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Rex, The King of Carnival, Announces its 150th Anniversary Proclamation is Now Available for Purchase Through its Website – Proceeds Benefit the Pro Bono Publico Foundation

The Rex Organization, Incorporated in 1872, 150 Years Ago, as the School of Design, Continues its Legacy of Public Artwork Celebrating Carnival

(New Orleans, Louisiana) Today, the Rex Organization announced it will make its 150th anniversary proclamation art print available for purchase through its website, and a portion of the proceeds will benefit the Pro Bono Publico Foundation. Since founding in 2006, the foundation has donated more than \$10 million to support public education in New Orleans. On Saturday, February 19, 2022 at 11:00 am at the Rex Den, the foundation will announce its most recent round of grants.

“Ever since the Rex Organization was incorporated as the School of Design 150 years ago, consistent with our motto *Pro Bono Publico*, for the public good, it 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 the Rex Organization’s 150th anniversary proclamation will be available for purchase through its website at <https://merchandise.rexorganization.com/>, and a portion of the proceeds will benefit the Pro Bono Publico Foundation, which has been a leader in supporting public education in New Orleans.”

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 the New Orleans area and far beyond, other forms of art have also flourished. Historically, Rex has issued a proclamation declaring the date of the Carnival celebration and commanding his subjects to gather and join in the festivities. Proclamations were

posted in train depots around the country, and Mardi Gras in New Orleans became a major tourist destination. Such proclamations were not issued after WWII.

In 1980, the tradition was revived, and each year a local artist selected by the Rex Organization creates an original Rex proclamation art print highlighting the year's theme or one of the iconic images of Rex and Carnival. These sought-after collectors' items always carry the notation "Rex Proclaims Mardi Gras."

"This year's Rex proclamation celebrates Carnival's historic role in rebirth and renewal in the wake of challenging times, and the Carnival art and artists that have illustrated that history for 150 years of Rex's reign," said Matthew Hales, Rex's Royal Lithographer and the artist who created the 2022 Sesquicentennial Rex Proclamation.

Mr. Hales uses high-tech tools to recreate the art of 19th Century stone lithography and engraving used to create early Rex proclamations, bulletins, and invitations. In this beautiful print, so reminiscent of the style of early proclamations, Rex sends greetings and proclaims March 1, 2022 to be "the Great Feast Day of Mardi Gras" and "the 150th Anniversary of His Glorious Reign." In past years, Mr. Hales has created Rex invitations, bulletins, and other official documents. He also uses his talents to lead Ochsner Health's Advanced Visualization Team.

An image of the 2022 Sesquicentennial Rex Proclamation is below.



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About the Rex Organization: Since the founding of the Rex Organization in 1872, 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 purple, gold, and green 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 public education philanthropy association. Since its founding in 2006, the PBPF has donated more than \$10 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 PBPF's philanthropic funds are raised from annual donations from members of the Rex Organization. www.probonopublicofoundation.org