

IN WINE, THERE IS CHARITY

Vintage Hollywood pours attention on foster children with its latest event for wine lovers.

By Stephanie Jones



THE BOARD MEMBERS of Vintage Hollywood, the annual wine- and food-tasting event, want as much money as possible to go to this year's beneficiary, Children's Action Network, which helps guide foster youth to successful futures. So its members—including two senior producers for *The Tonight Show* and the owner of Lucques restaurant—set up and break down the tables, plead for donations, and ask winemakers and proprietors to pour their own wines.

The evening under the stars, which will be held on June 13, has attracted such wine lovers and foodies as Courteney Cox, Kyle MacLachlan, and Ben Stiller. Guests mingle and engage with vintners and chefs alike. Board member Arlene Wszalek recalls a guest saying a few years ago, "I am so glad I didn't go to Grace tonight because [executive chef] Neal Fraser is here!" Another board member, Linda Daly, added, "Mark Peel [executive chef and owner] from Campanile is going to be handing you your little plate of food."

The board decided to add a Friday-night dinner to thank restaurateurs and winemakers. "It's

PHILANTHROPY



Andrea Ficzynski, president of Christie's LA, and celebrity auctioneer Randy Jackson lead the live auction at last year's event.

like a rehearsal dinner for out-of-town guests," explains Wszalek. The board members are in charge of food on this evening. "We make pots of chili; we roast potatoes; we have s'mores in the fire pit," says Daly. Winemakers bring bottles without labels, insisting, "Oh, you have to try this."

The event—which started in Linda Daly's backyard and raised \$15,000 in 2002—now produces total donations in the low six figures.

In addition to Daly and Wszalek, Annie Aft, Mike Alexander, Nancy Boxwell, Gracelyn Brown, Tracie Fiss, Suzanne Goin, and Richard Shephard serve on the board of Vintage Hollywood. Visit vintagehollywood.org or childrensactionnetwork.org.

AGENT OF CHANGE

Agent David Unger represented Mickey Rourke when no one else would, and that risky decision had a happy ending—an Oscar nod.

By Lizzie Simon

IF ANYONE is celebrating Mickey Rourke's comeback as much as Mickey Rourke, it's his agent, ICM's David Unger. Unger took on the actor as a long shot, believing he had a Marlon Brando-type talent on his



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hands. Unger ultimately helped resurrect Rourke's career from virtual oblivion all the way to the Oscars.

The unlikely and enviable comeback has cast a spotlight not only on Rourke, but on Unger as well.

Rourke has been candid about the fact that when Unger picked him up, no one in the business wanted to work with him. Apparently, intense and complex types don't intimidate this agent. He has repped a small

gang of diverse characters, including Val Kilmer and Stephen

Dorff, as well as a coterie of hip directors like Tony Kaye, Jonas Akerlund, and Malcolm Venville. His stable also includes such international actors as Anil Kapoor and Gong Li.

If there's anything connecting the eclectic bunch, it's that their agent knows how to identify talent that can change and evolve—from a struggling former playboy to an enigmatic Oscar nominee, a music-video director to a feature-film director, or from fame in China and India to Hollywood celebrity.

"To be honest with you," says Unger, "I always wanted to be a director, so now I get to live vicariously through my clients."

Rourke thanked Unger at the Golden Globes for "having the balls" to represent him. We might have said it differently, but we couldn't agree more.