ArtBLINK Gala 2011, the annual gala benefiting the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Comprehensive Cancer Center, was a tremendous success – raising $904,000 for research and patient services at the Cancer Center. This year's event was held Saturday, Feb. 26 in The Kirklin Clinic, with the theme being "Ignite Your Inner Artist."

Hosted by the Cancer Center's Advisory Board, ArtBLINK featured 20 top Alabama artists, who had just 90 minutes to create a masterpiece while attendees watched. Many of the artists have a direct connection to cancer either as a survivor or caregiver. The art was auctioned that evening by Guin Robinson and CBS 42's Sherri Jackson.

Participating ArtBLINK artists were Nall, Stephen Ardovino, Ahmad Austin, Xander Booker, Gary Chapman, Vicki Denaburg, Randy Gachet, Karen Graffeo, Lila Graves, Wyona Hamby, Bethanne Hill, Darius Hill, Joey Longoria, Fran Nagy, Amy Pleasant, John Pleasant, Linda Ellen Price, Ricky Trione and Paul Ware. A piece was also donated to the auction by Jane Marshall, a previous ArtBLINK artist who was unable to participate this year.

This year the gala honored three of the Cancer Center's most longstanding and loyal supporters, who each passed away in 2010. This year's honorees were Judith Todd Abrams, Rita C. Kimerling and William M. Spencer III. Honorary chairs for this year's gala were Advisory Board members Pat and Jean Sullivan.

Spotted in the crowd were Cancer Center director Dr. Edward Partridge and his wife Barbara, UAB President Dr. Carol Z. Garrison and Julian Banton, Dr. Shirley Salloway Kahn, Herman and Emmie Bolden, Sol Kimerling, Sam Todd, Ed and Candy Meyerson, Foots and Allene Parnell, Jeanie and Bob MacKenzie, Richard and Helen Pardue, George and Betsy Dreher, Tony and Dana Davis, Richard Adams, Jim and Donna Limbaugh, Richard and Carole Pizitz, and Ann Hayes and Johnny Beachamp.

Live music was provided by Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame inductee Cleve Eaton and the Alabama All Stars. B&A Warehouse provided a cocktail dinner buffet of beef tenderloin, mango-glazed salmon, smoked turkey, grilled vegetables, New Orleans-style jambalaya and gumbo. Guests also enjoyed fruits and cheeses, along with bananas foster bread pudding and chocolate torte with kahlua crème for dessert. The evening's decorations were handled by Dickey Baker with Botanicals.

The UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center thrives on the generosity of the community and the determination of expert researchers, outreach professionals, nurses and doctors to make strides in preventing, screening and treating cancer.

ArtBLINK Gala 2011 was sponsored by *Birmingham Magazine*, Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP, Burr & Forman LLP, EBSCO Industries Inc., Jefferson Iron & Metal Brokerage, Medical Properties Trust, Protective Life Corporation, The Thomas E. Jernigan Foundation, The Thompson Foundation and UAB.