

The Moonlight Ball

A Victorian Halloween Ball to Benefit Animal Welfare

Ball attendees Toniya, Tatiana and a furry friend, photo by Kambriel

Last October 20th marked the eve of the Animal Rescue League of Boston's annual fundraiser, which for the first time, designed its theme on the artwork of the late, great Edward Gorey. Since early last spring, Boston had seen Gorey-adorned posters, postcards and street banners announcing the event, a promotion that led to a sell-out evening, which was small wonder (550 people in attendance).

The signature artwork of Gorey's elegantly dressed and tweed clad skeleton men and women figures from his classic 1963 release - the boxed set *Vinegar Works*, which featured first editions *The West Wing*, *The Insect God* and his timeless classic, *Gashlycrumb Tinies*, made guests clamor for the alluring images of ornate candlesticks, oversized urns, trickling water fountains and shadowy backgrounds and that is precisely what awaited those in attendance, thanks to event planner **Jen Hawkins**.

Jen and her group trekked from Boston to Yarmouth Port on Cape Cod, the site of Gorey's house, which is now a museum (edwardgoreyhouse.org) and took the full tour of the Gorey House with long-time Gorey friend and current curator, Rick Jones. Inspired by their visit, which included touring areas not usually open to the public, the design group captured the essence of a Gorey drawing resplendent with all the intricate details and Victorian design he was known for.

Making this a truly signature event, Jen Hawkins and Animal Rescue League Director of Development, Bruce Preston, conceived of

allowing donors of the evening to bring along their four-legged family members. Dozens of well behaved - and some cleverly dressed - dogs mingled with guests.

Gothic Beauty readers will appreciate that fan-favorite designer, Kambriel, was invited to participate in the evening to provide the right ambience for the event. Billed as a Victorian Halloween, Kambriel and her 9 models completed the evening's theme with some amazing new designs. Flitting in and out among guests and posing for photos after dinner, aptly named the Beastly Banquet, Kambriel models graciously volunteered during the live auction to assist the auctioneer in locating bidders in the candelabra lit room.

As long-time Gorey fans that were fortunate enough to meet Edward Gorey before he passed, Kambriel and her partner Curse, along with their group of darkly bedecked models were more than happy to help the A.R.L. complete the evening's theme. This was topped off by local dance group

Ego Art, who performed a Gorey-inspired and attired dance set using some of Kambriel's theatrical designs, complete with signature Gorey umbrellas.

Aside from the obvious draw and appeal of Gorey's artwork, why make this evening such a Gorey affair?

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The League chose Edward Gorey's Charitable Trust, which dispenses grants annually to support groups such as Tuft's Veterinary School and the Bat Conservation Foundation, as well as the Animal Rescue League, to receive its first ever award. Part of the philosophy of new president, Jay Bowen, is to ensure that donors and supporters of the League are recognized for their generous and important support.

Long-time fans of Gorey know well that when he passed in April of 2000, Gorey left his entire estate - which included his on-going copyrights and original art, for the benefit of animal welfare causes.

The evening wound down with the perfect exiting Halloween touch - bags of treats but not just for the two-legged guests. Thanks to local canine favorite eatery, Polka Dog Bakery, a large selection of seasonal dog biscuits in shapes that included bats and gravestones, were on hand for those dogs unable to attend (those that did attend were spoiled the entire evening with these treats!)

Gorey readers and fans, and supporters of animal causes that were unable to attend can still support the event. Lasermach Inc, produced a commemorative mylar cel for the evening featur-

ing the never before re-printed *Vinegar Works* art. This 8 x 10 matted artwork fits into a standard frame and makes a fine decoration to support animal welfare and celebrate Halloween year-round. Limited to only 1,000 copies, it is available at the Edward Gorey House Web site's store for only \$25. Proceeds go to support the Gorey House and The Gorey Trust's mission to promote animal welfare.

Gothic and horror fans will be happy to know that all of the preceding was occurring on a very important and fitting day in history - the birthday of Bela Lagosi. ♦

edwardgoreyhouse.org/store
arlboston.org
kambriel.com

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Ball attendee Badriya, photo by Kambriel

