ArtsKC Events

ArtsKC First Fridays
Friday, March 6 5pm to 9pm
ArtsKC Office
Stop in to view the artwork of our current ArtsKC Now Showing artist Tim Forcade!
Learn more about his work at http://forcadeimages.com/.

ArtsKC 360° Tour
Thursday, March 25 12pm to 1:15pm
Learn how you or your business can support the arts! Join us for a complimentary lunch and tour of ArtsKC’s mission, work, and vision.

ArtsKC Aperitif: Immerse
Saturday April 18, 5pm to 8pm
IMMERSE yourself in world-class contemporary visual arts at the home of Bill and Christy Gautreaux with co-hosts Dale and Vickie Trott.

ArtsKC Aperitif: Delight
Saturday April 25, 8pm to 11pm
DELIGHT your senses at the home of Dan Nilsen with co-hosts Kathy Kelly and Bryan Folk.

ArtsKC Aperitif: Discover
Saturday May 2, 5pm to 8pm
DISCOVER White Nights and contemporary Russian artists in the art deco home of Holly Nielsen with co-host Siobhan McLaughlin Lesley.

ArtsKC Aperitif: Explore
Friday May 8, 5pm to 8pm
EXPLORE the art of photography with hosts John and Cate DePrisco and co-hosts Malik and Jessica James.

Telling the Arts Story in Jefferson City by Mike Burke

Read and share Burke's Blog Posting on the *NEW* ArtsKC Blog.

The arts are a significant economic force in the State of Missouri and a significant quality of life issue when recruiting businesses and people to locate in Missouri. That was the message that 30 Kansas Citians and over one hundred arts supporters from across the State of Missouri took to Jefferson City on Wednesday, February 11th as part of Arts Advocacy Day in the Capitol. Included in the trip was a briefing by Missouri Citizens for the Arts on its legislative agenda and encouragement from Jay Dick, Senior Director of State and Local Government at the Americans for the Arts.

Some of the issues discussed with our legislators included:

- Support of HB 117 which clarifies the sales tax exemption on ticket sales by not-for-profit groups.
- Support for funding the Missouri Cultural Trust as required by statute.
- Support for State matching funds for the Downtown Arts Campus for UMKC Conservatory of Music as provided by statute
- Support for funding the Missouri Fine Arts Academy for gifted high school students
- Support for funding for arts programs in Missouri schools.

Documenting our efforts were Steve Paul, Editorial Page Editor of the Kansas City Star and C.J. Janovy, Arts Reporter for KCUR Public Radio.

The Kansas City arts community needs to be heard not only on the annual legislative day trip, but year around in public forums and in individual efforts. Many thanks go to Harlan Brownlee and Kathleen Daily who organized and led the delegation. Special thanks go out to Dean Peter Witte and a group of talented students from the UMKC Conservatory of Music who provided a noon-hour concert in the Capitol Rotunda.

While the response from the legislators and the governor remain to be seen this year, we know that an organized and energetic advocacy does produce results.

Submitted by Mike Burke, Chair of the Mayor’s Task Force for the Arts.
Letter from the CEO

Artists are agents of change. Their work asks us to consider new perspectives and challenges our ways of thinking. The work of art is to provoke us to think and feel, to elicit a response to what we are experiencing. Sometimes that response is pleasant and enjoyable and sometimes it is not. Sometimes, it’s actually uncomfortable, but that is not bad if it prompts us to take action, to right a wrong, or to engage the community in a needed conversation. Art can be driven by issues of the day, it can critique current circumstances, and it can imagine new possibilities and solutions.

Some of the most creative problem solving I have seen has come from artists. Some of the most resilient and persistent individuals I have come to know are artists. I often think of the French Impressionists and the fact that during the time they were creating their “masterpieces” they were being rejected by the established arts community. They presented a new way to see the world and thank goodness they were not swayed into giving up. The world is infinitely richer for their contributions and the same is true for our region. Take but one artist, Sean Starowitz. Sean’s work is as imaginative as it is provocative. From his “Laundromat” project where curated conversations occur while the attendees do their laundry to BREAD! KC, a micro-financing organization that provides funding to the Kansas City creative community. He sees challenges in his community, and he finds a way to tackle them.

Celebrate and recognize the artists who live right here in our region; they too are a treasure for our community.

Follow Harlan on Twitter

Photo by Tom Styrkowicz, 53Tom.com

Kansas City couple shares love of collecting art through ArtsKC Aperitif

On April 18 Bill and Christy Gautreaux will open their West Plaza home for the first night in a series of art-sampling parties known as Aperitif. Named one of the top 200 art collectors in 2014 by ARTnews magazine, the Gautreauxs have an incredible collection of contemporary art from across the country, most of which is displayed in their home! Over the past twenty years they’ve acquired pieces from up-and-coming artists as well as household names from local, national, and international artists. Part of their collection is even on display at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art and was featured by KCUR radio.

Aperitif is particularly special because party-goers are invited into Bill and Christy’s home to experience art on a more personal level. Art lovers will have a chance to view works by Atsuko Tanaka, Ray Metzker, Rex Ray, and many others while enjoying performances by Victoria Botero, Beau Bledsoe, and Brian Padavic, and find inspiration to share art in new and exciting ways. If that’s not enough, Bill and Christy’s home is one of the first homes built by Kansas City Mafia legend, Tom Pendergast. What more could you want?

Tickets for this event and the series are available at artskc.org/apertif.

Q + A: Our Partner, Johnson County

How does Johnson County support the arts throughout the county?

Johnson County has an annual campaign to encourage donations to support ArtsKC and by virtue of that to support arts and the arts community in the metro. A Proclamation by the Board of County Commissioners kicks off the campaign. In addition to cash donations, we created and sold a 2015 calendar featuring art work of employees that was exhibited in our 2014 campaign. We have also raised money through sale of a t-shirt, which features a collage of some of this year’s employee art work (check out this year’s shirts at right).

How have your employees been engaged in supporting the arts?

Our campaign includes an annual exhibit of works of art by Johnson County employees. These works are exhibited in two county buildings for a six-week period. The artists are recognized at a reception to which all county employees are invited. Employee performing artists add to the ambience of the evening, which also includes a silent auction of employee art works that are donated to raise additional funds for ArtsKC.

During the campaign we conduct a People’s Choice selection of the three top submissions of employee art for 2015 and each winning artist will receive complimentary tickets to a Johnson County's Theater in the Park event.
How have you seen the arts or programs you have participated with through ArtsKC transform your environment, a colleague, your space, etc.?

The ArtsKC campaign, especially the art exhibit and the recognition reception create a buzz in the organization and heighten awareness of and appreciation of the great arts environment that we have here in the metro.

**Actor builds API arts community through Inspiration Grant**

ArtsKC Fund Inspiration Grant Recipient Andi Meyer is an actor in Kansas City. Known for her work with *The New Theatre, The Coterie, Unicorn Theatre, Kansas City Repertory Theatre*, and many others, Andi can be found in front of and behind the scenes. In addition to acting, she coordinates the arts program at Marillac Eash, a therapeutic day school, and is the education director and company member for *Right Between the Ears*.

As a grant recipient, Andi used funding from ArtsKC to attend the *National Asian American Theater Conference and Festival* in Philadelphia, PA last October. By attending this conference, Ms. Meyer engaged the Asian/Pacific Islander (API) theatre community on a national level in order to create a similar organization in the Kansas City community. She "had exciting, in-depth conversations about topics such as appropriate casting issues and also received input about what might benefit Kansas City's Asian/Pacific Islanders in the arts." Andi's hope is to expand beyond theatre to incorporate writers, dancers, musicians, and visual artists and become a multi-disciplinary organization.

**The Smile: A Give Art Story**

You have to look at that adorable smile. No, seriously, isn’t he the cutest thing ever? This is Evan and his face is filled cheek to cheek with that wide set grin because he was just gifted art.

Evan is five so let’s face it, his smile is always that big every time he gets a present. This time however, was different. This time, this smile, it lasted.

The entire morning before Evan and I went to see *Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer* at the Coterie Theatre this past holiday season, he was all smiles. It was his first time seeing a play and he couldn’t have been more excited. Waiting for the show to start, he couldn’t even take his seat. I remember he just stood there for twenty minutes looking from one end of the stage to the other, asking over and over again when “the players” would be coming out. He was enthralled from start to finish, yelling from the back of the room, “It’s just like the movie! They look just like the real Rudolph!” And when I asked his mom about the car ride home, she laughed and said he couldn’t shut up about it.

*It is something special to be able to give art. We shared an experience together, a lasting gift that brings smiles for years to come.*

*Story by Sara Vogt, ArtsKC Marketing Manager*

ArtsKC would like to invite you to consider giving art the next time the opportunity to make a gift arises! Check out our gift ideas [online](#). And tell us your story! Email [Vogt@ArtsKC.org](mailto:Vogt@ArtsKC.org) or tweet at us using #giveart!
Advocacy for the arts has been a hot topic for the Kansas City arts community. Our elected officials have started to realize that by investing in our artists and arts community we can truly attain a greater good. My passion for advocacy not only rests in partnering with our elected officials, but providing experiences for individuals that embolden them to engage and support the arts. The moment I get someone to start thinking about the arts as a crucial component to our society is what encourages me to do what I do at ArtsKC.

So why is arts advocacy important? Advocating for the arts is one of the most effective ways to support our community. Public partnership in support of the arts has shown incredible results for Kansas City from supporting the Crossroads Arts District through tax incentives to state-wide funding supporting field trips for students so they can experience our most treasured cultural and arts organizations.

When asking our elected officials and community to support the arts we often refer to the economic impact of the Arts. While our economic impact is formidable, we shouldn’t downplay the broader impact the arts have on our community. Everyone benefits from the arts whether you participate or not.

The arts help businesses attract and retain talent, create a constructive workforce, and build a sense of community pride. The arts truly help our business owners, elected officials, community organizers accomplish what they are trying to do—create a profitable, sustainable, and healthy community.

Photo by Tom Styrkowicz, 53Tom.com.