

Water Logged, but Red Hot! SPA's brick-by-brick fundraiser

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"Not Am Cup" is artist Bruce Hasse' contribution to "Water-Logged, but Red Hot!" fundraiser at Studio Place Arts Jan. 24-Feb. 3. Courtesy Studio Place Arts

BARRE - Is it possible to make art from flood-soaked and damaged bricks? Studio Place Arts says yes. Moreover, 25 artists have said "yes," to creating and donating their brick artwork for a silent auction fundraiser, "Water-Logged, but Red Hot! SPA's Foundational Art," scheduled for Jan. 24 to Feb. 3.

SPA is located at a low point on Main Street, and as a result experienced the full force of the July 10 flood. Water saturated the area around the art center and seeped through openings in the brick and granite foundation of the historic 1880s structure.

“Water-Logged, but Red Hot!” is a creative re-use fundraiser to help with the ongoing recovery process at SPA. There will be a silent auction pop-up show in the SPA classroom for two weeks that concludes during the SPA Art Social Saturday, Feb. 3. The silent auction has in-person and on-line bidding options and 100% of sales will benefit the SPA Flood Recovery Fund.

Artists selected their bricks from a pile removed from the foundation of the SPA building during repairs by Frosted Fern Masonry. General guidelines were provided to the artists, such as “Finished artworks will involve up to four bricks. They may be altered in any way and used whole or in pieces ...”

The diversely skilled artists involved in the silent auction have made correspondingly different works of art from the old bricks. Some bricks have been transformed with wax and collage, fine woodworking, paints, fabric selvages and rick rack, clay sculpting, and woven grasses.

“It’s exciting to use bricks from a flood-damaged building to make art that supports our renovations, and perhaps it’s the ultimate statement of flood resilience,” explained SPA Executive Director Sue Higby. “I’m inspired by the originality and support demonstrated by artist friends.”

Other flood ravaged bricks in the silent auction show were carved by stone sculptors, wrapped with fibers by an installation artist, or covered mirror shards by a mosaic artist. Bricks were even transported great distances, such as to and from Evansville, Indiana, to be a part of the activity. In several instances, artists enjoyed the challenge of using damaged bricks and decided to make additional pieces for the silent auction.

Later this winter, there will be a pop-up show of artwork made with SPA bricks by local Spaulding High School students, led by fine arts instructor Danielle Berg, whose work will be included in the “Water Logged, but Red Hot” show.

For more information, go online to www.studioplacearts.com