

canadianspecial events magazine

FOOD, FASHION, BEAUTY, & DESIGN FOR EVENTS

ARE
Galas STILL
RELEVANT?

URBAN
Romance
BY ARTHUR K

+5 OF THE MOST
Beautiful
VENUES
IN WESTERN CANADA

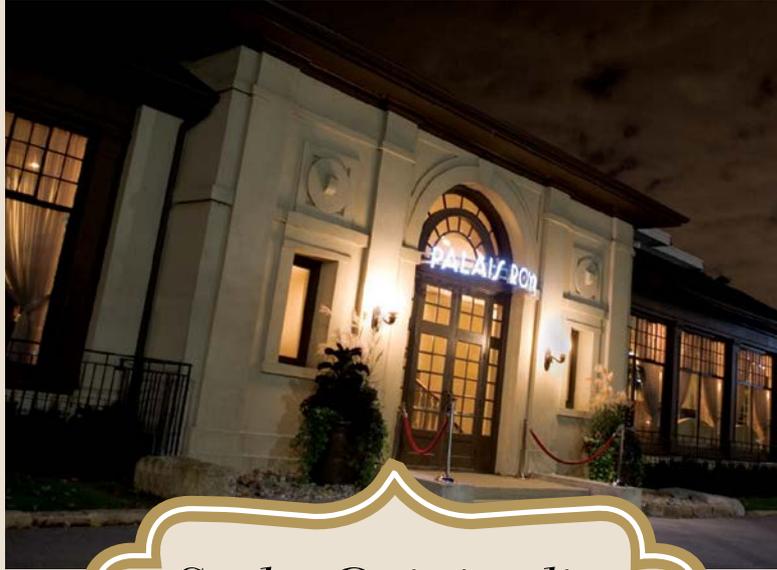
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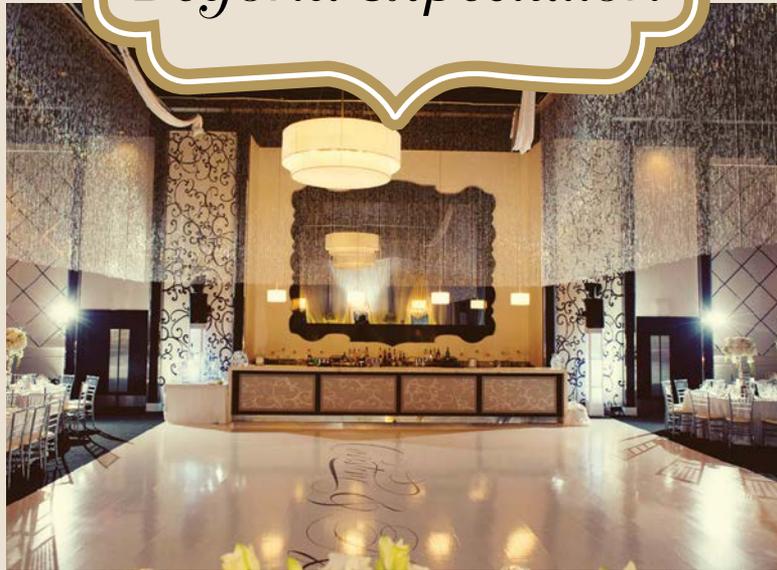
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editor's letter

Recently, with very little planning, (which is odd for a professional planner), I caught a flight to Vancouver and decided to hang out for 3 weeks. The un-plan was to shut down, and for the most part I did. I may have checked emails and written a few things here and there, but I tried my best to unplug.

Vancouver and the West Coast is home to me and there is just something unexplainable about what makes it so magical. I asked ten people to describe what they love about Vancouver and not one of them was able to tell me without using the word “beautiful” at least once. The words beach, mountains and weather all got fair play as well. It has been at least 2 years since I was home for an extended time so this was an opportunity to experience the coast like a tourist, with fresh eyes and a curious appetite. We wandered Commercial Drive, kicked back at Spanish Banks, took the ferry to Sunshine coast, ate sushi at Samurai (you have to do this at least once), rode the Peak to Peak at Whistler and hung out with friends and family. Oh, and we did some serious floating on the lake.

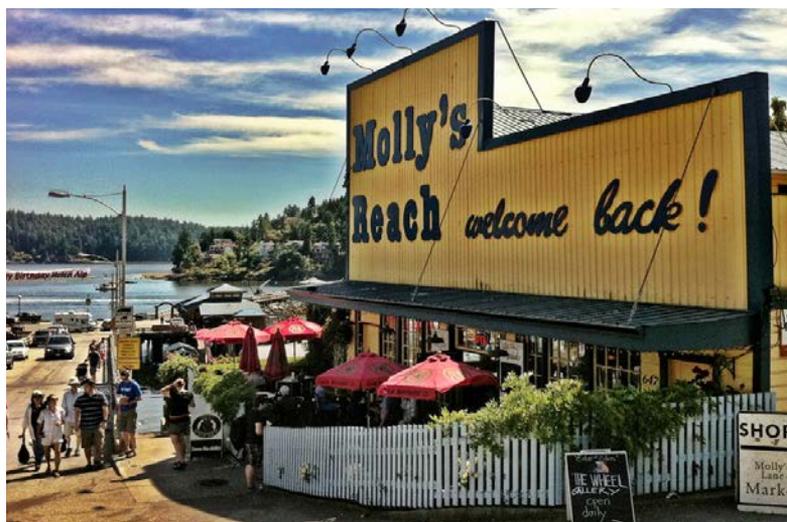
I had forgotten how beautiful it is and so at the last minute I was inspired to totally change our resort feature to show off a few my favorite places in BC. Check them out starting on page 43. There are some incredible spaces for meetings, incentives, weddings and galas.

Speaking of galas, in this issue, Hala Bissada examines the question; are galas really relevant in the fundraising world today? She interviewed 12 top charity gala organizers in Toronto and came up with some really interesting answers. Go to page 8 to read about it.

Finally, I am so excited to share our first photo editorial, featuring Urban Romance, styled by the super cool, award winning wedding planner Arthur K, in collaboration with Justin James. It is the perfect shoot for CSE magazine to showcase. It's edgy, funky and all the things we love about being unique.

I hope you enjoy our 2nd full digital issue. If you have feedback or story ideas, please email me. I would love to hear from you and help tell the world about your creative and inspiring events.

Stacy

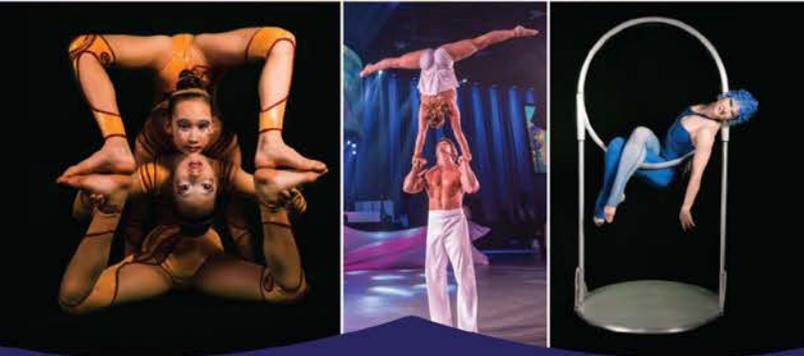




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Things We
L♥VE
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canadianspecial**events**

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Advanced Analytics

In The Event ROI Equation

There is nothing easy about calculating event ROI. Experienced planners know this but still find themselves stuck in a narrow organizational view of event metrics. Being limited to dollars spent versus qualified leads, brand awareness scores, or sales revenue does not fully indicate performance in our events or reflect the increased strategic role of event planners.

We've been inspired by the use of advanced statistics in sports from baseball to ice hockey to begin re-thinking typical event objectives and ROI calculations. In addition to the "big" metrics of leads and sales, we'd like to suggest including resource utilization analytics that show us how well we've optimized staff or how we're putting a greater percentage of budget toward revenue generators and less toward travel.

As organizations return their event participation to pre-recession levels, the budget and resource cuts that were put in place have not been reversed. It's the typical case

of doing more with less that event planners find all too common. So why aren't we measuring how many qualified leads we're generating per hour of exhibit time each year? Of if we reduced communication mishaps during the planning process? Keep metrics relevant and insightful but think along these lines to measure more than just the usual suspects.

There's no single correct set of metrics here. Event stakeholders vary from one organization to the next and they'll each have their own view of what is important. Our recommendation is to start early in the planning process to align stakeholders on event metrics and to derive your own inspiration from other businesses that have embraced new measurement techniques. With the right tools and processes in place to capture and measure data, your event ROI equation can include additional inputs and outputs that truly reflect how your events are performing.

Thought Leadership Provided by Eventuosity.

Pretty In **Pink**

Design Inspiration

By Stacy Wyatt



Everyone in events loves pink. Pink is fun, friendly, passionate and delicious.. but aside from its obvious attributes, it is also the most used colour for events?

Yes **pink**, from bubblegum to cotton candy to fuschia, is one hot shade for event planners. If you are wondering why, the reasons are endless, but one of the most impressive is that pink, according to Wiki, takes its name from the flower called "pinks", and the verb "to pink" dates from the 14th century and means "to **decorate** with a perforated or punched pattern". Also, according to surveys, pink is the color most often associated with love, beauty, charm and romanticism; all things we value and look for in our lives. If that's not enough, when combined with violet or black, it is associated with eroticism and seduction. No wonder so many people want pink at weddings.

Don't mistake this girly hue for anything but a major player; pink has a pretty impressive resume. In the early 18th century, pink became fashionable in the courts of Europe and in the latter part of the 1800s was recognized as the color of seduction in many famous works of art. In 19th century England, pink ribbons were often worn by young boys as a precursor uniform to the men of England who wore red uniforms. In the 20th century, Italian designer Elsa Schiaparelli, created a new variety of the color, called Shocking Pink, by mixing magenta with white and launched a perfume called Shocking which she sold in a bottle in the shape of a woman's torso, said to be modelled on that of Mae West.



In 1953 at the US Presidential inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower his wife Mamie, wore a pink dress and her strong liking of pink led to the public association with pink being a color that “ladylike women wore.”

In architecture, in the 18th century – the golden age of pinks, pink mansions and churches were built all across Europe. More modern pink buildings usually use the color to appear exotic or to attract attention and in some eastern cultures, pink and pastel homes are a sign of affluence.

In the 21st century, pink is a huge part of our pop culture. Pink ribbons are known worldwide as the symbol for breast cancer campaigns; it is the hood colour of five academic degrees; In Spanish and Italian, a “pink novel” is a known as a sentimental novel marketed to women; in the Yogic Hindu tradition rose is one of the colors of the fourth primary energy center, the heart chakra and in sports, major league baseball players use pink bats on Mother’s Day as part of a week-long program to benefit Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Pink is the most sought after color of lipstick; most popular popsicle flavor; the most wanted color for any apple phone, laptop or ipad; the name of one of the most popular female vocalists in our century and lets not forget the title of a legendary cult classic film; aptly named, Pretty in Pink.

For wedding and event planners, pink is a staple color and one of the most popular in the crayon box. A worldwide symbol for love, it’s no wonder we love pink and all its many wonderful shades.



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1

DESIGN:
Feather Stemless Wine Glasses

Hand-blown from coloured glass, this stemless wine glass flaunts swirled patterns reminiscent of tropical plumage. Hand crafted in Grants Pass, Oregon. Click [here](#) to buy it.



2

PORTABLE:
The Oogie Tote

The Oogie Tote is an event planner's dream bag. It features padded slots, sleeves, a laptop pocket and accessory slots. Comes in a variety of colours. Click [here](#) to see a video.

3

STYLE:
Cream Tweed Wrap

This adorable and chic buttoned wrap is made with the softest cream colored yarn infused with black and brown speck. Perfect for layering on long event days. Click [here](#) to buy it.



4

TECHY:
ila Personal Alarm

Working late in the office or coming home from an evening gig? Get peace of mind with this stylish personal alarm. These small, portable security device emits a high decibel noise when pulled, designed to attract attention as well as catch attackers off guard. Click [here](#) to buy it.



5

FOOD:
DIY Rosé Gummy Bears

How fun would these be to serve at a cocktail party? Click [here](#) to check out the recipe. Wine AND Candy? We know our guests will LOVE it as much as we do!



6

DECOR:
Candle on the Rocks

The wood wick within these soy candles makes a soothing crackle as they burn. Each vessel has a second life as a rocks glass once the wax has been used up. In six scents, like Guava Fig and Oakmoss + Leather. Perfect for an outdoor theme event held indoors or to earth up your office. Click [here](#) to buy it.



noteworthy

Are *Galas* Still Relevant?

By Hala Bissada, CFRE



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Art Gallery of Ontario's
Massive Party 2011 Chagall Ball

*Gone are the days of the Brazilian Ball, and with it, an era of glitz and glamour.
What has changed in our social event landscape? Are galas still relevant?*

I interviewed twelve of the top charity gala organizers and despite the fact that they are one of the most costly ways to raise money (the average cost is \$0.50 per dollar raised) the answer is clear, galas are still relevant and here are the reasons why. Galas are:

- a way to raise unrestricted and predictable revenue.
 - a platform to celebrate your mission's accomplishments and connect donors to your cause—i.e. tell your story.
 - an opportunity to provide brand visibility.
 - an opportunity to steward your key donors.
 - a vehicle to attract new supporters.
- a way to announce a transformational gift.
 - an opportunity to engage corporate donors and give them a platform for activations that help build a fun and engaging guest experience, while meeting their marketing objectives.
 - a vehicle to build board and committee leadership.
 - a way to create a deep connection with senior volunteers who work on the event.
 - still in demand as senior executives still want to network and doing so in a setting that supports charity is acceptable.



*The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Trust Gala: A Night at the Castle
Photography by David Lee Visuals*



*Children's Aid Foundation Gala, Teddy Bear Affair 2015
Photography by Ernesto Di Stefano, Lily Leung And George Pimentel*



*The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery's Power Ball
Photography by Henry Chan*

The concept of a gala is evolving. The glitzy gala of the past is not necessarily a compelling motivation to attend a gala for most of today's donors. Their expectations have changed mostly because of the demands for charity transparency and effectiveness. In addition, people have a desire to connect with the cause and that means you have to look carefully at crafting and communicating your message without beating them over the head with it. Many organizers are looking at simplifying their events to focus on a sound revenue/business model and key messaging.

Most of the organizers I spoke with said financial success starts with board and committee leadership. The board needs to be involved and diligent in identifying a true community and business leader(s) to act as chair or honorary chair. Their role is utterly important and the charities need to be clear about sharing their expectations and outlining their role and responsibilities. Your chair or honorary chair needs to be willing to come to the table to lend their name, contacts (for both monetary and gift-in-kind support), as well as assist with recruiting other strong committee members who can in turn leverage their networks. Preparing a clear and concise terms of reference can assist you in sharing your expectations with your senior volunteers and committee. The committee needs

to "own" the financial side of the event for it to be successful.

Another key to success is having the right people in the room, not only for fundraising but to hopefully engage them further in terms of other initiatives with your organization. Most of the organizers I spoke with said communicating the importance of having the right attendees (high net worth donors, influencers, ability to lead) at your gala is a sensitive matter and most have candid conversations with their donors and sponsors.

One of the key reasons you hold a gala is to raise funds, but connecting the attendees to the cause is just as important. Engaging prospective new donors is a way to build your capacity. What is helpful is to have a strong case of support crafted specifically for your event. You can use it to build creative on-site fundraising initiatives but it could also serve as inspiration for creating your guest experience. If you are a charitable organization where the attendees don't necessarily use your services you need to find a way to connect and draw them to your cause. Most attendees are driven by social and personal motivations to attend and that is why finding the right "hook" is so important.

*Art Gallery of Ontario Massive Party
2010 Maharaja Gala*



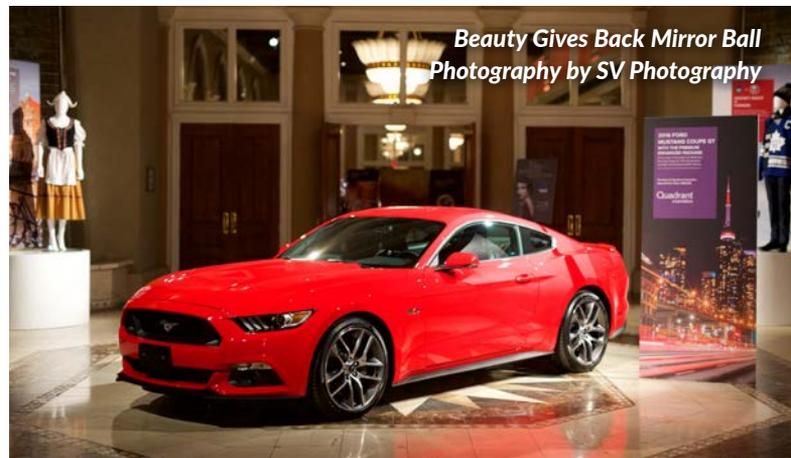
Dining experience on the venue stage at the Canadian Opera Company Centre Stage Gala



I recently wrote an article on [Building the Guest Experience](#) where I provided a few examples of organizations with great events and/or elements that have hit the nail on the head in terms of being on brand/mission and creating a fabulous guest experience. Below are some other great insights shared with me during the interviews.

- Top galas in Toronto are raising between \$500,000 and 4 million gross.
- Sponsorships ranged from \$15,000 to \$100,000 (some start at \$2,500 for events with a younger demographic).
- Table prices ranged from \$5,000 to \$50,000.
- Ticket prices on average ranged from \$100 (after party) to \$500.
- Attendance numbers ranged from 300 to 1,500.
- Galas have been held for 3 to 30 years.
- Demographics: Younger Audience 20 to 35
Older Audience: 40-65.

If you are a charitable organization where the attendees don't necessarily use your services you need to find a way to connect and draw them to your cause. Most attendees are driven by social and personal motivations to attend and that is why finding the right "hook" is so important.



Beauty Gives Back Mirror Ball Photography by SV Photography



The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery's Power Ball multi-sensory experience. Photography by Henry Chan



Event Formats

Based on the interviews I conducted, the format of gala events are evolving dramatically. The typical cocktail reception, followed by a sit-down dinner with entertainment is not as popular or typical as it once was. Organizers today are changing things up to give their attendees a new and fresh experience. For example, the popular Massive Party, Power Ball and Operation events give their attendees multi-sensory experiences by urging them to go from room to room to experience something different in each space. Whether it is a live performance, art installation, sponsor activation, or a variety of food and beverage samplings, guests are excited about what they will discover.

Grand Cru brings together international chefs, vintners and sommeliers, assembling the finest wine, gourmet cuisine and brightest minds in medical research.

The Toronto Public Library Foundation's Book Lover's Ball created a unique event format where guests had a shared cocktail reception, moved to the stacks for private dinners and then for the after party, guests were given the opportunity to explore the library with various activations throughout the building. Each of the dining

areas was also beautifully decorated and themed to correspond to a literary genre so guests were experiencing Mystery, Romance or Fantasy.

Toronto Taste is one of the most celebrated food events in the city. Guests are invited to spend the evening strolling through the event space and sampling the offerings from some of Toronto's best chefs and beverage purveyors. Their event includes an on-site chef challenge, and a spot on their judging panel for their top fundraiser.





Toronto General & Western Hospital Foundation's Grand Cru Culinary Wine Festival has a really unique event format. Grand Cru brings together international chefs, vintners and sommeliers, assembling the finest wine, gourmet cuisine and brightest minds in medical research. It is a three day event beginning with a wine auction on the Thursday night, an appreciation party for vintners and donors on the Friday night and then private dinners in about 30 different private homes each hosted by a top scientist and a well-known chef (e.g. Michelin Star and Iron chefs from around the world) on the Saturday night.

Some of the galas also combine formats. For example, an exclusive gala dinner first and then additional guests can join for the after-party that begins later in the evening.

Most organizers concur that the key to changing things up is to look at your event with a different lens. It could be as simple as having people enter a different way, changing up the schedule, or changing the furniture and the way the space is laid out. Try to literally wipe the slate clean and start from scratch.

More and more sponsors are interested in aligning themselves with unique and relevant opportunities.

Sponsorship Activations

More and more sponsors are interested in aligning themselves with unique and relevant opportunities. They want to connect their products and services to attendees in interesting ways. It is also a fun way to add interesting elements to your event and enhance your guest experience.

One organization that stood out with creative and non-typical sponsor activations was Rethink Breast Cancer. They partnered with Vitamin Water to create a "Lite Brite" Station. The colourful bottles of Vitamin Water served as the "pegs" for a giant Lite Brite board. Guests could move them around and make patterns. They also partnered with the food delivery app Ritual and guests could download the app and order a burger to be delivered to them during the event. For the year with the "Big Top Booby" circus/carnival themed event, Stila make-up sponsored a kissing booth and when the theme was "Camp Booby", IZOD sponsored a mini golf area.

Working directly with your prospective sponsors to come up with on brand activations that work for both parties is the key. The challenge is keeping the costs to create the activations manageable and potentially negotiating with the sponsor to underwrite these expenses in addition to their cash investment.

The Power Plant Contemporary
Art Gallery's Power Ball
Photography by Henry Chan



Use of Technology

As mentioned in my article [Technology and the Future of Events](#), if you are not using and embracing technology at your events right now then you are not current and attendees will take notice – but not in a good way. Top gala organizers are using check-in software, auction bidding technology, event apps, project management software, social media management tools, and projection mapping among other things to elevate the guest experience. For more in-depth information about technology trends, please refer to my article.

On-Site Fundraising

Online auctions are becoming much more popular and lucrative. Today's technology has made it much easier to implement as well.

Auctions, raffles, and balloon bursts are still a means to raise money on-site, however many organizers are coming up with custom initiatives that also raise dollars but might better connect the donor to the cause. For example, at the Book Lover's Ball you can "Adopt a Branch" in the Toronto Public Library system. There are 100 branches across the city that you can select from and dollars are matched by TD Bank.

Social Media

I find that the level of use of social media depends on the event's demographics. For Booby Ball, Massive Party, and the Power Ball, the use of social media is more prominent. There is a big focus on developing strategies around the events and creating buzz, whereas events like Teddy Bear Affair and Grand Cru where the main demographic is 40-65, there is less time dedicated to developing social media campaigns.

Themes

Themed events are still being used by many organizations. The theme is translated through marketing materials, décor, food & beverage, entertainment, etc. One fun example is what Rethink Breast Cancer did with a university theme. They called it Booby U and "Boobyball-ers" received a report card and university-style campus map that directed them to various sponsor activations and themed stations on-site. They had a huge, bold "Booby U" sign made out of Solo cups at the front entrance which set the tone for the evening. They also had a hairstyling station from Civello

Salon and Spa that offered guests a signature collegiate hair look. Their VIP booths were dressed as dorm rooms complete with a small desk, single bed with side table, drinks and snacks. They had a lot of fun photo booths with backdrops that included a football field, a sorority house and a fraternity house.

Several organizations are using Pinterest as a great tool to give guests ideas as to how to dress for a particular theme.

Entertainment

Many of the gala organizers shared the great entertainment productions they've provided to their attendees over the years. Each takes a different approach but typically aims to take advantage of their inherent resources or build upon their brand or cause.

For organizations like the Canadian Opera Company (COC), they have been able to capitalize on their homegrown talent. They integrate music, art and fashion into an immersive and unique cultural experience for guests. A highlight is a special collaboration between classic and modern music; for example in 2013 they had a rock/opera performance with the COC's Ambur Braid and Sam Roberts Band.

The 10th annual Book Lover's Ball was just nominated for Best Entertainment Production for the ILEA awards. They created a literary-inspired entertainment segment using 10 well known characters featured in classic books: Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson, Harry Potter, Captain Hook, Peter Pan, Romeo & Juliet and Scarlett O'Hara & Rhett Butler. Each performed a stunning vignette from different parts of the multi-level atrium reception space.

The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery's Power Ball is known for its innovative artist installations. In 2014, they had an installation called BYOB—Bring Your Own Beamer - a one-night exhibition that hosted a number of artists and their projectors. In 2015, one installation included an interactive food performance (work entitled "So Sorry") by artist Jennifer Rubbel. Some of her work included a wall of meat from which guests could shave off a portion to eat and an octopus hanging from the ceiling from which people could carve off a piece to eat.

The Waterkeeper gala collaborates with different presenters and artists each year to create a unique show that is a mix of music, poetry and dance while the Mirror Ball uses headliners like Matt Dusk.



What is important to your guest?

When I asked the organizers what they felt was most important to the guest, I received the following answers:

- When the price tag is high, exceptional food and wines are absolutely imperative. A well thought-out menu with paired wines will leave your guests with a good lasting impression
- Transparency—guests want to know how the donors dollars are being spent and that you have a sound revenue/business model
- They want to connect with the cause in a genuine way. Telling your story in a manner that resonates with the crowd will be impactful
- Less talking—keep speeches to a minimum
- Simplify your event—it doesn't have to have a million moving parts to be good—however keep in mind there is a fine line as corporate executives are still entertaining clients and have high expectations in terms of quality
- Many events now take place during the week so it does not interfere with family time on the weekend. Most guests (at events with older demographic) like it when the event wraps up by 10pm
- Most of all they want to have fun

Many events now take place during the week so it does not interfere with family time on the weekend. Most guests (at events with older demographic) like it when the event wraps up by 10pm.

Some of the universal challenges:

- Finding the right gala leadership (i.e. committee chair).
- Finding creative ways to communicate the mission and importance of the work of each organization.
- Finding sponsors in a saturated gala market and developing meaningful and multi-year sponsor opportunities. Other challenges include corporations focusing their funding in specific areas which means you are out of luck if you don't fit within their criteria.
- Pressure to be innovative and keep things fresh each year.
- The costs associated with the use of technology.

Let's face it. At the end of the day everyone loves a good party. But the truth is, a thoughtfully planned gala can do so much more for an organization than just bringing like-minded people together to socialize. Party On!

Thank you to the following people for sharing their valuable time for interviews and for candidly sharing their insights:

Anne Graham, Chair of [Mirror Ball](#), [Beauty Gives Back](#); **Cori MacPhee**, Director of Communications & Marketing, [Second Harvest](#); **Corinne Rusch-Drutz**, Chief Development Officer, [Art Gallery of Ontario](#); **Emilia Ziemba**, Major Events & Business Development Officer, [Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery](#); **Heather Rumball**, Past President, [Toronto Public Library Foundation](#); **Holly Belman**, Executive Director, [Gerry and Nancy Pencer Brain Trust](#); **Janet Babin**, Special Events Manager, [Gerry and Nance Pencer Brain Trust](#); **Jennifer Verschraegen**, Director of Development, [Second Harvest](#); **Julie Flynn**, Director, Development & Strategic Partnerships, [Toronto Public Library Foundation](#); **Krystyn Tully**, Vice President & Co-Founder, [Waterkeeper Gala](#); **Linda Ruickbie**, Senior Director of Events, [Toronto General & Western Hospital Foundation](#); **Linton Carter**, Chief Development Officer, [Children's Aid Foundation](#); **MJ DeCoteau**, Founder & Executive Director, [Rethink Breast Cancer](#); **Shauna Levy**, President & CEO, [Design Exchange](#); **Tracy Abergel**, Special Events Manager, [Canadian Opera Company](#); **Valerie McMurtry**, President & CEO, [Children's Aid Foundation](#)



The Gary and Nancy Pencer Brain Trust Gala: 2015 Raise a Little Heath entrance. Photography by Jody Glaser



The Gary and Nancy Pencer Brain Trust Gala: 2015 Raise a Little Heath. Photography by Jody Glaser

*Children's Aid Foundation Gala - 2015 Teddy Bear Affair
Photography by Ernesto Di Stefano, Lily Leung And George Pimentel*



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Wear This Not That



Cozy For Fall

Perfect for fall meetings; try on this stunning cream tweed wrap with elegant dress pants or pair with leggings and boots for a more casual look.

Coral Me Pretty

Elegant, classy and so versatile, this outfit is perfect for more formal daytime events. It works with flats so you will save your feet and if you add a blazer you can take it from morning "conference" to evening dine arounds".



On-Site Chic

This is a super cute look for a day with clients, working a trade show, attending meetings on site or for set-up days when you need to look sharp but also be ready to climb a ladder or help with decor.



We all have our 'go to' outfit. The one we fall back on, feel comfortable in and defer to in those "need to find something to wear" moments.

But, we think it is time to retire old faithful and freshen up your on site style with these trendy and adorable outfits that are professional and suitable for every body type.



Sheila Kussner, O.C., O.Q., Founder and former Chairwoman of Hope and Cope was and remains the backbone and driving force behind Hope & Cope and all its volunteers. She received a standing ovation, for her remarkable influence and contributions to this event along with her Chairs & Co Chairs: Marlene Ditkofsky, Marlene & Joel King and Howard Stotland.

Hope and Cope's 2015 Fundraising Story is One of Epic Success

Hope and Cope is a life-changing organization that supports free, innovative, life-affirming programs and services to cancer survivors and their families by Hope & Cope at the Wellness Centre and sites within the Jewish General Hospital's Segal Cancer Centre.

Canadian Event Industry Awards nominee for 2016, Monday Night Live was held on June 22 2015, at Place des Arts in Montreal. This was an absolutely brilliant concept designed around Dennis Miller, Emmy award winning comedian and

actor, former host of Saturday Night Live's "Weekend Update" and Monday Night Football. From publicity, invitations and marketing to the meet and greet pre-cocktail for high-end donors and finally to a great hours' worth of entertainment, Miller lived up to his billing.

This contemporary upscale event; catering to the next generation of philanthropists, needed to make a statement; Unlike past events for Hope & Cope, the planning team chose to move away from the 'gala' sit down dinner' and flip the

script to create a trendy modern experience in a fresh space highlighting bold architectural statements in design and lighting. Offerings included healthy foods served in a non-traditional way using highly styled food stations as eye candy, unique entertainment, along with minimal décor which kept things simple and elegant but functional.

The evening began with an stylish VIP meet and greet in the brand new St-Urbain space catered by JAVA U and styled by sought-after food presenter Nicolina Servello. Guests were treated to champagne and canapés, and had the opportunity to have a picture taken with the evenings star.

After 45 minutes guests joined those patrons in Salle Urbain for a sumptuous cocktail dinatoire. Ticket sales for this event exceeded expectations and venue capacity which prompted producers to install a tent adjacent to the side entrance and fill it with additional décor and seating. This allowed people to spill over to the tented area and experience a stunning view of downtown Montreal.

Après cocktails, guests were directed to Théâtre Maisonneuve to join another 525 people who had purchased a ticket to exclusively watch Monday Night Live with Dennis Miller. While guests spilled into the theatre, projections of donations, and sponsorships filled the screen, as well as “did you know facts” about Hope & Cope’s Cancer programs.

The evening opened with a wonderfully witty Saturday Night Live Weekend Update style video. Set 50 years into the future in the year 2065. The video, written and produced by Hope & Cope, featured ‘news anchors’ Hope & Cope Chairs and Co-Chairs Nancy Ditkofsky, Howard Stotland and Marlene & Joel King and, was a spoof on the “Saturday Night Live, Weekend Update”. The pre-recorded video, introduced by renowned radio emcee Aaron Rand, was fun to watch, hilarious at times and well received by the 1000 plus crowd. Created and written solely by the four “so called MNL broadcasters” had everyone in laughter as they poked fun at some political antics, and shared the hopes that cancer would be cured by the year 2065, part in thanks to all those who participated in the audience!

Following a standing ovation, Montreal’s radio broadcaster Aaron Rand came back on stage and introduced Dennis Miller, who for the next 60 minutes got everyone’s attention, with his insightful and dry wit.

The wildly successful benefit raised a record-breaking \$3,206,680 + funds, indispensable for cancer survivors supported by the organisation. The Producers made this event happen using only 10% of the revenue earned, an unheard of feat in the world of fundraising events, photography by

Monday Night Live was produced by Quebec based Marsha Brumer, MB Events. Projection & lighting from Total Events, Video by Eclipse Productions, Photography by Dominic Fuizzotto Photography



*Highly styled food stations served as eye candy
Photography by Dominic Fuizzotto Photography*



Aaron Rand, was hilarious and well received by the 1000 plus crowd

“Today’s clients; a new generation of millennial influencers, are looking for collaborations, live experiences and technology driven acts.”

-- Janice Cardinale, The Idea Hunter



advertorial

Toronto's *Music Scene* Is Set To **Explode**

A trend report from The Idea Hunter's Head Hunter, Janice Cardinale

Toronto is in the midst of a musical revolution that stretches far beyond the names of Drake and The Weeknd. There is a new generation of local artists ready to lead the city known as “the 6” into a new era full of musical experiences.

Wind back the clocks a few years. Could you have predicted half of the things we have now? The scene keeps evolving in exciting and unexpected directions and today, we are at the start of a musical revolution.

Genres such as Rock and Roll, Motown, Disco, Girl Groups and many other styles of music, continue to be revisited by corporate event professionals when they are given themes from the past to execute. These are classics that will never fade but today's clients; a new generation of millennial influencers, are looking for collaborations, live experiences and technology driven acts. This is what is driving the decision making process within large corporations.

Leading the northern uprising is a series of young talented performers who's passion is to change the way the corporate event industry thinks about music. The trend is based on letting opposites attract, creating a new type of disruption, and changing the status quo.

Here are the results of our latest hunt; fresh and original to keep the entertainment world fresh and ever-evolving.

- A female vocalist singing with a beat boxer
- Pairing a Soprano with a Spoken Word rapper
- Rock & Roll Dueling Female Cellists
- An Electric harpist who plays alongside a cellist with a DJ

These are just a few of the acts Idea Hunter has been working on and with classically trained young artists that are breaking down barriers in the music scene. These collaborations are brilliant, cool and very on trend. Not only do these performers learn to make music together, they are also being advised on

choreography, styling and delivery. Ultimately the engagement with the audience is more powerful and speaks to the importance of change. We as event professionals should always be leaping out of that comfort zone and encouraging our clients to take game changing risks.

Toronto is being recognized around the world for it's unique style and the birth of many new musicians who are breaking ground. At the Idea Hunter it is our mission to stay on top and continue to teach young artists how to earn a living by entertaining in a ever changing world.

Always hunting for fresh new ideas, be sure to follow [@the_idea_hunter](#) to see their latest catch.



Alexandria



Scott Jackson & Svet

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recommended vendor

In Full Bloom

Janine Sebastian, the creator behind FaBLOOMosity has an endless passion for all things glamorous and luxe and through her inspired, one of a kind stunning floral designs she is reinventing what it means to be a floral Atelier. Her company, founded in Edmonton in 2012 has grown in leaps and bounds in just a few short years, and now provides floral gorgeousness to the corporate and social markets in Edmonton, Calgary, Banff, Canmore, Lake Louise, Emerald Lake, Kelowna and Jasper.

Supported by an award winning team that she inspires daily with her talent and drive, Janine's designs can be seen in high fashion wedding magazines and websites around the world. Fabloomosity was most recently nominated for a 2016 Canadian Special Events Readers Choice Award by industry professionals from across Canada.

Just one example of her ingenuity includes the Bloom Box. There beautiful customized floral collections are designed for special occasions with witty and catchy names like "Life Would Suck Without You", a gorgeous arrangement of succulents or "Life's a Beach", a stunning arrangement of beach inspired flowers.

The floral world is highly competitive, and in just a short time, Fabloomosity has become one of the most sought after, innovative and imaginative designers in Western Canada. We cannot wait to see what comes next.



Play Me



"Catering the Daffodil Ball is always an exciting challenge as it has such an enviable international reputation and every year we have to reinvent ourselves to impress guests with an outstanding dining experience. The Chinese theme increased the difficulty level as we had to source perfectly ripe fresh Asian products in large quantities early in the Spring season as well as do extensive research about the Cantonese culinary traditions, typical dishes and preparation techniques."

Armando Arruda, Director, Outside Catering for Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth

The Daffodil Ball

Shanghai Silk

Windsor Station, Montreal, Canada

The Daffodil Ball is the brainchild of uber chic, Montreal based event planner [Alison Silcoff](#), who has turned the annual soiree into a highly anticipated theatrical and gastronomic masterpiece. She and her team of the very finest event vendors create elaborate and intricate productions that continue to win them international event awards year after year.

The theme of 2015 Daffodil Ball, which just won a 2016 Canadian Event Industry Award, was Shanghai Silk, reflecting the fantasy, nostalgia and romance of Shanghai – a vibrant mélange of old and new, a city in seemingly unstoppable transition. The Chinese theme was carried through in decor, menu, entertainment and guests' fashion choices.

Armando Aruda, Director of Catering of Re Le Traiteur, the outside catering service of the famed Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth Hotel, was tasked to uphold the enviable international reputation of the Daffodil Ball by creating evening which would impress its guests with an outstanding dining experience.

The catering chef designed an imaginative and exquisite five-course authentic Imperial Chinese dinner that brilliantly conveyed the theme, fusing Cantonese and Szechuan flavours with colorful and original presentations, decorative elements and attentive personalized details. From the highly entertaining cocktail to the late-night wonton soup station, the evening unfolded seamlessly with perfectly timed service and an exquisite experiential menu.

The logistics to complete this culinary feat were nothing short of spectacular. A team of 24 chefs and pastry chefs were required for preparations, with 16 remaining on site during the event. 70 high end servers, 24 sommeliers, 8 Maitres d'hôtel, 6 bar captains and 16 bus-persons were trained to ensure personalized service was given to each of the 660 guests. To further complement the theme, the serving staff wore Chinese silk tunics – midnight blue for waiters and burgundy for sommeliers.

The evening began with a selection of nine hors d'oeuvres presented on trays adorned with orchids, lotus roots, exotic leaves and served in bamboo spoons or steamers. Guests sipped on Champagne and an Asian-inspired litchi cocktail and enjoyed authentic dishes such as including Marbled tea infused quails eggs, Oriental salmon sashimi with crispy Chinese cabbage and pink radish and Jellyfish and chicken salad with sesame and coriander to highlight just a few.

Dinner was a feat of brilliance; A high-end multi-course Chinese banquet with a modern fusion spin. After completing their research, the caterer and his chef drew on their team's creativity to come up with an impressive line-up of dishes featuring authentic and flavourful creations with stunningly original presentations. Read on and enjoy this visual tour of culinary excellence.



The Imperial Dinner



Green papaya salad, Winter melon with coriander and Shrimp chips stuffed with lacquered mushrooms

The chef worked closely with his supplier to source 330 pounds of black winter melons, which would be the exact ripeness on event day. Preparation required delicate manipulation. On the morning of the Ball, 1,900 pounds of daikon, carrot and green papaya were hand cut into matchsticks. The shrimp chips were fried on site to remain crispy and then garnished with a mushroom preparation 25 minutes prior to serving and placed on plates at the last minute.

Szechuan Sautéed Pork with Crispy Tapioca Noodle Nest

The complexity of this dish was the precise cooking technique required by the meat. It was first sautéed in the caterer's main kitchen, then transported on site in heating units, during rush hour, risking traffic jams. A team of cooks was responsible for monitoring and adjusting the meat temperature enroute. The pork was lacquered in large woks on site just before serving. The presentation was so fragile, with meat placed atop a basket of crispy noodle that the teams had to slowly and delicately plate each as though it were a piece of art.



Imperial Lacquered Breast of Duck, Peking Pancakes, Soy Sesame Twist

Preparation of the lacquered ducks was done with the help of a master Chinese chef who had to preserve the skins intact, cut them in equal size and roast them until crispy so they could be used as garnish. Once ready, the duck skin tiles were kept in a ventilated and controlled area so as not to be altered by humidity. All 250 duck breasts were delicately removed from the bone, vacuum-packed to marinate and enhance flavours and slow-cooked at low temperature for six hours to obtain a very tender meat that melted in the mouth.



Yangtze lobster, Bok choy basket with lotus and water chestnuts

A team worked through the night to cook and shell 350 fresh local lobsters, making sure to take out all the meat while keeping some parts intact for garnish. 700 antennas and 700 legs were fried to enhance color and shine. The tails were cut lengthwise and cooked in a circular shape to fit the size of the bok choy leaf bundles. The leaves were cooked "al dente", stuffed with water chestnut and lotus and shaped using an exclusive mold.



Dim sum of desserts

The dessert was composed of Wonton aumonière stuffed with candied pineapple, Litchi sherbet and candied ginger on starfruit, Flower jelly with goji berries and dried flower petals and Mini kebab of caramelized tropical fruits.

Chinese tea, coffee, infusions and Fortune cookies (with customized messages) were served at the table after dinner and to ensure authenticity of the experience Wonton soup and a traditional smoked meat sandwich bar was available for guests while waiting for the valet.





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Inside URBAN ROMANCE

A STYLED SHOOT BY ARTHUR K



FUSION OF HIPSTER AND GRACE

Concept & Creative Director: Arthur K, Fusion Events

Concept & Co-Creator: Justin James, Decor & More Inc.; Floral Design: Terry Vasconcelos, Decor & More Inc.; Photography: AGI Studio (John Lin); Location: Evergreen Brickworks, Toronto



Taking inspiration from urban spaces and modern art forms such as graffiti and tattoos, these edgy designs are a juxtaposition of high end luxury and uptown hispter.



Gown:
Ines DiSanto

Menswear:
Theodore 1922

Makeup & Hair:
Rachel Renna

Jewellery:
Tara Fava Jewellery

Shoes:
Jimmy Choo



Chairs:
Detailz Chair Couture

Decor & Rentals:
Decor & More Inc.

Rentals:
Higgins Event Rentals
and Chairman Mills

Stationery:
Paper Damsels

Cake:
Cocoa - Fancy

Food Truck:
Chimney Stax



This look inspires one to embrace the feeling that comes with stepping out of the traditional and into the extraordinary; excited about the possibilities of a modern edgy wedding designed in bold colour palettes.



HARROP



LOVE

I'll never be home with you

Breathe the life

THINK HAPPY BE





“The industrial look of the food truck adds to the urban feel and the trend is so hot that these mobile caterers are now serving wedding quality, high end food service.”

Food Trucks:
Chimney Stax
and Gourmet Guyz







Attendees experiencing MetaVRse at the CDW BTEX event.

what'sup

Etouches has acquired Zentila, a company that streamlines the process of sourcing and booking venues as well as capturing data to measurably increase meeting ROI. According to Shane Edmonds,



CTO of etouches, "Zentila's product, technology, and staff will bolster etouches venue sourcing and allow us to offer a fully integrated solution as part of the entire event management software process." As part of the acquisition, hospitality industry leader,

founder and current CEO of Zentila Mike Mason will join the etouches executive team as Vice President, Sourcing and Hospitality Solutions.

Dragonfly Meeting Solutions Inc. has welcomed Bruce MacDonald to their team.



Bruce joins as Director of Business Development and Strategic Partnerships and brings a wealth of experience from many years in international DMC work with companies like JPdL Toronto and Host Destination Management.

B O L D

EVENT
CREATIVE

Canadian Event Industry Award Winner, BLD Decor and Scenery, has changed their name to BOLD Event Creative. They are a Vancouver based, award winning multi-faceted, event and exhibit company that creates dynamic events, custom exhibits, and engaging experiences.

Their mission is to create and provide inspired and impactful experiences for our clients and their audiences through Décor & Design services and products.



Entrance to Waldorf Astoria Hotel



KUDOS to Alan Smithson and Julie Anderson Smithson,

founders of Emulator (touch screen DJ system) on the official launch of their new company, MetaVRse. Using Virtual Reality (VR) entertainment systems MetaVRse. offers event attendees the ability to go swimming with sharks, sit court side, go on stage at festivals, ride a virtual roller coaster, paint in 360° and using a green screen be transported directly into their masterpiece. and dozens of other out of this world experiences.



Alan Smithson, Emulator

Luxe Modern Rentals has a brand new 5000 sq ft luxury showroom featuring two floors of fresh new rental furniture. Congrats on an almost year long renovation and design process.



WALDORF ASTORIA®
NEW YORK

The iconic Waldorf-Astoria hotel will host it's last guest for at least three years. The legendary New York landmark is closing its doors next

Spring in preparation for a massive overhaul that will see up to 1,100 of the 1,413 rooms turned into apartments. When the property re-opens it will have 300 - 500 hotel rooms. If the walls of this the glitzy Park Avenue property could talk they would tell tales of visits by legends like Cole Porter, Grace Kelly, Frank Sinatra every US President after Hoover, Generals MacArthur, Eisenhower & Bradley, Paris Hilton and...the founders of Canadian Special Events.

fab**five**

Great Places

Amazing Spaces

We have curated a list of five fabulous Western/Northern Canadian event spaces inspired by art, nature and Canada's rich cultural heritage.







PAINTED BOAT

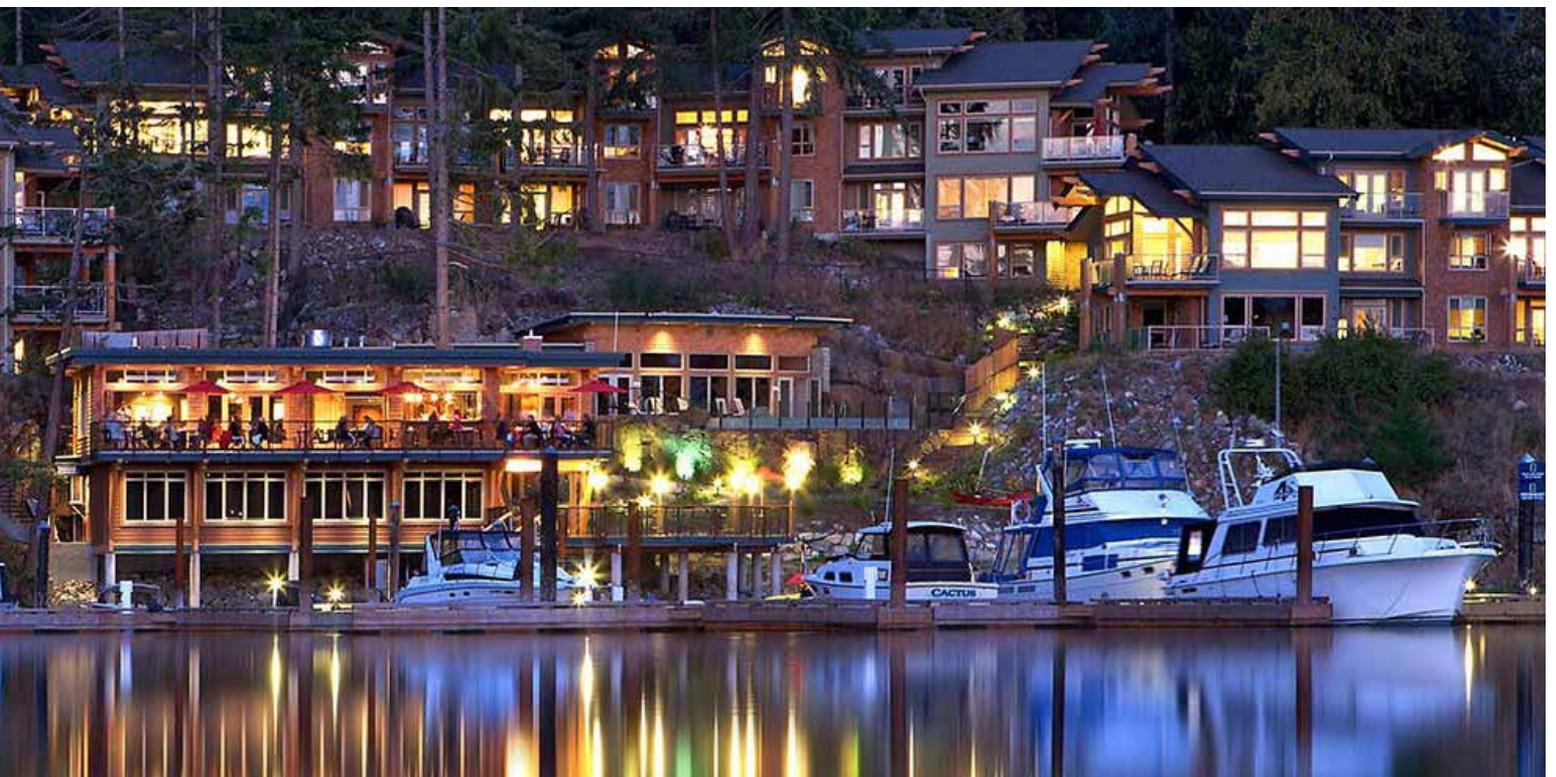
RESORT SPA & MARINA

On the Rocks

Painted Boat Resort & Marina,
Sunshine Coast BC

Nestled in a five-acre glade of Douglas fir, red cedar and arbutus trees, Peter Treuheit's architectural design was carefully designed to take full advantage of this extraordinary geography. Imagine your meeting or event in one of their spectacular nature encouraged spaces, each uniquely designed with the earth in mind and built to complement the beauty and wonder of their inspired surroundings.

Meet in the morning, and hike, kayak, or fish in the afternoon – Painted Boat Resort Spa & Marina is an incredible location for small meetings, events and weddings. With its breathtaking vista's local five star culinary offerings and close proximity to Vancouver, this is the ultimate in west coast experiences.





Outdoor spa at Painted Boat Resort

Nestled in a five-acre glade of Douglas fir, red cedar and arbutus trees, Painted Boat is designed to take full advantage of this extraordinary geography.



A place of world arts + cultures

Spectacular by Nature

Vancouver's Museum of Anthropology

Events held at the MOA offer an unforgettable experience in one of Canada's foremost cultural attractions. This dramatic venue boasts exclusive, intimate spaces for business and social events with rich, culturally intense galleries and stunning ocean views.

This jewel has long since been a favourite with local planners for its spectacular location and architecturally magnificent design. Spaces for rent include the presentation circle in the Multiversity Galleries; the Theatre Gallery with the most amazing Italian leather chairs, the Great Hall and the courtyard with over 3,500 square feet and a grassy plateau that overlooks the Sea to Sky coastline that can accommodate 1000 people seated for dinner.



Photography by Anthony Maw



Wedding reception at Vancouver's Museum of Anthropology
Photography by Gwilyn Timmers





ELK RIDGE

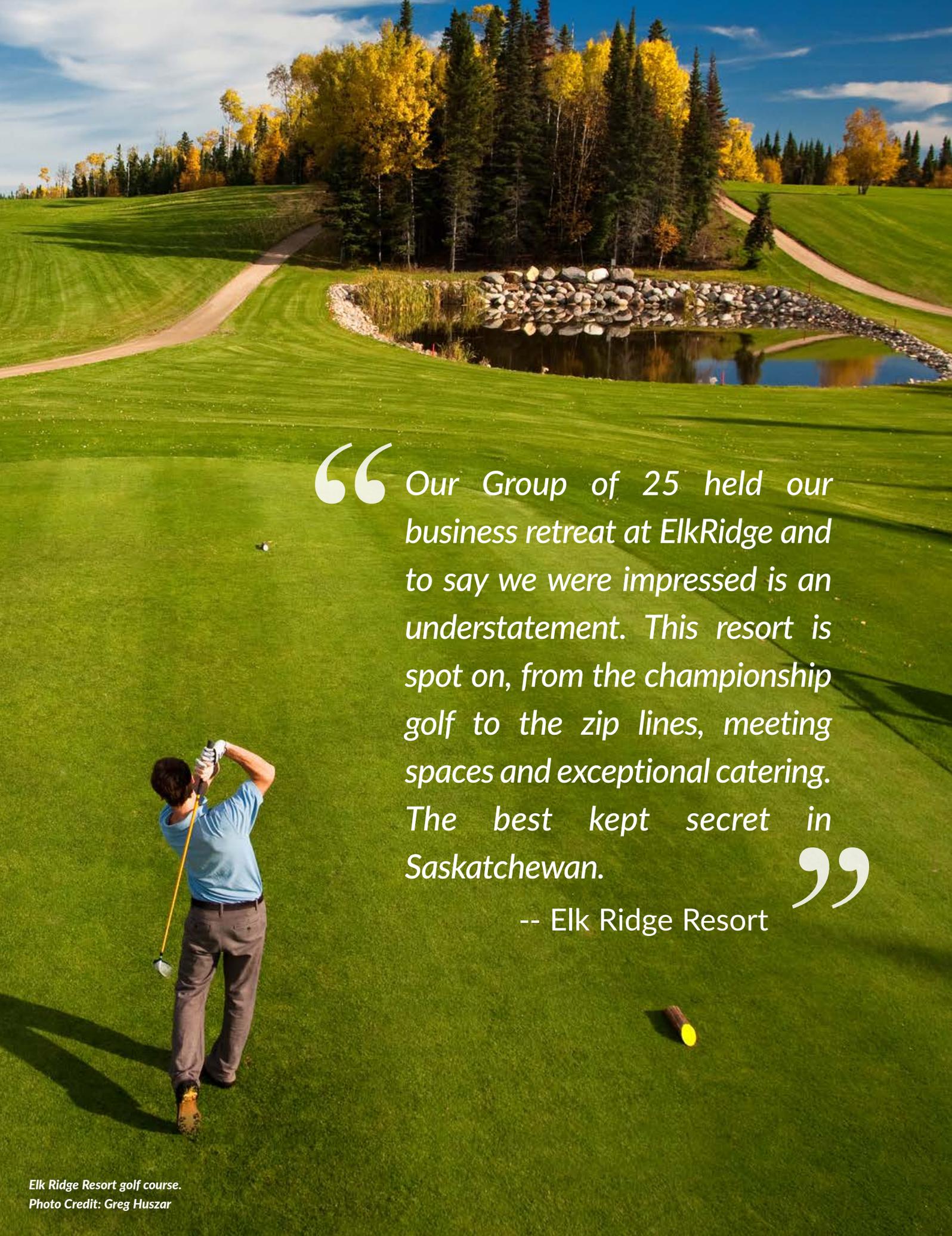
RESORT

Deep in the Boreal Forest Elk Ridge Resort, Saskatchewan

Located in a luxurious setting in the heart of the boreal forest. Elk Ridge is Saskatchewan's premier all season resort, and is recognized as Reader's Digest *Top 9 Must See Canadian Winter Destinations*. The resort features a world class golf course, five star dining and a myriad of all season experiences for even the most discerning corporate client. For connectivity, meetings are supported by state of the art technology and an event team ready to help plan down to the last detail. For post meetings, this resort features outdoor experiences such night golf swimming, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, tobogganing, or cross-country skiing over more than 400 km of groomed trails, kayaking and watching northern lights.



Inside lobby of front entrance



“ Our Group of 25 held our business retreat at ElkRidge and to say we were impressed is an understatement. This resort is spot on, from the championship golf to the zip lines, meeting spaces and exceptional catering. The best kept secret in Saskatchewan. ”

-- Elk Ridge Resort



HOTEL *Arts*

The Art of Indulgence

Hotel Arts, Calgary, AB

Hotel Arts is a creative and extraordinarily unique boutique hotel in the heart of downtown Calgary. This chic property is designed to appeal to even the most discerning guests, offering luxury and culture at every level. The hotel boasts original art on every floor, from stunning sculpture to breathtaking paintings, to hand blown art glass light fixtures.

The in house catering features two award-winning dining experiences; Yellow Door and Raw Bar with its exotic Pacific-Rim influenced cuisine, bespoke cocktail collection and the stunning poolside patio.

For events, their award winning events team is passionate about creating one of a kind experiences for your guests. Creative spaces, sumptuous cuisine and attention-to-detail that would impress Michelangelo - events at Hotel Arts are nothing short of inspired.





“Have you ever stopped to listen to silence? Or, taken in the sheer beauty of open spaces? Have you ever experienced the unexplainable –the unexplainably surreal? Look up. See the sky unveil the multitude of its brilliance. The Aurora Borealis, away from the lights of the city is something no one should miss.”

-- Blachford Lake Lodge



Blachford Lake Lodge

AND WILDERNESS RESORT

Aurora

Blachford Lake Lodge,
Yellowknife, NWT

Located in the rugged wilderness of Northern Canada, this resort is in Aurora-watching country. Perched on a rocky knoll overlooking Blachford Lake, it is a half-hour bush-plane ride from the city of Yellowknife. It may be many miles from the closet Starbucks but they guarantee that your first cup of coffee on the stillness of a northern morning will be the best cup of coffee you ever have.

The high end lodge provides all the benefits of a luxury hotel, such as wireless internet, hot tubs and Aurora-watch wake-up service. Combined with the priceless addition of a pristine wilderness environment, unpolluted by artificial light or noise, this is the perfect setting for watching the Aurora Borealis.

Blachford's unique location, five star dining comfortable northern wilderness setting, security and unobtrusive service are valued for small conferences, workshops and team building for elite groups. With all the modern technical amenities and full connectivity, Blachford offers all the comforts of a resort in a magical wilderness setting.





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Of The Month



The Fun Theory

An initiative of Volkswagen, TheFunTheory.com is a resource full of clever inventions and ideas using the concept of "fun" to solve social issues throughout the world. The website features dozens of videos, drawings and proposals.

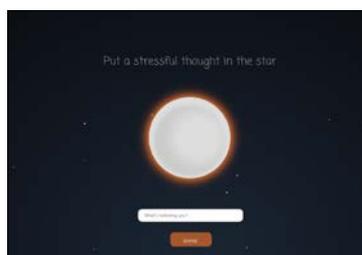
www.thefuntheory.com



Houzz

Houzz features an infinite gallery of interior design ideas for those seeking decor inspiration for an upcoming event or project. You can search by department, room size or function, even check out the sale section to land yourself some great deals.

www.houzz.com



Pixel Thoughts

As planners, every details seems like a big deal. For those moments when things seem out of control or your overwhelmed, take a minute and use this website to put things into perspective.

www.pixelthoughts.com



Taste Spotting

An obsessive, compulsive collection of eye-catching images that link to something delicious on the other side full of recipes, references, experiences, stories, articles, products, and anything else that inspires exquisite taste.

www.tastespotting.com



Mention

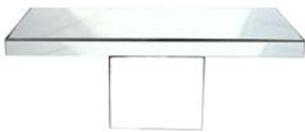
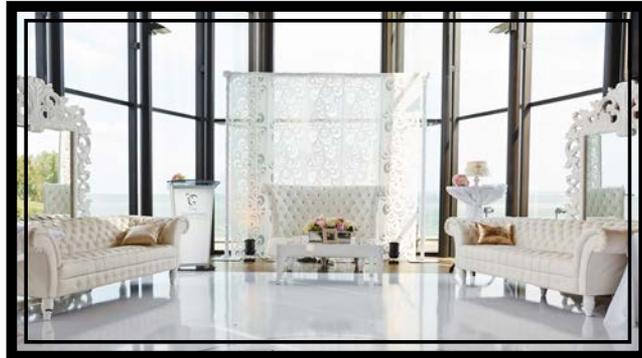
Wanted to know what's being said about you or your company online and on social media? Mention gives you the upper hand in the world of marketing by monitoring word-of-mouth, allowing you to share the good and mediate the bad.

www.mention.com



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Urban Deception MATT JOHNSON

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This is not your ordinary entertainer. Urban Deception is unlike anything else in the arena of corporate performers.

Originally from England, Matt Johnson now lives in Vancouver, but he has spent the past 20 years performing in the most incredible destinations on earth for some of the most successful companies in the world.

Matt started as most in his field do, as a traditional magician and illusionist. He developed both his knowledge in the mystic arts and his techniques from the countries he visited and the people he met along the way. The style of performance Matt brings to the stage is what he calls Urban Deception, a cool mix of urban style street magic combined with the comedic timing and slick stage presence of a seasoned corporate performer. He incorporates magic, sleight of hand, mind reading, the power of suggestion, razor sharp comedy timing and audience interaction.

The best reaction a planner can get from their client is "...Simply Brilliant!" which is exactly the response Matt's performance receives from clients like Mercedes, Hilton, Eli Lilly, TD and Toyota.

If you want unique, one of a kind, powerful, and innovative performances for your corporate or social productions, Urban Deception is absolutely Mind Blowing.

For more about Matt Johnson visit www.urbandeception.com



Photography by Jessica Jillings Photography

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