

# 23rd Annual Bourbon Ball

One of Louisville's premier Black Tie galas, the Bourbon Ball takes place the first weekend of October. As the primary fundraiser for the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft's operating budget, the ball also helps to fund the museum's many arts programs and exhibits.

The Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft is a nonprofit organization that was founded in 1981 with the specific mission of promoting the arts and crafts heritage of Kentucky. The museum is also dedicated to supporting artists and artisans by setting up residencies for them to teach in local schools, by promoting their exhibitions, and by providing educational opportunities at the museum itself. The museum's criteria for selecting works to display is beauty first, then utility, with an emphasis on crafts. In addition, the items in the exhibitions must come from Kentucky. According to Kevin O'Brien, the museum's executive director, this makes the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft different from other art museums, and reinforces their strong ties to the artists and artisans.

To keep the atmosphere fresh and exciting, the location of the Bourbon Ball changes every year. This year it will be held in the newly restored, historic Henry Clay building. In addition, this year there are several activities connected to the event that will take place prior to the night of the ball, including the display at several venues around town of a unique art exhibit that was created by local artists especially for the Bourbon Ball 2007. In addition, a Lounge Preview Party is planned for Thursday, August 16th at the museum, and promises to be a fun event for all ages, but perhaps especially for the younger crowd. The Preview Party will be hosted by Blink Pama liqueur, and will feature fun food items like Kentucky-themed sushi, and black tie accessory items for men and women cre-



ated by talented Kentucky fiber artists and jewelry designers will be on hand.

To tie in its connection to the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft, each year the Bourbon Ball is loosely themed around a specific art medium. This year the medium is wood, and Kentucky artists were asked to create works of art or functional objects that are made wholly or in part from white oak bourbon barrels. "With Kentucky's homegrown timber as the common element, we wanted to demonstrate the connection between the art of making bourbon and the art of our Kentucky craftsmen," explains Debbie Huddleston, chairperson of Bourbon Ball 2007.



This year, the ball will feature bourbon tastings from seven Kentucky distilleries, and a silent auction offering vacation getaways, tickets to the Ryder Cup and the Masters Golf Tournament, and chances to bid on the bourbon barrel artwork. Guests will also enjoy a four course meal prepared by Silver Spoon, that includes a dessert which ties in the theme in a most creative way! Finally, attendees will be treated to a live performance by a former American Idol contestant during dinner, with music from the popular Nashville band *Burning Las Vegas* to follow.



An event to remember, Bourbon Ball 2007 will be unique. From the artistic theme, to the increased exposure leading up to the gala, to the enhanced connection between Kentucky's original craft — bourbon — and its unique heritage in the décor and theme of the evening, this promises to be a groundbreaking year for both the museum and the attendees. ■

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*For more information about this event, or to purchase tickets, please contact Stephanie Mayfield at 502-589-0102.*

**Above Left:** Every year the crowd at the Bourbon Ball enjoys a silent auction along with dinner and dancing as well as fine bourbon tastings throughout the night. **Top Right:** This year, a delightful dessert will be crafted by Silver Spoon. It further incorporates the bourbon barrel theme and is made from fine chocolate, crème brûlée, and (of course) bourbon. Photo courtesy of Geoff Carr. **Bottom Right:** This butcher block was created by Hanns-Georg Reck of Louisville using actual bourbon barrels that were donated by Bluegrass and Kelvin Cooperage. Photo courtesy of Dan Kremer.