

Preventing HIV and Providing Care to People in Developing Countries



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**ART OUT OF THE BOX: CELEBRITY EMCEED BENEFIT FOR GLOBAL AIDS
INTERFAITH ALLIANCE (GAIA) RAISES OVER \$130,000**

Jane Kaczmarek and Rainn Wilson Emcee Gala Benefit

Featuring Guest Speaker Anne Lamott

PASADENA, CA (September 17, 2009) – Robert Simon of Bistro 45 restaurant hosted “Art Out of the Box” a uniquely creative benefit on September 13th, to raise funds for programs serving people affected by HIV/AIDS in Malawi. Internationally and nationally acclaimed artists including **Martin Puryear, Alison Saar, Lezley Saar, Michael Kenna, Joel-Peter Witkin, Joyce Kohl, Pam Keeley, LaMonte Westmoreland, Stanley Wilson, Charles Arnoldi, Kim Abeles, and Kenton Nelson** donated magical artworks for auction. The gala, attended by over 150 guests, was a huge success, **raising over \$130,000.**

Festivities from 4-7pm included live music, silent and live auctions and an array of fine wines and gourmet appetizers. **Dr. Michael Gottlieb**, who as a young doctor at UCLA identified the first cases of AIDS in 1981, chaired the fundraiser. **Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu** and **Dame Elizabeth Taylor** were Honorary Chair and Co-Chair of the event.

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Guest speaker Dr. William Rankin, GAIA’s president and chief executive officer, shared the plight of people in Malawi, where about 14% of the adult population is infected with HIV and about 550,000 children have been orphaned by AIDS (*Source: UNAIDS*). Funds raised benefit **GAIA’s Villages program** which trains, equips, and deploys local women to oversee the feeding, clothing, and educating of AIDS orphans, provide care to people living with AIDS-related diseases, and train communities in HIV prevention. The program also provides HIV testing, antiretroviral therapy and treatment of opportunistic infections that affect AIDS patients.

Featured guest Anne Lamott is the best-selling author of several novels and works of non-fiction including *Bird by Bird*, *Traveling Mercies*, *Operating Instructions*, *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith*, *Grace (Eventually)*. She is known for her deep yet hilarious commentaries on life. Emcee **Jane Kaczmarek** was nominated for seven Emmys for her role as the harried mom on “Malcolm in the Middle.” Kaczmarek currently stars in the TNT drama series *Raising the Bar*, as Judge Trudy Kessler. Emcee and Emmy-nominated Actor **Rainn Wilson** was previously known for playing Arthur Martin on *Six Feet Under*. Wilson currently stars as the neurotic Dwight Schrute in the award-winning series *The Office* on NBC, now in its sixth season.

A highlight of the event was a “Fund-A-Need” appeal, challenging guests to sponsor specific items including tuition for orphans, nursing scholarships, bicycle ambulances, and sewing machines for small business enterprises, **raising over \$35,000 within 20 minutes**. **The Art Out of the Box auction** also brought in thousands of dollars.



AIDS has ravaged the small country of Malawi, leaving behind many households headed by orphans.
Photo by Karen Hayes.

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Guest Speaker, celebrated author Anne Lamott with Event Emcee, actress Jane Kaczmarek.



The event opened with a festive Malawian performance by trustee Eva Banda and friends.



Emcee Jane Kaczmarek and Don Thomas view artwork at the silent auction.



Actor Rainn Wilson emcees the Fund-A-Need auction with Event Chair Michael Gottlieb, M.D.



Event Committee member P.J. Johnson and staff member Nadia Winters take bids for the auction.



Event Committee member Kitty Dillavou and Trustee Agnes Grohs celebrate hard work well done.