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WHEN CRAFTING A RECEPTION IN NEW YORK CITY'S REVERED NATIONAL ACADEMY Museum and School of Fine Arts, we couldn't help but be inspired by the sumptuous space. To create a soiree worthy of its elegant environment, we teamed up with 2004 MB Trendsetter and event designer Meredith Waga-Perez, owner of Belle Fleur. First, we selected a dramatic black and white color scheme—the powerful contrast suggests strength and clarity, says Waga-Perez, and of course, lends a level of formality. For flowers, we mixed graceful gardenias and hydrangeas with fashion-forward anemones. “The feminine white petals with a jet black center make a chic statement,” Waga-Perez says. Because we were working with only two hues, texture played an important role in adding richness. A velvet-flocked silk damask fabric, which we used for some of the tablecloths, prompted similar motifs on the cake and stationery (and also appeared as the envelope lining). On the tables, we blended classic and contemporary forms to strike a stunning balance of softness and starkness. —Elaine Stuart



Graphic Design

Hand-cut sugar pieces modeled after the damask tablecloths decorate this vanilla and chocolate cake filled with espresso dark chocolate ganache and vanilla bean buttercream and covered in white fondant, serves 400, price upon request; the faux wrought iron cake stand is actually made of sugar, price upon request, both by Ron Ben-Israel, NYC.





Ebony and Ivory

Opposite: The invitation's white script on black card stock, rather than the reverse, adds an element of surprise, \$5,000 for 100 (including calligraphy, art, design, liners and engraving), by Bernard Maisner Calligraphy & Fine Stationery. It rests on a faux crocodile-lined place mat from Dransfield & Ross, inside a tray from Kim Seybert. *This page:* The escort-card table features a lush arrangement of white hydrangeas, \$800, surrounded by petite iron urns (a nod to the staircase banister in the background) holding tea lights, all from Belle Fleur. Escort cards with envelopes, \$4 each, by Bernard Maisner Calligraphy & Fine Stationery. Tablecloth from Ruth Fishl.