

NoDa NEWS

The Arts District

Vol. 04 Iss. 2

For even more NoDa Neighborhood info, visit mynoda.org

MARCH 2011



NoDaRioty ART Featured Artist For MARCH

Ruth Ava Lyons a.k.a. "Miss X"

Describe your art: I have been an oil painter on canvas since the age of 8. The medium is sensuous, however I am afraid I have inhaled far more turpentine fumes than I would like to admit. I have worked on mural size works as well. In the old days, I was one of first artists in the south to work on billboards as a fine art format. One public art mural is permanently located in the Charlotte Convention Center. I have done projects in other media such as glass mosaic tesserae, metal, paper, steel and collaborated several times with sculptor husband Paul Sires.

Where are you from? I am from Cleveland, Ohio. It's a gritty tough place where I feel I was forged. It might not have provided much inspiration, but the people and tenor of the city shaped my somewhat blue-collar work ethic, fortitude, and determination to survive the trials of a "Maker".

Where did you learn? I studied at the Cleveland Museum of Art throughout my youth. I knew that place like the back of my hand. Soaked up the Asian, Egyptian, pre-Columbian, and medieval holdings like a sponge. Received my BFA from Kent State University and MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art, which some consider the Yale of art schools. Cranbrook is a real exclusive place and I was lucky to be accepted there to work alongside highly regarded international artists known widely in their fields. After Cranbrook, I was awarded a Fulbright fellowship in South America. My solitary travels there in the middle of the Andes were very intense, mind expanding, and changed me forever.

What do you think of the local art scene? Paul Sires and I came to NoDa 26 years ago as the first artists in the hood, so we have seen waves of change. A lot that has been lost as well as gained in NoDa, but we continue to roll with it in every new manifestation. We like to reflect on its colorful history, but we savor the moment. There were more alternative shows in NoDa and odd locations around town in the old days before real estate became so expensive. And we miss that "underground" attitude and always look for it to resurface. I appreciate events like Pecha kucha, Dialect nights, and places like Hart Witzten & Baku that help keep things fresh. I am always hopeful for Charlotte cultural institutions to offer new forms of exposure to local artists.

Where do you find inspiration? I am not sure I recognize inspiration when it takes place, but I do gravitate towards simple pleasures like the bamboo grove in my backyard or the poetry and music of non-western cultures. (I like deva primal right now.) Traversing various forms of information fuels me, as I am open to everything that crosses my path in the day-to-day stuff of life. So it can be images of microscopic organisms to product packaging in an Asian grocery store. It's all good. I will be an artist in residence at Everglades National Park in April, and I think that this type of exposure (it's the most endangered ecosystem in the U.S) will undeniably have an impact on my psyche. Ask me when I come back if inspiration took place.

If your art were a statement, it would say? My work has frequently been described as having a spiritual quality and that's flattering because making art for me is like being a street fighter. I wrestle with it and I almost always come out on top after being badly beaten. I strive to communicate a sense of mystery and weave imagery to depict the beauty of seen and unseen forces that surround us. Painting has always been a window where I see infinity, a place you can fall into and escape. This little universe holds a personal cosmology that allows me to go deep like a diver for treasure, yet allows me to conceptually stay connected to the world.

Who/What influences your art? I look inside more than outside for source material, but an influence can be generated by the direction of the work. When I started to incorporate a written "prayer" into the composition of my paintings, I began looking at Arabic script and other forms of calligraphy, so this visual language stimulated my experimentation. Having an artist for a partner for 34 years is also an immense sounding board that gives me another perspective. Paul always shows me a different way to look at things as do my children Eden and Orion.

What advice would you give to an artist just starting out? See possibilities. Also LET GO. The art world can be so arbitrary, so just follow your instincts and don't take too much advice. Thomas Edison said, "I haven't failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." Know that you might need to keep searching for ways to express your voice.

What else do you do for fun? I open my window next to my bed and listen to the rain...that's after I watch Jersey Shore! I like archery, hula hooping, salsa dancing...wish I could get to practice surfing...and I just started cello lessons.

If you could create one art installation in NoDa, without regard for expense or effort, what would it be? 1. All these years of driving under the Matheson Bridge I always envision a detailed massive installation of neon and other lighting to create a sensation of underwater ocean when you drive through at night. I was always interested in oceanography. 2. I would love to build a meditation chapel that has waterfall features built into walls. Where? I have no idea.

How can we find your art? My website is www.ruthavalions.com I will be the March featured artist in The Window on Noda, a venue I began for Lyons Fine Art Consulting after I closed Center of The Earth Gallery after 22 years in June. Hidel Brooks Gallery in Southend represents my work in Charlotte. An exhibition slated for Oct. 2011. Contact me if you want to get on my mail list for my exhibition invites or The Window on NoDa www.centeroftheearth.com

If you are a local artist and are interested in being featured in the NoDa News, please email art@green-rice.com

Remembering L.B. Lee

-Cindy, Allison and the folks at the Boulevard at NoDa.

On Friday, February 11th, our dear friend LB lost her battle with cancer. Those who have been in NoDa for a long time know that LB & The Boulevard go together like marshmallows and hot cocoa. The original "Shop Girl", LB was our first staff person when we opened 5 years ago. We have sold her jewelry most of that time, taking a small break when her health needed her to pull back and allow for more rest. Always known for her hugs, smiles and amazing wardrobe, LB is a shining star in our life and we miss her dearly.

Elle VJ BOUTIQUE

Located in the Hart Witzten Gallery, you'll find one of NoDa's newest treasures—Elle VJ Boutique. Owned and operated by LaVonndra Johnson, Elle VJ (a derivative of her initials) proudly boasts to produce some of the area's most unique and trendsetting fashions. Born and raised in Charlotte, NC, LaVonndra always had a knack for fashion and style. Introduced to fashion at a young age by her father, she quickly began styling and coordinating unique pieces in her everyday attire.

Initially, Elle VJ started out as a small booth inside the local mall in Fort Mill, SC and has since grown to a studio/loft space on 36th St. The boutique is one of Charlotte's only loft space dedicated to fashion and styling. The decor and ambiance of the boutique fit seamlessly with the overall creative atmosphere of NoDa. Decorated in natural hues of gold, brown, orange, and ivory, the boutique exudes a rustic, yet elegant feel. The downstairs of the boutique showcases an open fireplace with tall standing custom bookcases that house the boutique's exclusive collection of jewelry designed by De'Quite White as well as its shoe collection. As of late, a new addition to the boutique is its makeup and beauty bar, where customers can purchase as well as receive makeup applications by a celebrity MUA.

Upstairs of the boutique is where you'll find a fashionable collection of party and cocktail dresses. Each piece inside the boutique is personally selected by LaVonndra to ensure that the standard of quality remains and to also ensure that her customers leave feeling and looking sexy while still maintaining the demeanor of a true lady! In recent news, Elle VJ was voted as 2010 Boutique of the Year at the annual Queen City Awards. **136 E 36th St - Studio 2, Charlotte, NC 28206 | 704.333.1571 | ellevj.com**

All Arts Market at The Neighborhood Theatre

What better place to experience the edgy, artsy flavor of NoDa than the All Arts Market at The Neighborhood Theatre? We're back for another weekend of great sites, sounds, and people Friday and Saturday, March 11 & 12.

This will be NoDaRioty's 7th All Arts Market, and we aim to improve and expand the experience each time. We have 85 artists who are so eager to show you their creations, that on registration day, the servers of a professional, nation-wide event registration software company crashed because of the overwhelming response! That says a lot about the draw of this NoDa-born event. By providing this opportunity to artists and to local-friendly shoppers, we serve to bolster the presence of art in Charlotte's Arts District!

For a map of our March artists, go to www.nodarioty.org and click "Booth Registration." For further details, write nodarioty@gmail.com.

FREE ADMISSION
AFFORDABLE ORIGINAL ART
MAR FRI. 11th 6-10pm
SAT. 12th 2-7pm
ALL ARTS MARKET
MEET AND SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL ARTISTS



The Matheson Avenue Bridge will one day feature a conceptual mural by local artist, Will Puckett. Serving as a main entrance to The Arts District, the mural will depict the story of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. 250 hours of volunteer time are needed to prepare the "canvas" before the process can begin. Read more inside the NoDa News on how you can help out and be a part of this exciting new gateway to NoDa.

Tuesday, March 1
Chris Wooten, of Modry Design Studio, will be presenting NoDa's new website:
mynoda.org
He will be demonstrating how this exciting new online space will be your new neighborhood resource for all things NoDa.
6:30 @
The Evening Muse

Green Come Parking on Art

By Amy Farris Ray

Last month, you might have read how NoDa came to be the recipient of \$20,000 in grant funding to install seven custom designed bike racks. Here are the details on the racks, where they'll be installed, the designs we've chosen and how you can get involved:

After the grant was approved, we reached out to the community for feedback on the original "NODA" design and a few rack design suggestions Theron Ross had made, too. You responded with even more creative ideas, some of which we've incorporated in our final design decisions.

Amelie's will use an entire parking space for a bike rack in the shape of a car frame. Smelly Cat will, naturally, have a rack in the shape of a cat. Highland Mills Montessori School will have a rack shaped like crayons. North Charlotte Park's rack will be shaped like a dog. At the not-so-distant location of Hart Witzten Gallery and Pickles Farmers Market on Benard Avenue, we'll have a rack shaped like a painter's palette. And, the Johnston YMCA and Clemson Avenue Park will have 'NODA' racks.

Theron Ross is working diligently to have all seven racks completed this spring. If you see him around town, words of encouragement won't be wasted. This is a big project!

We are going to involve local artists in painting the bike racks to truly incorporate them as a part of the Arts District.

Artists interested in painting a rack at a public exhibition during a future All Arts Market and/or Gallery Crawl, please contact the Greenification Committee at nodagreenteam@gmail.com.

Looking forward to biking around the 'hood with you this summer!



It's time for spring cleaning! Remember, private dumpsters (such as the one behind Neighborhood Theatre) are not open for public dumping. These dumpsters are overflowing and becoming an eyesore in our neighborhood. City code says that dumpsters need to be screened, but we can help by not contributing to the illegal dumping. Household trash can be picked up for free from your curbside just by calling 311 and requesting a special pickup. Tyler Foster, the owner of the Neighborhood Theatre complex, has agreed to screen and/or move the dumpster away from the sidewalk.

PRESERVATION:



The Bids Are In: Four Developers Vie for Johnston & Mecklenburg Mills



Earlier this month, the City of Charlotte opened four bids for the Johnston & Mecklenburg Mills from qualified developers. The highest bidder was The Community Builders (TCB) with a bid of \$610,000. The other three developers had until February 21st to submit an upset bid at 10% higher than the top bid from TCB. If a higher bid is submitted, the clock starts again and all four developers have an additional ten days to raise their offer yet again. It is likely that at some point in the next month (possibly by distribution time), the City will have announced the winning developer.

Due in part to past lobbying by the NoDa Neighborhood Association (NoDa NA), all bidders are required to commit to historic preservation of the existing mills, inclusion of 20% or more affordable housing units within the project, and display past experience with construction and management of these types of projects.

The current high bidder, TCB, is a non-profit based out of Washington, DC. They have produced over 25,000 mixed income units, 8,000 of which are still under their management. They have significant preservation experience and have met with Hollis Nixon Meadows, the NoDa NA President. They have no project experience in Charlotte. The other bidders include:

Ark Management, developer of the NC Music Factory in the Center City, includes retail and studio space in their plans. Owner Noah Lazes had asked for the city to remove affordable housing from the requirements at a City HND committee meeting, but now is committing to a project that meets the bid requirements.

Merrifield Patrick Vermillion envisions a renovation similar to their Alpha Mill project on 12th Street. They include within their portfolio the Fat City redevelopment, The Nevitt Building and Lofts 34, all in the NoDa business district.

The final group, M&J, is a broad partnership to pool resources for all of the parameters of the Mills project. Their membership includes Conformity Corp, who bid on the mills back in 2007, the first time the City tried to sell. Their proposal at that time was grand and attractive, receiving some NoDa neighborhood support; it came in second place on NoDa NA votes due to their plans at that time to tear down Johnston Mill.

As of this writing, not all potential developers have met with the NA, so the Neighborhood does not yet have a full understanding of all plans.



Proposed Noise Ordinance Could Threaten NoDa's Outdoor Music Scene

On February 16th, news broke through Facebook and other social media sites alerting NoDa residents to a proposed ordinance to limit and prohibit outdoor music under certain conditions. NoDa residents began to email Patsy Kinsey, our District 1 Representative, and co-chair of the City of Charlotte Community Safety Committee who is considering the ordinance.

Ms. Kinsey attempted to respond to every email through the public figures in the NoDa Neighborhood Association. Here is an excerpt from Ms. Kinsey's response:

Let me try to address that based on what was given to us today:

1. Live amplified music is not permitted within 400 feet of occupied residential zoning. If there is a question about a specific venue, send me the address I will have it checked to see how close it might be to a residentially zoned area. I believe the measuring starts from the edge of the building.
2. Background music, televisions etc. may be played as long as they are not audible within residential zoning regardless of distance.
3. Acoustical music is permitted anywhere, drum circles included.
4. Amplified music is permitted inside a building with no restrictions.

Ms. Kinsey has always made herself available at NoDa Neighborhood Association Meetings, and will be in attendance for the March 1 meeting at the Evening Muse. She will field questions about the proposed ordinance, and explain that the process is just beginning - with public hearings and reviews to come.

All NoDa neighbors are welcome to attend all NoDa Neighborhood Association Meetings at Evening Muse.

Join us for our NEW Series for the month of February

Johnston YMCA
3025 North Davidson Street
Charlotte, NC 28205
Sunday 9:30am

queen city church of Christ

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FEBRUARY'S ASSOCIATION MEMBER OF THE MONTH: TODD HINTZMAN

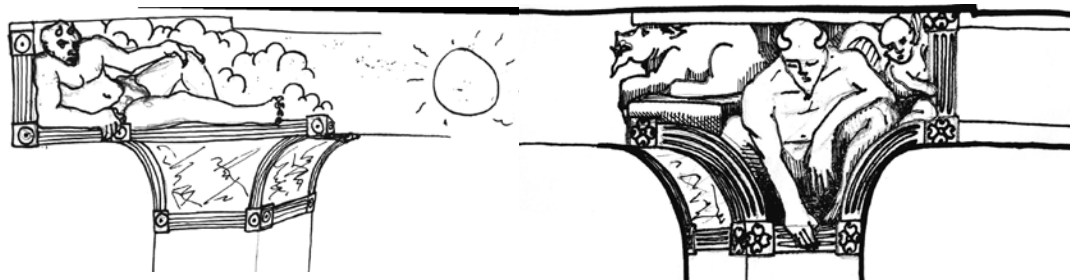


Todd Hintzman received February's Association Member of the Month award. Todd has been a dedicated member of the Association for years and has actively participated in the Social, Website, and Greenification committees. Todd was instrumental in coordinating and executing the tree banding efforts for the neighborhood. Todd always jumps in to lend a hand whenever he possibly can. He is often called upon for his technical expertise as well as his all-around good spirit.

Thank you to Todd and all of our neighbors who donate time and energy to making our neighborhood an even better place to live, work and play. Join us at this month's meeting and find out who will be recognized for March!

If you would like to see someone recognized for their contributions to the neighborhood, please email your nominations to hollisproductions@me.com.

Remember, the AMOTM must be a dues-paying member of HNCNA.



The Matheson Bridge Mural Project

For many neighbors, the hot topic on February's Neighborhood Association agenda was the artists' presentations for the Matheson Avenue Bridge Project. There was an open invitation to the public to submit design proposals for an artistic gateway into NoDa at the Matheson Avenue underpass on North Davidson Street.

Although several artists explored the project, only one group chose to present at the Neighborhood Association meeting: Will and Lauren Puckett. The Pucketts have worked on the concept for a few years, and their proposal was a mural depicting the story of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, or Mecklenburg Resolves. The Mec Dec, as it is commonly known, is often cited as the first declaration of independence by any civic body in the British colonies.

Will's inspiration came from his desire to celebrate the men and events that changed this community and the world. You can see his interpretation of the Battle of Lexington and the British Landing at Concord in his concept drawing. These encounters mark the beginnings of our nation and led to the signing of the Mec Dec. The Mec Dec signers are included in the sketch along with other significant figures from the time. Many of these men (like Alexander, Brevard, Graham, Harris, and Davidson) have streets in North Charlotte named after them. But, Will Puckett says, his ultimate goal is not to present a history lesson, but rather to "spark an interest in history through artistic presentation and to illustrate the power of the everyday man."

A Q&A session and then an internal discussion followed the presentation. Will and Lauren explained that the final budget and timeline would be determined once all grant monies were established. There were also requests from the neighborhood to accentuate how NoDa ties to the Mec Dec, and to maintain diversity within our neighborhood public art.

At the end of the discussion, the neighborhood unanimously agreed to move forward with the Pucketts' design. The Pucketts will now pursue matching grants from the Arts & Science Council and City of Charlotte. NoDaRioty will contribute \$5,000 from their public art funds to match the grants.

The Pucketts are looking forward to working with several of the NoDa N.A. committees during the project. Additionally, the grants require about 250 hours from local volunteers. Some of the help needed includes trash pick-up, brush removal and site cleaning.

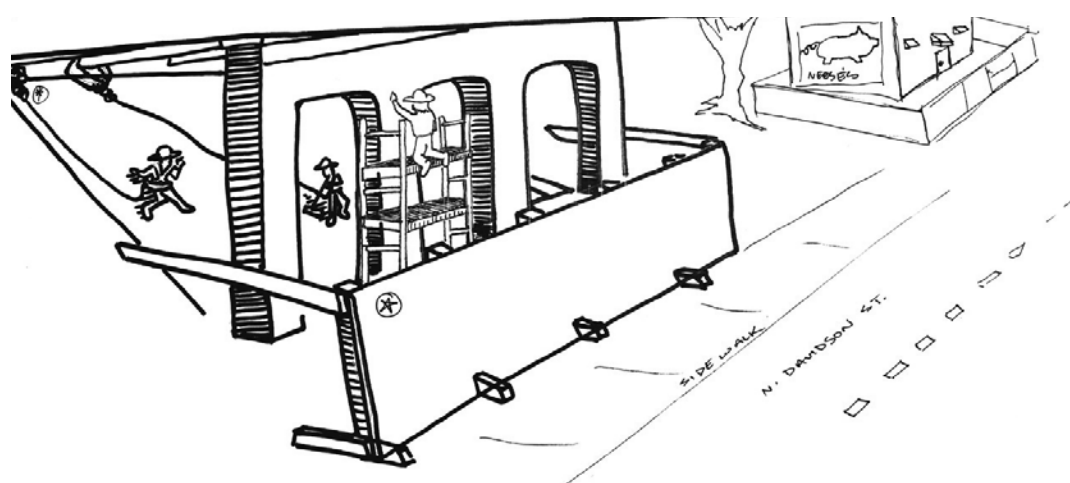
Grant Info: The Pucketts are relying on the combination of two grants: The ASC Special Projects Grant which will match NoDaRioty's \$5K match. This will give funding for Phase I of the project. The ASC is requiring that any work they fund for the Special Projects grant (due Feb. 21) must be completed by June 30, 2011. Therefore, the Pucketts decided to use their funding for the completion of the eight columns. They will then be relying heavily on a Neighborhood Matching Grant to obtain the funding to complete the two embankments and the overpasses. These two parts of the overall design are the largest and trickiest, as they require special scaffolding to accommodate painting on a slanted surface (for the painters balance/sanity!) as well as the closing of one side of the street at a time to paint the overpasses.

Victoria Manning, who co-wrote the big \$80K grant for the Greenification Committee has taken the lead on the grant writing, as she is a professional. She spoke to the ASC and they anticipate being able to approve the grant funding as soon as March 14th. So, work is anticipated to begin mid-to-late March, depending on the weather. In addition, The Pucketts have purchased MathesonBridge.com, which will be used as an informational site about the project. It will also show photo documentation of the working in-progress, and we will use it to help promote the local businesses and major corporations who we will be asking to make donations of materials and/or money.

Volunteer efforts needed include:

- 60 hrs of cleaning up the grounds (chainsaw, weed-eating, raking, bagging, trash pick-up, blowing)
- 48 hrs of bridge cleaning (trash pick-up, removal of vagrant materials, blowing, sweeping, including 24 hrs of heavy pressure washing)
- 40 hrs of priming (priming concrete for paint application, airless sprayers, rollers, brush painters)
- 25 hrs of gloss and final application (applying a protective layer to the final mural to UV protect it and seal it so that if it's ever vandalized it can be cleaned)
- 60 hrs of landscaping (Greenification met to decide how much to donate towards the landscaping. Imagine reading "No" and "Da" on either side of the entrance in flowers or topiary!)
- 20 hrs of hauling and clean up

Please consider volunteering for this massive effort. For more information or to volunteer, contact lauren@williampuckett.com.



So What's New NoDa?

By Sally B. Harris

The Queen City Church of Christ (QCC) is a non-denominational, evangelical Christian church just opening its doors in the heart of NoDa. We have a heart for the city of Charlotte, and especially for the NoDa community. We desire to be a vibrant church where the truth of the Gospel will be clearly and actively communicated, in word and deed, to the surrounding community.

We at Queen City Church desire to be two things: Simple and Serving.

Following Jesus was never meant to be complicated--difficult, yes--but not complicated. As a church, simplicity means we are not about programs, but people; growing people to be saltier salt and brighter light to a world that needs hope.

We will grow as we serve. Church should be not a place of "serve us" but of "service". Each of us desires to find that place where we use our talents and gifts to bless the community around us.

One of the primary ways in which we seek to develop our faith is through Christ-centered, biblically-based worship services. Our Sunday morning worship service exists to pull our affections away from artificial objects of worship—money, careers, relationships, approval, power, and control, among other things—and set our hearts on God. At QCC we have a joyful, engaging and participatory style of worship, which is a careful blend of dignity and freedom. Our worship strives to be interactive and majestic, yet warm and personal.

Please join us on Sunday mornings at 9:30am at the Johnston YMCA, 3025 North Davidson Street. If you need more information or help, please feel free to email at info@qccchurch.com



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FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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megan.flynn@ymcacharlotte.org

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United Way YMCA MISSION: TO PUT CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE THROUGH PROGRAMS THAT BUILD HEALTHY SPIRIT, MIND AND BODY FOR ALL.

Lyons Fine Art Consulting Presents The Window on NoDa 3206 North Davidson Street

The March artist is NoDa pioneer and CTE Gallery owner Ruth Ava Lyons. She has exhibited in over 100 exhibitions and is in numerous corporate and private collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Hearst Corporation, SAS Institute, Philip Morris, Federal Reserve Bank, and New Orleans Museum of Art. Ruth Ava and Paul Sires are the selected design team for the Charlotte Transit System 36th street NODA station. More work by Ruth Ava Lyons can be seen at Hidell Brooks Gallery or www.ruthavalions.com



ALL AGES • NON-SMOKING • LIVE MUSIC VENUE



FRI 6-10PM/SAT 2-7PM • MAR 11 & 12 • FREE
NoDa 60+ local artists
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Affordable original art - Meet, view & shop

FRI • MAR 18 \$10 • 9:30PM
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DREW HOLCOMB AND THE NEIGHBORS OPEN

SAT • MAR 26 (VIP AVAIL) \$18 • 9PM
CODY CANADA & THE DEPARTED
w/BLACKBERRY SMOKE
AMERICANA • ALT-COUNTRY • ROCK

FRI • APR 1 \$12 • 9:30PM
YO MAMA'S BIG FAT BOOTY BAND
'DEAD-ON RUMP-SHAKING FUNK' - BLENDING THE BRASSY, PARTY FEEL OF REGGAE, SKA, HIP-HOP, AND COOL JAZZ.

SAT • APR 2 \$35 • 8PM
DELBERT McCLINTON
JOSH PANDA BAND OPENS
TEXAS ROOTS WITH ROADHOUSE ROCK, JUKE-JOINT BLUES, MEMPHIS SOUL & COUNTRY

FRI • APR 8 (GOLD CIRCLE AVAIL) \$20 • 8PM
JUNIOR BROWN
WITTY SONGCRAFT & MIND-BENDING FRETWORK
COUNTRY, BLUES, TEX-MEX, WESTERN SWING, ROCK & ROLL

TUE • APR 12 \$25 • 10:30PM
CITIZEN COPE SOLO

WED • APR 13 (GOLD CIRCLE AVAIL) \$35 • 8PM
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APR 15 - SHUFFLE ISSUE #11 RELEASE PARTY
APR 30 - ACTUAL PROOF
MAY 6 - PERPETUAL GROOVE
MAY 7 - MIMOSA
MAY 13 - EYES OF THE ELDERS
MAY 17 - XAVIER RUDD
MAY 19&20 - ALL ARTS MARKET
MAY 21 - CHARLOTTE FEMMEFEST

XAVIER RUDD
MAY 17 • \$20 ADV/\$22 DOS (VIP Area) • 8:30PM

Charge tickets online: www.neighborhoodtheatre.com
Outlets: Sunshine Daydreams - N Davidson & E 36th St
Lunchbox Records - 1419-A Central Avenue
Infinity's End - 5119 South Boulevard
Cosmic Tattoos - 3927 Monroe Road



ARTISTS NOW SHOWING

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	NoDa Neighborhood Association Meeting 6:30pm @ Evening Muse Espada Bike Ride 8pm Solstice Trivia 8pm	2 Revolution Trivia 8pm NoDa Knitting 6pm @Yarnhouse	3 Wine Tasting @ Smelly Cat 6-8pm	4 Gallery Crawl	5 Running Group 9am @ Smelly Cat	6 Group Bike 10am @ Smelly Cat
Crime & Safety Meeting 6:30pm @ The Hut (behind YMCA)	8 Espada Bike Ride 8pm Solstice Trivia 8pm	9 Revolution Trivia 8pm NoDa Knitting 6pm @Yarnhouse	Back In The Day History Meeting 6:30pm @ Revolution Pizza Wine Tasting @ Smelly Cat 6-8pm	All Arts Market 6-10pm @ Neighborhood Theatre	All Arts Market 2-7pm @ Neighborhood Theatre Running Group 9am @ Smelly Cat	13 Group Bike 10am @ Smelly Cat
14	15 Espada Bike Ride 8pm Solstice Trivia 8pm	NoDaRioty Meeting 7pm @Boudreaux's Revolution Trivia 8pm NoDa Knitting 6pm @Yarnhouse	Greenification Meeting 6:30pm @ Boudreaux's Wine Tasting @ Smelly Cat 6-8pm	18 Gallery Crawl	19 Running Group 9am @ Smelly Cat	20 Group Bike 10am @ Smelly Cat
21	22 Espada Bike Ride 8pm Solstice Trivia 8pm	23 Revolution Trivia 8pm NoDa Knitting 6pm @Yarnhouse	24 Wine Tasting @ Smelly Cat 6-8pm	25 Social Committee 6pm @ Solstice	26 Running Group 9am @ Smelly Cat	27 Group Bike 10am @ Smelly Cat
28	29 Espada Bike Ride 8pm Solstice Trivia 8pm	30 Revolution Trivia 8pm NoDa Knitting 6pm @Yarnhouse	31 Wine Tasting @ Smelly Cat 6-8pm			

Aprille L. Shaffer, Agent
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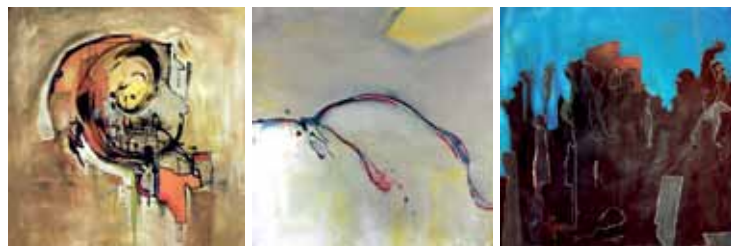
1001010 State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, State Farm Indemnity Company, Bloomington, IL

"Systems & Organisms: A Solo Exhibition"
by Artist Richard Babusci
Opens at Green Rice Gallery

On Friday, March 4th, Green Rice Gallery proudly introduces the new works of Artist Richard Babusci in his solo exhibition entitled *Systems and Organisms*. The goal of Babusci's newest body of work is to expand upon the idea that the paintings are newly created "things". While some of his works create complex, landscape-like compositions, others tend to focus on a single and simpler dynamic, like a specimen on a microscope slide.

Babusci believes the creative process to be something that occurs as naturally as breathing. It thrives most when left to its natural inclinations instead of prescribed notions about composition or other aesthetic "formulas". Consequently, Babusci's artwork begins very loosely and randomly with no predetermined result.

His method starts with bold strokes of black ink – building a skeleton for the painting to grow from. He then uses a combination of watercolor and acrylic paints to draw out and expand upon certain aesthetic elements, while carving away the excess. Colors and texture are layered to add complexity, while the finished form remains simple.



Babusci draws inspiration from the art of bonsai. Like trees and other organisms, he tends to view his artwork as living and dynamic rather than static representations of any idea or existing form. They are new "forms" in and of themselves – never finished, rather beautifully imperfect.

Richard Babusci is a visual artist living in Pittsburgh. He holds a BFA from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, and has exhibited at various galleries in Arizona, Virginia, and North Carolina. *Systems and Organisms* will be on exhibit from March 4th – 27th at Green Rice Gallery. The Meet the Artist Reception on Friday, March 4th will be accompanied by a wine tasting courtesy of World Premiere Wines.

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