

## **From Reem Acra's Fifth Avenue to the Foundation for Saint George Hospital**

**Charity gala** "To Reem Acra, in appreciation for her support to the American Foundation for Saint George Hospital and for introducing the beauty of Lebanon to the world through the international language of creativity, fashion and design".

By these words, Dr. Amin Barakat, founder and president of the Foundation, honored the Lebanese designer, presenting her with an award (engraved with the same words) at the Foundation fundraising gala.

The gala took place at the Organization of the American States, one of the most beautiful historic buildings in Washington, DC. Hispanic colonial style architecture, colonnade, exotic vegetation patio, spectacular marble stairs, crystal Tiffany chandeliers, all added to the glamour of this charity event which gathered more than 400 people including the Ambassador of Lebanon to the United States, Mr. Antoine Chedid and his wife Nicole. Mr. Chedid, congratulating Reem Acra, said: "It's true that as ambassadors we have our job to do, but we need creativity ambassadors such as Reem Acra to reflect the real image of Lebanon".

Dr. Stephen Brown, committee member, was master of ceremonies.

The evening program included a fashion show of the newest creations of Reem Acra: Fluid, diaphanous shiny pastel, nude to orange, pink to azure. Many celebrities chose to wear these designs recently such as Carrie Underwood (who wore golden colored sequined sheath at the Country Music Awards), Hillary Swank and Sophia Vergara at the "Latin America Awards".

### **Pierre Dulaine and the therapeutic ballroom dance**

Talking about her breakthrough in the world of fashion, Reem Acra said: "Hard work and talent got me quite far, but I owe my success to my heroes, those I call my guardian angels. Also to my family and friends, especially the magnificent Mr. Max Kan who at age 87, (I was 25 at that time), welcomed a young Lebanese girl full of dreams, in his New York clothes factory. He gave me a small space to be able to draw and his workers executed my sketches, so my success could be an example to others. By being here, it is our turn to bring our support to Saint George's foundation so that a larger number of sick people in Lebanon are relieved".

Another out of the ordinary entertaining interlude was Broadway dancer Pierre Dulaine's awareness program. Using ballroom dancing, he teaches problem students in public schools to build more self-confidence and trust the world. To make them

feel more appreciated, he calls them “ladies and gentlemen” instead of “guys and girls”. One of his dance group performed merengue dances, tangos and fox trots, attracting guests on the dance floor. Dulaine and Reem Acra will be visiting Beirut on November 30 to be part of the event “Christmas Ball for a Happy Childhood” organized by Philippe Hatem Foundation.

An auction followed the ballroom dance (one of the items was a guitar that belonged to Bruce Springsteen). An adjoining room displayed paintings by American-Lebanese artist Helen Zughuib.

Beforehand, Dr. Amin Barakat had thanked members of the committee and reviewed the mission of the American Foundation for Saint George Hospital. It was established in 1999 with the mission to offer high quality care to those in need, in Beirut and all the regions in the country. “We work diligently to provide Saint George Hospital in Beirut with the best equipment and to establish donations fund for needy children”.

Lebanese singer Tania Kassis was there as a guest. Named Goodwill Ambassador to the Korean contingent of the Unifil, Tania was on her way to New York. She sang Elias Rahbani’s verse: “We toured the world, but we didn’t find any other Lebanon...”

Tonight, the spirit of Lebanon was present at this gathering of talent.

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