



TRIBAL EXPRESSION

Body Modification Data

WHAT IS SCARIFICATION?

Scarification is one of the oldest forms of body adornment, the first tattoos were done / invented by cutting the skin and rubbing ash in to the cut. It has also been used as a right of passage (entering adulthood) these "tests" are to prove strength and self discipline. If the rights of passage test were failed or not done, the individual would still be treated as a child and not allowed to hunt, sing or dance with the "adults".

As of today the art of scarification has come a long way, and can be comparable to Tattooing. New techniques allow the practitioner to do shading, fading and minor removal. By combining these techniques with modern medical tools, it allows for a more realistic image. Most will ask, why do people do this??? We feel that a whole thesis could be written on this subject, but in our experience we feel that some of the main common dominators seem to be --- conquer an event; marking of an event; spiritual beliefs; or, just for the sake of the beauty and art.

There are many different ways to permanently scar images into the body, like branding "burning" or cutting.

Cutting: This is usually done with a scalpel, allowing for extremely accurate designs to be cut into the skin. Most would assume that this method would be quite painful, it is not as bad as one might think. It is imperative to have a scarification artist that has proper training in the art of scarification. This will aid in the reduction of pain and discomfort, not to mention that it is *not wise to allow any one without a proper apprenticeship / training to cut you in any manner, as this could be quite dangerous.*

Branding: When it comes to branding, there are many different types / methods of branding available.

(1) Desiccator Branding: This is one of the most accurate types of branding available, this method uses radio frequency to burn the tissue. The tip of the unit does not get hot, but the radio frequency = 2500 to 2700 degrees, these temperatures are focused and do not have much residual burn and are very focused, thus allowing for accurate brands. The "**con**" to this method is it can have a feeling of a mild electrical sting.

(2) Thermal Cautery: This method uses a specialized medical device normally used for cauterizing a wound, This is done by consistently heating a platinum wire to 2300 to 2600 degrees. This method allows for quick larger coverage, as the practitioner is able to brand a large area in a very short period of time. Due to its ultra high temperature, it is not very painful. The "**cons**" to thermal cautery can have a residual burn and if not placed properly this can cause images to join and or touch. The amount of residual burn can depend a lot on the practitioner and the tools that he is using. Though, due to the precision of the thermal cautery units this residual burn can be controlled to be used as a fading technique.

(3) Strike Branding: This style is achieved by heating thin strips of stainless steel and quickly striking the heated pieces against the skin. This style is perhaps one of the most misunderstood styles, most think that you can bend up a design and stamp it on your skin, eg. like a cow :) This is not the case, in fact a lot more thought has to be put into a design or a strike brand. For example, a closed design like a heart will not work, as the residual burn will project inwards and cause the whole design to one scar. This will not work well if the customer wanted just a heart outline. Most commonly, the design would be pre bent into small sections and numbered, when the practitioner does the brand he would simply follow each number. The "**con**" to strike branding is if the practitioner is not extremely experienced, it is very easy to mess up and also there may be a lot of residual burning - causing images to join.

(4) Rod Branding: This method involves the same theory as strike branding, but with more accuracy and less of a choppy appearance. Rod branding uses different heated rods, allowing the practitioner to literally draw the brand on. The "**con**" is again residual burning.

Tribal Expression is one of the most well equipped scarification shops in the world, offering scarification services with Desiccator, Thermal Cautery, Laser, Infrared and Cutting. All branding services are done with a medical smoke evacuation - "so it does not smell :)"

As of current, Keith Kennedy is one of the only practitioners to be heavily mixing Scarification with Branding. This allows us to start producing some unique looks as well reduce times on filling in areas. This combined use of styles is one of Keith's signatures and is recognized world wide for his scarring styles.

If you have any question feel free to ask any Tribal Expression employee.