



## FLORENTINE INSPIRATION WITH THE MIAMI FLAIR: The Restoring, Funding and Teaching of the Friends of the Uffizi Gallery

**By: Chris Carson**

[Chris@INYBN.com](mailto:Chris@INYBN.com)

Florence, Italy is world renowned as a city home to magnificent works of art and museums showcasing many of the masters' work from the Renaissance. One museum in particular is in dire need of assistance to remain a bastion of beauty and culture in the 21st century. The Uffizi Gallery was victim to a terrorist bombing in 1993, during which a part of the Gallery and some of its cherished pieces were damaged.

Many residents were distraught at the heinous acts against their beloved city and the art held within it. With over 2.6 million visitors to the Uffizi Gallery each year, the impact would be felt not only in Florence, but internationally. Passionate citizens undertook the labors to restore and maintain the Uffizi Gallery and formed Amici degli Uffizi, a non-profit association tasked with the preser-



**Elephant** [Photo courtesy of Friends of the Uffizi Gallery]

vation of its precious artworks.

The loss from the attack was felt world-wide, but so was the love demonstrated by Ami-

ci degli Uffizi. Its passion and dedication gave birth to Friends of the Uffizi Gallery, Inc. (FOUG), an

**Continued on page 6**

## FLORENTINE INSPIRATION WITH THE MIAMI FLAIR: The Restoring, Funding, and Teaching of the Friends of the Uffizi Gallery



**Royal Procession Chateau d'Anet** [Photo courtesy of Friends of the Uffizi Gallery]

### Continued from page 1

organization founded in 2006 in Palm Beach, Florida. “Our sister organization in Italy is wonderful. We’ve taken on tasks to help both them and ultimately the Uffizi Gallery,” said Executive Director, Lisa Marie Browne of Friends of the Uffizi Gallery.

Though 5,074 miles separate the cities of Miami and Florence, the collective goals of Amici degli Uffizi and the Friends of Uffizi Gallery are synced. One of the organizations’ key missions is to restore timeless artwork to its original glory. The Friends of the Uffizi Gallery currently has a large undertaking for their non-profit.

“Right now, we are working on the Valois Tapestries. They are some of the most celebrated tapestries the Uffizi Gallery has in its collection. We have four of them restored but are still working on the other four,” stated Browne.

The Valois Tapestries capture major figures in Catherine de Medici’s French Court from 1564 to 1573. They are created from valuable materials woven with wool, silk, silver, and silver-guild threads. The ornately decorated tapestries were brought to Florence by the granddaughter of Queen Catherine, Christina of Lorraine, as dowry to her betrothed Grand Duke Ferdinando I de’ Medici. After several hundred years of hanging on display, the kingly artwork required much needed restorations due to a multitude of issues involving deterioration



**Water Festival attack Fontainebleau light** [Photo courtesy of Friends of the Uffizi Gallery]



**Members of The Friends of the Uffizi Gallery** [Photo courtesy of Friends of the Uffizi Gallery]

from tears, sunlight exposure, oxidation of the metallic yarn, and other fraying and wear. But the tapestries, which currently are valued at about one million US dollars, require substantial funds to be brought back to their former magnificence.

“To make our goals of preserving and restoring the art-

work at the Uffizi Gallery possible, we have to raise money. It is a major factor in what makes our organization a success,” remarked Browne.

The Friends of the Uffizi Gallery exists to collect the resources needed to restore works such as the Valois Tapestries. The main avenue through which they gather funds is hosting events about the Uffizi Gallery and the artwork they are trying to restore. Stacy Conde recently hosted one such event at the Conde Contemporary art gallery in Coral Gables which highlighted the Valois Tapestries. The affair raised money for Foug projects but also educated the public on the artwork that it strives to maintain.

“We love to host, entertain, and educate. Teaching people is a necessity for our longevity. We connect people who may have heard about an artist or piece of artwork and had no idea it was on display at the Uffizi Gallery, with information on the art they find interesting,” said Browne.

The Friends of the Uffizi Gallery welcome anyone interested in the Uffizi Gallery, Renaissance artwork, or other great masterpieces to attend one of their events. Members of the Foug are a collection of volunteers whose passion brought them together to maintain the artwork they love.

“We’ve hosted events all over: from New York to Boca Raton, in various museums. We even host private events in people’s homes. If anyone wants to learn about us, we welcome the chance to spread our passion,” Browne stated.

To find out more information on the Friends of the Uffizi Gallery, their upcoming events, past restorations, and the Uffizi Gallery itself, visit [www.friendsoftheuffizigallery.org](http://www.friendsoftheuffizigallery.org) or call 561-289-4090.