

IMPERIAL COURT OF NEW YORK

NEW YORK, NY 10003

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EMPRESS BILLIE ANN MILLER AND EMPEROR RON TO CROWN SUCCESSOR AT NIGHT OF A THOUSAND GOWNS

NEW YORK - Empress VIII Billie Ann Miller and Emperor V Ron of the Imperial Court of New York will take their final walk on Saturday, March 25 at the 9th Annual Night Of A Thousand Gowns. This annual Charity/Coronation Ball, produced by the Imperial Court of New York, is expected to draw over 1,000 of New York's most glamorous drag queens, performers and their friends from the gay, lesbian and transgender community, to the Imperial Ballroom of the Sheraton New York Hotel.

At the stroke of midnight, Empress Billie Ann and Emperor Ron will relinquish their crowns to the newly elected monarch of the Imperial Court, Philomena. Philomena, a well-loved personality of New York City and Cherry Grove, Fire Island, will be crowned Empress IX at a glittering ceremony to be attended by out-of-town royalty from all over the United States and Canada. Philomena is a performer who is known for her theatre work, as well as weekly appearances as a co-host of the Gay Entertainment Television show, Party Talk, which is currently being syndicated nationally. Philomena has long been a recognizable personality on the New York City charity and benefit scene, and will be seen in the upcoming Amblin Entertainment (Steven Spielberg) production of To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar, starring Patrick Swayze and Wesley Snipes.

The beneficiaries of this much awaited Ball are the Community Health Project (CHP) and the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). GLAAD, founded in 1985, is dedicated to fair, accurate and inclusive representation of gay men, lesbians and bisexuals in the media. CHP, founded in 1983, is New York's only community based medical facility dedicated to meeting the myriad health care needs of the lesbian, gay and HIV/AIDS communities -- regardless of anyone's ability to pay. A highlight of the evening will be the presentation of the Court's Imperial Diamond Award to Deborah Glick, New York State Assemblyperson. Ms. Glick will be the fifth recipient of this prestigious award, which is given every year for outstanding service to the lesbian and gay community.

The Night of a Thousand gowns will also culminate and celebrate the successful reign of reigning Empress Billie Ann Miller and Emperor Ron. Ron currently serves on Community Board No. 2 - Manhattan, where he is the co-chair of the Lesbian and Gay Issues Committee. Billie Ann has been involved with fund raising for the community for 25 years, both in New York City and on Fire Island; most notably with the Arts Project of Cherry Grove. Both Emperor Ron and Empress Billie Ann have traveled extensively and performed all over the United States and Canada representing the New York Court at regal functions. They have also graced numerous fundraising events in the city.

The Night of a Thousand Gowns is the most glamorous fundraising event on the New York gay scene. Over the years, the Imperial Court of New York has raised over \$100,000 for various organizations including the Gay Men's Health Crises, The Anti-Violence Project, Body Positive, the PWA Health Group, Gay Games IV, and the Community Center of New York. "Along with dinner and dancing, the Night of A Thousand Gowns is an excellent opportunity to display the diversity of the community - as well as some fabulous gowns, boas, tiaras and jewels," remarked Charles Ching, aka Coco LaChine, President of the Court.

The Imperial Court is well-loved in the gay community. They participate in many community fundraising events throughout the year: Whether it is entertaining PWAs at hospitals, passing out condoms at Grand Central Station, entertaining seniors at social events, adding additional glamour to events such as the recent Dada Ball, Wigstock or the Heritage of Pride Awards or performing at fundraising shows. They are glamorous. They are fun. They are everywhere.

This is one Ball you do not want to miss. "Gold" Dinner Tickets are \$110, "Silver" Tickets are \$60. For further ticket information/reservations, call [REDACTED]

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