



For more information:

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Dear Friends and Patrons of the Arts,

I am so excited to be writing this letter to announce an exciting event happening on May 2nd, 2008: New Orleans Jazz Night! This event brings together the best of New Orleans' culture with food, music and art! We will combine the efforts of New Orleans street artist Bedonna Wakeman, the Ralph Miller jazz band and Back Inn Café to give Chattanooga a taste of the Big Easy! Best of all, our efforts will benefit the Arts Council of New Orleans, which is actively working to revitalize the art community and preserve the one-of-a-kind culture of New Orleans.

### How the event will work:

Jazz Night is a two-fold effort between River Gallery and Back Inn Café.

On Friday night, River Gallery will open their All That Jazz exhibit at 6pm. Prepare to sound the trumpets and strut your stuff for our May exhibition, All That Jazz- the Sound. New Orleans street artist, Bedonna Wakeman dynamically depicts icons of Jazz music in her luminously energetic paintings. Adding more swagger to that Jazz attire, Julia Peerson Carpenter creates her life-sized steel dresses to reveal the important balance between strength and elegance. Adding a distinct stylistic evolution to a richly rooted past, our May exhibit, which runs May 1-31, will undoubtedly be All That Jazz!

At 7:30 the Jazz Dinner will begin at Back Inn Café. This 5-course wine dinner will feature Creole style dishes and wine pairings at each course. **To make reservations for the dinner, please call 423.265.5033 x4.** A full menu is attached.

During, both events, we will have a LIVE JAZZ BAND playing and even leading a New Orleans-style jazz parade around the District before dinner!

### Giving back to New Orleans:

Our favorite part of this event is that it allows us to give back to artists who are working to make a living in post-Katrina New Orleans. Not only did they lose their possessions and their artwork, but they have watched tourists and patrons of the arts disappear from their city. The Arts Council of New Orleans is actively working to provide programs, grants and classes to help these artists learn how to survive, make a living, and carry on their craft for future generations. During the dinner, we will auction special pieces painted by Ms. Wakeman just for this event. The proceeds from this auction, as well as a portion of proceeds from the price of the dinner will go directly to the Arts Council of New Orleans.

### About Bedonna Wakeman:

After college studies, Bedonna moved to California where she worked in experimental theater and conceptual art with the Odyssey Company and the San Francisco Museum of Art.

She returned to New Orleans three weeks after Hurricane Katrina devastated the city. Her ruined home revealed a complete loss of all of her paintings and personal possessions. Within one week, Bedonna returned to the French Quarter to work as a street artist. Her pioneering presence made the statement that the arts community would return to New Orleans despite the struggles faced through the rebuilding process. Less than fifteen percent of the city's street artists remained after the storm as the absence of tourism continued to impede their success. Bedonna looked to the artistic communities outside of her city to embrace her mission: keeping the spirit of New Orleans alive. Bedonna will be talking during the exhibit opening and the dinner to educate people about the current situation facing artists in New Orleans and how she and other artists are working to keep the spirit of New Orleans alive.

Her newest series of paintings, The History of Jazz, marries her work and mission. The icons of Jazz music represented in this series pay tribute to New Orleans, the birthplace of the original American art form, Jazz.

**It's not everyday that we get to do something this wonderful and exciting! It is important that the art community does not forget about the devastating effects of hurricane Katrina, and that we celebrate the life, love and art that still thrives against all odds. We hope you will be able to join us for this special event.**

**River Gallery will be open from 6-9pm and Bedonna will be there to answer questions and talk about life as a street artist in New Orleans.**

**To make reservations for the dinner, please call 423.265.5033 x4.**

**Cost for the dinner is \$60 plus tax a gratuity, and a portion of the proceeds will go directly to the Arts Council of New Orleans.**

**A full menu is attached to this email.**



**There will be LIVE JAZZ MUSIC during both the gallery opening and the dinner!**

[www.BackInnCafe.com](http://www.BackInnCafe.com)

&



[www.River-Gallery.com](http://www.River-Gallery.com)

