

GLINKA GALA CELEBRATION

On October 22, 2004, the American Opera Company held its annual fundraiser in celebration of Russian Music and Culture, in collaboration and under the patronage of Hon. Sergei Garmonin, Consul General of the Russian Federation. The evening celebrated the Bicentennial of the great Russian Composer, Mikhail Glinka, considered to be the "Father of Russian Music". Sponsors of the event included Lukoil, Access Industries, Manhattan Auto, Andre Ruzhnikov and Finnair. The evening consisted of a Welcoming Champagne and Luxury Hors d'oeuvres reception and an Exhibit of Paintings and Photographs, including paintings by the world-famous painter, Mikhail Chemiakin, with other works by Andrei Petrov, and American Artists Brenda Kravitz and Joanne Turley. Photographic Landscapes were exhibited by Photographer, Christian StomsVik.

A concert in the main Ballroom with a welcome in song and dance performed by the Irina Zagomova Folk and Children's Ensemble, followed by a Musical Tribute to Glinka, featuring opera stars of the New York City Opera and other major companies. Singers included Lauren Skuce-Weiss, Soprano; Amy Sinitzki, Soprano; Frank Basile, Bass; and Nikolai Jenitski, Baritone, accompanied by Alexander Isbiter. Special Guest Artist was Renowned Pianist-Composer, Richard Nanes, who played one of his own compositions in honor of the event. Luly Duke, wife of Anthony Drexel Duke, was honored for her charitable work on behalf of Boys and Girls Harbor, and Fundacion Amnistad, that promotes cultural exchange.

A Post - Performance dinner of Filet mignon, Fruit-filled Roast Pork, and Pastry Wrapped Salmon with accomterments and desserts by Bindi Desserts followed. Special Guests included Sir Philip Thomas, Consul General of Great Britain, HE Aldo Mantovani, Ambassador of Italy, Simon Peres, former Prime Minister of Israel and Nobel Peace Winner, HE Biwei Liu, Ambassador of China. Co-Host for the evening, Hon. Sergei Garmonin, Consul General of Russia, Patrice Munsel of the Metropolitan Opera, Celeste Holm, Star of Movies and Musical Theatre, and Joey Reynolds and Bill Birtenshaw, Radio Hosts of national syndicated networks. Approximately 250 guests attended and enjoyed a festive and celebratory evening.BT

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Golden Rooster Children's Russian Folk Group



Diana Corto, Artistic Dir., American Opera Co., Organizer of Event w. Shimon Peres, Nobel Prize Winner and former P.M. of Israel



Patrice Munsel, Metropolitan Opera, Derek DeCambrà, Stage Director



Richard Nanes, Special Guest Artist, Renowned Pianist/Composer



Amy Sinatzki,Soprano



Gary Flom, Director, Manhattan Auto Co., Diana Corto



Theodore Mann, Founder/Director of Circle in the Square Theatre; Resident Director of American Opera Co., Joey Reynolds, Radio Talk Show Host



Dinner in Ballroom, foreground, Celeste Holm, Movie and TV Star, Frank Basile, Joanne Turley



Brenda Kravitz, Joyce Brooks, Shimon Peres and Mira Zikovich, photo by GMBlack Tie International.