

SUNDAY AUGUST 26, 2018 02:33 PM

Cuban artist Julio Cepeda to exhibit at GoggleWorks

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Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Sculpture that Cuban artist Julio César Cepeda Duque created was on display Thursday at a block party in the parking lot behind Art Plus Gallery in

The artist will be in Berks County for just two months.

If you go

What: Made in Cuba: Julio César Cepeda Duque exhibit.

When: Sept. 7 through Oct. 12. Cepeda also will present a visiting artist workshop, Assemblage, Sept. 8 and 9.

Where: GoggleWorks Center for the Arts, 201 Washington St.

Information: Call 610-374-4600 or email info@goggleworks.org.

WRITTEN BY [MICHELLE N. LYNCH](#)
WEST READING, PA —

The road from Trinidad, Cuba, to Reading took Julio César Cepeda Duque nearly three years.

But in only two weeks of working from a studio at 602 Penn Ave., West Reading, he completed a 3D sculptural artwork.

That piece, a stylized map of his native Cuba, will be permanently installed in West Reading's Cherry Street Mural Corridor.

Cepeda's work that he created in Cuba will be exhibited as part of the Made in Cuba: Julio César Cepeda Duque exhibit, running from Sept. 7 through Oct. 12 at the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts.

"What most people see as trash for me is raw material," Cepeda said Thursday at a welcome reception in the parking lot of Art Plus Gallery in West Reading.

The artist uses found objects of various materials, incorporating old toys, tools and technology into his 3D artwork.

There is no set process to making the pieces, Cepeda said. Sometimes, he is inspired by the frame he uses to support the components. At other times, he is inspired by the found objects themselves.

"We just fell in love with his artwork," said Jay Ressler, a member of the Julio Cepeda exhibition committee.

Jay and his wife, Martha Ressler, chairwoman of the committee, discovered Cepeda while on a trip to Cuba in 2015 and thought the artist would be a good fit for the GoggleWorks.

Getting approval from the GoggleWorks exhibition committee was the easy part, Ressler said. The hard part was going through the prolonged nonimmigrant visa process that would allow Cepeda to temporarily create and display his art in the U.S.

The artist will be in Berks County for just two months, but he is making the most of that time, collecting objects with the help of area artists and new friends, and assembling them into various works.

By using everyday things, such as old cellphones, broken fans and other used objects, Cepeda said he creates a connection with viewers who recognize the items and realize that pieces of their daily lives can become art.

Levi Landis, GoggleWorks executive director, called Cepeda's work "a confluence of art and community."

A number of the items in Cepeda's 3D map have specific ties to the West Reading community, said Dean Rohrbach, West Reading's Elm Street program manager.

For example, an old metal gate made from crankshafts used at Textile Machine Works forms the compass rose used to denote direction on the 3D map.

Textile Machine Works, or TMW, was a division of the Berkshire Industries complex that once sprawled through parts of Wyomissing and West Reading.

The gate, taken from the yard of Rohrbach's home in West Reading, was crafted by a former owner of the home, a welder for TMW, he said.

"I hope people connect to the art," Cepeda said, "and see more to it than even I intended to project."

Contact Michelle N. Lynch: 610-371-5084 or mlynch@readingeagle.com.



Michelle N. Lynch | Reporter

610-371-5084

Michelle Lynch is a metro reporter and writes Floor Plans for Berks Country.



Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Richard Frederick of Green Hills and Crystal Domino of Shillington, both artists with Art Plus, look at the sculpture created by Julio César Cepeda



Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Artist Julio César Cepeda Duque talks with guests at the block party in the parking lot behind Art Plus in West Reading on Thursday.



Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Sculpture by Cuban artist Julio César Cepeda Duque.



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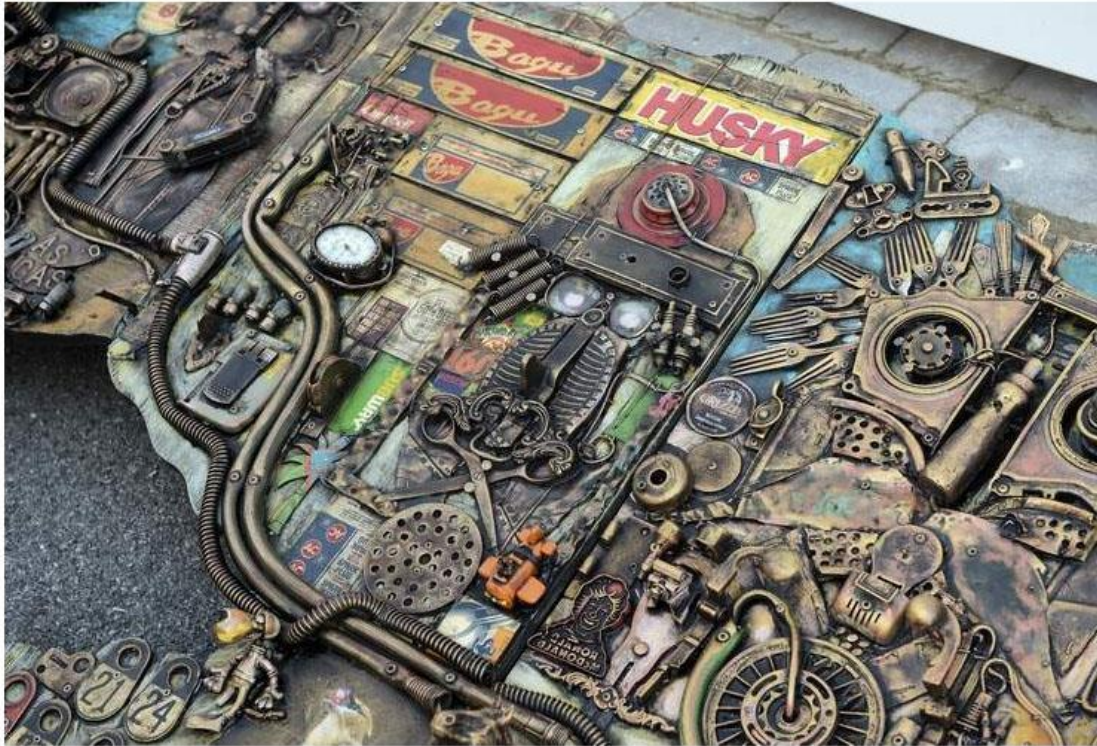
Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Sculpture by Cuban artist Julio César Cepeda Duque.



Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Guests look at sculpture made by Cuban artist Julio César Cepeda Duque.



Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Julio Cepeda, left, and Jessica Page, left, a Kutztown University Art student from Cumru twp, talk at the block party. Page helped Cepeda as a studio assistant while he made the sculpture. During a block party held for visiting Cuban artist Julio Cepeda in the parking lot behind Art Plus in West Reading Thursday night August 23, 2018. Cepeda created a sculpture mural that will be installed behind Kids Cuts on Cherry Street in the West Reading Mural Corridor. Photo by Ben Hasty



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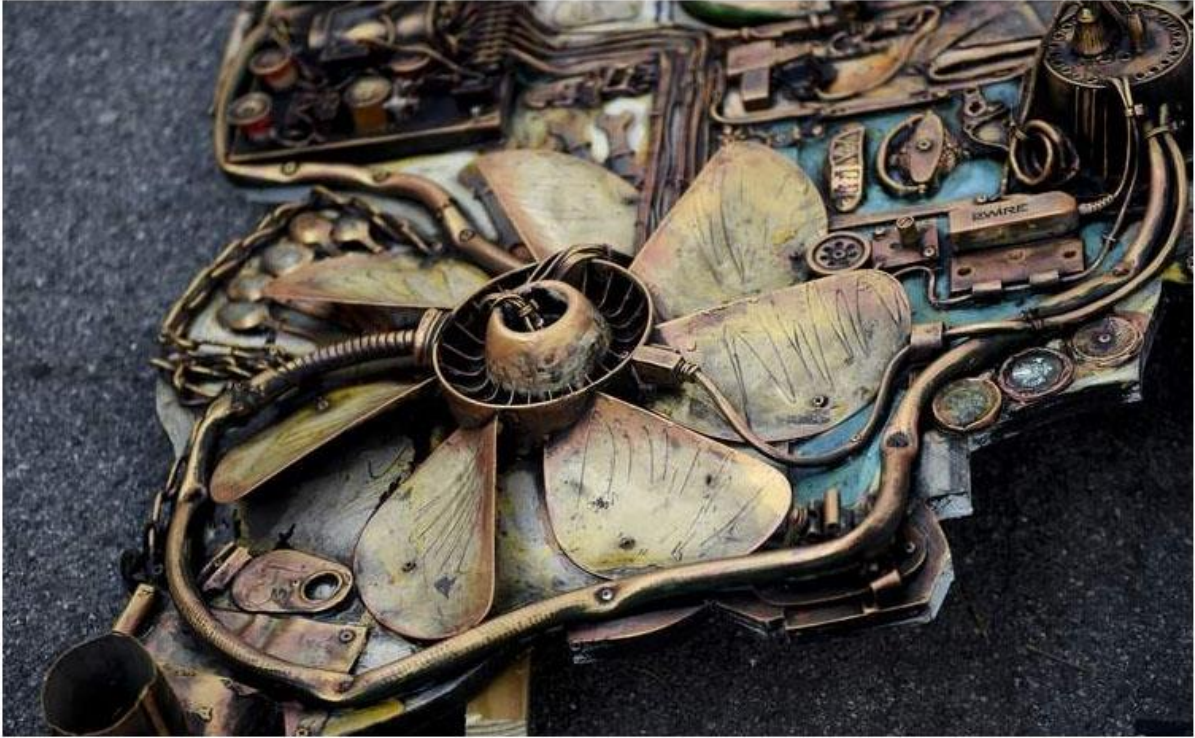
Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Cuban artist Julio César Cepeda Duque, left, and Bob Hakun, an artist from Pottstown, next to the sculpture that Cepeda created.



Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Bob Hakun, left, an artist from Pottstown, talks with Julio César Cepeda Duque, next to the sculpture that Cepeda created.



Reading Eagle: Ben Hasty | Artist Julio César Cepeda Duque talks with guests at the block party.



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