

# The American Swiss Foundation Hosts 53rd Annual Stratton Prize Dinner Honoring Artist Larry Grob

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, October 18, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The American Swiss Foundation hosted the 53rd Annual Stratton Prize Dinner at the prestigious Somerset Club in Boston, paying tribute to celebrated fine artist and ASF Board Member Larry Grob as the 2024 Stratton Laureate. This year's event also marked a significant milestone with the recent merger of Friends of Switzerland, Inc. (FOSI) into the American Swiss Foundation, signaling a new era of engagement in the Boston area.

The Stratton Prize was founded by Dr. Freddy Homburger, who served as Honorary Consul for Switzerland in Boston for two decades (1966–1986), to honor significant career achievements in fostering intercultural understanding between Switzerland and the United States. The prize was first awarded in 1966 to Julius Adams Stratton, former President of MIT and later Chair of the Ford Foundation. Dr. Stratton was recognized for his work integrating the humanities at MIT, inspired by his advanced education at ETH Zürich and his exposure to Swiss humanistic thinking.

The 53rd Annual Stratton Prize Dinner commenced with a special a cappella performance by The Chorallaries of MIT. ASF Chair Emeritus Steven Hoch (Young Leader 1990, Stratton Laureate 2014) opened the event, remarking on the importance of the Stratton Prize relaunch: "The revival of the Stratton Prize, combined with the merger of the American Swiss Foundation and Friends of Switzerland, sets the stage for a dynamic future in Boston. We are thrilled to build on this legacy and expand our reach in the years to come."

Dr. Srishti Gupta Narasimhan, ASF Board Member and Co-Chair of the Stratton Prize Committee,



Stratton Laureate Larry Grob and Stratton Co-Chair Mike Lake

shared reflections on the legacy of Dr. Julius Adams Stratton, the prize's namesake: "Relaunching the Stratton Prize underscores our deep commitment to the enduring relationship between Switzerland and the United States. Larry Grob, a steadfast champion of the prize through FOSI, exemplifies the transformative power of intercultural engagement. Through this award, we honor his exceptional contributions while reaffirming our commitment to dialogue and cooperation in tackling global challenges."

Justin Leahey, Managing Director of MIT's Germany, Netherlands, and Switzerland Programs, followed with insights into Dr. Stratton's lasting impact on U.S.-Swiss educational exchange, highlighting his pivotal role in fostering cross-cultural collaboration.

Larry Grob, the evening's distinguished honoree, delivered an inspiring address on his artistic journey and his long-standing dedication to fostering intercultural understanding. "Having bestowed the Stratton Prize on a distinguished lineup of past laureates, it is truly humbling to receive this honor myself. The relaunch of this prize is a positive step that extends the spirit of the award across Boston's rich Swiss-American cultural landscape—a vision I believe Dr. Stratton himself would have wholeheartedly supported."

Mike Lake (YL 2013), ASF Board Member and Co-Chair of the Stratton Prize Committee, closed the evening with remarks on the broader significance of the award and ASF's mission: "The 2024 Stratton Prize honors not only individual excellence but the enduring power of intercultural exchange between Switzerland and the U.S. Larry Grob embodies the spirit of this award, with his lifelong dedication to bridging cultures, industries, and generations. As we relaunch this tradition, we reaffirm our commitment to fostering cross-border dialogue and inspiring future generations to deepen the shared values of liberty, innovation, and progress."

With the 80th anniversary of the American Swiss Foundation on the horizon, the evening



Dinner at the Somerset Club



Stratton Co-Chair Srishti Gupta Narasimhan gives opening remarks

highlighted both the organization's rich history and its future focus on fostering Swiss-American relations through leadership, collaboration, and innovation.

#### About the American Swiss Foundation

Founded in 1945 in response to World War II, the Foundation's mission is to connect and engage Swiss and American leaders. Towards the end of the 20th century, two former U.S. Ambassadors to Switzerland, Shelby Cullom Davis and Faith Whittlesey, ushered in a new era for the small organization. They ultimately transformed the Foundation from an organization that was primarily social to one that focused on nurturing and investing in the next generation of leaders in both countries.



Justin Leahey, Managing Director of MIT's Germany, Netherlands, and Switzerland programs, gives remarks

In 1975, Ambassador Davis assumed an active leadership role with the Foundation. He served as chairman and president until 1989, and as honorary chairman until his passing in 1994. In 1989, Ambassador Whittlesey became chairman and president of the Foundation and launched the organization's flagship program, the Young Leaders Conference.

Today, alumni of the conference number more than 1,450 leaders who shape the futures of the two countries, including members of U.S. Congress and Swiss parliamentarians, entrepreneurs and business executives, media professionals, and public policy experts. The American Swiss Foundation's mission is to connect and engage Swiss and American leaders through inspirational programs to strengthen the shared values of liberty, the rule of law, and free enterprise.

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