

NY Ink's Ami James Chats about New Season and Inking Your Partner's Name



By Jennifer

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The holidays are the perfect time to catch up on television shows, new and old. If you're a fan of tattoos and drama, we have good news for you! The TLC reality hit show 'NY Ink' will be kicking off Season Two on December 29. We had the opportunity to catch up with renowned artist and main character Ami James, the driving force behind the show and Soho-based tattoo shop- Wooster Street Social Club. In our chat with Ami, we discussed his inside perspective on the series, as well as current tattoo trends. Here's what the reality star had to say in the days leading up to the start of the second season of 'NY Ink'!

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Tell us about your experience so far in New York. What's been the biggest challenge?

New York has been home for me for 15 years, although I live in both Miami and New York. I'm constantly going back and forth between the two cities, so I would say the biggest challenge has been giving the Miami and New York shops equal attention, and juggling my family and personal obligations as well.

How does New York differ from Miami?

Miami is very laid-back, where New York is more hustle and bustle. You can really feel the energy in the air in New York. So the cities are different, and the shops in the cities are different as well. The one common thread is really the clients.

Tattoos used to be considered pretty taboo, but it seems there has been a shift in perception. Do you agree?

The world of tattoos has really changed in the past decade, and with the television shows, tattoos have been brought into people's living rooms. The timing of the shows was right. People have learned more about tattoos, and there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of the population with tattoos.

What's the biggest tattoo trend you are seeing right now?

There are always trends in tattoos, but thought and education are important when considering a tattoo. Be sure to think long-term and know that the tattoo will likely last a lifetime. That being said, the biggest trend I'm seeing right now is women getting tattoos on their ribs. The upside of this location is the ribs are usually covered by clothes, but the downside is this is a very painful location!

So many people ink the name of their significant other on their body. We all remember when Kasey Kahl got a tattoo to declare his love for Bachelorette Ali Fedotowsky. What do you

think motivates people to do this?

It's popular to get these types of tattoos, but I don't recommend it unless it's somebody you absolutely know you will love forever. I respect the freedom of choice, but I do try to give people insight that the tattoo is permanent. And I can speak from personal experience; I have a portrait tattoo of my ex-wife [Jordan]! Today, we're best friends so I can honestly say I don't regret the tattoo. I embrace it as part of my personal history.

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For people who decide to get a tattoo with their partner's name, is there a place on the body you recommend that is best for this type of statement?

In our business, we don't typically provide recommendations as much as we advise customers of locations on the body that might not work very well. For example, some spots on the body are very painful to get a tattoo. It's all about making sure the customer is informed and making the best decision for their body.

We all know tattoos are permanent, but sometimes relationships are not. What advice do you give to people who may have a tattoo of a former lover?

Well, we know relationships have the potential to end up as disasters. I'm thinking of Tiger Woods right now, and we all understand what it's like when a relationship ends. Personally, I have a tattoo linked to my ex-wife, but we were lucky. Although our marriage didn't last, we ended the relationship really respecting each other, so I'm okay with the tattoo. If you end up with a tattoo you don't want, you really have two options, cover it up or laser it off.

How many tattoos do you have, and which is your favorite?

I have so many great tattoos. I especially like a tattoo I had done in Japan, because it really taught me a lot about the Japanese culture. I also really like my tattoo that is a

portrait of my daughter [Shayli Haylen James].

Thanks to Ami for sharing his perspective into the world of tattoos! In case you missed season one of NY Ink, you can pick up the DVD (available on December 20) and catch up before the second season begins.