

# LAS VEGAS SUN



PHOTOS BY R. MARSH STARKS / LAS VEGAS SUN

Artist Jennifer Main, right, displays her painting of jazz artist Dave Koz. On the table, from left to right, are her renditions of Ramsey Lewis, David Sanborn and Al Jarreau. Above, wine bottles featuring paintings of Jarreau and Sanborn are on display at Wine Art Gallery at 4305 Industrial Road in Las Vegas.



## A little wine, a little music

Unusual technique puts jazz artists' visages on bottles; sales help music education

By Jerry Fink  
LAS VEGAS SUN

There are those who love art, and there are those who love wine. Many love both.

Last year Roger Palas, owner of Wine Art Gallery, a small boutique gallery on Industrial Road, south of Flamingo Road, united the refined worlds of wine and art collecting.

He developed a technique of reducing canvas-sized paintings to label size and placed them on bottles of wine — an unusual way for aesthetes to display replicas of work by their favorite artists on bottles of their favorite wine.

This year, Palas has added jazz enthusiasm to his growing list of discriminating projects.

Now jazz fans can buy bottles of wine embossed with portraits of such notable musicians as saxophonists David Sanborn and David Koz and vocalist Al Jarreau.

There are nine jazz artists in all, including local celebrity Clint Holmes.

The jazz-wine-art project is a combined effort of Palas and KOAS 105.7-FM, The Oasis, noted for its smooth jazz format.

The Oasis chose the artists whose portraits appear on the bottles.

Frank Woodback, KOAS' general manager, said the list com-

prises some of the most popular musicians who are heard on the station.

All except Holmes, who qualifies as a pop singer who also does jazz.

"We included Clint because he is so popular, locally," Woodback said.

### A good cause

A portion of the sale of each bottle, about 25 percent, will be donated to the "Have a Peaceful Heart" foundation, an organization dedicated to music education for children.

The bottles may be purchased through Lee's Liquors.

Suzan Hudson, Woodback's wife, created the association.

"I have been working in the field of arts and cultural promotions for the better part of 20 year," Hudson said. "Jazz is my personal passion."

She said she decided to create a foundation that supported music education a couple of years ago, after watching a television program about how music helped change lives in Venezuela.

"The country had a high crime rate. Its educational scores were low," Hudson said. "Then a doctor in Venezuela started a music program for kids in grade one — and the results were unbelievable. Academic

scores increased dramatically and crime was reduced."

She said a light went off in her head.

"I wanted to help kids by making sure they get music education as part of their regular curriculum," Hudson said.

And "Have a Peaceful Heart" was born.

"We are known as the Entertainment Capital of the World," Hudson said. "I thought that this would be a really good place to seed future musicians."

Funds raised by the foundation will go to the Clark County School District to help pay for musical instruments.

Wine bottles bearing the likenesses of jazz artists, and the original paintings from which the miniaturized canvases were created, will be sold at auction during a private New Year's Eve party at Bali Hai Golf Club.

Nine paintings and about 2,700 bottles of wine will be sold.

Other upcoming fund-raising

projects planned by Hudson's organization include concerts, festivals and licensed products.

"Right now, we are just a homespun organization," she said. "But we want to make a difference."

Marcia Neel, director of fine arts and student activities for the Clark County School District, expressed gratitude for the fund-raising project by "Have a Peaceful Heart" and the Wine Art Gallery.

"The folks were very kind," Neel said.

Although the school district has one of the most respected music education systems in the country, there is always a need for money to help buy instruments.

"You should go out to the schools and see how many students are in the band," Neel said. "There aren't enough instruments. Many sit side by side and take turns playing."

But, she said, it isn't likely there will ever be enough instruments to go around. There are too many students in the program, about 40,000 in secondary school.

### And all that jazz ...

Palas said only two performers who were contacted about using their likenesses on the wine bottles declined — Celine Dion and Ramsey Lewis.

He said Dion rejected the idea because it was associated with alcohol and Lewis refused because he didn't like the style of the art, which is abstract. He wanted a realistic portrait.

Local artist Jennifer Main, a professional since age 17, is doing the portraits for the jazz artists series.

Main is noted for using bright, bold colors in an expressionistic style reminiscent of Picasso.

"Picasso is an inspiration," Main said. "But I make sure that I have my own style. The key thing is that everyone can tell who my subject is."

Main, 23, says she doesn't usually do realistic portraits, although she can.

"I don't like just looking at something and drawing from a picture," she said. "I like it a little crazier, a little less realistic. A little more imaginative."

Main is busy these days with commissioned work in addition

to the jazz project. Besides producing work for galleries and individuals, she produces art for such charities as the March of Dimes and American Heart Association.

And she is gearing up for more projects for Palas.

"We're discussing doing a rock series with some performers who are classic rock musicians," she said.

Another twist in the plan stage is to add DVD and vit to sell along with the bottle wine/art.

Palas said eventually he will create a music video of the former and combine it with video of the painter creating portrait for the bottle and sell them as a package.

"We will combine the fun watching the artist develop painting while listening to a viewing the entertainer performing his music," Palas said.

That may be music to the ears of Clark County students who share their instruments.

"We set it up so it will help the school system," Palas said.

Jerry Fink is an Accent feature writer. Reach him at (702) 259-0100 or jerry@lasvegassun.com.