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At Your Service UPDATE

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Personal Note

As you will find in this issue, theatres and galleries are abundant in metropolitan Atlanta. If you are considering a move and want more information about a particular community, please call me. I can provide information on schools, shopping, commutes, and, of course, real estate!

Art and Theatres

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VISUAL ART IN ATLANTA

Atlanta's visual arts scene is growing. One can find major exhibitions as well as exciting gallery districts showcasing works by local, national and international artists. The list is long and diverse! There are exceptional galleries in the metropolitan area for contemporary art, traditional fine art, glass art, sculpture, and photography. You won't want to miss the following:

The High Museum of Art

1280 Peachtree Street
 404-733-4444
 www.high.org
 The High Museum has more than 11,000 works in its permanent collection with a diverse array of fine art, American works, European paintings, decorative arts, African art, photography and contemporary art. The impressive Louvre-Atlanta exhibit will be on display until September 2009.

Michael C. Carlos Museum

571 South Kilgo Circle
 404-727-4282
 www.carlos.emory.edu
 The Carlos Museum maintains the

largest collection of ancient art in the Southeast as well as collections of 19th and 20th century sub-Saharan African art and European and American works from the Renaissance to the present. Selected Masterworks of Indian Painting is scheduled for the first quarter of 2007, Jewish and Christian Treasures from the Holy Land begins in June, and several traveling exhibitions are scheduled throughout the year.

Atlanta Contemporary Art Center

535 Means Street, Atlanta
 404-688-1970
 www.thecontemporary.org
 The Contemporary is a multidisciplinary art center that displays the work of local, regional, national and international artists. Exhibitions explore current ideas, attitudes, and new directions in contemporary artistic expression. Daniel Bozhkov, Greta Pratt, Kevin Landers and Devendra Barnhart are artists whose works will be displayed during the first quarter of 2007. Several Artist Survival Skills workshops are planned throughout 2007.





HOW TO BUY ART

Here are some points to consider if you want to know the thrill and satisfaction of owning original works of art.

- **What to buy.** The best reason for buying art is because you like it. There are so many kinds of visual art - paintings, glass, photography, sculpture, etc. Be sure you really love a particular medium before investing in a piece.
- **Look around and get information.** Visit as many galleries as possible and talk to staff. Visit art fairs where you can see many different galleries in one place. Look at art magazines for information - and surf the web!
- **Establish a budget.** Research the price range of the sort of work that you like. Remember to consider shipping, framing and insurance costs.
- **Ask the gallery or artist** - what kind of track record does the artist have? Ask to see an exhibition review.

Who else has bought this artist's work (private collectors, companies, museums) and do I want to be a pioneer?

How is the piece made - is it fragile? Are there any special ways to display and light it and, if so, can the gallery help? Can the gallery reserve it for me for a few days - give yourself time to think it over.

- **Before you buy** - ask yourself the following questions:
Will I regret buying this piece?
Do I want many varied works, or a few distinctive pieces?
Do I like this piece because it reminds me of another work that I can't afford to buy?
Do I like this artist's work but maybe not this particular example?
Will this piece fit the space I have in mind?

ATLANTA THEATRE

Unlike New York with geographically confined theatre district, the Atlanta theatre district is everywhere! Downtown, midtown, Buckhead, Little Five Points, Decatur, Marietta, Dunwoody.....great theatre abounds throughout metropolitan Atlanta. Many of the venues offer plays acted, produced and directed by locals. The Fox Theater and the Civic Center host mega Broadway shows throughout the year. Below is a list of the theatres to be found in Atlanta. Check the internet for current offerings, and enjoy your night on the town!



The Fox Theatre

660 Peachtree Street

404-817-8700

www.foxtheatre.org

The Fox Theatre opened on Christmas Day in 1929 and has been Atlanta's favorite theatre every since. Scheduled for 2007 are Disney's High School Musical, The Great Gatsby, Spamalot, and Clifford The Big Red Dog to name only a few.

There are of course, many concerts and ballet performances scheduled throughout the year that you won't want to miss.

For example, Snow White, presented by the Atlanta Ballet, is planned for February.

Alliance Theatre

1280 Peachtree Street

404-733-5000

www.alliancetheatre.org

Located in the Woodruff Arts Center, The Alliance is one of the largest and most respected regional theatres in the country. Under it's umbrella are The Children's Theatre, The Hertz Stage Theatre, and the 14th Street Stage Theatre. Sister Act, False Creeds, and Cuttin Up are among the 2007 offerings at the Alliance.

7 Stages

1105 Euclid Avenue

404-523-7647

Located in the Inman Park/Little Five Points area of Atlanta, 7 Stages offers a fun variety of theatre. My Left Breast is currently playing. You can look forward to seeing Zora, Karibu, Disposable Men and The Violet Hour in the first quarter of 2007.

Actor's Express

887 West Marietta Street

404-607-7469

www.actorexpress.com

Actor's Express is one of the most remarkable and daring theatre companies in the Southeast. It was recently cited as "the city's most vital theatrical venue" by *Creative Loafing*. Actor's Express has found and filled an important niche in Atlanta's arts community as a place for high quality theatre and theatre education.



ATLANTA THEATRE (continued)

Ansley Park Playhouse

1545 Peachtree Street
404-875-1193
www.ansleyparkplayhouse.com

Currently hosting the long running "Peachtree Battle" which is ending January 31, 2007, Ansley Park Playhouse will be bringing a new delightful play onboard in February. Call for more information.

Theatrical Outfit

84 Luckie Street
404-577-5255
www.theatricaloutfit.org

Theatrical Outfit celebrates its 30th season in 2006-07 with a collection of stories that will make your heart sing, and maybe make it ache. Stories that will make you make you laugh, and those surely to make you think. These are stories that stir the soul.

Georgia Shakespeare Theatre

4484 Peachtree Road
404-264-0020
www.gashakespeare.org

A free performance is given each year in May at Lake Meer in Piedmont Park, however, tickets are required and can be ordered by phone. All other productions are performed at the Conant Performing Arts Center located on the campus of Oglethorpe University.



Rialto Center for the Performing Arts

80 Forsyth Street
404-651-1234
www.rialtocenter.org
Built in 1926, the Rialto Theatre was re-opened 10 years ago as Georgia State University's performing arts center and is a jewel in the Fairlie-Poplar downtown renewal. Since re-opening, it offers its own unique subscription series with a wide variety of entertainment.

Theatre in the Square

11 Whitlock Avenue, Marietta
770-422-8369
www.theatreinthesquare.com

"A Beacon on the Square" is what the AJC 2005 Ultimate Guide calls Marietta's Theatre in the Square. A year-round professional theatre, producing a five-show subscription season, summer and holiday shows, it is one of the Southeast's most respected arts institutions, consistently ranked as one of Georgia's top professional theatres.

Georgia Ensemble Theatre

950 Forrest Street, Roswell
770-641-1260
www.get.org

Georgia Ensemble Theatre is North Fulton's only professional theatre company. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Robert J. Farley, the Company produces some of the finest theatre the Metro area has to offer with a variety of hilarious comedies, compelling dramas, and toe-tapping musicals. The Odd Couple, The Last Night of Ballyhoo, and Beyond The Rainbow are on the agenda for the first quarter of 2007.

Stage Door Players

5339 Chamblee Dunwoody Road, Dunwoody
770396-1726
www.stagedoorplayers.net

Stage Door Players is a metro-Atlanta non-professional theater that provides a venue to showcase the talents of up-and-coming local actors, directors and designers. It produces a variety of plays and musicals that delight and inspire young and old alike. The theatre likewise strives to enrich and create community involvement by providing opportunities for theatrical participation (technically, artistically, and organizationally) for individuals at all levels of experience.

Theatre Decatur

430 W. Trinity Place, Decatur
404-373-5311
www.theatredecatur.com

Formerly known as Neighborhood Playhouse, Theatre Decatur is the longest operating theatre in Decatur – and the only theatre in the downtown area. For more than 25 years, the theatre has been presenting familiar favorites, forgotten works and challenging new plays to audiences both young and not-so-young.

Art Station, Inc.

5384 Manor Drive, Stone Mountain
770-467-1105
www.artstation.org

This theatre is consistently ranked among the top multi-disciplinary art centers in the state by the Georgia Council for the Arts.

Aurora Theatre

3087-B Main Street, Duluth
770-476-7926
www.auroratheatre.com

The Aurora Theatre is a non-equity troupe that presents plays and musicals in the historic track-side section of Duluth. Noises Off and Camelot will be running in early 2007.



FINGER ON THE PULSE - REAL ESTATE

Finger on the pulse? Arms around the bubble? Home sales down 11.5% in the last year. Average price of home down 3.5%. Foreclosures at an all time high. Can I put my head under the pillow and keep it there until everything blows over? Or . . . could we take a second look at the information presented, particularly as it relates to the Atlanta market? What does all this mean to Mr. & Mrs. Buyer and Mr. & Mrs. Seller?

To begin with, the above sales numbers are compiled on a nationwide average. There are markets in the U.S. that have had enormous gains and are now suffering enormous loses. The Atlanta real estate market has been very stable in comparison. John Wieland was recently quoted in the Business Chronicle, "Prices have collapsed and volume has collapsed. In the case of Atlanta, the prices never were driven up to the ceiling levels and so pricing accurately reflects the cost to produce the home. I am not seeing any significant change in pricing, but there is a very significant change in volume. More homes are on the market for a longer period in Atlanta, just as in other cities across the country."

Statistically, from October 2005 to October 2006 the number of houses that sold in metropolitan Atlanta was within 3%. (4,537 sold in 2005, 4,686 sold in 2006, or 149 more sold in 2006 than in 2005). The average sales price was 3% less in 2006 than in 2005. The list price to sale price ratio in 2005 was 97.8% and in 2006 was 97.5%, essentially equal. Where things do not look equal is in the absorption rate. In October 2005 it took new homes 7.7 months to be absorbed, and 5.9 months to absorb the resale inventory. One year later it took 11.2 months to absorb the new homes inventory and 7.3 months to absorb the resale inventory, or somewhere between 30% and 20%

What this means is that more houses are coming on the market than there are buyers to buy them. The existing inventory is not being absorbed before the new inventory is being added. The buyer has more choices. With more choices, the buyer will likely be more attracted to the listing that has been improved, or at the other end of the scale, be drawn to the listing that can be bought below market value.

No matter what the market, there is always activity. Lives do not stop because of a slow down in sales. People get transferred, a family wants a different school district, one tires of a long commute to work, the children are gone and the need for a large house no longer exists, there is a divorce, the list goes on. To be successful in a slower market, it is wise, if you are able, to improve your house to meet current expectations in the market. In a market where there is a lot of inventory from which to choose, a buyer can just move onto the next choice. The one that will sell is either the one that captures the buyer's heart or the one that is severely discounted. If your house is on the market, or if you plan on putting your house on the market soon, you may wish to update and improve, not just to shorten the time on the market, but also to put more money in your pocket at the end of the transaction.

Call me for pointers and suggestions. I want what is best for you!

