

HATCHfest's nest egg

Fundraisers to benefit local artists

By Carol Motsinger
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ASHEVILLE — Every time painter Jonas Gerard starts to paint, it's like leaping off a cliff with no parachute, the Asheville artist said.

That's because he does what he calls spontaneous abstract painting, a process that involves starting with a blank canvas and letting his spiritual instinct dictate the direction the work takes.

This fearlessness in confronting the unknown conclusion of this process is what Gerard thinks is his contribution to HATCHfest, a festival of film screenings, concerts and exhibits from groundbreaking artists meant to encourage economic development in the creative fields coming to Asheville April 15-19.

That's why Gerard is participating in a fundraiser at 5:30 p.m. March 29 at the Market Place Restaurant on Wall Street.

It's one of two events relating to HATCHfest planned for the end of this month.

For Gerard, creativity hinges on not hesitating to pursue where this force takes you, and the programming HATCHfest emphasizes, like mentorships and education, helps artists follow this creative force without having to risk financial stability.

"Hatch is about showing people what can be done, what you can achieve" through painting, media, dance and poetry, he said.

The event, which originated in Bozeman, Mont., "is about encouraging people to explore the creative process within themselves," he said.



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Artist Jonas Gerard paints in an artistic performance for a live audience in 2007. Gerard will do another live performance as a fundraiser for HATCHfest.

IF YOU GO

TUESDAY

What: "CodeName: OpenSource," benefitting Media Arts Project and HATCH Asheville, 7-9 p.m.

Where: Pack Place in downtown Asheville

Tickets: \$20, includes drinks and hors d'oeuvres, via www.ashevillehatchfest.org, at the Pack Place ticket sales office and at the door.

MARCH 29

What: "Spring Awakening: Rebirth, Rejuvenation and Creativity," benefitting HATCH Asheville, featuring Jonas Gerard, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Market Place Restaurant on Wall Street.

Tickets: \$70. Visit www.hatchasheville.org or call 239-0925.

"And if they need assistance, they will be there to help. It's like the big brother coming around with an arm around your shoulder and giving you an encouraging tap on your back."

Gerard will create two paintings during a live performance; one will be raffled off, and the other will be up for auction.

Mark Rosenstein, chef and owner of the Market Place, will present seasonal wine and food pairings.

HATCHfest is also teaming up with the Media Arts Project for a joint fundraiser, "CodeName: OpenSource,"

7-9 p.m. Tuesday.

The event will showcase the work of digital media artists who have previously been awarded grants from the Media Arts Advantage Fund

Teresa Spangler, former vice president of sales of Red Hat/Linux, will also present a talk, "The Future of OpenSource," that will address the growth of the concept of open source as it moves beyond software development into education, pharmacology, songwriting and other areas.

The mission of MAP is similar to HATCHfest in the sense that the organization is about idea-sharing and net-

working among the creative community in Western North Carolina.

Last year, representatives from HATCHfest came to MAP for help getting the project off the ground, said board member Margaret Marchuk.

MAP's programming and services are about supporting the creative economy here and making the people of WNC more aware of the resources we already have," Marchuk said.

That's one of the reasons why teaming up with HATCHfest for "CodeName: OpenSource" "is such a natural fit," she said.