

Flint Local 432 rekindles the local music scene

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Stephen Wisniewski, vocalist and guitarist for Empty Orchestra, performed in one of the four bands at the Flint Local 432's first show in five years. "We all grew up playing in bands at the Flint Local 432, and are tremendously excited for it to be reopening, and honored to be playing the first 432-sponsored show in this new era," Wisniewski said. The Local's new establishment isn't ready to open yet, so the show on Dec. 2 took place at the Lunch Studio, which has served as a venue for the Local in the past.

Teenagers and adults who were at the Lunch Studio had the privilege of attending the Flint Local 432's first show in five years on Fri. Dec. 2, 2011. In an email interview, Joel Rash, Flint Local 432 manager, gave some background on the Local and the status of its new establishment.

"Flint Local 432 is an all-ages performance venue that has been booking local, regional and national bands since the mid-80s," Rash said. "The Local is about to re-open in a newly renovated building on First St., but we're still finishing up construction and waiting on our final inspections before getting an occupancy permit."

Rash said that the Local also held a few shows from 1993-1994 in the space currently occupied by the Lunch Studio.

“We are very grateful to Tracey and the folks at the Lunch Studio for hosting us,” Rash said. “They are about to celebrate their own tenth anniversary and will be a great neighbor for the Local.”

For the entire evening, the venue had a full crowd that got to hear four bands give a solid performance. The order began with local band George Orwell and the Flying Typewriters, Detroit-based band Crappy Future, Grand Rapids band Shores, and local band Empty Orchestra, who had its 7-inch vinyl release the same night. Stephen Wisniewski, vocalist and guitarist for Empty Orchestra, voiced the importance of the Local’s reopening in an email interview.

“[Empty Orchestra is] a band / musical collective made up of long-time members of the Flint independent music community,” Wisniewski said. “We all grew up playing in bands at the Flint Local 432, and are tremendously excited for it to be reopening, and honored to be playing the first 432-sponsored show in this new era.”

Jeremy Combs, Jordan Berry, and Chris Salk, who are UM-Flint students and band members of George Orwell and the Flying Typewriters also spoke of their excitement to be in the show.

“It’s nice to actually be part of a community,” Berry, a junior English major and vocalist/guitarist said. “It’s more than just playing a show here and there.”

“I went to school in Goodrich high school and the Local was like a pretty big part of [growing up],” Salk, a junior biology major and guitarist said. “So it’s cool to be a part of that now.”

“I’m really glad that the Flint Local has been able to come back and be part of the local music scene,” Combs, a senior clinical psychology major and bassist said. “It’s something that I think is important for Flint as a city to grow and become a better city.”

Combs also spoke of the importance of the Local as the attendance level at UM-Flint rises.

“With more people our age around here it only makes sense to have a bigger music scene like the Local,” Combs said.

John Duffy, graduate student pursuing a masters in liberal studies and Empty Orchestra guitarist, began his involvement with the Flint Local over a decade ago.

“I started going to the Local when the Carlton’s building opened in 2000,” Duffy said.

Duffy worked as a sound engineer during the Local’s metal night from 2000-2003 and played for a different band, the Hot Flashes, while the Local was open.

As a longtime supporter, Duffy could confirm the impact that the Flint Local 432 made on the community.

“I think the Local dramatically altered a lot of people’s lives,” Duffy said. “We’re all able to kind of reminisce about how the experience at the Local and being a part of that culture has altered all of our lives.”

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