

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ISABELLA
SEWART GARDNER
MUSEUM**

**Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum's *A Venetian Valentine Soirée*
Offers a Romantic Feast for All the Senses**

Fourth annual Valentine's Day fête showcases the enchantment of the Gardner at night, inviting guests to savor enticing cuisine and cocktails amidst romantic music, art, and poetry in Boston's only Venetian-inspired palazzo



Sunday, February 14, 2010, 6:30-9:00pm | Ticketed Event

BOSTON, JANUARY 13, 2010 – This Valentine's Day, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum invites guests to spend an enchanted evening surrounded by world class art, music, and cuisine at the museum's fourth annual *A Venetian Valentine* soirée.

On Sunday, February 14th from 6:30-9:00pm, the Gardner Museum opens its doors for a celebration of art and romance featuring live jazz, ambrosial cocktails, tempting small plates, and poetry amid Isabella Gardner's world class collection of art. This magical event offers an elegant opportunity for couples and friends to spend a memorable Valentine's evening together in one of Boston's most alluring destinations.

The evening begins with romantic jazz ballads performed by the Patrice Williamson Quartet, setting the mood for romance from the Gardner's fragrant blossoming courtyard. Attendees will feast on a sumptuous array of artfully designed sweet and savory small plates such as crispy parmigiano, sage, and wild mushroom risotto cakes, many showcasing romantic foods like oysters and chocolate. An open bar will feature that most Venetian of cocktails, the Bellini, mixed exclusively for the occasion by Chef Peter Crowley of The Gardner Café.

Throughout the evening, the Gardner Museum's softly-lit galleries will be open for an intimate stroll through 30 centuries of fine art. Guests are invited to explore the museum's sensuous masterworks on a poetry-infused self-guided tour of the collection, and to discover one of Isabella Gardner's favorite works, Titian's magnificent *Europa*, of which she wrote: "I am breathless about the *Europa*, even yet! I am back here tonight after a two days' orgy. The orgy was drinking my self drunk with *Europa* and then sitting for hours in my Italian Garden at Brookline, thinking and dreaming of her. Every inch of paint in the picture seems full of joy."

ROMANCE @ THE GARDNER: A VALENTINE'S CONTEST • *New This Year!*

From first dates to down-on-one-knee proposals, the Gardner Museum has been the setting for many romantic encounters over the past 100-plus years. This year – for the first time – friends of the museum are invited to share their stories of romance at the Gardner for a chance to win a pair of tickets to this year's *A Venetian Valentine* event. The winning story will be featured at the event and in the February issue of the @ *the gardner* eNewsletter. Visit <http://connect.gardnermuseum.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ValentineContest> for more details and to submit your story.

TICKETS & RESERVATIONS • Tickets to *A Venetian Valentine* are available for \$195 per couple or \$100 per individual – and include one full year of free museum membership, an invitation to experience the magic of the museum any day of the year! Current museum members may purchase tickets at a special members’ rate of \$125 per couple or \$65 per individual. Reservations can be made online through gardnermuseum.org, by phone at 617 391 3949, or via email to rsvp@isgm.org. Reservations are required; tickets will be not sold at the door.

ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM • 280 The Fenway Boston MA 02115 617.566.1401 www.gardnermuseum.org • Tue.-Sun., 11 am-5 pm • \$12 adults; \$10 seniors; \$5 students; \$2 discount w/ same day Museum of Fine Arts admission; FREE for members, children under 18, everyone on their birthday, and all named Isabella • An intimate Venetian-inspired palazzo in the heart of Boston, with three floors of galleries surrounding a flower-filled interior courtyard, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is home to more than 5,000 art objects spanning 30 centuries, including masterworks by Botticelli, Titian, Raphael, Rembrandt, Degas, and Sargent. Opened to the public in 1903, the museum continues to celebrate personal connections with art through contemporary and historic exhibitions, public lectures, performances, family and evening programs, free podcasts, and much more.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: Images and film of the museum’s romantic atmosphere, flowers, and art are available for advance promotion of the event. Photographers and film crews are welcome to cover *A Venetian Valentine* with advance notice to the Press Office.