

HOUSTON

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AND
POWER
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HOUSTON ARTIST RAY PHILLIPS' 'IMAGINE'

TIMELINE

The Bucks Stop Here?

Art organizations often suffer in recessions. "I think everyone's down, everywhere," says the Orange Show's Stephen Bridges. "But, considering everything, we're doing great." His recent gala, like many of the biggest fundraisers of '09, was a success. Here's the year in arts benefits, plus what the bucks bought. —Peter Barnes

Shepherd School

With Renée Fleming singing Rachmaninoff, it's no surprise Rice's Feb. 19 music school gala pulls in **\$2.4 million** for scholarships. The Moores School at U of H raises another **\$100K** for music education a few weeks later.



Houston Ballet

High hair and big bustles highlight the Marie Antoinette-themed, **\$600,000**-raising ball Feb. 21. Last month's record-breaking Nutcracker Market pulls another **\$2.3 mil.**



Houston Symphony

Months before fall's **\$325,000** opening night, the Feb. 27 Casablanca-themed ball meets its **\$1 million-plus** goal for student music programs.

Stages Theatre

The group takes in a record **\$175K** at its cowboy-clad 30th anniversary gala Feb. 28, for shows like January 2009's *A Picasso* about an art-hoarding Nazi.



H.G.O.

Poodles greet guests at the Opera's April 4 Parisian ball. The **\$1 mil** netted, plus **\$350K** raised opening night, will soon rouse Victorian ghouls in *The Turn of the Screw*.



S.P.A.

Sheik chic rules at the Society for the Performing Arts' "Rock the Casbah" April 18. As belly dancers and snake charmers sway, **\$400,000** is donated to bring performances to schools.

Theatre Under the Stars

TUTS raises **\$554K** on April 24, more than at any of its previous parties, to help present musicals like this month's *Sound of Music*.

Contemporary Art Museum

About 250 avant garde aficionados clink glasses at the April 25 Kaleidoscope Gala inside the CAM. The **\$325,000** raised helps curate acclaimed projects like *No Zoning*, an homage to Houston's anarchic art scene.

M.F.A.

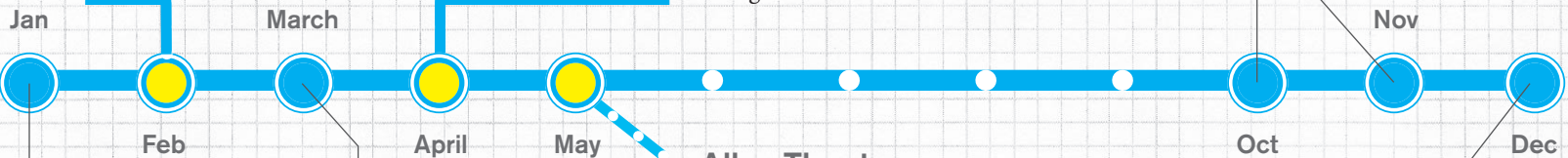
The Oct. 9 gala pulls **\$1.3 mil** as giant projections of director Peter Marzio's fave art grace the walls. That's on top of the **\$726K** raised at a June auction to buy Latin American works like those of Gonzalo Fonseca, and the **\$740K** raised in fall's men-only "One Great Night."



Fonseca's 'Puerto'

Orange Show

Halos and devil horns? Must be the Orange Show's Nov. 7 rave. At press time, the Art Car Parade-hosting group estimates it raised **\$250K**.



H.Y.P.A.

Houston Young People for the Arts' DJ Ceeplus and fire dancers do up the Houston Pavilions Jan. 24, raising **\$20,000**, in part to help Horse Head Theatre recreate seamy Amsterdam in *Red Light Winter*.

H.C.C.C.

A March 14 affair at the Center for Contemporary Craft mixes glass-blowing with partying to raise **\$20,000**. Later, an art auction also helps raise cash to support exhibits like *dysFUNctional* last September.

Jerry Bennet's decanter from 'dysFUNctional'



Alley Theatre

Some 250 rock '60s-style May 15—Coke floats for dessert!—and give **\$350,000** for shows like this month's *A Christmas Carol* and David Sedaris' *The Santaland Diaries*.

Hermann Park

On May 20 the Texan French Alliance for the Arts hits Becca's to auction **\$200,000** in masterpieces such as a diamond-dusted Damien Hirst skull to help install 15 imposing metal works by Bernar Venet in the park next year. To help keep up the art-studded green space, the conservancy had raised **\$409,000** a month before at a dedication event for the reno'd lake plaza.



From Venet's 'Indeterminate Line' series



Glasstire/Fresh Arts

Hermann Park's golf clubhouse fills with blinding plaid and *Caddyshack* jokes at the arts orgs' "Be the Ball" gala Dec. 4, anticipating at press time a **\$70K** haul—and throwing one of the zaniest parties since Lawndale Arts Center's "Day of the Dead" raised **\$33K** back in October.