

From: Columbia Museum of Art
Sent: 3/23/2015 4:00:21 PM
To: Haley, Nikki
Cc:
Subject: The CMA 2015 Gala, A Fair to Remember, Funds Museum's Mission to Provide Lifelong Learning

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PRESS RELEASE

**MEDIA CONTACT:
RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE

March 23, 2015

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**The CMA 2015 Gala, *A Fair to Remember*, Funds Museum's Mission
to Provide Lifelong Learning**

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Columbia, S.C. - The Columbia Museum of Art hosted its 2015 gala, *A Fair to Remember*, on March 21, 2015, the museum's largest fundraiser of the year. This annual event raises critical funds to support the museum's mission to provide outstanding art and arts education for lifelong learning and community enrichment for all. A committee and more than 100 dedicated volunteers worked for several months to create the spectacular party. The contributions of 88 sponsors were the most sponsors ever for a CMA gala.

The event netted more than \$105,000 in sponsorship and ticket sales to support the CMA's educational programming and annual operations for the year ahead. More than 800 attendees danced and dined while dazzled by an atmosphere inspired by the *Charles Courtney Curran: Seeking the Ideal* exhibition. Guests entered through tents on Boyd Plaza decorated as a beautiful garden setting while the museum's interior was reminiscent of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. A deep gratitude is due to gala co-chairs, Steven Ford and Julie Brenan, who tirelessly planned and organized the affair.

The museum hosts over 800 programs a year, many of them for free. Responding to community needs, the museum has developed educational and outreach programs and works with community and government partners to provide innovative and accessible arts education for all ages. Programs like "Richland County First Steps" and "CMA Arts and Autism Outreach" help children discover new ways to learn and grow. The fundraiser also helps continue popular education programs like "Gladys' Gang," a free, early childhood arts and literacy program for ages 2-5 that focuses on preparing children for kindergarten, and "CMA Creativity Club," a similar hands-on art program presented for free at regional library branches.

"The gala is way more than a fantastic party," says Julie Brenan, gala co-chair. "It is the lifeblood to all the museum offers. The art and programs provided by the CMA inspire the lives of children and families and help elevate the Midlands to a vibrant and creative region that is a destination for businesses and tourism. I thank all the amazing volunteers and sponsors who donate their time, money, and business toward such an important cause."

The event would not have been possible without the generous contributions of our sponsors. Curran Presenting Sponsor: Jim Hudson Lexus; Ferris Sponsor: Lexington Medical Center; Tesla Sponsors: Hannah and Ron Rogers, Southern Way Catering, Copper Horse Distilling; Edison Sponsor: Joyce and George Hill,

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About the CMA

The Columbia Museum of Art is a charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to lifelong learning and community enrichment for all. Located in the heart of downtown Columbia, SC, CMA ranks among the leading art institutions in the country and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and creative educational programs. At the heart of the CMA and its programs is its collection, which encompasses nearly 7,000 works and spans thousands of years of history, representing a range of world cultures. Established in 1950, the CMA now welcomes more than 135,000 visitors annually and is a catalyst for community creativity, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse spectrum of programming, from exhibitions and lectures to concerts, which appeal to a wide range of visitors and students. It is the recipient of a National Art Education Association award for its contributions to arts education and an Elizabeth O'Neill Verner Governor's Award for the Arts for outstanding contributions to the arts in South Carolina.

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