

*An official preliminary of the
Miss America Organization,
the world's largest provider
of scholarships to women*



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SOAP STAR ARTIST PARTNERS WITH MISS VA PAGEANT FOR HOLIDAY GIFTS

Actor/artist/author **Thom Bierdz**, known to daytime TV viewers across the country as “Phillip Chancellor III” on the number 1 rated daytime drama, **THE YOUNG & THE RESTLESS**, is helping the Miss Virginia Scholarship Program raise money for its scholarship fund by selling original prints through the pageant website for fans to purchase as holiday gifts.

“We’re thrilled Thom is willing to help our fundraising efforts”, says Mark Schreier, the pageant’s director of fundraising and marketing. Critics call Bierdz’s work as extremely impressive, hailed by many as “the next Andy Warhol”. He has won several awards and a great deal of critical acclaim. His work includes commissioned portraits of people, animals, and scenery; in addition to unique expressionistic designs.

Bierdz, who grew up in Wisconsin, began drawing as a child with his box of 64 crayons. Told by his teachers to “trust your hand and the brush”, Bierdz paints by instinct and offers a fresh, vividly bright collection of prints that he personalizes for each buyer. He’s selling the prints at a lower price at **misssva.com** to entice more purchases and support the Miss Virginia program. The price of \$ 100 / print includes shipping and a certificate of authenticity.

“I have two nieces in college, so I completely understand and support the importance of education and appreciate its rising costs”, says Bierdz, who paints from his home in California. The prints he is offering through the Miss Virginia website are 8” x 10” images of Archaic Ink matted in wide gallery mats measuring 16” x 20”. Each one is packaged in a plastic sleeve.

Bierdz first appeared on **THE YOUNG & THE RESTLESS** in the late 80’s until his character “died” in a tragic car accident. In 2009, he returned to the show, where his character explained he had faked his death to protect his family from discovering his homosexuality – making Chancellor the first major gay character on the **THE YOUNG & THE RESTLESS**. Since then, Bierdz often makes recurring visits (most recently this past spring) since his character’s mother, ex-wife, and son are still part of the show’s current storylines. He’s currently taping episodes of a new web sitcom, **OLD DOGS & NEW TRICKS**, about four middle-aged gay friends who live in youth-obsessed West Hollywood. His character is a TV sports anchor.

“We’re very grateful that Thom is helping us help Virginia’s young women further their educations”, says Harlen Gudger, the pageant’s executive director. “We’re excited he’s giving people in Virginia the opportunity to purchase original artwork and benefit such an important cause,” Gudger adds. The state Miss America preliminary awards about \$ 50,000 in cash scholarships each year to its contestants.

Bierdz is one of just a few openly gay actors, artists, and authors. His memoir, “Forgiving Troy”, won many literary awards. In 2006 he was the recipient of the “Key to the Light” award from Thailians Cedars Sinai. His paintings have raised more than \$100,000 for charities across the country and earned him the title “Best Emerging Artist Los Angeles” from *Out* magazine.

To view Bierdz’s collection and make a purchase, visit www.missva.com.

Orders can be placed via credit card and will be personalized and shipped to arrive before the holidays. For more details or to schedule a telephone interview with Bierdz, contact Mark Schreier: markisnowhome@cox.net; (540) 797-8791.

*Recognizing and Rewarding
Extraordinary
Women*



