

A MODEL MAYOR

Portrait sitting leads to unique fundraiser



Photo by LIANCHYN LIEN

Portrait artists and their subject: (standing, L-R) Joan Breckwoldt, Bellaire Mayor Cindy Siegel, Danny Ryan, Fred Husler, Rose Honenberger, Cam Lu. (Below, L-R) Lilibeth André, Myrrh Haslam.

Back in January, Bellaire Mayor Cindy Siegel sat for her portrait by artists of the Houston Civic Arts Association.

Now, the portraits will be revealed at an event to raise funds benefitting the organization, which offers classes, workshops and exhibitions.

The reception and silent auction will be held 7-8:30 p.m. April 18 at the HCAA Center and Gallery, 5252 Bissonnet.

Siegel described her portrait-sitting experience as unexpectedly relaxing.

"You get in a zone," she recalled. "It's like getting in a meditative state."

Besides, there was good music

playing in the background and interesting people to meet—and to watch as they worked on their portraits.

Long a supporter of the arts, Siegel said she was happy to help HCAA.

"She's looking forward to seeing the artists' work.

"You look at yourself in the mirror every day," she said. Their interpretations will be interesting.

Her life as a portrait model lasted three sessions in a standing-room-only studio full of artists gathered to participate in the Markos Studio Group's first portrait fundraising event for HCAA. They wanted to paint a

well-known local leader.

"What a great way to present the artists' work and raise money to help support the arts in Bellaire," said Lilibeth André, event planner and long-time member of HCAA. "We hope to draw friends of Bellaire and art lovers to join us and bid on their favorite portrait by area artists. It's all for a worthy cause."

Winning bidders will have the opportunity to donate their portrait to the city of Bellaire, said Bellaire Arts Commission Chair Kathy Biddle.

HCAA has been a member of the community for more than 30 years. The organization is run by volunteers.

Local artists offer classes each week in various subjects and art media. The organization brings artist of national and international acclaim to offer demonstrations and workshops.

Together with the Southwest Chamber of Commerce, HCAA hosts two arts and crafts fairs on the Bellaire Boulevard esplanade each year. The spring event is also April 18.

HCAA also sponsors a scholarship offered to deserving students from Bellaire High School.

Siegel had some advice for others who might wish to be a volunteer portrait model for the organization, which is always looking for subjects:

■ Sit still.

■ Do not fall asleep.

■ Pick your outfit carefully since you'll wear it three sessions in a row.