

“I believe that tattoos are a way to express, artistically, something that has special meaning and importance to one’s personality. Family is so important to me and this is why I’ve chosen to have my tattoos represent that.”

Tattoo You

Ink tells the story
of Orian Construction’s
Dorian Jeck

➤ BY ERIN MCPHEE | PHOTOS BY DON DENTON

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HEY TELL countless important stories.

Creeping along his arms and down his torso, Dorian Jeck's colourful, interwoven tapestry of tattoos chronicle all that is important to the 43-year-old Victoria construction company owner.

Family is the strongest theme. A large tiger speaks not only to the year he was born, but to the birth years of his daughter, Cali, 20, and son, Will, 8, as they coincidentally share the same fierce Chinese zodiac creature. Situated in close proximity is a detailed dragon, there to honour his wife, Dawn, and likewise, a zodiac reference.

Tropical island imagery of a shark, waves and bamboo speak to the Jeck family's love of Hawaii and its rich traditions. It's also intended to highlight the growing list of milestones they've experienced there. For example, it's the place where Dorian asked Dawn to marry him in 2008 (Honolulu), and where they got married in 2009 (Kihei). An inked Hawaiian language phrase on his forearm translates to, "Tied fast together, I will cherish your love as a beautiful adornment."

Maui is also where the family experienced one of their wildest vacations. While they were unharmed and unaffected for the most part, they were vacationing on Maui in 2011 when a tsunami, triggered by the earthquake in Japan, struck the coastline. Their son Will was a mere eight months old at the time.

"We got a T-shirt for him that said, 'I survived the tsunami,'" says Dorian.

He adds: "I believe that tattoos are a way to express, artistically, something that has special meaning and importance to one's personality. Family is so important to me and this is why I've chosen to have my tattoos represent that."

Dorian's double sleeves of tattoos have been a decade in the making. Over the years, he's had the majority of them crafted at Victoria's Empire Tattoo downtown. They're very much a work in progress and he has a number of ideas he'd like to see executed — a new Jeck family crest on his chest for instance — and others with outlines already in place.

Anxious unless he has one or more small- to large-scale projects on the go, this approach he takes to tattooing, but to his home in Cordova Bay. According to Dorian, who launched Orian Construction, a professional home building and renovation company, four years ago, a carpenter's work is never done.

"A carpenter's home always has projects ... multiple," he says.

After moving into what he describes as their family's "forever home," six years ago, Dorian spent the first four renovating it. Today, it's not uncommon for him to have a handful of minor projects on the go. That said, he always knows when it's time to wrap things up and move on, thanks to some gentle encouragement from Dawn.

"She'll get fed up with them and say, 'Can you please finish one?' So then I'll bring the guys in," he laughs.



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Builder Dorian Jeck, owner of Orian Construction, in his home.

Dawn's opinion is definitely one Dorian holds in high regard, both personally and professionally, and she's been part of Orian Construction since its launch in 2014.

"She's been a huge support in the success of my company," says Dorian.

A licensed plumber and gas fitter, Dawn initially provided those services to Orian Construction projects. But now, due to the extensive growth of the company, she manages the books.

"She knows the business well, being a tradesperson," says Dorian.

Dawn is incredibly proud of her husband for taking such a big leap and deciding to start his own company.

"I knew he could do it," she said. "He hemmed and hawed for a couple years and I finally said, 'You've got to



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do this. What's holding you back? Let's do it. I'm here to support you.' He's been successful and I knew he would be."

Dawn isn't the only family member who lends a hand to the company. Daughter Cali regularly helped in the office before heading off to study nursing in Calgary this fall, and Will loves going on what he refers to as "dad van rides," joining Dorian at job sites or client meetings.

When not at work, a favourite Jeck family activity is beachcombing at Cordova Bay Beach, walking along the sandbars that emerge at low tide, collecting shells and rocks, and monitoring the comings and goings of sea life in tide pools.

Dorian is pleased his son shares his passion for coastal living.

"I'm a real islander," he says, recalling the majority of his childhood spent running wild with his identical twin brother, Max, on a Gabriola Island acreage, complete with chickens, peacocks, geese, dogs, cats and even a parrot.

"It was great, it was growing up with a best friend," says Dorian. "You had someone to play with all the time. We were always in the woods."

The summer the twins were 10 years old, they worked tirelessly to build an extensive village out of scavenged wood, interconnecting a series of rustic buildings and forts with catwalks some 15 feet up through the trees. They went so far as to build a bridge to an island in the centre of the family pond.

Lumber and building materials were always easy to come by as the boys' parents ran a busy wood and furniture manufacturing business on the property.

"I didn't grow to the point where I'm off the tools. I've still got my finger on the pulse and I'm in there with the guys getting dirty."

"He was a busy guy," Dorian says of his father, who also worked as a shipwright in Silva Bay.

Those early experiences led to Dorian and his brother's passion for the construction trade, in which both have been immersed professionally since their teenage years. Prior to launching Orian Construction, Dorian spent 13 years working for Max at his Victoria-based custom homes and renovation company, Maximilian Huxley Construction.

Asked what he attributes to Orian Construction's burgeoning success, Dorian credits his hands-on approach.

"I didn't grow to the point where I'm off the tools. I've still got my finger on the pulse and I'm in there with the guys getting dirty," he says.

"It's the best job in the world," he adds. **B**

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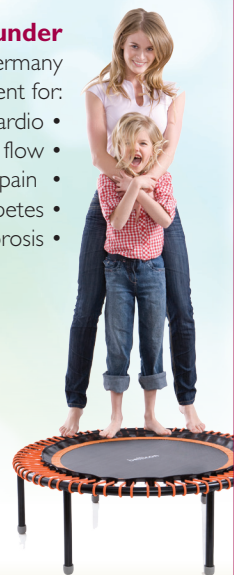
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