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## On the Town Out at night with Baltimore magazine!

July 24th, 2013 - 3:08 pm

### Paint Nite in Baltimore

By Laurie Wilson



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The cool breeze of air conditioning was a welcome relief as I stepped out of the muggy Baltimore evening last Wednesday and into **Tatu** in Power Plant Live. Once inside, I headed to the upper level to partake in a fun, new-to-Baltimore event: **Paint Nite**.

With the catchphrase “drink creatively,” Paint Nite combines the creativity of making art with the excitement of a night-on-the-town atmosphere. Currently held at **Alonso’s** on Tuesdays and Tatu on Thursdays, guests are provided with a canvas, an apron, and paint supplies so that they can recreate and, in many cases, reinterpret, the evening’s selected painting, all while enjoying a drink or two.

Next month, Paint Nite plans to add Monday nights at **Leinenkugel’s Beer Garden** to the mix. And, as chief fun officer Scott Hakanson told me, Paint Nite is currently in 20 states, and will soon be international, with events in Toronto and London. Not bad for a Boston-born company that started just last year.

The room I entered was spacious and bright, with two long tables running parallel down the center. Blank canvases were set up on both sides of the tables, along with palettes of paint and three brushes of varying sizes.

Guests ordered a wide selection of wines and cocktails from the bar before finding a seat. The painting we would be recreating was situated on a high easel at the end of the room. Everyone was eager to have a good view.

Once all of the guests were seated, Caren Shelley, resident Paint Nite Baltimore artist, went through the first steps, explaining how we could begin the background.

The feeling in the room was both relaxing and inspiring as everyone set to work; some chatting eagerly with friends, others preferring to focus on the task at hand.

Within minutes, each blank canvas was transformed into a tapestry of color. Some people stuck to the same color scheme as the example painting, while others branched out entirely, replacing peach and tangerine tones with navy and plum, all mixed from the primary colors on their palettes.

When I finished, I was amazed to discover that two hours had already passed. I am certainly no artist, but I came away very proud of my work. It was a great event, and a really memorable way to spend a Thursday night.

Afterwards, Shelley spoke enthusiastically about her involvement with Paint Nite. She believes that “if there were more events like this, the world would be a better place.” And after the fun I had, I couldn’t agree more.