

## The Week in Art: Ragnar Kjartansson at the Hirshhorn Gala and a DOOMOCRACY Party



### RxArt Party at Stephan Weiss Studio

The theme on the night appeared to be pandas at RxArt's third annual benefit auction on November 3, thanks to Rob Pruitt, the man responsible for the adorable decor, which extended to plushy panda suits worn by the waiters.

The artist received this year's RxArt Inspiration Award, presented by J. Crew president and creative director Jenna Lyons. PillPack co-founder TJ Parker was the winner of the RxArt Innovation, presented by Neil Blumenthal.

While guests including Agnes Gund, Chloe Wise, JiaJia Fei, and gallerist Bill Powers knocked back specialty Cuerpo de Cielo cocktails from Casa Dragones Tequila and enjoyed the musical stylings of DJs April Hunt and Juss, Christie's senior vice president and head of post-war and contemporary art Sara Friedlander led a live art auction, featuring Lucy Dodd, John Baldessari, Walter Robinson, Zoë Buckman, among other artists.

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## PANDAS! HEARTS! HALIBUT! GALA SEASON CONTINUES APACE IN NEW YORK, WITH FETES FOR RXART AND SCULPTURECENTER



Meanwhile, across town, the [RxArt Party](#)—another annual benefit, this time for the nonprofit that helps put art in the hospital rooms of sick kids—was in full swing in the West Village. The organization's guest of honor? Rob Pruitt, whose usual motifs of panda bears and hearts had been united to create a glittery centerpiece painting that was deeply admired by Michael Sobel, a collector in attendance.

"Usually the honoree is the one who puts the best piece out there," said Sobel, referring to Pruitt. "I don't know if he's ever done pandas and hearts together before, but I know that he's done hearts many a time."

Particularly impressive was a color-blocked work by Lawrence Weiner, a cinematic photograph by Alex Prager which evoked the noir dreaminess of Gregory Crewdson, and *Together Alone*, a deeply affecting work by Julia Chiang which repeated those two words over and over in blue pen.

Over the heads of the distinctly downtown crowd, bear-shaped balloons were wafting in the fall breeze that was blowing in through the cavernous front door. Out of the darkness, artist Chloe Wise suddenly appeared.

"It was so hard to leave the apartment, because I've been painting for 13 straight hours," she said. "But I was like, you know what? I deserve a night out."

# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

## Rob Pruitt Throws a Panda-Themed Party for RxArt

Tequila-fueled panda-monium broke out at RxArt's 2016 gala last night at Stephan Weiss Studio in New York's West Village. As the nonprofit led by Diane Brown—known for commissioning energizing contemporary artworks for children's hospitals (a Jeff Koons CT scan, an Assume Vivid Astro Focus mural)—auctioned off paintings by the likes of Martin Creed, Jonathan Horowitz, and Ed Ruscha, a fleet of fuzzy cater-waiters chipped ice, poured cocktails, and served hors d'oeuvres from grass-covered trays. The genius behind the unquestionably cute scheme? Artist Rob Pruitt, of course, recipient of the RxArt Inspiration Award, presented to him last night by J.Crew president Jenna Lyons. Since Pruitt began working with RxArt, he has created a dry-erase mural that allows kids to color the walls at St. Mary's Hospital for Children in Bayside, New York, and mounted sparkling panda paintings in the cafeteria at St. Jude in Memphis. We caught up with Pruitt, who has been painting glittery bears since 2001, for the inside scoop on his decorating scheme and how to make a party into serious Instagram fodder.



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## Inside the 2016 RxArt Party



"It's been great," mused Rob Pruitt at RxArt's annual party at New York City's Stephan Weiss Studio last night. "The first thing I did was the cafeteria of St. Jude children's hospital in Memphis, and I made a series of eight pictures of mama pandas and baby pandas and papa pandas feeding each other bamboo, because it was the cafeteria. They were made out of these Mylar paillettes that signs used to be made out of in Las Vegas. They shimmer in the breeze, and so as soon as they were installed, some of the little kids gathered around one of them and were blowing little breezes."

The artist was talking about one of several projects he has created with Diane Brown of RxArt—colorful works that transform children's hospitals into less frightening places for patients and their families. Pruitt was being honored alongside PillPack's TJ Parker, and the mood in the room was one of excitement and enthusiasm, as guests snacked on mini pigs in a blanket served to them by panda-suited servers; sipped tequila cocktails; and bid on works by Ed Ruscha, John Baldessari, and Alex Prager.

"I'm excited about all the projects!" exclaimed Brown as Jenna Lyons, who presented her friend Pruitt with his Inspiration Award ("Rob won my heart the first time we met," she told the room), Bill Powers, and Glenn O'Brien took in the wares at hand. "We work with the most awesome artists! We just pay the artists an honorarium, then we pay for the materials and installation, so they're doing it because they want to make a difference in children's lives."

"After many years of making work and having gallery shows and seeing it go into very, very nice homes where it was loved, this was a whole other side to the coin that just felt so much more meaningful," said Pruitt. "I was flooded with the feeling that this is the right thing to do."

Funds raised during the live and silent auction will go to projects in development with Dan Colen, Urs Fischer at Cedars-Sinai, and more.

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**RXART ANNUAL PARTY HONORING  
ARTIST ROB PRUITT WITH THE  
RXART INSPIRATION AWARD,  
PRESENTED BY JENNA LYONS, TJ  
PARKER AND NEIL BLUMENTHAL**



## THE HUFFINGTON POST

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### **RxArt kicks off gala season with their 16th anniversary party honoring Rob Pruitt**



Last night some of New York's most charitable and fashionable art patrons came together to celebrate and honor artist Rob Pruitt with the RxArt Inspiration Award, presented by none other than J. Crews leading lady and fashion icon Jenna Lyons. Working across all mediums, Pruitt has long considered his work to be intensely personal and biographical, so it comes as no surprise that he has the ability to inspire others both inside and out the art world with his work. Additionally, given RxArt's charitable mission to help children heal through visual art, PillPack Co-Founder TJ Parker was awarded the RxArt Innovation award, presented by Neil Blumenthal.

The evening began with an intimate dinner curated by Peter Callahan before moving into the cocktail party where guests danced to music by DJ April Hunt and DJ Juss while taking in the various works of art that were to be auctioned. The night culminated in a live auction led by Christie's Senior Vice President and Head of Post-War & Contemporary Art, Sara Friedlander where pieces by Rob Pruitt himself surpassed bid estimates. The RxArt party continues to work to raise funds that will enable them to expand their reach and continue to transform pediatric hospitals through the power of inspiring visual artists. Guests for the evening included Agnes Gund, Bill Powers, Chloe Wise, Chris Salgado, Courtney Crangi, Dayssi Olarte de Kanovas, Derek Blasberg + Nick Brown, Diane Brown, Dylan Brant, Gina Nanni + Glenn O'Brian, Glori Cohen, Ivan Argote, Jen Brill, Jenna Lyons, JiaJia Fei, Karley Sciortino, Kota Eberhardt, Lucy Chadwick, Neil + Rachel Blumenthal, Olivia Marciano, Patrick Bradbury, Peter Knell, Polina Proshkina, Rob Pruitt, Sara Friedlander and TJ Parker.

## ART ■ ZEALOUS

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# Best Dressed at the 2016 RxART Party



One of our favorite art organizations, [RxArt](#), hosted its 16th anniversary RxArt PARTY on Wednesday, November 2nd honoring artist Rob Pruitt with The RxArt Inspiration Award. The event was held at Stephan Weiss Studio and brought together tastemakers from the art, fashion, entertainment, and philanthropic industries. Once again, the art crowd showed up in some fashionable outfits.

If you were lucky enough to be one of the forty-five guests to dine with RxArt Founder Diane Brown at an intimate dinner before the party got started, you were treated to beats by DJ April Hunt and DJ Juss, and a specialty craft cocktail 'Cuerpo de Cielo' made with super tasty [Casa Dragones Tequila](#). All proceeds from the 2016 RxArt PARTY helped to raise funds that will enable the organization to expand its reach and continue to transform pediatric hospital and healthcare environments through site-specific installations by contemporary artists.