



The most popular art of the evening was the Paper Grotto Live. Music combined with paper art and people in dog costumes made a very unique live art event. ANDREA STETSON/CORRESPONDENT

Return to ‘Art and Nature’

Shangri-La events showcase live art in downtown Bonita

ANDREA STETSON
SPECIAL TO NAPLES DAILY NEWS
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Crowds packed into a room at Shangri-La Springs Wednesday evening to watch art come to life.

Sculptures made of white paper formed a backdrop as people dressed in white dog costumes moved about the scene.

A video of colorful lights projected on the live art as musicians played flute and drums nearby.

“It is out of the box,” said Lily Hatchett, creator of Paper Grotto Live. “In my art I want to make something I have not seen before. It’s just fun. It’s the next step away from television, but with no commercials.”

Paper Grotto Live was just one of the art attractions at the monthly Art and Nature event held at Shangri-La Springs in downtown Bonita Springs.

Zawi Borsa, Shangri-La’s operations and events manager, said her vision is for the event to bring local artists to the resort and allow the public to enjoy the interaction between live art and nature.

“You can see a finished painting and say it’s a nice painting, but there is nothing more powerful than seeing it created,” Borsa said.

The event featured a wide variety of local artists. There was chalk painting, shadowbox art, pottery, beading, live oil painting, a drum circle, free classes in Tai Chi and yoga, free massages, live music and more. The entire event is free, though guests can purchase dinner and wine.

“It’s just to come out and see the Shangri-La and the work we put into the Shangri-La and just enjoy the different artists and teachers we have here tonight,” said Lee Bellamy, general manager of Shangri-La Springs.

Guests said they enjoyed the variety of live art and performances.

“I just like to see the art,” said Marcia Litrenta. “It’s always something new. The performance art is something new and unique. I don’t have to go to Santa Fe (New Mexico) for something like this. It is right here in our own backyard.”

Jane Portaluppi Durand creates sidewalk art. At the event, she sat on a giant replica of a black sidewalk using chalk to draw Santa Claus.

She said she lets people enjoy her work for a few weeks and then washes it away and start a new picture.

“A lot of people find it hard, but I go into it thinking it’s part performance,” she said. “It’s temporary, and that is part of the charm of it. You are just doing it for the moment and for the enjoyment of the people watching it.”



Renee Bultema puts a leaf on the Wisdom Tree. ANDREA STETSON/CORRESPONDENT



Naples-based artist Juan Diaz created drawings inside a giant lighted box. ANDREA STETSON/CORRESPONDENT

Naples-based artist Juan Diaz created drawings inside a giant lighted box. He drew full-sized pictures of ladies while a musician played nearby. Guests sat on white chairs snapping photos and taking video.

Michael Monroe dabbed blobs of paint on a canvas. Then, while listening to Beach Boys tunes, he swung his brush quickly across the canvas to create a beach scene.

“I paint live,” he told the audience. “Come to my shows and watch it.”

Each month the show has a different theme. The December theme is Dream or Reality.

Mila Bridger is a photographer that inspired the Dream or Reality theme.

“My style and my art (are) all in between,” she said. “I make my fantasy and transfer that into photos.”

Local artist Rosemary Claire Allen brought her Wisdom Tree and allowed guests to write inspirational creative sayings on a leaf and add it to the tree.

“We can’t do these things by ourselves,” Allen said. “We have to do it collectively. It’s the whole idea of collective wisdom.”

Renee Bultema put a leaf on the Wisdom Tree.

“I love it here,” said Bultema. “I enjoy seeing all the new changes. And this tree was very fun too.”

The nature and art series takes place the second Wednesday of each month year-round at Shangri-La Springs.