Guess What's in a "Mean Girls" Picnic Basket

Find out in these pics from DIFFA's Broadway-themed Picnic by Design HIV/AIDS fundraiser.

September 26, 2018 By Trent Straube

The annual Picnic by Design fundraiser was a real showstopper this year, bringing in nearly $60,000 for HIV/AIDS organizations across the country. Hosted by DIFFA: Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS, the event tasked New York's top design talent with creating 23 picnic baskets based on Broadway themes and filled with inventive goodies—including dinnerware sets, pillows, blankets, champagne (and champagne flutes!) and, of course, Broadway tickets, autographed Playbills and backstage passes.

Picnic by Design attendees at Viacom Terrace and Lounge on Times SquareCourtesy of DIFFA/Erik Bardin

The reimagined picnic baskets were on display and auctioned off September 5 at Viacom Terrace

and Lounge. Located in the heart of Times Square, the venue provided the nearly 300 attendees with spectacular views of the Great White Way.

The real stars of the night were the imaginatively designed picnic baskets (and, of course, the funds they raised to fight AIDS). A few examples of baskets, with text taken directly from DIFFA descriptions:

"Breakfast at Tiffany’s” Picnic BasketCourtesy of DIFFA/Erik Bardin

Breakfast at Tiffany’s Picnic Basket

Vanessa Deleon Associates

Vanessa drew her inspiration from the 1961 film Breakfast at Tiffany’s, featuring the iconic star Audrey Hepburn in the role of Holly Golightly, and the 2013 stage production starring Emilia Clarke. The classic storyline of the timeless film featuring Givenchy’s little black dress and white pearls and Henry Mancini’s score seemed the perfect inspiration for a picnic in Manhattan.

Basket includes: A vintage Tiffany & Co. sterling silver tag necklace, a vintage luggage 24-inch trolley suitcase by CO-Z, 2 Tiffany bone china paper cups, 2 champagne bottles, 2 Martina flutes, 2 boxes of Cracker Jacks, 2 Gibson Elite bone china plates, 2 Hampton Forge forks, 2 Breakfast at Tiffany's ticket pillows, a Tiffany Ribbon gift box blanket (51" X 60"), 2 napkins, assorted food items, a TYSILK cat and a $50 Tiffany Blue Box Café gift card.

"Chicago" Picnic BasketCourtesy of DIFFA/Erik Bardin

Chicago Picnic Basket

NPZ Style & Décor

NPZ Style & Décor drew inspiration from Chicago The Musical. They love everything about this show, from the amazing original choreography by Bob Fosse to every single musical number. Let NPZ Style & Décor transport you back to the 1920s Prohibition Era, known for speakeasies, jazz, women's liberation, and dancing all night long. Inspired by merry murderesses Velma Kelly and Roxie Hart, this basket is a killer!

Basket includes: An art deco–inspired basket handwoven with French gold vintage thread and decorated with feathers, a vintage Red Lips mini sofa inspired by legendary vaudeville star Mae West, original 1975 Chicago The Musical vinyl with Chita Rivera and Gwen Verdon, gold ombré vintage inspired martini glasses, two black ceramic dinnerware sets with brass flatware, a marble cheese board and cutters, a Prohibition Era cocktail book, a bottle of Hendrick’s gin, a brass cocktail shaker, a handblown smoke-colored bowl, Neuhaus chocolate bonbons and a $200 gift certificate to the Alley Cat, a speakeasy at the Beekman Hotel in New York City.

"Kinky Boots” Picnic BasketCourtesy of DIFFA/Erik Bardin

Kinky Boots Picnic Basket

Knoll + Gensler

Inspired by Kinky Boots, this basket by Knoll + Gensler struts its stuff with sparkles, sass and heart! Dazzle up yourself and your picnic with this sensational ensemble.

Basket includes: 2 sunhats, 2 pairs of glittery sandals, 2 pairs of sunglasses, four place settings of Heller Massimo Vignelli dinnerware (mug/bowl/luncheon plate), four wooden Danish bowls, 4

napkins with rings, 4 Filzfelt placemats, 4 Filzfelt coasters, 2 bottles of rosé, a Saarinen red upholstered stool, 2 Seagrass Tote Belly baskets, and 2 tickets to Kinky Boots on Broadway

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"Mean Girls" Picnic BasketCourtesy of DIFFA/Erik Bardin

Mean Girls Picnic Basket

Hunter Douglas with Patrick James Hamilton Designs

Drawing inspiration from the Broadway musical Mean Girls, Hunter Douglas partnered with Patrick James Hamilton Designs to create this incredible basket. Hamilton reimagined a basket as a school locker and filled it with the perfect items for a dream picnic.

Locker includes: a 4-piece martini set from Tuscany Classics, Kate Spade Cocktail Shakers and Wine Tumblers, a Colebrook champagne 5-piece flatware set from Lenox, 2 sets of 4 linen napkins

from Lip Service Napkins, and 4 pink and orange ombré placemats and 4 hashtag gold coasters from Kim Seybert. In addition, Ramy Cosmetics provided a makeup and brow-shaping gift certificate, as well as cosmetics, because everyone needs to look gorgeous—remember, on Wednesdays we wear pink! And, of course, the locker includes a $300 gift certificate to see Mean Girls, as well as a $200 gift certificate to dine at the Cafeteria just like The Plastics!

"Summer: The Donna Summer Musical" Picnic BasketCourtesy of DIFFA/Erik Bardin

Summer: The Donna Summer Musical Picnic Basket

Antoinette Loupé

Antoinette Loupé has created a "Disco Nap Sack" introspective of the pre-AIDS disco era.

Basket includes: A Patricia Field/House of Field disco jacket ($270 value) and accommodations for two for one night with a complimentary bottle of champagne and a show at Ian Schrager's Public Hotel ($400 value). Public Arts is a cutting-edge progressive and avant-garde multimedia

performance space like no other. Afterward, take a Hornblower silent disco cruise for four ($200 value). Take home a Donna Summer signed lithograph ($200 value), a Jonathan Adler Full Dose tray and throw ($200 value) and Ian Schrager's Studio 54 tell-all book ($80). Lastly, enjoy 2 tickets to Summer: The Donna Summer Musical.

Picnic basket inspired by Vintage BroadwayCourtesy of DIFFA/Erik Bardin

Picnic Basket Inspired by Vintage Broadway

Studio TK/Teknion with Mancini Duffy

Mancini Duffy penned an original script that tells the story of two young lovers embarking on a picnic that will change the course of their lives forever.

Basket includes: In addition to a copy of the original script, the scene is set with a vintage steamer trunk filled to the brim with classic Americana picnic ware. 10 original vintage playbills, two original ticket stubs, classic 1920s playing cards and a custom handwoven picnic wine caddy with six wine glasses make this a full service picnic adventure. If you and your picnic partner are up for some light reading, check out the Images of America: Broadway book included in this setting. And last but not least, excite your taste buds with a bottle of Stratus wine ($75) from the first LEED-certified winery in the world. Put on your Sunday clothes and head over to Sardi's for a preshow dinner ($200). Give my regards to Broadway!

From left: David Rockwell, Dawn Roberson and Tom Viola at DIFFA’s Picnic by DesignCourtesy of DIFFA/Erik Bardin

According to the DIFFA press release, designers participating in the 2018 Picnic by Design event include Antoinette Loupé, BKSK Interiors, Catskill Provisions, Gensler + Knoll, Hunter Douglas + Patrick Harris Designs, Jes Gordon, Knoll + Studios Architecture, Kravet, Lo Chen Designs, Matouk, McCory Interiors, Michele Alfano Design, Mikel Welch, NPZ Style & Décor, Peter Valcarcel, Rockwell Group, Ted Moudis Associates, Tito’s Handmade Vodka, Vanessa Deleon Associates and Rebecca Wu Norman.

“We were thrilled to see the designs they produced for our guests to view, bid and raise funds to support our grant efforts,” Dawn Roberson, executive director at DIFFA said. “We are thankful to have the support of so many talented designers along with Cindy Allen, chair of the board of trustees; David Rockwell of Rockwell Group; Tom Viola, executive director Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS; Viacom; O&M; and the Shubert Organization who collectively helped to make this event an extraordinary success.”

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