

STARS OF THE WINE WORLD TOAST THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG IN WEEKEND OF EVENTS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

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St. Petersburg, Fla.--The MFA's 50th in 2015 will be truly golden. The Museum and The Margaret Acheson Stuart Society are bringing art—and wine—royalty to the community. **Monet to Matisse—On the French Coast** (February 7-May 31) spotlights masterworks from some of the world's greatest museums, and **Wine Weekend St. Pete 2015: Cheers to 50 Years!** (February 6-8) some of the world's most glorious wines.

In addition to Monet and Matisse, other major artists represented in this landmark exhibition include Renoir, Signac, Bonnard, and the talented brothers, Raoul and Jean Dufy. The exhibition also features two magical paintings by Picasso from the 1930s, lent by his son Claude. Works are coming from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Art Institute of Chicago, as well as from noted private collections.

Cheers to 50 Years! will open the exhibition and is taking Wine Weekend to an entirely new level. The guests of honor—**Jean-Charles Boisset and his wife Gina Gallo**—are in the stratosphere of the wine world. **Patricia Rossignol and John William Barger III are the chairs.** The Stuart Society, the Museum's service and fundraising organization, initiated the Wine Auction five years ago. This is the group's third Wine Weekend, which has become the premier such event in the Tampa Bay area.

The events are all at the MFA and salute the Belle Époque. Tickets can be ordered by visiting www.WineWeekendSt.Pete.org or by calling 727.753.WINE (9463). The corks will pop, the wine will flow, and the good times will roll at the following:

- Black-tie "Evening at Maxim's" on Friday, February 6, begins at 7 p.m. in the Marly Room.
- International Wine Auction under the tent on the Museum's north lawn and dinner at the "Café Montmartre" in the Mary Alice McClendon Conservatory, Saturday, February 7. Wine-tastings/auction preview begins at 2:30 p.m. The live auction follows at 4 p.m. and will spotlight not only exquisite wine, but also over-the-top lifestyle items and trips. Dress is resort casual. The French-themed dinner starts at 7:30 p.m.
- Anniversary Brunch at the MFA, Sunday, February 8, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

The celebration begins Friday, February 6, from 7-11 p.m. with a black-tie "Evening at Maxim's" in the Marly Room for major sponsors. Tickets are \$2,500 per couple. **Jean-Charles Boisset** is the guest of honor for this spectacular evening, which will feature a six-course dinner of French cuisine prepared by Tyson Grant, Executive Chef of the Parkshore Grill, and Michel Cornu, Director of Cuisine and Hospitality for Boisset Family Estates. The wines will be selected by Mr. Boisset.

The marriage of Jean-Charles Boisset and Gina Gallo in 2009 brought two of the world's wine families together. Both Jean-Charles and Gina were born into the world of wine. Mr. Boisset's parents, Jean-Claude and Claudine, established the family winery in 1961 in the village of Vougeot, Burgundy, France, the birthplace of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. "My playground was the vineyard," he once said.

In 2003, Jean-Charles extended the family's reach to America, when he acquired DeLoach Vineyards, known for its Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Zinfandel, in Sonoma's Russian River Valley. In 2009, he purchased Raymond Vineyards, one of the first in Napa. Under his care, Raymond has become a world leader in fine wines and has been named Winery of the Year by *Wine Enthusiast* magazine. In 2011, he added Buena Vista Winery, California's first premium winery founded in 1857, to the Boisset Collection. Jean-Charles now runs the family's wine empire, which encompasses 28 wineries in the U.S. and France.

Boisset Family Estates is one of the top 25 wine producers in the U.S., and *Decanter* magazine has named Jean-Charles to its power list of people in the wine world in each compilation since 2008. He has also been named Meininger's International Wine Entrepreneur of the Year and Innovator of the Year by *Wine Enthusiast* magazine. The French America Foundation gave him its first French-American Partnership Award in 2013.

Mr. Boisset has just received **The Jefferson Award** from the esteemed Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, founded in 1805 as America's first art museum and school. That honor recognizes leaders in the wine industry and recalls both Thomas Jefferson's connection to the earliest days of the Academy and to his love of wine, which he called a "necessary of life." Jefferson was instrumental in developing viticulture in the United States, a tradition that Mr. Boisset and Gina Gallo and her family have greatly strengthened.

A pioneer in wine tourism, Mr. Boisset even has a special winery for dog lovers—the Frenchie Winery, named after the French bulldog he gave to his wife, on the large Raymond Vineyards estate. Dog parents can leave their companions in a swanky kennel, replete with beds made from wine barrels, artwork on the walls, even a chandelier hanging from the ceiling. The humans can then enjoy wine in the tasting room, while keeping an eye on their pets via closed-circuit TV above the bar.

Gina Gallo and her husband will be the guests of honor for the Cheers to 50 Years! International Wine Auction on Saturday, February 7. The wine-tasting/auction preview will begin at 2:30 p.m. under a big tent on the Museum's north lawn, with the live auction starting at 4 p.m. Jeffrey Buchard will be the auctioneer, assisted by Elizabeth Flower. Tom duPont, publisher of the *duPont Registry* luxury magazines, will be the master of ceremonies.

The festivities continue at 7:30 p.m. at the "Café Montmartre" in the Mary Alice McClendon Conservatory. A four-course dinner, prepared by Tyson Grant, will be served with Burgundy and Napa wines from the Boisset Collection. Michel Cornu will create a special dish. Tickets to both the auction and dinner are \$285 per person.

Gina Gallo is the granddaughter of Julio Gallo, who with his brother Ernest, established the E. & J. Gallo Winery in 1933 following the repeal of Prohibition. Ernest and Julio Gallo are credited with introducing the vast public to wine and creating the modern American wine market. Today, the E. & J. Gallo Winery is the world's largest and one of the most respected for the art of grape-growing, winemaking, and distribution and marketing of wines. With nine wineries strategically located in the wine regions of California and Washington and access to vineyards in all of the premier grape-growing regions of both states, Gallo produces wines in every category to suit every taste.

Ms. Gallo has always lived close to the land. As a child, she tended gardens with her father Robert and grandfather Julio. In high school, she spent her summers working in the family winery. She earned her degree in the prestigious viticulture and enology program at the University of California, Davis, returned to the family winery as an apprentice, and for two decades, has worked with her brother Matt, who grows the grapes for her extraordinary wines. Her autograph graces every bottle of her Signature series, like a seal of approval.

Highly accomplished in her own right, Ms. Gallo was named "the most powerful woman in wine" by the British magazine, *The Drinks Business*. E. & J. Gallo is the world's largest exporter of California wines, but Ms. Gallo is still directly involved in crafting the wine—from start to finish. She is hands-on, truly an artist. She once said: "I stay close to these wines in the cellar, so that I can create something truly special. This is why I became a winemaker in the first place."

Family has always been central to Mr. Boisset and his wife, who has seven siblings. They are devoted to their beautiful young twin daughters, Honorée-Josephine and Grace Antoinette. As a result, they are especially eager to support a fundraiser for the MFA's extensive programs for children and young people.

The Museum's "Magic Carpet" program reaches pre-kindergarten students from economically stressed homes. A collaborative program with the Montessori School for the Deaf in St. Petersburg has produced incredible artwork and increased the children's vocabulary and writing skills. Through an innovative project with the Pinellas County public schools, nearly every sixth-grader now visits the Museum as part of the social studies curriculum on ancient civilizations. All receive a family pass to take home. "MFA: Make and Take Saturday" brings the entire family together through art. The list goes on.

Wine Weekend St. Pete 2015: Cheers to 50 Years! will conclude on Sunday, February 8, with a sumptuous Anniversary Brunch at the MFA from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. There will be wine and champagne tastings, international culinary delights, and live music. Visitors can also enjoy *Monet to Matisse* on its opening weekend and the Museum's own stellar collection. Tickets are \$100 and the attire is once again resort casual.

***Monet to Matisse—On the French Coast* and Wine Weekend St. Pete 2015: Cheers to 50 Years!** will bring fine art and fine wine together like never before. This is an illustrious marriage, and it is all for the community and especially, for our children and their future.

ABOUT THE MARGARET ACHESON STUART SOCIETY

Founded three years before the Museum opened to the public in 1965, The Stuart Society is named in honor of Museum founder Margaret Acheson Stuart (1896-1980). Over the years, this dedicated service organization has raised substantial funds for art acquisitions, major exhibitions, educational programs, building renovations and additions, operations, and publications. Members have donated countless volunteer hours to the MFA.

The Stuart Society has been the Premier Sponsor of numerous exhibitions and a Lead Sponsor for the construction of the Hazel Hough Wing, which opened to the public in March 2008. The Society initiated *Art in Bloom* at the MFA, as well as the Wine Auction, Wine Weekend St. Pete, and now Wine Weekend St. Pete 2015: Cheers to 50 Years! on February 6-8. The organization's importance to the MFA and the community is recognized by a gallery named in its honor. **Gail Phares is the current President and in that role, serves on the Museum's Board of Trustees.** For more information, please go to www.thestUARTSociety.org.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

The MFA at 255 Beach Drive N.E. has a world-class collection, with works by Monet, Gauguin, Renoir, Morisot, Cézanne, Rodin, O'Keeffe, and many other great artists. Also displayed are ancient Greek and Roman, Egyptian, Asian, African, pre-Columbian, and Native American art. The photography collection is one of the largest and finest in the Southeast. **The galleries, The Junior League Great Hall, and the Marly Room in the original building were recently renovated, completely transforming the experience of the art on view.**

Hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, until 8 p.m. on Thursday, and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. **Admission is only "5 after 5" on Thursday.** Regular admission is \$17 for adults, \$15 for those 65 and older, and \$10 for students seven and older, including college students with current I.D. Children under seven and Museum members are admitted free. Groups of 10 or more adults pay only \$12 per person and children \$4 each with prior reservations. For more information, please call 727.896.2667 or visit www.fine-arts.org.