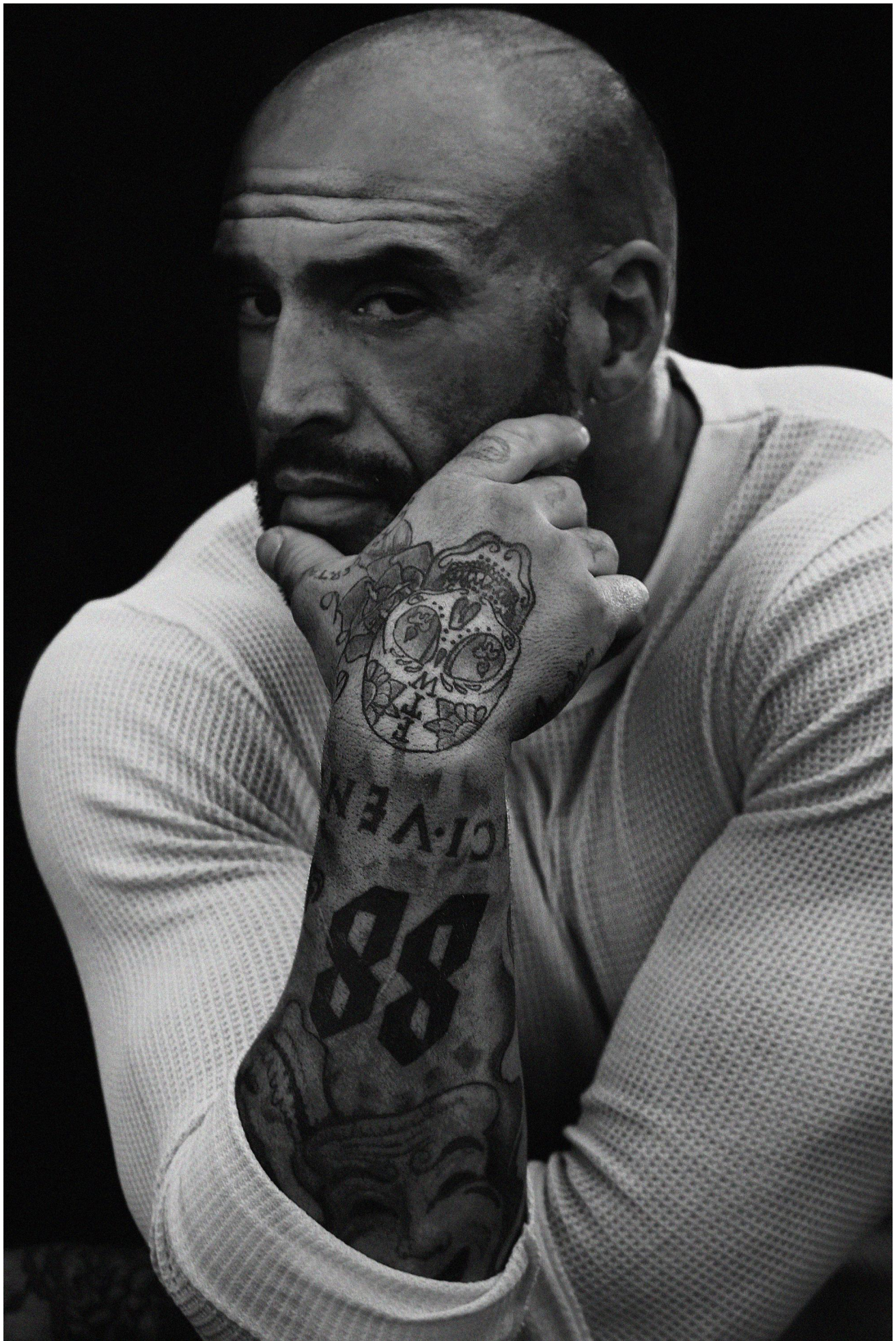


THE BIKER

AN OBJECTIVE PORTRAIT by SOPHIA RENEE





"The fundamental difference between being a biker and owning a motorcycle is that the first generally has a story to tell." -Shell Thuet

THE BIKER

Words and Photographs by Sophia Renee

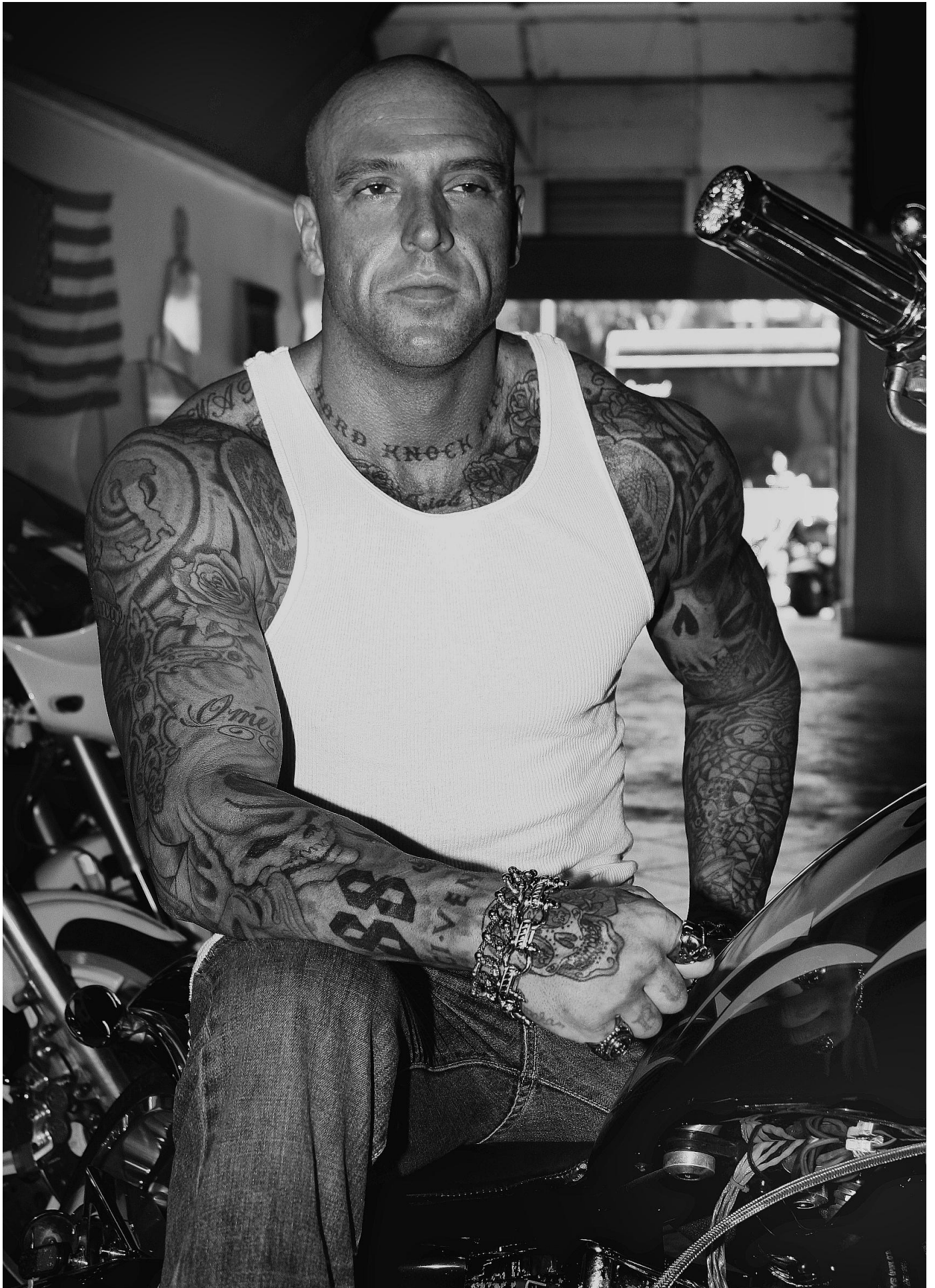
Originally published in 2014

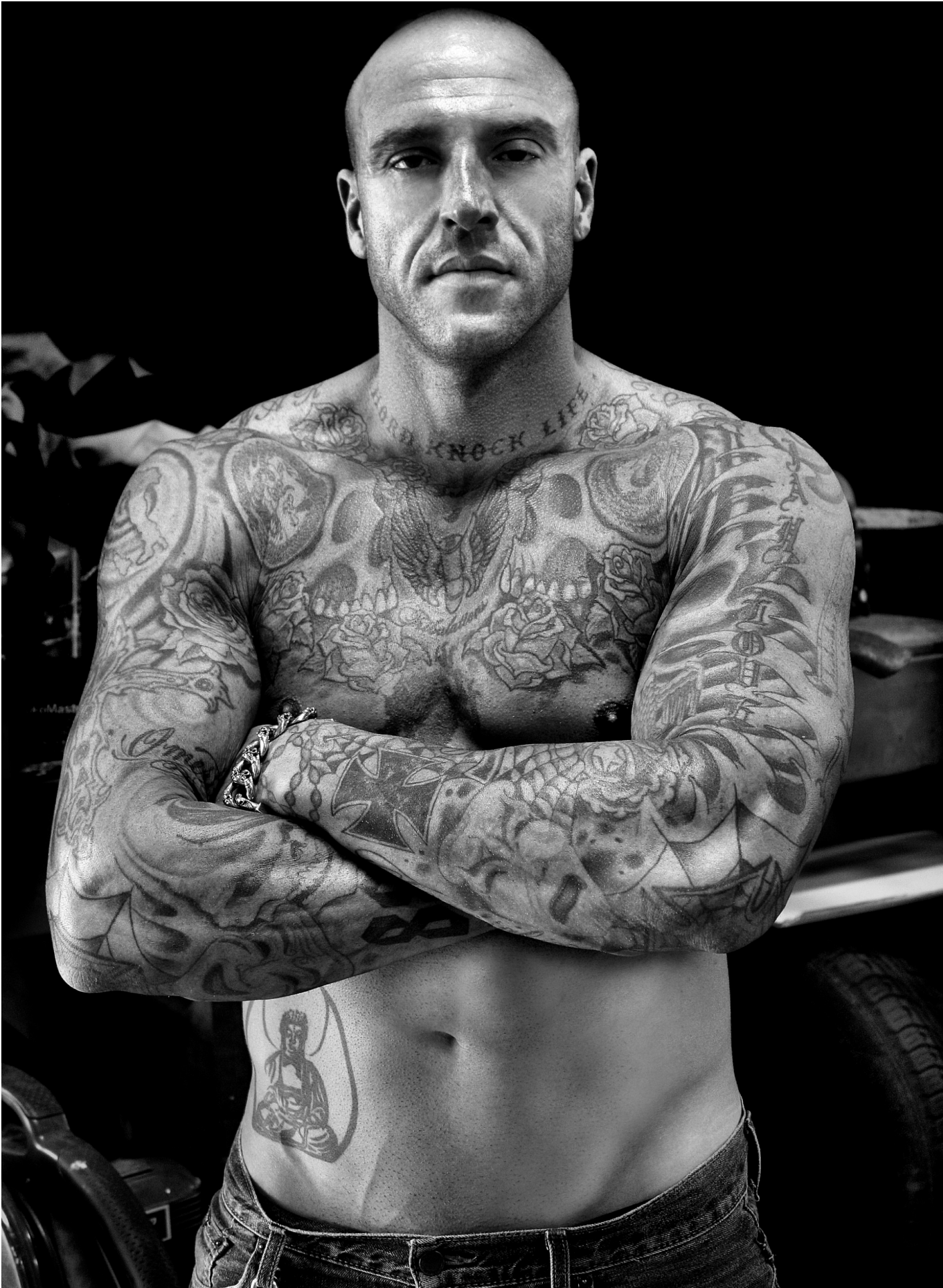
Revision 2020

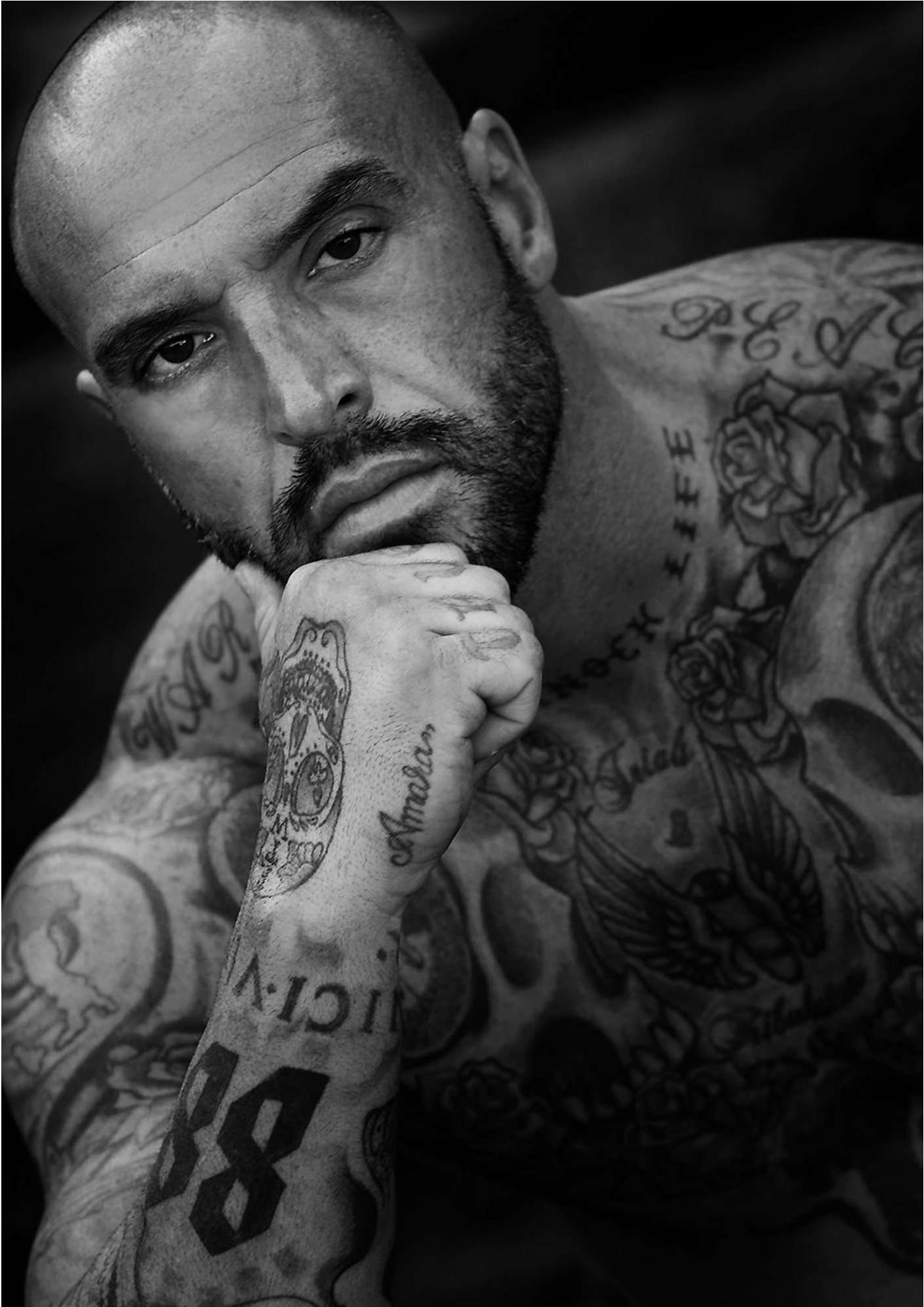
In my continuing quest to capture the bold, the interesting, and the uniquely beautiful, I recently spent the day photographing a striking 6'3, 230 lbs tattooed biker named Toren. A bike and body art enthusiast who got his first tattoo at 15 (it was an Italian boot), Toren's tattoos embrace a variety of styles and patterns. Words, names, and symbols of his personal philosophies and convictions—which have evolved and changed over time—are displayed powerfully across his neck, chest, arms, stomach, and back. The ensuing result is a demeanor that is both ruggedly handsome and dangerously intimidating. It's a combination so perceptibly commanding, you can't help but be momentarily taken aback by him.

As an artist, I have always found something beautifully raw and non-deceptive about the people who wear their stories on their skin. I'm not talking about the trendy hipsters who tattoo their bodies so unceremoniously as to render it meaningless. I am talking about the men and women—like Toren—who use their bodies as canvas, as an authentic and revealing form of self-expression, and as an epic road map of their life's journey. I sincerely hope I was able to capture a side of this man that seems reflective and thoughtful, and sensitive to these guiding principals.

I thoroughly enjoyed meeting and photographing Toren. Over the course of our morning together, I found him to be a man of fascinating contradictions. As a photographic subject, he is virtually omnipotent. He is impressive, towering, larger-than-life. In conversation, he is polite, soft-spoken, and quietly unassuming. And somewhere in the middle of this unique duality lies the complexity and beautiful self-efficacy of who he is, and perhaps who he still hopes to be.







This is an original photographic essay by

SOPHIA RENEE

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