

# Art

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and other Detroit artists have to be creative if their work is to reach the public. After approaching the International Institute in Detroit recently, he is exhibiting 37 pieces of his art there.

## Against all odds

If Detroit is on its way back, is local art in the area? Judging by the quality of art shown in exhibits at Detroit Contemporary, Alley Culture and the Cass Cafe the answer is a resounding yes. Art is alive and well in Detroit, but the struggle to keep it so is never ending.

The first time Aaron Timlin walked into the building on the corner of Bryant in the Westbridge Historic District two years ago, snow melting on the roof was raining in. With the help of family and friends, he set to work gutting the two-story structure built in 1899. Four layers of walls later, they reached the red brick in time for a Nov. 14 opening.

"We want to show a mix of emerging and established artists," said Timlin. "We have the biggest generation gap since the 1950s and '60s. There's a lot of wisdom coming from older artists. The younger artists have the excitement and energy."

Upstairs, Timlin has turned the former church and auto parts business into a beautifully lit white space perfect for showing art.

"The art is beautifully displayed," said De Giusti. "You

have to admire the spirit. It represents a wonderful new generation of kids."

Erickson echoes De Giusti's sentiments.

"It's the old idea of young people scraping some pennies together to fill in for nonprofits like Detroit Focus who's temporarily out of business," said Erickson, a sculptor who works in administration at Center for Creative Studies.

Timlin's not an artist but learned to appreciate it early from his father, Hugh, a sculptor and former instructor at Center for Creative Studies. Hugh Timlin curated the recent "3d@de" which showcased some of the finest established and fledgling artists. Aaron plans to schedule future exhibits along the same lines. The next show "Naked" opens March 27 with a mix of artists focusing on human nakedness.

"We want to keep the excitement going and the quality of shows going," said Timlin.

## Food for thought

The Cass Cafe by it's very nature, as a gathering place for students and business people in the University Cultural Center, is a wonderful environment for showing art. With Center for Creative Studies, Wayne State University and its Hilberry Theatre right around the corner, and the nonprofit Detroit Artists Market possibly moving into the neighborhood in fall, the area is

a growing hot bed of culture. Add to that, the fact cafe owner Chuck Roy charges no commission and you know why artists exhibit at the cafe.

"People just mingle here," said De Giusti, a board member of the Detroit Artists Market and the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center. "The artists meet and the food is good. That's important. The environment has to draw people into feeling comfortable."

Upstairs and downstairs, art mingles with the cafe setting.

"We try to support local artists or artists who were from the metro area," said Diane L. May who began curating cafe shows with Kevin Sommers five years ago. "There are 20 year olds to 70s that come here that have a common interest in culture."

Since the cafe doesn't depend on art sales for its bread and butter, May said they're able to create "experimental or unusual works" for shows such as the one in April by employees including hemp clothing by Beth Breidenstein.

"A gallery can be off-putting for people not really acquainted with art," said May, a Royal Oak painter. "It's nice to see people in an unimposing atmosphere open up to the art."

"On the Wall" is an exhibit of relief, sculpture, drawing pertaining to sculpture, and drawing by sculptors continuing through March at the cafe. Hanna, Piet and Robert Sestock

are among the artists taking a variety of approaches to transform 3-d into wall art.

"We tried sculpture before but it's difficult to show because people have a tendency to want to touch it and it's hard to display without it extending too near the tables or into walkways."

## Alley Culture

Sherry Hendrick believes "art survives because there are participants in an ongoing, organically changing community" otherwise "the stamps and lights can eat you up." Dressed to chop wood for Alley Culture's stove on a cold March day, Hendrick talked enthusiastically about the gallery's history and the board that's kept the nonprofit running since 1995. A converted five car-garage built in the 1920s, the gallery is vacant until April 10

when exhibits honoring Earth Day run back-to-back through May.

"There's no formal address or phone number," said Hendrick, a 1988 graduate of Wayne State University's art program. "We liked the idea of people finding it by coming down to a Detroit alley to see good art. Do we have a Web site? No, we have a word stove. They both generate conversation."

Curated by Hanna, the upcoming exhibits are a continuation of the "Honor the Earth" biennials he began at the Willis Gallery where the director before Hanna, Dave Roberts, held his "Earth Day Open Corridor" shows. An alternative space for 25 years until closing in 1996, the Willis Gallery gave cutting-edge artists a place to show work. Alley Culture originated with the same

mission. The gallery charges a 25 percent commission on sales, which by no means covers expense, said Hanna.

"I loved Kurt's proposal for an installation about trees," said Hanna, assistant director at the Center Galleries and an instructor at Center for Creative Studies, "and Nakagawa's work is just beautiful about earth, about seeds that's why I want to show them."

Before Hendrick and poet-husband Mick Vranich opened Alley Culture, the two put hundreds of hours of work into refurbishing the garage's wood walls leaving the environment perfect for Earth Day exhibits.

"We left it unfinished," said Hendrick, "but there's something about this place. You hear the birds."

## ART BEAT

Art Beat features various happenings in the suburban art world. Send Oakland County arts news leads to Frank Provenzano, the Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48009. E-mail: fprovenzano@oc.homecomm.net

## ART TOURS

The Fine Art Associates, a group of volunteers who support the arts and cultural activities at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, in cooperation

with the Art Museum Project at the university, present two art tours in April and May.

The first, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, April 22, focuses on the Detroit region with a visit to a private museum, an artist's studio and a new Hamtramck gallery.

The second tour, 9:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, May 24, stops at a private home/collection in Bloomfield Hills, and artists' studios in Troy and Pontiac.

## Art

The cost, which includes lunch, is \$20 for members of the Fine Art Associates, \$30 non-members. All proceeds are used to support art and cultural programs at the university. Call museum project director Kenneth Gross at (313) 693-5058 for information about the tours. To learn about volunteer opportunities with the Fine Art Associates, call Joseph Marks, collections and exhibitions curator, at (313) 693-5087.

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# The 1999 Home & Garden Collection

## EVENTS OF THE WEEK OF MARCH 21

### APRIL CORNELL

Visit the beautiful new spring collection of table and bed linens.  
Thursday, March 25, 7:00-7:30 p.m.

### NEIMAN MARCUS

Put on Underwood Trunk Show - view the beautiful collections of Alan and Pagluma straw hats for special outdoor occasions at home or away.  
Thursday, March 25, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

### WILLIAMS-SONOMA

Learn how to set the perfect spring brunch table and how to make delicious cake mixes and ganache frostings.  
Wednesday, March 24, 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

### ROSE

Learn the new Rose technologies.  
Saturday, March 27, 3:00-3:30 p.m.

### GARDEN EVENTS IN THE NORTH GRAND COURT

**ENGLISH GARDENS**  
Learn step by step how to create beautiful arrangements with fresh cut flowers for your home.  
Saturday, March 27, 9:00-1:30 p.m.

### WYUR 1310 AM LIVE

Join Don Juchartz, the "Garden Doctor" when he appears on the Jimmy Launce Show on 1310AM live from The Somerset Collection North. The Garden Doctor will be on hand to answer all of your gardening questions.  
Thursday, March 25, 11:40 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

### CRABTREE & EVELYN

Let the experts take you from "A to Z" from properly cleaning fruits and vegetables to creating fabulous, healthy desserts.  
Saturday, March 27, 3:00-3:30 p.m.

### HUDSON'S

Join us in the "Alice in Wonderland Shop" and be amazed at the assortment of spring collectibles and ornaments, from Hudson's china department.  
Friday, March 26-Saturday, April 2 - All Day

### HUDSON'S

Come to Hudson's china department for a personal appearance and signing by Lord Wedgewood.  
Friday, March 26, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

### LOCCITANE

Stop by LOCCITANE to enjoy a complimentary hand treatment designed to treat your gardening hands.  
All day each and every Saturday

### NORDSTROM

Nordstrom and Tiffany Florist will show you how to incorporate flowers and plants into your home and garden.  
Sunday, March 21, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

### RESTORATION HARDWARE

Restoration Hardware is your place for unique decorative and useful home and garden products.  
Thursday, March 25, 10:00-10:30 a.m.

### WALDENBOOKS

Have all of your gardening questions answered by the experts from English Gardens. Bring your children and take part in a creative gardening activity.  
Saturday, March 27, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

### RAND MCNALLY

Leaving home? Learn how to pack efficiently for a winter cruise with fashions by Talbots.  
Monday, March 22, 11:00-11:30 a.m.

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