

Pretty *in* ink

Tattoo parlor displays artwork

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ROBERT FRERIKS, owner of Aardvarx tattoo parlor, stands in front of the wall that shows the many designs from which clients can choose. Freriks said the '90s brought about a tattoo renaissance. "Now people from all walks of life get tattoos for all different reasons," Freriks said.

SANDY SUMMERS/DN

the extra space the Freriks acquired when they purchased the area, Michelle Freriks said. The open space in the building gave the couple the opportunity to showcase the works of local artists. Because tattoos are art, the two mediums fit well, Michelle Freriks said. And customer feedback has been positive so far, she said.

"Everybody's really excited about the place. We want people to feel comfortable."

Robert Freriks said he hoped customers would get a personal, homey, grass-roots appeal.

"We don't want people to get a production-line feel of the place," he said.

Those wishing to get a tattoo can either walk in or schedule an appointment.

"We prefer to draw up ideas and get as many ideas as we can from clients beforehand," Robert Freriks said.

With a clear idea of what the customer wants, Robert Freriks and Preheim can get to work.

"We can get almost anything and reproduce it perfectly," Michelle Freriks said.

Who's bad?

The shop is a member of the Alliance for Professional Tattooists, a nonprofit organization that educates about issues of tattoo safety. Aardvarx owners said they attended seminars and keep updated on the newest sterilization

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tattooist

procedures.

The screening process of Aardvarx is simple: The customer has to provide a valid drivers license. The three have turned away a lot of people. Some have been inebriated, others looked suspicious.

"Drunk people usually don't come in with money," Robert Freriks said.

Michelle Freriks defended the shop's policy concerning unruly customers.

"We do (turn them away) for their protection, as well," she said. "We don't want them to bleed all over the place."

Other, more minor problems revolved around simple indecision by the customer, Robert Freriks said.

"Some come in with nothing but a concept," he said. "My personal goal is to make it come to life."

Robert Freriks said talking to the clients and making the environment comfortable is instrumental in making customers feel at ease while they're having permanent work done on their bodies.

The most challenging design Robert Freriks has inked includes portrait-like and ultra-realistic designs.

Preheim's challenges lie in the intricate designs some people give him, he said.

Michelle Freriks said she noticed a growing number of women getting tattoos. She estimated a one-to-one ratio of men to women getting tattoos. Robert Freriks said the most common area to get tattooed for men were the arm and for women, the lower back and ankle.

"People are getting more experimental, though," Robert Freriks said. "I had someone request to get their whole head tattooed."

The design? An eight ball. A few satisfied customers come in and gaze at the works on the wall.

Robbie Richard, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln junior criminal justice major, had his last name tattooed by Robert Freriks on his lower back two months ago.

"Robert does really good work with shading," he said. "I like the style of his tattoos."

Though he wasn't coming in for a tattoo, Richard looked up at the various designs hanging on the wall, from subtle red roses to sketches of anime characters.



FRERIKS SHOWS OFF a tattoo on the back of his neck. Freriks, who got his first tattoo when he was 18, said he specializes in black-and-gray portraiture.

"I'm sure I'm getting another one," he said.

Michelle Freriks's advice to customers was to look at the artists' portfolios resting on a table in front of the tattoo gallery.

"Get an idea of what you want ahead of time."

Charles Mingus' legacy lives on with big band bop

From staff reports

Concert Preview

Twenty years after the death of its namesake, the Charles Mingus Big Band is dedicated to performing as a living tribute to the late acclaimed bassist, pianist and composer.

Having toured extensively in Europe and the United States, the award-winning group will jazz the Lied Center for Performing Arts tonight at 8.

The 14-piece orchestra is recog-

nized as a definitive and extraordinary big band ensemble that has breathed new life into the award-winning composer's inspired and lively jazz music.

Assembled in 1991 by Sue Mingus, Charles' widow, the band has determinedly focused on the reincarnation of the jazz pioneer's expansive repertoire of jazz, dance

and big band music to guarantee its place in the rich and distinguished history of jazz excellence.

In the tradition of such jazz and blues greats as Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Lionel Hampton, Charles Mingus forged his own brand of jazz in the late '50s and later recorded with contemporary pioneers like Charlie Parker and Miles Davis.

Diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Lou Gehrig's Disease, in 1977, Mingus retired from touring

and teaching at the State University of New York-Buffalo. However, he continued composing music despite the creeping paralysis that ended his life in 1979. Mingus has received a posthumous Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences and was the first black American to have his works chronicled by the Library of Congress.

The Charles Mingus Big Band manages to make its way back to New York every Thursday night to

play The Fez, a famous venue tucked away beneath the Time Café in the city's East Village. The band also has earned two Grammy nominations and has played on "Jazzfest with Branford Marsalis."

Tickets for tonight's show are \$16, \$20 and \$24. Tickets for students of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska Wesleyan University and Doane College and people under 18 are half-price. Call (402) 472-4747 for reservations and more information.