

City News

Mural shows the sound of soul through visual art



Henrique Nardi and two painters completed a mural of 1960s soul singer Otis Redding this week.

Image By: **Courtesy of Henrique Nardi**

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By **Hunter Nollenberg** | November 3, 2016 10:18 am

One Madison neighborhood will soon be enriched by a mural of the famous 1960s soul artist, Otis Redding. The singer's death occurred when a plane carrying him and his band crashed into Lake Monona while trying to land on a December 1967 day. Now, the Marquette neighborhood is recalling his life through art.

The reason for the mural—by Henrique Nardi of São Paulo, Brazil, and the two painters who assisted him, also from

Brazil—is to “reconnect the city to this great American soul artist in an uplifting way while honoring his musical legacy,” according a city press release.

Nardi said he encountered unexpected challenges when he initially hoped to paint the mural on the Solidarity Realty building on Williamson Street

He described the Madison Arts Program Administrator, Karin Wolf, as essential in the approval process of the mural. He also said that she was astounded that it was approved by the City of Madison in a mere month, a speed Wolf called “unprecedented.”

Beginning Monday night at 8 p.m., the trio worked to get ahead of the declining weather conditions projected for the next few days. Devoted to the upcoming 50th anniversary of Redding’s death in 2017, the team worked until 1 a.m. the next morning to accomplish their task.

They continued Nov. 1 from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., trying to finish the remainder of the mural despite unstable weather. The rain was not all that frustrating to the three of them because they were able “to see the sights,” Nardi said.

The mural itself denotes a picturesque image containing, as Nardi described, “five colors ... one green, white, two shades of yellow and black.”

“This is a great aid to a community that is willing to have more [murals], and I’m happy it happened,” Nardi responded when asked about the reason behind choosing the Marquette neighborhood for the piece.

The unofficial celebration of the mural to be held Thursday night will be an “opportunity for the artists to congregate with the community,” Nardi said.