

Painting A Dream

Saturday, 23 August 2008

“I dream my painting and then I paint my dream!” Vincent Van Gogh
“Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase!”

Martin Luther King, Jr

Over the Edge about… Painting a Dream!

It can be lonely as a dreamer and sometimes things can be more lonely when it’s time to “paint your dream.” How about painting your dream in front of 1200 people, live, on stage while other artists are dancing, singing and playing instruments moving all around you and the blank canvas you stand in front of center stage? WHAT? Blank Canvas? On Stage? Painting Live? Are you crazy? Most artists would say, live, mmm, I don’t think so! To find your voice as an artist and make a living at the same time can be challenging if not near impossible. Meet one over the edge artist that I ADORE and want to see all her dreams come true. Our Over the Edge Subject of the month………

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Things were getting down to the wire for me, I had a vision (a dream) of an artist painting live on stage during a two hour show that I produce for the not for profit organization Night of Dreams, founded in 2002 (www.nightofdreams.org). I had a dream to make other’s dreams come true and artists were at the forefront of this dream. Over 100 artists were lined to perform in the 2 hour Night of Dreams show for two nights in a row in November of 2004. It is only four weeks before the show would go on at Fletcher Auditorium in the Progress Energy Center for Performing arts but I had yet to secure an artist brave enough to paint live before an audience.

The show itself is a choreographed and uniquely produced show of the top talent in the region. The show is creatively produced to inspire the audience to think differently and see the world through a different set of glasses when they walk out.

UP FOR THE CHALLENGE

I spoke to no less than 25 artists in search of the brave one! About four weeks prior to show date, one of the artists who turned down the opportunity pointed me to Kay Hutchinson saying if there is an artist brave enough to do this event it would be Kay. Immediately I called her and before I could even get my name out and what I wanted her to do, Kay said "Yes, I would love to participate in Night of Dreams." She must have been forewarned that "I'd be a callin'" so the song goes. "Yes, I'd love to do this event." Kay said with such excitement that I just tingled inside.

It is one of the most creative components of the show and no one had attempted to have live artistry in shows before the 2003 event (the first time we'd added this aspect to our events) so we've been charting new artistic ground here in North Carolina. There are no rules, no artistic boundaries (other than this being a family event so keep it clean) the show is creatively diverse and collaborative by all the artists. "The canvas is blank and you may paint what you wish and what you feel," I tell Kay on the phone. "Share your interpretation of the artistry going on around you on stage. Paint what you feel, help us feel it with you through your visual interpretation of the evening."

Having no rules sometimes is not the best thing for anyone especially artists but I am insistent that creative license be provided to all artists with the boundaries of keeping content family oriented and the flow magical and the feeling so awe inspiring that every audience member would leave running out to buy an instrument to learn to play, or take up dancing lessons or pick up a paint brush or simply just go back to work thinking more creatively than they did the day before.

The night of the show Kay shows up with her family and supporters with a larger than life canvas and I realize as we set her up center stage as the main focal point of the large surroundings performance area, she is one of the bravest women I know. Imagine writing a novel on stage, writing a song while people are watching or painting your unfolding heart live for the world to see and experience with you in the moment. I imagined it must be like standing naked on stage for the world to criticize your every bump and lump and angle. We are humans and sometimes it feels as though we have been trained to critique. Those of us that can walk naked and not worry about the critics and at the same time turn off our own inner critics are the ones whose dreams will eventually come to life. Kay is certainly one of those people!

REAL INSPIRATION

The lights go down and our show opens with a silhouette shadow dance behind a moonlit-like screen, the piano keys ring the melodic original song and voice of the young composer, Jessi Hamilton (another amazing artist that I'll share with you another day, www.jessihamilton.com) and slowly the moonlit screen lifts to reveal Kay Hutchinson painting strokes across the stage backdrop while the dancers are flowing all around her. I have chills up and down my entire body from my toes to my hair follicles and realize at that very moment, I love creating, writing, music and art and most of all sharing these passions.

What a gift to the world Kay Hutchinson is!!! In just one simple smooth continuous stroke she has us feeling with her the music, the dance, the intimate moments of the artistry of the evening and we feel it as though it's just us, ourselves on stage performing with her, through her!

In this American Idolized world we've created, it is refreshing to find people who are so collaborative and giving and not driven by the world of what is in it for me, but creating a world that is more beautiful by sharing and collaborating inspiring us toward new ways of thinking. Of course we have to care for ourselves but folks like Kay have learned and believe that the whole can more often than not be stronger than the parts!

A REAL NIGHT OF DREAMS

The show continues, Kay's arms moved like weeping willow limbs swaying in the wind rhythmically to music. I am

mesmerized as is our audience as the painting transforms itself over and over all evening. I realize there could possibly be no end to the inventiveness of this artist. I also realize that the only way the painting could stop being shaped and transformed is by the ending of this show. The show would stop, the paint brush would be placed down and the canvas would have an interpretation of the evening's emotions stopping us in time. Amazing, not just one night but for back to back nights Kay poured herself into two very different and very beautiful paintings. She is unique in her ability, she is unique in her spirit and her talent should not go unrecognized!

I am over the edge about this artist and if you'd like to see more of her works please visit Kay on her website, www.KayPaints.com or see her two works from our show at www.nightofdreams.org.