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Atlantans to Commemorate 50th Anniversary of Orly Airport Tragedy

Plane crash took the lives of many of the city's most dedicated arts supporters and spurred Atlanta to create a memorial that would continue their passion for the cultural growth of the city.

Posted by Hunt Archbold (Editor) , April 27, 2012 at 09:16 PM

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Nearly 50 years ago, a plane crash in Paris devastated Atlanta, taking the lives of many of the city's most ardent supporters of the arts.

June 3 marks the 50th anniversary, and several groups have planned commemorations of those who were lost, and a tribute to the city's renewed support for the arts.

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The Buckhead Heritage Society will host a lecture next month by Ann Uhry Abrams, author of Explosion at Orly: The Disaster that Transformed Atlanta, and Chris Moser, the producer of the 2001 GPB documentary film, The Day Atlanta Stood Still. The event will also include the screening of a film at the The event is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on May 11.

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Meredith Pruden

Advertisement for Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage with a photo of a child holding a drawing of a house.

Advertisement for the movie Planes, featuring the character Dusty Crophopper, with text 'FLY OVER TO PROPWASH JUNCTION PATCH!' and 'IN THEATRES AUGUST 9'.

Advertisement for Dermatology Associates of Georgia, announcing the opening of a new office at 2061 Peachtree Road, Suite 400, Atlanta, GA 30309.

Buckhead Heritage President, W. Wright Mitchell, said in a release:

"The Orly crash was truly a watershed moment in Atlanta history. While it was a tragic event, Atlantans bounced back, as they always do, and used it as a catalyst to develop Atlanta into the arts and culture capital of the South. As the 50th Anniversary approaches, it is important to not only remember the many prominent Atlantans who lost their lives in the crash, but also to acknowledge the citizens who picked up the pieces and turned tragedy into triumph."

The [Buckhead Heritage Society event](#) will bring the story of the Orly tragedy to life through the works of nationally renowned artists including Todd Murphy, Meg Aubrey, Bonnie Beauchamp-Cooke, Dennis Campay, Carolyn Carr, Debbie de Juan Keating, Ben Jennings, Morgan Kendall, Hailey Lowe, Margaret Motley, Steve Penley, Peter Polites, Serge Raffato, Dawne Raulet, Rossin, Serge Ruffato, Tracy Sharp, Jill Steenhuis, Lou Steed and Katherine Bell McClure.

These artists will contribute original works interpreting the Orly Air Crash and its transformative effects on the cultural scene of the city of Atlanta.

The art exhibit will be free and open to the public from noon until 5 p.m. The reception and art auction will be held from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets for the private reception and art auction are \$25 for Buckhead Heritage members and \$35 for non-members. Proceeds from the auction will support the Cultural and Historical Resources component of the Buckhead Collection Greenspace Plan.

The plane crash at Paris's Orly Airport took the lives of 122 arts patrons from Atlanta who were part of a European arts tour planned by the Atlanta Art Association. The tragedy stunned Atlanta's citizens, galvanizing them to build a Memorial Arts Building that is now part of the , which celebrates multiple art forms in one location.

The Woodruff will commemorate the tragedy through a [special Community Day](#) of free activities at each of The Woodruff's divisions, including an art installation from the Musée du Louvre.

The Woodruff, which today is home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art, and Young Audiences, serves more than 1.4 million people annually.

On June 3, the public is invited to participate in Community Day at the Woodruff from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., including the following free activities:

- An Instrument Petting Zoo with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
- A reading of Pearl Cleage's "Wish You Were Here" – a poem written for the anniversary – at the Alliance Theatre, which will also host acting workshops and performances of "Waiting for Balloon"
- Admission to the High and family art workshops
- Hands-on activities such as storytelling, puppet shows, a community art project, multi-cultural music and more by Young Audiences, including a reading of "The Story of Orly" by Barry Stewart Mann.

Atlanta native Alfred Uhry, the Tony Award, Academy Award and Pulitzer Prize recipient and author of "Driving Miss Daisy," will participate in a special Q&A during Community Day. His new play "Apples & Oranges," based on the book by Marie Brenner, will premiere at the Alliance Theatre in October.

On the anniversary, the Woodruff will also host the Orly Commemoration Dinner at 6 p.m., a private, ticketed event in the Galleria of the Memorial Arts Building. The event will showcase the story of the Woodruff's creation in response to the tragedy through video, performance and guest speakers.

Joe Bankoff, president and CEO of the Woodruff, said in a statement that Atlanta's "determined response" to build a

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Caren West Pr

An advertisement for Churchill Five Cigars. It features the brand name in a stylized font, a "NOW OPEN!" banner, the address "5841 ROSWELL ROAD • SUITE 102 SANDY SPRINGS, GA 30328" and phone number "404.255.6111". There is a "Click For More Info!" button and a "20% Discount" offer. At the bottom, it says "WE CARRY MONTE CRISTO, PADRON, OPUS X AND MACANUDO, AND OTHER SELECT CIGARS WHEN YOU REFER TO THIS AD".

memorial benefited the entire community.

"Thus the 50th anniversary of the tragedy provides a moment to recall this loss – but more importantly to recognize and celebrate Atlanta’s commitment to build and sustain a visual and performing arts center that has achieved national recognition and global stature."

Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed in a news release that the response was fitting for a city whose symbol is the phoenix, a mythical bird reborn in the wake of destruction. "With the support and dedication of our citizens, Atlanta's art scene literally rose from the ashes in the late 1960s," Reed said.

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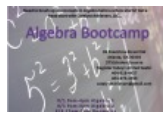


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