

Proposal: #59 by Stephen Perkins on Porta Bella Restaurant

Overview

A [SafeGrowth](#) study conducted on the 400 block of W Gilman Ave identified issues and goals for this vital area near State Street. A multidisciplinary team including staff from the Police Department, Traffic Engineering, Parking Utility, Planning, Economic Development, the Business Improvement District and other public and private agencies are working to implement some of the recommendations:

1. Improving perceived and actual safety
2. Encouraging positive community engagement and social interactions
3. Increasing pedestrian activity
4. Supporting economic vitality of local businesses
5. Creating a more vibrant downtown corridor

Location

Rear façade of Porta Bella, 446 Block of W Gilman Street, Madison WI 53703. The team identified this wall as a site for public art to create a welcoming atmosphere & enhance the pedestrian experience.

About the Artist: Stephen Perkins

Since 2010 Stephen Perkins has been running a [blog](#) devoted to reviewing artists' accordion books. Inspired by the stencil works of both Chant Avedissian (1951-2018) and Felipe Ehrenberg (1943-2017), as well as Sonia Delaunay's 1913 accordion work *La Prose du Transsiberian et de la Petite Jehanne de France*, he started making his own during the summer of 2024 using spray paint and stencils.



About the Artwork: #59

This work was submitted to our existing art call. Accordion book #59 uses playful patterns, and bright colors that complement other works planned for the block (**Dragons Fly* by Michael Young and works by Derrick Buisch). The long format lends itself to this site.

Proposal

Our designer took high resolution photographs of the #59 accordion book. He laid out sections of the work on 10 covered window bays and the closed off door on the façade. Owner of Porta Bella, Ed Shinnick, approved the proposal. Staff work with Mr. Shinnick and a fabricator to identify the appropriate material for the reproductions. The installation will occur in late August or early September. The intention is for the work to last 10 years.



Note: exact arrangement and dimensions may shift slightly

Cost: \$10,000 (including licensing fee, fabrication & installation)

Funding Source: The project will be funded by a grant administered by Public Health Madison Dane County to support the implementation of the SafeGrowth report recommendations.