

# SAVAGE

A Walk On  
The Wild Side

**GUIL  
ZEKRI:  
INKING  
WANDERER**

**HEY  
DOLL  
FACE:  
JENNIFER  
SHINES  
THROUGH**

**HEAVY  
METAL  
INK:  
LAMB OF GOD**

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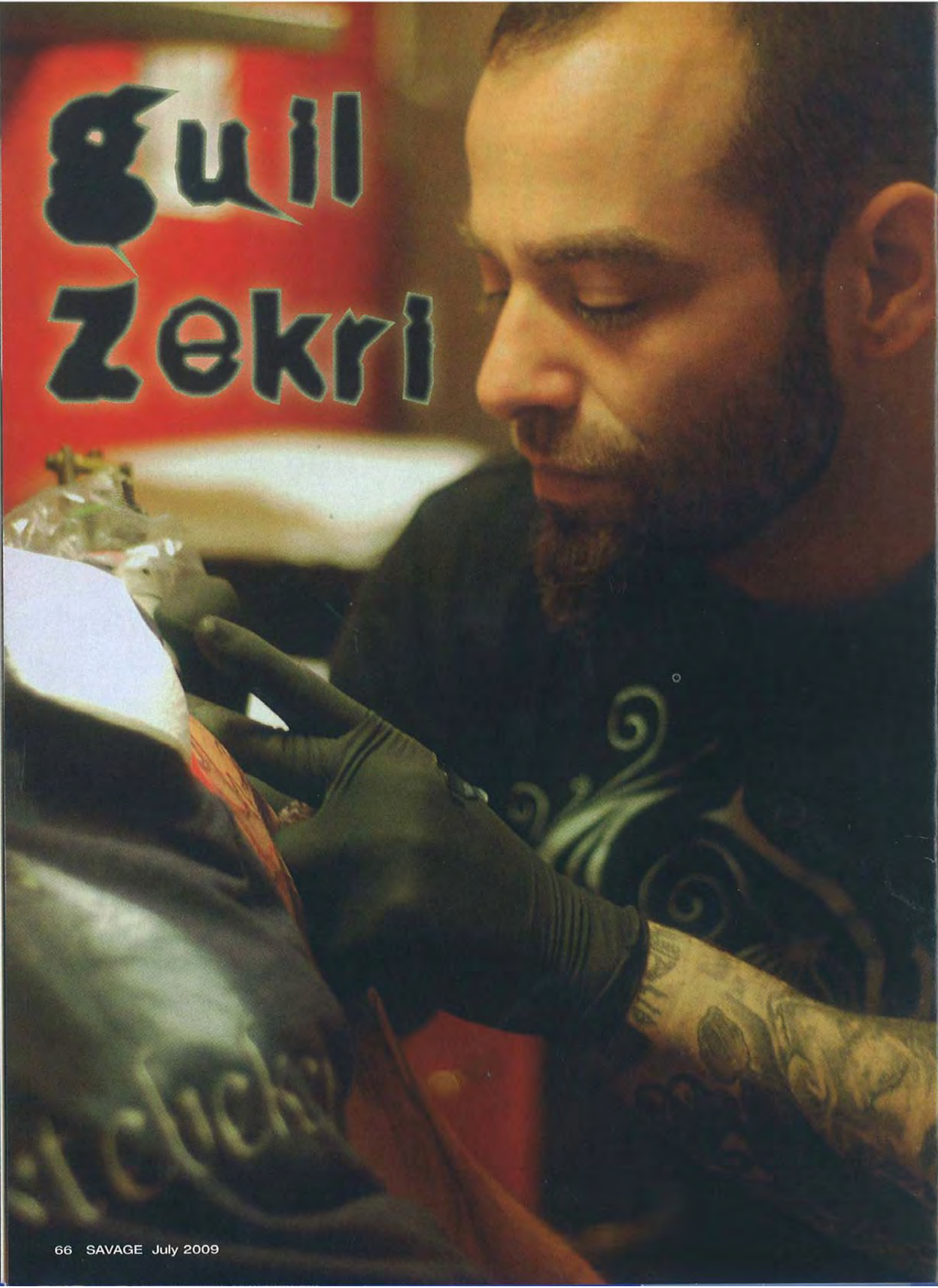
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# guil Zekri

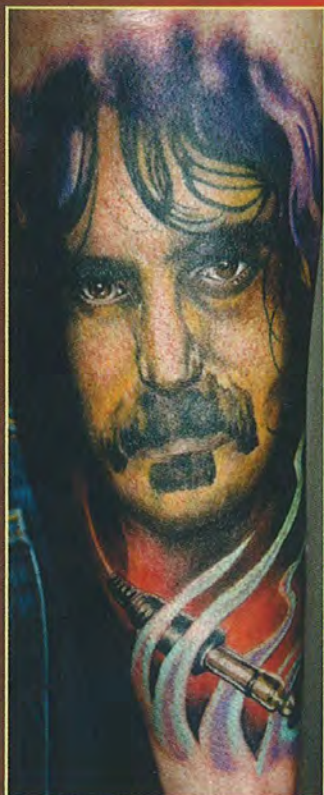






# THE

# WANDERER

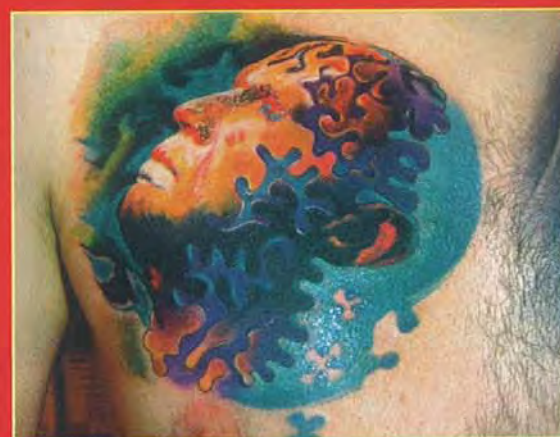


Nestled among the mountains somewhere in Vietnam, Guil Zekri interrupted his enjoyment of the breathtaking view to talk with us about his two favorite things—art and traveling. Born and raised in Israel, Guil departed The Holy Land at the age of 21 to trek around the world, beginning with Africa. His travels eventually led him to Paris, which he called home long enough to earn a master's in art aesthetics, apprentice at a studio where he cleaned floors more than anything else, and become discouraged, abandoning the world of tattoos.

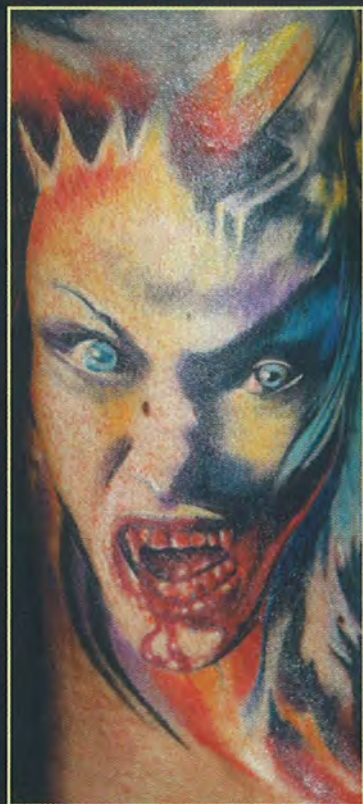
Now, as Guil slides into his sixth year as a professional tattoo artist, he examines the paths he took to get here. "I didn't really dream about becoming a tattoo artist," he explains. "I imagined myself more in the fine arts or as an art professor. But now that I look back on my life, somehow I have the feeling it was meant to be."

Though he began getting tattooed at 17 to get back at his girlfriend for coming home with some ink, it took Guil many years to come to the conclusion that the best medium to work with in the art arena is skin. On a supposed three-month trip to Germany in 2003, Guil's interest in tattooing was reinvigorated when an artist invited him to exchange the secrets of tattoo technique versus painting—and Cologne, Germany, is where Guil has planted his feet ever since.









Photos: Courtesy of Guil Zekri

Drawing and painting have been a staple in Guil's life for as far back as he can remember, so it's only natural for his painting style to appear in his tattoo work. "In fact," he reveals, "when I do my initial line work, I'm trying not to think about tattooing. I just think about painting or drawing and then slowly arrange the composition to look good on skin." Inspiration for his skin art is drawn from books he's read, museums he's visited, and places he's traveled, which ends up reflecting Guil in each piece he paints on his living canvases. It is perhaps this deep, personal connection he feels with each piece that emblazoned one of his clients in his memory for life. "I was tattooing an 18-year-old man's portrait (who passed away three weeks earlier) on his father. The portrait was done in black and gray, mixed with the young man's ashes. It was the first time I did something like that—and, without a doubt, definitely the last."

Guil worked in a shop in Cologne for three years before embarking on yet another journey—this time teaming up with fellow tattoo artist David Laszlo. Wanting to step out of the stifling shadows and stressful situation of the shop where they first met, Guil and David conceptualized a studio where they could take their time and sit down with the customers—a place that was not only comfortable to create in but also inviting to its clients. "We decided to reincarnate ourselves in our own studio," he says. "We tried to build a studio that would combine the personal expression of our customers with our imagination and creativity." ❧

—Courtney McKinnon

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