

AMERICAN SWEDISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --

Elfi von Kantzow Alvin to receive the 2009 Outstanding Achievement Award from the American Swedish Historical Museum Saturday, March 21, 6 pm

Philadelphia On the evening of March 21, Elfi von Kantzow Alvin will be presented the 2009 Outstanding Achievement Award at the American Swedish Historical Museum. The award recognizes a Swede or Swedish-American who has excelled in their field and brought honor and attention to Swedish-America. The award presentation is a highlight of the museum's annual Spring Ting fundraiser, which supports the museum's exhibitions and educational programs. The event features an on-line and silent auction, as well as dinner reception from 6 pm at the museum in South Philadelphia. Call 215-389-1776 for details.

Elfi von Kantzow Alvin is renowned in America and Europe for her tireless work spreading Scandinavian culture and promoting the work of Scandinavian artists. In 1976 Elfi received *Konungens Guldmedalj* (The King's Gold Medal) in connection with her coordination of a Swedish Artist Gala at the Lincoln Center. In 1998 she received the Order of the Lion, 1st class, of Finland. To date, she has curated 71 exhibitions presenting the work of nearly 300 Nordic artists in New York.



Elfi von Kantzow Alvin was born in Stockholm but grew up in Hallstahammar, Västmanland. She studied scenic and costume design at the Royal Opera in Budapest, Academia de Brera, Milan, and Kunstakademie, Vienna. During the years 1945-48 she worked for *Vasateatern* in Stockholm producing sets and costumes for 18 performances. As such, she became the first female scenic designer in Swedish theatre.

In 1948, Elfi Alvin moved to New York. She soon became only the second woman to be admitted to the Scenic Designers Union in the United States. Her Broadway debut was the mystery drama "Edwina Black" in which Swedish actress Signe Hasso also debuted. Elfi Alvin has produced stage sets for CBS television and worked as an interior designer. The New York restaurant Sardi's East and numerous offices and homes tell of her activities in the latter field.

Upon acceptance of the Outstanding Achievement Award, Elfi von Kantzow Alvin joins seven other Swedes or Swedish-Americans to be honored with the award, including 2008's winner Håkan Swahn, New York restaurateur, 2007's winner Count Peder Bonde, retired banking executive, 2006's winner Peter Forsberg, former captain of the Philadelphia Flyers, 2005's

winner, Jan Eliasson, former Ambassador of Sweden to the United States and former President of the United Nations General Assembly and 2004's winners Barbro Osher, philanthropist/publisher, Carol Erickson, meteorologist and television reporter and Edith Kohn, Philadelphia philanthropist.

Call 215-389-1776, email info@americanswedish.org or visit www.americanswedish.org for more information, to reserve a space at Spring Ting or for additional opportunities to support the American Swedish Historical Museum.

The American Swedish Historical Museum is located in FDR Park at 1900 Pattison Avenue in South Philadelphia, five blocks west of the Sports Complex. The Museum is easily accessible from Route 95 or 76 and has free parking. For those taking public transportation, the Broad Street subway or SEPTA's Route 17 bus route is within walking distance of the Museum.

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