



ThanxZoe and not.travis

Emily Berger

## The Team Behind *Psychedelic Robot* Wants to Take You Back to 1969

**TYLER HICKS** | MARCH 7, 2019 | 4:00AM

Last fall, hundreds of Dallas denizens flocked to the Crescent shopping complex to immerse themselves in a unique art experience. Curated by Bivins Gallery, the show *Psychedelic Robot* took the city and social media by storm. Visitors shared photo after photo of rooms covered with graffiti, paint and neon lights – photos that looked like a street artist’s dream. Bivins Gallery was on a mission to democratize art, and the show’s rampant popularity went a long way to achieving that goal. But Karen and Michael Bivins – the veteran art curators and owners of Bivins Gallery – are only getting started.

Their latest show, *1969: Get Back to Where You Once Belonged*, blurs the boundaries between immersive and traditional art shows for a celebration of the year ‘69. The show opens Friday, with guest performer and Texas native Stevie Starlight serenading visitors with original tunes and '60s classics while they browse the artwork.

Karen and Michael, both children of the ‘60s and ‘70s, decided on ‘69 after considering multiple years for their deep dive.

“When we realized it was 50 years since Woodstock, we started delving into this year,” Michael says. “We couldn’t believe how many important things happened in 1969.”

The moon landing, Abbey Road, the movies *Easy Rider* and *The Graduate*, and the first printing of the novel *The Godfather* are just a few of the many artistic and cultural milestones that occurred that year, and all of those will play a role in the Bivins’ 1969 show. But the focus wasn’t just on art.

“It was a time of peace and love, but also a scary time for our parents,” Karen says. “People started questioning authorities and institutions, and parents were concerned about their children.”

The more they looked at 1969, the more Karen and Michael realized how similar 2019 is to that time of love, beauty and danger.

“I think people are trying to get back to the garden,” Michael says. “They’re searching for something different, powerful and spiritual.”

**“I think people are trying to get back to the garden. They’re searching for something different, powerful and spiritual.” - Michael Bivins**

---

The couple didn’t have to search far to find the perfect artists for this project. Another couple, artists ThanxZoe and not.travis, each created part of the *Psychedelic Robot* exhibit, and they had the style and X factor for the job.

“They’re old souls,” Michael says. “They get it.”

They’re also opposites in a few key ways. ThanxZoe describes her work as “hyper-realistic” – meticulously crafted mixed media creations. not.travis’ work resembles a street artist’s: He goes with the flow to create what he calls “graffiti fusion.” *1969* is the couple’s debut show, and they’ve crafted over 25 original pieces inspired by The Beatles, Sharon Tate, *The Brady Bunch* and more.

“Our creative ideas flow off one another,” not.travis says. “It’s been a whirlwind process, a process with little sleep. But maybe you don’t get to know a person until you’re up for 36 hours with them.”

The couple is hopeful they won’t be the only ones who learn something from this experience.

“It’s basically the coolest history lesson you’ll ever see,” ThanxZoe says.

An Abbey Road riff will feature the original moon-walkers led by Jimi Hendrix, while an interactive piece will allow visitors to lounge in the iconic bed shared by John Lennon and Yoko Ono. Elsewhere, a *Brady Bunch*-esque portrait will remind gallery-goers of all the celebrities arrested in ‘69. The artists hope these pieces and many more will evoke the year as authentically as possible.

“This was such a cool year,” ThanxZoe says. “You should’ve been there if you weren’t, and now you can be.”

And while Michael Bivins is excited to see the reaction from fans who got a kick out of *Psychedelic Robot*, he's also hoping this show offers a reflective space for '60s babies, millennials and everyone in between.

“We want to remind people all the amazing things that can happen when they join together.” Michael says. “Sometimes you have to look back to see what's in store for the future.”

RELATED TOPICS:

ARTS



THINGS TO DO



VISUAL ART



---

Use of this website constitutes acceptance of our [terms of use](#), our [cookies policy](#), and our [privacy policy](#)

©2019 Dallas Observer, LP. All rights reserved.