

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW AT THE LANKERSHIM ARTS BUILDING?

BY SOPHIA LOUISA LEE

After Dover and Jill Abrams left to start up Infusion Gallery, there was a void left in one of North Hollywood's historical landmark buildings, the Lankershim Arts Building, which had dedicated itself to the arts. Of course, the space was still home to the upstairs



Photo Courtesy of NoHo Gallery LA

Daniel Debevoise and Nancy Branconi

theatre company, The Road Theatre Group, and still offered its spacious wooden floors for dance classes, but the walls downstairs were screaming for brilliant artwork.

In May of this year, a family group pulled together to turn the Lankershim Arts Building into North Hollywood's newest galley: the NoHo Gallery LA. The administrator of the building is Lisa Bianconi. Her mother, Nancy Bianconi, is President of the NoHo Communications Group, an organization that keeps the arts alive in the Arts District. Nancy's husband, Daniel Debevoise, who serves as the gallery's curator, is a renowned photographer and artist.

NoHo Gallery LA strives to bring together local artists as well as artists from around the world. The gallery presents not only original artwork at the monthly receptions, but live music as well. With the talent of actors and dancers, guests are treated to a taste of the theatre and varied cultural dances.

In September, NoHo Gallery LA welcomed the collected artwork of legendary jazz musician Pete Escovedo (who makes his home here in the Valley) as part of its group show called "Latin



Fusion." The show was dedicated to Latino artists representing a variety of mediums and styles. The artists were from the Caribbean, Mexico, Peru, and Columbia. There were also local artists from the Valley represented.

This month's show, "Art = La Cosa Nostra" (*Art = Our Thing*) is in honor of Italian heritage month. The show will run October 2nd through October 28th, with an artists' reception on Saturday, October 22 from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM, followed by a performance of The Road Theatre's "Bunbury" by award winning playwright Tom Jacobsen. The gallery will feature the artwork of "The Young & the Restless" star Thom Bierdz, as well as artists Leslie Marcus, Anne Kirkwood, Tony Mumolo, Muriel Barrett, Norik Dilanchyan, Rony Armas, Sophia Louisa, Alicia Barocio, and Daniel DeBevoise.

NoHo Gallery LA was created to be a stepping-stone for many new and emerging artists, as well as established artists wanting to exhibit their talents in a vibrant, energetic venue. The gallery attracts artists from all over the world. Lisa Bianconi shared, "Every culture has something wonderful to offer. We want and encourage all forms of art to come together, to make a statement in favor of our community, and of helping our fellow man."

NoHo Gallery LA gives back to the community. They work with the local non-profit organization Hands for Hope (an organization run by Lydia Floyd that provides an after school program to keep young kids off the streets). "As a gallery, we want to work with different non-profit organizations because we want to give back to the community," said Ms. Bianconi.

The gallery currently exhibits group shows, providing the opportunity for many talented artists to exhibit their work. As Daniel Debevoise stated, "We push the envelope for new, innovative work." Solo shows are planned for the future. Whether it is an original painting, a piece of sculpture, or that unique, interesting little something, it can be found at NoHo Gallery LA. With prices ranging from \$50 to \$16,000, Lisa Bianconi notes, "It is a place where everyone can go home with a piece of art."

The gallery is also working toward coordinating an art walk with other galleries in the NoHo Arts District. The District is mainly known for its theatre, but by adding an art walk, NoHo Gallery LA feels that an increased appreciation for art will add to the artistic diversity of the area. (Lisa and Nancy Bianconi are working diligently to make sure that the art walk will come to fruition in early 2006. For more information about what is happening in the NoHo Arts District, go to www.NoHoArts.com.)

NoHo Gallery LA is located at 5108 Lankershim Boulevard in North Hollywood. With the caliber of artists that Daniel Debevoise pulls together to exhibit, it is sure to be a gallery that will be around for a long time. To keep updated as to what's going on with the gallery, go to www.nohogalleryla.com.

Sophia Louisa Lee is a local artist who frequently exhibits her work around the Los Angeles area. She is currently making donations of sales of her work to the American Red Cross for the benefit of the victims of Hurricane Katrina. To view her work and/or to contact the artist, go to www.DessaGallery.com.

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