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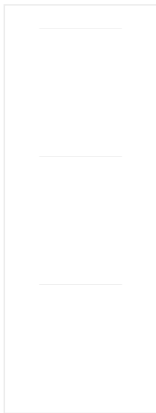
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OT Scene: What is an Arts District?



Jack Conard Jr and artists Justin Christenbery, Rico Nye and Brant Waldeck. (Christine Dietz photo)

OT Scene is a segment that includes remarks reflecting the impressions, opinions and general vibe of our community.

Rachel Prude of PlanCharlotte.org reports: Dozens of arts districts have been established across the country in recent decades, increasing awareness of the connection between the arts and economic development. Cultural project planning consultant **Deborah Frieden** of San Francisco has studied arts districts around the country. She defines an arts district as *a well-recognized, labeled, mixed-use area of a city with a high concentration of cultural facilities that serve as an anchor of attraction.*

brick row
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The People's Brass Band performs at a 2nd Friday Street Festival hosted by Bella Love Inc at Oak St Mill

(photo: My Creative Team)

s districts can form in two ways,” Frieden said in an interview. “The first occurs when artists move into a place with low rent and cultivate a creative energy in that location. The second occurs through some specific planning and action of the government or local organizations.”

— Deborah Frieden

UNC Charlotte architect and town planning professor **David Walters** was involved in 1990s long-range planning efforts for the three north Mecklenburg towns: Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson. He has also studied and observed other arts districts, including NoDa and South End in Charlotte. He said the essential things that attract large numbers of artists to an area are: *inexpensive spaces, “funky” old buildings that can be turned into spaces to live and work, and open entertainment venues.*



Megan McFoto

Old Town Public House on Catawba Ave opened in 2015 in a building built in the 1880s: Coffee Shop, Tap Room and host to live music 6 nights a week. HC Oakes is pictured here and is a featured artist at the Cornelius Arts District Soirée on Feb 21.

(photo: Megan McFadden)

districts that start with the artists tend to be more authentic and have more sustainability.”

— David Walters

Word on the Street

Anticipating the Inaugural **Cornelius Arts District Soirée** scheduled for next Thursday evening, February 21 at **Brick Row**, in which everyone is invited and encouraged to attend, we decided to take it to the streets to OTC and hear from some artists, residents and business owners.

The question:
*When you hear
‘Cornelius Arts District,’
what comes to mind?*

Here are some of our favorite responses:

ould say what comes to mind is the Cornelius Arts District invokes a feeling of freedom of expression. It’s a little enclave where artists and art appreciators can co-mingle and inspire each other, form a community within a community. And it’s awesome.

— Adé Herbert, of the music group, **The Hawthornes**, **Music BINGO** host at OTPH and Podcast Host for **B. Love Entertainment**



The Hawthornes: left to right: Horace Carney , Adé Herbert, Mike Prescott, Christopher Freeman (photo: Murdock Design Studios)

nk of a place where artists and businesses work together to enrich and support our community. This is the identity the arts district, a creative space for us all to just be.

–Andrew Durstewitz, Co-owner D9 Brewing Company, Board Member Cornelius Cultural Arts Group (CCAG)

ornelius Arts District will be the culmination of great work by a number of dedicated individuals with a common vision. A vibrant downtown that is quaint and powered by the arts. With the Cain Center as the centerpiece, the arts district will be walkable and include several shops , restaurants and points of interest to visit and enjoy. Can't wait!

— Denis Bilodeau, Town of Cornelius Commissioner and Board Member for Cain Center of the Arts

ace that brings people together to enjoy venues of talented artistsconnecting ..brings joy to our community .

–Cathy Brown, owner of Cathys Embroidery on Main St Cornelius Native



Jasper Thomas and Tron Robinson of the Kadi Breakers 4 Life Group performing at a community festival. (photo: Brant Waldeck)

community that values the arts! Respectful of all members of the community!
Showcase for local artists!

— **Todd Wolfram, owner of The Pita Pit in Antquity. The Pita Pit will be supplying refreshments for the Cornelius Art District Soirée**

It comes to mind... The arts 'district' is the next logical step in the evolution of Old Town Cornelius. This part of town has always been the cultural hub of our community and that status is about to be elevated in a big way. With the buzz of activity we're already seeing, and with the Cain Center on the near horizon, the arts district will be the perfect compliment to it all.

—**Michael Archer, Cornelius Native**



Cain Center for the Arts will be a home for creativity, learning, entertainment and enjoyment in the Lake Norman region. The new arts center will also be a place to hold community, private or civic events and will serve as a force for creative momentum within the Lake Norman area and beyond. (photo: courtesy of Bella Love Inc)

ank of all the amazing musical talent we have in the area. Cornelius is one of NC's best kept secrets!

I think of Bella Love, OTPH, and all the great work that has been done to put OTC on the map!

–Adam Wilson, owner of Learn Music on Main St in OTC

en I hear “Cornelius Arts District” I am so proud that I chose historic Catawba Avenue for my photography home in 1995. To see the Lake grow, to see how much appreciation there is for the art scene, I am very grateful!

– Deborah Young, local artist. Young’s series of photos of notable Cornelius landmarks will be on display at Brick Row during the Cornelius Arts District Soirée

idea of a Cornelius Arts District is something I’ve dreamed about since I moved here 10 years ago. Back then I had to travel to NoDa to be involved with anything resembling a vibrant arts “scene.” Today, however, I have a lot of pride in Cornelius as a destination for folks wanting to experience something a little different. As an artist I am extremely excited about the current and future opportunities that this young and thriving arts district will create

ARTIST WILL CREATE.

— Justin R. Christenbery, local artist. Christenbery's exhibition, *'Vinylism: Color on Sound'* will be on display at Brick Row during the Cornelius Art District Soirée



*Justin R Christenbery working on a painting at a local festival. His work is often auctioned off to benefit the arts district.
(photo courtesy of Bella Love Inc)*

When I think of Cornelius Arts District, I think “creativity, arts and music.” I get excited by the potential and growth to our area and can't wait to see the Cain Center for the Arts get built! I also think about how fun 2nd Friday's and Tawba Walks are. Looking forward to continuing to see the arts continue to flourish!

—**Regina Shea, local artist and serves on marketing committee for Cain Center for the Arts**

Grass music floating through the air. Booths filled with colorful artwork. Kids running and laughing while adults hang out with a cold drink in hand! These are a few of the images that immediately pop up in my mind when I think about the Cornelius Arts District.



Over the past year and a half, I have been so fortunate to be a part of this friendly and artistically charged community. I grew up immersed in the arts so when I moved here, I searched and searched for that connection to creativity but couldn't seem to find it. Several years went by before I started hearing about different festivals and community events that were starting to pop up in OTC! From a distance, I have watched as these events have grown and transformed the essence of this community.



When we look into what the future holds for an area that once was overlooked by many, we see some amazing changes coming to our side of the Charlotte area. With the inception of the Cain Arts Center, we will see even more opportunity for our local artisans and creatives to be empowered and celebrated! As a member of this community, both as a business owner and a creative, I am so excited to see how Cornelius continues to grow as our Arts District!

— Cory Rindskopf, owner of Bells Box Collective on Catawba Ave

Share your comments! Send us a message on Facebook or email to: events@oldtowncornelius.com and we may post your “word on the street” for this edition of the #OT Scene!

Follow these links for more information on the Cornelius Art District Soirée presented by the **Cain Center for the Arts** and Bella Love Inc. :

Cornelius Art District Soirée and event page.

CORNELIUS ARTS DISTRICT

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Soirée

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more info at oldtowncornelius.com

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Jess Boye

I live here in Old Town Cornelius and absolutely love our area's unique character. My life's calling is to work to bring art and culture to the forefront of everyday life. I work full-time for Bella Love, Inc and taking care of my adorable son, Kipton.

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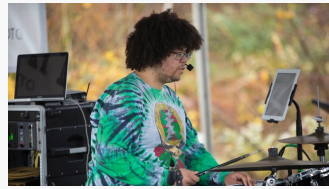
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Lake Norman's new cultural arts destination! #OTC



Old Town Cornelius (OTC) is quickly becoming a hub for a vibrant and flourishing arts scene just outside of Charlotte, NC. Known for its popular local breweries, OTC is making a name for itself as a destination for culture of all kinds: from boutique stores and bottle shops, to farm-to-fork restaurants and live music venues. So what are you waiting for?! Come out and experience the scene for yourself!

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