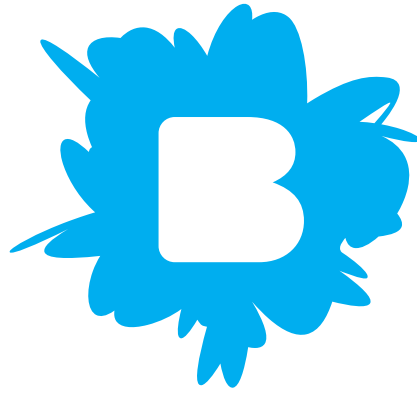


# Press Release



January 2015

## **BROOKLYN MUSEUM TO HOST FIFTH ANNUAL BROOKLYN ARTISTS BALL ON APRIL 15 HONORING RETIRING MUSEUM DIRECTOR ARNOLD LEHMAN AND CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS BASQUIAT, MURAKAMI, AND SMITH**

*Artists Dustin Yellin, OLEK, FAILE, Duke Riley, SITU Studio, and Catron & Outlaw Tapped to Create the Fundraiser's Signature Immersive Table Environments*

*Opening that Evening: "Diverse Works: Director's Choice, 1997–2015"—a Special Exhibition Featuring Pieces Collected throughout Lehman's Tenure*

NEW YORK, NY (January 28, 2015)—On **Wednesday, April 15**, the **Brooklyn Museum** will host the fifth annual **Brooklyn Artists Ball**, its annual fundraising gala celebrating Brooklyn's creative community.

The Brooklyn Artists Ball will once again feature artist-created immersive table environments at which guests will dine. However, unlike years past which tapped a new crop of artists each time, the gala's fifth incarnation welcomes back some previous Artists Ball participants—**Jen Catron & Paul Outlaw, FAILE, Fernando Mastrangelo, OLEK, Duke Riley, SITU Studio, and Dustin Yellin**—to create larger-scale installations for the evening's festivities.

As part of the Gala program, the Shelby White and Leon Levy Director of the Brooklyn Museum, **Arnold L. Lehman**—retiring from his position in June 2015— will be presented with the Augustus Graham Medal in recognition of his visionary leadership and transformation of the Museum and his unwavering support of Brooklyn's art community. In addition, acclaimed contemporary artists **Kiki Smith, Takashi Murakami, and Jean-Michel Basquiat** will be honored with the Asher B. Durand Award—named for the artist who donated the first work of contemporary art to the Museum's collection. All three honorees have had major exhibitions at the Museum during Lehman's tenure.

Opening the same evening will be a special exhibition entitled ***Diverse Works: Director's Choice, 1997–2015***, which brings together more than 125 exceptional works of art collected during Lehman's 18-year tenure. Organized by the Brooklyn Museum's curators, the exhibition highlights the wide-ranging vision of the institution's retiring leader and underscores the Museum's commitment to diversity in collection building.

## **Brooklyn Museum**

200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238-6052  
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[www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org)

The evening will begin in the Museum's lobby at 6:30 p.m. with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres before shifting to the Beaux-Arts Court for a seated dinner. Afterwards, guests will move to the Martha A. and Robert S. Rubin Pavilion for the Dance Party to enjoy desserts created by **FlourShop** and performances by more Brooklyn-based artists to be announced.

The Brooklyn Artists Ball 2015 will once again include a benefit auction organized by Artspace that will include artworks by the featured artists, event honorees, and select past Artists Ball participants.

Tickets to the Brooklyn Artists Ball start at \$1,000; tables of eight begin at \$10,000 and, for the first time in the event's history, will include tables priced at \$100,000, which will include a private dinner with Arnold Lehman. Tickets to the Dance Party are available for \$100; \$75 for Brooklyn Museum members. Proceeds from the event will support the Museum's extensive collection and further bolster the Museum's dedication to enhancing the visitor experience, as well as its commitment to excellence in education and services to the community. For more information about the event or auction, or to purchase tickets, visit [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org), email [special.events@brooklynmuseum.org](mailto:special.events@brooklynmuseum.org), or call (718) 501-6589.

This year's event co-chairs include Museum Board Chair **Elizabeth A. Sackler** and Board President **Stephanie Ingrassia**, as well as past chairs and Museum trustees **Robert S. Rubin**, **Norman M. Feinberg**, and **John S. Tamagni**. The Dance Party steering committee includes **Olivia Wolfe** (Museum Trustee and co-founder, American Two Shot), **Will Griggs** (co-founder, Cantora Records), **Amirah Kassem** (FlourShop), **Karen Robinovitz** (co-founder, Chief Creative Officer, Digital Brand Architects), and **Ben Sisto** (Cultural Engineer, ACE Hotels).

## **ABOUT THE HONOREES**

Shelby White and Leon Levy Director of the Brooklyn Museum **Arnold Lehman** has served in his leadership role at the Brooklyn Museum—one of the largest and most comprehensive art collections in the nation—since 1997. His first official act as Director was to march in Brooklyn's West Indian Labor Day Parade. Since then, he has prioritized both the individual visitor's experience and the community's engagement with the Museum (and the Museum's relevance to the community) through the presentation of innovative exhibitions and reinstallations of the permanent collection; highly successful public programs that address the diversity of the collection and the community; active support for and participation of Brooklyn-based artists; and an ongoing major capital program that has greatly enhanced the accessibility of the Museum and the preservation of its collections.

Prior to his leadership in Brooklyn, Dr. Lehman (Ph.D, M.Phil., Yale University) was Director of the Baltimore Museum of Art for almost two decades and Adjunct Professor of the History of Art at Johns Hopkins University. He has served as the President of the Association of Art Museum Directors and, from 2008 to 2011, was the Chair of the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) of New York City, representing 33 major cultural institutions. He has since been reelected to the CIG position.

**Jean-Michel Basquiat** (1960–1988) was born and raised in Brooklyn, the son of a Haitian–American father and a Puerto Rican mother. At an early age, he showed a precocious talent for drawing, and his mother enrolled him as a Junior Member of the Brooklyn Museum when he was six. Basquiat first gained notoriety as a teenage graffiti poet and musician. By 1981, at the age of twenty, he had turned from spraying graffiti on the walls of buildings in Lower Manhattan to selling paintings in SoHo galleries, rapidly becoming one of the most accomplished artists of his generation. Astute collectors began buying his art, and his gallery shows sold out. Critics noted the originality of his work, its emotional depth, unique iconography, and formal strengths in color, composition, and drawing. By 1985, he was featured on the cover of *The New York Times Magazine* as the epitome of the hot, young artist in a booming market.

**Takashi Murakami** (b. 1962, Tokyo) is an artist, a curator, a cultural entrepreneur, and a critical observer of contemporary Japanese society. A lightning rod between different powerful cultural elements (high/low, ancient/modern, oriental/occidental), Murakami has stated that the artist is someone who understands the borders between worlds and who makes an effort to know them. With his distinctive “Superflat” style and ethos, which employs highly refined classical Japanese painting techniques to depict a super-charged mix of Pop, animé, and otaku content within a flattened representational picture plane, he moves freely within an ever-expanding field of aesthetic issues and cultural inspirations. Murakami lives and works in Tokyo.

**Kiki Smith** (b. 1954, Nuremberg, Germany) is an internationally recognized artist whose career has spanned over three decades. She is a leading figure among artists, addressing the human condition, the body, and the realms of spirituality and nature in work spanning mediums from sculpture and printmaking to installation and textiles. Smith’s many accolades include the U.S. State Department Medal of Arts (2012); the Theo Westenberger Women of Excellence Award (2010); the Nelson A. Rockefeller Award, Purchase College School of the Arts (2010); the Women in the Arts Award, Brooklyn Museum (2009); and the 50th Edward MacDowell Medal (2009). Smith was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, in 2005. In 2006 *TIME* magazine named her one of the “*TIME* 100: The People Who Shape Our World.” Kiki Smith lives and works in New York City.

## **ABOUT THE BROOKLYN ARTISTS BALL/DANCE PARTY**

Launched in 2011, the Brooklyn Artists Ball is the Brooklyn Museum’s unique take on the annual fundraiser. Conceived of by Shelby White and Leon Levy Director of the Brooklyn Museum Arnold Lehman, the event celebrates the borough’s creative community and features artist-designed immersive table environments at which attendees dine. Previous artist participants include **Daniel Arsham, Iona Rozeal Brown, Catron & Outlaw, FAILE, Orly Genger, Ghost of a Dream, Nina Katchadourian, OLEK, Jose Parla, Duke Riley, Alyson Shotz, SITU Studio, Swoon, Marianne Vitale, and Dustin Yellin.**

The occasion is also used to acknowledge people who have made strong contributions to the Museum as well as to the contemporary art world as a whole. Previous Artists Ball honorees include **Ai Weiwei, Fred Wilson, Fred Tomaselli, Mickalene Thomas, Jenny Holzer, Chuck Close, Kehinde Wiley, Wangechi Mutu, Vik Muniz, and Roxy Paine.**

## **ABOUT THE EXHIBITION**

***Diverse Works: Director's Choice, 1997–2015***

**April 15–August 2, 2015**

*Diverse Works: Director's Choice, 1997–2015* is organized by the curators of the Brooklyn Museum in honor of Arnold Lehman. Representing every corner of the globe and virtually every era, the works in the exhibition highlight the Museum's commitment to diversity in collection building while honoring the wide-ranging vision of the Museum's retiring leader. This exhibition is made possible by the Martha A. & Robert S. Rubin Exhibition Fund and the Norman and Arline Feinberg Exhibition Fund.

## **ABOUT THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM**

The Brooklyn Museum is located at 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238–6052. Its comprehensive collections range from ancient masterpieces to contemporary art, representing nearly every culture. It also presents a wide range of special exhibitions and public programs.  
T (718) 638–5000 / F (718) 501–6134 [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org)

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Admission:**

Contribution \$16; students with valid I.D. and seniors \$10. Ages 19 and under FREE. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

### **Directions:**

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

### **Museum Hours:**

Wednesday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thursday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; first Saturday of each month (except September), 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Closed Monday, Tuesday, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.