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Rex's Annual Proclamations Now Available for Purchase Through its Website – Proceeds Benefit the Pro Bono Publico Foundation

*The Rex Organization, Incorporated Nearly 150 Years Ago as the School of Design,
Continues its Legacy of Public Artwork Celebrating Carnival*

(New Orleans, Louisiana) Today, three days before Shrove Tuesday, the Rex Organization announced for the first time it will make its annual proclamation art prints available for purchase through its website, and a portion of the proceeds will benefit the Pro Bono Publico Foundation. Since its founding in 2006, the foundation has donated more than \$9.3 million to support public education in New Orleans.

“Ever since Rex was incorporated as The School of Design nearly 150 years ago, consistent with our motto *Pro Bono Publico*, for the public good, the organization has taken a leadership role in producing and sharing beautiful works of art celebrating Carnival,” said Rex Official James J. Reiss, III.

Reiss continued, “We are pleased to announce that, for the first time, the Rex Organization’s annual proclamations will be available for purchase through its website at www.rexorganization.com/merchandise, and a portion of the proceeds will benefit the Pro Bono Publico Foundation, which supports public education in New Orleans. Rex’s 2021 Proclamation reflects the circumstances of this year and the resiliency, optimism, and hope within all New Orleanians that next year we can again celebrate Carnival as we know and love it.”

In 1872, the Rex Organization set out to create a special daytime Carnival celebration for the city of New Orleans. It did so by creating magnificent floats, rolling works of art for the public to enjoy. At a time before internet, television and radio, Rex’s floats created a sight that quickly gained notice across the entire country. Visitors flocked to New Orleans to see the beautiful spectacle.

While Rex’s rolling works of art are well-known in New Orleans area and far beyond, other forms of art have also flourished. Since the 1980s, the organization has commissioned a local artist to produce an annual proclamation art print. The Rex proclamation celebrates Carnival, Rex, New Orleans, history, ephemeral themes, and often all of the above.

Rex’s 2021 Proclamation is the work of local artist Shelley Hesse. Ms. Hesse is a New Orleans painter who is inspired by nature. Her work typically depicts the large birds of Louisiana, the wildlife of Africa, and unique sea life. She works in watercolor and gouache on paper, and she has worked as a full-time artist for over twenty years. She has also collaborated with Anthropologie on a home line that bears her name. Ms. Hesse has clients all over the world, with her primary markets being New Orleans, Dallas, and the East Coast. Rex’s 2021 Proclamation is her second proclamation for the School of Design; her first, with the theme “All Creatures Great and Small” was the 2013 Rex Proclamation.

As described by Ms. Hesse, “This year’s proclamation was born as a symbol of our great city’s endurance; the riderless captain’s horse embodying the spirit of Mardi Gras and the Rex Organization — which gallops on. It represents a bridge between what we have all endured and what is waiting for us on the other side — healing, prosperity, and life.”

A video of artist Shelley Hesse discussing her 2021 Rex Proclamation may be viewed at <https://youtu.be/y1bhf001eyU>.

Proclamations are typically sold to Rex members or given as gifts to dignitaries. However, beginning this year, the organization is making its annual proclamations available for purchase by the public via its website at www.rexorganization.com/merchandise. This is a unique transition inspired by a unique year.

An image of Rex’s 2021 Proclamation is below. A high-resolution version may be downloaded at www.rexorganization.com/media2021.



(continued on next page)

About the Rex Organization: Since the founding of the Rex Organization nearly 150 years ago, its traditions have helped define Mardi Gras. Rex's proclamation invites his subjects to the grand celebration of Carnival. His royal colors of green, gold, and purple are to this day the colors of Mardi Gras, and the song played in the first Rex parade, "If Ever I Cease to Love," has become Carnival's anthem. Rex, the King of Carnival, and his consort, the Queen of Carnival, preside over the Rex Ball, Carnival's glittering conclusion. www.rexorganization.com

About the Pro Bono Publico Foundation: The Pro Bono Publico Foundation ("PBPF") is the Rex Organization's philanthropic effort to benefit public education in New Orleans. Since its founding in 2006, the PBPF has donated more than \$9.3 million, including more than \$1 million annually for the past six years, to support New Orleans public school education, primarily charter schools, charter management organizations, and school support entities such as New Schools for New Orleans and Teach for America. Most of the foundation's philanthropic funds are raised from annual donations from members of the Rex Organization. The PBPF anticipates breaking through the \$10 million mark in the Rex Organization's 150th anniversary year in 2022. www.probonopublicofoundation.org