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Monday, 24 Sep 2012 13:49

Big City Art Swaggers into Downtown Mechanicsburg

Written by Vangie Unti

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Metropolis Collective, Mechanicsburg

Mechanicsburg may not be the first place you think of for viewing contemporary art, but that was part of the appeal for the husband and wife team of Richard Reilly and Danielle Charette, New York City natives and founders of the Metropolis Collective. The gallery's name says it all; a dual homage to the owners' hip urban roots and their vision for the space as a community collaboration, celebrating art and music from local talents alongside that of internationally established artists. "We felt there was a niche here that we could fill. We want to be fresh and show truly contemporary, modern things that you wouldn't otherwise see every day," said Charette.



The funky art deco location on Main Street features two separate and very different art galleries. The Trash Art Gallery in front displays serious contemporary art by internationally-acclaimed artists. The Hole in the Wall Gallery in back is reserved for local community artists to showcase their work alongside more established national artists. The Collective also houses an impressive recording studio and Stage Noir, an open stage for musical and performance art venues.

One of the most exciting aspects of the Metropolis Collective will be the ever-changing innovative exhibits and shows the couple plans to feature in the space. "Every month we go to New York and actively seek new art. We crate it up and bring it here so people can enjoy it," said Charette, a graduate of the Savannah College of Art & Design and a respected painter in her own right.

"We also welcome newcomers and locals in the community. We want this space to be open to everybody." The Metropolis Collective will feature completely new exhibits with fresh themes and new art each month.

Four months ago, the Metropolis Collective made a provocative debut with *A Taste of Trash*. The exhibit was a huge hit, attracting over 600 attendees on opening night. "The prior generation always calls the work of the innovative younger generation trash," explained Charette. "We also found it ironic to hang internationally renowned art that can cost a fortune in this big beautiful space and call it trash. The world of the 70s era New York City that we knew was this trashy, dark, decadent, rat infested, dangerous place that at the same time was full of color, promise, glamour, glitz and total artistic freedom."

Though exhibiting gallery art was the inspiration for the creative duo to open the Metropolis Collective, it is clear that the Mechanicsburg location will offer much more variety than the typical art space. The Collective began holding concerts as part of their recent *Sex and Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll* exhibit, featuring an unforgettable performance by *Damn Kids*. "We were conscientious about the noise level so before the show we talked to our neighbors, to make sure that they were comfortable with it," said Reilly. "When we talked to the Mayor, who happens to live next door, and explained who we were and what we were doing he had just two words for us," said Reilly with a grin. "Rock On." Reilly had no problem taking the mayor's advice. As a founding member of the seminal punk rock band *The Victims* and owner of the label *Rickochet Records*, Reilly hasn't missed a beat. He is currently working on several shows for the gallery featuring up-and-coming musical talent from Philadelphia. "We want to feel good about every aspect of what we put in here," said Reilly.

The Metropolis Collective's third series of exhibits kicks off on October 5th with *WEEGEE*, an exhibit showcasing new works from New York City art icon Rick Prol. Displayed in the Trash Art Gallery, *WEEGEE* will feature Prol's unique pieces, described as a dichotomy between unsettling yet beautiful, dark yet vibrant, and cartoonish yet brutal. *The Cool Cat Show* will be on display alongside Prol's work in the Hole in the Wall Gallery. This exhibit will feature local and national artists' broad interpretations of "cool cats"; not necessarily of the feline persuasion either. "The Hole in the Wall Art Gallery is our super-duper fun space in which we try to involve the community and everyone as best we can accommodate, space permitting, from the local high school skater artist kids who have a dream, to artists from across the globe who think it sounds like a super fun themed show," said Charette. The Cool Cat Show will coincide with the Metropolis Collective's *Scaredy Cat Campaign* fundraiser, which will launch on the same evening. All proceeds from the Scaredy Cat Campaign will benefit the local Harrisburg Area Humane Society. "As furry friend lovers with 8 cats we are very excited about the Humane Society fundraiser," said Charette. "We really hope to raise a lot of money for the organization."

Don't miss the opening reception for Rick Prol's *WEEGEE* and the Hole in the Wall Gallery's *Cool Cats Show* on Friday, Oct. 5th from 6:00 – 10:00pm. The event is free and open to the public. The Metropolis Collective is located at 17 W. Main Street in downtown Mechanicsburg. For more information, check out MetropolisCollective.com, or be friendly and like their page at [Facebook.com/MetropolisCollective](https://www.facebook.com/MetropolisCollective). Contact the Metropolis Collective via email at info@metropoliscollective.com or by phone at 717.458.8245.

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AGENDA: UPCOMING EVENTS

- DJ Dance Party Thu Sep 27 ~ Johnny Joe's
- Drag Bingo Thu Sep 27 ~ Stallons
- Leann Leiter "Safe from Security: Open Homes" Exhibition Thu Sep 27 ~ Midtown Scholar
- Mark Topp and Daniel J. Popp Exhibitions Thu Sep 27 ~ Gallery @ Second
- Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll Thu Sep 27 ~ Metropolis Collective
- Rapunzel Thu Sep 27, 10:15 AM ~ Gamut Classic Theatre
- US2 Duo Thu Sep 27, 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM ~ Big Woody's
- Steve Rudolph Thu Sep 27, 6:00 PM - 9:30 PM ~ Hilton Harrisburg
- Almost Uptown Poetry Cartel Thu Sep 27, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM ~ Midtown Scholar
- Off with their Heads Thu Sep 27, 7:00 PM ~ Appalachian Brewing Company - Abbey Bar
- LIMG Harrisburg Meetup Group Thu Sep 27, 7:00 PM ~ Holiday Inn Harrisburg - East
- Gettysburg Ghost Tours Thu Sep 27, 7:00 PM ~ Gettysburg Ghost Tours
- Let's KO Breast Cancer Comedy Fundraiser Thu Sep 27, 7:30 PM ~ Harrisburg Comedy Zone
- Thursday Night Jam Thu Sep 27, 8:00 PM ~ Liquid 891
- South Central PA Salsa Meetup Group Thu Sep 27, 8:15 PM ~ Level 2
- Salsa Night Thu Sep 27, 8:30 PM ~ Level 2
- Karaoke Thu Sep 27, 9:30 PM ~ Liquid 891
- DJ Ray Rossi Fri Sep 28 ~ Stock's on Second
- Noel Gevers Fri Sep 28 ~ Carley's Ristorante
- Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll Fri Sep 28 ~ Metropolis Collective

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Upcoming Arts Events

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- Thu Sep 27 Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll
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Upcoming Entertainment Events

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- Thu Sep 27 @ 6:00PM - 09:30PM Steve Rudolph
- Thu Sep 27 @ 7:00PM - Off with their Heads

Upcoming Community Events

- Fri Sep 28 Backstage Horrors presents Zombie Contagion
- Fri Sep 28 @10:00AM - 03:00PM Archaeology Excavation
- Sat Sep 29 Fall Harvest Festival
- Sat Sep 29 @ 9:00AM - 01:00PM State Street Clean-Up
- Sat Sep 29 @11:00AM - Kids and Careers Series

Upcoming Networking Events

- Thu Sep 27 @ 7:00PM - LIMG Harrisburg Meetup Group
- Thu Sep 27 @ 8:15PM - South Central PA Salsa Meetup Group
- Sun Sep 30 @ 2:00PM - 04:00PM HYP Book Club
- Sun Sep 30 @ 7:00PM - Capital Area Swing Meetup Group
- Mon Oct 01 @11:00AM - 2012 Harrisburg Chamber Membership Golf Outing

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