



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Francisco Art Institute Annual Gala: The Original Disruptor

SFAI's annual gala celebrates generations of groundbreaking alumni artists by inviting more than twenty back to transform its iconic Chestnut Street campus into a series of stunning art bars and lounges for one night only

**April 29, 2017; 6-9pm
After Party: 9pm-12am**

From Burning Man artist David Best's monumental installation over the historic courtyard, to the glow-in-the-dark drinks at Whitney Lynn and Tony Labat's peace sign bar celebrating the Summer of Love, San Francisco Art Institute's 2017 Gala will be a one-of-a-kind experience of its historic home on Russian Hill and an unprecedented celebration of its legacy as an incubator for some of the nation's most "disruptive" and groundbreaking artists such as Joan Brown, Richard Diebenkorn, Annie Leibovitz, Paul McCarthy, Laura Poitras, Jason Rhoades, Barry McGee, and many more. The event is SFAI's premier fundraiser—all proceeds from the evening will benefit student scholarships.

SFAI alumni artists will transform the campus into twelve stunning, temporary bars and lounges designed to generate surprising and immersive experiences. Renowned chefs and bartenders will join forces with the artists to create an unforgettable homage to the creative spirit fostered at SFAI for the past 146 years.

Arriving guests will enjoy drinks in an elaborate installation, built over SFAI's cloistered courtyard, designed by David Best (1962, 66-67, 71-74) who heads up Burning Man's famous Temple Crew and was a member of the now world-renowned festival's founding group.

Whitney Lynn (MFA 08) and Tony Labat (MFA 80), both currently faculty at SFAI, will take over the Diego Rivera Gallery with an homage to the 50th Anniversary of the Summer of Love. Labat, well known for his giant peace sign sculptures, will return to this subject with an enormous peace sign-shaped, blacklight bar created in partnership with Lynn. Expect glow-in-the-dark drinks, neon, video projection, and more.

KunstCapades, a collective composed of Tim Sullivan (MFA 04), Joshua Pieper (MFA 05), Robyn Carliss, and others, will bring their art-themed variety show/podcast to the

President's Office. Guests will board a gondola up to the recording booth—a micro tiki bar—for conversation and cocktails.

David Janesko (MFA 13) and Adam Donnelly (MFA 13) are creating the Camera Obscura Bar. Guests will enter an enclosed, 10'x20' camera obscura to see the outside world projected inward through a variety of lenses focused on the surrounding SF Bay and more. Photos taken by the giant camera will also be for sale that night.

Penelope Houston (77-78), singer in the famous proto-punk rock band The Avengers, is creating a bar called Backstage that mirrors the hundreds of hours she has spent backstage at punk clubs. A live punk band will perform songs from the first wave of San Francisco's punk scene, and the audience will be invited to perform punk-karaoke style. Expect graffiti and cheap beer on ice.

Taravat Talepasand (MFA 06), currently on the faculty at SFAI, is collaborating with fellow graduates Ala Eftekar (BFA 02) and Amir Esfehiani (MFA 07) to create "Mehmoonies," or a Persian party. Layered rugs, cushions, and arabesque motifs will create a cozy spot for tea, baklava, seasonal fruits, and more.

Lorena Perez (MFA 14), now based in Mexico City, will turn the SFAI tower into a dazzling ribbon wrapped installation with a rooftop bar for viewing.

Katie Bush (MFA 00) promises "an environment that will be like a relaxing but violent lava lamp of love." Expect light projections that "explode and molt ... and reverbed funky machine gun beats."

Other contributors include SFAI Board member Tom Loughlin (MFA 13) who is turning his bar over to SFAI students; experimental filmmaker Kerry Laitala (MFA 97); the Bonanza team of Conrad Guevara, Lindsay Tully, and Lana Williams (MFA 13); and faculty member/conceptual artist Mads Lynnerup (BFA 01).

All bars and lounges will offer food and drink, with a mix of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, and all will offer art for sale, including the installation work itself in some cases.

An After Party will feature live music, as well as a silent disco.

Tickets are \$350 each with sponsorship packages available from \$2,500-\$50,000. After Party tickets are \$85 each. For more information and to purchase tickets, go to <http://www.sfai.edu/events-calendar/detail/sfai-2017-gala-the-original-disruptor>.

About San Francisco Art Institute

Founded in 1871, SFAI is one of the country's oldest and most prestigious institutions of higher education in the practice and study of contemporary art. As a diverse community of working artists and scholars, SFAI provides students with a rigorous education in the

arts and preparation for a life in the arts through an immersive studio environment, an integrated liberal arts and art history curriculum, and critical engagement with the world. Committed to educating artists who will shape the future of art, culture, and society, SFAI fosters creativity and original thinking in an open, experimental, and interdisciplinary context.

SFAI is located at 800 Chestnut St., San Francisco, CA.

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