

# WHITNEY

Whitney Museum  
of American Art  
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# PRESS RELEASE

## 2024 WHITNEY GALA CELEBRATES LONGTIME TRUSTEES HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR. AND BROOKE GARBER NEIDICH

*Joined by Ashley Olsen, Claire Danes, Jeffrey Gibson, Kristin Chenoweth,  
Emily Ratajkowski, Rashid Johnson, Seth Myers, and Vanessa Williams*



From left to right: Fern Kaye Tessler, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Brooke Garber Neidich, Scott Rothkopf  
Photo by Madison Voelkel/BFA.com

**New York, NY, May 15, 2024** — Last night, May 14th, the **Whitney Museum of American Art** hosted the **2024 Whitney Gala**, which honored Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Brooke Garber Neidich, longtime Trustees of the Museum who have championed efforts to diversify the Museum's collection and exhibition program. Led by a group of dedicated Trustees and Dinner Committee, the Whitney **raised over \$5.2 million** in support of the Museum's mission of presenting groundbreaking exhibitions and award-winning education programs, all while advancing the careers of some of the most innovative artists of our time.

### **Whitney Gala**

Whitney Gala **Step and Repeat** images are available for download here:

<https://bfa.com/events/45056/share/04a84bc4ba4908>

Photos by [Madison Voelkel/BFA.com](https://bfa.com)

Whitney Gala **Cocktail and Dinner** images are available for download here:

<https://bfa.com/events/45055/share/cb7b115f475499>

Photos by [Darian DiCianno/BFA.com](https://bfa.com)



**From left to right:** Scott Rothkopf, Jen Rubio, Paul Arnhold, Claire Danes, Wes Gordon; Vanessa Williams, Kristin Chenoweth, Pamela Roland  
 Photos by Madison Voelkel/BFA.com

The Whitney Gala is a celebrated cornerstone of New York’s arts and philanthropy calendar. The **Gala** kicked off at **7 pm** with cocktails in the Museum’s 8th-floor galleries, where guests were able to socialize and explore *Harold Cohen: AARON*, an exhibition exploring the foundational stages of AI in artmaking. A seated dinner by **Olivier Cheng Catering and Events** took place in the Museum’s lobby. Colorful and festive decor for the evening was designed by **David Stark Design and Production**. Sponsors Amante 1530 and LALO Tequila generously provided support and liquor for the evening’s festivities.



**From left to right:** Sasha Bikoff, Ashley Olsen; Alexi Ashe, Seth Meyers; Paul Arnhold, Emily Ratajkowski  
 Photos by Darian DiCianno/BFA.com

**NOTABLE GUESTS: Whitney Gala honorees** Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Brooke Garber Neidich; **Artists** Cristina BanBan, Justin Beal, Kevin Beasley, Dawoud Bey, Zoe Buckman, Ian Cheng, Russell Craig, Torkwase Dyson, Derek Fordjour, Jeffrey Gibson, Lyle Ashton Harris, Camille Henrot, Sheree Hovsepian, Suzanne Jackson, Chantal Joffe, Merritt Johnson, Rashid Johnson, KAWS, Christine Sun Kim, Julian Lethbridge, Glenn Ligon, Julie Mehretu, Wardell Milan, Jennifer Packer, Rachel Rose, Juan Sanchez, Ilana Savdie, Jack Shear, Amy Sherald, Cindy Sherman, Laurie Simmons, Lorna Simpson, Sarah Sze, Salman Toor, Sylvia Waters, Fred Wilson, and Terry Winters; **Designers** Wes Gordon and Ashley Olsen; **Actors** Kristin Chenoweth, Claire Danes, and Vanessa Williams; **Model** Emily Ratajkowski; **Author** A.M. Homes; **Comedian** Seth Myers; **Musical Artist** Ali Sethi; **Journalist** Alina Cho; **NFL Commissioner** Roger Goodell; **Gala Co-Chair and Board President** Fern Kaye Tessler; **Whitney Museum Trustees** Judy Hart Angelo, Paul Arnhold, Jill T. Bikoff, David Cancel, Nancy Carrington Crown, Richard M. DeMartini, Pamela DeVos, Katja Goldman, Bennett Goodman, Susan K. Hess, Robert J. Hurst, Gaurav K. Kapadia, Michael E. Kassan, Neal Katyal, Claudia Laviada, Jonathan Lee, Miyoung Lee, Stephanie March, Raymond McGuire, Julie Ostrover, Nancy Poses, Robert Rosenkranz, Jen Rubio, Anne-Cecilie Engell Speyer, and Laurie M. Tisch, **Ku-Ling Yurman; Alice Pratt Brown Director of the**



**Whitney Museum of American Art** Scott Rothkopf; **Whitney Museum curators** Kim Conaty, Adrienne Edwards, Jennie Goldstein, Marcela Guerrero, Barbara Haskell, Rujeko Hockley, Chrissie Iles, Christiane Paul, Drew Sawyer, Elisabeth Sussman; and former Whitney Museum curator Chris Lew.



**From left to right:** Torkwase Dyson, Dawoud Bey; Christine Sun Kim; Rashid Johnson, Sheree Hovsepian  
Photos by Madison Voelkel/BFA.com

Gala guests enjoyed cocktails courtesy of **Amante 1530** and **LALO Tequila**. In the 8th-floor galleries, LALO Tequila's signature Paloma with grapefruit soda and fresh lime juice was served, and in the Museum's large Richard Artschwager–designed elevator, guests sipped on Moonrakers with New Amsterdam Gin, Amante 1530, fresh lemon juice, green tea simple syrup, and cucumber rounds. Following the cocktail hour, guests dined on a special menu of baked potato and caviar, provided by **The Nines**, and seared halibut, with an assortment of bite-sized sweets for dessert. Gala Co-Chair and Board President **Fern Kaye Tessler** welcomed guests as they sat down for dinner. During dinner, Whitney Museum Director **Scott Rothkopf** gave a tribute to Honorees **Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Brooke Garber Neidich**, thanking them for their enduring dedication to the Museum. Rothkopf and Trustee Ray McGuire highlighted the individual contributions each have made to the Museum, making special note of their longtime support for artists, Museum audiences, and the staff of the Whitney. Rothkopf also shared the extraordinary success of the Whitney's [new free admissions program](#) that offers access to the Museum free of charge to all visitors every Friday night and on the second Sunday of each month. Free Friday Nights are generously supported by Trustees Jen Rubio and Stewart Butterfield and Paul Arnhold and Wes Gordon. Support for Second Sundays is provided by Art Bridges Foundation's Access for All program.



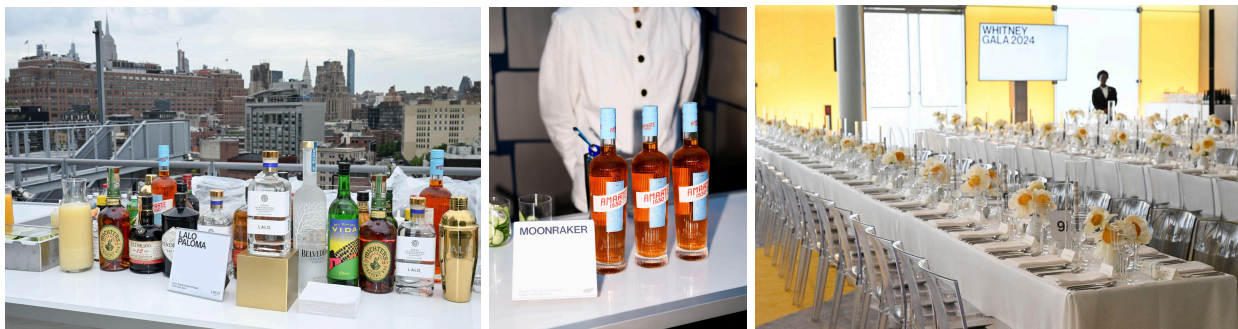
**From left to right:** Kristin Chenoweth, Dan Bucatinsky; Rujeko Hockley, Amy Sherald  
Photos by Darian DiCianno/BFA.com

Throughout the evening, Whitney Gala guests were given the opportunity to view *Whitney Biennial 2024: Even Better Than the Real Thing*, on view through August 11.



**From left to right:** Brooke Garber Neidich, Fern Kaye Tessler; Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Thelma Golden, Kevin Beasley, Jennifer Packer, Raymond J. McGuire, Rashid Johnson; Olivia Walton, Jeffrey Gibson  
 Photos by Darian DiCiano/BFA.com

Honorees Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Brooke Garber Neidich have played integral roles in the development of the Whitney over many years, including making the Museum’s collections and exhibition program more inclusive. During his thirty years as a Trustee, **Henry Louis Gates, Jr.** has been a guidepost for the Museum and its leadership by broadening conversations at the Whitney, examining the Museum’s role in the art world, and exploring related cultural issues in his scholarship. Gates is the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and Director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University, as well as an Emmy- and Peabody Award–winning filmmaker, literary scholar, journalist, cultural critic, and institution builder. He is known for his advocacy of the landmark 1994 Whitney exhibition *Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art* organized by then-curator Thelma Golden. This pivotal exhibition was the catalyst for many conversations about race, identity, and stereotypes—topics that remain fundamental to Gates’s scholarship. **Brooke Garber Neidich** began her tenure at the Whitney on the Print Acquisition Committee in 1992 and became a Trustee in 1999. Inspired by the women who founded and sustained the Whitney, Brooke has been a champion of artists. As Co-Chair of the Museum’s Board from 2008 to 2015 she marshaled great energy and enthusiasm for the Whitney’s move downtown. Since 2007, Brooke has also sustained and grown the 68-year-old jewelry business her father, Sidney Garber, founded. She donates her profits to children’s mental health, the arts, racial justice, women’s reproductive rights, and ending gun violence. In 2015 she was elected to the CFDA, the Council of Fashion Designers of America.



Cocktails by LALO Tequila and Amante 1530, seated dinner by Olivier Cheng Catering and Events, and decorations by David Stark Design and Production  
 Photos by Madison Voelkel/BFA.com

**WHEN**

Tuesday, May 14, 2024  
Whitney Gala: 7–11 pm

**WHERE**

Whitney Museum of American Art  
99 Gansevoort Street  
New York, NY 10014

**GALA HONOREES**

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Brooke Garber Neidich

**DINNER COMMITTEE**

Paul Arnhold, Nancy Carrington Crown, Susan K. Hess, Miyoung Lee, Raymond J. McGuire, Aliza and Stephen Neidich, Jon Neidich, Mallory Neidich and Teddy Kalborg, Anne-Cecilie Engell Speyer, Fern Kaye Tessler

**2024 WHITNEY GALA BENEFIT COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS**

Paul Arnhold and Wes Gordon, Jill and Darius Bikoff, Neil G. Bluhm and Kimberly Paige Bluhm, Jenny Brorsen and Rich DeMartini, Joanne Leonhardt Cassullo, Nancy and Steve Crown, Daniel and Pamela, Roland DeVos, Meg and Bennett Goodman, Hearst, Susan and John Hess, Soledad and Bob Hurst, Sonia and Gaurav Kapadia, Miyoung Lee and Neil Simpkins, Matthew Marks and Jack Bankowsky, Brooke Garber Neidich and Daniel Neidich, Julie and Doug Ostrover, Nancy and Fred Poses, Jonathan, Sobel and Marcia Dunn, Anne-Cecilie and Rob Speyer, Fern and Lenard Tessler

For a complete list of 2024 Whitney Gala Benefit Committee supporters, [visit our website](#).

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**PRESS CONTACT**

For press materials and image requests, please visit our press site at [whitney.org/press](https://whitney.org/press) or contact:

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**ABOUT THE WHITNEY**

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the



twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for ninety years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

### **Whitney Museum Land Acknowledgment**

The Whitney is located in Lenapehoking, the ancestral homeland of the Lenape. The name Manhattan comes from their word Mannahatta, meaning "island of many hills." The Museum's current site is close to land that was a Lenape fishing and planting site called Sapponckanikan ("tobacco field"). The Whitney acknowledges the displacement of this region's original inhabitants and the Lenape diaspora that exists today.

As a museum of American art in a city with vital and diverse communities of Indigenous people, the Whitney recognizes the historical exclusion of Indigenous artists from its collection and program. The Museum is committed to addressing these erasures and honoring the perspectives of Indigenous artists and communities as we work for a more equitable future. To read more about the Museum's Land Acknowledgment, [visit the Museum's website](#).

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