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INTERNATIONAL TATTOO STARS CONFIRMED FOR GOLD COAST'S SURFn'ink

Brent McCown, a Kiwi tattoo artist who lives in Austria and famous Japanese tattoo artist, Shige, are the latest additions to the growing list of high profile international tattoo artists confirmed for SURFn'ink 2012 at the Gold Coast Convention Centre from 13-15 January.

McCown, who resides at Villach in southern Austria, works with both machine and the ancient tradition of Tatau - hand tapped tattoos. Famous for his Pacific Polynesian style, McCown is expected to attract a big crowd of New Zealand ex-pats to the popular three day event.

Known for his colourful, intricate bodysuits, 30 year old Shige from Yokohama is ranked by many in the industry amongst the best tattoo artists in the world.

Shige says as a teenager he was impressed by the colourful American tattoo designs he was exposed to while working as a Harley Davidson mechanic in Hiroshima.

"I grew up in a family that loves art; both my mother and grandmother are both very artistic and creative and I was definitely influenced by them," says Shige.

"When I was a child, drawing was always one of my hobbies. My mother encouraged me to learn water colour painting, so I attended classes for a few years.

"I didn't go to school to learn to draw. I studied and taught myself how to tattoo. I don't stick to Japanese traditional tattoo styles. My style is very different. I call it 'Shige style'."

Shige and McCown will join tattoo artists from America, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Samoa, Tahiti, UK, Japan, Greece, China, Korea and Thailand, all of whom are already taking bookings from those who want to be tattooed during the January event.

Other big names now confirmed are Nathan Kostechko (US), Steve Ma-Ching (NZ), David Corden (UK) and Bob Tyrell (US).

Popular Californian artist Nikko Hurtado is one of many artists who will hold industry-focused seminars during SURFn'ink. Seats the seminars will be available on a first-in-first-served basis at the SURFn'ink desk on Friday 13 January from 11am.

As well as incorporating all aspects of tattoo culture, from all styles of tattooing, to body piercing and body painting, to competitions, SURFn'ink's colourful 2012 program also includes pro-wrestling, Muay Thai, Jiu Jitsu, art fusion, photo and art galleries, live music and a wildcard heat for the national tattoo pageant, Miss Ink Australia.

Organisers encourage those wishing to have tattoos during the event to book ahead directly with their chosen artist to avoid disappointment. A full list of artists is available on the website www.tattoosurfnink.com (see below)

Organisers expect around 15,000 people will visit SURFn'ink in January at the Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre.

SURFn'ink tickets are priced from \$20 and are available from www.ticketek.com

All tickets purchased online for SURFn'ink will give the holder express priority entry into the event – 30 minutes prior to opening time. Online ticket holders to be first to have access to available artists.

The Express Priority entry will be open to online ticket holders throughout the event to avoid queues.

The first 200 VIP ticket holders through the door will receive a free tattoo magazine and go in the draw to win a \$500 tattoo voucher.

Accommodation can be arranged through SURFn'ink's travel partner Leisurecom. For discounted accommodation deals, go to www.leisurecom.com or phone 1300 669 885. **1300 669 885**

INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS CONFIRMED TO DATE

(If you would like a phone interview, images, or would like to email through some questions for a pre-event story, send through your request and we will do our best to facilitate this for you. Please keep emailed questions to a minimum.

Alternatively, you can contact the artists direct through their website or facebook.)

Bob Tyrrell | USA | www.bobtyrrell.com

Nikko Hurtado | USA | www.nikkohurtado.com

Nathan Kostechko | USA | www.nathankostechko.com

RemisTattoo | LITHUANIA / IRELAND | www.facebook.com

Brent McCown | NZ / AUSTRIA | www.tattootatau.at

Emilia Drzewucka | THE NETHERLANDS | www.houseoftattoos.nl

Robin Pajzs | THE NETHERLANDS | www.facebook.com

Fuiavailili Lawrence Ah Ching | SAMOA | www.myspace.com/lesegaulatatau

Mr Jack | ITALY | www.mrjacktattooing.tk

Carlos Rojas | USA | www.facebook.com

Kasala Sanele | SAMOA | www.facebook.com

Ueo | ITALY | www.ueotattoo.com

Arnaldo Bel Fiore | ITALY | www.facebook.com

Bunny | HUNGARY | www.bunnytattoo.hu

Horiei Shinshu | JAPAN | www.facebook.com

Knuckle | JAPAN | www.knuckle.jp

Mirek Vel Stotker | POLAND | www.stotkertattoo.com

Jeremy Lo | BORNEO | www.myspace.com/monkey_tattoo

Steve Ma Ching | NZ | www.facebook.com/Samoan.tattoos

Cheng Xinlong | CHINA | www.blackeasttattoo.com

David Corden | UK | www.davidcordentattoos.com

Juin | MALAYSIA | www.facebook.com

Khan | On the road | khantattoo.com

Khor Kok Way | MALAYSIA | www.facebook.com

Lara Higgs | UK | www.facebook.com

Thai Ho Pham | GERMANY | www.trashinkbomber.com

**For more information, interviews or images for SURFn'ink, contact
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