



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: February 26, 2024

EVERLASTING TATTOO

Application No.: LBR-2023-24-025
Business Name: Everlasting Tattoo
Business Address: 813 Divisadero St.
District: District 5
Applicant: Michael Davis, Owner
Nomination Date: January 22, 2024
Nominated By: Supervisor Dean Preston
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Everlasting Tattoo is a tattoo parlor founded in 1992 by Aaron Cain in a storefront originally located at 1939 McAllister Street just north of the Panhandle. Over time, its ownership and locations have changed, eventually ending up under the ownership of Mike Davis at 813 Divisadero Street in 2000. When many other shops were still functioning as “flash” shops, Everlasting Tattoo set itself apart in the early 1990s by employing skilled artists who designed pieces specifically for each customer.

Founder Aaron Cain is well-known in the tattoo industry for his groundbreaking “biomechanic” style of art and for his handcrafted tattoo machines. The parlor has been instrumental in cultivating the “new school” tattoo movement of the 1990s. Also known as neo-traditional or illustrative tattoo, this contemporary style draws inspiration from traditional American and Japanese tattoo art, while incorporating bold colors, exaggerated proportions, and creative designs.

As the only tattoo studio in the neighborhood, Everlasting Tattoo is a staple of this commercial district and functions as an important social and cultural hub. With its iconic glowing neon signs in the storefront windows, residents are drawn to the store’s atmosphere and cultural legacy. Everlasting Tattoo’s emphasis on quality, creativity, and value of craft is a gleaming example of what a Legacy Business is. This shop brings joy to its customers and vibrancy to the neighborhood, helping capture the imagination of people and transforming it into art.

CRITERION 1

Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

Yes, Everlasting Tattoo has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

1939 McAllister St. from 1992 to 2000 (8 years)
813 Divisadero St. from 2000 to Present (24 years)

CRITERION 2

Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, Everlasting Tattoo has contributed to the history and identity of the North of Panhandle and Western Addition neighborhoods and San Francisco.

Legacy Business Program
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City Hall Room 140
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-6680
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www.legacybusiness.org





The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- The business is associated with tattoo artistry and was instrumental in the cultivating the "new school" tattoo movement of the 1990s, with all work being designed specifically for each customer. A new school tattoo, also known as neo-traditional or illustrative tattoo, is a contemporary style of tattoo art that emerged in the late 20th century. It draws inspiration from traditional tattooing, such as American or Japanese styles, but incorporates bold and vibrant colors, exaggerated proportions, and imaginative designs. New school tattoos often feature cartoon-like or surreal elements, making use of creative shading and 3D effects to give the artwork a more dynamic and modern appearance. This style allows for greater artistic freedom and experimentation, leading to visually stunning and eye-catching tattoos.
- Everlasting Tattoo is associated with numerous legends in the tattoo industry, including Aaron Cain, Mike Davis, and Time Lehi. The artists were cutting edge for the time and were innovative in the type of art that people were, and are, putting on their bodies. This was a time when actual "artists" became tattooers rather than just practitioners. They also strongly influenced the later generations of young artists.

Many famous entertainers and musicians have been clients at Everlasting Tattoo, including Margaret Cho, comedian and actor; Timothy (Tim) Commerford, bassist and backing vocalist for the band Rage Against the Machine; and Lars Frederiksen, guitarist and vocalist for the band Rancid.

- The subject property is within the boundaries of the California Register-eligible NOPA Historic District.
- The subject property is mentioned in the San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement. The Regal Manufacturing Company, which designed modern store fixtures and entire storefronts for local businesses, was located on the subject property.
- The business has been written up in countless magazine publications including Tattoo Planet, Tattoo Revue, Rise Tattoo, Tattoo Life, Easyriders Tattoo, Skink and Ink, and many more. Mike Davis was on the cover and featured in Juxtapoz Magazine #68 in September 2006, and has been interviewed by Hoodline, Metal Ink Crew Musings, and other blogs.
- With regard to racial and social equity, Everlasting Tattoo is an important social and cultural hub for the neighborhood. The business and their artists participate in the Divisadero Artwalk and have worked fundraising events for animal welfare at the SPCA and women's events, including an annual benefit called "Still Not Asking For It."

CRITERION 3

Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes, Everlasting Tattoo is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Everlasting Tattoo qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

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Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Large iconic glowing neon signs.
- Commitment to providing the highest level of body art.
- Identity as a tattoo shop.
- Social and cultural hub for the community.

CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS

Following is the core physical feature or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Tattoo shop.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Everlasting Tattoo currently located at 813 Divisadero St. in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

Legacy Business Program

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Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____

February 26, 2024

EVERLASTING TATTOO

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District: District 5
Applicant: Michael Davis, Owner
Nomination Date: January 22, 2024
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Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Everlasting Tattoo, currently located at 813 Divisadero St.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included on the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on February 26, 2024, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Everlasting Tattoo in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Everlasting Tattoo.

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Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Large iconic glowing neon signs.
- Commitment to providing the highest level of body art.
- Identity as a tattoo shop.
- Social and cultural hub for the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain Everlasting Tattoo on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Tattoo shop.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on February 26, 2024.

Katy Tang
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –

Legacy Business Program

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Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2023-24-025
Business Name: Everlasting Tattoo
Business Address: 813 Divisadero St.
District: District 5
Applicant: Michael Davis, Owner
Nomination Date: January 22, 2024
Nominated By: Supervisor Dean Preston

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

Yes No

1939 McAllister St. from 1992 to 2000 (8 years)
813 Divisadero St. from 2000 to Present (24 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes No

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes No

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: January 24, 2024

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

Legacy Business Program

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DEAN PRESTON

January 22, 2024

Office of Small Business
Attn: Legacy Business Registration Application
City Hall, Room 110
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: *Letter of Nomination for Everlasting Tattoo to the Legacy Business Registry*

Dear Mr. Kurylo:

I am writing today to nominate Everlasting Tattoo, a tattoo parlor in District 5 known for its world famous body art, to the Legacy Business Registry.

Everlasting Tattoo was founded in 1992 by Aaron Cain, who established the parlor in a storefront just north of the Panhandle. Over time, its ownership and locations have changed, eventually ending up under the ownership of Mike Davis at 813 Divisadero. When many other shops were still functioning as “flash” shops, Everlasting Tattoo set itself apart in the early ‘90s by employing skilled artists who designed pieces specifically for each customer.

Founder Aaron Cain is well-known in the tattoo industry for his groundbreaking “biomechanic” style of art and for his handcrafted tattoo machines. The parlor has been instrumental in cultivating the “new school” tattoo movement of the 90s. Also known as neo-traditional or illustrative tattoo, this contemporary style draws inspiration from traditional American and Japanese tattoo art, while incorporating bold colors, exaggerated proportions, and creative designs.

Everlasting Tattoo has been home to many world-famous tattoo artists, including founder Aaron Cain, current owner Mike Davis, and Tim Lehi, all of whom have inspired new generations of artists. The caliber of artists led to the shop’s brilliant reputation, and many celebrities have walked through the doors to get tattooed, including actress/comedian Margaret Cho, Tim Commerford of Rage Against the Machine, and Rancid guitarist Lars Frederiksen.

As the only tattoo studio in the neighborhood, Everlasting Tattoo is a staple of this commercial district. With its iconic glowing neon sign in the storefront window, residents are drawn to the store’s atmosphere and cultural legacy.

Letter of Nomination for Everlasting Tattoo to the Legacy Business Registry

January 22, 2024

Page 2

Everlasting Tattoo's emphasis on quality, creativity, and value of craft is a gleaming example of what a legacy business is. This shop brings joy to its customers and vibrancy to the neighborhood, helping capture the imagination of people and transforming it into art.

It is my distinct honor to nominate Everlasting Tattoo to the San Francisco Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,



Dean Preston
District 5 Supervisor



Legacy Business Registry Application



Business Information

Business name: Everlasting Tattoo

Business owner name(s): Michael Davis

Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business

Current business address: 813 Divisadero St., San Francisco, CA 94117-1505

Telephone: (415) 928 - 6244 **Email:**

Mailing address (if different than above):

Website: everlastingtattoo.com

Facebook: facebook.com/everlastingtattoo813 **Twitter:**

7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN): 0 3 1 0 3 3 7

Do any of these describe your business? (select all that apply)
Requires at least 51% of the business be owned, operated, and controlled by the business designation below.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrant-Owned Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Owned by Person with a Disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQ+-Owned Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran-Owned Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minority-Owned Business* | <input type="checkbox"/> Woman-Owned Business |

**Minority is defined as one or more of the following racial or ethnic groups: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino; Middle Eastern or North African; Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander*

Contact Person Information

Contact person name: Michael Davis

Contact person title: Owner

Contact telephone: () - **Contact email:**

Business Location(s)

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business.

If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address.

Original San Francisco address: 1939 McAllister St. **Zip Code:** 94115

Is this location the founding location of the business? (Y/N): Y

Dates at this location: **From:** 1992 **To:** 2000

Other address (if applicable): 813 Divisadero St. **Zip Code:** 94117

Dates at this location: **From:** 2000 **To:** Present

Other address (if applicable): **Zip Code:**

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Other address (if applicable): **Zip Code:**

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Other Address (if applicable): **Zip Code:**

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Other address (if applicable): **Zip Code:**

Dates at this location: **From:** **To:**

Applicant Disclosures

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified. A business deemed not current with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for grants through the Legacy Business Program.

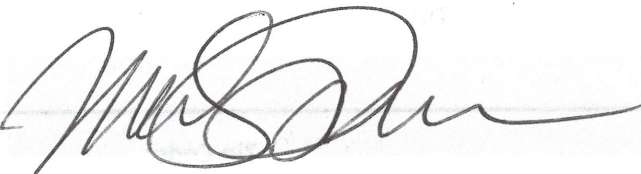
In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Name: MICHAEL S. DAVIS

Signature:



Date:

9/14/23

EVERLASTING TATTOO

Written Historical Narrative

INTRODUCTION

a. Describe the business. What does it sell or provide?

Everlasting Tattoo is a custom tattoo studio providing body art. Their excellent reputation is due to custom design work. Every person who works at Everlasting Tattoo is a very skilled artist and must have extensive experience in order to work there. It is not the normal “pick a design off the wall” kind of shop. All work is designed specifically for each customer. Everlasting Tattoo was an innovator of this in the early 1990s when most shops were still “flash” shops.

b. Describe whom the business serves.

The client base of Everlasting Tattoo encompasses the entire Bay Area, with many customers coming from other parts of the country. The business also serves numerous international customers. The ages of the clientele ranges from 18 to 90, but is generally within the 20 to 60 range. Their client base has grown over the years, and now clients are bringing their grown kids to get tattooed.

c. In about 2-5 words (15-30 characters), describe what the business is known for.

World famous body art.

CRITERION 1: The business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years

a. Provide a short history of the business, including locations and owners.

Everlasting Tattoo was founded in 1992 by Aaron Cain at 1939 McAllister Street in the North of Panhandle (NoPa) neighborhood. Aaron Cain is extremely well known in the tattoo industry – first for his groundbreaking “biomechanic” style of art and later for his handcrafted tattoo machines. He is considered one of the fathers of the “new school” movement in tattooing.

In 1994 at the ripe age of 23, Aaron wanted to move beyond Everlasting Tattoo and explore new things, so he sold the business to Michael (Mike) Davis and Mike Hare.

In 1996, Mike Hare, who was just an investor, sold his shares to Mike Davis and left the business. Everlasting Tattoo became a sole proprietorship under Mike Davis’ ownership.

Mike Davis has continued the tradition of the shop since he became the owner. He is now also a well-known fine artist with a painting in the permanent collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art located on the campus of the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon. He has also had many solo shows and been exhibited in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Laguna Art Museum, Halle Saint-Pierre in Paris, Musée du Quai Branly in Paris, among other. He also published a book of his oil paintings through publisher Last Gasp of San Francisco. For more details about Mike Davis, visit <https://www.mikedavisfineart.com>.

In 2000, Everlasting Tattoo moved to 813 Divisadero Street in the Divisadero neighborhood just a few blocks from the original location. The reason for the move was that Mike Davis found a storefront for sale at a good price in the Divisadero business district, so he bought the property to ensure the survival of the business in the expensive San Francisco market.

b. Provide the ownership history of the business in a consolidated year-to-year format.

1992 to 1994:	Aaron Cain
1994 to 1996:	Michael Davis; Mike Hare
1996 to Present:	Michael Davis

c. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for any significant length of time.

The only time Everlasting Tattoo closed was during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CRITERION 2: The business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community

a. Describe the business' contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community, business sector, or San Francisco as a whole.

Everlasting Tattoo is the first and only tattoo studio in the Divisadero, Alamo Square, and Western Addition neighborhoods, and it has been one of many businesses that have revitalized the Divisadero business district. The area has changed dramatically over the years for the better, and Everlasting Tattoo was part of the transformation. The shop is a community “hub” and a meeting place for folks in the neighborhood – a place where people end up stopping in to say hi and meet others.

Everlasting Tattoo was also instrumental in the “new school” movement in tattooing in the 1990s. “A new school tattoo, also known as neo-traditional or illustrative tattoo, is a contemporary style of tattoo art that emerged in the late 20th century. It draws inspiration from traditional tattooing, such as American or Japanese styles, but incorporates bold and vibrant colors, exaggerated proportions, and imaginative designs. New school tattoos often feature cartoon-like or surreal elements, making use of creative shading and 3D effects to give

the artwork a more dynamic and modern appearance. This style allows for greater artistic freedom and experimentation, leading to visually stunning and eye-catching tattoos.”¹

b. Is the business associated with significant people or events, either now or in the past?

Many artists who have worked at Everlasting Tattoo have become legends in the industry, including Aaron Cain, Mike Davis, and Tim Lehi. The artists were cutting edge for the time and were innovative in the type of art that people were, and are, putting on their bodies. This was a time when actual “artists” became tattooers rather than just practitioners. They also strongly influenced the later generations of young artists.

Current Everlasting Tattoo owner Mike Davis is a modern surrealist painter who is self-taught and began painting seriously in 1997. His inspirations range from his mother's woodwork, hand-tooled leather, and home projects to art of the ancient world, surrealism, and the Flemish masters of the Northern Renaissance. He renders complex surrealist works embedded with symbols of mortality, folly, and hubris, fixed within whimsical compositions. His works are featured in the permanent collection at Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, many publications (Juxtapoz, Hi-Fructose Magazine, HEY! Magazine, Art Ltd., Pop Surrealism: The Rise of Underground Art, Tatt Book: Visionaries of Tattoo, Beyond Tattoo, etc) and prestigious private collections around the world. In addition to painting and owner of internationally-renowned Everlasting Tattoo, Mike Davis is an active musician and woodworker.

Many famous entertainers and musicians have been clients at Everlasting Tattoo, including the following:

- Margaret Cho, comedian and actor
- Timothy (Tim) Commerford, bassist and backing vocalist for the band *Rage Against the Machine*
- Lars Frederiksen, guitarist and vocalist for the band *Rancid*

c. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?

Everlasting Tattoo and their artists participate in the Divisadero Artwalk and have worked fundraising events for animal welfare at the SPCA and women’s events, including an annual benefit called “[Still Not Asking For It.](#)”

d. Has the business ever been referenced in the media, business trade publication, and/or historical documents?

The business has been written up in countless magazine articles and publications here and abroad. Examples include: Tattoo Planet, Tattoo Revue, Rise Tattoo, Tattoo Life, Easyriders Tattoo, Skin and Ink, and many more. Hardcover books include: Juxtapoz Tattoo, Tatt Book-

¹ “Exploring the Colorful World of New School Tattoo Style,” Certified Tattoo Studios, <https://certifiedtattoo.com/blog/exploring-the-colorful-world-of-new-school-tattoo-style>

Visionaries of Tattoo, and many more. Mike Davis was the cover and featured artist in Juxtapoz magazine #68 in September 2006.

Following are some key publications:

- Meet Everlasting Tattoo, A Divisadero Presence For Over 20 Years:
<https://hoodline.com/2014/10/meet-everlasting-tattoo-a-divisadero-presence-for-over-2-decades/>
- Local Artist Mike Davis, Tattoos and Masterworks:
<https://sfbayarts.wordpress.com/2010/11/02/local-mike-davis-tattoos-and-masterworks/>
- From Hieronymus Bosch to Mike Davis, Fantastic Imagery in Art & Tattoos:
<https://metalinkshop.wordpress.com/2009/11/20/from-hieronymus-bosch-to-mike-davis-fantastic-imagery-in-art-tattoos/>
- New Tattoo from Mike Davis:
<https://margarecho.com/2008/07/30/new-tattoo-from-mike-davis/>
- Tag: Mike Davis:
<https://hifructose.com/tag/mike-davis/>
- The Art of Mike Davis:
<https://www.juxtapoz.com/news/tattoo/the-art-of-mike-davis/>
- PORTFOLIO Mike Davis Surréalisme flamand:
<https://www.tatouagemagazine.fr/produit/tatouage-magazine-140-papier/>
- Mike Davis, Eclectix Interview 28:
<https://medium.com/@eclectixp/mike-davis-eclectix-interview-28-91dabc3e9555>
- ArtJaws: Mike Davis:
<https://www.artjaws.com/en/portfolio/mike-davis/>

Following are some ISBN numbers of some hardcover publications featuring the business and/or its tattoo artists:

- A Blindman's Journey by Mike Davis, ISBN 978-0-86719-793-8
- Tattooing's guide to symbolism, ISBN 978-0-578-18599-6
- Juxtapoz Tattoo, ISBN 978-158423288-9
- Tatt Book, ISBN 978-0-7893-2270-8
- Tattoo by Musée Qauï Branly, ISBN 9-782330-032463
- Juxtapoz New Contemporary, ISBN 9-781584-234661
- Flashin skin (Japan), ISBN 88273-033-2 c0076
- Tattooisme 2 (France), ISBN 978-2-7335-0386-7

e. Has the business ever received any awards, recognition, or political commendations?

Everlasting Tattoo has won numerous awards at domestic and international conventions. Artists from the shop have won multiple awards at domestic and international tattoo conventions. Mike Davis has received the following awards, among others:

- Best in Show – Munich Tattoo Convention 1994
- Best Sleeve Design – Memphis Tattoo Convention 1994
- Best Tattoo of the Day – Inkslinger’s Ball, Los Angeles 1996
- Best Sleeve Design – Inkslinger’s Ball, Los Angeles 1998
- Best Sleeve Design – Artistry in Ink Festival, Pomona 1998

There were more, but these are the only trophies that are still around the shop.

f. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

If Everlasting Tattoo were to close, it would be a sad day for the neighborhood. Not only would the community lose its only tattoo studio, it would also lose an important social and cultural hub.

CRITERION 3: The business is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business

a. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building, structure, object, signage, mural, architectural detail, neon sign, or any other special physical feature that defines the business?

The business has a large iconic glowing neon sign in the storefront window that reads “Everlasting Tattoo” that is difficult to miss, as well as a second neon sign that reads “Tattoo” in an adjacent storefront window.

b. In a few words, describe the main business activity you commit to maintaining.

Everlasting Tattoo is committed to providing the highest level of body art possible. Its reputation relies on this.

c. What is the plan to keep the business open in the long term beyond the current ownership?

The biggest challenge these days is oversaturation of tattoo shops. Additionally, fewer young artists are doing original tattoo artwork anymore, and they are charging way too much. It’s an unsustainable model. Many “old timers” also feel the television reality shows are a detriment to

the tattoo industry, giving a very skewed representation of what tattooing is really about. Fortunately, Everlasting Tattoo has been around long enough to weather the storm!

d. What challenges is the business facing today?

The main challenge of the business today is oversaturation of tattoo shops in the city. Regardless of this, the business has been around long enough and has a good enough reputation to continue thriving.

Legacy Business Program staff will add the following details:

a. Features or traditions that define the business and should be maintained for the business to remain on the Legacy Business Registry.

Tattoo shop.

b. Other special features of the business location, such as if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

The building that houses Everlasting Tattoo has a Planning Department Historic Resource Status of "A - Historic Resource Present." The property had been identified for its association with modern architecture and landscape design (1935-1970), and it is a contributing structure to the eligible NOPA Historic District.



EVERLASTING
TATTOO

TATTOO

CHANGE
THE
WORLD
FROM
HERE
UNIVERSITY OF
SAN FRANCISCO







DAVID LACHAPPELLE · RICHARD COLMAN · THOMAS CAMPBELL · DEANNA TEMPLETON

JUXTAPOZ

ART & CULTURE MAGAZINE



FLESHED OUT
MIKE DAVIS DOES DOUBLE DUTY

SEPTEMBER 2006 • ISSUE #64
\$4.99US \$6.99CAN 0.99
0 71486 03040 9

Wally Inc.

New Tattoo from Mike Davis

July 30, 2008



I got this tattoo from this man. This is Mike Davis. We spent many hours together in his shop – [EVERLASTING TATTOO](#) in San Francisco. It rules. He rules. If you want a tattoo, go there, bitch.

I look fucken hot, except for the bruising...



TOPICS

Blog

GENERAL

PHOTOS

TATTOO

San Francisco

Divisadero

Alamo Square

NoPa

Meet Everlasting Tattoo, A Divisadero Presence For Over 20 Years

By **Stephen Jackson**

Published on October 17, 2014

Is your life feeling a bit fleeting lately? It could be time to think about a tattoo.

Everlasting Tattoo has been in business on or around Divisadero for the past 22 years. We stopped by the other day to get a closer look at the neighborhood's only tattoo parlor, and to pick owner **Mike Davis'** brain about the trade at large.

Mike's shop wasn't always on Divisadero Street proper and in fact, it wasn't always his. The first Everlasting opened in 1992 on McAllister between Lyon and Central. It was named by the store's first owner, a die-hard Willy Wonka fan who arrived at the moniker as an ode to the fabled confectioner's "Everlasting Gobstoppers".

After Mike took over the business, he decided to keep its already-established name, and moved the shop over to the current space at 813 Divisadero 14 years ago. In fact, he used some previous experience working on houses to gut and build out the entire place himself.



Mike got into tattoo art in a fairly natural way. “It wasn’t as popular as it is now,” he told us. “I got interested in it by getting tattoos and watching people do it, and I was already doing art for a living. I started looking at tattoos more and more and a hobby became a career.”

Everlasting Tattoo is run as a co-op, with about five different artists who essentially pay for chair time. They are not a “street shop”, meaning that all of their work is custom only. On a busy week, Mike tells us that

they will do between 30 and 50 tattoos. Pricing is dependent on the time it takes to get the job done.



Curious, we asked what he does when someone wants a really bad tattoo.

"If somebody wants a swastika or something, I won't do it, I don't need their money. Or if someone wants their face tattooed, I wouldn't do that either, and I don't think anyone else here would. That's not why we're doing this," he said. "But if someone wants to do

something we think is a bad idea, we will try to counsel them and help them make it better.”

Mike is also an oil painter, having learned the trade during his time as a theatrical scenic artist. When pressed for a genre, he reluctantly chose “pop surrealism”. The space features several of his works, and he has **a solo show up at III Minna** through November 1. If you'd like to meet him in person, he also has signing for his new book at the gallery on Tuesday, October 21st.



Mike has seen Divisadero through the great deal of change over the past two decades, and we asked him what he felt about the future of the shop in its current locale.

“We’ll see how it goes,” he told us. “We’ve been here a long time. I have no plans to go anywhere. It’s still a good city, and it’s nice to keep some of the weirdness, especially when the city is becoming so vanilla.”

Everlasting Tattoo is open seven days a week, from 1pm to 7pm. Stop by or call (415) 928-6244 to make an appointment.

San Francisco

Divisadero

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From Hieronymus Bosch to Mike Davis, Fantastic Imagery in Art & Tattoos

Happy Friday! Today we're talking to Mike Davis, tattoo artist, painter, and owner of [Everlasting Tattoo](#) in San Francisco. Mike has been tattooing at Everlasting since '92, and in the 17 years he's been here, he's seen a lot of change in the neighborhood and the tattoo scene, so we're glad for the opportunity to pick his brain!

Btw, [Metal Ink's 20% off sale](#) is going on through 11/30. Get t-shirts for only \$13-\$15 with code "Shop20" at checkout. Also don't miss our new styles and designs, like the [Toil & Tears Tank Dress!](#)

Everlasting Tattoo
813 Divisadero St
San Francisco, CA 94117
(415) 928-6244
www.everlastingtattoo.com



Mike Davis, tattoo artist & painter

MI: Love the artwork you have in here. Can you tell us about the paintings?

Mike: Well, I did them. I paint as well as tattoo. I have gallery shows and it's sort of like my second job.

MI: Your paintings look very **Hieronymus Bosch**, maybe a little **Dalí**, and kind of like those still lifes that Dutch painters used to do...



Mike: I'm very influenced by Dutch and Flemish painters.

MI: You're incredibly talented! Do you have any upcoming shows?

Mike: I have one, **Mondo Bizarro**, in Rome coming up in April. Other than that probably the next show will be in New York.

MI: So what came first, painting or tattooing?

Mike: Well I have always done art since I can remember. I was doing stage sets for film and theater before I was tattooing. I started tattooing out of my house as a hobby but seriously painting has been about ten years.

MI: Do your ideas for your paintings come more from your dreams or influential painters?

Mike: The ideas are sort of based on life experiences and interpreted in my own way through symbolism and imagery.

MI: Do people seek you out for your work as a painter and request these symbols as tattoos?

Mike: Sometimes but usually not. Once in a while people will have me put some of that type of element into their tattoos but it doesn't happen often.



MI: How would you describe your style as a tattoo artist?

Mike: I'll do whatever people want. To me it's commercial art. I mean, that's my job. If you're talking about artistic integrity, that's what my paintings are for.

MI: You said you started tattooing out of your house. Assuming that means you didn't do an apprenticeship, did you also not go to art school? Are you also a self-taught painter?

Mike: That's right.

MI: That's so amazing, your innate talent expressing itself. Let's talk about how tattooing has changed in the 17 years you've been here.

Mike: I don't think it's changed really. The area has changed, from being a ghetto to what it is today, gentrified NOPA. In terms of the clients, I tattoo more people, but I think the type of people who get tattooed and what things they get tattooed on them hasn't changed. It's generally the best place for tattooing in the country.

MI: How is it different from, for example, New York or LA?

Mike: We get to do more fun stuff here. You get to be more creative with the type of imagery that we do here. On the East coast, people tend to be more conservative with imagery, a lot of religious stuff and not too much crazy stuff.



MI: Right, you do see more of that here. A few weeks ago, we spoke to a tattooer on Haight named Barnaby who had just done a **Grateful Dead bear carrying a Wu-Tang flag** on a skater kid. But what about someone like Paul Booth in New York? His stuff is pretty crazy.

Mike: I've known him for almost 17 years. His work isn't crazy, it's dark.

MI: So is his artwork—he has paintings in his shop too! Is that how you got to know him? Through the art scene?

Mike: I know him through tattooing.

MI: Who else paints and tattoos?

Mike: There's Henry Lewis at Skull and Sword. He's a good friend of mine. Everybody does a little bit of something. But as far as being in a gallery where it's totally disconnected from tattooing, not very many.

MI: Who are your buyers, typically?

Mike: Well they're people a lot of times from a different city or country. They just look at it online. They are art collectors.

MI: What do you see yourself doing in 10 years? Tattooing or painting full-time?

Mike: I don't know.

MI: Well, whatever you decide, I'm sure you'll continue to gain lots of fans. Great stuff. Thanks so much, and I hope you participate in our design contest! Our members would love to wear a design made by you!





This entry was posted on November 20, 2009 at 11:22 pm and is filed under [Tattoo shops in San Francisco](#) with tags [Hieronymus Bosch](#), [Mike Davis](#), [Paul Booth](#), [SF tattoo shops](#), [surrealism](#), [tattoo artists](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

3 Responses to “From Hieronymus Bosch to Mike Davis, Fantastic Imagery in Art & Tattoos”

i-Tattoo electronic tattoo pen | My Blog Says:

December 24, 2009 at 1:22 pm

[...] From Hieronymus Bosch to Mike Davis, Fantastic Imagery in Art ... [...]

Reply



Denie Says:

December 26, 2009 at 2:02 pm

Love your works!

Reply



Jacquelyn Says:

August 26, 2010 at 10:48 pm

How can I connect with you to get a custom tattoo? Thanks

Reply

Leave a Reply



LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: February 21, 2024

Filing Date: January 24, 2024
Case No.: 2024-000776LBR
Business Name: Everlasting Tattoo
Business Address: 813 Divisadero Street
Zoning: NCT (DIVISADERO STREET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT DISTRICT) Zoning District
 65-A Height and Bulk District
Cultural District: N/A
Block/Lot: 1179/030
Applicant: Michael Davis
 813 Divisadero Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Dean Preston
Located In: District 5
Staff Contact: John Dacey - 628-652-7415
 john.dacey@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

Everlasting Tattoo is a tattoo parlor, founded in 1992 by Aaron Cain in a storefront originally located at 1939 McAllister Street, just north of the Panhandle. Over time its ownership and locations have changed, eventually ending up under the ownership of Mike Davis at 813 Divisadero Street in 2000. When many other shops were still functioning as “flash” shops, Everlasting Tattoo set itself apart in the early ‘90s by employing skilled artists who designed pieces specifically for each customer.

Founder Aaron Cain is well-known in the tattoo industry for his groundbreaking “biomechanic” style of art and for his handcrafted tattoo machines. The parlor has been instrumental in cultivating the “new school” tattoo movement of the 90s. Also known as neo-traditional or illustrative tattoo, this contemporary style draws inspiration from traditional American and Japanese tattoo art, while incorporating bold colors, exaggerated proportions, and creative designs.

As the only tattoo studio in the neighborhood, Everlasting Tattoo is a staple of this commercial district and functions as an important social and cultural hub. With its iconic glowing neon signs in the storefront windows, residents are drawn to the store's atmosphere and cultural legacy. Everlasting Tattoo's emphasis on quality, creativity and value of craft is a gleaming example of what a legacy business is. This shop brings joy to its customers and vibrancy to the neighborhood, helping capture the imagination of people and transforming it into art.

The business location at 813 Divisadero Street is a Category A (Historic Resource Present) structure within the boundaries of the California Register eligible NOPA Historic District. Located on the northwest corner of Divisadero and Fulton Streets in the North of Panhandle neighborhood, it is within the NCT (Divisadero Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit District) Zoning District and a 65-A Height and Bulk District. 813 Divisadero Street is mentioned in the San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement. The Regal Manufacturing Company, which designed modern store fixtures and entire storefronts for local businesses, was located on the subject property.

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1992.

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes. Everlasting Tattoo qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. Everlasting Tattoo has operated continuously in San Francisco for 32 years.
- b. Everlasting Tattoo has contributed to the history and identity of the North of Panhandle and Western Addition neighborhoods and San Francisco.
- c. Everlasting Tattoo is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art / craft / cuisine / tradition?*

Yes. The business is associated with tattoo artistry, instrumental in the cultivating the "new school" tattoo movement of the 1990s, with all work being designed specifically for each customer. A new school tattoo, also known as neo-traditional or illustrative tattoo, is a contemporary style of tattoo art that emerged in the late 20th century. It draws inspiration from traditional tattooing, such as American or Japanese styles, but incorporates bold and vibrant colors, exaggerated proportions, and imaginative designs. New school tattoos often feature cartoon-like or surreal elements, making use of creative shading and 3D effects to give the artwork a more dynamic and modern appearance. This style allows for greater artistic freedom and experimentation, leading to visually stunning and eye-catching tattoos.

4. Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and / or architecture?

Yes. Everlasting Tattoo is associated with numerous legends in the tattoo industry, including Aaron Cain, Mike Davis and Time Lehi. The artists were cutting edge for the time and were innovative in the type of art that people were, and are, putting on their bodies. This was a time when actual “artists” became tattooers rather than just practitioners. They also strongly influenced the later generations of young artists.

Many famous entertainers and musicians have been clients at Everlasting Tattoo, including Margaret Cho, comedian and actor; Timothy (Tim) Commerford, bassist and backing vocalist for the band *Rage Against the Machine*; and Lars Frederiksen, guitarist and vocalist for the band *Rancid*.

5. Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?

Yes, the subject property is within the boundaries of the California Register eligible NOPA Historic District.

6. Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?

Yes, the subject property is mentioned in the San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement. The Regal Manufacturing Company, which designed modern store fixtures and entire storefronts for local businesses, was located on the subject property.

7. Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?

Yes. The business has been written up in countless magazine publications including Tattoo Planet, Tattoo Revue, Rise Tattoo, Tattoo Life, Easyriders Tattoo, Skink and Ink, and many more. Mike Davis was on the cover and featured in Juxtapoz Magazine #68 in September 2006, and has been interviewed by Hoodline, Metal Ink Crew Musings and other blogs.

Racial and Social Equity Analysis

On July 15th, 2020 the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission adopted [Resolution No. 1127](#) centering Preservation Planning on racial and social equity. Understanding the benefits, burdens, and opportunities to advance racial and social equity that proposed Preservation Planning documents provide is part of the Department’s Racial and Social Equity Initiative. This is also consistent with the Mayor’s Citywide Strategic Initiatives for equity and accountability and with the Office of Racial Equity, which required all Departments to conduct this analysis.

The Legacy Business Program is deeply intertwined with these goals. One of the primary purposes of the Legacy Business Program is to maintain San Francisco’s cultural fabric and to foster civic engagement and pride by assisting long-operating businesses remain in the city. The Legacy Business Registry was established to recognize longstanding, community-serving businesses that are valuable cultural assets of the city. These businesses, ranging from restaurants to art galleries to tire shops to community shelters, are key to sustaining the racial and social diversity in San Francisco and adding to the identity and character of our city and the many communities within it.

Everlasting Tattoo is an important social and cultural hub for the neighborhood. The business and their artists participate in the Divisadero Artwalk and have worked fundraising events for animal welfare at the SPCA and women’s events, including an annual benefit called “Still Not Asking For It”.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 813 Divisadero Street (2000 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- 1939 McAllister Street (1992 – 2000)

Recommended by Applicant

- Large iconic glowing neon signs.
- Commitment to providing the highest level of body art.
- Identity as a tattoo shop.
- Social and cultural hub for the community.

Basis for Recommendation

The Department recommends the Historic Preservation Commission adopt a resolution recommending the business listed above be adopted by the Small Business Commission to the Legacy Business Registry.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Resolution

Legacy Business Registry Application:

- Application Review Sheet
- Section 1 – Business / Applicant Information
- Section 2 – Business Location(s)
- Section 3 – Disclosure Statement
- Section 4 – Written Historical Narrative
 - Criterion 1 – History and Description of Business
 - Criterion 2 – Contribution to Local History
 - Criterion 3 – Business Characteristics
- Contextual Photographs and Background Documentation



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 1378

HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 21, 2024

Case No.: 2024-000776LBR
Business Name: Everlasting Tattoo
Business Address: 813 Divisadero Street
Zoning: NCT (DIVISADERO STREET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT DISTRICT) Zoning District
65-A Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 1179/030
Applicant: Michael Davis
813 Divisadero Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Dean Preston
Located In: District 5
Staff Contact: John Dacey - 628-652-7415
john.dacey@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR EVERLASTING TATTOO CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 813 DIVISADERO ST, BLOCK/LOT 1179/030.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the City's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on February 21, 2024, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends that EVERLASTING TATTOO qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for EVERLASTING TATTOO.

Location(s):

Current Locations:

- 813 Divisadero Street (2000 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

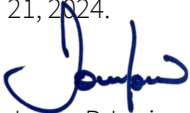
- 1939 McAllister Street (1992 – 2000)

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Large iconic glowing neon signs.
- Commitment to providing highest level of body art.
- Identity as a tattoo shop.
- Social and cultural hub for the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission’s findings and recommendations are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file to the Office of Small Business on February 21, 2024.



Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Vergara, Wright, Foley, Nageswaran, Matsuda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Baldauf, Campbell

ADOPTED: February 21, 2024