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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **BARTOW-PELL MANSION MUSEUM UNVEILS A STORYBOOK CHRISTMAS**

*Christmas Trees Inspired by Children's Books and Decorated by Interior Designers  
Deck the Mansion's Halls for a Memorable Holiday Season*

*Bronx, NY, December 2, 2014*—Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum's ([bpmm.org](http://bpmm.org)) highly-popular Storybook Christmas trees are back and better than ever before. This year, eight trees inspired by children's books will be decorated by an impressive group of interior designers from Manhattan, the Bronx, and Westchester. The books are a charming mix of nature-oriented stories, including well-known authors such as Eric Carle and Caldecott Medal winner Ezra Jack Keats.

On view early enough to see again and again and long enough to enjoy after the holiday rush, the Storybook Christmas trees set the stage for a season to remember from the moment the mansion doors swing open on **Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup>** for the **Holiday Luncheon**. That evening, the **Holiday First Friday!** features the Hudson Valley Chamber Singers performing in the double parlors. Throughout it all, visitors can browse for gifts and books in the museum's holiday pop-up shop (stocked, once again, with the help of Bronxville's Kensington Paper), and indulge in home-made delicacies.

On **Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>** the trees serve as a magical backdrop for the **Annual Holiday Family Day** when children and parents alike will enjoy holiday storytelling and crafts, caroling by the Morrisania Glee Club, shopping for gifts, and of course, the much-anticipated meeting—and photo—with Santa. At Saturday night's **Holiday Party**, guests celebrate the season in style—and support the museum—with the mansion in all its holiday splendor. A live auction featuring vacation houses and a very special winter dinner at the mansion, a raffle of over-the-top items including hotel stays, and more ensures the festive feelings will linger on well into the New Year (as do the trees which are up through Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>).

A list of the Storybook Christmas trees, the books that inspired them, and the designers that bring them to life follows. Please call 718.885.1461 or visit [www.bpmm.org](http://www.bpmm.org) for more information about the Storybook Christmas trees or to register for any of the museum's holiday events and programs.

### **BARTOW-PELL STORYBOOK CHRISTMAS TREES (as of 12/2/14)**

*In the entrance hall...*

***The Snowy Day*** Storybook by Ezra Jack Keats; Tree design by **Bryant Keller**, Bryant Keller Interiors, New York City  
Since opening his studio in 2006, Bryant has quickly gained a reputation for creating environments rich in texture and detail, yet never staid or fussy. Born and bred in Louisville, KY, Bryant's education focused on the classical arts, with a concentration in music. The introductory program at the Graduate School of Architecture at Columbia University led him back to art and design. The 2012 Kips Bay Show House earned Bryant the attention of the design world and the media alike—his foyer was featured in the *New York Times* and numerous other publications.

*In the north parlor...*

***The Yule Tomte and the Little Rabbits*** Storybook by Ulf Stark; illustrations by Eva Eriksson; Tree design by **Alice Pirsu**, Alice Pirsu Interiors, Pelham, NY

Alice Pirsu holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania and an AAS degree from the New York School of Interior Design. Her designs draw inspiration from modern lines and classical architecture, allowing her to elegantly update spaces while respecting and highlighting their original, historic features. Alice uses a variety of natural materials and textures giving her interiors an organic flow with environmentally sustainable choices in design, construction, and maintenance.

*In the downstairs sitting room...*

***Christmas Farm*** Storybook by Mary Lyn Ray; illustrations by Barry Root; Tree design by **Joshua Greene and Katrina Hernandez**, Hernandez Greene Design, New York City

Joshua Greene and Katrina Hernandez make up Hernandez Greene Design. They met while overseeing the interiors department at Sawyer | Berson, an Architectural Digest "ad100" ranked firm. Their hallmark is ultra-sophisticated interiors ranging from modern to traditional and characterized by a refined sense of color, texture, and pattern.

*In the dining room...*

***Cobweb Christmas: The Tradition of Tinsel*** Storybook by Shirley Climo; illustrations by Jane Manning; Tree design by Bartow-Pell Docent **Tom Berta**, Westchester

Upon early retirement from a career at IBM, Tom Berta started an interior design firm called the Decorating Den that was recognized in several national magazines including *Good Housekeeping*. He now volunteers as a tour guide at both Kykuit, the Rockefeller Estate in Pocantico Hills, NY and Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum.

*In the upstairs parlor...*

***One Snowy Night*** Storybook by Nick Butterworth; Tree design by **Ken Binder**, City Island

Ken Binder is an interior designer specializing in residential design, but has also worked on hotels, offices, stores, synagogues, and a Middle Eastern palace. Before moving his business to New York, Binder was the senior designer in a major design studio in the Midwest doing projects throughout the U.S. and abroad. He also worked for HGTV, both behind the scene and on camera, and was a regular on the program *Room For Change*.

*In the Lannuier bedchamber...*

***Dream Snow*** Storybook by Eric Carle; Tree design by **Peti Lau**, Peti Lau Interiors, New York City

Peti Lau began her design career in Thailand and Mauritius—two of the many places she lived during an extended globe-trotting stint. Upon transitioning back from the tropics of Asia to the concrete jungle of New York City, she earned a degree from The New York School of Interior Design. Over the past decade, she has worked on a variety of projects including restaurants, a Gentleman's Club, an international villa, a post-modern house, pre-war apartments, and more.

*In Clarina Bartow's bedchamber...*

***Angel Pig and the Hidden Christmas*** Storybook by Jan Waldron; illustrations by David McPhail; Tree design by **Charles Farruggio**, Charles Farruggio Interior Design, New York City

A native New Yorker and graduate of Parsons School of Design, Charles Farruggio established his firm in 2009 after a decade working with design icons Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz, David Rockwell, and Phillippe Starck. His portfolio includes guestrooms for Starwood Hotels Westin brand; corporate apartments in NYC, Boston, and Miami; design management for SBE's SLS hotel brand; Katsuya restaurant in Los Angeles; design lead for Ames Hotel in Boston; Fontainebleau's Gotham Bar & Grill in Las Vegas; and the renovation of the Carlton Hotel in New York.

*In George Bartow's bedchamber...*

**Snow** Storybook by Uri Shulevitz; Tree design by **Michael Van Nort**, MVN Interiors, New York City  
Michael Van Nort received a bachelor's degree in fine arts from Binghamton University and a master's degree in elementary education from Hofstra University. While teaching third grade, Van Nort realized that his favorite part about teaching was redecorating his classroom, so he returned to the classroom himself to obtain formal training and a degree in interior design at Fashion Institute of Technology in New York and began working at a boutique design firm, Full Scale, Inc. Van Nort went on to work for Jed Johnson Associates and in showrooms for design industry leaders Donghia and Holly Hunt. MVN Design was established in 2013 and focuses on residential interior design and event planning for intimate occasions.

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#### **ABOUT THE BARTOW-PELL MANSION MUSEUM**

A New York City Landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum (BPMM) is owned by the City of New York Department of Parks & Recreation and is a member of the Historic House Trust of New York City. It is operated by the private, non-profit Bartow-Pell Conservancy. The Bartow-Pell Conservancy, originally known as the International Garden Club, was formed in 1914 by a group passionate about horticulture. That year, New York City gave them permission to use the Bartow family mansion on Pelham Bay in the Bronx, as their headquarters in exchange for restoring it, creating public gardens and programs, and preserving it for generations to come. The International Garden Club officially changed its name to the Bartow-Pell Conservancy in 2008 as well its membership model to that of a typical cultural organization. BPMM is located at 895 Shore Road, Pelham Bay Park, Bronx, New York. The mansion and carriage house are open to the public for guided tours on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. The gardens and grounds are open daily from 8:30 a.m. to dusk. For more information about Bartow-Pell, visit [www.bpmm.org](http://www.bpmm.org).