

Tucson's Hotel McCoy is turning its rooms into art, music venues for its 1st anniversary

Hotel McCoy is cranking the creativity up to 11 this Saturday in honor of its first anniversary.

The boutique hotel, which took over and renovated the old Silverbell Inn on West Silverlake Road, is taking 12 of its rooms and turning them into mini-art venues for the evening.

One room will be reserved for stand-up comedy.

Two others will feature live sets from local musicians, including Brian Lopez and Jillian Bessett.

Entire walls will become canvases for muralists in rooms where visitors can watch large-scale pieces being created before their eyes.

The mini-venues will be spread throughout the property. Attendees will be given maps, then set loose to choose what they'd like to see. Pop-up bars will be serving different, locally made beer and wine from room to room.

Hotel McCoy's creative director Nicole Dahl and assistant general manager Lynette Lopez have dubbed the evening Arizona Art Fest, which they hope will draw more people than your run-of-the-mill anniversary party.

"The festival will acknowledge that art isn't just a painting on the wall," Dahl said. "What we hear is art. What we wear is art. We get to show people that art can be so many mediums. They get to interact with these artists on an intimate level."

The unique event is par for the course for Dahl and her crew, who have worked hard over the last year to make Hotel McCoy more than just a place for travelers to lay their heads at night.

The outdoor walls of the hotel already serve as a who's who of local muralists, with elaborate scenes from the likes of Joe Pagac, Jessica Gonzales and Ashley White.

Many of the rooms are also filled with works from local artists, as is the hotel's lobby, bar and conference area.

Pieces are sold commission-free. If a work is purchased, the artist gets 100% of the money.

About five pieces of art are sold each week, Dahl said.

"We are a for-profit business, but we make money off our bar and hotel," Dahl said. "We give back by supporting the arts community and not taking from them."

The hotel's social calendar is brimming with activities geared toward guests and the Tucson community at large.

McCoy has regular poolside movie nights. Last weekend, it screened “Dirty Dancing.” This weekend, it’s “Selena.”

And Dahl has made an effort to hold events you can’t find elsewhere in Tucson.

In July, the hotel hosted a body positive pool party that embraced women of “all shapes and colors,” according to the Facebook event page.

And every weekend in May saw Black Renaissance events, celebrating African American arts in Tucson.

“The black community in Tucson is so strong and vibrant,” Dahl said. “There are amazing musicians, artists, fashion designers, poets. It was a cool time to honor that.”

Dahl said she hopes the Arizona Art Fest will serve as one of the hotel’s flagship events.

“I want this event to grow to where artists from Phoenix and Flagstaff want to be a part of it,” Dahl said. “Maybe one day we will use all the hotel rooms.”

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