

Carnival-Themed Purim Ball Raises a Record \$3 Million for the Jewish Museum

Event Honored Robert and Tracey Pruzan and The Barnett and Annalee Newman Foundation

New York, NY, February 25, 2019—The Jewish Museum held its 33rd Annual Purim Ball at the Park Avenue Armory on Wednesday, February 20, 2019, honoring **Robert and Tracey Pruzan** and **The Barnett and Annalee Newman Foundation**. The Museum's annual fundraising gala gathered over 1,000 notable members of New York's corporate, social, and art and cultural communities for a festive dinner and lively after party in celebration of Purim. **This year's Purim Ball raised a record \$3 million in support of the Museum.**

The carnival-themed event created by David Stark Design and Production began with cocktails at 6:30 pm. Guests immediately lined up to take a ride on the 45-foot-tall Ferris wheel. They also tried their luck at fun carnival games named after the key players in the story of Purim: "Mordecai's Break-A-Plate," "Esther's Ring Toss," and "Haman's Balloon Pop." Prizes included a Deborah Kass "OY/YO" necklace and a BaubleBar gift card. Stilt walkers danced with guests while aerialists dazzled the crowd from high above. Hors d'oeuvres were served on spinning, illuminated Ferris wheel and elephant trays designed and fabricated by Peter Callahan, Peter Callahan Catering/PCK. The night's signature drink was "Esther's Elixir," made with Tito's Handmade Vodka, cucumber, lemon, and turmeric syrup.

Prior to dining on a menu that included tomato hamantaschen, Moroccan-spiced hake, and assorted desserts, guests were surprised by a performance on the Ferris wheel by Hungry March Band.

Claudia Gould, the Jewish Museum's Helen Goldsmith Menschel Director, welcomed guests to the gala. Event Co-Chair, Stephen Scherr, introduced the night's first honorees, Robert and Tracey Pruzan, who were recognized for their longtime service to the Jewish Museum as well as their outstanding and unflagging commitment to philanthropy, the arts, and celebrating Jewish culture. Robert Pruzan is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Jewish Museum.

Kelly Taxter, the Museum's Barnett and Annalee Newman Curator of Contemporary Art, next introduced honoree The Barnett and Annalee Newman Foundation, recognized for its support of the Jewish Museum's contemporary art programming and of artists whose work exemplifies the Newmans' spirit of inquiry and independence. Heidi Colman-Freyberger, Executive Director of The Barnett Newman Foundation, accepted the honor.

The Purim Ball continued with an after party until midnight, attended by a multi-generational mix of dinner guests and young revelers. The night featured an open bar and passed hors d'oeuvres and dessert. Music was by DJ Louie XIV. Many guests donned masks throughout the evening.

Notable guests in attendance included: Honorees **Robert Pruzan**, Chairman of the Jewish Museum's Board of Trustees and Co-Founding Partner of

Centerview Partners, and **Tracey Pruzan**, senior designer at Cullman & Kravis; **Claudia Gould**, Director of the Jewish Museum; **Richard Plepler**, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of HBO, and wife **Lisa Plepler**, both Co-Chairs of the Purim Ball; **Stephen Scherr**, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of The Goldman Sachs Group, and wife **Susan Scherr**, both Co-Chairs of the Purim Ball; **Blair Efron**, co-founder of Centerview Partners, and wife **Cheryl Efron**; **Scott Stringer**, New York City Comptroller; **Jane Mayle**, fashion designer; **Gabi Asfour**, fashion designer; **Murray Moss**, designer and founder of the design art company Moss, and **Franklin Getchell**; **Ian Wardropper**, Director of the Frick Collection; **Thelma Golden**, Director and Chief Curator of the Studio Museum; and **Josh Russ Tupper** and **Niki Russ Federman**, owners of Russ & Daughters.

Among the artists in attendance were: Rachel Feinstein and John Currin; Amos Gitai; Jonathan Horowitz; Bryan Hunt; Joan Jonas; Maira Kalman; Deborah Kass; Mel Kendrick; Scooter LaForge; Izhar Patkin; Martha Rosler; Kiki Smith; Frank Stella; and Terry Winters.

Masked Purim balls have been given for charitable purposes since the end of the fifteenth century. The holiday commemorates events that occurred during a period of Jewish history known as “the Babylonian exile,” in the 6th century BCE. Aided by her uncle Mordecai, the Persian king’s beautiful Jewish queen, Esther, thwarted a plot against the Jews devised by Haman, her husband’s chief minister. The Jews of Persia rejoiced at their deliverance and sent gifts to one another. Centuries later, these events are celebrated every year with jubilant parties, feasting, and the wearing of costumes and masks.

About the Jewish Museum

The Jewish Museum is a distinctive hub for art and Jewish culture for people of all backgrounds. A wide-ranging schedule of significant art exhibitions, innovative educational programs, memorable family events, and stimulating presentations attracting visitors of all ages, demonstrates how the Jewish Museum illuminates art, culture, and ideas for today's diverse audiences. Visit thejewishmuseum.org for more information.

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Press contacts: Anne Scher, 212.423.3271 or ascher@thejm.org
Daniela Stigh, 212.423.3330 or dstigh@thejm.org
Alex Wittenberg, 212.423.3272 or awittenberg@thjm.org

