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PVLA Celebrates 45 Years

-with-

The Arts Affair 2023

June 7 at Hamilton Hall, University of the Arts

An evening of art hosted by drag performer Iris Spectre, featuring Visionary the Poet, Ben “BoxWon” Barnes, John Singletary, Dream Poet for Hire and more.

(Philadelphia, PA)—[Philadelphia Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts](#) (PVLA) will celebrate a milestone 45th anniversary during this year’s annual benefit celebration *The Arts Affair 2023* on Wednesday, June 7th from 6-9pm at University of the Arts’ Hamilton Hall. Featuring live performances by local artists, visual art, and awards for both Volunteer Attorney and Law Firms of the Year, the event will highlight PVLA’s deep dedication to Philadelphia’s arts & cultural community.

PVLA’s commitment to empowering Philadelphia’s low income artists and small budget arts organizations through the provision of free legal services is made possible by its devoted network of hundreds of local volunteer lawyers and law firms. The only organization of its kind in the region, PVLA, on average, receives 300 requests per year for services and at any given time has over 100 active cases matched with volunteer lawyers who annually provide well in excess of \$1 million of free legal services. Since its inception 45 years ago, PVLA has served thousands of individual artists and hundreds of arts and culture organizations by delivering millions of dollars of free legal services. “PVLA believes that artists are essential, and we are in awe of the rich diversity of artistic talent in our midst and we remain committed to ensuring they receive the legal support and literacy they need in order to thrive.,” says Ken Metzner, Executive Director.

The Arts Affair 2023 will highlight some of these incredible artists with an electric array of live performances, visual art, and interactive artistic experiences hosted by [Philly’s 2016 “Drag Queen of the Year,” Iris Spectre](#) (@irisspectre). Some of the featured artists include:

- **Visionary the Poet** (@visionarythepoet)—an award winning and “dynamic” poet (*Campus Philly*, 2023), and current Temple law student, who believes that art is one of the most powerful forms of activism that there is. She has worked with brands such as TEDx, T-Mobile, REC Philly, Wawa, and others. She is curating the first poetry conference of its kind in Philadelphia, [Stretch My Stanzas Poetry Summit](#), this summer.
- **John Singletary** (@johnsingletaryimaging)—is a photographer and multimedia artist based in Philadelphia whose installations “form chapel-like environments, not unlike entering a dream and moving

through a swirling experience of shadow, light, movement, spirituality, and beauty. Using OLED electronic canvases, multimedia sculptures and traditionally printed photographs, he creates fantastical tableaux with his performers.” (*Lenscratch*, 2018). His work has been collected by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Center for Fine Art Photography as well as other institutional and private collections and has exhibited at the Pennsylvania State Museum, LG Tripp Gallery, The James Oliver Gallery, The Sol Mednick Gallery and The Delaware Contemporary Museum.

- **Ben “BoxWon” Barnes** (@boxwon)— is a 4 time world champion break-dancer, performer and educator, who has been selected to be on the leadership team [planning breakdancing's 2024 Olympics debut](#) in France. A member of the Monster Energy Breakers, a sponsored competitive team consisting of the nations best B-boys & B-girls, he has won numerous titles worldwide and serves as a mentor and ambassador for breakdancing as an art form. He will be joined by dancers from local nonprofit, [Hip Hop Fundamentals](#).
- **Ajibola Rivers & Moustapha Noubissi** (@ajibola_rivers, @moustaphanoubissi)—are a cello and guitar and vocal duo. Rivers is a Nigerian-Cherokee performing artist, teacher, and composer who received his classical training as a cellist at Temple University and has performed with The Philadelphia Orchestra’s “Our City, Your Orchestra” program. Noubissi is a multi-instrumentalist and songwriter whose “songs simmer across long runtimes and dynamic structures — the rise and fall of a whisper-to-holler tide — and they meditate on connections, emotions, identity, and ways to guard those aspects of your person in a cold world.” (WXPN, 2023) Born in Belgium to Cameroonian parents, he grew up a participant of many musical traditions, including West African drumming, American pop, and choral music.

This year, PVLA will honor two attorneys and two law firms whose contributions as volunteers have been exemplary.

Volunteer Attorneys of the Year awards will go to partner Zachary Johns and associate Dennie Zastrow of the law firm Morgan Lewis, who together have provided dozens of hours of free legal support in 2022 alone on a complex, continuing engagement for an arts organization.

Law Firms of the Year awards will go to Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath and the solo law practice of Angelina Williams (Tax Journey, LLC). Nine attorneys from Faegre Drinker have provided thousands of dollars worth of free services to arts clients through PVLA in the past year. Solo practitioner Angelina Williams worked on five different matters over the course of the year, adding to her impressive roster of 37 pro bono cases she has worked on since 2005.

WHERE: Dorrance Hamilton Hall, University of the Arts, 320 South Broad Street, Philadelphia

WHEN: Wednesday, June 7, 6-9pm

TICKETS: \$45 (artists, students, nonprofit and public interest employees), \$125 (general admission), \$200 (general admission x 2), or tickets can be purchased to sponsor artists; ie. Sponsor 1 Artist (\$45), Sponsor 2 Artists (\$90), Sponsor 4 Artists (\$180)

Ticket link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-arts-affair-2023-tickets-522560531617>

About Philadelphia Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts:

PVLA is a non-profit legal services organization through which lawyers assist artists and cultural organizations throughout the Greater Philadelphia area via legal representation, advocacy, education, and counseling pro bono. PVLA has provided, on average per year, roughly 3,600 hours of pro bono legal services valued at approximately \$1.4 million to more than 265 artists, arts groups and inventors. For more information or to learn how to get involved, please visit www.pvla.org.

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