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Art Gallery Turns Into Tattoo Shop Celebrating Black History

Recess gallery is hosting a pop-up shop, Invisible Man Tattoo, offering up designs celebrating black history and pride.

By [Nicholas Rizzi](#), Patch Staff | Feb 14, 2018 4:32 pm ET

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CLINTON HILL, NY — A pop-up tattoo shop has moved into a Clinton Hill art gallery, inking designs celebrating black history and pride.

Sculptor and tattoo artist Doreen Garner opened [Invisible Man Tattoo](#) inside the [Recess](#) gallery, at 45 Washington Ave., last month offering up free tattoos with flash sheets — a page of pre-drawn designs — that reflect black history, Garner said.

"The main focus of the tattoo shop project is to provide a space for people of color and identifying being of the African diaspora getting tattoos," said Garner, a licensed tattoo artist who works out of a private shop.

"There are always images that are celebrating white America and there are never any images that celebrate the black American experience."

Garner will offer people who identify as black free tattoos chosen from more than a dozen flash designs drawn by her and the [Philadelphia Printworks](#). The tattooed people are then asked to record a video afterward talking about why they chose the design.

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The shop opened in early January and Garner estimates she tattooed around 40 people so far — mostly using the flash designs — with nearly 160 people booked so far to get inked by her until it closes on March 3. People who want to go under the needles at the shop can fill out an online form to book an appointment.



invisibleman_tattoo

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Garner tattoos out of Invisible Man on Fridays and Saturdays and the space is open to the public so they can watch and check out designs on the walls.

The flash sheets mostly focus on American traditional style tattoos, with some pieces in Garner's own art style, which Garner chose because those classic designs rarely showcase black history.

"I wanted there to be some remnants of that so there's an association to this black American history that hasn't been illustrated yet," she said.

Aside from the tattoos, the pop-up also hosts several events and a party on [Saturday is being planned to mark the opening of the "Black Panther" movie.](#)

Garner, who's more well known as a sculptor, said she's always been interested in becoming a tattoo artist, but was always put off by the long apprenticeship process. She finally decided to skip it, pick up a needle two years ago and get to work.

"It was something that I was always really interested in and I always thought that you had to absolutely go through an apprenticeship," she said.

"I talked to a friend of mine who was a tattoo artist and just encouraged me to get my license and start practicing on my own."

Image: Doreen Garner

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