

Escape Into Art

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Micaela Myers

As we were putting together this annual arts issue of Laguna Beach Magazine, I had the opportunity to visit Florence, Italy, including taking a private tour of the Uffizi Gallery and the Vasari Corridor—a once secret passageway for the Medici family, which is now lined with pieces from their art collection. While Laguna and Florence are quite different in age, size and architecture, I couldn't help but see the similarities: They are each famous for their art, which draws people in throngs to take it all in. In both cities, works of art are not only in museums but on the streets and in the parks.

Before the last ruling member of Florence's Medici family died, she made sure the family's art collection stayed with the people of Tuscany. Because, after all, art is for the people: for the people whose lives are enriched by seeing it—who perhaps are moved to deeper emotional levels, maybe even laugh or cry, for having viewed it; for the people who are inspired to create their own works of art; for the artists who must not only sell their works to survive but who want to share their art with people—to see that important interaction between art and the viewer.

When I was working to obtain my MFA in writing, my teachers often asked the age-old question, "Who is your audience?" because they wanted us to remember that art—written, visual or performed—is not created in a vacuum. It's meant to be seen.

So as we endure the crowds this summer in Laguna Beach, remember that most of those visitors are here for the art—art they may not get to experience in their hometown. Their enthusiasm can remind us to rediscover Laguna's rich art offerings. Although events like the festivals are a seasonal fixture here in town, each features countless new artists, demos, workshops and performances every season, ready to be explored and experienced. We highlight what's new on page 50.

Dancer Twyla Tharp said, "Art is the only way to run away without leaving home." Here in Laguna, we get to escape into art every day.

We hope you enjoy our arts coverage and would love to hear what you'd like to see in future issues of Laguna Beach Magazine. E-mail micaela@lagunabeachmag.com to share your thoughts.



Laguna's "Time arrow" by Tita Blitt, 2007