

Hope Blossoms art event to benefit Lotus House homeless shelter

By JONATHAN DAVILA

jdavila@MiamiHerald.com

What exactly does hope look, sound or taste like?

That's the question which more than 30 contemporary artists from around the country will try to answer this Friday at the fifth annual Hope Blossoms fundraiser at the Margulies Warehouse in the Wynwood Arts District.

The proceeds will go to the Lotus House Women's Shelter, a nonprofit started by the Sundari Foundation in 2006 that provides housing for homeless women and children in downtown Miami. But the fundraiser won't be the conventional art event that it has been in recent years.

This time, it's an "Art Happening," in which the artists, as well as attendees, will create live works of art through music, movement, paint, sculpture, poetry and even food -- with hope as the theme. The term "happening," coined by the American painter Allan Kaprow, was explained by the late artist as "a game, an adventure, a number of activities engaged in by participants for the sake of playing."

Paintings and sculptures will still be around, though, and participants will be able to bid for works on display as well as the art created that night.

"In the last two years we've had about 400 to 450 people at our event. We're hoping to have a minimum of that this year," said Constance Collins Margulies, president of the Lotus House. "We printed 800 tickets; we have about 150 left."

Artists attending the event include Shinique Smith, Miwa Koizumi and the Fantastic Nobodies, a group of artists based in New York and Berlin. "You could even bid on a performance by the Fantastic Nobodies at a later date and time. They could terrorize your mansion; they can destroy your wedding," Margulies said.

It's not just about the art, though. Several local restaurants such as Azul, Eos and Galerie Gourmet have agreed to donate food for the event to ensure the artists and attendees won't go hungry while they survey and create their own art. Doubletree and Marriott also are helping out by donating hotel rooms for artists traveling to the event.

Margulies hopes the night is a success, considering the fundraiser is vital to continuing the Lotus House's operation.

"Normally we raise half the money for the shelter from this event every year," she said.

Tickets for Hope Blossoms are \$100 and can be purchased by calling 305-365-2478 or by visiting www.lotushouseshelter.org.
