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**INSPIRED BY COUTURE, ART IN BLOOM RETURNS FOR THE 30<sup>TH</sup> YEAR**

*Queen of Arts: Celebrating 30 Years of Art in Bloom at NOMA, March 14 – 18*

**NEW ORLEANS, LA** – This year, the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) celebrates 30 years of Art in Bloom, the most anticipated springtime event in New Orleans. Themed *Queen of Arts: Celebrating 30 Years of Art in Bloom*, the event will showcase spectacular floral designs created by over 75 exhibitors, which will remain on display from March 15-18, 2018. *Queen of Arts: Celebrating 30 Years of Art in Bloom* is in partnership with IBERIABANK.

Multiple displays in *Queen of Arts* will be inspired by NOMA's special exhibition, *A Queen Within: Adorned Archetypes*, on view February 21 through May 28, 2018. Showcasing rare pieces from one of the world's largest private collections of Alexander McQueen fashion, NOMA's first major fashion exhibition will feature contemporary designers exhibited in an immersive gallery presentation. This exhibition's bold couture explores different archetypes of femininity, and how these mythic characters manifest through storytelling in fashion over the past decade.

Leslie Gottsegen of the NOMA Volunteer Committee and Courtney Le Clercq of The Garden Study Club are co-chairing *Queen of Arts*. "Art in Bloom is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> year as we all celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our wonderful city," said Gottsegen. "What a special time to be a part of NOLA and NOMA!"

In collaboration with The Garden Study Club, this five-day event showcases over 75 exhibitors of spectacular floral designs. Proceeds benefit educational projects and exhibitions at NOMA, and community projects of the Garden Study Club of New Orleans. Recipients of Garden Study Club grants include the New Orleans Botanical Garden, Long Vue House and Gardens, the historic parterre garden at the Beauregard-Keyes House, rain gardens at City Park, and the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden.

**Patron Party, Preview Party, Lecture Series and Fashion Show**

The annual Art in Bloom Patron Party and the subsequent Preview Party will be held Wednesday, March 14. With cuisine and libations from 30 top New Orleans restaurants and

caterers, guests can enjoy an exclusive preview of the floral displays at the premier social event of the season.

One of the distinguishing elements of the Patron Party is the silent auction, which will feature an online component, allowing art enthusiasts to bid on the unique pieces. A highlight of this year's auction is a piece by George Dunbar, whose works and career were recently celebrated in a comprehensive retrospective at NOMA, titled *George Dunbar: Elements of Chance*.

The popular Art in Bloom lecture series and the annual Art in Bloom luncheon and fashion show are scheduled for the following day, Thursday, March 15. Lecturers are Charles Masson, GM of French fine-dining spot Majorelle, located in New York City's Upper East Side, and American fashion designer Lela Rose.

Charles Masson is an acclaimed restaurateur and author of *The Flowers of La Grenouille* (1994). He has a vast and diverse resume including: jewelry design; painting; china, glassware, and silverware design; guest speaking; and flower arrangement. Masson has shown and sold his original art in many shows beginning in 1993 and at well-known boutiques such as Treillage in Upper East New York and Hollyhock in West Los Angeles. Masson is also an esteemed businessman who launched and later sold his own company "Charles Masson Designs Ltd" and most recently created the much anticipated "Marjorelle" restaurant at the Lowell Hotel.

Lela Rose, American fashion designer debuted her signature LELA Rose Collection in 1998 and the Lela Rose bridal collection in 2006. Formally trained as a painter and sculptor, Rose employs a brilliant use of color, rich fabrication, sculptural silhouettes and handcrafted details. Lela has received recognition from fashion editors, stylists and high profile celebrities who are regularly seen wearing the brand. Rose, now a published author, released her first book, *Pret-A-Party* with Rizzoli in 2015 which celebrates her love of style and entertaining.

A luncheon and fashion show presented by Saks Fifth Avenue will take place in the Pavilion of the Two Sisters in City Park following the lectures.

For event information, visit: <https://noma.org/event/art-bloom-2018/>

### **About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden**

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses nearly 40,000 art objects encompassing 5,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing special exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Fridays from 10 AM to 9 PM; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 AM to 6 PM; Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM and Sundays from 11 AM to 5 PM. NOMA offers docent-guided tours at 1 PM every Tuesday – Sunday. The adjoining Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features work by over 60 artists, including several of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's master sculptors. The Sculpture Garden is open seven days a week: 9 AM to 6 PM. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk. For more information about NOMA, call (504) 658-4100 or visit [www.noma.org](http://www.noma.org). Wednesdays are free admission days for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Teenagers (ages 13-19) receive free admission every day through the end of the year, courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

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