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print, so I spent days, weeks, teaching myself.”

Gonzales’ artwork is heavily influenced by the time he spent dancing. During competitions or hangouts, each B-boy would size each other up and express his/her personality through dance and fashion. Gonzales often made his own apparel and designs but decided to open up shop last summer.

When he’s not in his new storefront, The Lab 137, on Roosevelt and Sixth streets in downtown Phoenix, he’s either delivering a batch of his latest prints or he’s out back welding the shelves and framework in which to display them.

Gonzales says his goal is to continue experimenting with design and with screen printing while teaching and collaborating with artists and designers in the community. He’s also doing a little reorganizing and

setting up the back room with co-owners Dave Bjorn and Monica Robles to host workshops.

— Claire Lawton

**The Lab 137:** 610 E. Roosevelt St., 602-748-5471, thelab137.com

## STAMP CONNECTORS

“That’s George. He came with the furniture,” teases Mary as we start a tour of the **Phoenix Rubber Stamp Co.** Indeed, George has been working here since 1965. He is seated at the computer working on typesetting a half-sheet of rubber stamps, including one I have just ordered. “Mind if I take out a little of white space?” asks George. I do not, because one look at George tells me he is the maestro. At the Phoenix Rubber Stamp Co., they can make just about any kind of stamp you could want.

Mary tells us of people who come in to get stamps made for their wedding, and a cake

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decorator who orders stamps with the impression at double the depth (and minus the ink) to press into her confections.

Though rubber stamps might make you think of something sort of antiquated — a man in a visor sitting at a desk stamping a big pile of papers — they are still alive and well. And

at the Phoenix Rubber Stamp Co. they do it all — self-inking, traditional hand stamps, address stamps, date stamps as well as engraved name plates, badges, and embossers. There's a simple satisfaction to stamping something: marking it, personalizing it, the feel of the stamp in your hand.

The whole process

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from making a vellum negative to finished stamp takes place on the premises, and I watch as polymer and light are used to make an impression — raised edges around the text and image appearing magically after a few minutes under intense light. For most custom stamps you can order it one day and pick it up the next.

They have gotten a few requests for a “bullshit” stamp over the years, according to George, including one from Barry Goldwater. The mind swirls with the possibilities: gift tags, or recipes, or business cards.

The Phoenix Rubber Stamp Co. is definitely old school, in all the right ways. Founded in

1964 by Booth Bazzill, the place is still run by his daughters and family members. It moved to its current location in 1985, taking over the space of a former jewelry store. But the real gem here is reasonable prices for a custom made stamp.

— *Sativa Peterson*

**Phoenix Rubber Stamp Co.:**  
4020 E. McDowell Road,  
602-273-1963, [phxstamp.com](http://phxstamp.com)