

Another Jew With a Tattoo



Ahh the joys of writing! And my favorite part of it is meeting people. Some people are hesitant to share their stories with a complete stranger; others are more than willing. Of course, those are the ones I like because it makes my job a whole lot easier and enjoyable. For this interview, not only did I get a chance to see a great tat job but also I got to laugh the whole way through it!

Gabriel Feinberg kindly met me for lunch, at a Jewish deli no less, on his break from work, on the day it was pouring to talk about his work in progress – a beautiful geisha encapsulated by nature. Because of its intricate details, this tattoo has taken a year so far and has been broken up into 6 sessions.

Over matzo ball soup, Gabriel, being a typical guy, said he wanted to have a “hot chick on his ribs”. Oh no, who doesn’t want a hot chick on them? So he met with artist Paul Dewey at True Tattoo in Hollywood and together they sat and sketched out a geisha girl. But not one that was too “geishy” - one with a little more depth and character (sure because that’s what guys really

want). The design was going to be initially a foot long. After 3 weeks of working on the sketch, the tattoo had grown to 2 feet.

The first session was the outline. Shading came next. Then the coloring of the flowers and birds took place. The fourth session, and the most painful one, was the lining and shading of the hair. That part of the tattoo took place in the armpit and nipple – two very highly sensitive spots. After already having a couple of tattoos done Gabriel has learned that his body somehow doesn’t take to ink well. Supposedly that can be the case for those with a high immune system. So in addition to the armpit being his most painful spot, the tattoo artist had to keep going over the lines repeatedly to get the hair a dark color.

Paul has remained the continuing artist on this endeavor and for Gabriel to get this finished up he had to drive all the way to San Diego to have his latest session done. However, on his drive there a speeding idiot sideswiped him. His car was crushed on one side, but still able to be driven. Even though he was hung over and stressed out, he still continued on his mission. Such a trooper for his woman! Maybe the sideswiping was a good thing because Paul gave Gabriel a pity discount and let him down Jamison during the 5-hour session.

Paul practices tattooing in the same manner as the Japanese do and after every tattoo session he places a hot, scalding towel over the tattoo which let’s the ink set in and allows the skin to heal better. Gabriel said he doesn’t know what giving birth felt like, but he thinks this feeling has got to be the equivalent. Not so much darling. But I do sympathize with the pain he must go through for the next couple of days and lack of sleep because of the discomfort.

The Jewish culture believes that you must exit the world in which you entered it, which means no altering of the body and that is why Jewish people are not supposed to have tattoos. Gabriel’s father doesn’t know anything about his tattoos and his mom knows of a few. His mom isn’t exactly thrilled about the idea and for the first 3 months she kept sending him articles and brochures on tattoo removal. She even sent him one where a

parlor offered a special deal on removals if you did community service for the city of Santa Barbara. Gabriel's tattoos are too deep and dark that removal is not even an option anymore.

The last and final session will be taking place at the end of January in which all the shading and coloring of the face still remains to be done. He's thinking green eyes. And the lips? "Not hooker red". A geisha without hooker red lips is the same as a Jewish man without his annoying analytical behavior! You know I'm kidding Gabriel. My peeps like your peeps!