

Press Release

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"Rat Pack" Ball raises £3700 for Art at the Royal United Hospital

Photos attached

Photo 1 – empty table

Photo 2 – group: Left to right: Molly van der Weij, (Arts Strategy group, ASG) Amanda Muir, Hetty Dupays, arts co-ordinator, Sheila Day (you can just see her) and Dr. Robin Fackrell .

The RUH's Arts Strategy Group has received a significant boost following a fund raising ball held on February 29th at the Pump Rooms.

At the "Rat Pack" themed event, attended by over 200 people, £3700 was raised by an auction and raffle. One of the organizer's Dr Robin Fackrell says

"the evening was a fantastic opportunity for 190 staff members to relax in the beautiful setting of the Pump Rooms while raising money for the Art Strategy Group who do very valuable work within the hospital. Excellent entertainment provided by the Natural Theatre Group, The Park Lane Big Band, cabaret and a magician all made the evening go with a bang, ending all too quickly!"

Several local artists donated their work to the auction including Martyn Colbeck (Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2005), sculptor Edwina Bridgeman, painter Nick Cudworth and abstract artist Steve Jee.

A work by painter John Bellamy fetched the highest bid of the evening raising £1000.

The Arts Strategy Group (ASG) was formed in the year 2000 and has steadily increased its presence at the Royal United Hospital over the past seven years with a programme of visual arts, music, literary and educational events for patients, staff and visitors. It uses the arts to contribute to a positive environment for healing at the RUH. The constantly changing array of art work displayed has proved popular with patients, staff and the public.

Arts co-ordinator Hetty du Pays says:

"It gives artists a chance to have their work displayed to a wider cross-section of society than might otherwise be the case. We match particular projects to particular artists, who can then go on to develop their work along a different vein than perhaps before. Public art is a participatory activity which reaches a wide audience at the hospital, which is used by all sections of the community".

Future projects include working with Artpoint, a public Arts agency, which will be involved in shortlisting artists for a major public artwork for the central reservation in front of the main entrance which should be ready next year.

The Arts Strategy group is also hoping to get funding to convert a room for 'End of life' Care. This will provide a special room where a terminally ill patient can be with their family and will include a room where family members can stay overnight.

A £30,000 grant has been applied for from Kings Fund from its "Enhancing the Healing Environment Program: Environments for Care at End of Life". If successful the trust will contribute a further £10,000 to this project.

Current exhibition includes limited edition prints from Spike Island in Bristol and internationally renowned local artists : Mariele Neudecker and Andrew Mania.

Note to Editors

- Painter John Bellamy underwent a liver transplant in 1988 and has since then felt a great appreciation for the medical skills that saved his life. Since then his paintings have been shown in galleries all over the world and his work is held in numerous major public Collections, including the Tate Gallery and Beaux Arts in Bath.
- Nick Cudworth studied at Chelsea School of Art and has lived since 1999 in Bath, where he opened his own gallery in London Street, using it as both an exhibition space and a studio. Nick paints minutely observed, exquisitely detailed works in pastel and oils. He is fascinated by shadows, which are often witty echoes of all manner of objects which appear in his paintings. He has done a very striking series of Bath cityscapes and his most recent group of paintings is inspired by the work of Vermeer. He has exhibited internationally and has had several shows at the prestigious Portal Gallery in London. In 1999 the National Portrait Gallery in London purchased Nick's painting of film director Ken Loach for their permanent exhibition.
- **The RUH Arts programme is funded by the Arts Council, Charitable Trusts, Foundations and individual donations. The group has recently been invited to become Strategic Partners of B&NES Arts Development and will receive some funding and support over a three year period.**
- **It comprises staff at the RUH, members of the general public, and volunteers with an interest in the arts and health care. The work of the ASG is delivered through a part-time post, Arts Programme Manager, Hetty Dupays.**

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