

Piasa Body Art announces grand opening in Downtown Alton

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The public is invited to tour the studio, as well as the neighboring leather shop and live music venue.

ALTON - The time has come for Piasa Body Art, Downtown Alton's long-awaited and much-debated tattoo parlor, to open its doors to the general public. The studio had its soft opening in February, and owner Chris Hinkle is now ready to cut the ribbon and invite the community to stop by and experience the transformation that the 500 block of Broadway is enjoying.

Vast improvements have been made to the property including the removal of exterior paint which returned the building to its original brick façade, as well as the addition of new awnings.

Hinkle has been operating his successful business in Alton, IL since 2008, and is grateful for the opportunity to relocate and advance the growing arts district on East Broadway. “My plan is to be a cornerstone of the revitalization of Downtown and a positive force for attracting more arts-related businesses that appeal to the millennial generation and to tourists.” said Hinkle.

On Sunday, May 15th from 4:00-6:00 p.m., the public is invited to walk through the studio during an open house and meet many of the artists who work at the shop. Guests will enjoy refreshments and a DJ, and will also be entered into raffles for a \$100 gift certificate from each artist, a complimentary piercing, and other locally-made works of art.



Biker Brother Leathers, which neighbors the tattoo shop at 556 E. Broadway, will also be inviting the public in for an open house to see their selection of quality leather jackets, vests, chaps and saddle bags. Owner Mike Fort also offers leather repair and alteration, as well as custom work.

Immediately following the grand opening, there will be an after-party two doors down at Shakers, a live music venue that showcases local and regional musicians at 554 East Broadway. From 6:00-10:00 p.m., the Odd Conversations will perform electric acoustic

reggae rock. The band is a 7-piece ensemble based in St. Louis, which plays original music. Josh Witt is the connecting link, being a piercer at Piasa Body Art and playing guitar and singing vocals in the band. Popular hula hoop troupe “The Hoop Factory” will also be performing for the special occasion.

Piasa Body Art has already become a destination, with clients regularly traveling from Michigan, Indiana, Missouri, and Iowa to acquire a piece of body art, or to have one removed.

“Our community embracing this business is a clear indicator that Alton’s Downtown district is moving in the right direction to attract a younger & hipper demographic who are into arts, culture and self-expression,” said Sara McGibany, Executive Director of Alton Main Street. The organization’s staff and volunteers assisted Chris and Cody Hinkle as they navigated the path to request zoning changes which made the move to Downtown possible.

More information can be found at: www.piasabodyart.com or www.facebook.com/piasabodyart

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