



A choir lined the Corcoran's stairs and performed as guests migrated downstairs for dinner after cocktails.



Andre Wells relied on silver, copper, gold, and nude tones in the dining space.



BET chairman and C.E.O. Debra L. Lee welcomed 250 guests to the private dinner.

Moving Honors

BET highlighted a popular Corcoran Gallery exhibit at its annual honoree dinner.

WASHINGTON For the fifth annual BET Honors, BET Networks moved its private, 250-guest honoree dinner to the Corcoran Gallery of Art to spotlight "30 Americans," the museum's popular exhibit of important contemporary African American artists. The January 13 dinner and the taped award ceremony, held the following night at the Warner Theater, honored the achievements of Maya Angelou, Mariah Carey, Stevie Wonder, Spike Lee, Olympic coach Beverly Kearney, and the Tuskegee Airmen.

"We have such big names. It's amazing all the accomplishments of all of the individuals we

are honoring," said Bobette Gillette, special assistant to Debra L. Lee, chairman and C.E.O. of BET Networks. Gillette's team chose the Corcoran for the honoree dinner hosted by Lee to give guests an opportunity to view the exhibit. "We are saluting black people who've made an impact on the community and taken risks to impact the world at large, and we think the artists are doing that," Gillette said.

Andre Wells, who has produced the dinner since its inception, designed a dining room in silver and gold tones, with different linens on every table and feathers incorporated into floral arrangements by Amaryllis. "I love that it's eclectic, but it still looks married through different elements like crystals and feathers," Wells said.

Purple curtains draped off the dining room and adjacent lounge space for a big reveal later in the evening. As guests arrived at 7:30 p.m., they walked directly up the Corcoran's stairs to view the "30 Americans" exhibit and enjoy pre-dinner cocktails while DJ Adrian Loving spun. At 8:45

p.m., the Voices of Inspiration choir led by Nolan Williams Jr. gathered on the stairs and sang "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" and "Signed, Sealed, Delivered, I'm Yours" as guests found their seats in the dining room. After dinner, guests moved to the dessert bar and lounge on the other side of the curtains, which was outfitted with green couches and chandeliers, a mirrored bar, and a green-tufted DJ booth.

The celebrations continued after Saturday's taping of the BET Honors ceremony, which aired February 13 and featured an appearance by Michelle Obama. At 10:30 p.m., approximately 1,200 guests arrived at the Smithsonian American Art Museum & National Portrait Gallery's Kogod Courtyard for the official after-party, produced by Natasha Bryson, manager of special events for BET Networks. Dramatically lit white feathers decorated the space. Ridgewells Catering set up stations with duck spring rolls and sliders, and a dessert station that included push-up parfaits and mini whoopee pies. —Adele Chapin



The soaring Kogod Courtyard was lit with moody purple lights.

A sparkly purple DJ booth flanked the black-and-white tiled dance floor in the middle of the courtyard.



Large white-feather arrangements topped cocktail tables, and logos were projected on the building facades.