

The art of the city

Young artists exhibit work that embraces wide range of media

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A burgeoning group of Georgia artists is hoping to bring their twenty-something sensibilities to a wider audience.

The Three Cities Group, founded in 2004, is staging a group show called "Success Through Scandal" at Contemporary Arts Exchange this month. The opening reception is tonight.

Organizer Jonathan Dye, 28, of Cochran, said the group grew out of three Middle Georgia artists who wanted more exposure for their work. The founding members, including Dye, Mark Watkins and Michael Marks, held their first show at an alternative space in Atlanta last year.

They've since picked up more than a dozen area artists, Dye said. Seventeen will exhibit their works in the show.

"This show will span pretty much every medium," he said. "There's painting, drawing, printmaking, video installation, site-specific installation and performance-art type stuff."

Don't go expecting a nude artist smearing him or herself in canned yams a' la. Karen Finley though.

This performance art is audience-participation and probably wouldn't have ruffled former North Carolina Sen. Jesse Helms' feathers.

"We're making up protest posters to let people protest the show themselves, on the inside and outside the building," Dye said.

The subject matter of the pieces loosely touches on the nature of modern celebrity, especially during an age when all it takes is a reality-show tantrum or lurid sex tape to garner headlines.

"We let (artists) do whatever they want, but at the same time, we take a postmodernist approach," Dye said. "Everything has the potential for significance."

The group is looking forward to their newest roost. They'd also like to continue to promote shows throughout Georgia and the Southeast, offering artists outside major metropolitan areas a chance to shine.

"Being at the Contemporary Arts Exchange really puts us on a new level," Dye said. "They're embedded in the Macon cultural fabric."