

# THE POINT

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MAGAZINE OF PROFESSIONAL PIERCERS

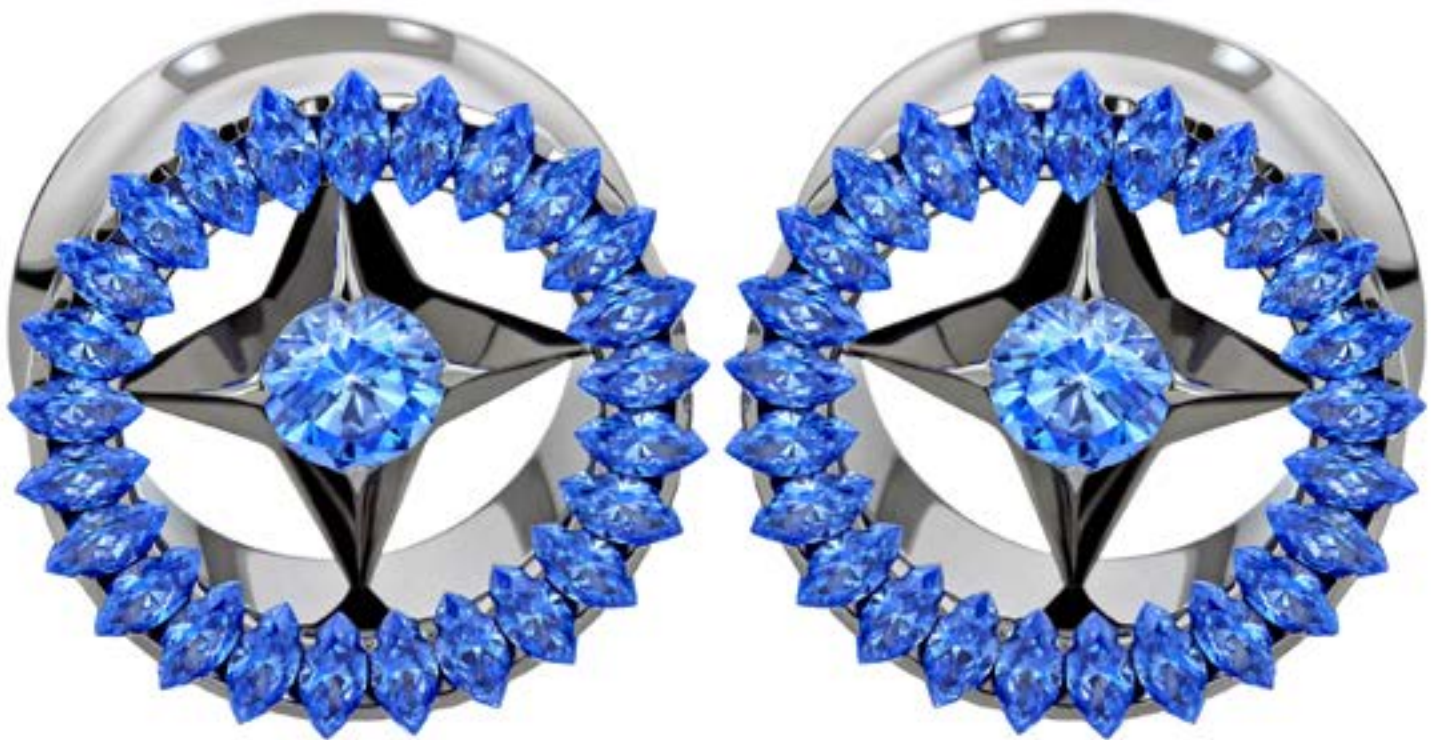


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# FROM THE EDITOR



**KIMBERLY ZAPATA**  
*The Point Editor*

It is with a mix of emotions that I write this From the Editor column, as it will be my last. After months of struggling to maintain that precious life/work balance we all seek, I found it to be too great after some very personal, and unexpected, circumstances arose. Something had to give; unfortunately, that something proved to be this publication.

I began my work with The Point in late 2009, just after I started working at Infinite Body Piercing, Inc. I sat down to edit articles for issue #49, my first, and felt totally and completely intimidated. I felt secure in my knowledge of language and grammar rules, but the content was mostly foreign. (I was modified, yes, and loved body modification but I had no industry experience. I was an outsider looking in.) I edited those articles as timidly as one could have, changing punctuation and fixing spelling mistakes. And edited in this manner for many issues, until James Weber encouraged me to be more aggressive — reminding me it was our publication and our industry, reminding me I was a part of that industry. I still felt an outsider as I wasn't, and would never be, a piercer, but my confidence grew.

I continued serving as a contributing editor for several years. but when James stepped down in 2012—and The Point switched from a print publication to an online one—I took the reigns, with issue #61.

The entire time I have worked with the APP and this publication, as

both editor and a contributing editor, has been nothing short of amazing. I hope to continue on as part of the “Point posse,” I just no longer have the time to dedicate to spearheading the publication that it (and you all) deserve.

What's next for The Point? Whatever you want! That is the beauty of this publication, and our organization. The Point will become whatever you want it to, whatever you make of it. While it is with a touch of sadness that I must do this, I also know it will be exciting for The Point to get some “fresh blood” in, and take the publication to another level.

I want to thank my amazing Point team: Kendra Jane, Elayne Angel, and Jim Ward. It has been an honor and pleasure working with each of you. Even with all of the initial (and technical) hiccups, you made my transition smooth and seamless. You always made me feel part of a family I, for so long, convinced myself I wasn't worthy of, and you have each touched my life, and my work, in a way I can never truly verbalize. I am eternally grateful for everything the three of you have given me.

And to James Weber, my predecessor and current boss: Thanks for seeing something special in the little girl with the overly wordy resume and “anime” hair. You took a chance on me and, looking back I cannot say I know why, but that chance has forever changed me, personally and professionally. I am blessed and honored to not only call you my boss but my friend.

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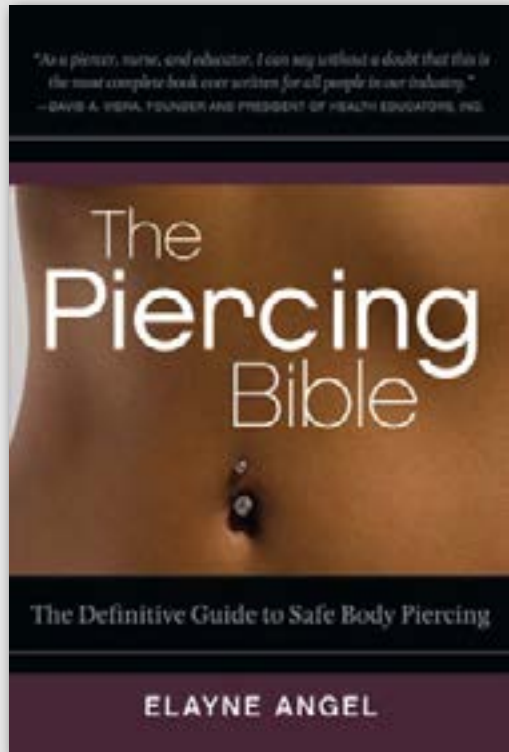
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I want to thank the Board, old and new, and the entire APP family: Thank you all for allowing me to be a part of this incredible organization and for trusting me with such an integral role. It has been a wonderful ride. ☺





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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR** - ELAYNE ANGEL has been a professional piercer for more than 20 years and has performed over 40,000 piercings. She was awarded the President's Lifetime Achievement Award by the Association of Professional Piercers in 2006 and is a contributing writer for *PAIN* Magazine. She lives in Mérida, Mexico. Visit [www.piercingbible.com](http://www.piercingbible.com) for more information.

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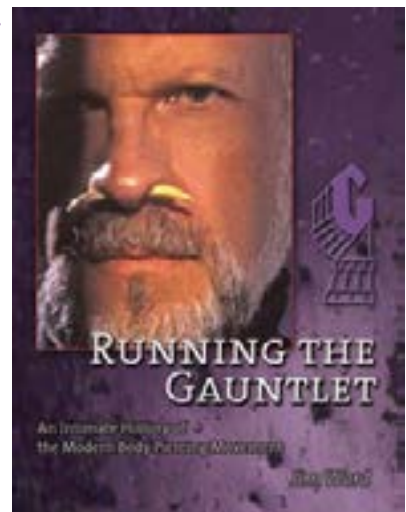
In this revealing autobiography, Jim Ward, considered by many to be the father of the modern piercing industry, tells the engaging and candid story of discovering his own fascination with body piercing, his founding of Gauntlet, the world's first body piercing studio, and how he transformed a personal fetish and backroom, amateur pursuit into a respected profession and spearheaded a world-wide social phenomenon.

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JAMES WEBER, *Former President  
Association of Professional Piercers*

# PRESIDENT'S CORNER



**BRIAN SKELLIE**  
*APP President*

Some of the most fundamental ideas about piercing are those that are most intriguing and still relevant to question. What materials are available now to make jewelry for initial healing and prolonged wear in the body safe? How does one accurately direct an edge while traversing a body part to get consistent results? What can be done to minimize harm to the client and risk to the worker?

Part of what we can delight in as piercing practitioners is the potential for continued qualitative improvement in our work. Rumination upon these questions that can incite change, coupled with a willingness to progress and try new options opens us to the possibility that each procedure, each interaction and connection made with patrons can be our best to date. We have in our hands the means to find persuasive science and novel approaches to the challenges that we face, through access to libraries and communication with colleagues worldwide.

The constant flow of information among our peers engages this and advances our desire for better outcomes based on both understanding and inspiration. You are welcome to join in the conversation, add to it what you can offer, and benefit from the advantages of persistent educational opportunities. This organization exists to act as a crucible for bringing our ideas and skills together to make something more versatile, robust, complete, healthier, and easier to disseminate for the betterment



Bruno BMA describing the importance of asepsis at the 2014 BMXnet Conference in Essen, Germany

of our craft and our society.

One of the aspects of this trade that I cherish most is the occasion to share with others what fascinates me about our work, and to learn from them in exchange. Whether that may be in written correspondence, a phone call, video conference, in person (or in a studio), or at an event. It is encouraging to observe that virtually every one of you seems to partake in them as often as possible—and this is evidenced by the many thousands of professional conversations logged online and the outstanding international attendance at several major educational events this year, including over twenty countries represented at our Conference.

Since the 2014 APP Conference,

volunteer members working with the organization have traveled as educators to share ideas related to safety, theory, technique, technology, and history to conferences held by [APP associate corporate members](#) in Germany, Mexico, and Italy. As a participant at each, I can say they have exemplified and improved upon some of the best aspects of our event, and at the same time were quite different and unique from one another, apart from geographic location and language.

From October 2-5, the annual [BMXnet](#) event took place in Essen, Germany, and our business members [Ana Paula Escalante](#), [Christiane Löfblad](#), and [Ryan Ouellette](#) were welcomed back to the creative [Un-](#)



After one of the first theory classes at the LBP 2do Congreso

[perfekthaus](#) space to provide both informative lectures and hands-on demonstrations in technical skills workshops. The event is equipped to allow procedures to be performed live, and I had the privilege of demonstrating how to lose a connection and reconnect during a nostril piercing. (Sorry, David!)

Former APP Presidents [Elayne Angel](#) and [Bethra Szumski](#) (Secretary), [Paul King](#) (Treasurer), and I collectively taught a dozen classes and workshops during the event. An important element of our participation was to introduce the ideals and mission of the APP organization to new people. To that end we held a panel discussion with Ryan on how to continue our work to help fellow organizations such as [BMXnet](#), [ASAP](#), [APTPI](#) and [LBP](#).

As an event that draws more international attendees than ever before, it seemed that [this year English-speaking classes filled the schedule](#) (38 in English/9 in German), and this was one of the topics discussed during

the Future of BMXnet roundtable, led by one of the organizers, Stephan Strestik. They seem to have great potential, with their strong mix of educators and open exchange of ideas. The inclusion of an “all-you-can-eat” buffet for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and all-day soft drinks, coffee, and tea was very helpful, especially for those who might have skipped a meal or had to eat on the run at other events due to a full schedule.

A few short weeks later, a voyage to Mexico City followed for the LBP 2do Congreso: [La Asociación Latinoamericana de Body Piercing](#). Along with board member [Jef Saunders](#) and officers Bethra and Paul, we reunited with Ana Paula, serving as LBP Secretary, and LBP President [Danny Yerna](#), who was previously APP International Liaison. Registration and entry to the provided transportation was fluid, and the participants who filled the meeting place quickly made it into their seats with their necessities and a binder full of all of the lecture handouts, which

was provided as reading material for the road trip. Even the APP materials and class details were translated into Spanish! This allowed for in-depth discussion en route, and prepared everyone to ask informed questions—and cut down considerably on live translation time. The translation of materials in advance was first rate, and gave me peace of mind as a non-native presenter, since my competence in Spanish is not yet what I



The event’s well-assembled dossier



BAD educators Tiziano Pirina, Paul King, Ron Garza, Bruno BMA, Giuseppe De Palo, and Brian Skellie

aspire to. (Aprendo español, pero yo no hablo con fluidez.)

We traveled with a large group of the attendees to the [Centro Vacacional y de Convenciones IMSS Metepec](#), near Puebla, at the base of the [Iztaccíhuatl - Popocatepetl National Park](#) and namesake volcanoes. We drove through a beautiful nature reserve part of the park on the way. When we arrived, we toured the grounds and got a sense of the harmonious combination of natural and professional spaces the organizers found so attractive.

This event follows several successful APP Mexico conferences, and has evolved in a significantly different format in an all-inclusive setting—where transportation, lodging, and meals were all covered together with the event. Everyone was invited to take part in every class and workshop, and the planned social events, as well as to dine together. Even special guest [Fakir Musafar](#) and his partner Cleo Dubois spent a great deal of time mingling with the group outside of the auditorium.

The next week transported me to Venice, Italy where I met Paul and long-time APP conference participant [Ron Garza](#) for the [Body Art Development International Piercing Class and Workshop](#) event. This was a new offering by the [APTPI affiliated](#) organizers, with technique and theory lectures,

coupled with hands-on supervised training. The format was punctual and could be repeated for focus on specifics with expert direction.

Our 20th Conference is in production now, with plenty of new ideas for you! See you at Bally's in Las Vegas (June 7-12, 2015). ©



Bruno BMA, left, and presenter Ron Garza



# IN MEMORIAM—RAELYN GALLINA



**JAMES WEBER**  
*Infinite Body Piercing*



Raelyn, right, and her partner Babs

**O**n September 6, 2014, the body modification industry lost one of its pioneers. After a long battle with cancer, Raelyn Gallina passed away.

In the early days of modern body modification, it was definitely a man's world. Doug Malloy, Jim Ward, and Fakir are credited as being the "fathers" of the modern piercing movement, but while they were servicing a primarily male clientele, Raelyn was blazing a trail among women, offering piercing, branding, and scarification in the lesbian BDSM community. While Doug, Jim, and Fakir get the lion's share of the credit for what modern piercing has become since it emerged in the late 70s, Raelyn's name has often been little more than a footnote—and that's a shame. (It is called "his-story," after all.)

While she made her home in California's Bay Area (the center of the

modern body modification resurgence in the U.S. through the late 70s and 80s), Raelyn also had a tremendous impact on early body modification in the East Coast thanks to her travels. In the early 90s, she would see clients and do workshops in and around the Philadelphia, Washington D.C., and Baltimore areas, offering not only piercing, but also branding and scarification. At a time when feminists were leading the movement to politicize the body, she was creating a safe space for lesbians, leatherwomen, butches, femmes, the queer-identified, and even the occasional man. She presided over a women's space, but welcomed everyone from the local queer communities.

Raelyn battled inflammatory breast cancer over ten years ago, and last May she found herself deal-

ing with a recurrence that affected parts of her brain, bones, mediastinum, and lungs. She finished a course of 25 radiation sessions in June of 2013, and spent the fall and winter recovering. Although that radiation did a good job on many sites, Raelyn was still undergoing radiation treatments. Sadly, she lost that long, final battle.

Her partner of many years, Babs, was requesting help with medical bills, and with Raelyn's passing, funeral costs have added to this expense. To anyone who is able to give even a small amount: any donation is useful and appreciated. You can send funds through the GoFundMe site ([gofundme.com/8z2314](http://gofundme.com/8z2314)), although they do take a percentage of all donations). PayPal donations can be

—continued on page 15



Raelyn was well known for her cuttings. Photos by [Mark I. Chester](#)

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# INFORMED CONSENT & THE BODY MOD INDUSTRY



**KENDRA JANE**

*Authors note: During research for this brief piece it became apparent that is not a topic that one can do justice to in a few short paragraphs. Please consider the following piece merely an introduction for a full length research article that will be forthcoming.*

Informed consent is the process of getting permission from a patient before conducting a healthcare intervention. In the case of body piercing or modification (which for the purpose of this article may include, but not be limited to, scarring, branding, ablating, or suspension), it is the process of getting consent from a client prior to any procedure. Most body modification practitioners worldwide already obtain some sort of informed consent—borrowing relevant pieces from the medical world, mainly from the fields of medical ethics and research ethics.

Informed consent can be said to have been given based upon a clear appreciation and understanding of the fact, implications, and future consequences of an action. This means what maybe more than adequate information for lobe piercing is not adequate when that same lobe piercing is being done at an initial size over [for the sake of argument] 4 gauge. The information one must relay to a client about a navel or nipple piercing, versus multi point ear projects as an example.

In order to provide informed consent, the individual giving the consent must have adequate reasoning faculties (be of sound mind and judgment) and be in possession of all relevant facts at the time consent is given. This means they need to be given all and any information necessary to make an informed decision about the procedure at hand. Impairments to reasoning and judgment which may make it impossible for someone to give informed consent include such factors such as basic intellectual or emotional immaturity, age, inability to comprehend the future, and any other impairment.

Due to the fact that expressions of consent or understanding do not necessarily mean that full adult consent was in fact given—or that full comprehension of relevant issues occurred—makes the idea of informed consent even more complicated. (It is also possible for consent to be implied within the usual subtleties of human com-



munication rather than explicitly negotiated verbally or in writing.) For this reason you document everything in writing, especially when it comes to your business and your livelihood. A person may state he/she understands the implications of some action, as part of their consent, but in fact has failed to appreciate the possible consequences fully and later deny the validity of their consent for this reason.

## **Note on Piercing Minors**

Additional problems and ethical dilemmas arise when we talk about piercing a minor, or someone who is not able to provide consent for themselves based on laws and/or regulations. The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages medical professionals to seek the assent of older children and adolescents by providing age appropriate information to these children to help empower them in the decision making process, and this is something we—as piercers—can do as well. ☺

# IN THE OFFICE



**CAITLIN MCDIARMID**  
*APP Administrator*

**T**here is a lot to report since our 2014 Conference has ended. Over the last few months, the Conference Committee has convened multiple times, via Skype, and the overall 2015 Conference proposal that was submitted to the Board of Directors has been accepted. 2014 was extremely successful, and both the Association and our industry continue to experience fast-paced growth. This means as we grow as an Association, many things need to change with our Conference to accommodate all of our attendees and keep the event moving in the right direction! We are very excited to share a few of the changes attendees and vendors can expect in 2015.

## WHAT'S NEW FOR 2015?

- The AI D. Scholarship application policies and procedures have been updated. Initial applications will be accepted December 1, 2014 through January 31, 2015. Due to the overwhelming response to the scholarship there will now be a more stringent application process. Applicants can expect to have to answer questions in writing, there will be a video/essay submission component, and they will be interviewed by multiple committee members. Click [here](#) for more details.
- Attendee registration for this year's Conference will stay open right up until Conference starts, though prices will increase approximately three weeks prior to Conference. (Exact date to be determined.)
- Self-registration will be available onsite, attendees will be able to fill out their registration forms online, and simply pay and pick up their badges at the Registration Desk.
- Attendees can upload their documentation for proof of piercing and proof of industry affiliation during the Registration process. (However, if this is not done proof of affiliation will still be required on site.)
- All classes will now have a predetermined class size or limit. Attendees should register early to make sure they get exactly the classes they want.

- Attendees will now have to sign up for any classes they want to take in advance of attendance. This includes full Conference pass holders.
- Partial Conference attendees will now have access to the workshop courses. (You asked for it, and your access is now granted!)
- CPR and First Aid courses will no longer be offered at Conference. Dwindling class numbers and increased access to these courses in most communities, along with the desire to provide more hours of unique education at our Conference all contributed to the committee to make this change.
- Only full Conference pass holders can utilize the "No-Show Passes." These passes will be available for all classes and can be used to gain access to a class which was closed/full but registered attendees fail to attend (i.e., "no-show").
- Classroom check-in procedures are currently being reviewed, and we hope to implement even more technology to assist in quicker more accurate load-ins. We will keep you posted!
- Social Wall – see your photos post in real time!
- The APP will have a Conference app (through your digital app store) available approximately 30-60 days before the Conference. This will be a digitally enhanced version of our Conference program!
  - View your schedule and set alarms & reminders
  - View class descriptions and Speaker information
  - Provide class and Speaker feedback
  - Get detailed information on Vendors and Sponsors
  - Find interactive Event Maps: Expo Floor, Conference Area, Las Vegas
  - Build your network: This feature will allow you to scan your fellow attendees' and vendors' badges and directly capture their contact info!
  - Enable you to post directly to your Social Media accounts.

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# MARKETING & SALES THROUGH DISPLAY



BY THE MAYA JEWELRY TEAM

One are the days of horn spirals being our only alternative jewelry option! As our industry continues to embrace an educated stance on high-quality jewelry, owners—and their employees—are raising the bar not only for the overall aesthetic of their studios, but the industry as a whole.

But there are many aspects at play when embarking on the marketing and sales of these products, and it all starts with your display cases—and your marketing strategies. Every year Maya Jewelry puts thought and intention into how its collection will be presented at the annual Association of Professional Piercers Conference. Although it may take many months of planning and preparation, it only takes one day to set up. From planning to execution it is a well thought out portrait of how we want Maya portrayed.



Maya Jewelry display at the APP Conference

This planning and execution should include rotating your displays often. This keeps them fresh, keeps your clients interested, and offers them the opportunity to see a piece that they may have missed on their last visit. (If you don't do this already, consider refreshing cases seasonally; it is a great way to allow separate pieces to shine.)

While Kristin of Metamorphosis (Indianapolis, IN) separates her cases by jewelry company, Nick of Dorje Adornments (Rochester, NY) organizes his cases by the cohesiveness of the collection. Being able to determine how your particular clientele prefers to shop will make all the difference in your sales. Try new placements to determine what works and what doesn't. Get creative with materials and stands, using them to not only build and tie into your studios brand but also to accentuate the product without it being overbear-

ing. Keep everything above waist level, polished, and well-lit. The more pieces you can hang to create different levels within your display and showcase the various dimensions within the actual design, the more distinctively each piece will be represented. Keep it creative but comfortable.

Another important element of product placement, one which lands on you as the representative, the face, and the spokesperson for what you carry. Wearing jewelry you sell displays it in a natural yet subtle way. It showcases the piece as it is intended and shows how it looks and translates on an actual person. It also allows you and your client to build a connected sense of trust; if you don't wear it, why would they want to? Mike of Iron Clad Tattoo (Troy, MI) even offers preferred rates to high profile clients, such as those who work within the service indus-



The Metamorphosis showroom



Dorje Adornments jewelry display

try of his area. Bartenders, hair stylists, and many other customer-facing clients are one of the best forms of representation, as they will be asked about their jewelry often.

Kristin and Nick both offer various jewelry incentives to their staff, which is something more of us could join in on. Noah of Evolution Body Piercing (Albuquerque, NM) uses reward systems to encourage staff to really get involved with their sales. Have your employees exceeded sales goals for the month? That pair they have been coveting makes for the perfect token of appreciation.

You should also be sure to take time to educate your staff on the products they sell. Set up a meeting that focuses on product knowledge and sales. Kristin makes sure her staff studies catalogs and any available information through manufacturer websites. Mike likes to educate his staff and clients on where the products are coming from, and the care that is put into each piece's creation. It is also imperative to understand the differences between the materials you offer, and how to prop-



Iron Clad Tattoo jewelry display



Industrial Tattoo jewelry display

erly care for them in order to ensure the life-long integrity of the pieces that walk out your door. This applies to all jewelry, be it a steel nostril screw or a pair of Maya Jewelry's Kavadi's. erly care for them in order to ensure the life-long integrity of the pieces that walk out your door. This applies to all jewelry, be it a steel nostril screw or a pair of Maya Jewelry's Kavadi's.

A powerful and effective way of approaching a sale is being able to read and understand your client in a short amount of time. Having a relatable demeanor is everything and within minutes you can easily have a lifelong client or an extremely bad review, so knowing how to shop with them is key. Lysa of Industrial Tattoo (Berkeley, CA) loves jewelry sales because she loves what she is selling and loves pleasing people even more so. Lysa and Nick both recognize just how important personal shopping can be, and how vital it is to get involved. Ask questions to decipher what they are looking for: a gift for someone else, that particular piece a special occasion, something to help make a bad day a little better, or just something, just because. Mike and Noah both also noted how important it is to educate your client of the designer—and their products high-quality, hand-crafted nature. Nick does it right by taking on the roll of

a stylist, offering his honest opinion in an appropriate manner if something looks great on them or not and being able to pull other styles that they may not have even considered. You want to see your client confident and excited by the end of your interaction and knowing what role to take on in order to do so will be your most potent tool.

It is no secret that social media plays a crucial role in the direction of advertising now. It is necessary for every company and studio owner to jump on this bandwagon if you do not wish to be left behind. You can use these platforms to your advantage to build your studio's brand and your clientele and besides, who doesn't love free advertising?

Much like your displaying techniques, it is best to keep your pages current and inviting. Using high-quality, cohesive photos to enable your viewer a poignant impression of exactly what you are offering. If you post a photo of beautiful jewelry sitting next to a large inanimate object, your point is lost. At Maya, we offer usage of all of our product and editorial photography to our clients which enables them to remain consistent in their branding of our collection. Keep the content of your specific post in context as you only get one shot. Posting often, using appropriate hashtags, and following through with comment response will allow your posts to be more interactive and encourages your followers to get involved and feel like they are a part your studio and our community.

Marketing and sales are a fraction (albeit an important fraction) of the display tactics which make up your company. Just remember to decipher your target market then come up with an approach to grow it using the 3 C's: creative, comfortable, comprehensive. Your impression can last a lifetime. ☺



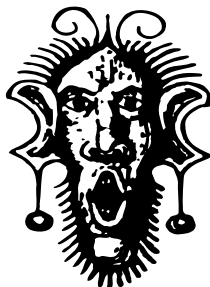
photo by Autumn Swisher

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made to the email address 2gardenhens@gmail.com, or checks or money orders can be sent to:

Babs McGary  
1271 Washington Ave., #640  
San Leandro, CA 94577

Raelyn was a pioneer in piercing, branding, and scarification, and even one of the early organizers of the APP, and without her influence our industry would not be where it is today. The world is poorer for her passing. ☺



—continued from page 12

- We will be offering new classes in\*: Lapidary Anthropology, Jewelry Display, Industry Careers for the Non-Piercers, Portfolios, Jewelry Polishing & Care, Apprentices, Ethics, Studio Analysis, and more!
- The Conference Committee and others are also working on some special projects "outside of" Conference events, such as an archival exhibition, special merchandise and giveaways—all in celebration of our 20th Conference!

*\*subject to change due to instructor availability*

We look forward to seeing all of you at Conference this year. We have a lot to celebrate with our 20th Anniversary. ☺



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