



# Station Ink

## AN ARTISTIC INSTALLATION

### A remembrance of the victims of the Station Night Club fire

by Janine Calise, Creative Director, 4Design, LLC

#### It all started with a vision.

A simple vision of love for a brother and his wife, two highly creative people, Michael and Sandy Hoogasian. These two people were very talented individuals, both musically and visually, with a love for body art; tattoos. The vision for this exhibit was a result of their death in the Station Night Club fire, ten years ago.

Paula McLaughlin, a RISD graduate and established jewelry design director was on a mission to tribute in a unique and creative way, the death of her brother and sister-in-law along with the other 98 people who had lost their lives in that tragedy.

Many of those who lost loved ones were so deeply saddened; they needed to express their love and remembrance outwardly. What better way to do this than body art? A tattoo, a permanent expression of passion, commitment and love infused on your skin to be there for eternity. Paula's brother and sister-in-law loved tattoos. Upon Michael and Sandy's death, friends and family members had all gotten memorial tattoos honoring

them. This concept seemed to take flight. Many of the families and friends of victims followed suit. Paula learned of more and more people using their bodies as canvases to represent their love for those lost. They wanted to ensure that no one would forget their beloved family and friends lost in this tragedy. There were moms, dads, sisters, and brothers of all ages taking part to memorialize their loved ones. This had great impact on this very talented and intuitive designer.

#### Vision

In processing all that was happening, Paula had a vision. Photos of art, body art; a collage of all the body art that evolved and was created to memorialize the victims in the tragedy.

She started months after the tragedy to research how she could possibly bring her idea to life. Overcoming her own grief to pursue such an undertaking was overwhelming. But the emotion, intensity, and creative attributes of this project could not be discarded. It needed to be executed perfectly, and doing so, would serve to be therapeutic in nature; her creative *healing* so to speak.

#### Execution

Paula commissioned photographer and friend John Pitocco to photograph the many people who proudly wear these memorial tattoos. John along with Paula interviewed each of the people photographed, learning of their individual circumstances as a result of that fire. Through the images that John created, it is evident that he not only understood the pain and emotion behind each individual, but also his talent enabled him to capture that in a very expressive and moving way.

Countless hours of coordinating, contacting and photographing these people had marked the true beginnings of this vision becoming a

reality. This was it; these two creatives were both dedicated and inspired more than ever to see where this could lead. After viewing the photos, it was decided that it would be an injustice to simply hang these images on a four wall venue. They needed something more . . .

They needed a venue with character; a creative flair; some place extraordinary. They wanted their audience to be engaged in an inviting exhibit that reflected rebirth, while maintaining a simplistic flow. Although the Armory in Pawtucket has never hosted any type of "museum showcase" in the past, it served to have the aura and essence that this exhibit required.

Although it was a challenge to transform the space, with Visual Director, Vitar Ferreira on board nothing was impossible. The project was escalating. It was no longer just a photo exhibit of tattoos but an artistic installation; a path that leads the audience through five archways, a photo memorial garden, with a magnificent mobile signifying rebirth. It is simple, yet executed down to the most intricate detail. Hosting, dynamic photography in the most serene setting. It is beautiful, artistic and emotional.

#### Fruition

Words cannot fully describe this installation. It needs to be seen. The heart of the project is about the people, their stories and their tattoos.

A culmination of artistic minds; Paula's passion, vision and insight, John's photographic talents and dedication and Vitar's unsurpassed creativity in the visual arts has developed into pure art; art that hits upon every emotion imaginable.

This installation serves to be historic in nature and will be remembered by all, as will those who lost their lives in that fire, where it all began.

#### The Creative Team



Paula McLaughlin  
Jewelry Design Director/  
Visionary



John Pitocco  
Photographer



Vitar Ferreira  
Visual Artist/  
Landscape Architect

#### Gallery Opening:

Friday, February 15, 2013

7:00pm - 10:00pm

Pawtucket Armory

172 Exchange Street, Pawtucket, RI

#### Gallery Hours:

Saturday, February 16th, 10:00am - 4:00pm

Sunday, February 17th, Noon - 6:00pm

Admission is free.

[www.stationink.com](http://www.stationink.com)