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Blue Star explores link between art and fashion

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On the eve of New York Fashion Week, Blue Star Contemporary Arts created a setting like a Vogue photo shoot for its Models and Mannequins fundraiser Sept. 7. Willow models in stylish ensembles from Neiman Marcus posed on pedestals in severe relief against the gallery's white walls. Super-real photographic images by Chuck Ramirez, the late artist, hanging as part of Blue Star's Fotoseptiembre exhibit, accentuated the link between fashion and art — and their contrast to everyday life, however ordinary Ramirez's subject matter (brooms, bouquets).

“Lionel Sosa bought the students' work!” said fashion model-esque Rebecca Geibel, Blue Star's new marketing and program manager. The piece in question, a white mosaic mannequin, was embellished by Alex Rubio and

teenagers at Blue Star. It was one of eight mannequins Blue Star asked nine artists to re-imagine. Siblings Ricardo and Luana Mendoza pointed out the work of their mother, Luisa Wheeler. “She was a photographer and she branched out,” Ricardo said, and appropriately so: Wheeler turned her mannequin into a tree.

Perny Shea, Al Silva, Nancy Scott Jones, Zifa Esparza, Stephen Krause, Becky Canavan, Butch Brown and Krisanne Frost were among others pondering models and mannequins to pounding music spun by DJ John Mata.

The party continued the next night at Fashion's Night Out, at which The Shops at La Cantera tried to outdo each other with gifts, discounts and, at Neiman's, a celebration of the 125th anniversary of the tuxedo. Viva, la cummerbund!

McNay raises funds

with art

The very next night, artworks by 10 regional artists lined stalls in the McNay Art Museum's Leeper Auditorium for the McNay Contemporary Collectors Forum's “Art to the Power of Ten” fundraiser. Guests could buy pieces outright or purchase raffle tickets to place on a work the artist donated.

Aside from the art, the party was a reunion of friends after a long, hot summer. Richard and Carolyn Wiggins, Susan Toomey Frost, Keller Henderson, Rex Hausmann, Lori Riemenschneider, John and Jamie Bloodsworth, Shannon Stephens and Ann B. Coiner were among the throng scooping Bohanan's shrimp shooters from passing trays. Dr. Alexis Wiesenthal and Stephen Palmer talked about the cotton candy-scented Katy Perry concert two

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nights earlier. Dapper Mike Casey wore trousers that once belonged to Bernard Lifshutz, who died exactly seven years ago today.

Stephen Horton was sharing cocktails and laughter with his aunt, Marie Ester Valero, and uncle, Carlos Rodriguez, when his name was called as the winner of a painting by abstract painter Roberta Buckles. "I bought one raffle ticket and put it on that piece," he said. It was fate: "A year ago on a tour of the McNay I took just one picture, and it was of her work," he said.

Charity Ball grants announced

On Wednesday evening at the [Argyle Club](#), Helen Eversburg, charities chair of the [Charity Ball Association](#), announced the association will distribute \$900,000 in grants to 29 children's charities in Bexar County this year. President Marie Smith handed out checks on the spot.

"It's significant that 100 percent of our net proceeds go to the children — no executive director or employees or office; we do the work," Smith said.

The grants will be distributed in the following categories:

Special needs children, \$131,026

Abused and neglected children, \$181,674

Early childhood education and literacy, \$259,631

After school enrichment and sports program, \$126,100

Leadership and success, \$55,089

Teen pregnancy/teen parenting, \$10,000

Child health and well-being, \$71,000

Strengthening families/parent education, \$65,480

Well done, Charity Ball Association. Keep throwing balls.

Boerne's [Thom Ricks](#) honored

Friends from Boerne, Bergheim, Bulverde, Kerrville and New Braunfels drove into town Sunday to honor the [San Antonio Art League's](#) Artist of the Year, Boerne resident Thom Ricks. "He's creative from the top down, an unbelievable painter," said friend and fellow artist Finis Collins, there with his artist wife, Edie. Guests Johnny and Zelime Matthews bought copies of Ricks' fancifully illustrated children's books and Rena Dubose, Richard Teitz, Linda Hammond, Sandee Thomas, Melissa Keahey and John Santikos studied the artist's evocative watercolors of shorelines in England, Italy, Greece and other sites from his famous travels. The exhibit hangs until Oct. 23 at the [Art League Museum](#), 130 King William St.

Nancy Cook-Monroe's "Social Studies" column appears Thursdays and Sundays in S.A. Life. Write to her at [ex](mailto:newsocialstudies@gmail.com)

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