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THE *Family* ISSUE

SIBLING REVELRY
The three Billbray sisters talk about their passion for helping others while keeping family close.

**SNELL & WILMER
PAINT THE TOWN.**
Local art lovers unite to bid on contemporary art and, in turn, raise money to benefit AFAN.

TIME TO GIVE BACK
Winky Designs donates a part of their proceeds to Animal Foundation while keeping their customers' wrists stylish.

SEEDS FOR CHANGE
A community garden program teaches children to plant, harvest and cook their way to a healthier lifestyle.

CULTURE

1
night only

SNELL & WILMER

PAINT

THE TOWN

Local art lovers unite
to support AFAN.

Written by
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Photography by
Tonya Harvey



Small pigs are painted by artists as a donation to AFAN; this is Sushi Pig by Raven Snow.

For one night out of the year, the sedate offices of Snell & Wilmer transform from law firm into contemporary art gallery for their annual Paint the Town event. Conference tables, rolling chairs, and coffee tables are carted away and replaced by numerous easels and an array of paintings, drawings, photographs, and sculpture works by artists both local and international. As the sun sets upon a spectacular 11th floor view of The Strip twinkling to life, a bidding war for the art begins – all for the worthy cause of Aid for AIDS of Nevada (AFAN).

"Every month there are 25-to-30 new cases of HIV and AIDS infection [in Clark County]," commented AFAN president, Attorney Marek Bute. "The numbers are still there, but there is a lack of awareness and urgency. Part of the mission is trying to bring awareness back to the cause because I think people have gotten very complacent with medical advances."

Initially, Paint the Town rotated causes, AFAN among them. Impressed with the efficient organization and dedication of AFAN, attorney Michael Stein invited them to become the permanent

beneficiary of the event in 2007. Stein launched the event six years ago to pair a love for the arts with a goal of giving back to the Las Vegas community.

"I absolutely love art," says Stein. I was looking for something to do for our community and match it up with something that I really loved so that I could be passionate about it. I came up with the idea to throw an art show and do *something* that isn't really done."

The "something" was making sure artists who enter work into the event benefit financially from participation as well, making it a win-win for both artists and the charity which makes Paint the Town as much about building up the arts in Las Vegas as about assisting AFAN.

The mutually beneficial arrangement pulls in talent from all around the country — from the delicate paper wall sculptures forming viral and chemical structures of Tennessee artist Charles Clary to the playfully perverse works of Los Angeleno Gary Basemen. Local art is also prominently featured including the delicious absurdist realism of Jelaine Faunce, the whimsical gritty urban landscape by Joseph Watson, and the buttery abstract impasto works by Susanne

Forestieri, just to name a few. Unique to this year's event is the inclusion of two works — selected through a juried competition — by art students from the Las Vegas Academy.

When it comes time to begin bidding, a smartphone app turns bidding on the art into a game. Guests meander and mingle, serenely sipping cocktails while slyly outbidding one another in a version of eBay gone live.

As if the stellar art roster wasn't already reason enough, the event features trays of gourmet eats, a unique cocktail specially crafted by mixologists for the event, artisan chocolate panels by Jin Cadwell, and souvenir photo-ops with Tanya Harvey, all accompanied by the musical stylings of the electric string quartet, Phat Strad. Generously supporting the cause, all vendors and entertainers give their time and wares at extremely reduced rates. An event with such a savory and sophisticated lineup makes giving to a great cause as enjoyable as it is gratifying.

Didn't get an invite? Don't worry you can bid on art pieces from home! Call AFAN Development Director, Irene del Rosario 702.383.8095 for details. ■

1. Artist Eric Burwell

With art patrons Thomas and Shannon Love

2. Artist Jerry Misko

With Michael Stein, Snell & Wilmer, Antioco Carrillo, AFAN, and Marek Bute, Snell & Wilmer (left to right)

3. The ladies of PhatStrad

4. Artist Heather Theurer

Shown here with oil painting titled "Dragonfly"



CULTURE

PAINT THE PIG

Petite white pigs are getting makeovers! A secondary segment of the Paint the Town art auction features ceramic piggy banks that artists adopt and decorate for the event. The pigs are part of "Every Piggy Counts," an ongoing fundraising program in which supporters of AFAN fill the pudgy porcine banks with coins and volunteer artists paint them. This year, art students of Las Vegas Academy opted to adorn the curved bank sides with views of The Strip and the iconic "Welcome to Las Vegas" sign. Vegas tattoo artist Robert Pho adorns his pig with the swirling lines of Asian and tribal motifs. Titled "When Dreams Take Wing," artist Nancy Good's glossy gray pig, with winged heart design framing the coin slot, plays off the classic idiom "when pigs fly." The remade pigs, with humorous-to-edgy designs, puts a new spin on the classic coin bank. ■



Photo by Nancy Good of her pig titled "When Dreams Take Wing".



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