**Dining In The Dark at the Georgia Aquarium**

**Atlanta’s Blind Institute of Technology & The Fine Art Auction;   Serving Up Art and Community**

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***The evening will also serve as the premiere of EdgGuide : a mobile application that is field tested and proven to allow the blind and visually impaired visitors the feeling of independence as it guides users through a safe step by step tour of the facility using a combination of audio descriptions and haptic sensors.***

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**FOR IMMEDATE RELEASE** **Press Inquiries:  Interviews Available**

**Michael Patellis – VP – Corporate Engagement BIT, Anthony Rivera, COO Georgia Aquarium, PJ Lynch – CEO Fine Art Auction, Richard English, Host – Fine Art Auction**

**Allison Zucker-Perelman**

[**allisn@relevantcommunications.net**](mailto:allisn@relevantcommunications.net)

**561.715.9525**

**APPROVED PRESS ASSETS:** [**press images**](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/mmirvaixb27jno1/AABUcsaNDWronAozHEqRU2Ela?dl=0)[**CLICK HERE FOR APPROVED IMAGES**](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/mmirvaixb27jno1/AABUcsaNDWronAozHEqRU2Ela?dl=0)

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**EVENT WEBSITE & TICKETS:** [DINING IN THE DARK](https://event.auctria.com/0cf6b885-6097-417c-9041-d40c13743fb5/7fdb52f0498911ec92e9cdda530be9f5)

***Atlanta, Georgia: March 2022***:  **Salesforce proudly presents the Blind Institute of Technology's Dining in The Dark Fundraising Gala at The Georgia Aquarium.  Michael Patellis, VP of Corporate Development for BIT is excited to bring BIT's Dining in The Dark Annual Fundraiser to Atlanta to help significantly reduce the severe unemployment and underemployment rates of people with disabilities in the state of Georgia.**

**The Fine Art Auction Channel, the Atlanta-based global art-centric entertainment platform, is delighted to be a sponsor of the evening, donating several important art works to the gala’s auction.  The Fine Art Auction presents to a global audience the most significant contemporary and urban artists of our time, as well as the most-important 20th and 21st Century Artists and the venerable Masters.**

***“The Fine Art Auction is thrilled to be part of this important BIT inaugural charity event as we help enable workplace access for the disabled.   In fact, our auctioneer for the evening was mentored by one of world’s leading auctioneers, who happened to have been blind.  Join us for an amazing evening of fun, education, and entertainment .. all for a great cause”.***

**PJ Lynch**

**CEO, The Fine Art Auction**

**Advisory Board Member, Blind Institute of Technology**

**The evening’s auction will be hosted by the renowned Auctioneer and Host of the Fine Art Auction Channel Richard English, whose synergistic relationship to the evening is truly special:**

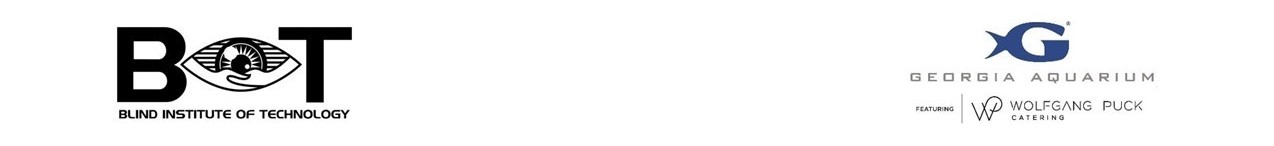
***“It is with profound pleasure that I have the opportunity to assist The Blind Institute of Technology in their inaugural fundraiser at The Georgia Aquarium. This is a very special event to me personally as I have enjoyed the skill and ability over the last 35 years in the auction industry thanks to my mentor, the late Mr. Roy.L.J. Lipman Esq. who was the only registered blind Auctioneer in The United Kingdom.***

***Roy gave me my start and imparted his incredible gift to me in London 5 decades ago and now I am honored to help raise funds to give sight impaired individuals the chance to be independent for the rest of their lives through the incredible guidance of the Blind Institute of Technology.***

***This event has inspired me to devote more my life to giving back in the way I know best by generating fun, excitement and frenzied support through auction for those in need”.***

**The evening will also serve as the premiere of EdgGuide : a mobile application that is field tested and proven to allow the blind and visually impaired visitors the feeling of independence as it guides users through a safe step by step tour of the facility using a combination of audio descriptions and haptic sensors. The platform delivers detailed audio descriptions and describes points of interest. Visitors will be able to download the EdgGuide app to their mobile devices and will be provided a smart vest that works in collaboration with the app. The smart vest with haptic sensors provides further enhanced navigation with up to seven centimeters of accuracy.**

**BIT is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing workplace development and inclusive employment solutions for individuals with disabilities.  BIT helps ready individuals with disabilities for success in the workplace as well as aids the employers who hire them.**



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**ABOUT BIT & MISSION**

**We empower professionals with disabilities and the employers who hire them for success in the workplace.** **The facts speak for themselves, and therefore we do what we do every day.  Our team recruits’ candidates with disabilities from universities, vocational rehabilitation centers, disability-focused forums and events, and social media. Our career development services include interactive workshops, resume writing, interview training, and specific skill training. Our BIT Academy focuses on official certifications for careers at companies such as Salesforce, Cisco, Amazon, and companies within their ecosystems.  At a minimum, we guarantee each candidate who completes a course from the BIT Academy a paid internship with the goal of placement in a full-time employment role.  Candidates we place earn a median salary of $72,000.00 per year which is 40% higher than the U.S. average household income of $50,740 per year.  At the same time, we work closely with our corporate partners to increase awareness and education on the value of hiring individuals with disabilities.**

A group of men standing in front of a blue wall

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**Michael Patellis, PJ Lynch, Anthony Rivera, Richard English**

**Michael Patellis – VP – Corporate Engagement BIT, PJ Lynch – CEO Fine Art Auction, Anthony Rivera, COO Georgia Aquarium, Richard English, Host – Fine Art Auction**

**About the Fine Art Auction**

**The Fine Art Auction Channel is a ground-breaking entertainment platform. We bring to you the most significant contemporary and urban artists of our time, as well as the most-important 20th and 21st Century Artists and the venerable Masters.**

**The opportunity to explore Art and to be a part of a Live Art Auction is an Experience unlike any other.**

**No other channel brings to you the variety of content we do: It is captivating, entertaining, informative, and interactive. Experience the first ever global channel dedicated to Art**

**Tune in for our live Auctions, our in-studio Artists’ Appearances, our video features narrated by our experts and Curators in our unparalleled “behind-the-scenes” celebrity Artist interviews, and our continuing commitment to providing programs that foster emerging artists. Stand with us as we raise awareness and create philanthropic initiatives for communities in need, as we address crises and recognize heroes throughout our world. We use our cultural and artistic capital to help those in need, because together we can do what we cannot do alone.**

**The Fine Art Auction Channel presently enjoys a global audience of millions and has become the trusted platform that has allowed people, quite simply, to find and acquire Art they love. There is the thrill of the Live Auction experience, hosted by world-renowned Celebrity Auctioneers and Presenters Ray Taylor, Mitch Carter, and Richard English. Their careful curation of the artworks and their unparalleled knowledge have made them Icons in the genre and have enabled people all over the world to become a part of the artistic & cultural movement that is The Fine Art Auction channel.**

**Join us in this global Art Experience, on broadcast television, on streaming platforms, on all your devices and from the comfort of…….anywhere you choose.**

**ABOUT GEORGIA AQUARIUM**

**Georgia Aquarium is a leading 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Atlanta, Ga. that is Humane Certified by American Humane, accredited by the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, and a licensed Class R Research Facility under the Animal Welfare Act. It is the first aquarium to be a Cognia Certified STEM Provider and the first aquarium designated as a Certified Autism Center. Georgia Aquarium is committed to working on behalf of all marine life through education, preservation, exceptional animal care, and research across the globe. As the largest aquarium in the Western hemisphere, the Aquarium continues its mission each day to inspire, educate, and entertain its millions of guests about the aquatic biodiversity throughout the world through its hundreds of exhibits and tens of thousands**