

Diff'rent Strokes

Fine arts are making a comeback. Maybe it's because of our "been there, done that," mentality in regard to everything else of interest a city has to offer, maybe the "snob" connotation associated with the fine arts has finally worn off, or maybe we're in the midst of a renaissance (no, probably not). Regardless, Rhode Island has made another move in making the arts accessible and exciting to those of us who don't actually have any idea what we're doing by welcoming Pawtucket's Paint and Vino.

Popular in most of the country's major cities, drink-and-paint events are pretty much exactly what they sound like they are. Participants sign up for a class that supplies them with a canvas, brushes, paint and booze while an instructor gives step-by-step instructions so that participants can replicate the work on display in their own artistic style.

Paint and Vino is one of, if not the, first of its kind in Rhode Island, tucked away between the historic, less seedy, part of Pawtucket and the Blackstone River Waterfall. P&V contributes its allure to its "no-experience-needed" attitude for those who don't want to spend massive amounts of money on local college summer programs or go on a paint-supply shopping spree only to encounter expensive frustration.

And of course there's the vino side of the deal. Classes include two complimentary glasses of beer or wine, likely to get the creative juices flowing.

Held every Saturday evening with some occurring on Fridays and Sundays as well, each session is taught by a local artist. Pre-registration is required online where you can also find out which painting will be taught throughout the month.

www.paintandvino.com

150 Main Street, Pawtucket

The *Motif* team headed to P&V for some Saturday night debauchery and to put our artistry to the test. The work of the night was a scene from an African sunset ...



Too Much Paint

Artisté: Jeffrey Folker

Before I begin, I want to assure you, I am not an artist. I will never be able to draw anything more than a stick figure (I am pretty much the Monet of stick figures), yet here I am, sitting in a place where I never expected to step foot - an art studio. The staff is exceptionally polite and welcoming, attentive toward everyone who walks in. They set out to assuage any worries as to my artistic abilities; anyone can paint. I agree, but silently, I still have my doubts.

As suggested by the very name of the event, and my aforementioned lack of artistic ability, I came for the vino (well, the birra). Brewed locally in Pawtucket, Foolproof Brewing was on deck and I tried all three - there was a golden ale with a nice balance of bitter hops and sweet malt, an India pale ale that surprisingly was not all that hoppy, and a porter that had hints of chocolate and an almost nutty finish.

Two hours after beginning my painting, I was staring in disbelief at what I created. It is not the best painting in the history of the world, but I was not *expecting* it to be the best. Nevertheless, it surpassed all of my expectations. Sure, I may have used more paint than Van Gogh did throughout his entire life, but nevertheless, I am proud of my work.



Full Frontal Elephant

Artisté: Caitlin Ardito

When it comes to art, I'm not "in the scene," to say the least. I ended up at a Prov Gallery Night a few months back and fell in love with the concept of putting something onto a canvas. I haven't made it far past putting something on a piece of construction paper, really. I also came of the legal drinking age a year ago, so I'd say that my excitement for attending an event outside of a bar that serves complimentary wine is justified (for now).

Acrylic paintings of landscapes are apparently all about mixing colors. After what probably averaged out to four glasses of said vino (yeah, you only get two drink tickets, but ...), I turned in my rainbow palette for a plate of primaries and got my blend on. I have to say, making colors is invigorating. By the last pinot noir I was in the zone and it was time to sketch in the silhouettes of the mom and baby elephants. No, no, I can do one better. I turned that bad boy around to the front.

I sold my first work of art for \$6. I think I can make a career out of this.



Sahara Slime

Artisté: Drew Curry

Acrylic and alcohol. Color and cabernet. Paint and Vino. I was excited to say the least. I haven't painted anything in about a year, so I was looking forward to a good kick-start. Having an artist provide you with guidelines is always a great way to begin a piece.

Some time passes. Every artist is in their zone. I look around the room, but I see nearly the same painting on each canvas. I decide to wander a bit. I want my piece to be different. I try altering the color scheme, using different brushes and strokes, and just getting funky with it. I throw a little twist on the tree, add some monkeys, and try making the sky a trip all in itself.

I may have gone too far in that respect.