

MUSEUM FÜR
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HAMBURG

MK&G

English

TATTOO

13.02. till 06.09.15

AN EXHIBITION OF THE
GEWERBEMUSEUM WINTERTHUR
GEWERBEMUSEUM

Kept under wraps in winter and proudly displayed in summer: tattoos are now ubiquitous. However, they are much more than just a current mass phenomenon and trendy fashion accessory: many cultures throughout the world are familiar with the tradition of tattooing, and human skin has always been used as a canvas. Tattooing is one of the earliest art forms and oldest handicrafts.

Tattoos last for a lifetime. Pigments are inserted under the skin forever, yet they are as transient as the life of the person who bears them. They tell personal stories, create identity and affiliation, embellish, heal, protect – and they can both fascinate and repulse. For a long while they were most commonly known as a mark of social distinction or as a means of identifying social outcasts, and as a method of self-stigmatization used by sailors, criminals, prostitutes and gang members to distinguish themselves from “the other”. It is easy to forget that the craze for inking one’s body spread even to aristocratic circles in the later nineteenth century, in a trend that is now echoed by the current fashion for tattoos.

The Tattoo exhibition is dedicated to old traditions and new stories. It takes a look at the vibrant, innovative and multifaceted tattoo culture, with a focus on artistic, artisanal and culture-specific issues. International exhibits from diverse perspectives are displayed and current debates considered. This is the first time that an exhibition has brought together such a broad range of references, presenting the phenomenon of the tattoo with a particular focus on art and design, since these enduring pictures, words and symbols inspire artists and designers. The theme of the exhibition is therefore the reciprocal influence of art, traditional and lived tattoo art and visual design.

Expedition to Brazil Johann Baptist von Spix, 1817 – 1820

Between 1817 and 1820, the zoologist Johann Baptist von Spix and the botanist Carl Friedrich Philipp von Martius undertook an expedition to Brazil at the behest of Maximilian Joseph I, King of Bavaria. They were also interested in the culture of the Brazilian indigenous tribes on the Rio Yapurà, and they published their findings in a three-volume travel report. The illustration is a portrait of Juri, “The son of a cacique of the Juri nation”.

Illustrated travel books were very popular in the 18th and 19th centuries. They shaped western ideas about foreign cultures and also indicate the early interest in exotic tattooing practices. James Cook’s reports on his expeditions to the South Seas in the 18th century contain the mention of the word “tattoo” derived from the Polynesian. The term quickly spread and tattooing became popular in the Western world soon afterwards.

Early ethnographic drawings and engravings such as those made by Georg Forster and Karl von den Steinen attracted widespread interest, as did photographs at a later date such as the studio portraits taken by Felice Beato in Japan. They helped to make the art of tattooing into a symbol of the eroticized alien, and a magico-mythical world of cults and rites. Tattoos elicited a mixture of fascination and revulsion right from the start, particularly in middle-class circles during the 19th century: tattooing thus developed a dual character as both stigma and mark of distinction.

Spix, Johann Baptist von: Reise in Brasilien auf Befehl Maximilian Joseph I, König von Bayern, in den Jahren 1817 bis 1820 / gemacht und beschrieben von Johann Baptist von Spix und Carl Friedrich von Martius – München: [s.n.], 1823 – 1831. Loan: Museum für Völkerkunde Hamburg

2

Art is Dangerous, Pablo & Ruth, 2010 Enrique Marty (*1969, Spanien)
 Oil paint on latex on polyurethane, human hair, textiles, metal, 155x90x53.5 cm/143x60x35 cm, loan: Deweer Gallery, Otegem, Belgium

Real portraits are always the starting point for Enrique Marty's tragicomic sculptures. The tattoos of "Pablo & Ruth" in the "Art is Dangerous" series reflect the iconography of the tattoo motifs in Japanese yakuza which the artist has explored in detail and incorporated into his work. His grotesque figures also make reference to early sculptural traditions such as those used in the quaint waxworks exhibitions of the 19th century. He builds on these themes and develops an original sculptural world. Ironic inversions and humour are essential strategies which he uses as an effective weapon. "Art is dangerous": protest or parody? An allegory of the market system? Can art be dangerous? Or should it be? What role does the art of tattooing play?



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Tattoo equipment

Throughout the world tattooing is performed by introducing pigments to the dermis, or second layer of skin. Pieces of wood, thorns, bones, horns, tortoiseshells, metals and shards can be worked into tools. Depending on the shape of the tattooing implement, the patterns produced may be smooth or dotted, narrow or broad. The individual instruments have not changed greatly over the years. However, one notable step forward was the use of electricity which resulted in new techniques and styles at the beginning of the 20th century after Samuel O'Reilly had patented his rotary tattoo machine in 1891. The electric motor moves the needles up and down regularly, enabling the operator to work smoothly and steadily. It is also a less painful process for the client. These electric machines are in widespread use today. Nevertheless, traditional tools, which have hardly changed, are also still employed.



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Loans: Alpha Tattooshop, Rotkreuz | Bavarian Custom Irons, Grafing | Kaco Tattoo Machine, Fribourg | Kantonsbibliothek Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Trogen; PA Herbert Hoffmann | MT. Derm, Berlin | Musée d'ethnographie de Neuchâtel | Collection Jens Uwe Parkitny, Singapur | Collection Klaus Pichler, Wien | Pullmann Tools GmbH, Widnau |Tattoo Goods, Dresden | Tattooeecke Kaufbeuren | Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich | Tattoo Museum Willy Robinson

Tattoo inks

It was not until the 20th century that tattoo inks began to be manufactured as industrial products. Previously, they had been mixed in small quantities according to individual recipes using pigments, oils and plant juices. Synthetic pigments not only altered the colour spectrum and production techniques of tattoo inks, but also led to new requirements and constraints as is clear from developments over the last forty years. Today, challenges in the manufacturing process for tattoo inks primarily concern the purity of the ink production process and the quality of the pigments procured. Other requirements tend to be connected with new problems which are no longer to do with the actual pigment that is inserted into the skin. Nowadays the main focus is on the risks posed by laser treatment for tattoo removal.

Loan: Deep Colours! The Inkfactory, Neuburg

4

The Rich Mingins Collection

Rich Mingins (1916 – 1968) ran a tattoo studio with his father and his brother Alf Mingins in Cumbria, which is in the north-west of England, and later in London. Tattooing was his passion and he was a master of his craft. He also collected photographs and newspaper cuttings about tattoos. Today all that remains is his photo album which documents the history of tattooing from 1922 to 1949. Unfortunately, it lacks a chronology or any precise dates, and no accompanying commentary has been found. The digital version with extracts from the photo album shows his clients, other well-known tattoo artists of his era, copies of pictures that were in circulation at the time and the artist himself: Rich Mingins poses for the camera with clenched fists, displaying the picture of Jesus Christ with crown, that was tattooed on his chest by his brother Alf Mingins (no. 424).

From the Henk Schiffmacher Collection, Amsterdam

5

Painting the Lily! (1936, 1.12 mins.)

In this documentary, George Burchett (1872 – 1953) tattoos two women with permanent makeup at his studio in the West End of London. His clientele included members of the English upper classes and European royalty such as King Alfonso XIII of Spain, King Frederick IX of Denmark and King George V of England. George Burchett also tattooed Horace Ridler, the legendary Zebra Man also known as “The Great Omi”.

Tattoo Soldiers (1942, 1.15 mins.)

Three Australian soldiers talk about their tattoos from all over the world.

Woman Tattooist (1952, 1 min.)

The first British female tattooist, Jessie Knight (1904 – 1994), tattoos young women soldiers in Aldershot, Hampshire. She ran a number of studios from the 1920s up to the 1980s.

Tattoo Club (1954, 1.51 mins.)

The well-known British tattooist Les Skuse (1912 – 1973) founded the Bristol Tattoo Club in 1953 and in 1955 he organized the world’s first tattoo competition, the precursor of the tattoo conventions of today. In the 1950s the Bristol Tattoo Club was the focal point of the tattoo scene, counting famous people such as Bob Maddison, Al Schiefley, Albert Cornelissen and Tattoo Peter among its members.

All films are from the British Pathé film archive.

Christian Warlich: the “King of the tattoo artists”

During his lifetime, Christian Warlich (1890–1964) was held to be the greatest tattoo artist in Germany and gained an international reputation as “King of the tattoo artists”. He had taught the craft to the Hamburg tattoo legend Herbert Hoffmann and later made him to be his “Crown Prince”. Warlich himself is believed to have come into this profession by chance. After an apprenticeship as a boilermaker he had gone to sea and become acquainted with tattoo artists in the United States. From there, he brought back one of the first electric tattoo machines. In 1919, Warlich opened an inn in today’s Clemens-Schultz-Straße in St. Pauli, Hamburg, where one of the corners served as a “Modern Tattoo Studio”. Warlich took on tattooing as a serious business: he promoted the store, traded with tattoo machines and tools and in addition to his tattooing, he offered a residue-free and painless removal of tattoos by using a special tincture. Warlich was not only noticed because of his business sense, his work was characterized by craftsmanship and artistic standards, too. Unlike other tattoo artists of his time, he strove for a continuous improvement of the shapes and for the modernisation of the image repertoire. For these purposes, he developed new designs and collected all kinds of templates, for instance from Chinese sample books, movie posters or advertising images. In addition, Warlich kept in contact with tattooists all over Europe, North America and Asia. They exchanged sketches photographs and celluloid stencils with which the outlines of the motifs were transferred to the skin of the customers.

Photographs from the Christian Warlich estate, 1961. Loan: Hamburg Museum, Sammlung Fotografie | Different acetates with tattoo motifs from the Christian Warlich estate, celluloid, ca. 1950. Loan: Tattoo Museum Willy Robinson



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7

The tattooist Herbert Hoffmann: a legend

The world famous tattooist Herbert Hoffmann (1919 – 2010) lived through and helped shape various stages of the history of western tattooing. Throughout his life he was very keen to help tattoos gain acceptance and social approval. Having been trained by Christian Warlich, he later became the proprietor of Germany's oldest tattoo studio in the St. Pauli district of Hamburg, where he worked until 1980. He then moved to Switzerland, where he lived with his partner Jakob Acker in Schwendi bei Heiden in the canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden. Hoffmann was active in the tattoo scene right up to his death in 2010, attending conventions throughout Europe and acting as an important role model for younger tattoo artists. He himself bore tattoos by Christian Warlich, Tattoo Peter, Tatover Ole, Horst Streckenbach and others.

Throughout his life he was also a keen photographer and collector. Many of his photographs were published in the photo book "Living Picture Books, Portrait of a Tattooing Passion 1878 – 1952", which is now out of print. The images displayed in the exhibition are from his private archive and have rarely been shown before. These are photographs from his personal albums with portraits of his friends and clients. They depict Herbert Hoffmann himself at different stages of his life, as well as his environment. At the same time, they narrate an important chapter in the history of tattooing from the 1920s to the 1970s. Unfortunately his written comments can no longer be traced.

The tattoo motifs are from Herbert Hoffmann's own catalogue. Loan: Kantonsbibliothek Appenzell-Ausserrhoden, Trogen; PA Herbert Hoffmann

Women and tattoos from the private collection of Herbert Hoffmann

The picture archive of the tattooist and collector Herbert Hoffmann (1919 – 2010) also includes photographs of tattooed women from the 1920s up to the 1970s. Some of them are photographs he took himself but others are copies and images that were circulated in various forms by like-minded people. They are not systematically arranged, most of them are undated and there is no commentary. The collection also includes iconic photographs which had a decisive impact on how tattooed women were viewed at that period.

This selection of Herbert Hoffmann's pictures is a chronicle of women with tattoos, from circus attractions of the 1920s and glamour girls of the 1960s to the predecessors of the famous "new burlesque" artists like Dita Von Teese. However, there are also photos of "ordinary women" with tattoos in the prim-and-proper 1950s and – more rarely – of female tattooists.

Herbert Hoffmann's collection ends with the "renaissance" of tattooing in the 1970s. At that time, women in particular were discovering tattoos as a sign of self-empowerment and the number of female creative tattoo artists making their way in this male-dominated profession began to increase.

Today there is a huge variety of (self-)expression by tattooed women, and female tattoo artists play an essential and influential role in the rich contemporary tattoo culture.

Loan: Kantonsbibliothek Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Trogen; PA Herbert Hoffmann

A small selection of prominent female tattooists

Maud Stevens Wagner (1877 – 1961, photo from 1907)

The American tightrope walker and contortionist Maud Wagner was the first well-known female tattooist in the Western world. Like others of the small number of female tattooists in the 1920s, she learned her craft from her husband, Gus Wagner, whom she met at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.

Lady Viola (1898 – 1977)

Ethel Martin Vangi, who became famous as “Lady Viola”, was a circus performer and later tattooist; she had portraits of presidents Woodrow Wilson, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln tattooed on her chest. Her left thigh was tattooed with pictures of popular figures of the day, such as Babe Ruth and Charlie Chaplin.

Artoria Gibbons (1893 – 1985)

Like many tattooed circus attractions, Anna Mae Burlington Gibbons was a working-class woman who had herself tattooed when she fell on hard times, and then earned good money as a result (especially as a woman). She and her husband, the tattooist Charles Gibbons, travelled all over America in the 1920s and worked as a team in the circus business. She had one tattoo showing a section of Botticelli’s “Annunciation”, another depicting a part of Michelangelo’s “Holy Family”, and her chest featured a portrait of George Washington.



8

Cindy Ray

The last great circus lady, Cindy Ray – also known as “Miss Technicolor” or “The Classy Lassie with the Tattooed Chassis” – toured Australia and New Zealand in the 1960s. She learned how to do tattooing and is still working today under her real name, Bev Nicholas, at the Moving Pictures Tattoo Studio near Melbourne.

Loan: Kantonsbibliothek Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Trogen; PA Herbert Hoffmann

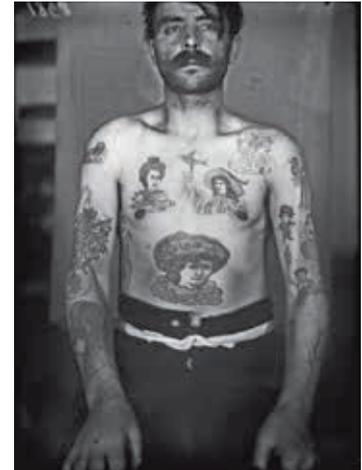
8

Irene “Bobbie” Libarry, 1976 Imogen Cunningham (1883 – 1976, USA)
Silver gelatin estate print, 19.3 x 17.8 cm, loan: The Imogen Cunningham Trust, Lopez Island, USA

Irene “Bobbie” Libarry (1893 – 1978) worked as a circus performer, magician and market vendor. She was tattooed by her husband in 1918, ran her own sideshow “The World’s Strangest People” in the 1930s and later worked as a tattoo artist in San Francisco.



9



10

Images of an epoch

Numerous historical portraits of tattooed men have been preserved in the inheritance of the tattoo artist Christian Warlich (1890 – 1964). The pictures probably originate in the 1880s to 1890s. Especially typical contemporary garments, the beard and hair fashion of the time, relevant tattoo motifs from the German Empire under William I or the symbol of the tenth World Expo in 1889, the Eiffel Tower, give information about this type. All images are carefully rear numbered and labeled with the names of the people portrayed. On display are mainly dock workers and seafarers; members of underprivileged workers who were not used to posing in front of a camera. In the late 19th century, the loading work in the ports was extremely cumbersome and labour intensive, roosts such as the Hamburg Gängeviertel hosted thousands of working families. In this milieu relevant subjects such as anchors, sailboats or professional characters show the belonging to a social group. The tattoos document but beyond the story of people's lives. There are references to the military service or the crossing of the equator, as well as prison stays or religious motives.

Twelve photographs on albumin paper, 24x18 cm: **Martin Nötzel**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4509 | **Heinrich-August Kahlbohm**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4513 | **Albert Friedrich Wilhelm Koschorrek**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4515 | **Franz Matthens**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4478 | **Karl Friedrich Wilhem Lüth**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4489 | **Karl Paul Johann Frank**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4492 | **Wilhelm Johann Stoldt**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4473 | **Johann Georg Klotz**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4472 | **Eugen Wasbauer**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4537 | **Wolf Wilhelm Daub**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4452, | **Karl Joachim Buse**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4455 | **Carl Wilhelm August Otto Sternke**, Inv.Nr. 2013 – 4491, loan: Hamburg Museum, Sammlung Fotografie

Preserved tattoo specimens

The specimens date from around 1900. At the time they were used to identify unknown corpses. Photography was not yet in routine use at that period and preserved specimens offered almost the only opportunity to document a tattoo in detail and keep it for later identification. The oldest known report of successful identification thanks to a tattoo dates back to the 11th century: King Harold II of England fell in battle and is said to have been identified by the inscription “Edith and England” tattooed above his heart, thanks to which he was buried in a manner befitting his rank.

Dry and wet preserved specimens, loan: Anatomisches Museum der Universität Basel | **Specimens from historical study collections**, loans: Institut für Rechtsmedizin der Universität Basel, Abteilung für Forensische Medizin; Institut für Rechtsmedizin der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Medizin- und Pharmaziehistorische Sammlung

10

Rudolf Archibald Reiss (1875 – 1929)

The criminologist, lecturer and photographer founded the “Institut de police scientifique” at the University of Lausanne in 1909. He also helped to set up courses in photography for investigative purposes at the same institution. Forensic photography, which was being carried out according to standard criteria for the first time was an essential component in his teaching. Since tattoos are important identification features, Reiss paid particular attention to them. However, the technology available at the time made it difficult to obtain a sharp and accurate image. Reiss used photographs purely for forensic purposes. He refused to accept the then common opinion that offenders could be recognized simply because they had tattoos.

Emile Lavril, Romeo und Julia Tattoo, 14 November 1913, front and back view | **Tattoos of an “ancien joyeux soldat des bataillons d’Afrique”**, 1 July 1912, front and back view | **Tattoos**, July 1916, loan: IPS UNIL Lausanne | Musée de l’Elysée, Lausanne

Photographs of Russian convicts

Up until the end of the 19th century, it was usual for the government to burn the initials "B.O.R." (Russian for thief) into thieves' skin as a punishment. Subsequently, tattoos developed as a distinctive feature of professional criminals; serving as demarcation, identification, as well as a secret means of communication: they transmit information such as affiliation, profession, number of convictions or position in criminal hierarchies. This informal practice transliterated the original stigmatisation inflicted through the government, using a pictorial repertoire borrowed from traditional tattoo imagery while assigning a new meaning. Most of the prison tattoos were done with primitive instruments, such as modified electric shavers with attached needles. Oftentimes, a self-made mixture of rubber and urine was used as substitute ink, bearing great health risks.

Arkady Bronnikov (*1926) was a leading forensic doctor at the interior ministry of the USSR. From the mid-1960s until the mid-1980s he interviewed and photographed numerous inmates of labour camps in the Urals and Siberia. Today, Bronnikov is a leading expert on tattoo iconography and owns what is considered to be one of the biggest photographic collections of Russian prison tattoos.

Arkady Bronnikov, Photographs of Russian convicts, 1960 – 1980, digital print on paper, loan: Fuel Design and Publishing, London



11

Prison tattoos

The Austrian photographer Klaus Pichler (*1977) spent eight years looking for ex-prisoners, photographing their tattoos and writing down the stories behind them. The result was an impressive documentary account of the still poorly researched history of prison tattoos. The pictures and interviews were published in the book "Inked for Life. The World of Prison Tattoos".

Image: **Untitled, Klaus Pichler (*1977, Vienna)**, paper on aluminium, 60 x 40 cm



12



13

Tradition and taboo

The acceptance of tattoos in Japanese society is subject to constant change. In the 19th century, large tattoos were considered decorative and were carried openly by rickshaw drivers, for example. For the scantily clad men an ornate body was helpful for their business because it attracted the attention of customers. The image of bullies and petty criminals adhered to rickshaw drivers, as well as to other professions from the simple population which led to a long-term negative perception of the skin images. As an identifying feature of “outlaws” they also function in the criminal milieu of the yakuza. In the Japanese mafia organization, tattoos still illustrate the milieu name of the bearer (“serpent”, “dragon”, etc.) and document his gang membership. The result was a social aversion to tattoos which continues to this day and also unjustly criminalises innocent citizens. Unlike their historical predecessors, taxi drivers today would only flaunt their tattoos for a photographer; because they are not good for business. Tattoos in Japan were rarely shown openly; in public bath houses they are even forbidden to this day. It was only through the appreciation of the Japanese tattoo tradition by the American tattoo scene of the 1960s and 1970s that the taboo was partially revised.

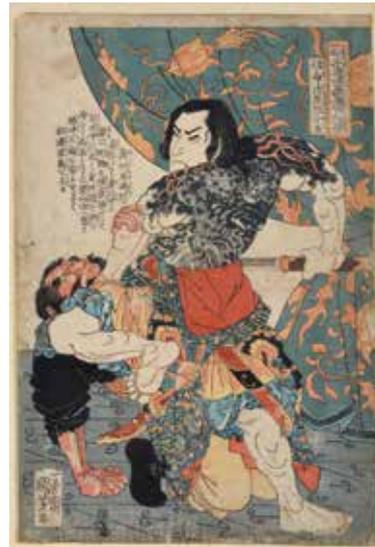
Image: **Unknown, Japanese Tattoo**, 1880 – 1890, albumin paper, 27 x 21 cm, Inv.Nr. P1984.463
Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg



14

Flesh Color Masahiko Adachi (*1983, Tokio)

Japan / 2010 / Animation / 4 Min.



15



16

15

Japanese colour woodcuts: The 108 heroes of the “Suikoden”

The Japanese name “Suikoden” stands for a famous Chinese adventure story that became very popular in both countries. In this story, a group of rebels fights against corruption and injustice, campaigning for the poor and the disadvantaged. The story originates in the 14th century and is set in the 12th century. For the first time, Kuniyoshi displays these rebels with naked, tattooed bodies which lead to a great success of the book. Until today, the Suikoden is a well-known theme of Japanese culture such as computer games and TV series.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797 – 1861), Konkoryu Rishun, 1827 – 1830, colour woodcut on paper, 37.5 x 25.7 cm, Inv.Nr. S2012.62 | **Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Tengan Isobyôe und Yajin Ran**, 1830 – 1845, colour woodcut on paper, 37 x 25 cm, Inv.Nr. S2012.55 Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg

Image: **Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Tanmeijirôgenschôgo**, 1827 – 1830, colour woodcut on paper, 38.7 x 26 cm, Inv. Nr. S2012.56

16

Untitled, 2004 Fumie Sasabuchi (*1975, Tokio / Berlin)

Watercolour, acrylic paint and ceramic, each 50 x 30 x 16 cm, loan: Sammlung Becker, Cologne

The ceramic Playmobil figures by Fumie Sasabuchi take their inspiration from the world of the toy industry. She paints them with colourful torso tattoos, thus uniting a symbol of Western mass consumption with mythical pictures from Japanese culture.

17

Untitled, 2004 Fumie Sasabuchi (*1975, Tokio / Berlin)

Pencil on paper, 29.5 x 20.5 cm, loan: private collection, Austria

Fumie Sasabuchi draws irezumi tattoos on the skin of pictures of young girls taken from the children’s fashion magazine “Vogue Angels”. The motifs of the tattoos are part of the traditional repertoire of the Japanese yakuza mafia, and symbolise mortal danger, superhuman strength and special protection, among other things. Sasabuchi unites two media from Western and Eastern popular culture: photography from modern fashion magazines and the traditional woodcut. She combines Japanese myths with Western picture subjects and plays with the ensuing ambivalent images.

18

The Mara Salvatrucha gang warfare in El Salvador

Twelve years of civil war in El Salvador came to an end in 1992. Today, gang warfare is an everyday reality in San Salvador, mainly because of two gangs: the Mara Salvatrucha (MS) and the Mara 18 (18). Every year 2,000 people die as a result. Some 14,000 abandoned youths dedicate their lives to the gangs which replace their families. They are the successors of the US gangs that were founded in the 1980s by refugees from the Salvadoran civil war. The Mara gangs today, which originated in the ghettos of Los Angeles, have over 70,000 members in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

Members generally have a tattoo containing the letters M or MS, as well as the number 13 which refers to the position of M in the alphabet. Tattoos in the shape of teardrops represent the number of murders committed, or commemorate the death of a fellow Mara member and friend. The words “La vida loca” stand for “the crazy life” in the Mara, and a downward-pointing M formed with the fingers is used as a sign of recognition.



17



18

Christian Poveda (1955 – 2009, France)

El Gangster de Iberia (Mara Salvatrucha), San Salvador, 2008, paper on aluminium, 60 x 58 cm | **El Molle (Mara 18) and his daughter**, San Salvador, 2004, paper on aluminium, 60 x 60 cm | **La Liro (Mara 18) and Cesarito**, San Salvador, 2008, paper on aluminium, 60 x 90 cm | **Interviews with gangmembers**, El Salvador / France / 2005 / doc. / 12 mins., loan: Agence Vu', Paris

The Spanish-French photographer and documentary filmmaker Christian Poveda spent over a year with members of the Mara 18. He followed the lives of these "lost youths", documenting them through interviews, impressive photographs and the film "La vida loca" (El Salvador / France / 2008 / 90 mins.). Poveda was killed by several shots to the head in San Salvador in 2009 while working on another film.

19

Face tattoos, Burma

The face tattoos of the Chin women in Burma form part of a ritual to mark the transition from childhood to the adult world. Female tattoo artists use thorns or needles to prick patterns into the skin. The symbolic meaning of the lines and dots cannot be ascertained, since no records exist. All that is known is that the patterns differentiate one clan from another. Although the tradition of facial tattooing has died out in many parts of Burma, it is now experiencing a partial revival.

Jens Uwe Parkitny (*1965, Singapur)

Ma Wine, Laytu-Chin, Northern Rakhine, 2003, paper on aluminium, 30 x 30 cm | **Ma Hla Oo, Laytu-Chin**, Northern Rakhine, 2005, paper on aluminium, 30 x 30 cm | **Pou Lee, N'gha-Chin**, Southern Chin State, 2005, paper on aluminium, 30 x 30 cm | **Sutu-Chin-Frau vom Oberlauf des Lemro Flusses**, Northern Rakhine, 2004, paper on aluminium, 30 x 30 cm | **Mna Thi, M'khan-Chin**, Southern Chin State, 2002, paper on aluminium, 30 x 30 cm | **Ma Ning Li, MÜN-Chin**, Southern Chin State, 2002, paper on aluminium, 30 x 30 cm



19

Tā Moko, New Zealand

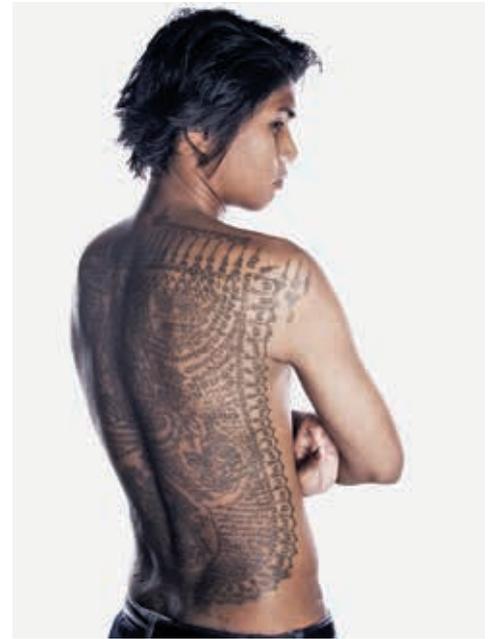
The Tā moko facial tattoos of the Maori in New Zealand give information about family membership, ancestors and social position, as well as the specific abilities of the tattooed person. Each part of the face is dedicated to a particular type of information. Few people have a tattoo in the centre of the forehead, for example, since this indicates high status. Men can usually wear tattoos over the entire face, whereas women have them only on the chin area. This tattoo tradition has been suppressed for a long period, as also happened in other cultures, but the Tā moko have recently been experiencing a renaissance.



20

Becky Nunes (*1965, Auckland)

June Tangohau, Uawa region, 2006, paper on aluminium, 60 x 45 cm | **Taurewa Victor Biddle**, Waimana region, 2006, paper on aluminium, 60 x 45 cm | **Hano Tihema**, Uawa region, 2006, paper on aluminium, 60 x 45 cm



21

Sak Yant, Thailand

Sacred tattoos known as Sak Yant are commonly found in Thailand. They protect the bearers from accidents, misfortune and crime. At the same time they help them to lead a morally upright life. However, the rules set by the tattooist must be obeyed or the tattoos lose their power. Sak Yants are not intended for public view and therefore often kept hidden. The motifs used are derived from ancient Khmer script writings and animal symbols such as tigers, dragons, birds, snakes and lizards. The tiger, or Yant Sua, is a popular subject and is associated with strength, fearlessness and power.



22

Aroon Thaewchatturat (*1975, Bangkok)

Koy, blessed photograph, Bangkok, 2010, paper on plastic, 60x40 cm | **Oh, blessed photograph**, Bangkok, 2010, paper on plastic, 60x40 cm | **Num, blessed photograph**, Bangkok, 2010, paper on plastic, 60x40 cm | **Dong, blessed photograph**, 2010, paper on plastic, 60 x 40 cm



23

Tattoo Master

There are several hundred tattooists in Thailand. Monks tattoo in their temples, and tattoo masters in studios. They are authority figures and their followers also seek advice from them. The sacred tattoos link tattooist and tattooed for a lifetime.

38-year-old Achan Neng Onnut is a tattoo master in On Nut, a district of Bangkok. The pricked motif is called Pho Kae. It depicts a recluse, or hermit, and bestows wisdom, goodness and a peaceful mind to the bearer. The tattoo master recites a mantra in order to activate the tattoo.

Tattoo Master Andreas Nebeling, (*1970, Bangkok)

Thailand / 2011 / doc. / 3.20 mins.

22

Don't worry ..., 2013 Goran Galić & Gian-Reto Gredig (*1977 / *1976, Switzerland)

7 videos on monitors / sound / 138 mins. | 1 projection / loop / no sound / Swiss German / German (German subtitles)

In a work specially created for the Tattoo exhibition, Goran Galić and Gian-Reto Gredig asked 22 tattooed people for their personal tattoo stories. Starting with the story of the origins of the first tattoos, other areas are explored such as the relationship with the body, the style of the tattoos and how tattoos create identity. The video interviews are linked with a projection which focuses on the tattoos of the respondents, revealing them as body images in constant motion.

23

250 cm line tattooed on six paid people, 1999,

Santiago Sierra (*1966, Madrid / Mexico D.F.)

Espacio Aglutinador, Havana / Cuba / doc. / 28.17 mins. / no sound, loan: Galerie Kow, Berlin

In 1999 Santiago Sierra recruited six young unemployed men in Havana to stand in a row and have a horizontal line tattooed on them, running continuously from one man's back to the next, in exchange for 30 dollars each. Further versions of this performance were carried out and documented as simply as possible. It alludes to the unequal values of capitalist society and to the relative and haphazard nature of remuneration. The imprecise line drawn of the tattoos suggests scarring, so the participants in the performance – members of socially marginalized groups – were subjected to further stigmatisation.



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80064, 2004 Artur Żmijewski (*1966, Warsaw)

Poland / 11 mins. / doc. / Polish with English subtitles / loaned by the artist and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zürich

The Polish artist Artur Żmijewski takes an unsparing and provocative look at the tattooing that took place in the Nazi concentration camps. His video shows 92-year-old Auschwitz survivor Josef Tarnawa whom the artist persuaded to have his fading camp number re-inked. While the tattooist is renewing the numbers, Josef Tarnawa recalls the most traumatic time of his life. Artur Żmijewski's video work polarises opinions. On the one hand, Josef Tarnawa is stigmatized for a second time, but on the other, the number on his left forearm acts as a shocking memorial. According to Artur Żmijewski, nowadays active remembrance is often far too conventional.

In the history of western tattooing, brands and involuntary tattoos have receded into the background, although the practices used during the Second World War remain deep in people's memories. Whereas the prisoners in Auschwitz were numbered, members of the SS had their blood group tattooed on their upper arms. This meant that after the war, what had started out as a useful medical information turned out to be an irreversible identification mark. The social connotations of a tattoo change over time, with proud insider symbols becoming the stigmata of an outsider group.

Tim, 2006 – 08 Wim Delvoye (*1965, Belgium)

Tattoo, loan: Sammlung Reinking, Hamburg

Tim Steiner, a Swiss citizen, has had a work by the Belgian conceptual artist Wim Delvoye tattooed on his back. In 2008 the tattoo was sold to a Hamburg-based art collector who acquired the right to lend, sell and bequeath Tim Steiner as a loan object and to preserve his skin after his death. Since then, the work, called "Tim", has given rise to international controversy. It raises important questions about ethics in the art market, and about power and the right to dispose of the human body (and its organs, such as the skin).

"Tim" will be present at the exhibition on Saturday and Sunday, April 11th & 12th, as well as on Saturday and Sunday, June 27th & 28th between 2 pm and 6 pm

Donata, 2005 Wim Delvoye (*1965, Belgium)

Pig tattooed and stuffed, loan: Burger Collection, Hong Kong

"I considered other animals but pigs are very similar to human beings: we have the same sort of skin, eat the same foods and have the same organs. Tattooed pigs look like tattooed people."

Wim Delvoye, 2010

Between 2004 and 2008, the Belgian conceptual artist Wim Delvoye sedated domestic pigs on his "Art Farm" in China and had them inked by several professional tattooists working simultaneously. They were later exhibited at the museum, either alive or stuffed.

"It was the best of times", 2013 Mario Marchisella (*1972, Switzerland)

Audio installation / stereo / 15 mins. / loop / music & sound design: Mario Marchisella / text: Charles Dickens, from: "A Tale of Two Cities" (1859)

The composition was based on a photo that "accidentally fell into the artist's hands"; it shows two forearms bearing a tattoo of the opening words of Charles Dickens' novel "A Tale of Two Cities" in which a particular era and its associated longings, hopes, joys and misery are described. The soft, monotonous buzzing of the tattoo machine as it is rhythmically manipulated is set against minimalist musical motifs and a sung text. The material is interwoven and compressed in a similar way to how a tattoo is produced – layer by layer.

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way ..."

Auto Ink, 2010 Chris Eckert (*1968, USA)

Metal, paint, microelectronics, 137 x 56 x 50 cm, loaned by the artist

The kinetic sculpture of American artist Chris Eckert draws a random religious symbol on the arm of a volunteer subject. Membership of a religion integrates, connects and offers an ethical and moral framework for living with others. Yet many faiths compete with each other and regard the others with resentment and politically motivated enmity. Chris Eckert's tattooing machine explores how having a particular faith can affect peaceful co-existence in a globalized world.

In European history, the now defunct tradition of religious pilgrim tattoos is an example of the practice of tattooing as a mark of identity and segregation. Examples include the crusader tattoos and tattooed guild symbols in the Middle Ages.

Contemporary tattoo art

Inking the skin requires the same aesthetic imagination and care, the same manual dexterity, and the same knowledge of materials and colour as other artistic processes. The innovative contemporary tattoo scene is transcending the language of classical tattooing and regenerating the medium. The image loop shows a diverse range of top quality works by international tattoo artists in a huge variety of styles.

Luke Atkinson, DE | Curly, GB | Mike DeVries, USA | Thea Duskin, USA | Lionel Fahy, FR | Sabine Gaffron, DE | Valentin Hirsch, DE | Saira Hunjan, GB | Inma, GB | Bastien Jean, FR | Jon John, GB | Guy LeTatooeur, FR | Filip Leu, CH | Karl Marc, FR | Volko Merschky & Simone Pfaff, DE | Léa Nahon, FR | Roxx, USA | Minka Sicklinger, USA | Liam Sparkes, GB | Jacqueline Spoerlé, CH | Kostek Stekkos, BE | Amanda Wachob, USA | Seth Wood, USA

Image: Thea Duskin, Untitled, 2011, © Thea Duskin, photo: Kimberly Frost



Tradition and modernity

The rich and cross-cultural collection of the MKG has served as an inspiration for creative work to artists and craftspeople for over 130 years. The classic ornaments of historicism, the floral patterns of art nouveau or the spirited characters of Japanese wood cuts: the continuous examination with this kind of historic artwork and its adaption into one's own visual language are just as much a part of the art of tattooing as the creation of new images. In the autumn of 2014, the MKG has invited a selection of Hamburg tattoo artists to use the museum's collection as a starting point for new tattoo designs.

Frank, Taki, Nikkels (Endless Pain) | Christian Hensen, Seb Winter, Jules Wenzel (Immer & Ewig) | Robert Gorlt (Tattoo Nouveau) | Chriss Dettmer (Black Hole Tattooing) | Hanadi Chawaf (Hanadis Garage)

Image: Taki, **Über(leben)**, 2014



Scientific tattoos

The American science journalist Carl Zimmer has a blog in which he collects examples of scientific tattoos (among others). These have also been published in his book "Science Ink: Tattoos of the Science Obsessed" (Sterling Press, 2011).

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The End

Timm Ulrichs (* 1940, Berlin)
Eyelid tattoo, 1970/1981/1997, inkjet print on canvas on stretcher bars, 150 x 150 cm, loaned by the artist

In 1981, Timm Ulrichs had "THE END" tattooed on his right eyelid by "Tattoo Samy" (Horst Heinrich Streckenbach). The tattoo, which can only be read when the eye is closed, recalls the final credits of a film, the last performance and the final moment. This tattoo event was also documented on film, created in the context of the video of the same name which juxtaposes 60 final images from various classic films, without comment.



TATTOO

13.02. till 06.09.15

The Tattoo exhibition has been produced by the
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Project management Winterthur

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Project management Hamburg

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Santiago Sierra (ESP) | Aroon Thaewachatturat (THA) |
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Maud Stevens Wagner, Tattoo Artist, USA 1877 – 1961 |
Ashleigh tattooed by Saira Hunjan, 2010, © Saira Hunjan,
Image: Tareq Kubaisi

