

SMartLY DRESSED AND SAKS FIFTH AVENUE PRESENT THE FASHION DESIGNS OF REBECCA MINKOFF, ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST INNOVATIVE AND ARTISTIC DESIGNERS

MEDIA CONTACTS: Elise Minkoff, The Margaret Acheson Stuart Society, eminkoff20@aol.com
David Connelly, Museum of Fine Arts, dconnelly@mfastpete.org or 727.896.2667, ext. 224

St. Petersburg, Fla.--SMartLY DRESSED will present the latest international fashion designs on Thursday, November 3, in the Palm Court Ballroom of the historic Vinoy Renaissance St. Petersburg Resort and Golf Club.

This stellar fundraiser for the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg is presented by The Margaret Acheson Stuart Society and Saks Fifth Avenue. The social hour will begin at 11 a.m. and the gourmet luncheon at noon. The exciting runway show will follow. **To purchase tickets, please visit stUARTSOCIETY.org.** Proceeds benefit the MFA.

The first half of the show will be devoted to the Best of Saks and the second to selections from Rebecca Minkoff's ready-to-wear collection. Ms. Minkoff, the special guest for SMartLY DRESSED, first gained national attention in 2001 when actress Jenna Elfman wore her "I Love New York" T-shirt on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It became a sensation and the designer spent the next several years sewing the T's on the floor of her small New York apartment.

In 2005, she designed her first handbag, which she called the "Morning After Bag" (the "M.A.B."), which became iconic and inspired her "downtown romantic" designs. After four years of creating some of the most discussed and acclaimed handbags on the market, she introduced her first ready-to-wear collection in 2009, which also earned a large following and high praise. She is also known for her accessories, jewelry, athletic leisure wear, and men's fashion.

Her brother Uri Minkoff, the company's CEO, has been a key to her success. He took his sister's designs into the world of social media and high tech. She was the first designer to live-stream her runway show on NASDAQ in Times Square, carried simultaneously on NASDAQ's Facebook page, providing viewers with a front-row experience.

In addition, the Minkoffs have partnered with the start-up company Zeekit, on an app, which allows women to see how designs actually look on their bodies. "Consumers who aren't there can see the runway looks and take those items and create screen shots of themselves as a remote experience to see what it looks like on them. They can go ahead and instantly purchase," Ms. Minkoff said.

She has become a favorite of millennials and in 2011 won the Breakthrough Designer Award from the Accessories Council. Reese Witherspoon, Keira Knightley, Lauren Conrad, and Agyness Deyn are some of her many fans. She has been featured in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street*

Journal, Forbes, and Vogue and has appeared on *Good Morning America* and *Extra*, among other TV shows.

Saks is sponsoring a pop-up boutique after SMartLY DRESSED, featuring Ms. Minkoff's handbags. The designer will be on hand to answer questions.

The emcee for the fashion show will be popular TV news anchor **Reginald Rountree**, who has been with WTSP, Channel 10, for 24 years. He has received numerous Emmy nominations and AP awards and has graciously participated in a wealth of charity events.

Opportunity tickets are available for the following prizes: a spectacular glass art piece *Jungle* by Duncan McClellan, a \$3,000 shopping experience at Saks, necklace and earrings by Dina Mackney from the Museum Store, a Melange Rosselle Chest from Matter Brothers Furniture, and a two-night stay at the Vinoy with a \$100 gift certificate from Sea Salt Restaurant.

Natavidad (Nata) Cibran and **Dr. Virginia Ward** are the SMartLY DRESSED chairs. The Presenting Sponsor is Saks Fifth Avenue and the Silver Sponsors are St. Petersburg Pediatrics and the Cibran Family. The Bronze Sponsors are Anderson McQueen Funeral Homes; Campbell-Plummer & Merritt, Signature Homes; Farrior Plastic Surgery Specialists; Mrs. Cynthia Faulhaber; Gayoso Plastic Surgery; and Merrill Lynch Wealth Management/The Carlson Group. Supporting Sponsors are Doyle Wealth Management; Northern Trust; Dr. and Mrs. Albert Saltiel; and Wood, Gross and Wood, P.A. Friends of The Stuart Society are Harris & Hunt, P.A.

ABOUT THE MARGARET ACHESON STUART SOCIETY

Founded three years before the MFA opened to the public in 1965, The Stuart Society is named in honor of Museum founder Margaret Acheson Stuart (1896-1980). Over the years, this impressive service organization has raised substantial funds for art acquisitions, exhibitions, educational programs, building renovations and additions, operations, and publications. Members have donated countless volunteer hours to the MFA.

The Stuart Society was a Lead Sponsor for the construction of the Hazel Hough Wing, which opened to the public in March 2008. The Society initiated *Art in Bloom* at the MFA, as well as the Wine Auction and Wine Weekend St. Pete. The organization's importance to the MFA and the community is recognized by a gallery named in its honor. **Dr. Dimity Carlson** is the current President and in that role, serves on the Museum's Board of Trustees. For more information, please go to stUARTSOCIETY.org.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

The MFA at 255 Beach Drive N.E. has a world-class collection, with works by Monet, Morisot, Rodin, O'Keeffe, Willem de Kooning, and many other great artists. Also displayed are ancient Greek and Roman, Egyptian, Asian, African, pre-Columbian, and Native American art. Selections

from the photography collection, one of the largest and finest in the Southeast, are now on view in a gallery dedicated to the medium.

Hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, until 8 p.m. on Thursday, and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. **Admission is only \$5 after 5 p.m. on Thursday.** Regular admission is \$17 for adults, \$15 for those 65 and older, and \$10 for students seven and older, including college students with current I.D. Children under seven and Museum members are admitted free. Groups of 10 or more adults pay only \$12 per person and children \$4 each with prior reservations. The MFA Café is open from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. For more information, please call 727.896.2667 or visit mfastpete.org.