

NOW HANGING

Downtown art heads uptown



By Angela Hurley Jordan April 19, 2012

Ah, April. Rain, flowers, longer days, and ... Willy Wonka stencils. Stay with us, here. It's about to get cool, because April is a helluva time for the arts in Indianapolis, with the **Stutz Open House, April Show, Spring Exhibitions Opening** at the Indianapolis Art Center, and a host of other spring art celebrations (although the April Show website reflects 2011 information, organizer David Hittle assures us that this year's show is Friday, April 27 at 7 p.m. and the website is being updated). New kid in town, **3040 Indie**, hosts the Mad Collab Show this Friday, April 21, at its cozy studio on the Northwest Side.

The Mad Collab Show focuses on collaborative artwork created or touched by at least two artists. Each artist adds their own flair to the piece, and what comes out is an extraordinary original. The Mad Collab concept was born out of a love for street art. In the two years he's spent researching the underground movement of graffiti and public visual art, 3040 Indie owner Pete Brown discovered something: "I was inspired by how street artists often work together—whether it's for the sake of speed to cover such massive surfaces, or just for the diversity of work," says Brown. "Two artists working together create something that couldn't be created by just one. I liked the idea of two different styles coming together as one."

One of our favorite pieces in the show is a stenciled work of actress Kim "We are sex bob-omb!" Pine on a kick-drum head, created by Brown and a local artist simply named Pretzel. Fans of the geek-rock film **Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World** will be hard-pressed to walk away from it—and they won't have to battle seven deadly exes for the rights to call it their own.

Another collaboration showcases a stenciled purple Willy Wonka in front of a graffiti-laden brick wall in shades of black and white. The savvy image of Wonka in his suit and top hat juxtaposed with street art makes for quite the art dichotomy, but it works. You won't just see stencils, though. Multiple mediums are present at the Mad Collab Show—illustrations, paintings, fiber art, photography, and street art are all visible.

Created as a community creative space by Brown's company Brownbulb Productions, 3040 Indie is a place to create art and music of all types. 3040 Indie is what Brown dubs "an open-door collective." It's a space open to artists, instructors, and musicians who can use it to create art work, sketch, exhibit, and record music or videos. "It's a community space for artists," Brown says. "It gives young, emerging artists an opportunity to showcase their works and seasoned artists the chance to share experiences with younger artists. Everyone contributes. And everyone is responsible for cleanup after a show!"

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The 3040 Indie shows are also a good thing for aspiring collectors. The works range from \$20 to \$500 per piece. No stuffy, hoity-toity artiste-types here. The art is accessible and attractive to the newbies, but sophisticated enough to appeal to more experienced collectors as well. Brown wants everyone to be able to leave with something. And of course, so do the artists.

Independently, the artists on this show's roster have well over a century of diverse experiences and many are well established on their own. Some are Hoosiers, some are Buckeyes, some are Michiganders and one is Dutch? Yep, it's an international show. Dutch artist Pieter Van Tongeren approached Brown at last year's Oranje event to inquire about future art shows at 3040 Indie. Van Tongeren is collaborating with his mother, Ada Leenheer, on a piece for the Mad Collab show. So, yeah, it's also multigenerational. Artists working together. Artists working with their parents. Artists working with their kids. International artists working with Midwestern artists. Dogs and cats living together. Mass hysteria!

It's a sensory experience as well. Taste and sound, that is. The **Tacos Without Borders** food truck will be on hand and **The Sinking Ship** at 49th and College hosts the after party. Live performers "Mild And Hard" and **DJ Kyle Long** of Cultural Cannibals set the electronica stage as well. And if you're feeling a bit left out, just make your own artistic contribution to the interactive canvas. Everyone is invited to paint on it, not just the artists. Make your own mark at the Mad Collab show, have a taco or two, and stay a while.

Check out 3040 Indie's first show from November 2011, and see what the fuss is about:

The Mad Collab Show happens Saturday, April 21, from 6-10 p.m. at **3040 Indie**.

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