

WJA Ruby Gala Shines Bright, Marking 40 Years of Empowering Women in the Jewelry and Watch Industries

Glitz, Glamour and Luxurious Auctions manifest at the Women's Jewelry Association Ruby Gala



New York, NY. November 6, 2023. The Women's Jewelry Association (WJA) celebrated a milestone during the WJA Ruby Gala on November 2nd, 2023, held at the The Pool in illustrious Seagram Building in New York City. Commemorating four decades of dedication to empowering women in the jewelry and watch industries, the gala delivered an evening of unparalleled elegance, entertainment, and philanthropy.

The Seagram Building, an emblem of refinement and architectural brilliance, provided a breathtaking backdrop for the evening's festivities. Guests were welcomed with a candle lit red-carpet entrance, capturing their finest moments through the lens of Sean Zanni/Patrick McMullan via Getty Images. The interior exuded an air of timeless glamour, setting the stage for an enchanting night ahead.

"The most beautiful part of the evening was seeing WJA members, leaders, founders, and friends celebrating old friendships **and** forging new ones. When we come together as an industry, we do great things, we create opportunities, and we continue to build our legacy. Thank you all for your support and your presence at our 40th Anniversary Gala. The work we do raising funds for the association and foundation nonprofits is powerful, meaningful, and the key to a brighter future. As we look to 2024, your support remains pivotal to reach more members. Please join us as a member, corporate member, or angel sponsor!" says Susan Chandler, WJA President and Chief Merchandising Officer for Citizen Watch America.

The elevated cocktail reception, featuring gourmet delights presented by [Major Food Group](#), left guests delighted and satisfied. Acclaimed performers, including harpist [Lexie Lowell by Élan Artists](#), a percussionist, duo aerialists by [Astarte Creative](#), and the urban rhythm musicians [Drumadics by Élan Artists](#), provided an unforgettable experience. [Astarte Creative](#) dazzled with a glamorous dance act performed to a custom montage of diamond and jewelry-themed tracks— a spellbinding delight with hundreds of crystals and giant burlesque feather fans. Topping off the evening, [Lorenzo Laroc](#) entranced all with an electrifying performance on his signature five-string plexiglass electronic violin, playing an array of attractive genres for guests throughout the night. During the evening, current international board members and past presidents were acknowledged for their volunteer work and photographed onstage, while The Pool emanated a sea of dazzling ruby red, from the gowns and jewels of guests in attendance. John Green, President & CEO of [Lux Bond & Green](#), emceed the night with a contagious enthusiasm.

The highlight of the night was the thrilling auction led by [Caroline Ervin](#) via [Lydia Fenet](#) Agency, showcasing a luxurious five-star corporate retreat package generously provided by [Inspirato for Good](#). The auction raised funds to support the Women's Jewelry Association International non-profit and its Foundation arm, ensuring women continue to thrive in the industry for generations to come. In addition to the luxurious corporate retreat package provided by Inspirato for Good, a new second priceless experience was unveiled. Generously provided by Balmain, this extraordinary package included a VIP invitation for two to Balmain Paris Fashion Week show (choice of Fall 2024 or Spring 2025), attendance at Balmain's exclusive party and cocktail reception, a private dinner designed for Balmain's top clients, and an exclusive opportunity to tour Balmain's showroom and place a pre-order on the collection. The second auction item also offered a

private shopping experience at Balmain's Madison Ave. flagship store, or a store in the winner's city. Balmain would close the store for the winner and up to 10 friends to shop for a full look, complete with champagne and styling assistance from a senior sales associate. Additionally, a percentage of sales goes towards a donation.

"We are very grateful to all that came out to celebrate this significant milestone. The energy and the spirit of generosity demonstrated by leaders in our industry further illuminates they **believe** in all that the WJA does to provide meaningful networking, professional development, and financial support to women in our industry. '**Belief**' is a powerful motivator, and it was evident in the funds raised for the foundation that the industry truly believes in all that we do," says Gabrielle Grazi, President of the WJA Foundation and VP, Head Retail Strategy and Partnerships, Natural Diamond Council.

Monica Elias, CEO and Executive Producer of Elias World Media, curated the evening as WJA Gala Event Chair, which celebrated the beauty, creativity, and passion of the jewelry and watch industries. Susan Chandler was Sponsorship Chair of the WJA Ruby Gala, with both Monica and Susan being supported by WJA committee members: Aida Alvarez, Kendra Bridelle, Gabrielle Grazi, and Ivette Nersesyan-Stephanopoulos, as well as by Anna Samsonova, Jen Cullen Williams, Rachel Jurisz, and Jacqueline Cassaway. The gala brought together prominent names in jewelry, fashion, entertainment, and philanthropy, including Kimberly and Steven Rockefeller, Kayla Rockefeller, Angel Pai, Julia Haart, Lucy Horowitz, Isabelle Bscher, and Janna Bullock. Industry VIPs included: Jack Gabriel, David Kellie, Matthijs Braakman, Howard Hauben, Anne Russell, Caryl Capeci, Adam Black, Esther and Ruth Fortunoff, Annie Doresca, Nancy Orem Lyman, Grant Moble, Rob Bates, Jill Newman, and Adrienne Sanogo. Acclaimed jewelry designers were in attendance, including: Stephanie Gottlieb, Monica Rich Kosann,

Lorraine West, Malyia McNaughton, Joan Hornig, Lorraine Schwartz, Ofira Sandberg, Olivia Landau, and Kyle Simon, Maria Valim, and Steven Lagos.

“The evening was magical and a testament of what can be achieved when thought leaders and industries come together to support a good cause. We were determined to create an evening that was big, bold, and unique. Taking a chance, we incorporated many new elements not seen before, like bespoke dance and musical performances, an auction featuring luxury packages generously donated by famed brands, and the invitation of notable names in philanthropy, fashion, and entertainment,” says Monica Elias. “Yielding publicity leading up to the event from high-profile outlets, this level of exposure is good for the entire industry, putting everyone on the map for the fundraising of important causes. The excitement and energy that filled the room was lifting. Guests were thrilled to be a part of the evening and motivated to give back. We honored the past and present, and toasted to the future. We are grateful for the support of the industry and everyone who helped make this night a big success.”

The Women’s Jewelry Association would like to extend heartfelt thanks to its gala sponsors: De Beers, Jewelers Mutual, Citizen Watch America, GIA, Elias World Media, JCK, Krainz Creations, Platinum Guild International, Stuller, The Centurion Jewelry Show, BOSS Logics, Chrysmela, Goldstar, Heritage Auctions, Instore, Lux, Bond & Green, Marco Bicego, Richline Group, Sheetal, Uni-Design, V&A Group, and Casadevall Group.

The WJA 40th Anniversary Gala not only celebrated the organization's achievements but also raised critical funds to support women in the jewelry and watch industries. The gala was a testament to the enduring impact of WJA in advancing and empowering women professionals in the field.

To further donate to the WJA cause, donations will be collected on their site at <https://wedoauctions.com/d/donate.php?slug=wja>. For more information about

WJA, or to join, visit <https://www.womensjewelryassociation.com/> or email info@womensjewelryassociation.com. For inquiries regarding this press release, contact [Pietra Communications](#) by calling 212-913-9761 or email info@pietrapr.com.

About the Women's Jewelry Association:

The Women's Jewelry Association (WJA) is a trailblazing organization dedicated to empowering and advancing women within the jewelry and watch industries. In 1983, WJA was founded on the belief that women could create lasting change by connecting, mentoring, and recognizing one another's accomplishments. Today, WJA stands as a global network of professionals spanning diverse roles, from designers and manufacturers to retailers and media representatives. The organization's mission is to facilitate professional growth through networking, education, leadership development, and a wide range of member services. Through its numerous chapters across the U.S. and around the world, WJA offers a spectrum of benefits, including networking events, educational programs, mentoring initiatives, scholarships, and grants.

About the Women's Jewelry Association Foundation:

The WJA Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the Women's Jewelry Association (WJA), dedicated to furthering the organization's mission of providing women in the jewelry and watch industries with educational and business opportunities to help them achieve their full career potential. The Foundation operates as a 501(c)(3) corporation, actively engaging individuals and corporations to contribute and make meaningful impact through the distribution of scholarships and grants.