

# THE POINT

ISSUE 54  
WINTER 11

THE

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL PIERCERS



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# FROM THE EDITOR



## JAMES WEBER

APP President  
Infinite Body Piercing, Inc.  
Philadelphia, PA

As editor of *The Point* for the last five-plus years (two of them as co-editor, with Elayne Angel), I've been fortunate to correspond with a huge number of people from all over the United States and the world. I've often said that my work as editor of *The Point* has put me in contact with more people than my two terms on the Board of Directors—including my time as President. I now routinely trade emails with probably a hundred piercers from dozens of countries. Through this correspondence, we're able to include articles on a wide variety of subjects and events from around the globe.

Recently, through Facebook, I was contacted by Ronaldo Sampaio, a Brazilian piercer and vice-president of the Sindicato dos Estúdios de Tatuagem e Body Piercing de São Paulo (SETAP-SP, or the Union of Tattooing and Body Piercing Studios of São Paulo, Brazil). During our exchange, I asked him to submit some information about his organization for publication in *The Point*. I received an enthusiastic response, and a deluge of writing and photographs over the following 48 hours. With the invaluable help of Nick Wolak (Portuguese-fluent piercer and owner of Evolved in Columbus, Ohio), who was able to translate and organize Ronaldo's submissions, we're able to include his article both in English *and* in the original Portuguese.

Since I started my job as editor, there have been many issues of the journal in which I've been able to include articles in two languages. The first was *The Point* #35, with a piece covering the first APP Mexican Conference (now referred to as the APP Mexico Seminars). For that issue, I asked the bilingual instructors to submit columns for inclusion in both English and Spanish. There were several reasons I wanted to include their writing in both languages: the most obvious was that it allowed us to distribute the issue to Mexican attendees and expand our outreach efforts in not only Mexico but, hopefully, South America as well—in addition to Spanish-speaking piercers in the U.S.

The second reason is a little more opaque: it lets our U.S. readers stateside know, in a subtle way, that it's not only piercers of the English-speaking world that populate our industry. While it can be argued that modern body piercing is a mostly U.S. invention, it's not a practice that is currently confined to this country—and it hasn't been for some time. It's one thing to be told that an article is translated from its original language for English-speaking readers, but seeing it in its original form forces our more American-centric reader to think bigger than just about us and our overseas British neighbors—even if but for a moment.

Much is made of the fact that citizens of the U.S. are isolated in their use of language. Most of us living here more than two generations after our families emigrated from other countries speak and read only English. Mainstream media doesn't often expose us to the alternative; top-grossing movies in this country are seldom foreign, and are almost never subtitled. Network TV is in English only, and besides a few Spanish-language exceptions, so are the cable channels. Those of us who don't leave the country seldom get exposed to mainstream media with anyone speaking or writing in any language other than English. We force the world to come to us, linguistically. With *The Point*, I'm hoping to be the exception—and to attempt to meet piercers in the rest of the world at least halfway.

Also in that first bilingual issue, in my "From the Editor" column I wrote, "...as anyone who has done a bit of traveling knows; when in a different country, a successful trip is one in which you learn as much about yourself as you do about the culture you're immersed in—and quite often more." This is reason enough to include all the international coverage we do, organized and attended by piercers and piercing enthusiasts from all over the world. We can't each attend all of these events—although some of us do try—but even reading about them can teach us a little about our industry and ourselves.

So in this issue, in addition to our Brazilian submission, we also have Elayne's recounting of the most recent BMXnet conference in Germany, information on the 6th APTPI Italian SusCon (in both English and Italian), a review of the 2010 APP Mexico Seminars, as well as articles on body piercing anthropology, skin-prep alternatives, retail issues, and updates for APP Members.

Welcome, bienvenido, bem-vindo, e benvenuti a *The Point: The Journal of the Association of Professional Piercers*. **P**

# THE POINT

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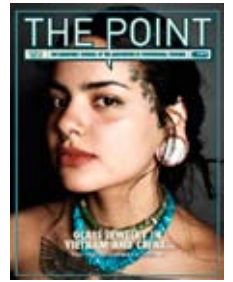
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# PRESIDENT'S CORNER



**JAMES WEBER**  
APP President  
Infinite Body Piercing, Inc.  
Philadelphia, PA

In October, the ballots were counted and the election was certified for the one vacant and four soon-to-be-vacant seats on the APP Board of Directors. I'm pleased to introduce the five members who will be filling these positions:

**Elayne Angel**  
**Didier Suarez**  
**John Johnson**  
**Rick Frueh**  
**Mike Martin**

Two members of the existing Board have been re-elected to their seats. Elayne Angel and Didier Suarez will each begin a second three-year term when their current one ends at this year's Conference, the first week of June.

Since he received the highest number of votes—after Elayne and Didier—John Johnson will assume his position immediately, occupying the vacant seat left open by Bethra Szumski's resignation from her Board position at last year's Conference. (Bethra has continued as an officer, in the position of Secretary.) This election certification happened too late to fly John to the most recent Board meeting—which took place in October, during the 2010 APP Mexico Seminars—but John was able to attend via Skype video conference, and he is quickly making the transition to a fully-oriented member of the APP Board of Directors.

Rick Frueh and Mike Martin will assume their places on the APP Board of Directors at Conference, when Ed Chavarria and I finish our current terms. Both Rick and Mike will be attending the first Board meeting of 2011, in Atlanta, Georgia, and at that meeting the titles and duties will be decided upon for new and re-elected Board Members—including who will assume the title and responsibility of President, to start in June of 2011. Both Dana Dinius and Brian Skellie will continue in their positions until their seats are up for election in 2013.

Thank you to all the nominees, and thank you to all members who took the time to vote. **P**



**JOHN JOHNSON**  
APP Board Member  
Outer Limits  
Long Beach, CA

It's a great honor to be elected to the Board. The piercing industry has been my passion for as long as I can remember, and the APP has been an extremely important part of my life. I have been involved with the organization in some way since 1998, and I consider serving as a Board Member the ultimate contribution for a member.

Many of you may already know the APP now has specialized committees, staffed by volunteers, which help with the workload of the organization. I've served on the Conference Committee with Bethra Szumski, Sarah Wooten, Ed Chavarria, William Spencer, and Caitlin McDiarmid for several years. Our team has worked hard with previous Board Members to offer attendees the best Conference possible. The annual APP Conference and Exposition is the only event some people in the industry know about the organization. It takes 51 weeks a year to prepare for, and we all want it to be the biggest success possible.

The early years of the APP are behind us, and I can see the positive influence the organization has had on the industry. I am proud to be a part of it, and I look forward to what I will bring to it in the future through my role on the Board of Directors. I hope to encourage more members become involved in the areas of outreach and public relations so we can watch our community flourish.

Naturally, the APP must grow as the industry evolves. We all hope the slow economy turns around soon, and with that I hope to see our organization expand. APP membership is a good way to generate business, and a larger membership base serves our interest in public health and safety. Every piercer should aspire to be a member, and shop owners should do all they can to support their piercers' efforts. Additionally, new suppliers and manufacturers of jewelry, equipment, and related products are continuously joining our industry, and I hope they find value in the APP's efforts.

Many companies have been supporters and Corporate Sponsors of the APP for years, and they're as important to us now as they have ever been. I hope we can work to keep our relationships with them strong, as they support the good work we do. I look forward to working together with the Board over the next few years to strengthen the community we already have, and earning an even more positive public opinion of who we are and what we do. **P**

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## IN THE OFFICE



**CAITLIN McDIARMID**  
APP Administrator

Is everyone ready for 2010 to be over and done with? I know my family is.

It seems like our whole industry got beat up pretty bad this year. I know more people who lost family members and friends due to illness and accidents, more people who were sick or had loved ones in the hospital than in years past. Just as we were picking ourselves up emotionally from one notification, another came in.

My own family had six separate hospitalizations, with half lasting more than four weeks. All of them emergent. All of them potentially fatal. And I still feel blessed because none of my family members succumbed; many of my friends this year were not as lucky.

Along with many others, I received amazing support from our community during my personal challenges this year. Sometimes you don't realize how many friends you have, or even who they are. Sometimes you may not think you are doing any good, but that one text message, or card, or Facebook posting is exactly what the bereaved or struggling friend needs to hear. Do not think – not for a minute – that your interest, your concern, your condolences, and sometimes your donation doesn't matter to that person or that person's family. It does.

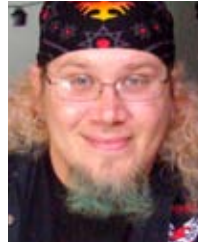
On behalf of the members of our community who have struggled this year, I want to thank all of you who helped in small or large ways. As we go through this holiday season, I ask that you reach out to those who have lost family or been adversely affected by events this year – loss/grief/change is profoundly felt during this season, no matter what you celebrate (or if you celebrate). Please remember your own families as well; make apologies, forgive, tell someone you love them.

As you approach 2011, consider doing something good for yourself and others. Learn a skill, start walking to work, call your grandma, make some cookies with your kids, quit smoking, volunteer.

In closing, I'll quote my Dad, who just moved into a long-term care facility, but has rebounded better than expected after a massive stroke: "Things could be worse, but I'm glad they're not."

May your blessings be abundant now and in the future, and may you never forget them. **P**

## CPR UPDATE



**ERIC GUSTAV "GOOSE" JOHNSON**  
In the Skin Tattoo and Piercing  
Victoria, TX

This year, the American Heart Association updated its procedures for CPR. While they mostly just tweaked small things in the procedure to keep up with the evidence provided by field experience, everyone should know what these little things are—and what may be different for you this year when you update your CPR certification:

1. The ABC has changed to the CAB. New guidelines state "compressions, airway, and breathing." Chest compressions should be started *first*, even before dealing with the airway.
2. No "look, listen, feel" for breath; no wasting time trying to judge if someone is breathing or not. Just start helping them.
3. It is still 30:2 compression to ventilation ratio, but the wording will change from *approximately* 100 compressions per minute to *at least* 100 compressions per minute.
4. The depth of chest compressions for adults is now a flat 2 inches, instead of the 1 ½ inch to 2 inch range. (Infant and child compression range remains the same.)
5. For untrained lay care providers, CPR should be limited to just chest compressions. Ventilation should be administered only by trained providers—so members of the general public aren't called upon to perform mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

These are not all of the changes, but they are some of the main ones. Even though the American Heart Association has updated their procedures, it does not mean everyone needs to retake the course right now—or that all organizations currently teaching CPR have adopted these changes.

Just remember to keep your CPR certification current. You never know when you may be a link in the chain of someone else's survival. **P**

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# THE BANANA THEORY: HOW CUSTOMERS SPOIL



## DARRIN WALTERS

Blue Star Tattoos, Inc.  
Concord, CA

How many times have you gone to the store and purchased a bunch of bananas? I'm talking about the perfect, firm ones—just the right shade of yellow—that smell exactly how a banana should smell. You bring the bunch home and can't wait to snack on one or two right away. Then, like a lot of other things, you forget about them. When you remember that perfect banana, you come to find a soft, black-spotted, mushy thing that looks ready to attack, like something out of a Stephen King novel.

In every business, there is a time when the customer is in the perfect position to make a purchase. There are also circumstances that can spoil that opportunity and leave us in a far-from-perfect situation. The Banana Theory differs in form, but it always deals with the same problem: how businesses sabotage product sales by not paying attention to the customer.

I have trained body art professionals, managers, and business owners in the body modification industry for many years, and very few of them do what they do simply because they love their customers. One of the most disliked customers is the "Lookie Loo"; they ask a million and one questions, tie up your time looking for a deal, then wait for someone else to get something done and leave.

Cheap body jewelry companies and poor piercing shops have embraced this customer and have been very profitable in doing so. In our economic times, we need to wake up and smell the banana. If you are having problems with low customer turn out, low repeat business, and low customer loyalty, the banana softens.

Fulfilling your customer's expectations is the key to success in every way. As body mod professionals, we have some control in setting that expectation, but we can't forget what the customer wants. Many body modification shops not only forget the customer's expectations but purposely set up situations that turn the perfect opportunity into a rotten banana.

From the time that the customer is greeted and the consent form is signed, the clock is ticking. Procedure times should be quoted thoughtfully, or we shoot ourselves in the foot by giving the customer unrealistic expectations. Some piercers do not allow time in their initial quotes to perform additional services that the customer might want or need. A good way to turn this around is to quote the time you expect to start on the piercing procedure, not the finish time.

Once the customer is in the room, we have about 15 minutes to present any additional services—after that you will just piss them off. For example, if they are getting their rook pierced and they already have an industrial, try to up-sell a new barbell with an industrial fitting and gem ends. I know there are people out there reading this and saying it can't be done that fast and still do a good job. Keep an open mind, many other industries have been doing this very thing, correctly and profitably - and with excellent customer response - for many years. Case in point: Jiffy Lube. They get your car in, drain the oil, then give you a list of options. A client who is a Jiffy Lube shop manager tells me that 9 out of 10 customers take one of the options presented to them.

So, within the bounds of sticking to appropriate professional ethics, why can't we do that?

As soon as the individual enters the shop, we should be working as a team. Before any body modification can happen, we need to check the anatomy to see if it is suitable. Make sure to get the customer into the procedure room within 15 minutes so we can analyze and suggest other services. As we get further from the 15-minute window, the banana starts to rot. The customer wants to leave, rightfully so, and we have neglected our duty to provide service to the best of our ability. The ability to practice "show and tell" is essential in building a better relationship with the customer; it can not only save them money, but we might actually make a couple of dollars while doing our job, which, in turn, makes everyone happy.

*[Editor's note: Along the same lines, I use a technique I call "planting seeds." I don't suggest they get an additional piercing on the spot, but will advise a client on what other options for piercings his or her anatomy presents. Then they'll often start thinking about that, and frequently return at a later date for the piercing I've described.] P*

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## OPTI-SCRUB: A REPLACEMENT FOR TECHNI-CARE?



**RYAN OUELLETTE**  
Precision Body Arts  
Nashua, NH

Like most of the progressive members of the body art industry, I'm a big fan of CareTech Labs' Techni-Care skin prep product. Most readers of *The Point* already know how effective Techni-Care is as a skin prep for not just body piercing, but suspension, scarification, tattooing, and other heavy modifications. Once I found Techni-Care, I gave up all previous skin preps and stopped researching or looking for new ones. Then came the fateful call with a sales rep at CareTech, telling me that Techni-Care was temporarily unavailable for purchase.

I never carried big reserves of Techni-Care in my studio. Why bother when it was so easy to get? Finding out that it was no longer available when I was down to my last bottle was a little stressful, to say the least. Unfortunately, I did not have the foresight to buy in bulk while remaining stock could still be tracked down online. CareTech's reps repeatedly gave the frustrating "it will be available for purchase within a few months" line; that was more than a year ago. So I backtracked to previous skin preps like iodine, benzalkonium chloride (BZK) wipes, and just plain saline wipes for mucosa.

I felt really angry. I know it's probably silly to get angry over running out of soap, but I let myself base my entire procedure on one product with no known equivalent. I read Elayne Angel's great skin prep article "What to Do When You Run Out of Techni-Care," but I wasn't satisfied with just taking a step back. So, after months of being embarrassed when I told people in the industry I was back to iodine,

I decided to be proactive and find an alternative.\*

The alternative I've found is a product called Opti-Scrub, manufactured by Micro Scientific Industries (MSI). (If the company name sounds familiar, it could be, as they are the developer of the surface disinfectant Opti-Cide.) I stumbled across the product by accident, as a fellow piercer piqued my interest by mentioning the product in a post on Facebook. I initially did some research, but I came up short on details.

I knew it to be a type of antimicrobial soap, and that its active ingredient is parachlorometaxylenol (PCMX), but that's about all the information I could find through casual online searches. So I was left with two options: order some and use it and hope it works well, or dig deeper and find more technical data. Luckily, it was fall, and since my shop is dead during this season, I had plenty of time for research. I looked up the company online, emailed them—introducing myself as a member of the APP—and asked a list of questions about their product.

To my surprise, I received a phone call from the director of scientific, technical, and regulatory services. He gave me data, at length, about

\*Editor's note: While iodine is seen by many in our industry as a throwback to an earlier time, it can hardly be called "embarrassing" to use—surgeons use it successfully every day in operating rooms all across the country. It is a safe and effective product when used according to manufacturer's instructions.

---

## I know it's probably silly to get angry over running out of soap, but I let myself base my entire procedure on one product with no known equivalent.

Opti-Scrub's capabilities and informed me that Opti-Scrub is not a single product but a two-product family. There is the basic Opti-Scrub antimicrobial liquid soap as well as Opti-Scrub No Rinse (NR). I was sent product samples and FDA test data for both versions, along with a follow-up letter stating the company's suggested use for general body piercing skin prep—which is to first use the Opti-Scrub soap with water as a scrub, followed by Opti-Scrub NR as a skin sanitizer. Neither product lists a requirement that it be used in conjunction with the other, so selecting which products to use for which procedures may be flexible based on individual practitioners' preferences.

I found the basic Opti-Scrub antimicrobial liquid soap to be the superior individual product – and closest to Techni-Care in both functionality and application when used as a topical gel scrub. Since it is a liquid soap, I also found it to be a good replacement for Care Tech's Satin soap, for various body art aftercare applications.

For technical test results and data, you can contact Micro Scientific Industries online at [www.opticide.com](http://www.opticide.com) and ask for their full results and MSDS. The main points are:

- In the FDA test materials provided by MSI, Opti-Scrub is billed as an *“antimicrobial skin cleanser which produces rapid bactericidal action and persistent bacteria-static properties against a wide range of organisms (both gram positive/negative bacteria as well as yeast).”*
- Its active ingredient is only 0.5 percent PCMX, much lower than Techni-Care's 3 percent PCMX content, but upon reviewing test data, it seems equally effective, if not more so. While the test data lists a 30-second standard application time, many strains of bacteria are eliminated by 99 percent or more in as few as 15 seconds.
- Opti-Scrub was tested against many common bacteria such as *Candida Albicans*, *E. Coli*, *Salmonella*, and *Staphylococcus*, and was shown to have a 15-second kill time. Opti-Scrub was also shown to be 99.99 percent effective in killing the antibiotic-resistant strains of *Enterococcus Faecium* (VRE) as well as *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MRSA) in both 15- and 30-second exposure tests.
- Opti-Scrub NR performed equally well. Opti-Scrub NR was tested against the same strains of bacteria as Opti-Scrub, but was additionally shown to be effective against fungi and certain virus strains.

I used the basic Opti-Scrub in my studio for several weeks and was very pleased with the results. Opti-Scrub is a soap-like scrub with emollients. When worked onto the skin, even without water, it produces a foamy lather that gave me a very clean, dry skin surface to work on—even when wiped off with only gauze. It leaves no sticky residue (like some other soap skin cleaners can), regardless of whether

it is thoroughly rinsed off with water or wiped off with saline. I didn't have any grip or slip issues through a variety of forceps, receiving tube, and freehand piercings.

The soap lightens pre-scrub gentian violet skin marks slightly but usually didn't fully remove them unless I scrubbed a little extra. While materials from MSI suggest using water during the scrub, a simple saline wipe *may* be sufficient. I used Opti-Scrub without water during prep application and saw no direct requirement for it to be effective.\*\*

One area I did not test Opti-Scrub on was mucosa, as I utilize only a saline wipe scrub for mucus membranes or genital piercing. I did not find any listed limitations or contraindications on the test data material that would lead me to believe that basic Opti-Scrub was unsafe or inappropriate for mucosa application, although thoroughly rinsing or wiping the product away from mucosa with sterile saline after cleaning might be a good suggestion.

Opti-Scrub NR is an alcohol-based waterless skin sanitizer, unlike the basic Opti-Scrub skin-scrub soap product. Opti-Scrub NR was deemed nonirritating to skin as well as orally non-toxic; however, it was shown to produce mild short-term eye irritation, most likely due to its alcohol content.

As with Opti-Scrub antimicrobial liquid soap, no specific test data for mucus membrane tissue was listed, but since Opti-Scrub NR is 10 percent alcohol, I imagine it would be irritating and/or unsafe for mucus membrane skin prep. I didn't have Opti-Scrub NR samples at my disposal for in-studio testing for as long as I had the basic Opti-Scrub, but for the short time I used it, I was not as impressed with it. Opti-Scrub NR has a very strong alcohol odor and was rather unpleasant for both myself and the client when used anywhere around the head. With the high alcohol content, it also tended to completely erase my pre-cleaning marking, and it sometimes blurred out my post-cleaning marks. One other thing I don't care for with NR is that it has a consistency more like a lotion than a gel or soap, and it did not foam or leave any visible indication where it was applied to the skin.

Opti-Scrub antimicrobial liquid soap has proven to be an impressive product, and I have incorporated it into my studio as a permanent replacement for Techni-Care. Micro Scientific Industries is a body-modification friendly company and has expressed interest in attending the APP 2011 Conference to meet industry professionals, introduce their product, and answer any technical questions we might have. Opti-Scrub is not yet widely available through body modification suppliers (MSI has plans to create an industry-specific branch for body piercing sales), but both products are easily found through the internet for purchase in 4-ounce, 18-ounce pump, and one-gallon bottles. **P**

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\*\*Editor's note: Opti-Scrub's effectiveness is determined when tested according to manufacturers instructions. It is not suggested to use the product in a way that deviates these instructions without first asking the manufacturer.



# THE FIRST APT TRADE SHOW AND EXPOSITION



## ERIC GUSTAV "GOOSE" JOHNSON

In the Skin Tattoo and Piercing  
Victoria, TX

I'm going behind enemy lines here, as a piercer infiltrating a tattoo artists' conference. Relations between piercers and tattooists tend to be closest to that of feuding siblings. In very broad strokes: a good piercer is an efficient technician, and a good tattooist is a creative artist, and both tend to be intensely detail oriented, headstrong, and passionate about their work. These factors often lead to friction between the two camps, which can (at worst) produce a disharmonious work environment or (at best) push everyone to be better at their jobs.

In order to better understand the "other team," I made my way to the Alliance of Professional Tattooists (APT) first trade show and exposition in Kansas City, Missouri. I have been to enough traditional tattoo conventions to know that not too much gets done there to improve the industry: mostly artists showing off their work, competing against each other, and taking home a fat stack of cash. While there is nothing wrong with these things, they don't do much to raise industry standards. Over the past few years this started to change, with seminars and panel discussions making an occasional appearance, but this was the first full tattoo convention I attended (or heard of) *without any tattooing*.

Tattooing has been lurking just on the periphery of popular culture for nearly a century; however, in this last decade, we have seen it embraced by the mainstream. Unfortunately, while breaking into the popular culture has brought acceptance up, it has also brought standards down. Like the obscure, dedicated artist who suddenly finds popularity, what was once carefully crafted and fretted over is now mass produced—and sometimes spit out with seemingly little regard for quality. We have been around for the birth of mainstream tattooing, but now, in order to keep it from being just another fad, the industry must codify and unify their practices to keep their standards. The key to this success is in education and activism. Standardizing proper technique allows for a quality "product," and being proactive within one's own community leads to a more educated public—rather than having the fad-hungry media spoon-feed them their opinions. This is where professional organizations like the APP and APT come in; they provide a platform to stand together and speak with one educated and informed voice.

This was not the first gathering of APT tattooists. They have had their annual Tattoo Rendezvous for four years now, since East Coast Al donated his Kansas City convention to the organization. This year's rebranding as a trade show demonstrated the changes happening in the organization and within the industry as a whole. Last year, APT President Pat Sinatra issued a statement in the organization's journal, *Skin Scribe*, expressing the need for reorganization and changes. She

spoke of ending the secrecy and elitism of this previously underground industry, and of opening doors for a new generation of professional artists. This show made it clear that they are taking this mission to heart. The convention was open only to artists from licensed shops (no fans, no clients, no scratchers; just artists). This limitation, in addition to the poor economy and lack of tattooing, meant that attendance was lower than previous years (but I'm sure many wanted to see how it turned out before committing to attend). Plus, the smaller crowd

was really a boon as the classes were more intimate, and you could have one-on-one conversations with the instructors.

Of particular import to me was the "Preventing Disease Transmission for Tattooists" course—a lecture on bloodborne pathogens within the tattoo studio environment. Two variations on this course were presented: a short course (two hours) and the full-length course (six hours). The workbook that attendees received is impressive, addressing the most commonly encountered diseases in detail and explaining the "how and why" of aseptic technique. It also includes a complete exposure control plan, which requires only that the book owner sign their name and add their shop info to be ready to implement.

Our instructors were APT Vice President Mike Martin of Flesh Skin Graphix Tattoo (Imperial Beach, California) and APT Secretary Don Corah of Artisan Tattoos (Ft. Wayne, Indiana), both of whom were very knowledgeable and tolerant of my nit-picky questions. What surprised me most was that, in my previous bloodborne pathogens seminar experiences, I seemed to learn about only a half hour's worth of material stretched over two hours (to fulfill the time requirements), whereas this course was full of material for the entire six hours; so much so that I got the impression that a lot of information actually needed to be left out. Attendees could easily tell that this course has been taught successfully for more than 15 years; the class is polished and efficient, and the flow from topic to topic was smooth and easy. All in all, it was one of the best courses I've ever had the pleasure to attend. The other classes were split between the technical and artistic aspects of tattooing and general shop management and/or business practices. Technical classes dealt with some of the "lost" arts of needle building, pigment mixing, and rice paper/acetate stencils. The art classes included life drawing, advanced cover-up techniques, large tattoo

They have been talking to lawmakers and health officials for almost two decades and are recognized as an authority in a sometimes obtuse and misinterpreted profession.

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design and layout, wildlife drawing, and black and gray techniques with the infamous Jack Rudy. A real treat was Dan Dringenberg's "Machine Everything" class, which, while a little unfocused and light on raw data, did present some rare footage of Paul Rogers building machines in his workshop. Management courses included "Shop Security," "IRS and the Tattooist," "Employee vs. Contractor," "Shop Ethics," and "Insurance for Body Art Professionals." There were also classes on sanitation and various other techniques.

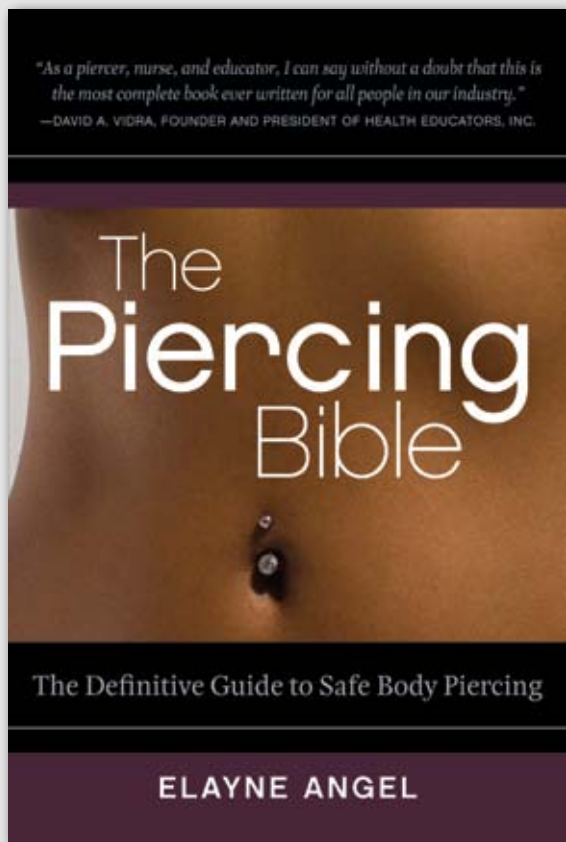
All was not classrooms and education though; the expo floor had a fair amount of vendors displaying their wares—and offering a little free swag, which was quickly snatched up. Wednesday night, Knuckleheads Saloon hosted the "APT Trade Show Special," with live music from Outlaw Jim and the Whiskey Benders. Good food, cold beer, and a great time was had by all. The fun continued Thursday at the closing banquet, where a buffet was served up with a wide variety of healthy and tasty dishes. Pat Sinatra gave a brief speech thanking all of the attendees and volunteers before moving on to the awards. She presented the APT President's Award to Tim Corley of Millennium Tattoos (Fort Collins, Colorado) for his work as APT treasurer. The Educator of the Year award was presented to Peggy Sucher of Tattoo Hawaii Studio (Honolulu, Hawaii) for tailoring the "Preventing Disease Transmission for Tattooists" course in a shortened form for conventions. The evening closed out with the raffle. A large table was loaded with machines, flash, aftercare products, and other assorted goodies to be given away. As we sat and secretly cursed all the raffle winners while politely clapping, I thought of the future.

As the presence of government regulation within the industry is on the rise, a united voice is needed to explain to those regulators peering

into our business practices how and why we do what we do. This was a big motivation for me to join a professional organization, and why I try to help others do the same. I have heard too many stories of piercers and tattooists raked over the coals by government regulators, business owners (both big and small), and state legislators to continue be aloof about joining with others. We must come together and define ourselves lest a definition is thrust upon us. The Alliance of Professional Tattooists has proved that a united voice can bring about change. They have been talking to lawmakers and health officials for almost two decades and are recognized as an authority in a sometimes obtuse and misinterpreted profession.

APT promotes education from both inside and outside the industry - a great windfall for an art that I love. We need the education and activism that the APT provides, and hopefully, this trade show will be the start of a new trend for this organization to help make tattooing a pillar of our culture rather than another flavor of the month.

In all honesty, the week was a fun time. Granted, a piercer won't get as much out of it as a tattooist would, but I felt very welcome and came away with a deeper understanding of the tattooist mindset and what actually goes into their jobs. For everyone out there thinking of attending next year: DO IT! Bring a notebook, a sack for swag, some petty cash for the raffles, and a smile. You will find yourself in good company, having a great time, and coming away with a collection of tips and tricks to improve your art. You might also find a community of like-minded individuals whom you can call on in times of need, for help with a problem, or just to trade old war stories with. They have taken a chance and opened their doors; I hope the tattoo industry responds. **P**



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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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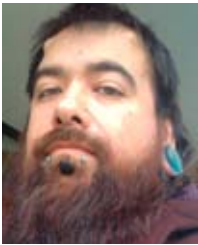
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## APP MEXICO SEMINARS 2010



### OSCAR SANDOVAL

Splash of Color  
East Lansing, MI

I thought it would be a breeze to capture the passion and emotions from the 2010 APP Mexico Seminars in Mexico City. What I didn't forecast was how difficult it would be to put such an amazing experience into words.

While I could start with so many different things, I think it's appropriate to start with those who made the 2010 Seminars unique: the attendees. They were a superb group of piercers and tattooists, whom I am honored to call my friends and colleagues, who traveled from all over Mexico to attend. (There was even an attendee from Argentina!) All were there with hopes of gaining information, be it answers to specific questions, confirmation that what they were doing was correct, dispelling of myths, or just to see what is new in the industry. I met people of all skill levels; the main focus for everyone was education.

Something I had never seen before at a U.S. conference was that people were all about taking pictures! It seemed there was more than a handful of attendees who took pictures of the slides during the presentations (a trick I have since adopted).

All of the classes were well-received: freehand vs. forceps; stretching; studio aesthetics; English in the studio; aftercare; anatomy; female and male genital piercings; and roundtable discussions on tips, tricks, and ethics; surface piercing; surface

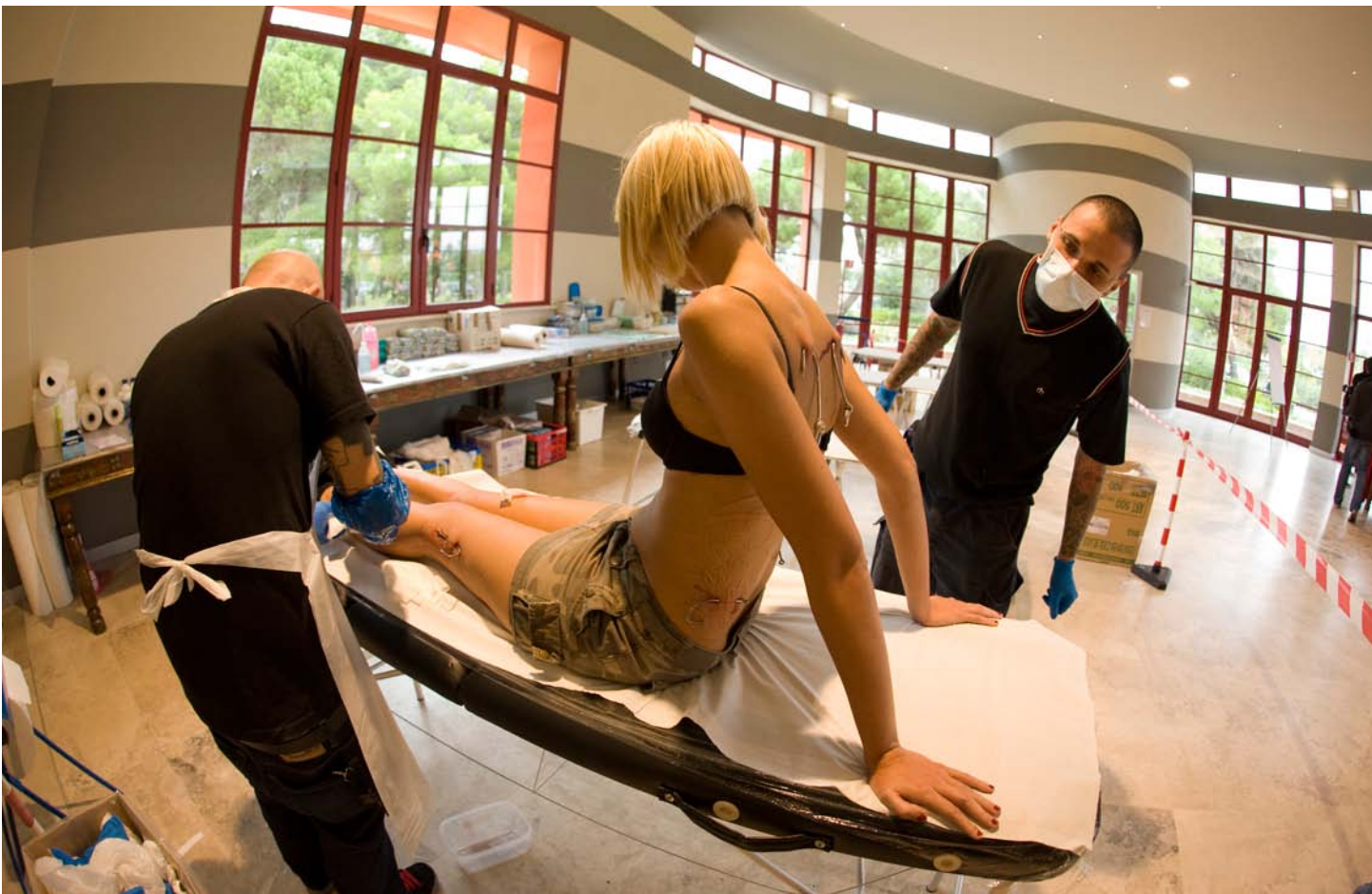
anchors; infection control; and many others. We shared meals together and discussed many subjects; we went out for drinks and talked some more.

I was sent to Mexico to speak on behalf of Health Educators and the APP, but I experienced so much more. I learned so much. I had things broken down and explained to me. I came away invigorated, excited, and ready to take my new knowledge home—even though I didn't want to leave. I made a bunch of new friends and had conversations with people whom I've always wanted to sit down and talk to.

Although our resources may seem limited, making the APP a multi-lingual and multi-cultural organization will inevitably impact our industry as a whole. The more we are able to teach, the more we can educate piercers. This should be an ongoing goal among industry providers, as well as business proprietors.

I would like to thank David Vidra for sending me to Mexico, Danny Yerna for being an amazing host, and James Weber and the APP Board. You guys were all great! I owe a special thanks to Nick Wolak, Ron Garza, Jason Pfohl, Miro Hernandez, all of the speakers, and most of all, the attendees of the conference. You all did an amazing job and it was my pleasure to share this experience with you. **P**









## 6TH ANNUAL APTPI ITALIAN SUSCON: LIVORNO, OCTOBER 12-14, 2010



### APTPI OFFICE

Photos by Massimo Carlisi

About the 6th Annual Italian SusCon:

- Three days
- Three speakers and four classes
- More than 70 attendees (half of whom were foreigners)
- Fifty suspensions
- Three car pulls
- Four indoor rigging points and one outdoor rigging point
- More than 300 hooks

This year's SusCon took place in the same location as 2009: the "Regina del Mare" resort in Livorno, Italy. The resort is the perfect location for a SusCon, due to the ability to set both indoor and outdoor rigging points. Additionally, the fine hospitality and Tuscan cooking made everything cozy and warm.

We have hosted six SusCons: three in Amelia, near Terni; the fourth in Venice; and the last two in Livorno, where we plan to hold the next one.

Half of the attendees (more than 70 in all) were Italian. Most of them were new to the body suspension world, and we really hoped to provide them with a positive experience. The foreign attendees came from Germany, Holland, Great Britain, Norway, Denmark, Croatia, and the United States.

To review the event in detail:

- Of the 50 suspensions that took place over the three days, a few distinct configurations stood out, such as the reverse lotus and the twin lotus. Among the static suspensions, some were quite evocative.
- As a novelty, this year we also had three car pulls. This was in thanks to the location.

- For the attendees who participated in suspension, we used 300 hooks at four indoor rigging points (for static and dynamic suspensions), and one outdoor rigging point, so people had the chance to experience an open-air suspension.
- There were three speakers:
  - Håvve Fjell, from Norway, taught the class "Suspension Styles and Rigging Variations." He and Christiane Lofblad have attended all of our events and have collaborated with APTPI since the very first Italian SusCon.
  - Cere Coichetti from the United States (a member of the Rite of Passage suspension team) taught "Basic Rigging: Introduction and In-depth Examination - How to Choose Safe Materials and Tools."
  - Allen Falkner, from the United States—considered the "Father of Modern Suspension" and the first to organize the events now known worldwide as "SusCons"—taught "History of Modern Suspension: A Look at the Different Cultures that Have Affected the Art of Body Suspension" and "Suspension Mechanics: From Rigging to Anatomy, the Physics Behind Body Suspension." We were especially proud to have had him in Italy for the very first time. (For further information about Allen, visit [www.suspension.org](http://www.suspension.org).)

APTPI is really pleased with how this SusCon turned out and would like to thank all of the sponsors, attendees, volunteers, and speakers who helped make this event so special. We invite you all to attend the Italian SusCon in 2011. **P**





## 6° APTPI ITALIAN SUSCON

LIVORNO, 12 13 14 OTTOBRE 2010



### APTPI OFFICE

Sesta edizione, 3 giorni, più di 70 partecipanti di cui il 50% stranieri, 50 sospensioni, 3 auto trainate, più 300 ganci utilizzati, 4 *rigging point* interni, 1 *rigging point* esterno, 3 relatori, 4 lezioni. Questi i numeri dell'ultima edizione dell' **APTPI Italian SusCon**.

Numeri di tutto rispetto, che rendono quello appena concluso uno degli eventi più importanti d'Europa.

La location è rimasta invariata rispetto all'edizione 2009: il Resort Regina del Mare si è confermato un luogo perfetto in quanto ha offerto la possibilità di installare punti di sospensione *indoor* e *outdoor*, inoltre l'ospitalità e la cucina toscana hanno reso l'atmosfera calorosa e accogliente.

Ma veniamo al commento dei numeri sopra citati: 6 le edizioni raggiunte fino ad oggi, le prime 3 svolte ad Amelia in provincia di Terni, la 4ª a Venezia e le ultime 2 a Livorno che con molta probabilità verrà scelta anche per il settimo anno.

Tra i più di 70, circa il 50% degli iscritti era composto da italiani, molti dei quali nuovi volti che si sono avvicinati al mondo delle *body suspension* e che ci auguriamo abbiano vissuto un'esperienza più che positiva; la rimanente parte era composta dagli stranieri giunti da Germania, Olanda, Inghilterra, Norvegia, Danimarca, Croazia, Stati Uniti. 50 le sospensioni eseguite in 3 giorni, tra le più particolari da segnalare la Reverse Lotus, la Twin Lotus e molte altre particolari sospensioni statiche molto suggestive (vedi foto); 3 i *pulling* con auto trainate ognuna da una persona, novità di quest'anno in quanto nelle precedenti edizioni le location non ci potevano permettere tale pratica; più di 300 i ganci utilizzati per permettere ai partecipanti di poter provare l'esperienza della sospensione; 4 i *rigging point* interni che hanno permesso lo svolgimento di sospensioni sia statiche che dinamiche e soprattutto di ripararci dal maltempo che fortunatamente ci ha colpiti il primo giorno della manifestazione; 1 *rigging point* esterno utilizzato per lo *spinning beam* e per chi ha

preferito una sospensione all'aria aperta. 3 i relatori: il norvegese **Havve Fjell**, ormai veterano del *SusCon* italiano in quanto, assieme alla sua compagna **Christiane** collabora con **APTPI** dalla prima edizione, ha spiegato gli "Stili di sospensione e le varianti di rigging". Lo statunitense **Cere Coichetti** del *Rite of Passage Suspension Team* ha svolto una lezione tecnica: "Introduzione e approfondimento del *rigging*. Le tecniche, i materiali impiegati e la sicurezza dal punto di vista pratico e nella scelta delle attrezzature" (argomento che a volte può sembrare insignificante, ma assolutamente da non sottovalutare, sia sotto l'aspetto igienico, ma anche dal punto di vista tecnico). **Allen Falkner**, anch'egli statunitense, personaggio che non ha bisogno di presentazioni e che siamo fieri di aver chiamato per la prima volta in Italia. Per chi non lo conoscesse può essere considerato il padre della sospensione interpretata in chiave moderna e colui che ha iniziato ad organizzare i *SusCon*. Per ulteriori notizie su di lui, basta una semplice ricerca su internet o un giro nel suo sito [www.suspension.org](http://www.suspension.org). Due le sue lezioni: "Storia della sospensione moderna. Uno sguardo alle differenti culture che hanno influenzato l'arte della sospensione" e "Meccaniche di sospensione. La fisica dietro la sospensione corporea" hanno motivato ulteriormente il pubblico alla preparazione per la loro sospensione.

**APTPI** può ritenersi soddisfatta dei numeri e dei risultati ottenuti anche quest'anno e coglie l'occasione per ringraziare tutti gli sponsor, i partecipanti, i volontari e i relatori, rinnovando l'invito alla prossima edizione 2011.

Per chi tradurrà: questi sono i titoli delle lezioni di **falkner** mandate da lui, per cortesia mantenete questi testi senza tradurre il testo dall'italiano: "History of Modern Suspension. A look at the different cultures have affected the art of body suspension". "Suspension Mechanics. From rigging to anatomy, the physics behind body suspension". **P**



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...it was a unique experience to do demonstrations in a hands-on environment, as compared to the lectures I'm accustomed to giving. We did everything from conch, nipple, and septum piercings, to a triangle, ampallang, and apadravya.

Photo by Rolf Buchholz



Photo by Dante Busquets



Photo by Dante Busquets





Photo by Dante Busquets

## THE 4TH INTERNATIONAL BMXNET CONFERENCE



**ELAYNE ANGEL**  
APP Medical Liaison  
Yukatan, Mexico

Living up to its name as the “Body Modification Exchange Network,” the 4th International BMXnet Conference took place in Berlin, Germany at the Congress Hotel Holiday Inn, September 16-19, 2010. The event drew a great crowd of not only piercers, but also tattoo artists, suspension specialists, and other body modification artists. The evenings were filled with socializing and some truly wonderful entertainment.

The new venue was larger to give the conference a chance to grow and develop. There were bigger rooms for workshops and classes, and the expo was much bigger than in previous years. The expo contained a mix of piercing and tattooing equipment, tools, and body jewelry from the U.S., Mexico, and Europe.

The event was definitely enjoyable and clearly a success overall, despite some technical difficulties, issues with the printing company, and the hotel apparently making promises that they couldn't keep. I suffered the brunt of some of these problems by teaching the first class of the day on Friday. The event organizers had arranged for professional translators to provide support to the German attendees and for the high-tech projector to play the PowerPoint presentations. Unfortunately, they couldn't get the sound system working quite as

planned for the translators, and they couldn't get the projector to work at all. An emergency projector was rigged semi-successfully (the images were quite hard to discern). The class eventually took place—albeit quite delayed—due to the fact that many attendees were still being registered after the lecture was scheduled to begin. Despite the frustrations of the day, people seemed to find the seminar worthwhile.

Classes were included on everything from “Advanced Sterilization and Instrument Management,” to drawing and painting seminars, along with “Suspension Rigging,” “Handpoking Tattoos,” “Body Piercing in Pre-Hispanic Meso-American Cultures,” “Genital Piercings,” and much more. There were workshops that included live demonstrations of surface anchors, piercings of all types, and suspensions. There was even a rope bondage class in which participants learned traditional techniques from CoCo Katsura of Japan.

I participated in the live workshop on needle-blade piercing (as they call American piercing needles in Europe, to differentiate them from cannula needles) with Bethra Szumski; it was a unique experience to do demonstrations in a hands-on environment, as compared to the lectures I'm accustomed to giving. We did everything from

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conch, nipple, and septum piercings, to a triangle, ampallang, and apadravya. A camera filmed the action from very close so the whole audience was able to see every detail on a large screen at the front of the room. This form of live instruction definitely provided a unique vibe and an altogether different type of education from the methods we have maintained at the annual APP Conference.

The shows in the evening were also very international with acts from Japan, Norway, Finland, Australia, Russia, England, and of course Germany. The entertainment was spearheaded by The Headmaster (Håvve Fjell of Pain Solution) from Norway. He served as Master of Ceremonies for the evenings' diversions and also performed the various sideshow acts for which he is so well-known.

On Friday night, a German band called Freakatronic rocked the audience. Their musical style was amusingly described as "robot folk." They put on a fantastic show, which included costumes and choreography along with a great electronic beat. Many members of the audience were inspired to get on their feet and dance, myself included. I'm definitely a fan!

Performer CoCo Katsura has a unique style that is "a mix of cult Japanese classic form and modern gothic decadence." She did a lovely suspension in which she released yards of diaphanous white fabric that were part of a vast kimono that trailed from her suspended form.

Pain Cult is a theatrical costumed freak-show based in Russia that is engaged in staging shows with the elements of extreme piercing and suspension. One of the standouts was a performance in which a pair of wildly costumed piercees were linked via hooks in their backs by two long, metal springs. Bamboo rods were handed out

to random members of the audience, and we made music together. The instrument was the conjoined performers themselves; as the rods drummed against their coils, electronic sounds reverberated throughout the hall. The sounds were altered by how hard they pulled against one another and varied the length of the coils. The crowd was quickly brought into a trance-like state. It was a very effective performance that the audience obviously enjoyed a great deal by unexpectedly becoming part of the act.

The brave and perhaps foolhardy Lassi of The Saviours, also from Norway, gave a show that few people around the world have likely seen. The audience was captivated, entertained, and happily horrified as he performed a self-suspension from a single rope tied at the base of his genitals. Along with the audience, I watched open-mouthed and transfixed as both of his feet left the ground. Wow, impressive!

Lucky Hell amused the crowd with a delightful act that was a combination of burlesque, vaudeville, and sideshow that also involved a suspension. She managed to remain adorable even as she performed the human blockhead trick with a large nail in her sinuses.

The pièce de résistance was the show by Operafication (England and U.S.), professional opera singing and live instruments combined with the beauty of body-art performances and circus sideshow elements. (See article on next page.)

Despite some organizational hiccoughs (which made me especially proud of how smoothly things run at our APP Conferences), the 4th BMXnet Conference turned out to be a huge success. Everyone I spoke with had a great time and reported enjoying the classes, entertainment, and of course, socializing with members of the body art community from all around the world. **P**





## INFORMATIONAL BROCHURES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE APP OFFICE

Each brochure has been recently updated with a new look and the most current information. Brochures are available in packs of **100 for \$25**. PDF downloads are *free* at [safepiercing.org](http://safepiercing.org).

**TITLES INCLUDE:** Jewelry for Initial Piercings (**New!**) • Jewelry for Healed Piercings (**New!**) • What Is The APP? • Picking Your Piercer • Body Piercing Aftercare • Aftercare for Oral Piercings • Oral Piercing Risks • Troubleshooting for You and Your Healthcare Professional (Now with more detailed medical information for doctors). Many titles are also available in Spanish. All brochures are also available in French for free download from the APP website.



To order, contact the APP office at **888.888.1APP**  
or email [info@safepiercing.org](mailto:info@safepiercing.org)



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## OPERAFICATION



### VICTORIA HAWKINS

Tawapa  
San Francisco, CA

There we were, in the conference room of the Tegel Holiday Inn in Berlin, a most unlikely setting for a night of suspensions, except that this was the BMXnet Conference. While the evening held many delights—Lassi hanging by his testicles, Lucky Hell doing a burlesque feather dance to Nina Simone during a resurrection suspension (from her torso)—it was Hilary Whitmore’s Operafication performance that struck a deep chord with me.

I was sitting between two extraordinarily powerful women in my life: Jenella Brooks, my dear friend, whom I have worked with for the last six years (and whose brains, heart, and management skills I am blown away by daily), and Sharon Kihara, internationally esteemed badass Butoh and tribal bellydancer. We lost track of each other while

watching Hilary’s piece. I know I was completely absorbed, but as it ended, we looked at each other and saw we had all been brought to tears.

Hilary pairs classic opera with contemporary dance and modern primitive suspension. A post-structuralist scenario of old and new, art and ritual, she brings these disparate aspects together to create a unique performance driven by her passion. The composition of the piece was lovely and professionally executed. An artist, suspended above, kept steady by the riggers off stage, held long red ribbons that cascaded down and were held by her dancers. A wonderful play on puppeteering, power, and connection, it was the dancers below who controlled Hilary’s spins and movement, with a thread of energy

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running between dancer, suspendee, and rigger. There was an angelic bearing that extended from Hilary into the audience. She had an elegance—a smoothness to her movements and voice that communicated an openness of heart, a willingness to share, and gave profound access to what the experience was for her.

The piece spoke clearly to me. When Hilary sang, her voice conveyed the power that was coursing through her. There was not a hiccup nor waiver in her song, and the voice cannot lie in a context like this. I thought to myself, “I would like to have a recording of this piece to watch it whenever doubt arises in me, whenever I feel less than in my power.” It was relevant to the moment that I was seated between Jenella and Sharon; it accentuated the sense that one can give and receive strength from being near another in such an intense experience—as if those red ribbons continued out into our hands.

As a long-time performer in San Francisco’s underground circus scene, I have seen more suspensions as performance than ritual. I often wonder how and why these two aspects of suspension overlap: the ritual and the performance. When do they diverge? Why is it important for others to witness someone doing a suspension? I am interested in the balance between the very internal and personal experience of the suspendee and the expectations of an audience that may want the individual to emote, or perform as a character. There is also the balance between the time it takes to properly hook and rig a suspension and an audience’s expectation of pace and entertainment value. I was inspired and curious enough to catch up with Hilary and ask for her insight on these questions.

**When was the first time you heard opera—and what piece was it—when you knew it was a part of you?**

The first piece of Opera I was completely drawn to was *Son Pochi Fiori* from *L'amico Fritz* by Pietro Mascagni. It was then that I completely fell in love with opera.

**Can you tell me about the first time you saw a suspension and how it was that you knew it was a part of you?**

The first time I saw a suspension was a show in Portland, Oregon done by TranceSend, a group led by Michael Pitts. I went into it having no idea what to expect but was blown away by the beauty of the show. After the show, I approached both Mike and Dana Dinius, who also worked with TranceSend, and said I’d love to sing for one of their shows. They looked at me and told me I should suspend and sing.

**Is there something you can describe about bringing these two arts/explorations together—opera and suspension—and how they came to meet in you?**

It took me two years to realize for myself that I could and very much wanted to bring these two beautiful things together. I think from the moment combining these two art forms became a possibility in my mind, it only took the time for me to gain the strength and courage to make it a reality. This is something I could not have done without the support of both Dana and Mike.

**Where do you think suspension as ritual and as performance overlap?**

For me personally, ritual and performance are two completely different things, both in the intention and the experience I receive. When I am on stage, I am focused on the task at hand, making sure that everything goes off smoothly and that the audience stays engaged and interested. Ultimately, I suspend for the audience. When I suspend ritually, I suspend for me.

**Can you describe the states your mind and body move through when you are suspending?**

During a performance I feel very little as far as the suspension goes. I am focused on the music, staging, acting, and delivery of the show. I do however definitely feel the adrenaline and nerves that go along with being on stage and in front of an audience.

During a private suspension I take the time to feel and take in the whole experience. It is much more personal and I find it can be very meditative and oftentimes more challenging.

**How and why is it important for others to witness someone doing a suspension?**

I feel it is important for others to witness suspension because it allows people the opportunity to see it as both a viable and equally beautiful type of performance art.

**When, historically, did people start to incorporate dance, music, and costuming into suspension?**

I think it is difficult to pinpoint when exactly dance, music, costuming, etc. began to be incorporated in suspension performance. There are so many groups from many different places who have chosen to combine these art forms. I personally started incorporating them in 2003.

**What kind of modern dance do you work with?**

Almost all of the dance we use is improvised. We establish a few parameters and let the dancers create within them. The music, other than the set arias, is also completely improvised. I find that not only does this make it more adaptable in new spaces but also adds a new energy to the performance as a whole and keeps it from becoming stagnant.

**What range do you sing in opera and what languages do you sing in?**

I am a lyric soprano. I have sung in English, German, Italian, French, Spanish, Latin, Russian, Czech, Polish, Romanian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Hebrew, and Malayalam.

**What countries have you suspended in?**

I have suspended in the U.S., England, Germany, Norway, Finland, and Italy.

Thank you, Hilary, for sharing with us a piece that continues to reverberate for me. And to all the performers at BMXnet, thanks for your guts and grace! **P**









# THE UNION OF TATTOOING AND BODY PIERCING STUDIOS OF SÃO PAULO, PART 1



**RONALDO SAMPAIO**  
SETAP-SP Vice President  
Don Rodrigues Tattoo  
São Paulo, Brazil

In 2001, SETAP-SP (the Union of Tattooing and Body Piercing Studios of São Paulo) was formed with attorneys, physicians, bioanalysts, tattooists, and piercers. Considered exemplary representatives of each field, they contribute to developing safe and suitable concepts within the tattoo and body piercing industry.

Our area of expertise is the rights and responsibilities of the individuals who render tattoo and body piercing services. For this reason, we are considered by legislators and institutions as a representative for these activities in Brazil.

Our main concern today is with the Hepatitis C virus. The World Health Organization considers this a disease of the third millennium. Along with other bloodborne diseases, this is a risk during procedures with exposure to biological materials.

We have our Code of Ethics clearly worded, outlining our methodology to perform safe services. We create client records that are filled out before each service. This aids us in conducting a procedure without risks concerning the health or anatomy of each client. We have established protocols for procedures – before, during, and after.

Appropriate aftercare for both tattoo and body piercing does not mention any type of prescription medicine. The majority of the products indicated for new local cell formation are vitamin A and D based and liquid antibacterial soaps, never antiseptic sprays. This is for both the body and the face. For daily oral cleaning, we suggest alcohol-free antiseptic solutions.

The location of the piercing is considered an accumulation point for germs and bacteria. If it isn't regularly cleaned in the proper manner, it can cause inflammation. We do not believe in the efficiency of antiseptic sprays due to the fact that the secretion from the point of infection crystallizes once it has contact with air and does not allow these products to penetrate the site. The best way is to wash the area with running water two to three times a day, but no more. Excessive cleaning can damage or eliminate the new cell growth of the piercing.

We do not use any type of anesthetics, either injectable or topical, nor can we prescribe anything, because we are not licensed to do so.

We incorporate an "Occurrence Log" to track the various reactions to pigments or metals used in the procedures. We thus have been able to considerably reduce the number of reactions from 316L steel being used for initial piercings. We offer options for jewelry, and we give orientation through speeches and workshops directed toward the safety and suitability of both activities that we represent.

Because neither tattooing or body piercing have been recognized yet in Brazil, we have seen establishments without even minimal conditions and practitioners without even minimal technical skill. There are lightning-fast apprenticeships being offered. These are examples of a disservice being created for both tattooing and body piercing, and this does not even include the invasion of inferior jewelry from China! All of this has led us to the obligation of creating methods with which to propagate knowledge for those interested in furthering themselves in this universe that is so full of forms, colors, and expression.

We develop courses with:

- Dermatologists – physiology of the skin
- Bioanalysts – biohazard and infection control
- Infection specialists
- Dentists and other public health bodies
- Body piercers
- Tattoo artists
- Red Cross Brazil – First Aid
- Laws and standards regarding the practices of tattooing and piercing
- Bio-compatibility
- Government agencies, in defense of our rights and responsibilities
- Advisory groups
- And others **P**



# SINDICATO DOS DE TATUAGEM E BODY PIERCING DO ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO, PARTE 1



**RONALDO SAMPAIO**  
SETAP-SP Vice President  
Don Rodrigues Tattoo  
São Paulo, Brazil

Desde do ano de 2001 o SETAP-SP ( Sindicato dos Estudios de Tatuagem e Body Piercing do Estado de São Paulo), junto com Advogados, Médicos, Bio Médicos, Tatuadores e Piercers considerados exemplos em suas respectivas áreas. Juntos desenvolvemos conceitos tidos como seguros e adequados para a desenvoltura de ambas atividades que representamos.

Nosso campo de atuação se refleti nos direitos e deveres daqueles que prestam tais serviços, por isso somos considerados pelos legisladores e órgãos coligados, como classe representativa de tais atividades em nosso país.

A preocupação que temos nos dias de hoje é com o vírus da Hepatite C, considerada doença do terceiro milênio de acordo a O.M.S

- Organização Mundial da Saúde, entre outras doenças que podem ser adquiridas no procedimento pela exposição aos materiais biológicos.

Temos o nosso código de ética piamente redigido o qual, menciona a metodologia tida como segura para se prestar tais serviços. Desenvolvemos um cadastro de clientes, o qual, deve ser preenchido a punho antes da prestação de serviço. Para termos como conduzir o procedimento sem colocarmos o cliente em risco eminente por questões de saúde e anatomia para ter um Piercing ou uma Tatuagem. Protocolos de procedimentos: Antes, durante e depois de cada trabalho realizado.

Cuidados considerados adequados para pós aplicação do Piercing e da Tatuagem, sem mencionar, nenhum tipo de medicamento sob prescrição Médica. Em sua maioria os produtos indicados para reconstituição celular local, são a base de vitaminas A e D, antibactericidas em soluções líquidas (sabonetes). Nunca! Spray Anti Séptico... Tanto para áreas facial e tronco do Corpo. Para limpeza diária bucal soluções Anti Sépticas que não contenham álcool na composição.

O local onde foi aplicado um piercing é tido como ponto acumulador de Germes e Bactérias. Se não for limpo de maneira correta regularmente pode acarretar em processos inflamatórios.

Não acreditamos na eficacia do Spray Anti Séptico pelo fato da secreção que sai do ponto de infecção cristalizar em contato com o ar impossibilitando a penetração de tais produtos no local. A melhor maneira seria lavar a área em água corrente duas a três vezes a o dia. Não mais! Pelo fato do excesso de limpeza eliminar a células de reconstituição do ponto perfurado.

Não podemos usar nenhum tipo de anestésicos seja intra dérmicos

ou tópicos, muitos menos pescrever algo que não somos gabaritados para tal.

Livro de Ocorrência para registro das mais variadas reações do organismo decorrentes dos pigmentos ou metais utilizados na aplicação.

Conseguimos diminuir o índice de reações... Provenientes do Aço 316 L consideravelmente. Pelo fato! do mesmo ser utilizado aqui como jóia inicial... Oferecemos opcionais ao nível de joalheria e orientamos através de palestras e works shops todo um conceito tido como seguro e adequado para ambas atividades as quais, representamos.

Como ambas... ainda não foram reconhecidas no Brasil... Estabelecimentos sem as minimas condições de se aplicar um Piercing e Atuantes sem o tido como minimo dominio técnico. Oferecem métodos relâmpagos de aprendizado. Fazendo um desserviço para ambas atividades... Sem contar que, a china tem invadido a nossa atividade com jóias de aço com a composição inferior a sujerida pela comunidade medica mundial. Com isto! Nos vimos na obrigação de criarmos metodos

para propagar tais conhecimentos para aqueles que tem a pretensão de adentrar nesse universo cheio de formas, cores e expressões...

Desenvolvemos Cursos com:

- Dermatologistas
- Fisiologia da pele.
- Bio Médicos
- Biossegurança e Controle de infecção em Atividade de risco.
- Médicos Infectologistas.
- Palestras com Dentistas e outros Órgãos ligados a saúde Pública.
- Work Shops para Piercers e Tatuadores oferecido pelos Atuantes tidos pelos Diretores e Associados exemplo.
- Primeiros Socorros
- Cruz Vermelha Brasileira.
- Legislações e Normas referentes as práticas de Tatuou ou Adornar o Corpo.
- Bio compatibilidade.
- Interagimos com órgãos Publicos em defesa dos nossos direito e deveres.
- Assessoria Sindical.
- Entre outros... **P**





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# ON THE APP MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE



## CODY VAUGHN

Creative Visions  
Monterey, CA

A common question we are asked is: What exactly does the APP do? Aside from the Conference and classes, what goes on the rest of the year?

Allow me to be the first to tell you: a lot!

The APP is governed by the elected Board of Directors. Their assigned duties and titles are agreed upon by the whole Board, and keep in line with their interests, experience, talents, and skills (Membership Liaison, Medical Liaison, Outreach Coordinator, etc.).

In addition to this governing body, individual committees, staffed by volunteers, are in place to do the bulk of the work required of the organization. I volunteer on the Membership Committee, which is led by Ed Chavarria and includes Darrin Walters, Steve Joyner, Ashley Misako, Johnny Velez, and Richard Frueh. (I have individually named the volunteers here because they each deserve a thank you for their time and effort—and it's useful for other APP Members to know who is a part of the committees, in order to volunteer or offer feedback.)

On the Membership Committee, we:

- **Propose updates for APP protocols:** We now include mill certificates and recent jewelry order invoices as part of the member application process to better ensure applicants are using jewelry that meets the APP guidelines.
- **Handle/mediate complaints from members and non-members**
- **Coordinate meetings to discuss ideas and techniques:** Our committee will soon be offering virtual round tables via video chat sessions with other members twice a month. We will cover topics such as technique and aftercare. They will be similar to a round table at Conference, but will take place throughout the year.
- **Propose ideas for membership benefits and privileges**
- **Deal with impostors**

That last item may sound a bit harsh, doesn't it? But let's focus on "impostors" for a moment.

We've all seen it: piercers making claims on their Facebook or MySpace page or website that they are APP "certified" or members of the APP—the *Alliance of Professional Piercers* (an organization that does not exist, but still a favorite among people making false claims since it shares a familiar acronym)—and so on.

Few things upset members more than people making false claims. And rightfully so! What's the point of maintaining such a high level of standards, expanding our piercing education, and paying our dues—both monetarily and metaphorically—if anybody can turn around and say they are an APP Member?

A typical impostor complaint scenario goes like this: when a false

claim is brought to our attention, an email, letter, or phone call is made to the APP about improper logo usage, someone making false claims of membership, or APP "certification." Our responsibility is to gather evidence of the violation (screen shots of websites, yellow pages or other ads, business cards with APP logos, etc.) and submit them to the Board. We then write a letter informing the person(s) of their error and request that they cease and desist. A follow-up phone call is placed two weeks after the letter has gone out to make sure the infraction has been handled appropriately.

They obviously admire the APP; why else would they make false claims of membership or affiliation?

It is challenging to call a piercer you have never met and do your best to maintain a strong upholding of APP standards while, at the same time, not coming across as the piercing police. They are not always happy to hear from us. But some situations have turned into positive and encouraging

conversations. We invite those who are using our name or logo incorrectly to apply for membership. They obviously admire the APP; why else would they make false claims of membership or affiliation?

Some "impostors" have never attended Conference; some have never had the opportunity to sit down with other piercers in a setting where they can bounce ideas and techniques off one another. This is one reason follow-up calls can turn into positive communications. This helps these piercers better understand what is needed to join the APP and why the requirements are in place to begin with.

Since I've been a part of the Membership Committee, I have witnessed—and taken part in—the creation and conveying of new and exciting ideas, proposals, and projects for the organization. In fact, I've already received notification from Membership Committee Chair Ed Chavarria that many of our proposals have gained approval from the Board and will proceed.

I encourage other members to offer their assistance in the committees. It's a great way to feel more connected and a part of the APP. Our membership constituency ranges vastly in age and number of years in the industry. What better way to grow than to have these diverse minds pool together their ideas, suggestions, and input for the committees and the organization.

These committees offer a great example of what the APP stands for and how much its members give. Thanks to the Board of Directors and the volunteers who devote so much of their personal time. The next couple of years are going to be a very exciting time for us all. **P**





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# THE POINT



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## UPCOMING APP EVENTS

▶ **PHILADELPHIA  
TATTOO ARTS  
CONVENTION**  
February 4-6, 2011  
Philadelphia, PA

▶ **ACHA**  
(American College Health  
Association Conference)  
May 31-June 4, 2011  
Phoenix, AZ

▶ **APP ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE  
AND EXPOSITION**  
June 5-10, 2011  
Las Vegas, NV

▶ **NEHA**  
(National  
Environmental  
Health Association  
Conference)  
June 15-18, 2011  
Columbus, OH

▶ **HELL CITY  
TATTOO FEST**  
August 26-28, 2011  
Phoenix, AZ

▶ **APHA**  
(American Public  
Health Association  
Conference)  
October 29 -  
November 2, 2011  
Washington, DC

