

VOGUE

PARTIES

A Night of Opera, Jazz, and Museum Masterpieces at the Guggenheim International Gala

BY ZACHARY SCHWARTZ

November 16, 2023



Photo: Scott Rudd

To wander through a museum after hours is an extraordinary experience—to do so at the Guggenheim Museum is an unequivocally unparalleled treat. That’s exactly what lucky guests of the 2023 Guggenheim International Gala could do for one fabulous night at the museum.

Held in the iconic rotunda of New York City's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Guggenheim International Gala raised millions of dollars for the museum while celebrating artists, artistry, and educational resources. Artist Sarah Sze, as well as benefactors Gail and Alfred Engelberg, were the gala's honorees, joining friends and luminary artists for an evening of performances and contemporary masterpieces. Some artists in attendance included Sanford Biggers, Christopher Wool, Lisa Yuskavage, and Pat Steir.

The cocktail hour began in the museum's café, where guests in black tie sipped wine and admired the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed museum. The elegantly dressed crowd wore tuxedos and floor-length gowns, though guests' fine jewelry noticeably stood out. Lapel pins, pearl earrings, gold cuffs, and bejeweled rings were the accessories du jour, designed by the likes of Van Cleef & Arpels and Boucheron.

Attendees like Yvonne Force Villareal and Siddhartha Mukherjee were fortunate to wend the spiraled rings of the museum and explore the exhibition on view. "Going Dark: The Contemporary Figure at the Edge of Visibility" centers around art that obscures figures, showcasing works by major contemporary artists like Lorna Simpson, Faith Ringgold, Glenn Ligon, and Kerry James Marshall. While viewing the exhibit, a pop-up opera performance of arias was delivered by Jasmine Rice LaBeija accompanied by pianist Lachlan Glen.

Uniting all in attendance was a deep appreciation for the Guggenheim Museum's art and programming. "The Guggenheim puts on really interesting exhibitions, and has the ability to show art in new contextual ways," Jordan Casteel wearing Rosie Assoulin told *Vogue*. Rashid Johnson, who wore Tom Ford, shared a similar sentiment. "The Guggenheim is a space that has always prided itself on rigorous investigation of contemporary themes and

ideas. It has a real investment in the avant-garde. It's a place where art goes from being beautiful to being brilliant.”

During the Guggenheim International Gala's seated dinner, a coterie of art aficionados like Roselee Goldberg, Tanya Bonakdar, and Larry Gagosian dined among tablescapes of wildflowers. Several speeches were made by Guggenheim staff and honorees, including Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation President Wendy Fisher, who wore an Anna Valentine dress and Antonia Miletto jewelry. The evening culminated in a riveting jazz performance by virtuoso Aaron Diehl and the Ellington Alumni Jazz Orchestra. The sublime concert and subsequent applause reverberated throughout the circular locus, a moving finale after which guests flowed out to Fifth Avenue with art and music on their minds.



Brian Robinson, Alteronce Gumby, Sanford Biggers Yvonne Tnt/BFA.com