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Interiors

CHICAGO

ART, ANTIQUES
& ARCHITECTURE

THE SPRING ISSUE

PLUS

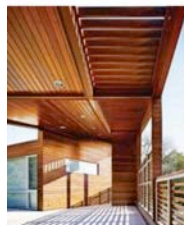
A DREAM HOME DESIGNER'S INSPIRATION
PIRCH K&B SHOWROOM OPENS IN OAK BROOK
TOM ROSZAK REVEALS HIS RURAL MASTERWORK
TRENDING NOW: RADIANT ORCHID
& ACRYLIC ACCENTS

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Zoe Ryan embodies our town's artistic zeitgeist every day, but her new gig with the Istanbul Design Biennial means she's ready to raise our bar.



ON THE COVER
PHOTOGRAPHY: Tony Soluri
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JOSH HODGE PHOTO COURTESY OF CYNTHIA WYNN; RICH PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIC BAEHNACHER



MOTLEY CREW
Members of Garfield Park's new Stairway Studios collective, from left: Eric Gushee, Jason Hawk, Jyl Bonaguro, Salvador Dominguez, Brad Nugent and Trevor O'Neil

Inside the walls of Chicago's ubiquitous yet nondescript artist studio buildings (they function something like art-world speakeasies), hundreds of artists make and moonlight in thriving independent communities. One of the newest, Stairway Studios, was started by the entrepreneurial artist trio Trevor O'Neil, Jason Hawk and Eric Gushee. In their East Garfield Park building, situated in the shade of the Green Line tracks, they have taken advantage of the robust space, characterized by concrete floors, sky-high ceilings and, most importantly, an abundance of square footage that is as affordable as it is durable. So far, they have welcomed nine artists into their community.

While most studio buildings are home to a host of mediums and styles, the artists and designers at Stairway are linked by their ambitious and often irreverent ways of producing artwork. Claptrap studios that belong to Hawk and Laura Davis each boast industrial welding equipment; Hawk's darkly inventive sculptures featuring scavenged bits are a fun counterpoint to Davis' studious yet playful assemblages—small rendered metal forms that are often elegantly flanked by found objects like old art and design books and antique jewelry. Down the hall, O'Neil's colorful, eclectic furniture

CLIMBING HIGH

Stairway Studios is a new design and art collective on the West side, and walk-ins are welcome—anytime!

By Jessica Cochran

Photography by Saverio Truglia

and sleek sculptural lighting pieces emerge from an enormous studio, tricked out with various shop tools. Jonathan Cermak's studio is filled with paintings that range from neosurrealist to punchy abstract and uberconceptual; he used shredded currency (all legally obtained from the Board of Trade, of course!) in a recent series.

But how do people—from the casual art enthusiast to the curious collector—access these artists and their wares? Turns out, anyone can make an appointment to sit down and brainstorm an idea. After all, this is where the action is, as much of the work is destined for galleries, showrooms and public spaces. High-end and high-concept, Gushee's sprawling, intricate wire sculptures, for example, are sold by way of Holly Hunt, and a recent commission rests in the lobby at 33 North Dearborn in Chicago's Loop.

While one-on-one visits are definitely encouraged, Stairway Studios can also throw a good party; at their recent bash for Chicago Artists' Month, they welcomed over 600 people. Their next open studio event on May 3 promises to be a similarly fabulous fete, with music, guest collabs and refreshments served on an eclectic, custom-built piano bar designed by... who else? The inventive artists of Stairway Studios.