



‘PALACE OF PALMS: A NIGHT CELEBRATING HERITAGE’ at ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW

The World Monuments Fund event highlighted their ongoing climate heritage work with historic glasshouses and partnership with Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

May 3, 2024 – Last night, **Thursday, May 2**, [World Monuments Fund \(WMF\)](#)—the leading independent organization committed to building community through the preservation of the world’s most treasured places—hosted **Palace of Palms: A Night Celebrating Heritage** at [Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew](#) in London, United Kingdom.

The event was the first of its kind for WMF in the UK and underlined WMF’s partnership with Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew on the ambitious project to reduce the carbon footprint of the historic Palm House at Kew Gardens. Palace of Palms: A Night Celebrating Heritage was made possible with support from Giorgio Armani, Cabana, Bird in Hand Wine, and Portofino Dry Gin.

Notable Guests Included: HRH the Duke of Gloucester (Royal Patron of WMF Britain), **Kim Cattrall** (actress), **Emilia Fox** (actress), **Simon Jenkins** (author), **Prince Amyn Aga Khan**, **Rocco Ritchie** (Actor, Madonna’s son), **Ashley Hicks** (Interior Designer), **Jack Guinness** (writer), and **Pixie Geldof** (model).

The night’s entertainment

The festivities took place inside the world’s largest Victorian glasshouse, the Temperate House, and Kew’s iconic Palm House, with **President and CEO of WMF Bénédicte de Montlaur** remarking: “As WMF approaches its 60th year, we reflect on how much heritage work has changed since our inception in 1965. Our strategic priorities have evolved, making sure we use the full potential of heritage to support communities affected by the great challenges of our time, such as climate change, conflict, and underrepresentation. Nothing could illustrate this mission better than being here tonight at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. The Palm House was a triumph of British ingenuity when it was built 175 years ago, and today, it is developing innovative solutions to build climate resilience. Let this night inspire action and multiply our ever-growing WMF global community.”

The evening’s entertainment included two performances from five members of the renowned and award-winning **Kanneh-Mason family** and a silent auction with proceeds matched by The Aldama Foundation.

Giorgio Armani, Chairman and CEO of the Armani Group, said: "I have always seen success as a way to operate in the wider world and give a meaningful contribution to causes that have a deep social and cultural impact. Fashion, after all, is part of the global cultural heritage. Supporting such a significant initiative is another way for me to affirm the importance of surpassing boundaries and distinctions, seeing culture as a multifaceted whole."

Cabana launch

Inspired by WMF’s partnership with Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the Italian company Cabana launched a new tableware and stationery Botanica Collection for the occasion. Designed by Fin Fellowes, the new collection includes exclusive table linen and custom stationery. A portion of proceeds from the sales will support WMF’s work, furthering WMF and Cabana’s

shared ethos and vision of using the conservation of heritage as a means of building community.

Martina Mondadori, Cabana Founder, said: “This project speaks so eloquently to our shared desire to celebrate such an amazing cultural asset in a beautiful and meaningful way. Our new Botanica collection celebrates inspiration and timeless design reflecting the fabric of the magnificent buildings at Kew. We are delighted to support World Monuments Fund in their work to conserve our shared cultural heritage.”

Palm House renovation

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, is embarking on an ambitious project to conserve its most iconic buildings - the Palm House and Waterlily House - with the aim of becoming the first net-zero buildings of their kind. Together with World Monuments Fund, Kew is at the beginning of the journey to set the standard for the sustainable restoration of complex heritage buildings and engage a new generation with the extraordinarily important ecosystems of the tropics. Successful implementation of new systems in Kew’s glasshouses could lead to a new model for the energy transition of other historic buildings around the globe.

WMF’s work at Kew Gardens has been made possible, in part, by support from H el ene Marie and Jake Shafran, The Robert W. Wilson Charitable Trust, Nora McNeely Hurley and Manitou Fund, and James and Clare Kirkman.

Richard Deverell, Director of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, said: “Rainforest plants cover only 2% of the world’s surface but make up 50% of species so are vital to sustaining life on earth. The Palm House is a place of scientific significance, valuable to the world both as a structure and for the plants it houses. It is a place for education and inspiration, and we are committed to renovate this spectacular heritage building for future generations to come. We are excited to find solutions for this ambitious project and thank World Monuments Fund for their ongoing support.”

This project is part of WMF’s larger [Climate Heritage Initiative](#), launched in January 2024. The \$15 million initiative addresses the growing threat that climate change poses to cultural heritage sites and their surrounding communities around the globe. New and expanded projects include restoring traditional water management systems in Nepal, India and Peru; developing innovative climate adaptations for historic gardens; and the establishment of Coastal Connections, a global network allowing heritage professionals at coastal sites to develop reliable resources for tackling the shared challenge of sea-level rise and other climate concerns.

About World Monuments Fund:

World Monuments Fund is the leading independent organization devoted to safeguarding the world’s most treasured places to enrich lives and build mutual understanding. Since 1965, WMF has raised \$300 million to support more than 700 diverse cultural heritage sites across 112 countries. For more than 55 years, its highly skilled experts have applied proven and effective techniques to preserve important architectural and cultural heritage sites around the globe. Through the World Monuments Watch—a biennial, nomination-based program—WMF uses cultural heritage conservation to empower communities and improve human well-being. In partnership with local communities, funders, and governments, WMF seeks to inspire an enduring commitment to stewardship for future generations. Headquartered in New York City, the organization has offices and affiliates worldwide.

Visit www.wmf.org for more information, or connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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About Giorgio Armani

Founded in 1975, Giorgio Armani stands out for its unique and unmistakable image, its clean, sophisticated designs, superior materials and timeless elegance; these elements have been associated with the brand since its launch. Alongside his creative career, the designer has long been involved in the promotion of cultural heritage, including projects for the protection and development of Italian and international art with several donations towards the restoration of churches and historic villas - among others, Villa Necchi Campiglio in Milan and the Abbey of San Fruttuoso in Camogli, through its continued support of FAI, the National Trust for Italy, but also the Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés in Paris - as well as contributions to numerous artistic exhibitions, for instance at Palazzo Reale and Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan.

About Cabana Magazine

Founded in 2014 by Editor in Chief Martina Mondadori and Creative Director Christoph Radl, Cabana is an ethos, mindset and a platform for discovery through the lens of global design. Cabana Magazine, published bi-annually in print and daily online, discusses and showcases the best interiors and decorative arts. Each story explores intimate relationships between people and interiors, and the intricacies that make a room feel unique. Cabana is also an artisanal homewares brand, designing tableware, home accessories, exclusive ready to wear collaborations and more inspired by the magazine's globetrotting narrative. From patterned linens embroidered in Tuscany to glassware crafted on the Venetian island of Murano, each in-house designed Casa Cabana piece brings a touch of worldly style to one's space.

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About Bird in Hand

Bird in Hand is a family-owned winery that champions social inclusion and advocacy through artisan wine. Believing in the inspirational side of winemaking – the ability to be boundlessly creative while relentlessly pursuing excellence – Bird in Hand's commitment to embody environmental practices and sustainability never ceases. Bird in Hand proudly resides and operates on Peramangk, Paredarerme and Ngarrindjeri Land.

Wines available at birdinhandwine.co.uk

Instagram [@birdinhandwine](https://www.instagram.com/birdinhandwine)

About Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is a world-famous scientific organisation and charity, internationally respected for its outstanding collections and scientific expertise in plant and fungal diversity, conservation, and sustainable development in the UK and around the globe. Kew's scientists and partners lead the way in the fight against biodiversity loss and finding nature-based solutions to the climate crisis, aided by five key scientific priorities outlined in Kew's Science Strategy 2021-2025. Kew Gardens is also a major international and top London visitor attraction. Kew's 132 hectares of historic, landscaped gardens, and Wakehurst, Kew's Wild Botanic Garden and 'living laboratory', attract over 2.5 million visits every year. Kew Gardens was made a UNESCO World Heritage Site in July 2003 and celebrated its 260th anniversary in 2019. Wakehurst is home to the Millennium Seed Bank, the largest wild plant

seed bank in the world and a safeguard against the disastrous effects of climate change and biodiversity loss. RBG Kew received approximately one third of its funding from Government through the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and research councils. The remaining two thirds of funding is needed to support BG Kew's vital scientific and educational work and comes from supporters, sponsors, memberships and commercial activity including ticket sales. For tickets, please visit www.kew.org/kew-gardens/visit-kew-gardens/tickets. Since implementing a new accessibility scheme for those in receipt of Universal Credit, Pension Credit and Legacy Benefits, Kew has welcomed over 50,000 visitors with £1 tickets.