

## Art Makes History

First 'Paint the City' event captures City of Fairfax's 50th anniversary.

By Victoria Ross

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The City of Fairfax is asking local artists to set up their easels and start painting the city for the first "Paint the City" event on Saturday, April 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The imaginative event celebrates the city's 50th anniversary, and kicks-off the 26th annual Spotlight on the Arts Festival.

"It is the first of its kind in the City of Fairfax, to celebrate the 50th Anniversary and to highlight the wonderful historic nature and charm of the city and its buildings, parks and 'hidden secrets,'" said Joanna Ormesher, marketing director for the City of Fairfax.

Ormesher said there has been a lot of interest from artists about the event, and 25 local artists have signed up so far. Visitors and spectators are invited to watch the artists in action as they create one-of-a-kind artwork that brings the history of the city to life. "Visitors can park in one of the car parks downtown, walk around and see the artists at work and then enjoy a meal in one of our wonderful restaurants," she said.

"Artists will be everywhere painting scenes of the city, from historic buildings to parks, gardens and people. We are asking them to capture the essence of the city for its 50th anniversary," she said.

Adam Lister, who owns the Adam Lister Gallery in Fairfax, is a sponsor of the event along with the Fairfax Art League and the City of Fairfax.

"It's a pretty cool event, and I think people will enjoy seeing the creative process," he said. "There will be a good mix of painting styles, from purely representational to abstract art. We're open to whatever the artists want to do, whether it's sketches, oils, watercolors or even photographs," said Lister.

Ormesher said artists will check in at the SPACE at Old Town Plaza, where they will receive a suggested map of locations, but artists are encouraged to go wherever their vision takes them.

Ormesher said the city decided to include the event as part of its annual Spotlight on the Arts after City of Fairfax Mayor Robert Lederer attended a similar event in St. Michael's, Md. "He really loved that, and thought it would be a good event for the city, especially since it's our 50th anniversary," she said.

Selected artwork from Paint the City will on display during the Mayor's Ball on April 15 at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center. The paintings will be part of a silent auction to benefit the Legacy for Fairfax program and the Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts Foundation.

Both amateurs and professional artists who are 18-years-old and older are eligible, and advance registration is required by Friday, March 25. Artists can



Donated Photo

**Christian Perez playing during Spotlight on the Arts Musicale**



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**Doc Nix (Michael Nickens) and Mason Dance Company members.**



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**Main Street Community Band in the SPACE at Old Town Plaza.**

**Jump, Jive & Polka during City's Spotlight on the Arts Festival**

Visitors to the City of Fairfax can polka 'till they drop, jump for joy, or wear a poodle skirt and saddle shoes to enjoy a performance of "Grease."

Whatever music, sights and sounds light your creative fire, visitors can find during the annual Spotlight on the Arts Festival in the City of Fairfax. Now in its 26th year, this three-week event features a symphony of visual and

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performance artists from across Fairfax. On April 15, the event kicks off with the inaugural Mayors' Ball, hosted by City of Fairfax Mayor Robert F. Lederer and former Mayor John Wood at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center.

Highlights of the festival include:

- \* Performances at the new, state-of-the-art Stacy Sherwood Community Center, including:

- \* "Polka 'Til Ya Drop" by the Alte Kameradan German Band.

- \* A lawn concert by the Main Street Band

- \* "Jump for Joy," featuring swing music by the Fairfax and Woodson high school bands;

- \* "Art in the Park," presented by the Fairfax Art League and a joint exhibition presented by Fairfax Art League and Fairfax High School.

- \* FX Players production of "Grease," and Woodson Players production of Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple."

- \* The NOVA Annandale Symphony Orchestra.

- \* An Evening on the Civil War Home Front with Sior-Og Celtic dance ensemble at historic Blenheim Civil War Interpretive Center.

- \* Mason Dance Company Spring Festival

This year's festival features more than 40 events presented by George Mason University, Northern Virginia Community College, Theater of the First Amendment, Fairfax area high schools, the Fairfax Art League, American Youth Philharmonic and many others.

Founded in 1985 as collaboration between the City of Fairfax and George Mason University, the Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts festival was created to enhance community awareness of the many arts and cultural opportunities in Fairfax. In the past decade, Spotlight has begun offering six different scholarships to high school seniors to study arts at George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College.



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