



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Painting Legacy Lives On Through the Art of Tattoos** *Bloodlines: Matt Stebly exhibition opens March 23 at The MAX*

MERIDIAN, Miss. (March 1, 2021) – Matt Stebly has put his mark on the art world through the unconventional artform of tattooing. A special exhibition titled *Bloodlines: Matt Stebly* will feature his work through sketches, paintings and photography March 23-July 11 at the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience, or The MAX, in downtown Meridian.

The tattoo artist, based in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, developed his personal style from the talents of his family, the natural environment and the work of other coastal artists. Stebly is a great-grandson of Mississippi artist Walter Inglis Anderson, a member of The MAX Hall of Fame who spent much of his life in Ocean Springs and shared some of the same inspirations. In addition to tattooing skin, Stebly also draws and paints using tattoo ink as pigment.

“For a majority of people, tattooing is still considered taboo. Most tattooers are actually fine artists,” said Stebly. “More and more people are now realizing that tattooing is art, and it’s becoming more mainstream.” Stebly’s clients become living canvases – walking, talking, breathing works of art.

In the exhibition, organized by the Walter Anderson Museum of Art in Ocean Springs, Curator Mattie Codling shows a generational connection. The art forms of painting and tattooing are more closely linked than one might think. *Bloodlines* offers a compelling family story and educational experience, as well as an inside look at the intriguing world of tattooing.

The exhibition celebrates the history of tattooing in the Gulf South along with Stebly's unique body of work. Stebly regularly creates masterpieces on skin at his studio, Twisted Anchor Tattoo and Fine Art Gallery, located in downtown Ocean Springs, a community that has long attracted arts enthusiasts.

Admission to the exhibit is free with regular museum admission. The MAX is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and on Sunday from 1-5 p.m. The museum is located at the corner of Sela Ward Parkway and Front Street, overlooking the railroad at the edge of Meridian’s historic downtown. Street parking is available, with shops and restaurants within walking distance. For more information visit [MSarts.org](http://MSarts.org) or call 601-581-1550.

#### **About The MAX**

The Mississippi’s Arts + Entertainment Experience explores the state’s creative legacies in one immersive attraction. Come discover the Mississippi roots of some of the world’s arts and entertainment icons – Elvis Presley, Oprah Winfrey, B.B. King, Faith Hill, Sela Ward, Margaret Walker, Eudora Welty and Jim Henson, to name just a few.

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