



## AUTHENT/INK

**Inked Australia's resident tattoo advisor Kian Forreal on the relevance of Facebook to tattooists.**

**FUCKING FACEBOOK HEY**, either love or hate it, or in my case, both. Being a rather private person myself I loathe the personal information stream that emanates from Facebook on a regular basis, whether it's about me or someone else. Most of it is just shit I don't need to know, or anyone else for that matter. I don't care what you had for breakfast, what mood your cat is in or who is sitting in front of you on the train. Does anyone really care? I am also forever amazed at the amount of deeply personal information people post about themselves in this public forum for the world to see.

Just in case you're not aware, that stuff you write never ever really goes away, it's cached somewhere, forever. The drug references, the sex talk, the youthful political opinions, the jokes... all of it. Same with the pictures from the wild party, street racing your car etc.... all over the world governments and lawyers are using peoples facebook profiles against them in courts of law to help convict them of a range of offenses, from drink driving to insurance fraud to showing someone is of bad character for a particular job. It is the #1 tool of investigators and the police. Don't be stupid.

My Facebook page is just for tattoo related posts and information, and for this I love it! It's a great way to get the word out about this and that and reach thousands of people in one fell swoop. I regularly post pictures of my best works in progress, the odd drawing and usually my daily completed work if it's something noteworthy. It's a great medium for self-promotion, networking and keeping your potential clients interested in what you are doing. Awesome.

Also a great medium for making a level seven dickhead out of yourself. Note to aspiring tattoo/artists: if you can't draw why post your drawings on a public forum? What are you looking to gain? Wouldn't time be better spent practising your craft? And subsequently if you can't tattoo very well yet, maybe don't post pictures of your shit work for the world to see either, or better yet... don't do the shit work in the first place and learn to tattoo better instead of seeking compliments.

Funny thing is, and I am also guilty of this ... no one seems to call these people out very often, but I am working on it slowly and politely. Every day amongst all the other stuff coming down the stream, great art and fantastic tattooing, there are always some crappy and embarrassing tattoo scab pictures showing themselves in the newsfeed and instead of marking their card and telling them what's up... it just gets ignored.. so maybe that encourages people to keep on trucking? No need to be mean but sometimes some constructive criticism can be helpful in the big scheme of things for an artist to grow. I know it helped me a lot.

I know I talk a lot about this and that... rant about tattooing but it's for a good cause. I care about tattooing deeply as it has been good to me these past 18 years. It takes care of me and I take care of it. Like I said in my last article: the choices we make now will dictate the direction tattooing goes in the coming years. The ancient history of modern tattooing is written for all to see... when I say ancient I mean the last 150 years.

The old timers have seen all this before, go read some of the memoirs of the old legends and learn the history of the cycles of tattooing. Unscrupulous people have fucked it up before and it took decades to bring it back. Do your own research if you care enough about it and see for yourself. There is enough negativity going on right now in the local tattoo world from outside forces without doing it to ourselves. Many people say they care about tattooing yet few go out of their way to take a stand.

Apart from being a fashion movement, this whole facebook thing has made tattooing an online popularity contest within the community. Haha, I mean really... it's like fucking high school half the time. Tattooing is about tattooing, get it? Make the best tattoo you can for your client, treat them and tattooing with respect, get paid, hone your skills in your down time, stay current. Repeat. It's quite simple. However as with any art or fashion bullshit, its cliquy, someone is more special than others, there's matching hats involved and lots of circular fellating. Makes me laugh.

On the other end of the spectrum are the 'Facebook Sale' jokers. "Today only come into the shop and get any one hour tattoo for 50 bucks!" Really? Business that bad huh? Thanks for letting us all know! Come on guys... you are





fucking chumps, the same folks posting the lame tattoo pics... and usually the same ones worshipping from afar the 'special people' noted above, matching hat of course. Jesus I must be getting old!

"All artists are willing to suffer for their work. But why are so few prepared to learn to draw?" – Banksy

Kinda sums it up right there... so we'll leave it at that.

I see people nearly naked on a daily basis, part of the job, and I am always saddened and angered when I see a great specimen of a human, male or female: nice skin, good musculature, proportionate physique and then a shit tattoo right in the middle of it all. Regardless of how you look it really lowers your stock in life to have a scribble on your body.

I know I sound like a broken record. But please, as a tattoo client or potential client... please take your decision seriously! Your body is yours, it's beautiful, its unique and its not renewable, and more importantly, shit tattoos don't come off easily or cheaply. Would you let a half-assed airbrush artist paint your brand new car with a mural? Would you let a beginner dog groomer have a go at your best buddy? Most likely not.. unless you're a fool. And someone, anyone, who lets an unproven no-talent joker kitchen-magician scab-vendor have a go at drawing permanently on their body is the same thing: a fool.

I understand the fascination, the desire and the outright need to get tattooed, but for fucks sake... slow down and take a minute, that shit on your arm or wherever is not going to go away when you come to your senses. Patience is the key. Deliberately choose your tattoo artist and what you want to carry for life. Let me be the little devil on your shoulder giving you self-doubt about your decision. Better safe than sorry! When the time comes to get tattooed...Like all things in this life, you get what you pay for. Invest in your future.

Cheers! ☺

*Kian Forreal is a professional tattoo artist with 17 years international experience and who specialises in traditional Japanese tattoo work and script lettering. He has worked all over the world and has studied under some of the leading tattoo artists of today. He is based in Sydney at Inner Vision Tattoo in Surry Hills. His website is: [www.kianforreal.com](http://www.kianforreal.com) For information on Laser Tattoo Fading and Removal please visit [www.fadeyourtattoo.com](http://www.fadeyourtattoo.com)*