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Contact: Ben Dupuy
(202) 253-2063
publicrelations@rexorganization.com

Rex, The King of Carnival, Expresses Condolences, Dedicates 2025 Parade to Victims and Their Loved Ones, Proclaims Mardi Gras 2025, and Unveils 2025 Proclamation

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

(New Orleans, Louisiana) Today, during the traditional Kings' Day celebration at Mardi Gras World, Rex Official James J. Reiss III began his remarks by offering condolences to the victims of the tragedy on Bourbon Street and their families. Mr. Reiss' remarks included the following:

Reflecting on the last few days, we, the parading captains, are reminded of the twin masks representing tragedy and comedy, one crying, and one laughing. Often a symbol of Mardi Gras in New Orleans. We, the people of New Orleans, are wearing both. One mask as we look backward in mournful remembrance following the tragedy of early New Year's Day. The other mask as we move forward in celebration of life, liberty, and our freedoms as New Orleanians and as Americans.

In the face of this horrific event we, the krewes parading through New Orleans, dedicate our 35 parades, the centerpiece of our city's Carnival celebration, to those who lost their lives and the loved ones they have left behind. While we know that it may not change the gravity of the loss; we are hopeful that this small gesture sheds some light on how we New Orleanians feel about our freedoms and why we celebrate, even in the face of such enormous tragedy; and we hope that it lets the families of those lost know that we wish to celebrate the memory of the joy and love those 14 souls brought to them while they were here.

Also today, Rex, the King of Carnival, by royal edict, proclaimed Mardi Gras 2025. Mr. Reiss announced the King of Carnival's proclamation and plans to visit "... his beloved Capital City of New Orleans" as follows:

Rex, King of the Carnival, sends greetings and announces with pleasure his intention to visit his Capital City of New Orleans.

His Majesty invites all of his subjects to gather, from far and near, to join in the many Celebrations and Processions which will shortly unfold under the Joyful Carnival Banner. He promises that the Festivities and Pageants arranged for this Celebration will surpass in Joyousness and exceed in Beauty the most Brilliant Attainments of the Glorious Past, culminating in His Grand Procession on Tuesday, March 4th, 2025 to celebrate the great festival of Mardi Gras.

It is further commanded and ordained: that the Joyous Music of Carnival shall fill the Streets of His Capital City, Multiplying all Merriment; that Fair Weather and Blue Skies shall prevail; that Multitudes might gather and celebrate without Impediment; that the Royal Constabulary shall marshal the Grand Celebration with their Customary Skill and Tolerance; and that the Keepers of Inns, Taverns, and Eating Establishments in His beloved Capital City shall throw open their Doors to receive all Carnival Celebrants.

By the King Himself, Rex

Attest Bathurst Lord High Chamberlin



Rex's Royal Edict Proclaiming Mardi Gras 2025

“Since its founding 153 years ago, the Rex Organization’s incorporated name has been ‘The School of Design,’ which reflects its interest in advancing education and the arts,” said Rex Official James J. Reiss III. Reiss continued, “Annually, the Rex Parade artistically and traditionally illustrates an educational theme rich in references to culture, history, mythology, literature, nature, geography, and the arts. The Rex 2025 Parade theme, *La Belle Époque*, carries that long and important tradition forward.”

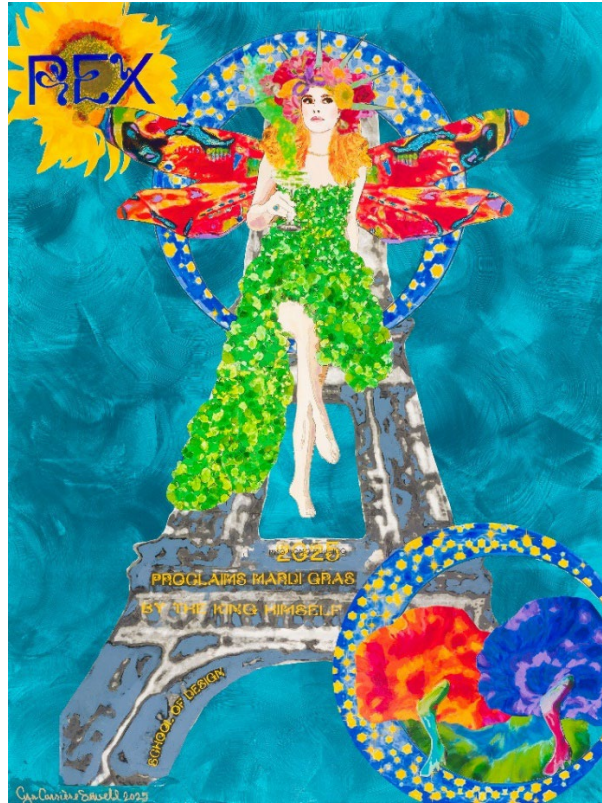
Coinciding with the origins of the Rex Parade, *La Belle Époque*, spanning roughly 1871 to 1914, was not only a period of peace, cultural flourishing, and technological progress in France, but it also saw the advancement of political and social freedoms. With a very Parisian theme, Rex is delighted to present a beautiful procession featuring some of the greatest known works of art, astounding innovations, and many of the groundbreaking women who helped to define the “Beautiful Era.”

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 spectacle that quickly gained notice across the entire country. Visitors flocked to New Orleans to see the beautiful Carnival procession.

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 proclamations declaring the date of the Carnival celebration and inviting 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 (see Rex’s Royal Edict on Page 2). These 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.”

The Rex 2025 Proclamation is an original, Cyn Carriere Sewell mixed-media collage, painted in acrylic with resin finish on wooden Gesso Board canvas measuring 30” x 40”.



Rex's 2025 Proclamation by artist Cyn Carriere Sewell

Eleven years ago, Cyn Carriere Sewell began creating mixed media art from her home studio in New Orleans. As a self-taught artist, she experiments with various mediums and is always pushing her artistic boundaries. Using acrylics, vintage photos, and images captured from all walks of life, she creates compelling narratives through texture, layers, and vibrant colors. She draws inspiration for her one-of-a-kind pieces from history, pop culture, and the human experience.

“The theme of this year's Rex procession provided inspiration to me as I created an artistic rendering of the dichotomies of *La Belle Époque*,” said Sewell. “*La Fée Verte* (the Green Fairy), my muse, is symbolic of the intoxicating extravagance and social freedoms characteristic of the Beautiful Era. Her champagne glass emits the essence of Absinthe as her Tiffany dragonfly wings glow vibrantly. She is pensive, reflecting on the flourishing movements of the time, and she invites the observer to interpret her thoughts. Like the Parisians of *La Belle Époque*, she is seeking, wondering, partaking, and escaping ... all the while raising her glass ‘à la liberté’.”

Some of the iconic images from the 2025 Rex Parade are featured in Cyn Sewell's colorful masterpiece, including the central Eiffel Tower, Lady Liberty's crown, Marie Curie's discovery, Van Gogh's starry night and sunflowers, and the risqué Can Can dancers of the Moulin Rouge.



Poster depicting Rex's 2025 Parade theme, *La Belle Époque*, by Matt Hales

About the Rex Organization: Since the founding of the Rex Organization in 1872, 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. Many of Rex's floats are icons of the city's celebration of Mardi Gras. 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 \$14 million, including more than \$1 million annually for the past nine years, and committed nearly \$1.3 million in 2024 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