

THE POINT

ISSUE 56
FALL 2011

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL PIERCERS



P. 12 **TRANSMOGRIFY**

P. 20 **ART, COUNTER-CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY**

P. 30 **CONFERENCE 2011**



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FROM THE EDITOR



JAMES WEBER
Infinite Body Piercing, Inc.
Philadelphia, PA

Once again, I find myself introducing the newest issue of *The Point*. Even though my position on the APP's Board of Directors ended this past June, I've contracted with the new Board to continue on as Editor-in-Chief of the APP's official journal. As much as I will be enjoying my time free of the stress and workload of being a Board Member and Chief Officer of the organization, I couldn't turn my back on this publication. I still have a passion for our industry and a drive to create the publication we need: a document of our industry at a time when journalism and media are changing at a dizzying pace, and everyone has a different idea on just where it's headed.

As I write this, ten different employees—editors, reporters, and journalists—of Rupert Murdoch's British tabloid *News of the World* have been arrested on charges relating to cell phone hacking and bribery of government officials. This story has outlets both in the United States and overseas not only commenting on the future of Rupert Murdoch's media empire (including Fox News and *The Wall Street Journal* here in the States), but also talking once more of bias and the ethical responsibilities of journalists.

In this country, there is still the charge—most often leveled at one side of the political spectrum by those from the other—that the media have an overreaching influence; that opinion is being manipulated by those with a social and political agenda.

I recently finished Brooke Gladstone's wonderful new book, *The Influencing Machine*. In it, she argues this is not the case, that corporate-owned media's allegiance is simply to the public opinion. They do not control their public; they pander to them. The media are a mirror and do nothing more than reflect what is already there. There is no man behind the curtain; just a big mirror. The "media machine" is us.

That's why *The Point* is important. It lets us put a mirror up to... us. It facilitates a dialogue

It you were in Las Vegas this year, this issue is your scrapbook. If you weren't there, read on and see what you missed.

between members of our industry, and between our industry and others. It lets us expand upon what we talk about in our studios, with our friends, and online. It takes the blog posts, the Facebook comments, and the debates from online forums and creates a formal dialogue, a public face for ourselves and others.

Besides, online debate can only take you so far. (And you know what they say about arguing on the internet.)

There is also criticism (most often by those invested—either emotionally or financially—in older media models) that this new, online media discourse is inherently flawed and has contributed to a partisan and insular way of thinking. That we now single out and expose ourselves to news of particular interest to us: We most often read blogs written by those we agree with, we choose online news outlets based on our politics, and we get our news from shows that share our opinions—like Fox News or The Daily Show. Instead of participating in a dialogue among those with diverse points of view, we instead insulate ourselves with online sources and social media that repeat back to us what we already know, leading to the reinforcement of ideas we already have and limiting exposure to new ones. This "echo chamber" results in one's opinions simply being echoed back by other people who only navigate through media that reinforce their preferred world view. While this argument may be simply a reaction to an unfamiliar media landscape by creators of "traditional" (i.e. older) media, it does have its merits.

This is another reason attending Conference is so very important; it facilitates a dialogue outside of the one we engage in every day. There are classes, roundtable discussions, and

workshops, but much of the learning goes on outside the classrooms—in hallways, over food, and late at night at the bar with attendees from outside our city, our state, or even our country. And this is true not just the APP's annual Conference and Expo, but at BMXnet in Germany, the APTPI events in Italy, and the APP's seminars in Mexico. It's a dialogue that you won't get in your studio—or sitting in front of your computer.

If you were in Las Vegas this year, this issue is your scrapbook. If you weren't there, read on and see what you missed. I invite you all to be part of this dialogue. Get to an event. Submit to *The Point*. Don't be left out of the conversation.

We get the media we work for. Welcome to issue #56 of *The Point: The Journal of the Association of Professional Piercers*. **P**

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IN THE OFFICE



CAITLIN McDIARMID
APP Administrator
Lawrence, KS

It's been several months since the 2011 Conference ended and we all said goodbye in Vegas. This year, as with the last few Conferences, all of the participants seemed to agree that "this was the best Conference ever." This means we organizers are doing our jobs, but I do have to wonder: Was it *really* the best Conference ever?

As one of the planners and main on-site managers of the Conference, I often see only what we could have done better: our flaws, attendees' complaints, the things that didn't go as planned.

This I do know, however: This was the best team of staff and volunteers that I (we) have ever had.

Here they are:

There was Sarah Wooten and Will Spencer—both members of the Conference Committee. They were managers of people, programs, and things. Even when I spoke gibberish at them and waved my hands around, they seemed to know what needed to be done, and they got it done. Pierre was back with Gus as our AV staff; I didn't realize how much I missed this kid until he returned.

David Kelso, Marah Stein, Anna York, Tye (Golem), Theo Sheffler, and Jezebel Voulé made up the next tier of staff.

We had employees of Board Members/former Board Members: Becky Dill and Dannielle Greenwood from Cold Steel; Mandolynne Hopkins from Virtue and Vice; and Casey Hosch from Sol Tribe.

Our Al D. Scholars were Jovi Croes (Aruba), Alexander Kumaritakis (Toronto), Kendra Berndt (Edmonton), Chris "Pixie" Smith (Memphis), Charlie Stiles (Orange City), Jason Edens (Rossville), Luna Duran (Richmond), and Aaron Foster (Cambridge).

Tiana McGuire was back for yet another year of hard work.

We had a plethora of "love" volunteers:

When I say the volunteers are the backbone of Conference, it's true—but they are the spirit as well. To these staff and volunteers this year, I thank you and I know all of the attendees thank you.

Darrin Walters, Kenny Hughes, Chadwick Jackson, Kwinton Filip, Lauren Delahaye, Meghan Riley, Jill Sans, Zane Nichols, Autumn Spinks-Miller, Ashley Misako, Kristin Young, Neek Boggs, Casey Kutilek, FaraTa' Wild, Jared Silverman, Sarah LaRoe, Seven Wolfe, and a number of other folks who just stepped up to help. (Sorry for not getting all your names!)

Allen Falkner donated a huge amount of time this year.

Ryan Ouellette again managed the mentor program and had a great group of mentors helping the new attendees out at Conference: Jesse V., John Joyce, Johnny Velez, Ricardo Hernandez, Julia Grow, Oscar Sandoval, Penelope Silverstein, Darrin Walters, Rick Frueh, Courtney Sisler, Sarvas Berry, and Mike French.

This team of staff and volunteers was not perfect, and they made mistakes. However, they were the best group I've had for a number of reasons:

- They worked as a team. No one thought twice about helping another volunteer out, covering for missing volunteers, getting up early, or staying late.
- They were joyous—I don't know how else to describe them. They were the most enthusiastic, happy, smiling, joke-cracking, hugging, loving-on-each-other group.
- They cared about their work and the Conference. Their attitude was great,

they gave 200 percent, they had fun, and they genuinely cared about the outcome.

Most of them did all of this for seven days straight—and performed just as well in the last hours of Conference as they did from the first moment they arrived. They did it tired. They did it with minimal training. They did it while in physical pain. They did it with immense social anxiety. They did it often shouldering overwhelming personal grief.

Upon reflection, I believe the people mentioned here were largely responsible for the feeling that "this was the best Conference ever." When I say the volunteers are the backbone of Conference, it's true—but they are the spirit as well. To these staff and volunteers this year, I thank you and I know all of the attendees thank you. You may not know it, but you—YOU—made this the best Conference ever! **P**

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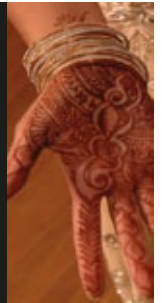


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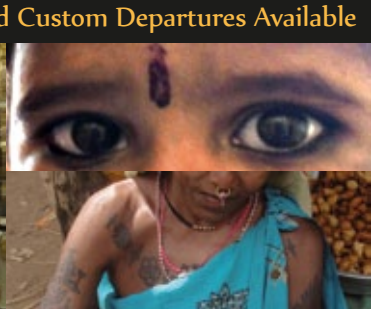
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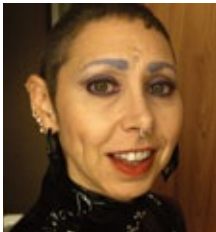
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Two authors: Elayne Angel and Jim Ward.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



ELAYNE ANGEL
APP President
Yukatan, Mexico

It is with great excitement and a bit of trepidation that I embark on my term as President of the APP. Even though I have an abundance of industry and APP Board experience to draw from, I have to admit that former president James Weber has left me with a hard act to follow—but I vow to do my best.

I want to express my thanks to him for his amazing work and his vote of confidence and support as I take over. Thank you also to all of the APP Members who have elected me to serve the organization on my fourth term on the Board of Directors. My involvement in the Association has been incredibly rewarding—and thus I'm back for more.

My desire is to emulate the calm and steady leadership style that proved so effective during James' reign. You only have to look at his "Goodbye" column on page nine to learn of his many important and impressive achievements. And it is with his end that I pick up my beginning—quite literally—by coming back once again to the all-important mission of the organization.

As the APP's "Objectives and Purposes" is commonly written today:

"The Association of Professional Piercers is a California-based, international non-profit organization dedicated to the dissemination of vital health and safety information about body piercing to piercers, healthcare professionals, legislators, and the general public."

Upon taking my new position, I've taken a hard look at the categories of people that we have pledged to educate, and considered the impact the APP has had on these populations to determine what is still needed. It is from this that I derive my inspiration for a direction in which to steer the organization during my term.

HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Having served as the Medical Liaison of the APP for two terms (six years), I know firsthand how countless members of the medical and dental communities have benefited from our organization's efforts,

and in turn so have their pierced patients. We regularly staff booths at health-related conferences, including the annual meetings of the American Public Health Association, the American College Health Association, the American Dental Hygienists' Association, the National Environmental Health Association, and others to share our information and printed materials. Having business-suited, professional piercers on hand to demonstrate visible differences between quality and junk body jewelry or articulately answer questions about tissue epithelization in piercings has made plenty of positive impressions. We have created many an ally where there previously was an enemy—or at least a suspicious doubter about safe piercings.

Our brochures, "Troubleshooting for You and Your Healthcare Professional" and "Oral Piecing Risks and Safety Measures," along with other outreach and education, have led many in the medical community to trust us as experts in the field. Through demonstrating our professionalism and dedication, APP Members have earned the respect of countless

Upon taking my new position, I've taken a hard look at the categories of people that we have pledged to educate, and considered the impact the APP has had on these populations to determine what is still needed. It is from this that I derive my inspiration for a direction in which to steer the organization during my term.

healthcare professionals with regard to our knowledge and experience.

LEGISLATORS

The APP has often been on the front lines when it comes to dealing with legislators—in fact, this is the reason the organization was originally established. The APP and our Members have been instrumental in guiding state and local legislatures to promulgate appropriate regulations for our industry. Numerous health inspectors have also come to rely on us for assistance in learning how to deal effectively with body art studios. We encourage their participation by inviting them to attend Conference gratis, and hosting a meeting between health inspectors and piercers.

To promote sound laws about body piercing, the APP's Administrator, Caitlin McDiarmid, has packets of crucial information she regularly sends to legislators, Members, and other piercers who are working with their regulatory bodies. On occasion, Senate bills on body art have come up unexpectedly, and we rally Members to be there at the last minute to provide input and help to prevent bad or unreasonable legislation from being passed.

GENERAL PUBLIC

The APP has had wide-ranging influence in this sphere, as we have built our name over the years and come to be known as trustworthy experts. In the electronic age, we have been especially effective in spreading the word. After reading the information on our website, scores of piercees seek out our Members. Tens of thousands of our "Picking Your Piercer" brochures have been circulated, and these

help us to raise public awareness of safe body art practices and clarify exactly what people should look for in a piercer and studio.

Lots of APP Members participate in local outreach and share information about safe piercing in their own communities in schools, health fairs, medical facilities, and other venues. More recently we have been staffing informational booths at tattoo conventions to access a targeted population that is interested in body art.

Given the resources we have (primarily volunteers and a limited budget), the APP has done an outstanding job of sharing information with those in the categories listed above. That leaves one more:

PIERCERS

This very publication, *The Point*, is primarily dedicated to the edification of piercers, as is our Procedure Manual. The education we make available at the APP's annual Conference is of a quality available nowhere else. (Thanks Conference Committee!) The entire Conference experience does so much to foster safety, professionalism, and excellence in our field, I'd describe it as *invaluable*. Piercers who attend the classes, workshops, roundtable discussions, and other events (whether Members or not), are among the best in the industry, as they care enough to further their education and make improvements in their practices and procedures.

We do spread ourselves around, but piercers have remained a central focus of the organization—and understandably so. Still, there remains one large, under-served population that is in dire need of what the APP has to offer: the many piercers who do not

read our publications or attend Conference.

In my experience, piercers are divided into two distinct groups: our Members (and those who attend our Conference and make use of our information) and the other guys. The first is being well cared for, and the second... well, we really need to do something about them.

Just yesterday, I received an email from a woman who was in agony. She went into her local tattoo/piercing studio and requested a Vertical Clitoral Hood (VCH) piercing. She left with a piercing through her clitoral glans. The piercer claimed to have been experienced in "hood piercings" yet clearly he had no idea of what he was doing. I receive daily messages from people who have received botched piercings, and we've all seen horrid piercing videos on YouTube that make us want to scream. Each of us misses out on business because people who would be interested in piercings get turned off by exposure to bad work.

The truth is, for all the APP has done, there is still a LOT of bad piercing going on out there. What I'd like to do, with the support of the Membership, is to draw these piercers somehow into our fold to educate them. Doing so can only bring up the standard of the entire industry, and that's good for everyone.

I'm not talking about a change in the standards for APP Membership, but I do want to look at ways to reach out and encourage "the other guys" to have some level of affiliation of with the organization. My objective is to help them do a better job, because botched piercings are bad for all of us.

I obviously have ideas on how to make this happen, but your input is needed too. Share them with me at president@safepiercing.org. **P**



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BOARD MEMBER GOODBYES



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

Three years ago, I wrote this in *The Point*, at the start of my second term on the APP's Board of Directors:

"The outgoing Board of Directors—on which I served as Medical Liaison—was plagued by communication problems, personality clashes, and drama. Of the original seven of us elected, at the culmination of our three-year term only four of us remain. Through the unforgiving lens of the internet, all our difficulties were amplified, our struggles exaggerated, and the three subsequent resignations came to overshadow any of our accomplishments."

The situation I came into on my second term was much different. Out of the seven-person Board, two Board Members were continuing on to the second year of their three-year terms, three of us had served on the Board previously, and of the two "green" Board Members, one had already been volunteering at Conference for several years. Add to this mix a former Board Member as appointed Treasurer, and we had an incredible team right out of the gate.

But this team was also riding a lame horse, so as much as we wanted to charge out of the gate, we needed to assess our injuries. With

that limping leadership, Membership opinion was polarized and deeply fragmented as well.

Piercers have always been passionate, and our membership is no exception. Many felt strongly about how the organization should be run—especially those who disagreed with how it *was* being run—and many of those felt their voice was not being heard. Views varied on everything from the primary focus of the organization to how the APP conducted its elections. I came from being the organization's Medical Liaison to its de-facto leader—in the middle of one of the organization's biggest identity crises.

The first Member's meeting I oversaw included presentations from both the APP's bylaw consultant and its lawyer, explaining the APP's election process at our most-attended Member meeting ever. (Piercers are not only passionate, but they very often want front-row seats when drama unfolds.) This event was either an enlightening educational meeting for those in attendance or a disappointingly uneventful one, depending on your point of view.

Looking back, that meeting came to define my time as President.

By necessity, I became the APP's expert on Robert's Rules of Order, the APP's bylaws and even, by extension, California non-profit code. (The article on Robert's Rules I drafted for *The Point* three years ago is still being distributed at our annual Members' meeting.) I also researched copyright law, and that first year I introduced an update to the APP copyright licensing on all printed materials, also updating the APP's logo usage criteria to apply to social media.

The second year, as President and head of the Bylaw Committee, I worked with the rest of the Board—with feedback solicited from the Membership—to re-examine the role of corporate entities inside the organization. We changed the categorization of Associate Corporate Members to Corporate Sponsors and established a new role for their involvement within the APP.

And through this work we redefined what it meant to be an APP Member—and a member of the Board of Directors or Officer—by going back to the bylaws. The result is a Board going forward with two officers outside of the Board of Directors, to better administrate Board decisions and facilitate a smooth transition

between Board elections. This would never have happened five years ago—or even three.

It's said that you really don't know something until you can teach it to someone else. Through all of this, I worked on educating the Membership and *Point* readers about these changes through my "President's Corner" and "From the Editor" columns. I was also the co-author of the first article published by the APP addressing the use of dermal punches by piercers, marking a sea-change in the way the organization addresses the use of these devices and opening a dialogue that continues today.

Is this all just bragging? Maybe a little, but it's more than that.

I'm proud of my part in the Board's accomplishments over my last term, but it's important that our Members—and readers of *The Point*—know just how far this organization has come in the last three years. This is what I'm most proud of accomplishing in my time as President: helping the organization understand itself and its role as a non-profit.

What advice do I have for the new Board and Membership? The same advice I was given when I started: Have a clear idea of what the organization is, and does. It all starts with the APP's bylaws:

**ARTICLE 2
PURPOSES**

**SECTION 2.1
OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES**

The primary objectives and purposes of this Corporation shall be: TO DEVELOP AND DISSEMINATE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, INCLUDING THE PROFESSIONAL PIERCING COMMUNITY THAT INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO HEALTH, SAFETY AND OTHER ISSUES PERTINENT TO THE PIERCING COMMUNITY, THROUGH PUBLICATIONS, LECTURES OR OTHER INFORMATION EXCHANGES.

Or, as it is commonly written today:

"The Association of Professional Piercers is a California-based, international non-profit organization dedicated to the dissemination of

vital health and safety information about body piercing to piercers, healthcare professionals, legislators, and the general public."

When I started out on the APP's Board of Directors, understanding the mission statement—and being able to recite it verbatim—was considered crucial to the job. Many people have a strong opinion on what the APP is, does, or should do. Some believe that we should be a lobbying organization, petitioning legislators for regulations in places there are none. Some an endorsement entity, giving a seal of approval to jewelry and manufacturers that follow certain criteria. Others that we should—or do—train and certify piercers. Or that we should be a standards organization, setting standards for an industry that, in many ways, still operates like the wild west.

While the industry may need organizations to fill these many roles—and while the APP has at times embodied these personas—this is not our primary purpose. We are, first and foremost, an educational organization. We get information about body piercing to people who need it. It can be argued what the APP should be, but there is little question about what the APP is, legally. This question does not need more debating.

What advice do I have for anyone contemplating running for the Board? Do it.

I've had the opportunity to learn about things that I never would have otherwise: about non-profits and bylaws; about Robert's Rules and parliamentary procedure; about graphic design and copyright law; about writing, grammar, editing, and publishing; about public speaking, and

how to deal with people; about what's worth fighting for, and what's best just to let go.

I've met my heroes, and been given the opportunity to work with many of them. Some of them—very few of them—have held up to close scrutiny without the guilt coming off on my hands. These are the people who have impressed me the most: the larger-than-life personalities who turned out to be genuinely good people. Some of them I've had the opportunity to work with as peers, and a few of them I now consider friends.

Thank you to Elayne Angel, my predecessor in *The Point* and my successor in the presidency. To Paul King, who maddeningly insisted on playing devil's advocate in many a meeting, but forced us to think about exactly what we were doing and how we were doing it. Danny Yerna, for showing me just how much one person can accomplish, and especially Bethra Szumski, my comrade-in-arms through everything who helped me to find a strength I never knew I had.

Lastly, I would like to thank the banquet streakers, for teaching me to never take myself too seriously.





ED CHAVARRIA
 Former APP Membership Liaison
 High Priestess
 Salem, OR

Three years have gone so quickly. I remember when I received the letter of nomination to the Board of Directors, and how I felt that my peers voted me into the pool of potential Board Members. I was even more honored when I got the phone call informing me that I was going to be on the APP Board. When I started, I don't think I realized exactly what I had signed up for and the opportunities and challenges this would present.

Serving as a Board Member for the APP has

efficient and removing the possibility of bias affecting acceptance or denial of membership. I am most proud of the committee's organization of roundtable discussions via the internet, for APP Members to communicate and compare and contrast ideas. I am continuing to head this committee now that my term is officially over, and I hope to continue on with the progress this committee has made.

As I look back and reminisce over the past few years, I can say I am very happy I accepted the

amazing moments we shared. Thank you to the Membership of the APP: I would not have had this opportunity or experience if you guys did not vote me in in the first place.

Most importantly, thank you Tiana McGuire: You have been everything to me for the last three years; you have pushed me and motivated me more than any other person. I appreciate all the understanding, help, and dedication you have shown me. Thank you also for always keeping me on my toes and motivating me when doing

It has been a pleasure working with people who I always looked up to as a younger piercer—many of whom I considered heroes. The friendships and bonds I created with other members of the APP's Board of Directors is something I never thought I would have an opportunity to do. I will always value this experience, and hope the friendships I built with them will continue.

been one of the highlights of my piercing career. It made me feel I had finally come of age—not only within my community, but within myself.

When I first assumed the position of Membership Liaison, the only experience I had was being a long-time volunteer at the annual APP Conference. I grew from an AI D. Scholar to a regular volunteer, made a point of being a trustee volunteer, and finally was Caitlin's assistant before assuming a Board position. But all this volunteer time was not enough of a warm-up to the shoes I filled upon accepting my Board position.

It took me about a year to figure out what my responsibilities were, how to apply things, and how to be productive. The two years after were a whirlwind of projects and achievements. In that time, I started the APP's first Membership Committee to specifically address membership issues. During my time as head of this committee, I established protocols for membership complaints and impostor complaints. I cross-trained volunteer members in the application process, making it more

challenge. Being on the Board of Directors has opened my eyes to many things about me, about my industry, and about my community.

It has been a pleasure working with people who I always looked up to as a younger piercer—many of whom I considered heroes. The friendships and bonds I created with other members of the APP's Board of Directors is something I never thought I would have an opportunity to do. I will always value this experience, and hope the friendships I built with them will continue.

Lastly, I would like to thank the many people who believed in me and helped me to get where I am today. Thank you Byriah Dailey and Steve Joyner: Both of you saw a potential in me that I did not know I had, and I appreciate what you both have done for me. Thank you to the members of the APP's Board of Directors who I worked with the last three years: Thank you for the pep talks, the help, the encouragement, and the willingness to push me to do better for myself. You are the best people I could have served with, and I will never forget any of the

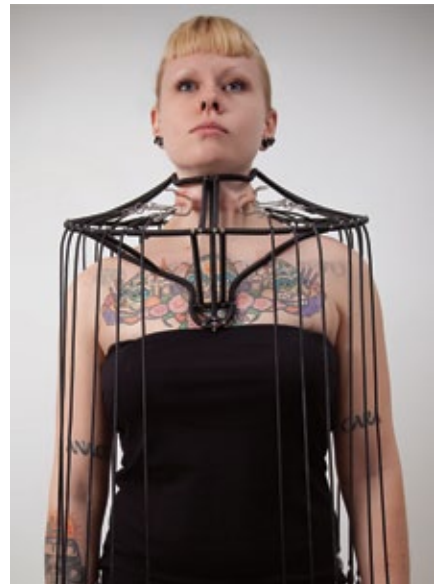
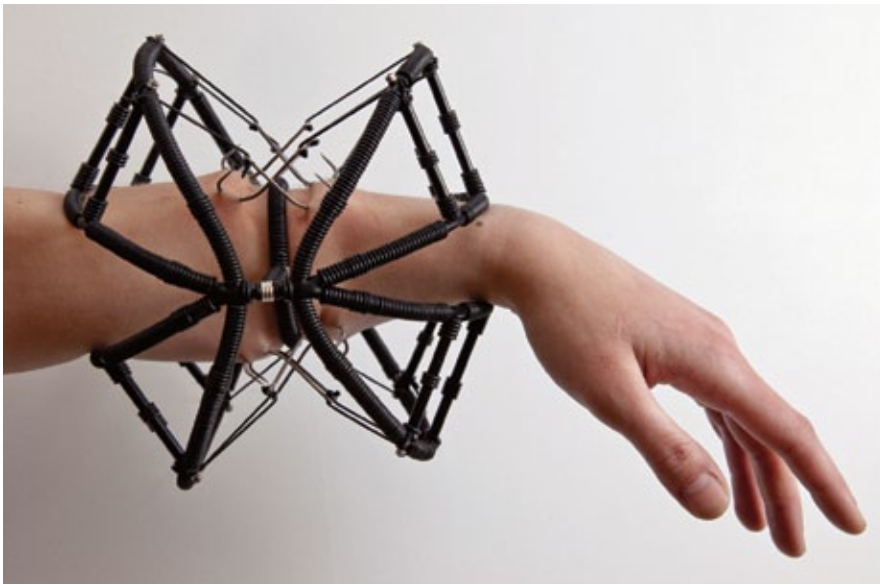
this has gotten hard. If anyone has seen or suffered from any of the negative reactions of me serving on the Board it has been you, and yet you always encourage me to continue to do what I love to do. Thanks for standing behind me and being the most supportive person in my life.

Thanks everyone for the past three years. I hope to remain equally productive by serving in committees—and I may even return to being a Board Member in the future. I wish the incoming Board lots of luck and I hope that you are able to be as productive—if not more productive—than we were. Remember to breathe, and know that everything you are doing is for the greater good.

Namaste. **P**

At the last APP Conference, Didier Suarez (pictured on page 8) also stepped down from his position on the APP's Board of Directors after serving three years as Vice-President.





TRANSMOGRIFY



GENNE LAAKSO
Tacoma, WA

Using a post-industrial aesthetic, I push the boundaries of jewelry by exploring ways to create rituals of wearing, marking, and recovery by making objects that place a physical demand on the wearer. The culminating pieces of the series knit together contemporary practices of ornament, piercing, and the physical attributes of flesh suspension and relate to my experiences performing within the community. My devices leave a temporary or permanent mark that becomes a secondary form of decoration and a vestige of the act.

In 2006 I moved across the country, from Ohio to Washington, to begin my Masters in Fine Arts degree focusing on jewelry/metalsmithing at Central Washington University. I received my BFA at Kent State University two years prior. I knew I would be continuing my undergraduate thesis:

developing devices that marked the body.

A year into my MFA thesis I began my adventure into body suspension—marking a huge transition in my life. At this time I had spent more than ten years researching the history of body modification rituals, practitioners, and the cultures involved. I never knew it would lead me to be where I am today. After experiencing body suspension I became intrigued with the personal, physical, and emotional sensations (before, during, and after); the physical form of the body while suspended; and the marks that are left by the hooks. During a public performance with a group based out of Michigan, now known as Escape Suspension, I wore *Subjectivity/Objectivity (Garter IV)*, a garter I made from razor blades. This heightened the suspension experience for me, though my work was secondary to the public act of suspension. I

struggled for months on ways to merge the physical attributes of body suspension with jewelry. It wasn't until I gave up on forcing the ideas that they began to emerge.

In my last year of graduate school in 2008/09, *Promenading in Elation* and *Amalgamation* developed out of my experiences and interest in merging jewelry/sculpture with the physical transformation of flesh suspension. This raised the question: Was I willing to slowly become physically part of my work in a manner I hadn't experienced yet? It seemed only natural to proceed with these last two devices. *Promenading in Elation* and *Amalgamation* are inspired by methods of pulling the skin with hooks using weights and tension lines rather than the weight of the body, historic rituals, suspension practitioners, and artists who have used these methods (such as Stelarc¹).

1. Stelarc, an Australian artist, began to exhibit his notion that "the body is obsolete" by merging flesh suspension and performance art in the 1970s. He performed more than twenty flesh hook suspensions hanging from a machine in different locations such as over the streets in New York City during rush hour. Stelarc believed that "the cables were lines of tension, which were part of the visual design of the suspended body, and the stretched skin was a kind of gravitational landscape. The skin has a boundary for the soul for the self and simultaneously a beginning to the world." Once the technology stretches and pierces the skin, the skin as a barrier is erased. Source: Paolo Atzori and Kirk Wolford, "Extended-Body: Interview with Stelarc," in *The Artist's Body*, 184 (New York: Phaidon Press Inc., 2006).

Promenading in Elation was developed to expose the neck in order to allow the skin to be pulled away from the body, making the flesh an intrinsic visual part of the piece, and to hold weights that would serve to pull the skin. As I walk, the weights swing and shift the pull of my neck in different directions, reacting to my body in motion. I have used this kinetic reaction to heighten the experience of the collar by deliberately shifting my body weight from one side to another. I take this a step farther by spinning in circles, which pulls the weights outward and creates a stronger pull on my neck, continuing to transform the pull of the skin.

Amalgamation is a bracelet that works in a similar manner, but with tension lines rather than weights. Twelve hooks are pierced

through my forearm and attached to the frame of the bracelet. The movement of my arm is limited to a slightly bent position and every muscle movement pulls upon the hooks.

Previous devices I created simply pressed objects into the skin to ornament a particular part of the body and leave a temporary design. These two piercing pieces significantly extend the scope of my work since the skin is being penetrated and transformed by the pull of an object, not by the object being pressed into the skin. The mark becomes a more visible scar and enters the structure of the body, dissolving the boundary between jewelry and flesh. These resultant scars serve as markers of the event and as a permanent ornament.

I have worn *Promenading in Elation* at numerous events such as the Dallas

Suspension Conference (2009) and the Seattle Erotic Art Festival (2010). This past April, Allen Falkner invited me to have a fashion show at Freaks and Fetish, the opening party for the Dallas Suspension Conference.

I still consider both of these pieces prototypes. *Amalgamation* has only been worn once and will be redesigned with all the kinks worked out. The frame for *Promenading in Elation* was rebuilt in 2010 and the hooks were downsized. My experiences creating, wearing, and exhibiting these pieces have deepened my understanding of the emotional and social meanings of piercing and suspension and will lead to further experiments in creating jewelry that continues to pursue those goals. **P**



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SKIN PREP REVIEW: MICROSAN RX



RYAN OUELLETTE
Precision Body Arts
Nashua, NH

S ometime in the fall of 2010, I started researching skin prep products to find viable alternatives to Techni-Care. The first product I found was Opti-Scrub; I used it for several weeks and produced a review article based on my initial time with it. [See issue #53 of *The Point*.] In the weeks that followed, Opti-Scrub use spread among fellow piercers.

In the several months following the article's publication, I heard various concerns about labeling, and had my own concerns about product consistency variations. While I still carry and utilize Opti-Scrub in my own studio for some applications, I no longer use it exclusively. I went back to researching alternatives.

Recently, my medical supply distributor pointed me toward a new product: Microsan RX. For anyone who used Techni-Care regularly, Microsan RX will seem very similar—even down to the smell. It's a liquid soap with 1.75 percent PCMX (parachlorometaxylenol) and BZK (benzalkonium chloride). All the literature I read seems to list only the PCMX as its active ingredient, but it does contain BZK too.

It has similar overall efficacy as Techni-Care and Opti-Scrub. It kills 99.99 percent of susceptible bacteria, yeasts, and viruses with a thirty-second contact time, leaving four to six hours of residual protection against recolonization of tested organisms. The technical data I received touts effective elimination of more than one hundred pathogenic bacterias, including several antibiotic-resistant strains and several common viruses. It is FDA-rated as a health care product and is OSHA-safe for use under latex gloves. Microsan RX has also been formulated and tested to be a safe and effective skin prep for both oral and genital mucosa. It gets the job done, but the real meat of what goes into making a good skin prep for body modification is

the finer points of application and use.

Microsan RX, like Opti-Scrub, has more than one product type under the same brand name. Both work the same on a technical level, both have the same concentration of active ingredients, and both kill the same pathogens, but there is a tangible difference in the thickness of the two products. The basic Microsan RX product is widely available online and through multiple body art suppliers. This was the first product I tested. It has the consistency of a watery gel soap, and often I found myself having to dole out an extra pump in order to have enough to prep an area thoroughly. It worked well though, even with its runny viscosity. When worked onto the skin it foamed easily and left the area very clean—without removing my marks applied pre-cleaning.

The bottle instructs users to apply a small amount of soap and wash for thirty seconds, then rinse, but there is a contradiction with this and the technical data I received for the product. In it, the instructions explicitly state that after a thirty-second scrub you can merely wipe off excess product with sterile gauze and that “there is no need to rinse.” I apply the product with dry sterile gauze, and I also remove it with dry sterile gauze. I've seen no need to use saline or water to rinse it away.

The other version is referred to as Microsan RX E2T. The alternate designation is nothing fancy; the “E2” part is from an older product code. “E2” was the old designation for Healthcare Professional



Skin cleansers and scrubs,” according to Dr. Robert Bogosian of Global Biotechnologies Inc., the parent company of Microsan. The T in “E2T” just stands for “thickened.” E2T came with additional labeling calling it a “special formula for tattoo and piercing,” but it's little more than a sticker on the basic Microsan RX bottle. This version has a noticeably denser consistency, more like a syrup than a liquid. I find I need less product to clean the same area. While the basic Microsan RX is widely available, the E2T version is currently sold as a dealer exclusive through only one body jewelry distributor. I am hopeful that the E2T will become more widely available in the future as I find it to be the superior product.

Both the basic Microsan RX and the E2T version come in an eight-ounce pump, sixteen-ounce pump, and one-gallon bottle, and they are competitively priced. So while I won't make the same mistake and endorse one product as my sole skin prep, I will say that Microsan RX is a great product, and the best I've used since Techni-Care became unavailable.

For MSDS and additional info contact Global Biotechnologies, Incorporated at 1-800-755-8420, or online at www.globalbio.com. **P**

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*“Essential reading...”**

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET

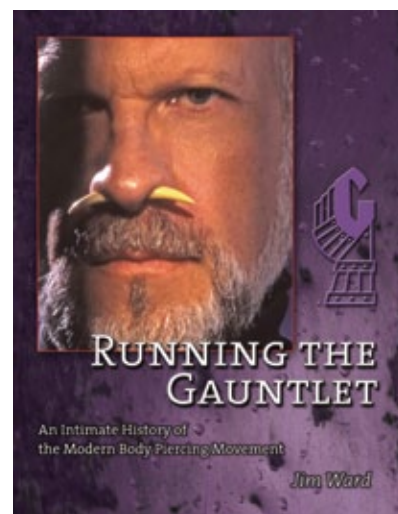
An Intimate History of the Modern Body Piercing Movement by Jim Ward

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Running the Gauntlet will be available at the 2011 APP Conference. Pre-order your personal copy or multiple copies to sell in your studio (<http://www.safepiercing.org/publications/running-the-gauntlet/>). Stop by Jim Ward's table in the vendor area, meet the author, and pick up your signed copies from him!

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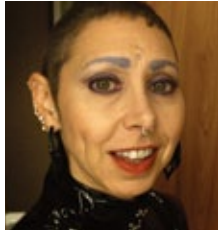


*

“Essential reading for anyone who wants to understand how modern body piercing arrived at the place it currently occupies.”

JAMES WEBER, *Former President*
Association of Professional Piercers

PRE-STERILIZED NEEDLES AND PIERCING INSTRUMENTS



ELAYNE ANGEL
APP President
Yukatan, Mexico

Earlier this year—while I was still the APP’s Medical Liaison—a Florida health inspector emailed me a question that deserves addressing here, in *The Point*. Her inquiry was regarding the APP’s stance on the prepackaged “sterile” instruments, needles, and jewelry that are being marketed and sold to our industry. (She had seen an increase in use of these items by piercers in her state.) When she set out to research the procedures used for the sterilization of these products, she reported that she could not locate *any* manufacturers of body piercing instruments, needles, or jewelry that follow the standards for sterility established in the United States for medical device manufacturers.

In the U.S., manufacturers selling sterile products are obligated to follow the U.S. Food and Drug Administration 21 CFR part 820 and International Standardization Organization standard 13485 for sterilization to ensure that their products are safe and effective. These detailed good manufacturing practice (CGMP) requirements form a highly structured system for regulating quality, and govern the methods used in the design, manufacture, packaging, labeling, and storage of all finished devices intended for human use.

All items used in a piercing (including jewelry, needles, tools, and any other supplies or equipment) must be sterilized in the studio using an autoclave that is spore-tested regularly. The only exceptions to this would be medical supplies that come directly from a medical supply vendor who adheres to the requisite stringent standards, or a body art industry supplier who can certify that they uphold the same requirements.

The *APP Procedure Manual* describes in-house sterilization:

“To minimize the risk of cross-contamination and to ensure that the piercing procedure

is as clean as possible, many components of a piercing set-up are disposable. Unless supplies will be sterilized in a Statim autoclave immediately prior to the procedure, all disposables must be individually packaged in autoclave bags, sterilized, and remain in their pouches stored in enclosed, nonporous containers until use. Disposable materials that can and should be autoclaved include piercing needles, corks, rubber bands, cotton swabs, toothpicks, and gauze.”

The excerpt below is from my book, *The Piercing Bible: The Definitive Guide to Safe Body Piercing* (Random House, May 2009):

Even in studios where procedures are done only with disposable equipment, an autoclave must be used. A piercer cannot be certain that needles and body jewelry are sent in a sterile state or whether contamination occurs during shipping. Medical suppliers have stringent requirements for sterilization and packaging, but other industries are not held to the same standard.

Piercers and body art business owners should pay close attention to this issue for the safety of their clients. It has become clear that many piercers are making the assumption that items touted as “sterile” are ready to use in the studio. However, this may not be the case when the products come from body art suppliers. While piercers aren’t medical professionals, this is an area in which abiding by their practices is entirely appropriate.

When you buy “sterile” prepackaged products from *body jewelry and piercing supply companies*, be aware that they are not bound by the same requirements that govern the medical field. For safety you *must* sterilize on-site all jewelry and needles, as well as forceps and other tools before use.

Only when sterile items are purchased from medical suppliers—who must uphold strict CGMP standards—can articles be considered ready for use without sterilizing in-house. The only exception would be if your body art industry supplier can show you certification that they are following the same stringent standards required by the medical industry. **P**

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I AM NOT MY BODY

ART, COUNTER-CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY



JASON PFOHL

Gorilla Glass
Oaxaca, Mexico

All images by Jason Pfohl and Elayne Angel

I am very proud to be part of the piercing and body modification community. We have collectively created our own sub-culture in every sense: with our own fashion, language, rituals, artwork, and entertainment. Sometimes it seems we exist in a bubble, unaware or unconcerned with the mainstream culture. My life requires me to exist in two worlds: the business and manufacturing reality of an ex-pat living in Mexico, and my friends and customers in the worldwide piercing community. Living between these two worlds, I am inspired to break down the one group's narrow perceptions about body modification performed by the other.

I have always been aware of the stigmas and stereotypes attached to tattooing and piercing. For me, making glass body jewelry is a way to combat the typical image of the metal kid dressed in black and pierced with metal spikes. Glass is something colorful, beautiful, and hand-crafted. People do not expect to see something beautiful in an "ugly" piercing, and hopefully it is a detail that changes people's perceptions and makes them more receptive to the beauty of piercing—even if only in a small way.

Making jewelry is amazing, but I also want to make an impact on the culture at-large. It's important to balance and challenge the negative stereotypes from TV and the mass media with positive images. I want to challenge people's notions that piercing is just a fad that has gone mainstream; piercing is a lifestyle for many of us. Facial tattoos, scarification, and implants will never be mainstream. I want people to recognize the sincerity of body modification, and to learn to keep an open mind.

I had a chance to advance my social-artistic vision this year when I was invited by the state government of Jalisco, Mexico to present a body of art work in the museum Ex Convento de Carmen in Guadalajara. It was a joint show with my friend Orfeo Quagliata, who created

an impressive environment of oversized fairyland glass sculptures. I was invited as a glass artist, but what the organizers received was a bit of a surprise.

A little backstory: Orfeo is an old friend from my days at the famous Pilchuck Glass School. It was Orfeo who invited me to set up shop in Mexico City ten years ago, and he is also the mad scientist behind the Power Plug glass designs. (See www.phuzedesign.com.)

The Guadalajara show was a huge breakthrough for me professionally and artistically, as I finally had an opportunity to use art to express the beauty, diversity, and freedom that the modified counter-culture represents. Using photography, drawing, video installation, stencil art, silk screening, and glass casting, I presented body modification as the ultimate form of personal expression, and Buck Angel as the true sexual icon of the modern age. (More about Buck in a moment.) The opening was packed, with more than five hundred people and the news media attending. While I had imagined enjoying people's reactions to the artwork, most of my time during the opening was spent tagging along with Buck while he signed posters for fans.

The following week, when the museum director censored one of my video installations I gained some notoriety and made front page news in *La Jornada*. My response to the censorship was published in the newspaper, followed by the director's rebuttal. I embrace controversy and believe that provocative artwork should generate discussion, so I considered the show a big success.

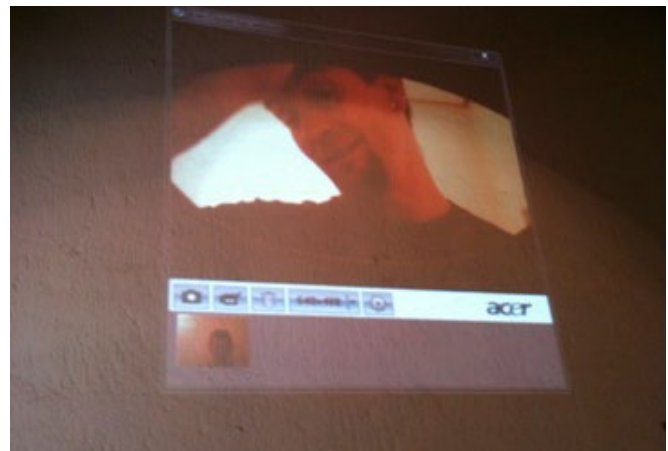
My part of the show was separated into two bodies of work titled "Modificaciones Corporales" (Body Modifications) and "Buck Angel," shown in three rooms. The first room was primarily photography, with intimate portraits of pierced and tattooed people wearing glass jewelry mounted in large format. Some of these portraits were taken in Las Vegas during the APP Conference, and others in a

photo studio in Mexico City. These images are part of an ongoing, eight-year collaboration with three well-known photographers: Victor Mendiola, Dante Busquets, and Gregory Allen. Thanks to each of them for their hard work and artistic sensibility. It was a good feeling to finally show these images in a gallery setting.

Another element, apart from the photographs, was text in big block vinyl letters on the floor spanning the entire length of the narrow space announcing, "I AM NOT MY BODY"—a quote lovingly stolen from my friend Erica Skadsen. For me, this expression exemplifies the declaration of independence we all wear daily, drawn and punctuated on our tattooed and pierced bodies. "I AM NOT MY BODY" is simultaneously a challenge and affirmation of Catholic metaphysics. Catholics believe in the separation of the spirit and the body. My interpretation of this philosophy is that we are free to modify our bodies as our spirit moves us, and being born with a vagina doesn't necessarily make you a woman—as in the case of Buck Angel. (How ironic and fitting that the museum is in an old convent.) On the back wall, three life-size silhouettes suspended from the ceiling; self portraits from my suspension experience and another reference to setting the spirit free by negating the body. The second room featured a video projection of my first suspension, which took place in an abandoned hydroelectric plant in Oaxaca, Mexico.¹

The third room featured Buck Angel as the archetype of the modern sex symbol. For those who aren't familiar with Buck Angel, he is a ground-breaking transsexual porn star and educator. He has proudly dubbed himself

1. *Jussi Ranta and Lassi Lindquist did the suspension, and Edson Trujillo did the filming and editing. To see the video go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaurydX8wXc>.



“The Man with a Pussy.” I could spend a long time writing about Buck, but it’s best to just go to buckangel.com and see for yourself. (In addition to this collaboration, Gorilla Glass has a new sex toy project with Buck Angel, which you can see at getgorillasex.com.)

The “Buck Angel” exhibit was the most challenging, technically and conceptually. With inspiration from the Pop Art movement, it makes reference to Andy Warhol’s images of Marilyn Monroe exactly fifty years after he made them. There were both two-dimensional and three-dimensional objects in this room: several oversized images of Buck’s genitals painted with bright colors; realistic glass casts of his vulva and the lower part of his face; a Buck Angel full-body portrait painted using stencils and posing with a glass sex toy; and the real glass double-ended dildo seen in the accompanying portrait was displayed on a pedestal nearby. The most controversial piece was “Porno Box,” a pink box containing a laptop computer with a thirty-second video loop of a Buck Angel porno movie. In the video clip it appears like regular gay porn with an encounter between two men, until the camera pans down and you see that

Buck has a vagina. The laptop’s webcam records the expression of the viewer and projects their reaction in real time on the wall in the museum’s entrance. The first thing people saw upon entering the show is the projection of the individuals’ responses to “Porno Box.” This was the piece that was censored by the museum director several days after the opening and caused controversy in the local press.

The “Buck Angel” exhibit was a commentary on our modern society, how media and technology affect our lives, the line between art and pornography, and an updated look at gender and sexuality. In the end, I don’t know how much impact the art had on the attending public. Perhaps suspension videos and “Man Pussy” images will only polarize people’s views rather than change them. But at the very least, the artwork demanded a response from the viewer, positive or negative. For me, it reaffirmed how satisfied I am to be part of this piercing sub-culture.

This show was the result of the work of a whole team of photographers, video artists, street artists, graphic designers, and glass artists all united by my vision and the body

modification experience. Special thanks to Bernhard Rehn for inviting me to do my first museum show. Thanks to Orfeo Quagliata for inviting me along for an amazing ride in Mexico. Thanks to Buck and Elayne Angel for showing me a new way of looking at the world. Thanks to Victor Mendiola for his amazing photography and helping with the retouching and mounting of the images. Thanks to Dante Busquets for his friendship and photography. Thanks to Gregory Allen for taking time out from his busy schedule to come to Las Vegas and take portrait photos. Thanks to Edson Trujillo for the video installation of the suspension. Thanks to Roberto and Rosario of La Piztola for the stencil art and screen printing. (La Piztola does all the screen printing for the Gorilla Glass T-shirts and posters.) Thanks to Luisa Restrepo for making the glass casting possible. Thanks to Carlos Franco for the silhouette images. Thanks to my entire team at Gorilla Glass who make everything possible. Last but not least, a most special thank you to all the models who sat for these photos; you are the subject and inspiration, the living artwork. **P**



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FROM LOST TO FOUND TRAVEL: BODY ART AND ADORNMENT IN INDIA



KIMBERLY ZAPATA
Infinite Body Piercing, Inc.
Philadelphia, PA

“The aim of art is not to represent the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance.” —ARISTOTLE

If you were at this year’s APP Conference, you may have noticed—and even spoken to—a young woman set up in the front corner of the exposition floor. Surrounded by images and art, rather than body jewelry, you may have walked right past her without realizing it—or you may have been one of many who decided to stop, take a look, and explore further.

I was first contacted by Allison Rulon-Miller several weeks prior to Conference to talk about her tour group, From Lost to Found Travel. It is a company that specializes in “special interest tours to the Indian subcontinent,” including their newest: tours about body art and adornment in India. My interest piqued; I responded to Allison’s email and set up a meeting. Only when I arrived at her office—and home—and spoke to her over a cup of freshly ground and brewed Indian coffee did I realize the story she had to tell.

As we talked, I thought, “How do you

write about a tour you’ve never been on, a country you’ve never been to?” I cannot tell a story of the tours themselves; I cannot tell you what I saw, or did, or even what I felt, since these experiences are not my own. I can only tell you the story I came to hear: Allison’s story, a story about the India I have come to know from halfway around the world, from a conversation over a cup of coffee.

As Allison explained, body art in India consists of both permanent modifications and temporary, decorative, ritualistic adornment (think henna, certain types of saris, large beaded necklaces, and bangles and bracelets of silver and brass.) “I look at this tour concept more as body adornment rather than body modification, the latter being viewed by me as anything permanent—ritualistic or not. Body adornment, as I use it as a tour theme, includes not only tattooing and piercing-related jewelry—earrings/nose rings—but armllets/anklets/talismans/astrological rings, clothing—traditional and tribal versus high-fashion—headwear, cosmetics/sindur, hair styles, body painting, and mehndi, among many other aspects of personal appearance,”

she said. “The art of getting dressed [there] is highly ritualistic and deliberate.”

Allison has traveled to India many times over the last twenty years, and as a woman she has found herself in a strange yet fortunate position: In India, it is a cultural taboo for men to speak directly to women; the same is true for taking photographs. They must obtain the permission of the husband, father, or brother of the woman, and even with this permission, the men often expect something in exchange. But Allison is granted a certain amount of leeway, allowing her to ask the questions no one does—and get the incredible amount of photos she does. She says no one there questions body adornment: their reasons, rituals, and meanings. To those living in India, body art and adornment is simply a part of who they are. It is a cultural norm. Allison, like most Westerners, wanted to know more. While it was easier for her to ask the questions few are allowed to ask, it did not help her receive truer answers.

She observed body art and adornment to be more prevalent with Indian women than men. This is not to say that men do not have





their own specific modifications, apparel, and jewelry, but it seems to be a more integral part of the lives and milestones of females: from henna to bangles and bracelets to tattooing. As you can see from the accompanying pictures on the preceding pages, traditional Indian tattoo designs are relatively sparse to Western eyes. They are far less intricate than, say, Japanese-style tattoos—and are devoid of color. As Allison went from village to village, she saw all sorts of tattoos—mostly on women—and while the designs varied, there were repeated motifs from one community to another. (For example, tattoos on women, much like the one on the previous page, represent everything from a woman's caste to marital status, while many other markings represent luck or, in the case of a black dot on a woman's forehead or chin, protection, specifically from the "evil eye." The same symbols appeared over and over, on women young to old.

Certain piercings hold particular meanings, often representing the various stages of one's life. And, as you can imagine, the jewelry chosen was just as deliberate. (The woman—above—wears gold rings through her nostrils, symbolic of an amorous ornamentation often connected with female sexuality, while her ears

are adorned by several silver hoops.) Whether it be the numbers, colors, and materials of bangles and bracelets, or the jewelry one wears through a nostril, in rural India everything is done deliberately and traditionally—though, predictably, many Indian cities have abandoned the old adornments in their shift toward modernity.

While my only true taste of India was a single cup of coffee, and the only tangible items I experienced were a few brass hair pins and assorted jewelry, I felt transported. Looking through pictures of places I've never been, into the faces of people I will probably never know, one particular image stuck with me: it shows the face of a young child, a year or two old, covered in nothing but bangles of green and gold, a simple beaded necklace of yellow and brown, and adorned with double nostrils—one on each side—and a septum piercing (see above). She stares up at something out of the picture's frame, yet in her eyes there is a reflection; I can see the faint outline of a village, her village, and the sun. And as I look at this one image, I keep wondering: What is the story told by these men and women, told by this one child, told through their jewelry, their tattoos, their decorations and dress? **P**

ABOUT THE TOUR

At this time, there are two separate body-adornment-based trips scheduled. The first, "Body Art and Adornment of Western India," has two scheduled departures: one in September 2011—during the Ramdevra festival—and one from February to March 2012. The second is a one-time trip titled, "Body Art and Adornment in Orissa," and is also in February of 2012. Each of the tours is twelve to thirteen days in length, and while each has a unique itinerary, travelers will get to experience various "rural communities where the traditional dress, body jewelry, and symbolic tattoos are still worn....visits to urban mehendiwalas, jewelry and gem markets, apparel boutiques, and tattoo parlors...temples, mosques, and shrines to see how body decoration merges with devotion."

These tours promise to "blend cultural touring with insights into traditional and contemporary body adornment in India." While they tend to be "geared toward a moderate-to-upscale clientele"—with moderate-to-upscale costs—they are able to design custom tours to fit any budget.

For more information about From Lost to Found Travel and their upcoming tours, go to fromlosttofoundtravel.com. You may also contact Allison Rulon-Miller by calling 215-731-9553 or sending an email to info@fromlosttofoundtravel.com

TANGIBLE MARKETING



MIKE FRENCH AND KAITLIN KORBITZ

Omega Red Studios
Cedar Falls, IA

If there is one thing about running a business that is seemingly simple yet frustratingly complicated, it is trying to create and maintain a marketing campaign for your studio. Owning, managing, or working in a studio requires us to sell ourselves in unique ways to attract customers and make the company stand out. At the recent Association of Professional Piercers Conference, I sat down to discuss various marketing tactics my studio has tried, and shared how a great marketing campaign can augment business and generate loyal clientele.

What is marketing? The simple definition is “the promotion, sale, and distribution of goods or services to the customer.” Marketing campaigns can include digital and print advertising, shared promotions, and merchandising. Many of our marketing campaigns at Omega Red focus on tangible items: things people can touch, carry around, or share with friends. Digital marketing—such as TV or radio commercials, social networking, or a website—are great additions to your campaign, but non-digital marketing does the tangible footwork. Each time you hand out a flier to a customer, they can choose to throw it on the ground, give it to someone else, or keep it for a later date. If your flier has a coupon for five dollars off, it becomes incentive for the customer to keep the flier around, check out your shop further, or recommend your business if they had a good experience there. Even if the person discards the flier, they left with something in hand—something that influenced them and could potentially influence someone else to check out your studio. With your shop name and information everywhere via tangible, non-digital marketing, you create a base clientele and promote your name effectively.

Much of the power of a marketing

campaign starts with the creation of a logo. In addition to being a recognizable force in the community, a logo can become a component of your tangible items. A logo allows you to brand your company. By putting your logo on everything—T-shirts, water bottles, fliers,



posters—you create a brand, or a design for which you are known.

Once people start to recognize your specific brand, you can start to market new designs or items. In this way, you not only make money via piercing services, but on merchandise as well. It can be as simple as a set of T-shirts with your logo on them. By branding your company, you will have more venues for free advertisement. People paying for shirts with your logo are not only increasing revenue, they are advertising for you as well. Never be afraid to try new colors, designs, or techniques. Marketing products do not necessarily have to match; they just need to be connected by a logo or design.

Getting people involved in studio advertising in any capacity is a great way to bring in business and flood the community with information about your studio. One way we got people involved in advertisement at

Omega Red is through what we call a “street team.” Combining community involvement and advertisement, participating in our street team is an honored status for clients or community members who are willing to trade their time for credit. What we do is give clients ten dollars in store credit per hour, which they can use at the shop on jewelry, piercing, or merchandise. We send team members to local events, concerts, art festivals, movie premieres, or other events the members themselves suggest. This allows for members to experience an elevated status with us, promotes the shop name out in the community, and builds a community around the shop.

Another method of involvement is shared promotions. For example, creating double-sided fliers with your shop on one side and a local non-profit or business on the other allows you to make connections with local companies. Another example is making matchbooks with your logo and having local bars keep them in stock. Every shared promotion you create is another way to get your name out and reach more people, which means more potential clients.

Any marketing campaign you create will enhance customer interest and bring more people into the shop. Becoming a brand is not only a great way to make money, but also guarantees that people know who you are.

A marketing campaign represents the best aspects of your shop and calls attention to what makes the shop unique. Knowing your unique qualities allows your clientele to take pride coming in, to enjoy their time in your establishment, and helps them identify with the shop. **P**



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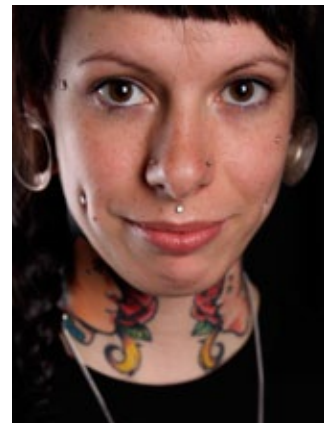
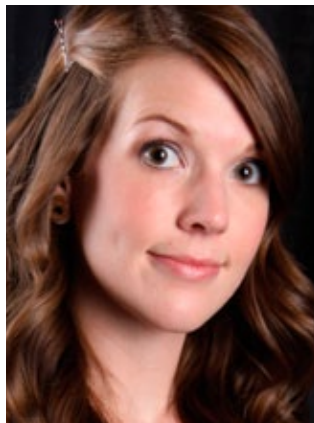
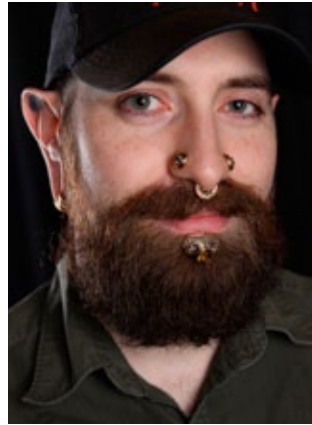
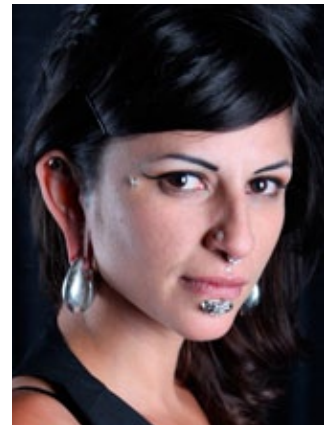
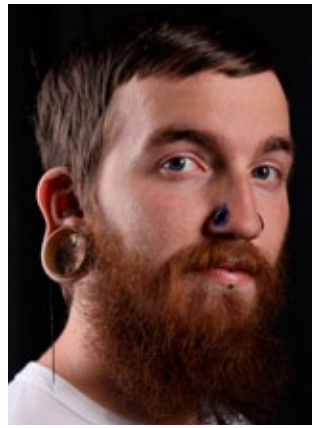
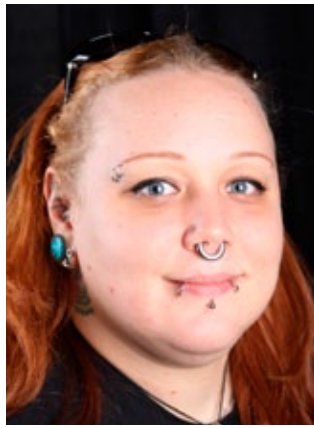
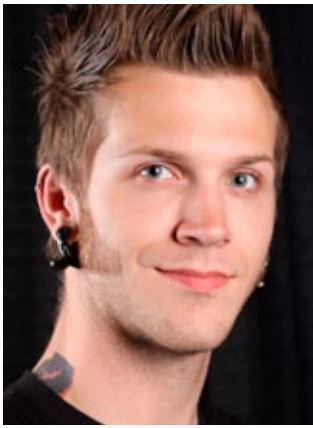


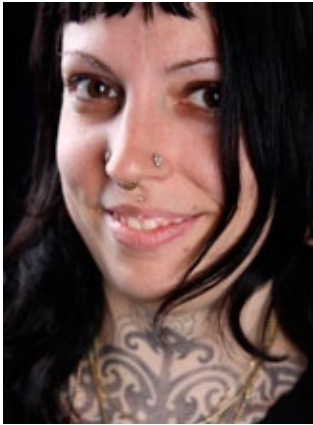
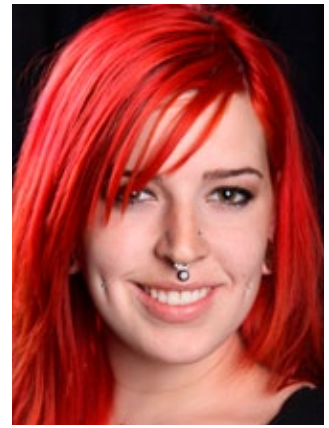
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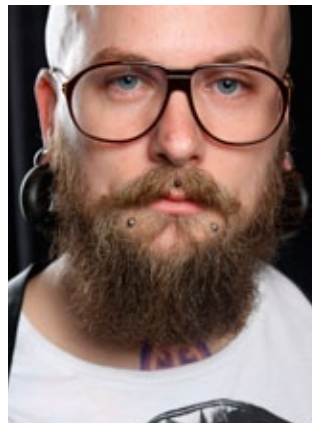
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LAS VEGAS CONFERENCE 2011

Conference photos by Sean Hartgrove







THE 16TH ANNUAL ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL PIERCERS CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION



CAITLIN McDIARMID
APP Administrator

As one of the many planners involved in Conference every year, I am always elated, surprised, and a bit exhausted when we all finally gather in Las Vegas for this event. Every year we seem to do a little better than the one before—and this year was no different. Bally’s was our new home for this Conference—and will be in 2012—and we were excited to be at the new spot in the heart of the strip, with a wealth of restaurants, entertainment, and relaxation options right at our doorstep.

Our class lineup included our core curriculum and a variety of elective options; new this year were classes on Statim use, freehand technique, and “Exploring the ‘O’ Needle.” We brought back classes on stone and wood jewelry and business management, and restructured some of our previous courses to create a three-class series on aftercare. We refined and expanded our workshops, which premiered in 2010. We had favored teachers Elayne Angel, Paul King, and David Vidra; we had Ron Garza back; we welcomed new instructors Mike French, Maria Pinto, Marea and Alan Vedge, and Leo and Kate Ziebol. Our other instructors were amazing—they are too numerous to mention here—and we thank them for the many hours spent perfecting their presentations, lectures, and

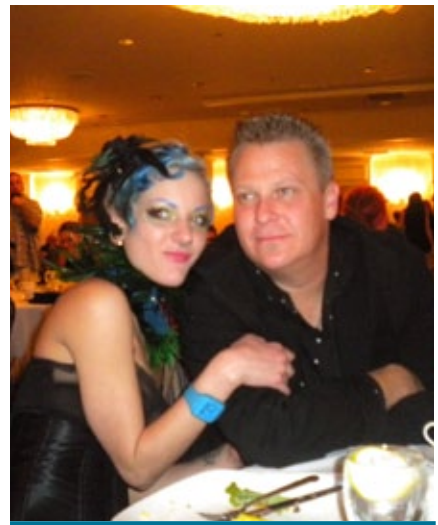
materials. They passed along knowledge and passion, answered questions, and supported the attendees in their professional growth.

Although most were there to take classes, we encouraged everyone to find time in their busy schedule to visit the exposition floor; the beauty and artistry found among our jewelry vendors was amazing. We had educators, aftercare products, insurance, corsets, and books, *The Piercing Bible* and *Running the Gauntlet*—where else you can find all of that in one place? We re-vamped APP merchandise and raffle booths with information, T-shirts, and chances to win thousands of dollars in prizes with our raffle!

We made time for attendees to mingle and relax at our opening party by the pool, and also at our banquet dinner. At the annual banquet, we put on our glitzy best and honored Gauntlet founder and author Jim Ward on his 70th birthday!

We welcomed hundreds of attendees—whether it was their sixteenth Conference or their first—who found Conference is a magical place: a place where everyone shares your passion, where everyone has something to contribute and something to learn. People left with new friends, new inspirations, and new energy for the coming year.

And we’ve already starting working on the next one. **P**



For the sixth straight year, Sean Hartgrove has been the APP’s Conference photographer, taking portraits of attendees in addition to shots of classes, social events, and the exposition floor. Sean’s photos are used for the APP’s educational and promotional materials, and many of his more striking portraits have graced the cover of *The Point* through the years. More information on Sean and his work can be found on his site, seanhartgrove.com.



PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The past two years, I've honored two of our unsung heroes with this award, two people who have worked tirelessly for our industry without recognition. This year's recipient is different. He's been a very visible and public figure for the past two decades, and he's always been the first and best person to promote himself—but without much "official" recognition from the APP.

He was one of the first members of the APP's Board of Directors. He has at times been a vocal critic of the organization, but through the years he's also been one of the APP's biggest supporters.

He has manifested a passionate and opinionated persona online, and he's been a consistent presence on the internet since the very beginnings of the online body art community. But his biggest contribution has been through his dedication to suspension. He has been a tireless advocate for the acceptance of suspension as an art form, and the founder of both TSD—considered by most to be the first suspension group—and suspension.org.

He's a piercer, a business owner, suspension artist, educator, event organizer, photographer, and laser tattoo removal technician—in addition to being one of the industry's biggest all-around shit-stirrers. It's my pleasure to give this year's President's Award to Allen Falkner.

—James Weber

BANQUET DINNER

This year's banquet dinner included a 70th birthday celebration for Jim Ward, the founder of Gauntlet, the first piercing specialty business in the world. Birthday hats and party favors were provided at the door!

Many of Jim's friends, peers, admirers, and loved ones spoke about the impact he had on their lives, and paid him respect for his crucial role in the founding of our industry. The emotion in the room was thick, and hearing firsthand about Jim's legacy and his importance to everyone in the piercing community made this year's banquet especially memorable.

The birthday wishes culminated with the singing of "Happy Birthday" as a scantily-clad leatherboy jumped out of Jim's man-sized birthday cake. Afterward, banquet attendees took turns at the piñata—shaped like a black leather boot and stuffed with candy, purple hankies, and condoms. Hilary Whitmore of "Operafication" closed the evening with several stunningly beautiful opera arias.

2011 CONFERENCE RAFFLE

The annual APP Conference and Exposition is the main source of income for the organization, and the yearly raffle at Conference is a crucial part of it. The money raised in Las Vegas supports outreach efforts throughout the entire year. All of the raffle prizes are donated by companies who support the APP and the work it does.

Special thanks are due to all the companies—and individuals—who donated what turned out to be an incredible **double-grand-prize offering this year**: JD Lorenz and Industrial Strength donated \$10,000 in jewelry and \$10,000 in additional gift certificates; Barry Blanchard and Anatometal donated \$12,000 of merchandise credit. Add to this other prizes donated by Body Circle Designs, H2Ocean, LeRoi, NeoMetal, and Omerica, bringing the total to more than 150 different prizes awarded.

Congratulations also to Italo Fernandez, who won the Industrial Strength top prize, and Ryan Ouellette, who won the Anatometal top prize. Mark Montgomery at The Zone Tattoo and Body Piercing picked up the most individual prizes. *(continued on pg. 36)*

THE TOP 10 REASONS TO BUY BODY PIERCING INSURANCE

- 1 His Prince Albert disgraced a member of the Royal Family
- 2 Your client participated in women's mud wrestling after having her navel pierced
- 3 Your client or your piercer didn't understand the difference between Ampallang and Apadravya
- 4 Your client lost the key you gave her for her chastity piercing
- 5 You've been charged with sexual molestation by the client who got a Christina
- 6 Your piercer thought "Autoclave" was a new Superhero and didn't think they needed to use it.
- 7 Your client's tongue piercing got caught on his girlfriend's braces
- 8 Your piercer thought the "eyelet ring" worked well on the eyelid
- 9 She looked 18 but was only 15 and "Dad" was her Sugar Daddy
- 10 Your client went pole dancing after piercing her nipple



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INNOVATOR'S AWARD JIMMY BUDDHA

The Human Bone Project first started about a year ago when Adam from BodyMod.org approached me about the use of human bone in body jewelry. He had always been interested in creating jewelry with this material, but the political and cultural sensitivities associated with it were an obstacle to experimentation.

I have spent many years traveling the globe, experiencing and observing cultures far removed from my own and learning from them. For a great deal of this time I've been in the remote regions of the Himalayas, where I got the chance to witness the use of human bone for ceremonial and decorative purposes. At

first these experiences were shocking, but slowly I realized that when cultural prejudices are removed, we should have no aversion to these practices. My experience and exposure to alternate ways of viewing and approaching human bone allowed me a unique perspective to transform Adam's concept into a reality.

I started to brainstorm design ideas and drew from influences of Tibetan culture and the circle of life and death. I chose to use the skull bone (death) as a background to the swastika (an ancient symbol for life). Both human bone and the swastika are taboo in Western society, hidden away and buried. We are told to forget. We are not expected or encouraged to confront death in our reality. Conversely, in many older cultures

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

Of all the attendees who registered online, more than one-third attended Conference for the first time in 2011, and more than two-thirds attended two or fewer Conferences prior to this year:

- First-time attendees ————— **210 / 37%**
- Registrants who attended Conference once or twice before ————— **169 / 30%**
- Registrants who attended Conference three to five times before ————— **94 / 16%**
- Five to ten times before ————— **74 / 13%**
- More than ten times ————— **21 / 4%**
- **345** people registered for full Conference.
- **358** people registered for partial Conference.
- **140** Exhibitor badges were issued.
- Eight health inspectors attended.
- Thirty-nine speakers taught classes, monitored roundtables, and oversaw workshops.
- Forty-five staff and volunteers worked on site.
- Twenty-nine different classes and ten roundtables were offered, for a total of eighty-three and a half class and discussion hours.

The Conference Committee wants all our attendees to keep coming back. Are you a long-time attendee? What classes are you looking for at Conference? What events do you want to see? Let us know by contacting us at info@safepiercing.org or secretary@safepiercing.org. **P**

and societies, death is viewed and accepted as part of the natural world. Being in touch with the reality of the circle of life and death supplies us with knowledge; knowledge that can be applied as life lessons.

I am not trying to explain my work as a re-creation of a tradition that is not my own, but I do believe there is a basic need for us to start viewing death and life as a symbiotic cycle. Our bleached-out, diluted Western world could use a little more death—and therefore life.



INNOVATOR'S AWARD: REIGN CUSTOM DESIGN

MACARONI & REIGN (HOLD THE CHEESE)

We at Reign Custom Design know it. You know it. It is a fact: Pierced people love their jewelry. The gleam and the shine, the organic materials, the cutting-edge designs and the thrill of seeing new jewelry worn for the first time. However, we also know a darker truth. We acknowledge the one thing that piercing enthusiasts around the world avoid talking about in public: the stench of the dirt and sweat that builds up around regularly worn piercing jewelry—the greatest offenders of all being none other than those beautifully stretched earlobes that are the signature of our pierced nation. And thus our quest had begun—how to undo the undoable?

In all seriousness, the source of inspiration for the Macaroni & Reign design was born out of the desire to create fine pieces of body jewelry for people with stretched earlobes that were attractive and would, most importantly, serve to greatly decrease the formation of what we shall politely call “ear funk.” After some consideration it became apparent that we either needed to decrease the amount of surface area committed to the wearing surface of the jewelry or find a way to increase the amount of airflow around the plug as it sat in the ear. The solution seemed quite simple: Do Both! Macaroni & Reign, as a one-inch plug, is comprised of eight curved one-quarter-inch diameter stainless steel tubes that are mounted to a central eighteen-karat

gold hub. The spaces that exist between the tubes decrease the wearable surface and create airflow at the same time. I am convinced that the design is successful, but most importantly I truly hope that everyone loves them.

Often people ask where the inspiration for our designs originates. My muse has always been and will always be my wife Tomma. I love doing nice things for her, and the best way that I know how is to craft beautiful jewelry. Besides, we all know that girls love shiny things, right? The Macaroni & Reign pieces have a special signature just for Tomma. Each of the tubes have star sapphires set on each end. One side features pink for our daughter Veda, and the other has blue for our son Jayden. In all, approximately twenty hours went into creating these custom pieces. Setting the sapphires took almost five hours alone. The entire project had a lot of tedious nuances, but it was worth every minute.

As a designer, I love to work with platinum and steel more than anything else. I have sixteen years of experience with these materials from my nine-to-five job. In many ways they pose challenges in terms of yielding the kind of results that I seek. Those challenges make each of my designs, and ultimately the entire Reign collection, a truly satisfying endeavor. I chose to accent the Macaroni & Reign plugs with yellow eighteen-karat gold. Normally I'm not a yellow metal person, but when contrasted against white metals correctly—WOW! I think we struck the

proper balance, and I am honored to have been selected by the APP as one of this year's recognized Innovators.

Finally, I'd like to take a moment to address the issue of design imitation in our entire industry. I hear a lot of designers talk about being flattered or outraged at the concept of imitation. I feel that almost everything that has ever been made has been copied. Copies usually bring the cost down; unfortunately the quality can suffer as well. I won't lie, I find it a little flattering when I notice that our designs create a trend, and that just drives me to continue to innovate and create in new and different directions. More than that though, I truly urge today's designers to aspire to step away from the standard conventions of body jewelry design. Through this I know that we can continue to raise the bar in our industry with regard to quality, ingenuity, and aesthetics. My favorite thing to see at the APP Conference is when people scratch their heads when they see our jewelry as if to say, “I wonder how they made that?”

As for the future of Reign Custom Design, our legacy will stem from the fact that we refuse to stagnate. I know that we have barely scratched the surface of what is possible for us, and I promise you that we have huge things in store for years to come as there are many things brewing in our mad scientist's laboratory (insert evil laugh here.) Ultimately, I'd like to see us retired on a beach somewhere with a couple of glasses of Crown Royal. Feel free to join us—just don't forget the ice!



Topping off a thorough revamping of the APP's graphic identity over the last five years, Jon Loudon—the APP's graphic designer—redesigned and re-imagined the APP's booths at Conference this year. Jon has been instrumental in not only creating and solidifying the APP's graphic identity—designing everything from brochures to business cards—but has also been responsible for the design and layout of *The Point* since issue #35. The organization owes him our continuing thanks.



KENDRA BERNDT
Eye of the Lotus
Edmonton, Canada

AL D. SCHOLAR

A wise woman once told me, "Conference will change your life. When it is done you will either know this is what you will do forever, or you will know this is not for you."

The past year—basically, my entire apprenticeship—caused me to question my abilities, knowledge, skills—everything. But getting the Al D. Scholar and going to my first APP Conference gave me a sense of validation, justifying all of my hard work, sweat, and tears. I tried to embrace this opportunity—even though I was frightened like a schoolkid—and took it as a challenge to educate myself, build great friendships,

and present myself as professionally as I could in my future career.

Conference week I had little sleep and even less food, but I can proudly say I faced its challenges and embraced all its opportunities. I shook hands with people I have watched on television and became friends with people I have read about. I found a great sense of family and a few very special friends. I questioned my existing knowledge and gained a priceless education, making me a more open-minded piercer with an unbounded passion for what I do. Most importantly, Conference taught me that I will be able to handle whatever my career or my life may throw at me with grace and confidence.

I look forward to next year's Conference, from the new friendships to the education. Thank you to everyone who made this a pivotal experience in my life. I hope to one day give back to this community a fraction of what was given to me.

I now know this is what I will do forever.

Sure, you can learn a ton from the classes and buy a lot of cool jewelry, but the real knowledge you learn is that you are not alone.

Al D. Scholar: **AARON FOSTER**
Pino Brothers Tattoo, Cambridge, Massachusetts

JOSH A. PRENTICE VOLUNTEER AWARD

A single person can make a difference.

The Josh A. Prentice Volunteer Award is given out each year to a volunteer for outstanding “volunteerism.” It goes to individuals who truly make a difference. Josh Prentice did, and continues to do so through this award in his name and in the memories of his life.

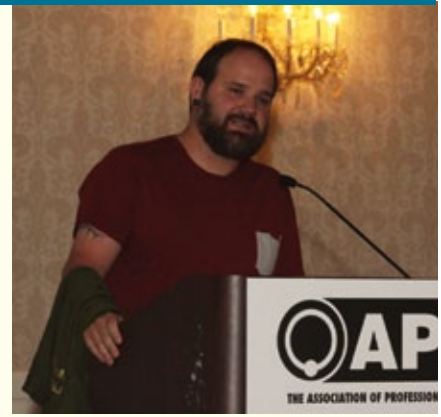
It was my honor to give the 2011 Josh A. Prentice Volunteer Award to David Kelso. As David accepted his award at Conference this June, it was clear the community also recognized his dedication.

Even though I have worked with David every year for nine years at Conference, I really don’t know him that well. Our relationship is like many Conference-based friendships: you are friends, happy to see each other every year, missing each other when you return to the “real world,” and occasionally “liking” one of their posts on Facebook. Next year it happens all over

again, and it’s not until years later that you realize the person went from a Facebook friend to a real one. It doesn’t matter that I don’t know that much about his life outside Conference; his time at Conference says volumes about him.

David has been volunteering longer than I have been working for the APP, and has a historical perspective that is invaluable as a volunteer. His love for this industry and this organization is readily apparent when you speak with him. He’s never been opposed to hard work, and has always been there when I or anyone needed him—and often when I thought I didn’t. He’s an unsung hero, exceedingly humble, an APP Member for twelve years, and is known for sacrificing his own meal, class, or entertainment to do that one little task for me.

I’ve watched him grow along with the rest of us, becoming well-known and respected in the piercing and suspension industry. He’s become happier—and more



calm—but has never stopped believing that his top priority at Conference is to serve in whatever way he can. I look forward to David’s continued involvement as a staff person at Conference and a mentor to other volunteers.

—Caitlin McDiarmid

[You can make a difference as well. For information about volunteering opportunities in 2012, contact Caitlin at info@safepiercing.org.]

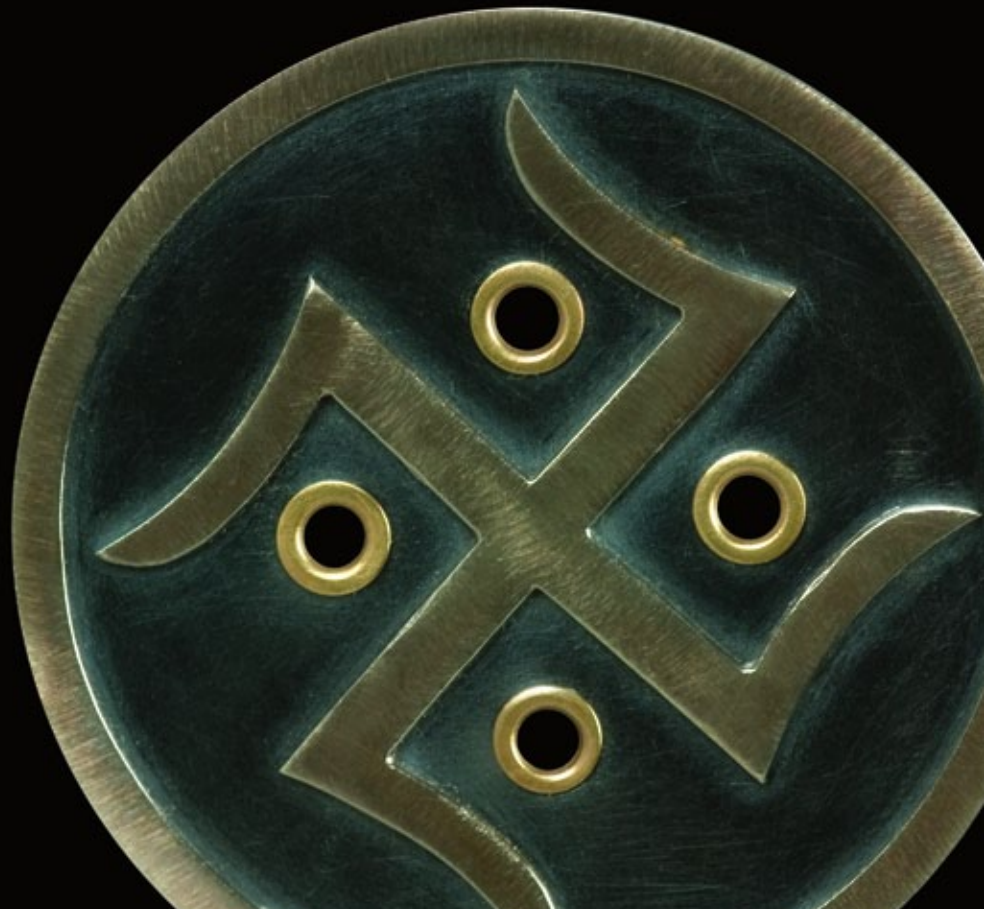
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suspension.org/hooklife
Fort Smith, AR

This 16th annual APP Conference and Exposition was more than just another year in Las Vegas. For those involved with the suspension community, a major part of the week was celebrating the 10th anniversary of Constructs of Ritual Evolution (CoRE) with their outstanding performance, “A Journey to Enlightenment.” CoRE is the suspension group I have had the most difficulty writing about—and somehow it became even more difficult after seeing this show. There is just so much that can be said about CoRE. The fact that this show managed to happen at all was a testament to the dedication of this group. With the original venue cancelling at the last moment, it took a tremendous amount of work to not only relocate but to also adapt the performance to fit the new space. If it were any other group, this show could have easily been a disaster—but this was CoRE. Pulling it together was ten years of experience, with professionals both on the stage and behind the scenes. The result was nothing short of breathtaking.

ACT 1

On stage, a traveler has come upon a man who is preparing to carry the Vel Kavadi. Those around the man carefully place spears through the altar and against his skin as dancers move to the steady drumbeats in the background. The crisp green of the apples at the end of each spear glows in contrast to the dark setting and the paint streaked on the bodies of those in view. The scene unfolds, and our traveler keeps a cautious distance. The Kavadi bearer stands and begins to dance, swaying and moving with the heavy altar as the spears drive deeper into his flesh. Even as we watch the skin stretch and move under the long skewers that are pressing into it, his face remains calm and focused. Although the traveler seems intrigued by this new and unusual practice, he chooses to move on, seeking something we don't yet comprehend.

CoRE was first formed in Houston, Texas

when Steve Joyner—a former member of Traumatic Stress Discipline (TSD)—began to branch out and find his own place in the body suspension community. Through performances that combined artistic expression with influences from both ritual and spiritual practices, CoRE began to form the foundation on which they would continue their growth. Many of the individuals involved in those early days had little idea where this path would take them. As CoRE grew, so did their ambition. This wasn't going to be people simply hanging from hooks; it was going to be bigger. Through the combining of suspension, theater, performance art, live music—with an array of talented individuals bringing their skills to the stage—CoRE managed to create their own place in the world rather than fitting into any pre-existing mold.

ACT 2

Our traveler moves onward in his journey and finds himself in an angelic setting, where every surface is bathed in halos. A queen, wreathed in shimmering white, is sitting on her throne as statuesque guards stand before her, the metal wings framing their back held in place by hooks in their flesh. The queen rises and begins to sing, her enchanting and powerful voice filling the room with its otherworldly song. It's enough to bring the traveler to his knees as he watches this magnificent scene unfold before him. As her voice carries through the hall, two women rise in the air. Draped in silver fabric and moving gently on the hooks that hold them up, they are a vision of grace and beauty. Both gently and suddenly, the queen is raised into the air without missing a note, and her song grows louder, more sinister. She floats in the air, and the women at her sides seem to move at her command. They are raised and lowered at the simple wave of the queen's hand. She reaches for the crown of needles pierced through her forehead and pulls it free. Small streams of crimson blood run down her face, and the traveler begins to back away. She

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descends back to her throne, with the guards stepping to her sides. The frightened traveler departs overwhelmed, but still searching.

What CoRE has managed to accomplish in their first ten years is only the beginning. As they continue to move forward, Steve Joyner has said he hopes to see CoRE working with more outside performers and artists—as they did with Hilary Lobitz of Operafication. The decision to branch out and work with people outside of CoRE adds freshness and diversity to an already immensely talented group of individuals. The future of CoRE is an exciting and inspiring thing to imagine. They are a group with no limitations.

ACT 3

We are led deep into a cave where our traveler, in his quest for enlightenment, has come upon a conjurer. He watches cautiously as she works



her spells, moving among the bottles and powders scattered around her. Shadows writhe and crawl across the floor, and the cave itself appears to come to life. The conjurer's work continues, and the pace quickens. Two dancers slide into place, their bodies moving in sync with one another as the ritual unfolds. The bones that hang from their waists sway and tap, working in rhythm with the music. From behind a rock rises a woman in red, her back arched and her body relaxed as she is lifted into the air by the hooks in her stomach. The spell is complete, and she is resurrected. From her hands drops a key – the object of the conjurer's final manifestation. As this captivating scene comes to a close, our traveler departs, still not finding what it is he has been searching for. His quest has taken him to the ends of the earth, from forests and caves to heavenly palaces, but still he has yet to find what it is that he needs to complete himself; that certain place or practice that will lead him to enlightenment.

There was more than one story being told on stage that night. The past, present, and future of CoRE came together to create this

performance. In a production that took sixty-two people and an entire year to complete, their inspiration came from CoRE's early performances, present stage characters, and their vision of CoRE's future. After years of searching for who they were, this journey has shaped CoRE into who they are now. This past decade provided only a glimpse of what I hope we will see from CoRE in the future.

ACT 4

Our traveler seems to have failed in his search for personal enlightenment. The rituals he has witnessed were not the things that he had set out to discover. Suddenly, he finds himself surrounded by the people he observed along his journey. He is cornered, and as they close in around him, he tries to escape. His arms flail as the mass of bodies pushes inward. His panic and fear turn to clarity; it becomes apparent that what he was hunting for could not be discovered at any one destination. All of these bodies looking into his soul remind him that it is he who most needs to be looking inward. The enlightenment is within him, and has been

found through the journey itself. As he rises in the air from the hooks in his chest, he lets out a cry that is one of victory rather than pain, and the only thing louder than the driving music on stage is the sound of applause from the audience as the curtain drops.

I have wanted to see a CoRE performance from the first time I saw photographs of their work. Watching them on stage was such a reminder of all the things I love about body suspension: the emotion, the beauty, and the people with whom we share this amazing experience. I left the show with a renewed excitement about suspension. I can only hope as CoRE enters into their next decade of performing, all of those involved will remember the story they were a part of that night. As important as it is to focus on where you want to be, it's often the journey that makes you who you are when you arrive.

Thank you to CoRE for ten years of hard work, education, and stunning performances. Special thank you also to Patricia and Steve for all of their patience and help in preparing this article. **P**



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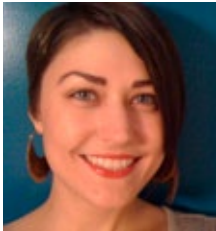
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AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALLER REMOVED FROM GAME FOR GENITAL PIERCING



JENNIFER HEIMBURG

Philadelphia, PA

Quite outside the usual excitement of a soccer game, on June 19 an Australian footballer was given a red card—removing him from play—when his Prince Albert piercing was revealed during a game. The series of events that led to this discovery were reported as follows:

Aaron Eccleston, the Old Hill Wanderers captain, jumped for a play during the game. The ball he intended to hit hit him in the groin instead. After gathering his wits, Eccleston lifted his shorts to assess the damage. With shorts lifted, the referee reportedly caught a glimpse of the piercing.

Soccer rules prohibit players from wearing items, jewelry included, that are “dangerous to himself or another player.” According to the Old Hill Wanderers’ website:

“During the first half, our player was struck in the groin by the ball, and left the field to receive attention. At this point the referee became aware that the he had a body piercing. He subsequently received two yellow cards, firstly for re-entering the field of play without the referee’s permission, and secondly for privacy reasons being unable to prove that he had removed the piercing. [Editor’s Note: If a player is given two yellow cards the same game, that is equal to a red card, which means they must leave the game and the team must play short.] At no point during the incident did the player of Old Hill Wanderers expose himself

to the referee or to other players on the field. Old Hill Wanderers FC [football club] is satisfied that the conduct of both the referee and our player was reasonable, and accepts that the two yellow cards given to the player were in accordance with the laws of football. Old Hill Wanderers FC apologises to VicSoccer and the referee in question regarding the negative attention that may have been generated by this unfortunate event.”

When asked if he thinks that the rules should be modified with regards to non-visible piercings, Eccleston replied:

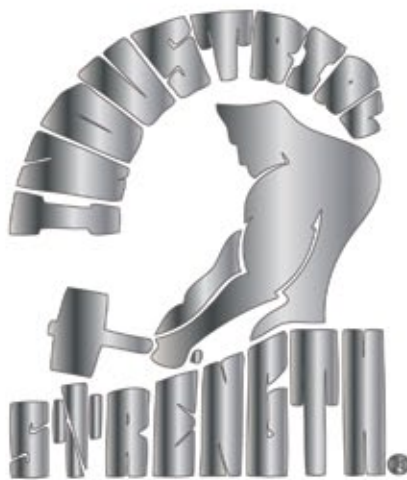
“Rules are rules, and the safety of players is paramount. But there also needs to be a little common sense incorporated into the rules. My piercing is covered by three layers of clothing and is not going to cause harm to anyone. The ref should have covered his back and told me to take it out and

taken my word for it. If it later caused me damage then its entirely my responsibility (not that it would be anyone else’s fault other than my own). A red card was a bit harsh!”

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- www.oldhillwanderers.com
- http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/06/27/aaron-eccleston-ejected-genital-piercing_n_885474.html
- <http://www.guardian.co.uk/football/2011/jun/23/intimate-piercing-red-card-captain>
- <http://sports.yahoo.com/soccer/blog/dirty-tackle/post/Australian-amateur-footballer-sent-off-for-genit?urn=sow-wp2690>
- <http://aeryssports.com/kitchen-sink/aaron-eccleston-gives-down-under-a-whole-new-meaning/> **P**





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