



Under The Skin

**AN INTRODUCTION
TO
MODERN TATTOOS,
AND HOW TO STYLE
THEM**

A large, vibrant orange splatter graphic with a central circular shape and numerous smaller droplets radiating outwards, set against a solid black background.

Introduction

As a young artist who grew up in a time period that utilises computers, social media, and Artificial Intelligence, my photography however stays raw, authentic, with a nostalgic feeling, highlighting the natural cause of life in a mundane neighborhood. My editing pushes these limits, introducing harsh contrasts and washed tones to depict a mood, that isn't currently in the spotlight, but has a strong niche audience.

Alongside photography, I'm moving deeper into the Tattoo Industry, this time diving deeper into the "Underground", and "emerging aesthetics", Bringing a physical, yet delicate approach to an industry that appreciates all styles. My work highlights the beauty in chaos, with scratchy, intentional, dark lines that flow and spike in personal and unique ways. My flashes and designs really draw inspiration on the "Nu-wave" aesthetic that has been steadily but surely been rising from Europe. Blending Cybercigilism, Trash Polka, and Euro-trash elements is the creation to a new style, which I am helping shape in my work.

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DID
YOU
KNOW ?

Otzi, nicknamed “Ice-Man”, is one of the oldest mummified humans, found on the Austrian border, discovered 19/9/91.

Otzi has over 60 tattoos, which under inspection consist of symbols, dots, and horizontal lines, believed to be markings that locate acupuncture locations.

A microscopic evaluation of Otzi, concluded that his tattoos were made from manufactured pigments containing fireplace soot and ash. A cruciform marking was also found behind his right knee. (Cruciform referring to a cross shaped symbol, however it is unclear whether this is a link to Christianity or not).



TATTOO TIMELINE OF STYLES



1910-1920

Earliest tattoos of this period were shunned by society, mostly owned by sailors and criminals. However sailors tattoos did actually serve a bigger purpose, they were used to identify sailors who were thrown overboard.



1950-1960

During the 50's not much seemed to happen within the tattoo world and its acceptance within society, tattoos were still mainly linked to criminals or hyper-masculinity, with designs to reflect that. However in the 60's this changed due to the hippy scene and more importantly Janis Joplin, known as the first tattooed celebrity.



1970-1980

Within the 70's, due to more widespread acceptance thanks to the 60's, tattoos were no longer linked to criminals as heavily, this saw a surge of peace, love, music and job related tattoos. However the musical influence of tattoos really took off during the 80's after the uprising of rock music, and the rebellious themes that they brought with them.



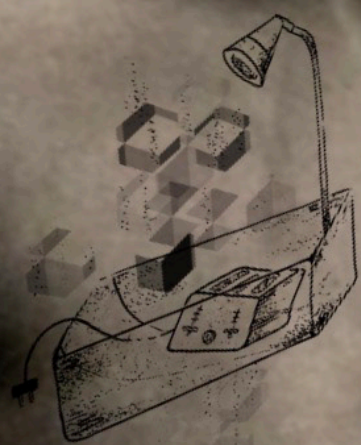
1990-2010

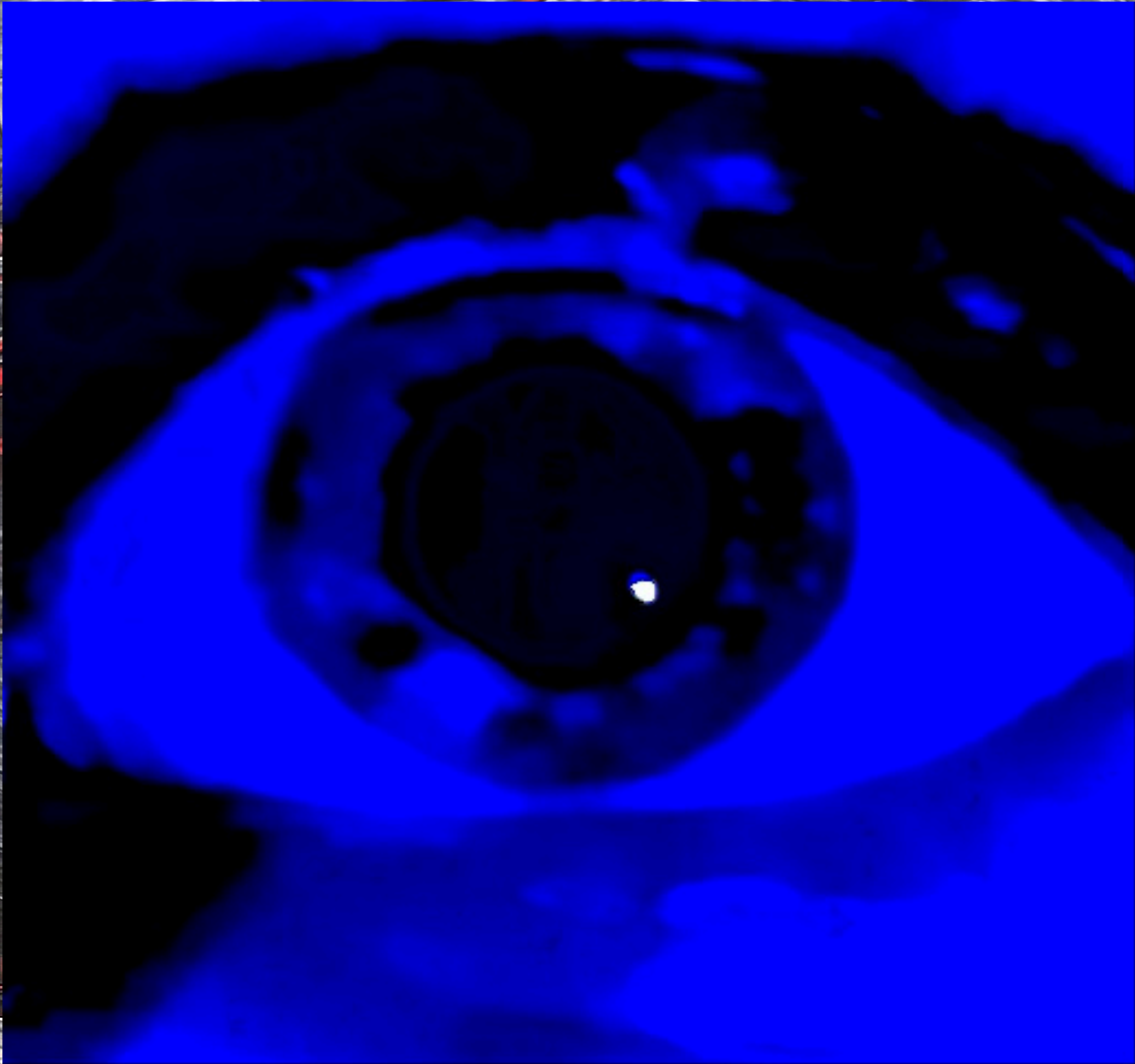
The 90's to the 2000's seemed very similar in terms of acceptance, however the main take away from this period comes from the location of tattoos. More specifically, getting tattoos in places that weren't previously considered, such as; ankles, neck, hands, back.

The late 2010's saw an increase in "trashy" tattoos, more specifically, nu-wave styles such as Cybercigilism and Trash Polka.

Cybercigilism

“DIGITAL BATH”







WHAT IS TRASH POLKA?



Trash Polka is known for finding the beauty in chaos. It takes elements from traditional, realism, and blends it with an abstract brush flow like backdrop, the artworks encased in often red splatters, flicks, and shaped elements such as crosses and triangles.

It was created by Volko Merschky and Simone Pfaff, in Germany, in the early 2000's.



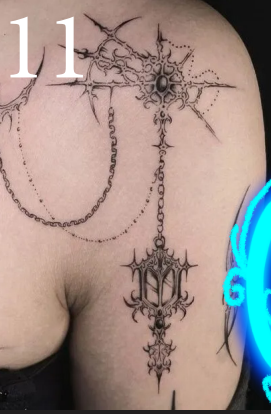
The above image is my take on the style, followed by some clothing / merchandise to accompany the style.

Trash Polka.









Cybercigilism



Cybercigilism didn't really have a creator, online tattoo culture, helped shape what was once sigilism and tribal, into a beautiful new wave of cyberpunk.

Emerging, and still most popular through independent "Instagram artists", across the UK, Germany, Russia, Armenia, and the list goes on.

Cybercigilism first saw some spotlight in the 2010's, but the style really blew up through Instagram around 2020, and arguably still not at its peak.

Primary consisting of harsh and rough spiked blackwork, this style also flows, just with sharp edges! Cybercigilism is also currently helping the social acceptance of hand tattoos, because as of lately, more and more hand tattoos are popping up on social media, and they all seem to have links to Cybercigilism, y2K graphics, and Eurotrash.

How to?

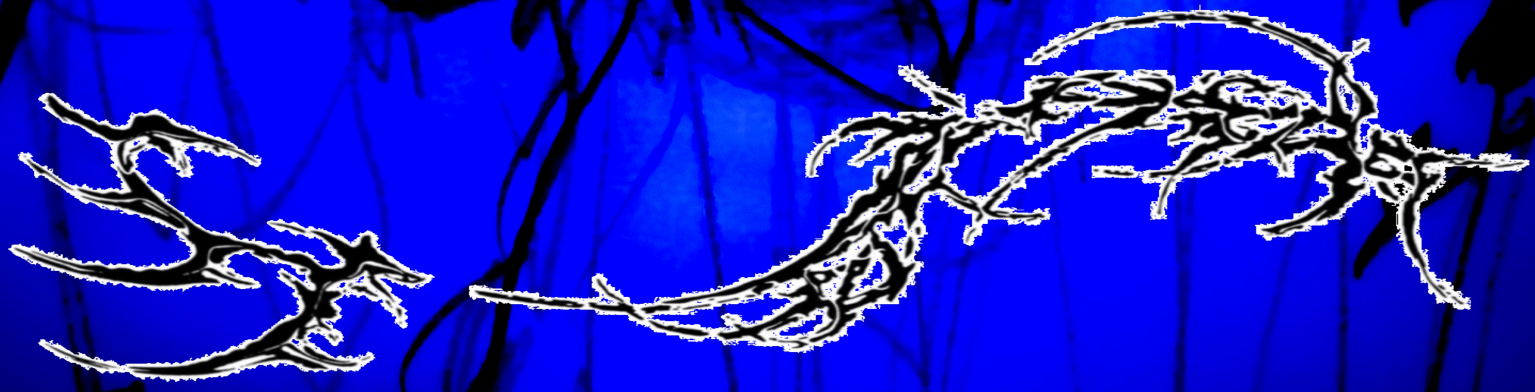
Start with rough guide lines.

Add curls and spines. roughly trace around.

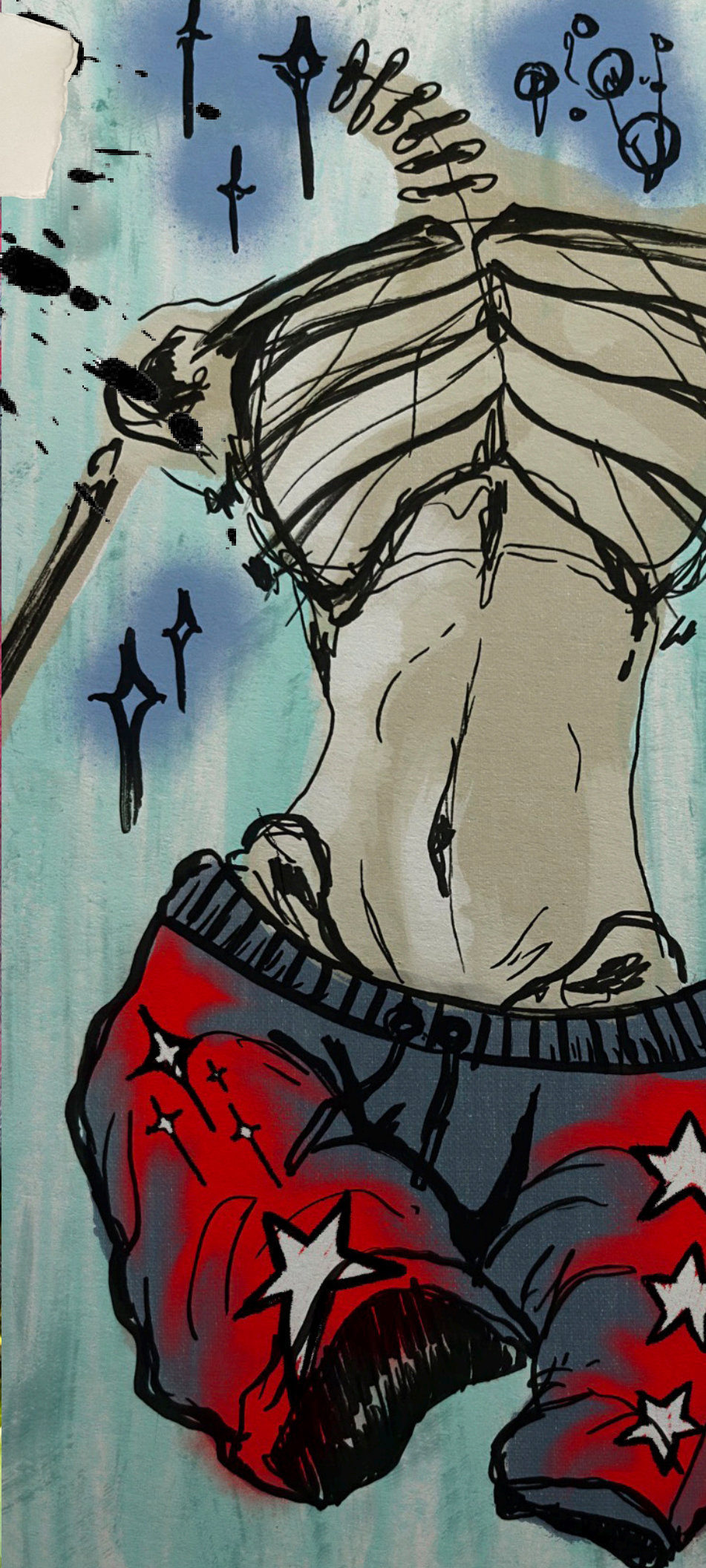
1.

2.

3.



MY TAKE ON
CYBERCIGILISM.



cyber cigitalism
stencils.

STENCILS.

Spraypoint.



Blending these styles into a fashionable mix, incorporating the flow of sigils, and the harsh splash of Trash Polka.











Eurotrash

Eurotrash isn't an entirely new concept this is because at its roots, it was shaped by the Aggrogoth movement of the late 90's and early 2000's, which used symbols, Industrial, and Cyberpunk club scene styles. However the Eurotrash movement (starting in Europe during the late 2020's), incorporates religious imagery, amongst a harsh, scratchy, raw style of tattooing.

Due to it being an emerging style that has really taken off in 2026 due to social media, artists involved in the Eurotrash movement, often don't stay in one shop, they travel Europe, working in different cities, each month.

trash

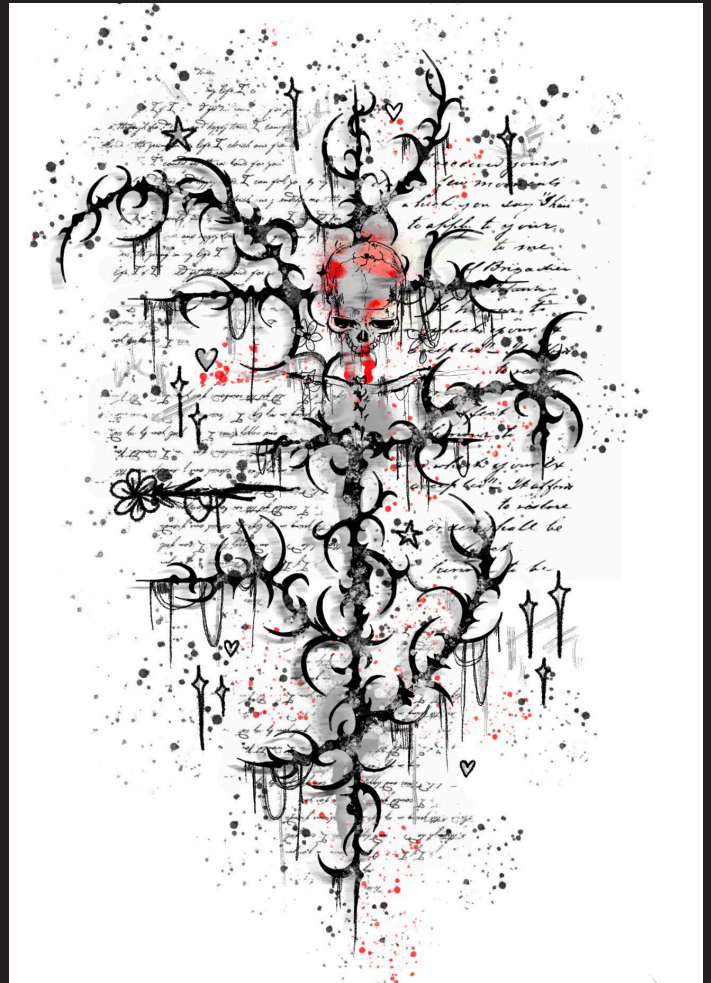
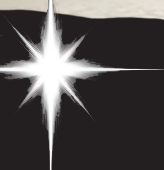
SOME NOTABLE ARTISTS

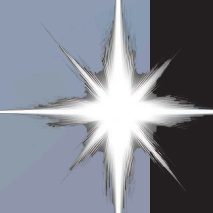
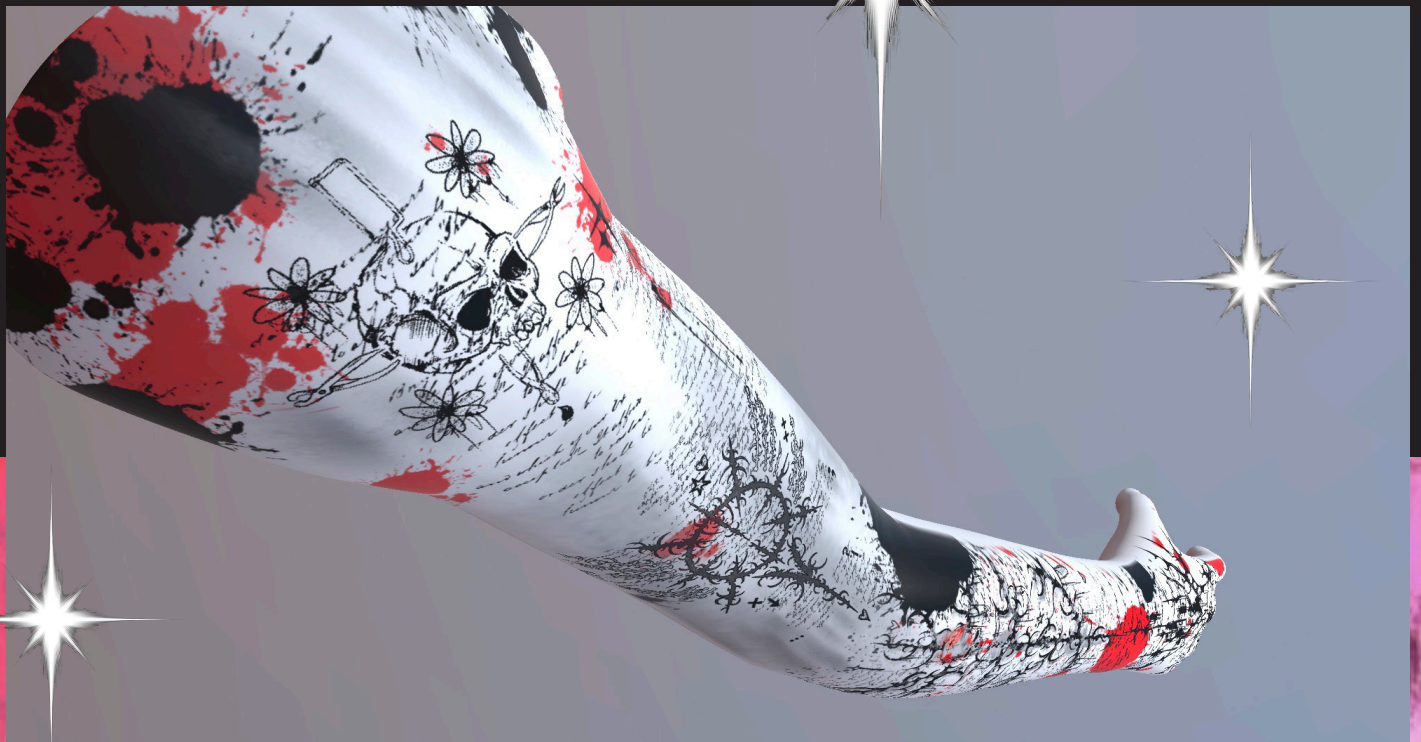
The screenshot shows two Instagram profiles side-by-side. On the left is Dmitrii Drugakov, an artist with 1,063 posts, 18.8K followers, and 437 following. His bio lists locations in France (Lyon, Berlin, Paris) and a Telegram link. On the right is Lada, with 252 posts, 229K followers, and 545 following. Her bio lists languages (RUS, ENG), booking location (Yerevan), and contact info. Below the profiles are navigation buttons for 'Following', 'Message', and 'Email', and a row of profile icons for 'booking', 'commissions', 'me', 'healed', and 'work'. At the bottom is a grid of 12 images showing various tattoo styles, including intricate line work, black and grey shading, and colorful designs.

Left;
Dmitrii
Drugakov

Right;
Lada

MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE "EUROTRASH" SCENE.







**A QUESTIONNAIRE TO GATHER
UP TO DATE, UNBIASED PUBLIC
OPINION ON HOW TATTOOS ARE
PERCEIVED.**

My Questions, sent out via Instagram, to a target population ranging from family in late teens, to friends in mid twenties.

1 - When you observe someone with tattoos, do you judge their choices in tattoos and will that affect your perceived opinion of them from a glance ?

2 - as someone with tattoos, have you noticed a change in the general public's perception and treatment towards you ?

3 - if you don't have tattoos but want to get any, would you get a traditional style, a modern trending style, something personal, or something based on an interest such as music or gaming ?

Some interesting responses.

1) I think most of the time they look cool, I wouldn't think negatively about someone for having tattoos. I think the style/ imagery they go for tells you a lot about the person

2) I don't have any tattoos

3) if I were to get a tattoo I would chose something meaningful to me. I think cyber sigilism is a cool style I'd look into

1 I feel like I do I think I also kinda judge what they are into and hobbies and stuff like from the type of tattoos they have , like really messy patchwork to me looks more like , I spose edgier and less formal but older styles I find less to judge
2 don't have any

3 I want fine line but something all over me like the ones that flow well

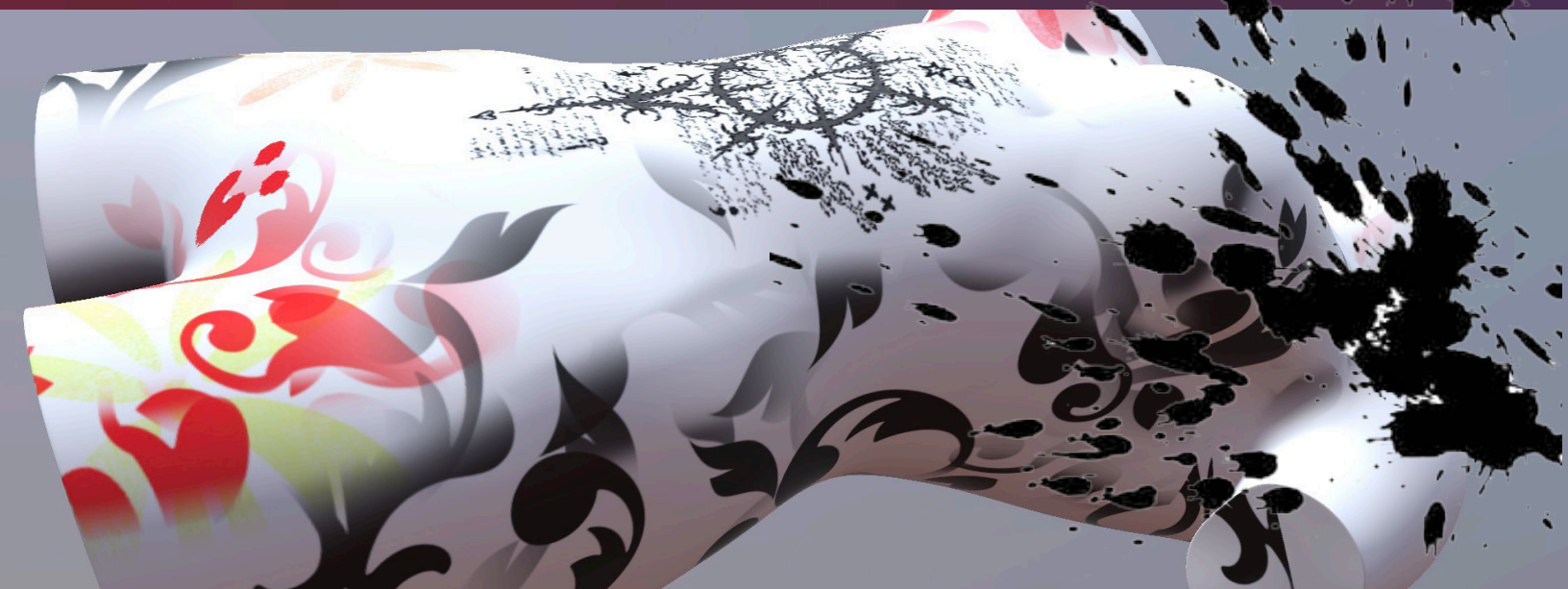
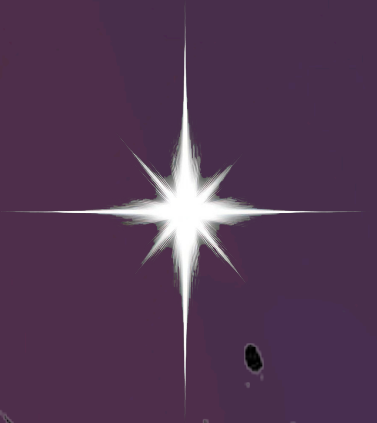
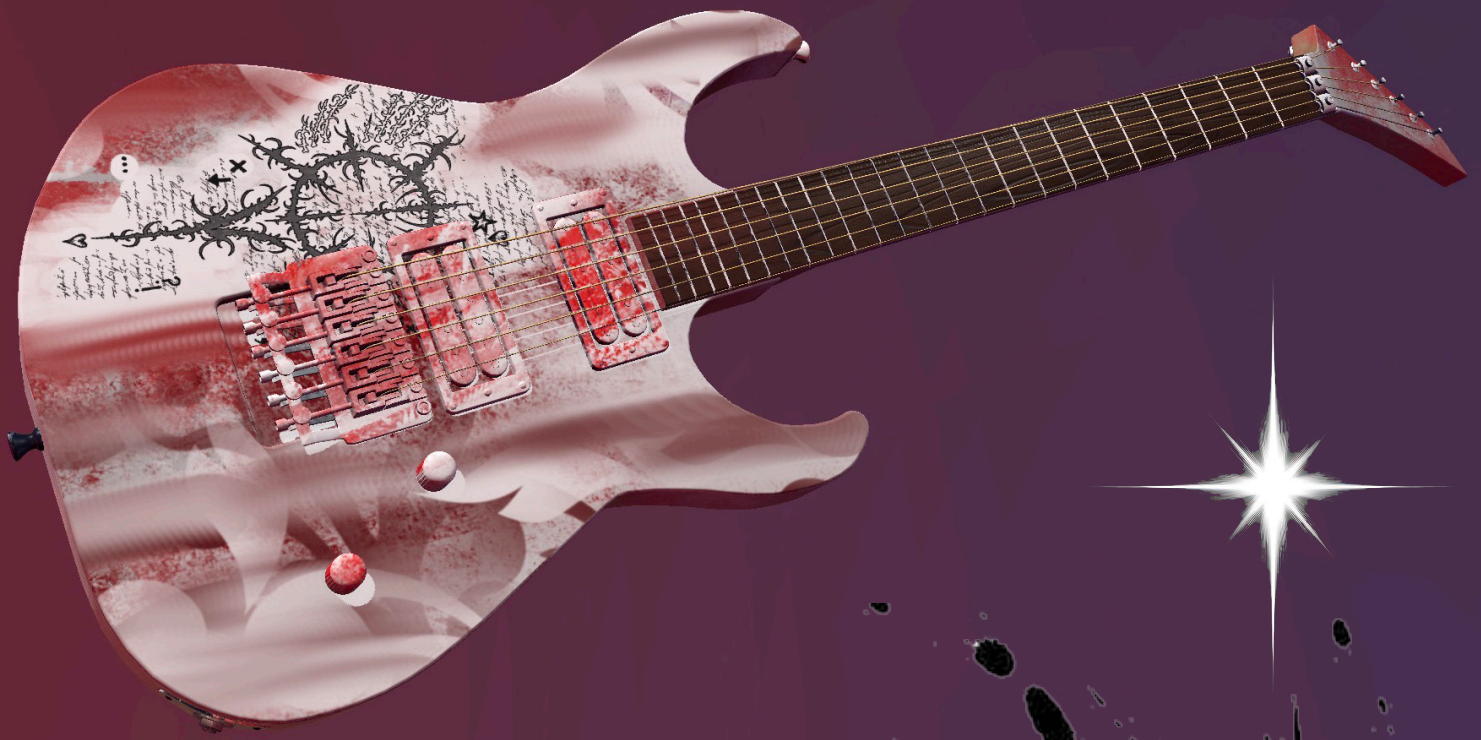
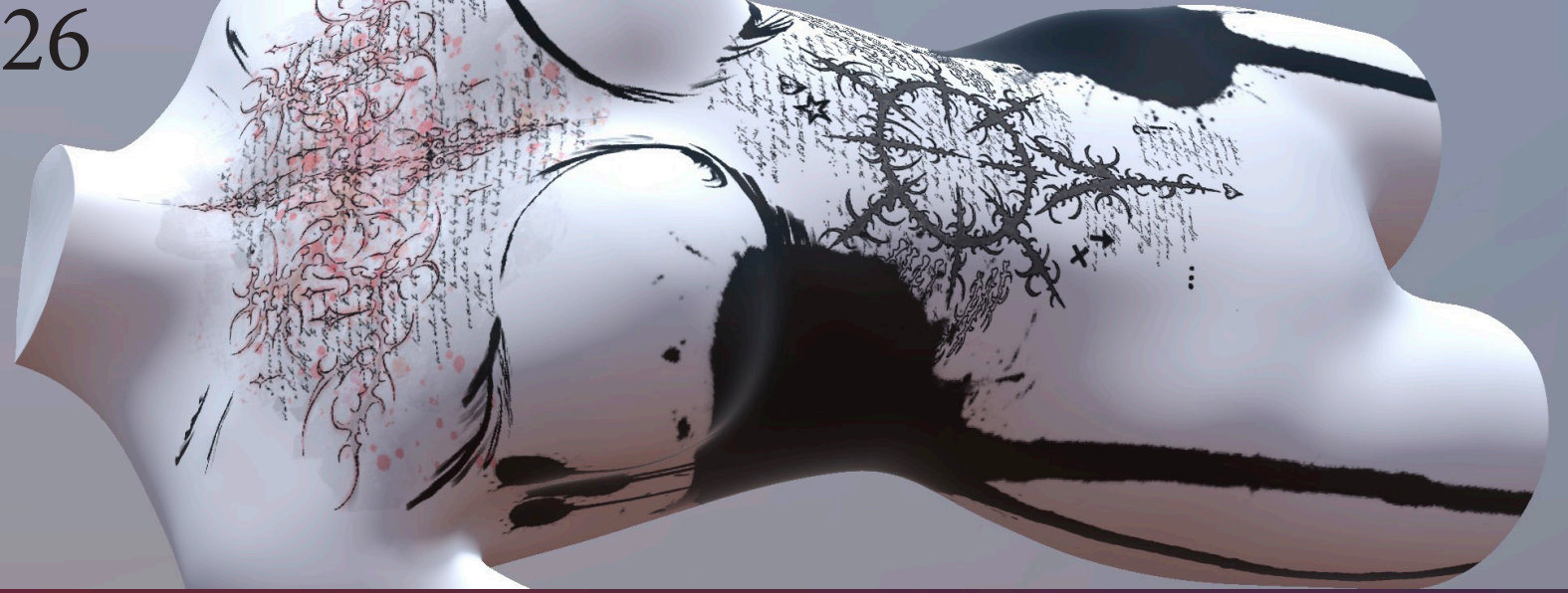
A STUDY INTO THE GENERAL PUBLIC
REACTION TO A HEAVY COOVER OF
TATTOOS VS NONE AT ALL.

BY: ONLYHUMAN, 2019.

A small social investigation was set up in London where a heavily Tattooed friendly man, would ask the general public if they would swap one of his bank notes into smaller cash. The twist is, the same man would then be covered in make- up for the next trial to see whether the general public hold any prejudice against people with large tattoo coverage. Two interesting opinions are stated below, and suggest that despite the UK's acceptance of tattoos has increased, they still do play a very important role when it comes to first time perception from strangers,



One middle age man even asked,
“Am I going to get mugged?”!







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