

New business showcases N.C. crafters

Online shop The Makery moves off the web and into a permanent location in downtown Durham

By: Alyssa Armstrong
UNC Staff Writer
The Durham Voice

North Carolina crafters will have a new location to showcase their work, thanks to a new brick-and-mortar opportunity in downtown Durham.

The Makery, which features handmade and vintage products from North Carolina crafters, opened its doors on Feb. 8.

Located at 401 W. Geer St., The Makery was originally an online shop, but co-owner Krista Anne Nordgren decided to take the business one step further.

The shop partners with Mercury Studio, a co-working business that allows people to rent office space for creative and profession pursuits.

Nordgren and Katie DeConto, co-creator of Mercury Studio, decided to combine their businesses.

"It just happened," Nordgren said. "Our businesses just fell in love with each other."

Nordgren, who was born and raised in Durham, said that her goal is to introduce people to local businesses.

She said they chose the location because it represents downtown Durham's artistic population.

"We really like this neighborhood," Nordgren said. "It feels like a preserved area of Durham."

"I want to show people that there are a lot of people who make really cool stuff, and their stuff is just as cool as anything you can go out and buy.

A community network

DeConto said that the shop gives crafters an opportunity to connect with the community.

Megan George, owner of The Zen Succulents, a local succulent and terrarium business, has her plants on display at The Makery.

George, who is a North Carolina native, created the business with her mother after first making the plants



Business partners Krista Anne Nordgren and Katie DeConto proudly stand in front of their new shop at 401 W. Geer St. (Staff photo by Alyssa Armstrong)

as gifts.

She said the business eventually snowballed, and people started to get interested in their terrariums. She was contacted by The Makery after a craft show.

"I really love The Makery's sense of independence and empowerment of crafters in the area," she said. "[The shop] gave us a shelf to express ourselves and our brand to branch out and reach customers."

Cassandra Smith, a sophomore at Western Carolina University, put a couple of her knitted baby-hats on The Makery's website a year ago.

Smith said that while she is not currently creating products for The

Makery due to financial and time constraints, she would like to participate again in the future.

"Keeping it exclusively for [artists] in North Carolina is an awesome idea," she said. "We do have a lot of artists here in N.C. that may not be able to get the word out about their stuff, and this will give them a lot of attention."

Nordgren said Smith's sentiments are the driving force behind the Makery.

"[We want] to help vendors reach their goals using [The Makery] as a resource," she said.

The shop currently features products from 21 different artists and crafters, but Nordgren said that number will likely increase in the future.

"I am taken with the idea that I can buy a necklace that was made in the same town," she said. "It is a community thing. Making people feel supported should start locally."

*"It is a community thing. Making people feel supported should start locally."
-Krista Nordgren*