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FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS
RSVP ‘Yes’ to these upcoming charity events

BY BENJAMIN-EMILE LE HAY

On any given evening, some of the nearly 350,000 registered nonprofits in New York City sometimes feel like all of them—stage benefit dinner-dances, concerts, auctions, art shows, poetry readings, theater performances and even nude revues (cheeky James Franco recently flashed his ass at the Broadway Bares event to raise a few bucks to fight AIDS). With the battle for your donation (and attendance) brutal, the Observer sorted through our mounting pile of invites to save you the chore.

THE FRENCH HERITAGE SOCIETY’S FALL GALA DINNER DANCE
The 90th of its season. The Pierre Hotel
Monday, November 10
The French Heritage Society, which promotes French architectural, historic and interior design heritage, is hosting a fall gala dinner dance for the Edwardian Line of American and French architects and decorators. The event will feature a live auction with items ranging from original paintings to fine jewelry and fine wines.

Tickets start at $100 for guests under 30 and $1,000 for everyone else who’s not an artist. (212) 796-4141/frenchheritage.org

LUCIN COLOR CENTER GALA
A fashion show, a wine auction, a how-to dinner for the proceeds for art and technology. Alice Tully Hall
Thursday, November 20
The Lincoln Center Corporate Fund presents a show by Christian Dior, with a wine auction to benefit the Lincoln Center Digital division.

Tickets for the anniversary are $250, and available tickets for the gala are $3,500. (212) 875-0450 / lcppresentsfund.org

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY GALA
A whale of a time in the Whale Room. Thursday, November 20
Cocktails flow now ending in the Theodore Roosevelt Roundabout—followed by dinner and a live auction for the proceeds for educational and scientific programming. The auction will feature a 15-foot-long sperm whale, a 10-foot-long grizzly bear, and a 15-foot-long Atlantic salmon.

Tickets are $3,000 and up. (212) 769-5932

ALVIN AILEY OPENING NIGHT GALA BENEFIT
Give dancers a leg up. Performance at New York City Center, dinner at the Hilton Times Square. Wednesday, December 3
Bever, Joan Weiss. The dance company’s long-time board chairman recently announced her retirement so this year’s soiree should be bigger than ever. The evening starts with the premiere of Hofesh Sechter’s Uprising and a special performance of Alvin Ailey American Dance Ensemble’s Rhapsody in Blue. Dinner and dancing at the Hilton. Aside from Ms. Weiss and her husband, Sandy (who is offering to match gifts of $15,000 or more), look out for cameo by Kathryn and Kenneth Chenault, Taye Diggs, Marcus Samuelsson and Jesse Norman.

Tickets range from $500-$5,000. (212) 465-9900/alvainy.org

AGRIA ANNUAL HOLIDAY DINNER
Pictures with a cause for AIDS. Skyline Modern 555 West 25th Street. Wednesday, December 10
Agria, a foundation battling HIV and AIDS, will pay tribute to Larry Kramer and photographer Bruce Wee. Its annual holiday dinner, a who’s who of the gay, downtown and East End art world. Score some underpriced contemporary works at the silent and live auctions, but be prepared to bid against the likes of Ross Bleckner, Gaby Karan Delice and Arief Foxman. Don’t fret if your bid falls short; Tiffany provides swing bags so no one goes home empty-handed.

Tickets start at $1,000. (212) 545-3545/airisa.org

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA’S NEW YEAR’S EVE GALA
Help the Men’s fund raisers hit a high note. Lincoln Center Wednesday, December 31
No need to suffer through a glorified wedding hand dancing with a live band. The opera company will present Franz Lehár’s The Merry Widow—a favorite of Upper East Side wives. Renée Fleming stars; frequent Tony Award winner Susan Strumman directs and Kelli O’Hara makes her Met debut as Valenciennes. Guest stars enjoy an after-dinner dance.

Tickets start at $62. (212) 362-6000/specialevents@metopera.org

YMA FASHION SCHOLARSHIP FUND GALA
School the next generation of designers. Waldorf-Astoria Wednesday, January 7, 2015
Rub straps with Make Believe with Mary Alice Stephenson. Diane Von Furstenberg, Glenda Bailey, and a bevy of fashion execs as they pay homage to Isabel and Rubin Tchabo, legendary interior designer Erin Apfel, Levi Strauss CEO Chip Bergh and Men’s Wearhouse president Douglas Ewert. The party, according to the YMA’s website, pays for scholarships for “gifted and enterprising young people” who nevertheless want to enter the fashion industry.

Tickets cost $2,500-$7,000. (212) 227-0088/ymafs.org

WINTER ANTIQUES SHOW OPENING NIGHT PARTY
Shop for schmucks while aiding your neighbors. Park Avenue Armory 69th Street & Park Avenue Thursday, January 22, 2015
Board president Ari L. Kopelman and likely guests, Michael Bloomberg, Martha Stewart and Bunny Williams stop by for cocktails, hors d’oeuvres and art deco弃ins. But the real winner will be East Side House Shelter and Park Avenue, a social service agency, which should receive a hefty check from the fund-raiser.

Tickets start at $300. (212) 666-3332/winterantiqueshow.com

THE DRAMA LEAGUE 91ST ANNUAL GALA
Hollywood meets Broadway at the Drama League’s black-tie gala. The highlight of the evening will be a musical revue drawn from honoree James Earl Jones’ career in theater, film and television. Likely guests Judith Light, Jefferson Mays, Billy Porter and Tyne Daly will act glad to see you.

Tickets start at $750. (212) 389-2277/dramaleague.org/events/gala

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION
Help an orchestra conduct business. Avery Fisher Hall Tuesday, February 24, 2015
To celebrate the year of the sheep, acclaimed conductor Long Yu will lead the orchestra featuring Yo-Yo Ma. The guest list for the recital will likely include such names as Chen, Karen Leaht, Steven Rockefeller and Chin’s Concert General John Guanlao, (who will no doubt be on hand for crowd control).

Tickets for the concert cost $55-$145. Gala tickets start at $1,000. nyphil.org

THE NIGHT OF TOO MANY STARS
Some people apparently die from fits of laughter. Perhaps that’s why the producers of The Night of Too Many Stars schedule the star-studded comedy extravaganza—benefitting New York Collaborates for Autism—only every other year. Jon Stewart hosts and co-produces the event. Past performers have included Jimmy Fallon, Mike Myers, Sarah Silverman, Chris Rock and laugh Riot Harvey Keitel.

Tickets for the concert cost $125 and up and will be available later this year through Ticketmaster. VIP benefit tickets begin at $2,500 per person.

Email nighthottoomanystars@eventassistance.com for further information. nyca2.org

DANIEL
Cherish the de-gourmand gourmand. 60 East 66th Street Sunday, March 8, 2015
Chef Daniel Boulud and Pierre Gagnaire, owner of a renowned eponymous restaurant in Paris, share cooking duties at Chefs on Wheels’ famed Sunday supper. Serves as the bell and book a private consultation with your personal trainer because you will bow down—dessert, too. Last year’s event, “bureaucracy. Black truffles & blue jeans,” drew Drew Niponert, Seil Eiselein, Annie and Joseph Cohen, and Al Roker, and raised enough to prepare and deliver nearly 150,000 meals to hungry (not ambitious) New Yorkers.

Individual tickets are $1,400, gourmand tickets, which include a pre-dinner kitchen tour, cost $2,500. (212) 697-3700