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Tseelana Market Shows Off Talent

UP artisans selected to take part in fundraiser

BY SILVER HOGUE
Staff Writer

The Tseelana Market is making it possible for University Park residents Brenda Bogart and Ellie to showcase their unique talents while raising money for disadvantaged children in South Africa.

Bogart, a interior designer turned painter, helped come up with the idea for the artisan festival being held today at Tru Salon.

The event is a fundraiser for the Wilson Foundation, a national organization created by interior design firm Wilson and Associates that endows financially disadvantaged



BRENDA BOGART

high school graduates with college scholarships.

Bogart said she came up with the idea for the event to

help get the word out about local artists and raise awareness for a good cause.

"I really support the foundation," said Bogart, a former designer for Wilson and Associates, who left the firm and her children's clothing business, B's T's, in 2006 to pursue painting full time.

"It just started to grow, and other vendors were brought

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STAFF PHOTO: CHRISTINA BARANY

Brenda Bogart works on one of the several paintings that brighten up her University Park home.

Tseelana

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in," she said. "We really want it to keep growing. It's our first year, so we're taking baby steps."

Bogart's career as a painter is a testament to the happiness that can be found by following your true passion.

"Painting is something I always wanted to do but never had the time," she said. "I always knew I could do it, but I needed formal instruction."

She began taking painting and drawing classes with her daughter in 2002 at Southern Methodist University. Bogart said the feeling she had after completing her first piece was indescribable.

"I remember thinking that was the happiest day of my life, and feeling really guilty about that," she said. "I knew it was there. I've always had to draw as an interior designer, and I used heavy drawing

skills for B's T's. Every time I looked at a painting, I would always tell myself I could do that."

Bogart's University Park home is filled with countless, colorful oil and acrylic pieces, many of which will be for sale at Tseelana.

"I never thought I could make money as an artist," she

"incredibly generous."

"Brenda is a longtime friend and one of the most versatile, talented women I know," Wilson said. "I am thrilled that she is using her talents as an artist to help benefit the foundation."

One of Tseelana's other standout vendors is Hamm, a student at Ursuline Academy

mind."

Ellie said she began experimenting with candles in December 2007, when her mother bought her a candle-making starter kit for Christmas.

"When she first came to me with this idea, I was like no way," said Madeline, who refers to herself as the "supply gatherer" of the operation. "I was worried she'd burn the house down, but she was really good at [candle making]."

To get the word out about Ellie's business, Madeline began giving the candles to friends and family as gifts.

"From there, I just got more and more confident," Ellie said. "I felt like I could do shows and sell them to other people."

The word-of-mouth advertising from her mother proved successful, and Ellie began receiving invitations to sell candles at markets hosted by Jesuit prep school and Ch Omega sorority.

Her list of clientele grew even larger with the creator of her website, eleanorhammandco.com, this summer Ellie now turns out about 100 candles a month and will attend more than 10 markets this fall.

"I kept hearing all these wonderful things about Ellie's candles," said Tor Mannes, executive director of the Wilson Foundation. "They smell great, and she has a unique method of making them. The fact that she is really developing this business at such a young age is really impressive."

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IF YOU GO

What: Wilson Foundation's Tseelana Market

When: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. today

Where: Tru Salon, 2715 Fairmount St.

For more information: Call 214-521-6753.

said. "I learned to be a good designer because I worked for good people, but it wasn't what I really wanted to be. When I paint, I really feel like I'm alive. It's something I'd do even if I had a 102-degree fever."

Trisha Wilson, president of Wilson and Associates and founder of the Wilson Foundation, said Bogart is

who launched the Eleanor Hamm & Co. candle business in January 2008.

"I wasn't really interested in baby-sitting, but I really wanted to make money," said Ellie, who runs the business with help from her mother, Madeline. "I've always been interested in arts and crafts, and making things, and candles just sort of came to



Ellie Hamm pours scented wax into a candle holder to gel. Hamm, a student at Ursuline Academy, started her own candle business.