more likely to be
tattooed than **men**.



39%
Back

34%
Hand/Wrist

23%
Lower Leg

22%
Foot/Ankle

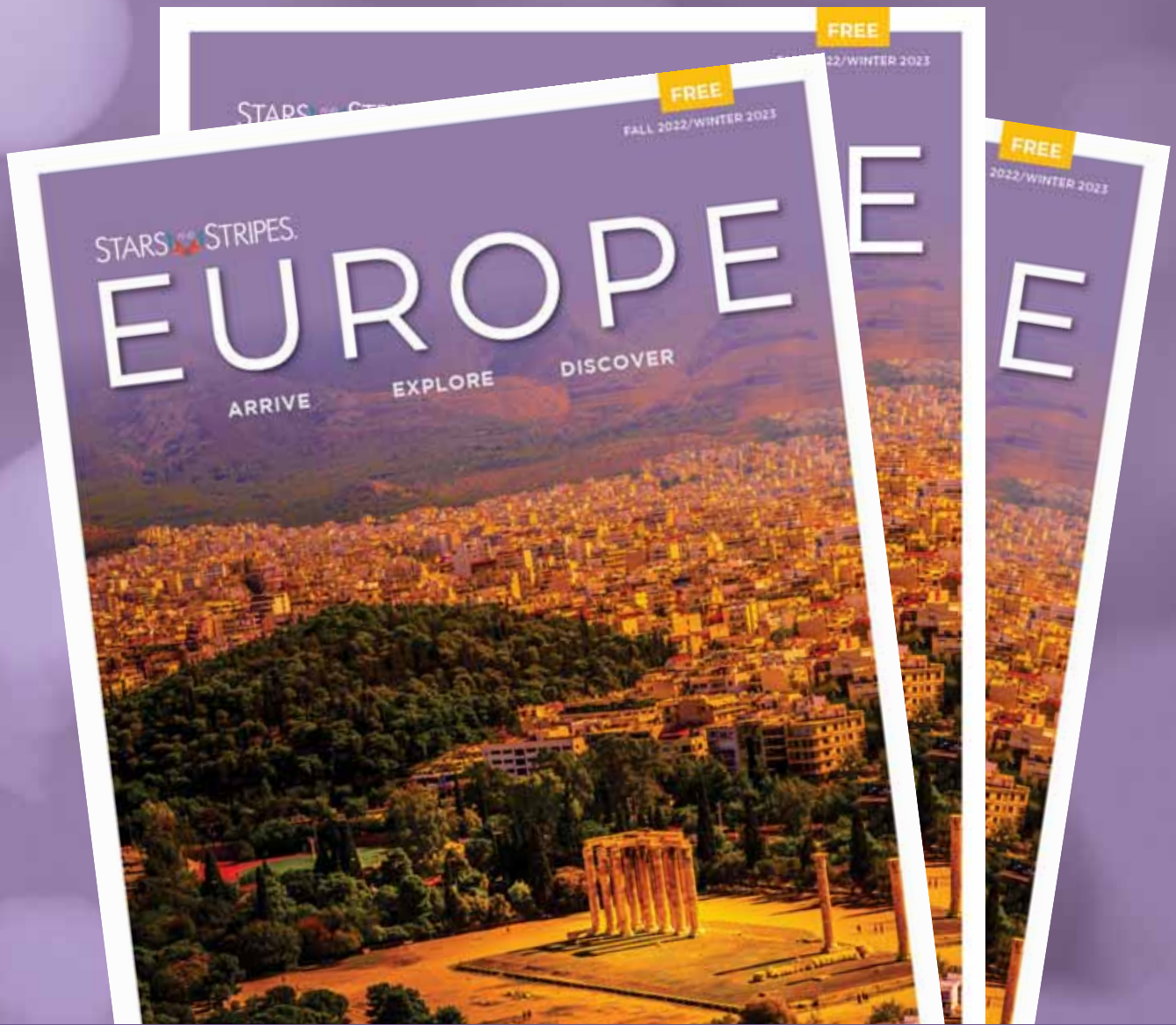
1.65 million

dollars are spent on
tattoos each year

*Based on the 2019 American population
being over 300 million

Sources: <https://comparecamp.com/tattoo-statistics>; <http://www.historyoftattoos.net/tattoo-facts/tattoo-statistics> and <https://authoritytattoo.com/how-many-americans-have-tattoos/>

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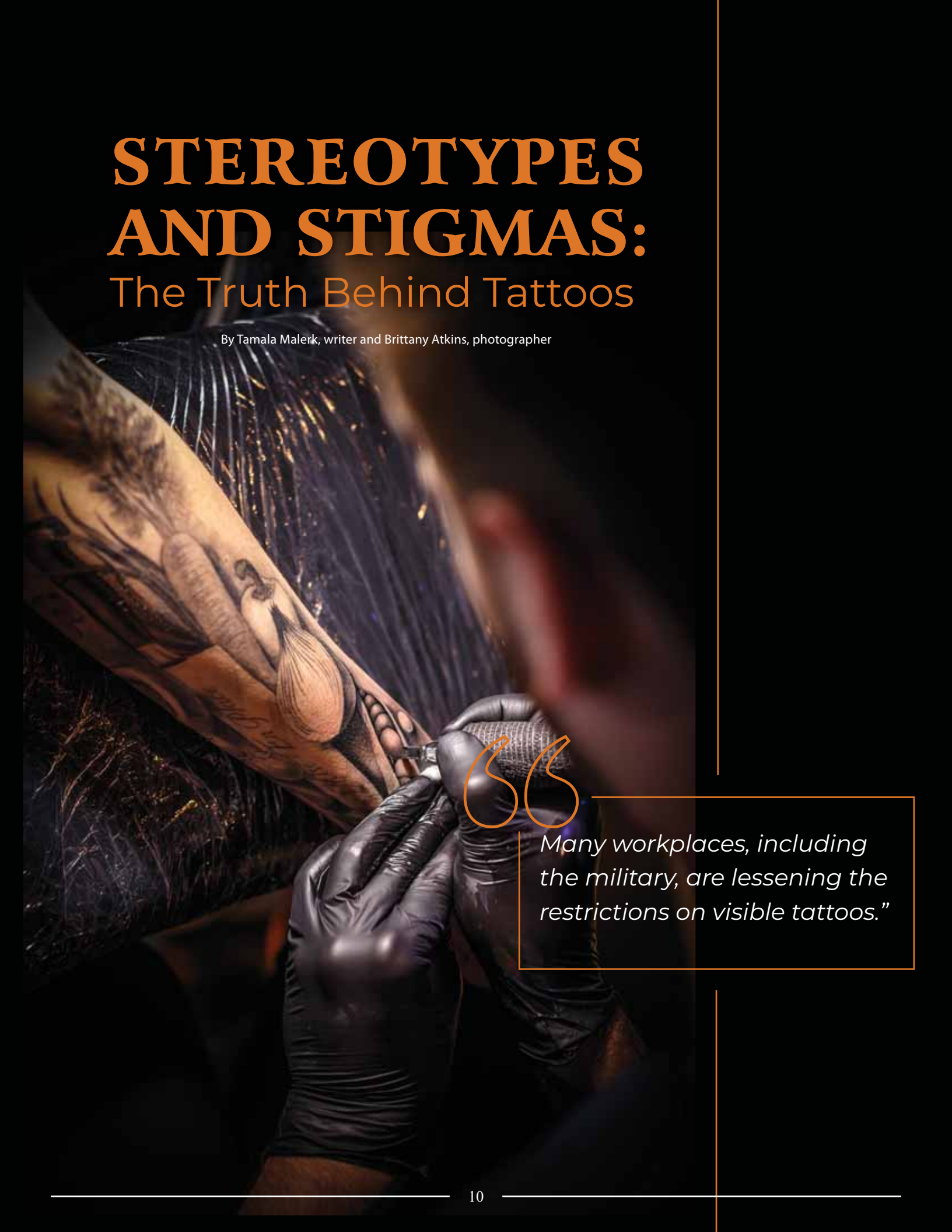
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STEREOTYPES AND STIGMAS: The Truth Behind Tattoos

By Tamala Malerk, writer and Brittany Atkins, photographer



“Many workplaces, including the military, are lessening the restrictions on visible tattoos.”



ERICA LOCKUFF

"I'm sure a lot of women can relate to the stares you may get having so many tattoos. I've gotten used to it but there is definitely still a stigma behind tattoos and women getting tattoos in my opinion. I've been asked by parents in front of their kids to say I regret my tattoos as a way to discourage their kids from getting them in the future, but my parents were always supportive of me and my art styles and tattoos are just another medium of art and nothing to be ashamed of!"

Tattoos used to be heavily viewed with skepticism and judgment. However, with each passing year, more and more people are getting tattooed as the stereotypes fade and the stigmas disappear. Nonetheless, there is still some outdated and overall incorrect information floating around. Here is some information to help set the record straight about tattoo stereotypes and stigmas.

1 Tattoo Shops are Scary and Unhygienic

Tattoo parlors are no longer the seedy shops in the underbelly of town. In fact, once the U.S. started reopening in 2021, tattoo parlors were booked far out because tattooing is a very hygienic process with its use of masks, gloves, sterile products, etc. Tattoo parlors and tattoo artists in the U.S. are required to follow certain Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and CDC rules. Germany has the Deutsche Organisierte Tätowierer, or German Association of Professional Tattoo Artists, whose aim is to "to maintain and even increase the quality and performance standard in the area of tattooing and studio hygiene."

2 Getting a Tattoo is Not Safe or Sanitary

While getting a tattoo is not risk-free, one must research the parlor and artist before committing; the process of getting tattooed is almost equivalent to a medical procedure. The artist creates a stencil for the piece you have discussed. Before the stencil touches your skin, the artist cleans the area. The artist will then use a special type of paper to transfer the stencil to your skin (almost like the temporary tattoos you got as a kid). The artist then uses a variety of needles to tattoo you, like liners and magnums, just to name a few. Depending on the type of tattoo you are getting or even what part of the tattoo the artist is at, the needle will puncture the skin 50 to 3,000 times a minute according to creativeinktattoo.com.

3 Getting Tattooed is an Extremely Painful Process

There is really no way to “prove” or “disprove” this. It really all depends on the person as well as the placement of the tattoo. Pain levels can range from mildly irksome or annoying to intolerable. Typically, the least painful places to get tattooed can be the outer arms, forearms, calves, shoulders and top of the thigh. The most painful places can be the armpits, head, neck, elbow, knee, stomach and ribcage.

4 Only “Certain” Types of People Can Get Tattoos

Gone are the days of only sailors, bikers and spring-breakers in Cabo getting inked. Tattoos have evolved into a new form of art and self-expression for all types of people. Unfortunately, that does not mean that tattooed people are not being stigmatized and discriminated against. Children’s public tantrums are sometimes blamed on parents’ wayward morals of having tattoos rather than the fact that children throw tantrums sometimes. Many employers require that tattoos are not visible. Although, many more workplaces, including the military, are lessening the restrictions on visible tattoos. Tattoos do not make a person any better or worse of a human being; just a human being that decided to be permanently colored on.

5 All Tattoos Have A “Deep Meaning”

This is really a personal choice. Of course, something that is being tattooed on your body should have some thought put into it. Nonetheless, it is your body and if you want to tattoo it, you do not have to justify that to anyone with a ten-minute diatribe about the significance of the infinity symbol on your calf.

6 You Will Regret It When You’re Older

This is impossible to predict. You may regret a tattoo when you get older. But this will most likely have to do with getting a “Khaleesi” tattoo before watching the eighth season of “Game of Thrones” more so than regretting the actual process of being tattooed. The chances that you will wholeheartedly regret the tattoo is much lower than others may have you believe, if you do ...

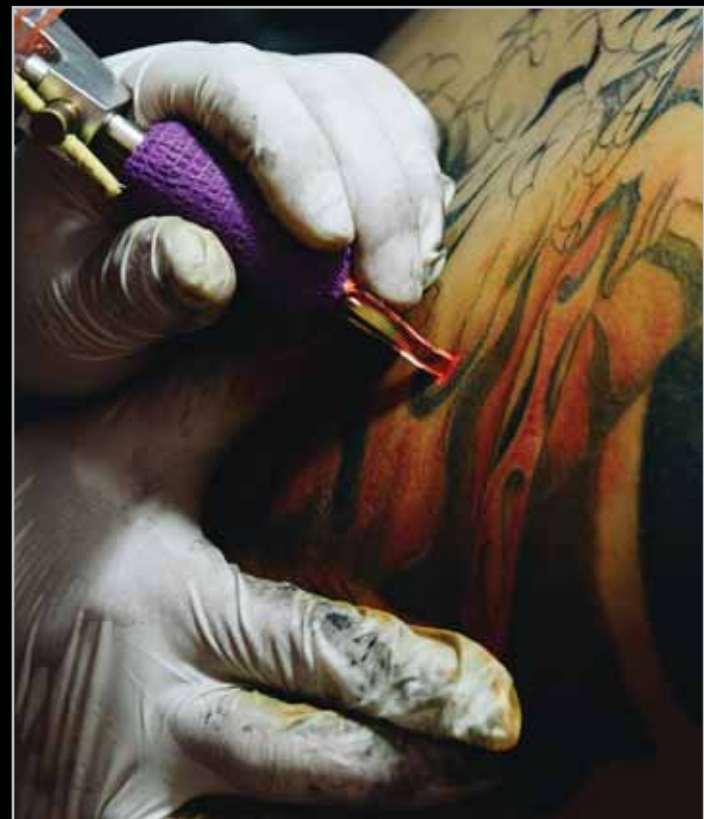
7 Tattoos are Forever

This is probably the most truthful of the stereotypes because the very permanency of tattoos is the point of their existence. Yet, if you want one gone, you have options. There is always the option of covering it up. Cover-up tattooing styles have advanced so much that most times you cannot even tell the rose on your bicep used to say “Lucy.” There is also the option of getting laser tattoo removal, which according to WebMD, “can significantly diminish the appearance of your unwanted tattoo with minimal side effects.” If you tattooed an ex’s name, the wrong Superbowl winning team or something as a result of a lost bet on your body, you are not stuck with it forever. ■

TIFFANY WINSTON



“I believe my tattoos break the stigma associated with my various roles in life. I am a physician and 10 years ago, physicians weren’t flaunting tattoos as openly as they do these days which I still feel isn’t as freely accepted as it should be.”





 @elzvt.k


My name is Eliz. I am 26 years old. I started tattooing at the age of 21, when I was in my 2nd year of university. After graduating, I was already doing my favourite thing - tattooing!

Over the years I found my own style, which I describe as neotraditional in graphic line work. From day one I favoured black and white tattoos and I am still crazy about them.

Every day I bring to life my customers ideas through my artwork, which stays with them forever. Capturing their favourite moments and life events on skin is exciting for me.

I have been living in Germany for the last 2 years now and for the most part I am working on and with the American military at Ministry of Ink in Mannheim. The guys are keeping me busy with interesting projects, doesn't matter if they are large scale or smaller - I am always able to find a creative solution based on the customers input.

Ministry of Ink

To schedule an appointment or a consultation - please contact Ministry of Ink directly.
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PICTURED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Janeca Lowery, Kern Christian, Anastasia Seliverstova and Jason Zielske

TATTOO ARMED FORCES

Stars and Stripes' annual "Tattoo: Armed Forces" magazine pays special tribute to a popular, yet underrated audience in our military—those with tattoos. This one-of-a-kind magazine is designed to feature our military audience's current ink masterpieces and the stories that are behind them. As Fred R. Barnard put it, "A picture is worth a thousand words." With the help of local photographer Brittany Atkins, she truly captured the stories of our military audience and their civilian counterparts by showcasing their creativity, vivid designs and bold colors—letting their body art do the talking. Take an in-depth look at the works of art and their stories.

Behind the Lens

About the photographer



While Brittany Atkins has only been photographing for two years, she has been doing creative hobbies for most of her life. She spends most of her time engaged in theatrical activities: Building sets, crafting props and directing shows. In Winter 2021, she completed her B.A. in Graphic Communication. Brittany and her husband started photographing after taking a class together. Now they create fantasy-style photos and videos that they post to their Instagram and Facebook Art by Atkins.



 @ivan__vanin


My name is Ivan and I am 27 years old. Since my early teens I was into art. Drawing always played an important role in my life and once I discovered tattooing - I knew immediately, that this is it. I've been tattooing since 7 years now.

Describing my style is difficult, as I am working cross different genres and am offering a wide range - from classic realism to new school and neo traditional. I also love mixing styles, for the most unique outcome. While I prefer large scale projects in full color, I also enjoy doing black and grey from time to time. Besides projects on blank skin I handle very challenging cover up pieces of any complexity.

Recently I've moved to Germany and become a resident artist at Ministry of Ink. Due to the fact, that the shop almost exclusively is working with folks from the US - the majority of my customer base are active duty military and their spouses. It always amazes me, how easy going and supportive these people are. The artistic freedom and trust that I am getting from my customers is incredible and I am very thankful for every single one of you.



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NICOLAS CORCORAN

I think my tattoos have mostly impacted my life in a positive way. Don't get me wrong, sometimes I've gotten bad looks. But I've come across plenty of people who appreciate the art. It's been a great conversation starter over the years.

I got my first tattoo when I was 19. If I have a regret, it might be the hermit crab. I was bored while eating lunch at Denny's in Guam and decided to get a big flash tattoo.

I favor Balinese style tattoos. My favorites are my Balinese Barong and the Balinese Randga—the bringer of good and the

bringer of evil. It reminds me of my times traveling to Bali and the amazing friends I've met out there.

My Japanese Daruma doll represents good luck and fortune. In the Japanese household, the doll is placed somewhere on a shelf and the owner will make a "wish" or a "goal" that they want to accomplish, and mark one of the eyes. Once the goal is accomplished, the next eye will be marked in also. My goal has been set for nearly 5 years now and I have yet to accomplish it, but work everyday to do so!



Patchwork



ERICA LOCKCUFF

My favorite tattoo would probably be my beehive half-sleeve. I had originally wanted to get just a single bee and showed up with a drawing I made but then spontaneously designed an entire half sleeve to go with it. It was one of my first bigger tattoo designs and got me into designing all of my tattoos so they all mean so much more to me now that they're all customized.

My favorite tattoo style is patchwork style tattoos! They give you more room for creativity and since it's a sleeve made up of multiple tattoos I have lots of room to get all the things I want.

My "Where the Wild Things Are" tattoo is a bit smaller but definitely meaningful to me. It was the first book I remember my

dad giving me as a kid and it definitely reminded me of how rebellious I could be as a kid! It gives a lot of people nostalgia and so many people point out remembering it as a kid when they see me. My other is my dad's name in Arabic. I grew up Muslim and though it's not my particular faith anymore I still resonate strongly with it and since my dad raised me he is a big influence in my life.

SARAH KREGER

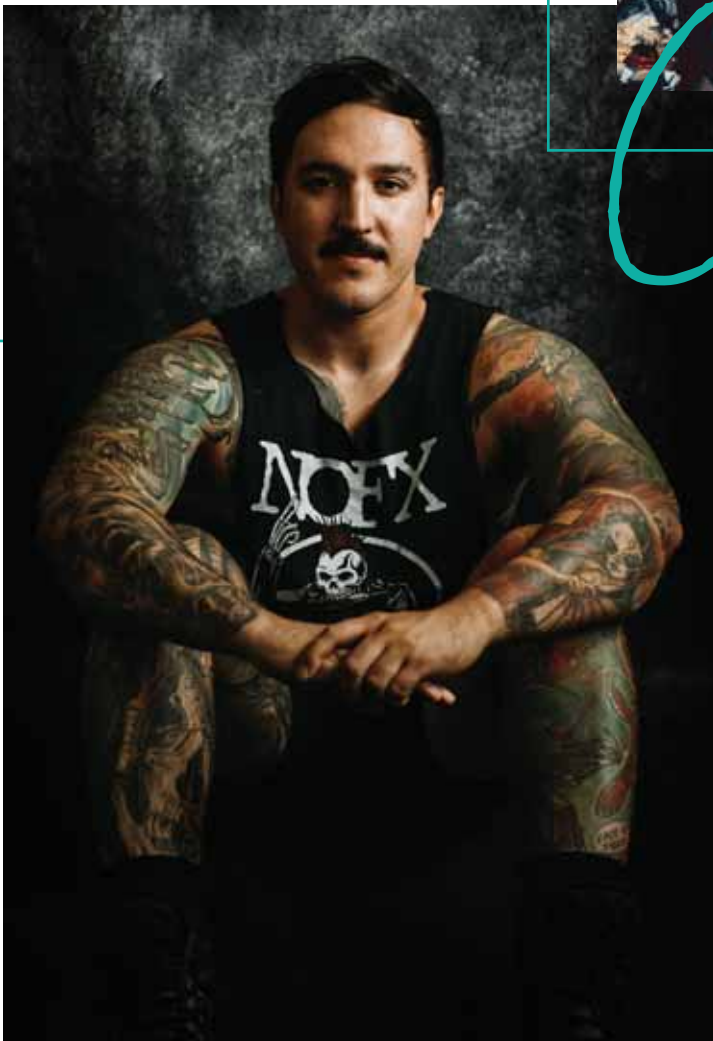
I got my first tattoo when I was 20 years old. Tattoos help me feel like more of a bad ass, and they help others start conversations with me, which I love!

My favorite is my sleeve, it's my tribute to Tim Burton, who I absolutely love!

I got my tattoo on my right shoulder for the 20th anniversary of my mom surviving breast cancer, then later touched up after she survived lung cancer.



Color



AJ JUAREZ

I really enjoy the American Traditional style even though I don't really have any myself. The Ignorant style tattoos are some of the ones that always catch my eye due to how interesting and absurd they can be. Everything I have are the black and grey horror style on my right side and then my left side is all comic book related stuff with color all over.

Having tattoos has definitely helped my confidence and being comfortable in my own skin. It's like having a beard. It's comforting and helps you have your own style that suits you. It feels to me like a bit of protection when walking around. It helps to know that if people are staring, I can at least assume why they are. And not just because I look dumb or weird. A lot of the people I looked up to as a kid were rock stars and they were always covered in tattoos. So to me, it just looks normal since that was what I was used to seeing growing up.

Out of all my tattoos, it's tough to choose a favorite because I do love every tattoo I have. If I had to choose it would probably be my foot tattoo. I got it with 2 of my best friends and we also got to tattoo a section of it ourselves.



no
Regrets

CHAITLYN RAIN

My first tattoo was the day of my 17th birthday. I have roughly 30 tattoos. The two skeletons embracing at the top of my right arm is one of my most favorites, I think it's beautifully done. Done by @barizontattoo at @ink_league_kaiserslautern. So far in life, I have no regrets, including my tattoos. I love outwardly expressing myself and truly being a walking piece of art. My favorite tattoo style is black and grey traditional/neotraditional and blackwork.

My tattoos do tend to draw people's attention, whether that be good or bad. It tends to typically be positive reactions though (except for at airport security). For me personally, I feel that I become more comfortable with myself with each tattoo I get and I love the body positivity/confidence they bring me. My love for tattoos has brought me the opportunity of my own tattooing apprenticeship that I'm currently working on.

One of my most meaningful tattoos is the Medusa on my hand and the "I am what survived" on my right thigh. Both of them are about being a survivor of sexual assault and I wear them both with courage. Another meaningful one is my rose with a rosebud on my left forearm; the blooming rose is to represent me becoming the person I'm meant to be and the rosebud represents a dog I rescued that I truly formed a bond with.



 @marselin_tattoo


My name is Marselin and I am 23 years old. I've been tattooing since 6 years now. As a kid I used to draw all the time and my goal was to become an artist. Tattooing pretty quickly become my passion and I wanted to get better and better every single day. Countless sleepless nights and years of practise resulted in finding my own style.

I prefer drawing dark themed, graphic illustrations in black and grey. Sometimes I'm using colours for highlights and contrast. I love fantasy, fairy tales and magic - which you can clearly see in my portfolio. Taking the customers idea or theme and giving it my own, unique interpretation is what I love most.

Last two years I've spent in Mannheim at Ministry of Ink, as a resident artist. The majority of my customer base are American citizens from K-Town and other bases in Germany. They always come up with great projects and its easy for us getting on the same page design wise.

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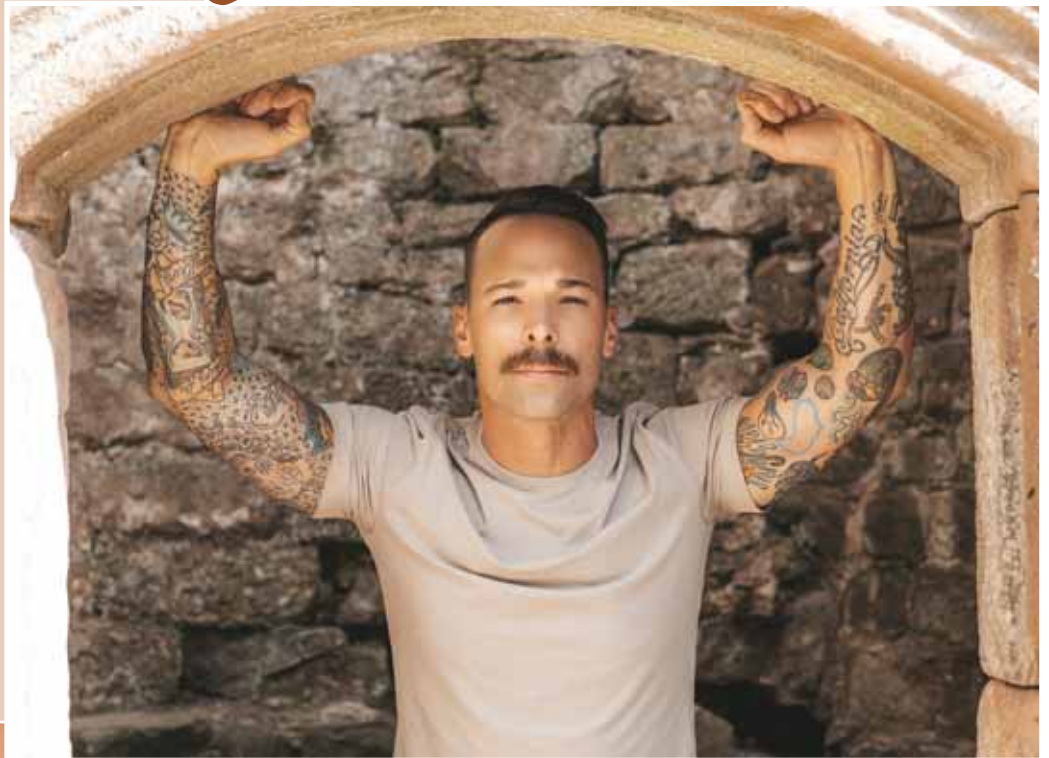


Sleeves

KYLE DEMARCO

I like the American Traditional style of tattoos. I feel like my tattoos have been a positive impact on the way that people view me. Because I wear my stories/life experiences on my arms, I typically get asked about what they mean or stand for.

All of them carry a reason, a purpose, a story—I've never received a tattoo just because. It usually was surrounded by something going in my life at the time.



AMANDA MARTINEZ

I started getting tattoos when I was 18 years old. Now I have 22 of them. My tattoos have allowed me to express the things I've been through in my life—the good and the not so good.

Every single one of my tattoos has meaning and each has its own special story. I have been through two divorces. Anyone who has been through, or is going through, a divorce can tell you it's an intense roller coaster of emotion. My arm and leg tattoos represent the struggle, pain and eventual happiness of it all.

I also have tattoos in memory of my grandpa and cousin who both had cancer and passed away. Tattoos are a form of artful expression—a story without words and sometimes sorrow without tears. They have helped me cope with hardships when I couldn't find the words.

JONATHAN PRONOVOST

All of them carry a story... but I would say my Elvis pin-up girl by Joe Capobianco is extra special. This was the first tattoo I got when the Air Force changed it's policy to allow tattoos all the way down to the wrist. I was ecstatic to have a tattoo legend and overall great artist and person knock this piece out of the park!



Maternal

Grace Bex

My sleeve has A LOT of meaning to me. It took me over two years to design it and choose an artist because I knew I wanted to tell a story far deeper than the ink that is on my skin.

The lotus flower covers old self-harm scars. The lotus grows from mud into a beautiful flower, which is representative of me growing through my depression and blooming despite the dirt life throws at me.

The Cuban mariposa is in honor of my Dad who is Cuban and came to the United States, as one of eight children, on the JFK Freedom Flights. The British rose honors my Mom who is British who came to the U.S. as a Nanny for a Navy family. I am very proud to have two immigrants as parents who taught me the meaning of hard work.

The two bees represent my brothers. The tiger represents my family, power and strength. It was the first piece of this sleeve because, for me, family will always come first.

My outer forearm has a wolf howling up at the woman on my upper arm. This one is inspired from a favorite quote, "Somedays I'm more wolf than woman, I'm still learning to stop apologizing for my wild."

The woman on my upper arm is my warrior spirit conquering the battles I've faced with health issues and life's adversities. I was unaware at the time how much this would end up meaning to me now. I was diagnosed with PCOS, Endometriosis and POTS and have endured a plethora of surgeries and hospitalizations. In addition, I had two complicated pregnancies/births that involved pre-term labors and Pre-Eclampsia.

My inner bicep has an owl. Owls for me represent wisdom which, as a business owner, mom and wife, I need a lot of.

My sleeve tells my life story—overcoming mental health battles, strength through the adversities of my health issues, empowerment, love, adventure and wisdom.



“The woman on my upper arm is my warrior spirit conquering the battles I've faced with health issues and life's adversities.”



Tiffany Winston

I believe my tattoos break some of the stigma associated with my various roles in life. I am a physician and 10 years ago, physicians weren't flaunting tattoos as openly as they do these days. In the beginning of my tattoo journey, I chose locations that could always be covered, so that I could remain "professional." I eventually got over my fear of judgment (a little) and got one on my inner upper arm, which could still be covered with long sleeves. In the more recent years, I occasionally get praise from my patients about how cool my tattoos are. It's also a great conversation starter to break the ice and build rapport with some patients, even kiddos, because of my cartoon dino sleeve.

I feel like it also breaks down some of the walls of motherhood to see me pregnant or running around with 3 littles or breast feeding and tatted up.

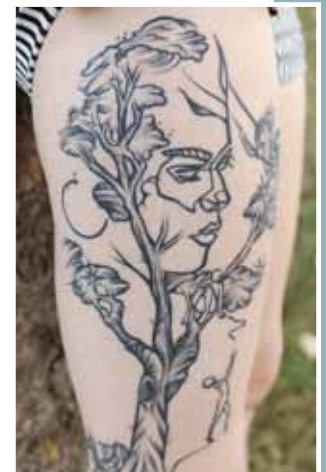
My favorite tattoo is my dino sleeve. I have 3 boys named after dinosaurs (and a 4th boy on the way). My oldest son is Tatum Rex (T. Rex), then Titus Raptor and last Thoren Trice (for triceratops). We're still discussing the 4th boys name but he will be a dino too.



Lane Fox

My most recent tattoo is based on the plum dream from Sylvia Plath's Bell Jar. In it, she sits in the crook of a plum tree, surrounded by all her possible futures. She is paralyzed by indecision and watches them all rot and fall to the ground. I recognize that fear.

This one is especially meaningful to me because it's also a reference to a magical story my child was writing, called "The Lighting Tree," about a tree that provided sparks of joy for the whole village.



Botanical

ABIGAIL PELOQUIN

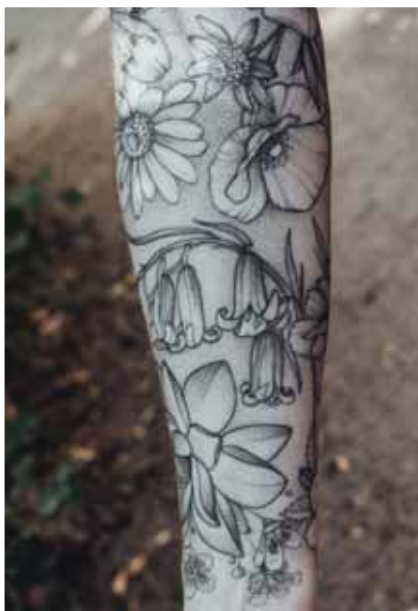
On the
cover

I think a lot of people can relate to my first tattoo experience. I was 18, just wanted a tattoo and got the word 'Always' on my hip from Harry Potter. It's since blown out and I don't show it off. I can say out of all three spots, hip, foot, and entire arm, the worst was my hip. I don't necessarily regret it, but it just doesn't look great now. Just went to a local tattoo shop in Massachusetts, walked in, and asked for it with a friend. The whole experience only took 40 minutes, but I was dying because it was right on my hip bone.

Whenever I'm asked about my tattoos I'm able to express things about myself that typically don't come up when meeting people for the first time. Like my love for musicals and the countries I've traveled to. I'd say I feel more confident with my sleeve because it's so well done and I'm extremely proud of it and the meaning behind it.

My sleeve is comprised of the national flower of every country I've traveled to. People might look at it and think I'm your basic white girl with a floral tattoo, but I've known I wanted the national flower of countries since high school, the Army has now given me an opportunity to really travel and explore enough to get an entire sleeve. I also have a matching tattoo with my sister from our favorite musical 'Gypsy' on my foot that says "Everything's Coming Up Roses".

I can say a section of my floral sleeve that's my favorite is the outside of my forearm. I just absolutely love how Karina, my artist, was able to integrate all those flowers in the way she did. It starts with the Iceland flower on my wrist, then Greece, Portugal, Slovenia, and Slovakia. I love the look of it, and it happens to be a prime photo taking spot.



“

I have Gingko leaves in honor of my mother and evergreen elements for my father.



JENNA (JAY) BOWEN

I love botanical greyscale tattoos. My tattoos have made me value my individuality even more. They have provided confidence and artwork as my forever carry-on. My tattoos have served as such a gallery of memories, interests, and reflection that ultimately I don't regret the experience.

I have Gingko leaves in honor of my mother and evergreen elements for my father. "Prove them wrong" are words my mother told me endearingly. I have my favorite lyric wreathed around my knee and other tattooed aspects that dual as accidental beauty with discovered meaning.



Nature





Tammie Canada



I am the daughter of an U.S. Army Infantry Medic who served two tours in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968. I grew up to become an USAF critical care nurse and deployed in 2009, 2011, 2013, and 2015. My first deployment was to the ICU in Balad, Iraq in 2009. It was a life changing experience.

In 2010, several of the nurses that I worked with there reunited at a nursing conference in Washington D.C. It was a priority to honor my dad by visiting the Vietnam Wall. On our way to the Wall we walked by the Vietnam Women's Memorial. We were speechless. The majority of women who served in Vietnam were nurses. The emotions depicted on their faces was personal to me, to the women I stood there with.

In 2011, I deployed to Bagram, Afghanistan as a Critical Care Aeromedical Transport Team (CCATT) nurse. Our teams were busy. In 2013 I again deployed as a CCATT nurse here to Ramstein.

In 2013, I moved from San Antonio to Cincinnati, OH as an instructor at our advanced course for all CCATT and Tactical Critical Care Evacuation Team (TCCET) flyers. The image of the Vietnam Women's Memorial had stayed with me, and I found myself visualizing those women as I searched for meaning and understanding of war, and combat medicine, and the role that our teams, and my dad's teams, have played in the lives of so many.

In 2014, I met Chris Sanders, owner of Nightshade Ink, and I pitched him the idea of recreating the statue into a tattoo. His vision was large, and it worked. Seven sessions and 22 hours later his work was finished.

These women represent the strength and perseverance of so many men and women that have, and are currently, serving. The sculptor, Glenna Goodacre, stated, "The standing woman looks up, in search of a medevac helicopter or, perhaps, help from God. The kneeling figure has been called "the heart and soul" of the piece because so many vets see themselves in her. She stares at an empty helmet, her posture reflecting her despair, frustrations, and all the horrors of war. The soldier's face is half-covered by a bandage, creating an anonymous figure with which veterans can identify. Even though he is wounded, he will live. I want this to be a monument for the living." (Goodacre, Celebration of Patriotism and Courage, 1993. 16) ■



 @mishajust

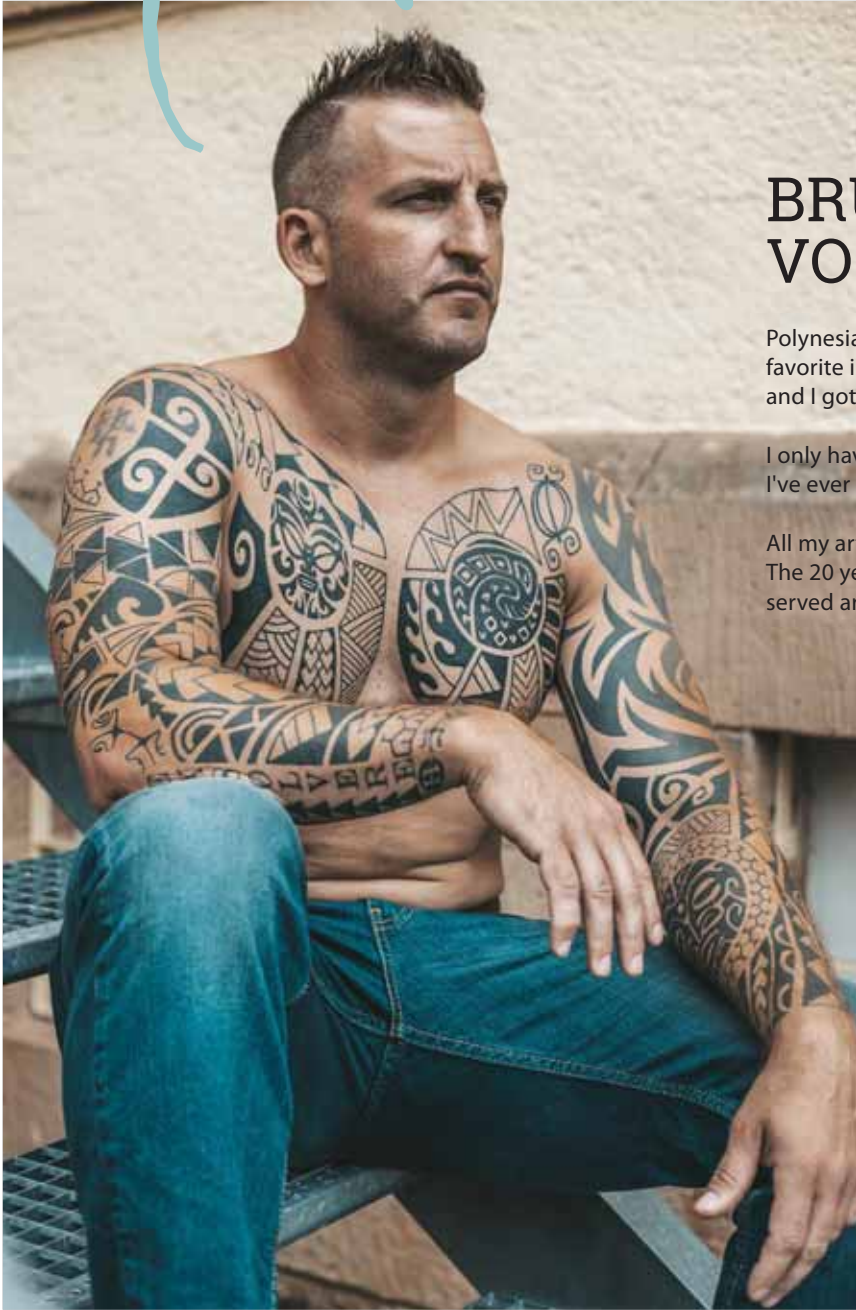
My name is Misha. I'm tattooing since 10 years now. I enjoy doing black and grey projects with or without color accents. Most pieces are drawn freehand, directly on skin. This is my favourite way of creating a design.

While drawing on the customers skin I can reach the most unique outcome, because I am able to adjust the drawing to the natural body flow. It gets a very dynamic, natural look, the tattoo becomes part of you. While my most popular designs are floral - I can picture almost any theme on skin. From very delicate to dark and heavy - whichever the customer would like me to go for.

Since two years I am working at Ministry of Ink and am sending a shout out to my American friends and customers. Thank you for always trusting and supporting me.



Tribal



BRUCE VOSEFSKI

Polynesian style is my favorite style of tattoos. My favorite is my oriental symbol. My childhood best friend and I got them together when we were 16 years old.

I only have one cover-up. I don't regret one single tattoo I've ever gotten and I doubt I ever will.

All my artwork represents my warrior style personality. The 20 years of infantry and three years of Air Force I've served are intertwined into the artwork.





I love the macabre illustrative blackwork style of tattoos.



Fantasy

LEAH BOLIN

My sleeve, it's my only tattoo, but a lot of blood, sweat, and tears went into it. I got it when I was 25 years old. I love the macabre illustrative blackwork style of tattoos.

I played World of Warcraft for about 12 years, starting when I was 14. It holds a lot of nostalgia for me, since I played it so much during my formative years. The lore, the community, and the

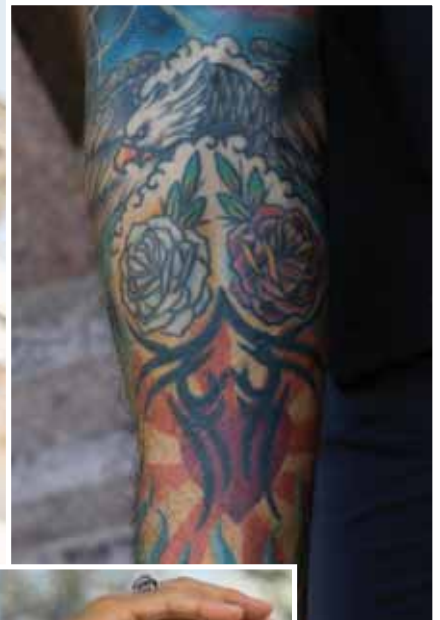
challenges all hold a special place in my heart. I specifically chose to center my tattoo around the character of the Lich King since his story is so interesting. Video games have always held a special place in my heart, but World of Warcraft was the first one that made an impact. I don't play the game anymore as it's become a shell of what it once was, but my tattoo reminds me of all the great times I've had throughout the years.

Impact

Anthony Clas

I got my first tattoo when I was 21. I currently have four large pieces: arm sleeve, two chest pieces, and an upper back piece. Out of all of them, my favorite is my right-arm sleeve with my kids names. It represents the love for my children and how they are the biggest impacts to my whole universe.

I have never covered up a tattoo, but I have added to them. Sometimes your final design is simply just the base of a larger project.



“SOMETIMES YOUR FINAL DESIGN IS SIMPLY JUST THE BASE OF A LARGER PROJECT.”

“ IT'S A REALLY BEAUTIFUL THING TO BE ABLE TO SHOWCASE ART ALL THE TIME.



Britaney Hale

Tattoos have given me the option of expressing myself artistically which is important to me.

My left sleeve is special to me. It was designed by Alex at Ministry of Ink in Mannheim, Germany. I only recently discovered that my late father was stationed at the exact same base as me in the 1970s. Germany now holds a special place in my heart. In the design, there are notes of the Black Forest on my arm—a tribute to him. The hawk and wolf represent strength and resiliency to remind myself how I got here and where I am headed.

Kay Rogers

Realism/black and white tattoos are my favorite. I chose my sleeve design because I'm an October baby and I love Halloween.

I was 18 years-old when I got my first tattoo. I have my dad's handwriting on my rib cage closest to my heart. He's my best friend.

I've never had a tattoo removed, but I do have a cover-up, a peacock feather.

My tattoos have most definitely impacted my life. I have gained confidence in my self and comfort in my own skin. It's a really beautiful thing to be able to showcase art all the time.





Rob Brokaw

My favorite is my first one. It's a forearm religious piece with my family verse on it. It's a reminder of how I should live life. It keeps me grounded. I've never had regrets about getting tattoos—they are all planned out and show pieces of my life. They have been therapeutic and a way to express an artistic side I can't show on my own.

I like the traditional style of tattoos. The first traditional tattoo I got is the candy skull on my leg. It's special because my wife and I got a couple's tattoo that day.

Lyndian Warrior

I'm often asked how many tattoos I have. Honestly, I've never counted them. So the answer is, A LOT!

I can't say having tattoos has impacted my life. It's rather the other way around. My life has impacted my tattoos, the choice, style, motif, etc.

All of my tats have a story behind them. A lot of them are based on or symbols of my Native American heritage. It's part of my identity and I like honoring the culture. My biological Dad (Native American) was stationed here at Ramstein Air Base. I was even born here in Germany.

Others are based on different stages in/of my life, things I love or just expressions of thoughts, feelings, experiences and statements. It's like being a human canvas and the art shows part of my past and present.

I would like to give credits for their amazing art to Lisa Murphy from Against The Grain (Melbourne, Florida) and to Niki Varga at RTM (Kaiserslautern, Germany)!



Identity

IT'S WHO I AM

Laura Jäger

I have four tattoos so far. I got my first one when I was twenty years old. My favorite is the one with my brother. I was an only child for a long time. I always wanted a brother. Then, twenty years after being told she couldn't have any more kids, my mom got pregnant! It was a miracle! I love my small, eight year-old brother. Forever! I would do anything for him.



Strength

NOELLE BURLESON

I have five tattoos. I got my first when I was 18 and I have zero regrets.

I have always been an introvert and kept a lot of pieces of myself hidden. My tattoos tell a story about me and my life if people wish to know.

My Norse themed sleeve because I have gone through a lot of hard times but this reminds me I am a warrior and I can handle anything that life throws at me.

I am not sure what my artist Domantas Parvainis' style exactly is called, but that is my favorite. All of his work is incredible and absolutely stunning.



My tattoos keep me grounded. when I'm having a bad day, I can look at them and they take me to my happy place.

BRIAN RADER

My sleeve represents the love I have for the ocean—it's my happy place. The mermaid represents my wife and the clown fish is a symbol for my son. The jelly fish is for my daughter. The Great White and the Kerten represent the two fiercest predators in our oceans today.

My favorite style of tattoos is realism. My tattoo reminds me of where I want to be and where I've been. The meaning is deep—it represents my love for my family.






 @erachtin

My name is Nik and I've been tattooing since 7 years. My favourite genre is classic black and grey realism. I also love using colourful backgrounds to reach a nice contrast. I am convinced, that you can take every simple, basic idea and turn it into a piece of art, giving it an interesting touch.

I'm always trying to make sure that my customers are feeling comfortable, safe and appreciated. I'm guiding my people through the entire process - from discussing the design idea, to the actual tattoo and to aftercare.

Considering myself a very lucky person - while working at Ministry of Ink in Mannheim - I've met so many interesting people from all over the US. Every-day there is a new life story and its always exciting to hear it.

Ministry of Ink

To schedule an appointment or a consultation - please contact Ministry of Ink directly.
 +49 1521 8689455

European Tattoo Convention Directory

by Tamala Malerk

Information provided by www.worldtattooconventions.com, Facebook events, www.tattoofilters.com, Tattoo Tattaa, www.inkpl.com or the event websites.

Germany

- Bremerhavener Tattoo Weekend** | Oct. 8 to 9, 2022 | Apollo Bremerhaven
- Mühdorf Tattoo Convention** | Oct. 8 to 9, 2022 | Stadtsaal Mühdorf
- Tattoo Tatta: Tattoo and Art Convention, Koblenz** | Oct. 14 to 16, 2022 | Rhein Mosel Halle
- Schweinfurter Tattoo and Art Convention** | Oct. 15 to 16, 2022 | Frankenhalle Sennfeld
- Alsfeld Tattoo Convention** | Oct. 22 to 23, 2022 | Messe Alsfeld
- Fulda Tattoo Convention** | Oct. 22 to 23, 2022 | Künzell Community Center
- Tattoo Expo: Saar** | Oct. 22 to 23, 2022 | Saarlandhalle Saarburücken
- Fürstentfeldbruck Tattoo Convention** | Oct. 29 to 30, 2022 | Event forum Fürstentfeld
- Tattoo Convention Ludwigsburg** | Nov. 5 to 6, 2022 | Reithaus Ludwigsburg
- Tattoo Tatta: Tattoo and Art Convention, Bonn** | Nov. 5 to 6, 2022 | BaseCamp Young Hostel
- Bremer Tattoo Weekend** | Nov. 12 to 13, 2022 | Gustav Heinemann Bürgerhaus Vegesack
- Tattoo Weekend: Essen** | Nov. 26 to 27, 2022 | Essen Westhalle
- Schwäbisch Gmünd Tattoo Convention** | Nov. 26 to 27, 2022 | Congress Center Stadtgarten
- Moosburg Tattoo Convention** | Dec. 2 to 4, 2022 | Stadthall Moosburg
- Bodensee Tattoo Convention** | Dec. 3 to 4, 2022 | Alte Festhalle, Friedrichshafen
- Leeraner Tattoo Weekend** | Feb. 4 to 5, 2023 | Hotel Ostfriesen Hof, Leer
- Balingen Tattoona Matata** | Mar. 4 to 5, 2023 | Volksbankmesse Balingen
- Cuxhavener Tattoo Weekend** | Mar. 4 to 5, 2023 | Kugelbake-Halle

- Gera Tattoo Convention** | Mar. 11 to 12, 2023 | Culture and Congress Center
- Schwenningen INK Style Tattoo Event** | Mar. 11 to 12, 2023 | Neckarhalle
- Braunschweig Tattoo Weekend** | Mar. 11 to 13, 2023 | LokPark
- Deggendorf Tattoona Matata** | Mar. 25 to 26, 2023 | Deggendorfer Stadthallen
- Schwarzwald Tattoo Weekend** | Apr. 22 to 23, 2023 | Culture House Titisee
- Offenburg Tattoo Art Show** | May 20 to 21, 2023 | Messe Offenburg (Baden Arena)
- TattooCON: Dortmund** | June 2 to 4, 2023 | Dortmund Westfalenhallen
- Tattoo Convention Traunreut** | Sept. 23 to 24, 2023 | Culture and Event Center

France

- Chalons en Champagne Tattoo Show** | Oct. 7 to 9, 2022 | Capitole en Champagne
- Bourges Tattoo Convention** | Oct 8 to 9, 2022 | Auron Palace
- Perigueux Tattoo Expo** | Oct 8 to 9, 2022 | Parc des Expositions du Périgord, Marsac-sur-l'Isle
- Bourg-en-Bresse Tattoo Convention** | Oct. 15 to 16, 2022 | Ainterexpo - Parc des Expositions
- Hautmont Tattoo Convention** | Oct. 15 to 16, 2022 | Centre Culturel Maurice Schumann
- Salon Miss P'Ink Tattoo Convention** | Oct. 22 to 23, 2022 | Guiscard
- Le Mans Tattoo Convention** | Oct. 29 to 30, 2022 | Le Mans Exhibition Center
- Evian Tattoo Show** | Oct. 29 to 31, 2022 | Palace of the Festivities of Evian-les-Bains
- Sugar Ink Tattoo Convention** | Nov. 4 to 6, 2022 | Coulommiers
- Planetarium Tattoo** | Nov. 4 to 6, 2022 | La Villette, Paris
- Paris 13 Tattoo Expo** | Nov. 15 to 19, 2022 | Town hall of the 13th arrondissement of Paris
- Tattoo Salon Clermont** | Nov. 26 to 27, 2022 | Grande Halle d'Auvergne

Tattoo conventions are a great place to not only get a tattoo in a style that might not be available from an “expert” in your local area, but also a wonderful place to meet fellow tattoo enthusiasts and see the latest in tattoo styles, news, machinery and art. No matter where you are stationed or visiting in Europe, there is a tattoo convention nearby for you. If you want to be tattooed by a specific artist at an event, make sure to reach out to them beforehand.

Tarn Tattoo Convention | Dec. 3 to 4, 2022 | S.E.M. Albi Expo, Le Sequestre

Toulouse Tattoo Salon | Jan. 14 to 15, 2023 | Diagona Congress and Exhibition, Labège

Lille Tattoo Convention | Feb 3 to 5, 2023 | Lille Grand Palais

Lyon Tattoo Convention | Feb. 4 to 5, 2023 | Villeurbanne

Patutiki Kakiu Festival | Feb. 10 to 12, 2023 | Espace Reuilly

Decaz Tattoo Show | Feb. 10 to 12, 2023 | Salle du Laminoir

Orléans Tattoo Show | Feb. 17 to 19, 2023 | Performance Hall CO'Met

Rouen Tattoo Festival | Apr. 14 to 16, 2023 | Parc Expo Rouen

Angouleme Tattoo Show | Apr. 15 to 16, 2023 | Espace Carat, L'Isle-d'Espagnac

Vichy Tattoo Convention | Apr. 15 to 16, 2023 | Le Palais du lac

Dammarié Les Lys Tattoo Ink | Apr. 22 to 23, 2023 | Espace Pierre Bachelet

Epinal Tattoo Show | June 16 to 28, 2023 | Epinal Convention Center

Italy

Ferrara Tattoo Convention | Oct. 21 to 23, 2022 | Ferrara Fiere Congressi

Milano Tattoo Convention | Oct. 21 to 23, 2022 | Milano City Fair

Florence Tattoo Convention | Oct. 28 to 30, 2022 | Fortezza da Basso – Spadolini Pavilion

Passion Art Tattoo Convention Bolzano | Oct. 28 to 30, 2022 | MEC Four Points by Sheraton Hotel

East Coast Tattoo Convention | Nov. 11 to 13, 2022 | Palacongressi D'Abruzzo, Montesilvano

Love Tattoo Festival | Nov. 12 to 13, 2022 | Parc des Expositions du Bassin d'Arcachon

Trieste International Tattoo Expo | Nov. 12 to 13, 2022 | Ippodromo Comunale di Trieste

Ancona Tattoo Expo | Nov. 18 to 20, 2022 | Mole Vanvitelliana

Lecce Tattoo Fest | Nov. 18 to 20, 2022 | LecceFiere

Verona International Tattoo Expo | Dec. 2 to 4, 2022 | Verona Fairs Hall

Reggio Calabria Tattoo Convention | Dec. 3 to 4, 2022 | Pala Botteghelle

Passion Art Tattoo Convention Verona | Mar. 17 to 19, 2023 | Palazzo della Gran Guardia

Lucca Tattoo Expo | Apr. 14 to 16, 2023 | Lucca Polo Fiere & Tecnologia Spa

La Vallee Tattoo Fest | Apr. 22 to 23, 2023 | Palais Saint Vincent

UK

Halloween Tattoo Bash | Oct. 22 to 23, 2022 | Wolverhampton Race Course

Liverpool Tattoo Convention | Oct. 28 to 30, 2022 | Britannia Adelphi Hotel

Wrexham Tattoo Show | Nov. 12 to 13, 2022 | Wrexham Glyndwr Sport

Tattoo Freeze | Feb. 4 to 5, 2023 | The International Centre

Brighton Tattoo Convention | Feb. 19 to 20, 2023 | The Brighton Centre

UK Tattoo Fest | Mar. 4 to 5, 2023 | Marshall Arena

Big North Tattoo Show | May 6 to 7, 2023 | Metro Radio Arena

Rest of Europe

Barcelona Tattoo Expo | Oct. 7 to 9, 2022 | Barcelona, Spain

Bucharest Tattoo Convention | Oct. 7 to 9, 2022 | București, Romania

Mons Tattoo Convention | Oct. 8 to 9, 2022 | Mons, Belgium

Oberschützen Tattoo Weekend | Oct. 15 to 16, 2022 | Sennfeld, Austria

Vianden Tattoo Convention | Oct. 15 to 16, 2022 | Vianden, Luxembourg

Wildstyle Tattoo Messe Linz | Oct. 22 to 23, 2022 | Linz, Austria

Nordic Ink Festival | Oct. 27 to 29, 2022 | Frederikshavn, Denmark

Inskövde Tattoo Convention | Oct. 28 to 29, 2022 | Skövde, Sweden

Utrecht Tattoo Convention | Oct. 28 to 29, 2022 | Utrecht, Netherlands

LOZT2 Lausanne Tattoo Convention | Oct. 28 to 30, 2022 | Lausanne, Switzerland

Kempen Tattoo Convention | Oct. 29 to 30, 2022 | Herselt, Belgium

Bern Tattoo Convention | Nov. 4 to 6, 2022 | Bern, Switzerland

Icelandic Tattoo Expo | Nov. 4 to 6, 2022 | Reykjavík, Iceland

Pamplona Tattoo Expo | Nov. 4 to 6, 2022 | Pamplona, Navarre, Spain

Tattoo Sunday Brugge | Nov. 6, 2022 | Brugge, Belgium

International Brussels Tattoo Convention | Nov. 18 to 20, 2022 | Brussels, Belgium

Eisenstadt Tattoo Weekend | Feb. 11 to 12, 2023 | Eisenstadt, Austria

Rotterdam Tattoo Convention | Mar. 11 to 12, 2023 | Rotterdam, Netherlands

Güssing Tattoo Weekend | Mar. 18 to 19, 2023 | Güssing, Austria

Maastricht Tattoo Expo | Mar. 25 to 26, 2023 | Maastricht, Netherlands

Luxembourg Ink | Apr. 8 to 9, 2023 | Luxembourg City, Luxembourg

Numaga Tattoo Convention | Apr. 14 to 16, 2023 | Nijmegen, Netherlands

Inkspired Tattoo Fest | May 14 to 15, 2023 | Bruxelles, Belgium

Leoben Tattoo Weekend | May 20 to 21, 2023 | Leoben, Austria

Staff Tattoos

OUR FAVES

WE'VE ASKED OUR STAFF TO WEIGH IN ON THEIR FAVORITE TATTOO AND THE REASONING BEHIND THEIR INK MASTERPIECE. HERE'S WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY:



Terria Velez

"Behold, here cometh the Dreamer"- it's my newest so, it's my favorite. The artist, Toombs, drew this freehand. No stencil. As an introvert I tend to spend a lot of time in my own head. Dreaming.

West African Adinkra symbols. Love the bold geometric shapes and meanings of these symbols. The one shaped like a flower means Abundance. The square one means Knowledge/ Life-long learning.



Kevin Miller

This tattoo encompasses two of my many passions; the love for the outdoors and classic cars. Specifically, the beauty of Sedona, Arizona and it's breathtaking sunsets as well as the bold looks and craftsmanship of the 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air.



Tamala Malerk

I used to try and come up with some special meaning and sentimental story for every tattoo I got because I felt the need to justify getting tattoos (started back in 2010). Honestly though? They don't really have a deep meaning. I just like tattoos. If I had to choose a favorite, I think right now it is the coffee cup on my left arm because it is the only tattoo I can see regularly. Before that, I think the My Chemical Romance tattoo on my left shoulder because My Chem was so influential in my teenage years.

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Terry Dickerson is an IRS registered tax preparer with more than 13 years of experience in the Kaiserslautern Military Community.

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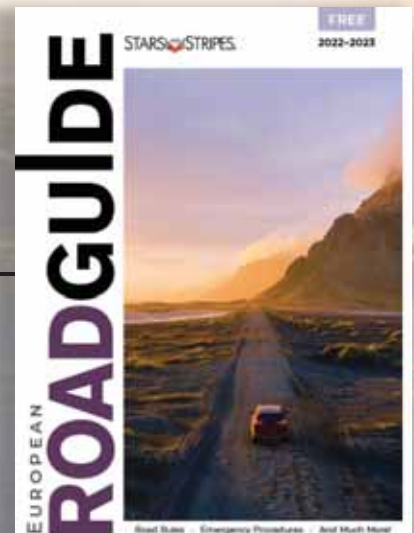
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