

## Take a Seat Vienna Returns!

Imagine a community where local artists and businesses collaborate to make their community a vibrant, beautiful place. This is what the “Take a Seat Vienna” project is all about and just one of the many ways that the Vienna Arts Society, a 501c3 nonprofit organization, enriches their community through the arts!

The “Take a Seat Vienna” project returns this spring to local businesses beginning April 28th and will end with a celebration and auction on November 11th, 2023, at the Vienna Community Center Field House. However, this project has been under way for months as 39 individual artists, a local design group, and a class of young artists have worked to create forty one-of-a-kind benches to be displayed at local businesses, non-profit organizations and public areas around Vienna.

A plaque on each bench names the particular business or non-profit that has proudly sponsored the cost of the bench that local artists have spent months designing, painting, and preparing for display. Crafted by Vienna resident and fine furniture builder, Ralph Reinecke, each bench was handmade from cypress wood and is a beautiful symbol of what community is all about!

While the idea for the benches was inspired by a similar project in Purcellville, the Vienna Arts Society initiated the inaugural “Take a Seat Vienna” project in early 2018. The benches were then installed for the community to enjoy for six months in 2019. In November of that same year, the benches were auctioned off, raising funds that helped sustain the VAS throughout the pandemic and economic shutdown.

As an integral part of the Vienna community, the Vienna Arts Society has been focused on building and supporting the community through the arts for over 50 years! This is just one of many amazing community activities that the VAS organizes or supports to make our community a better place. Programs, classes, community outreach, exhibits all over northern Virginia, and even scholarships are supported by this important VAS fundraiser!

The “Take a Seat Vienna” auction on Saturday, November 11, will be open to the public. Your \$20 adult ticket enables you to support this great organization whether or not you plan to make a bid! Each bench will be auctioned to the highest bidder, making this THE event to attend this fall!! Children will enjoy this lively event, and those under 12 need no ticket. Please remember to mark your calendars now to spend an evening with live music, artists, benches, professional auctioneers, and of course, community! Admission provides one complimentary adult beverage as well as specialties from some of Vienna’s favorite restaurants!

The beautifully created benches will be displayed all over Vienna through October, when they’ll be cleaned and revarnished for the auction. The Vienna Arts Society’s Halloween Parade float will feature many benches!! To purchase your tickets, find out more about the project, or how you can support the Vienna Arts Society, please visit the Vienna Art Center, located in the lower level of the Windover Professional Building, 243 Church Street NW, Vienna, or go to [www.viennaartsociety.org](http://www.viennaartsociety.org) .