

inked life | VIEW



Clockwise from top Clockwise from top left: My God Rides a Skateboard; WC; achl's tattoo; Spejbl & Hurvínek Tattoo; Winter Jesus.



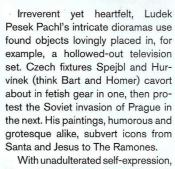






OFF THE WALL

To Ludek Pesek Pachl nothing is sacred, except art.



his art keeps the elements of a pure punk attitude but is created with a keen hand and mature aesthetic. This spills over into his business venture, which is a work of art itself.

"My shop is a gallery, studio, oasis, and art pub," Pachl says of his store in Berlin's hip Prenzlauer Berg. Art and persona merge here: His shop, named Tuzex after the communist state-owned stores that sold luxury goods to foreigners-in order to prove that life behind the Iron Curtain wasn't as harsh as reported and to use communism for capitalism-is a

wink to the past, with an eye on the future of art. He's morphed his experiences as a punk rocker in communist Czechoslovakia into an authorityflouting private enterprise; works that once might have landed him in prison are now on display in countless galleries in Europe.

Tattoo, hardcore, and skate culture also appears in his work: Spejbl and Hurvínek get tattooed in one of his dioramas, and My God Rides a Skateboard features Jesus with a board instead of a cross. The title is taken from West German hardcore band the Spermbirds.

Pachl's tattoos-including a back piece featuring the work of Czech satirist Josef Lada-reflect both his cultural heritage and commitment to his beliefs, which in turn reflect his undying creativity and his tenacity and business savvy in the free market that was first introduced to him in his adult life. "I provoke my roots and live from it, and that satisfies me," he says. -Andrew Loughnane

