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ART!

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With One of Canada's Most

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*Boundless: A Film Recognizing
Women Pilots in World War II*

MINING LAUGHTER
Comedy with Barry Taylor

REVE DE MOI
*Estelle Okayon's
Extraordinary Art Exhibit*

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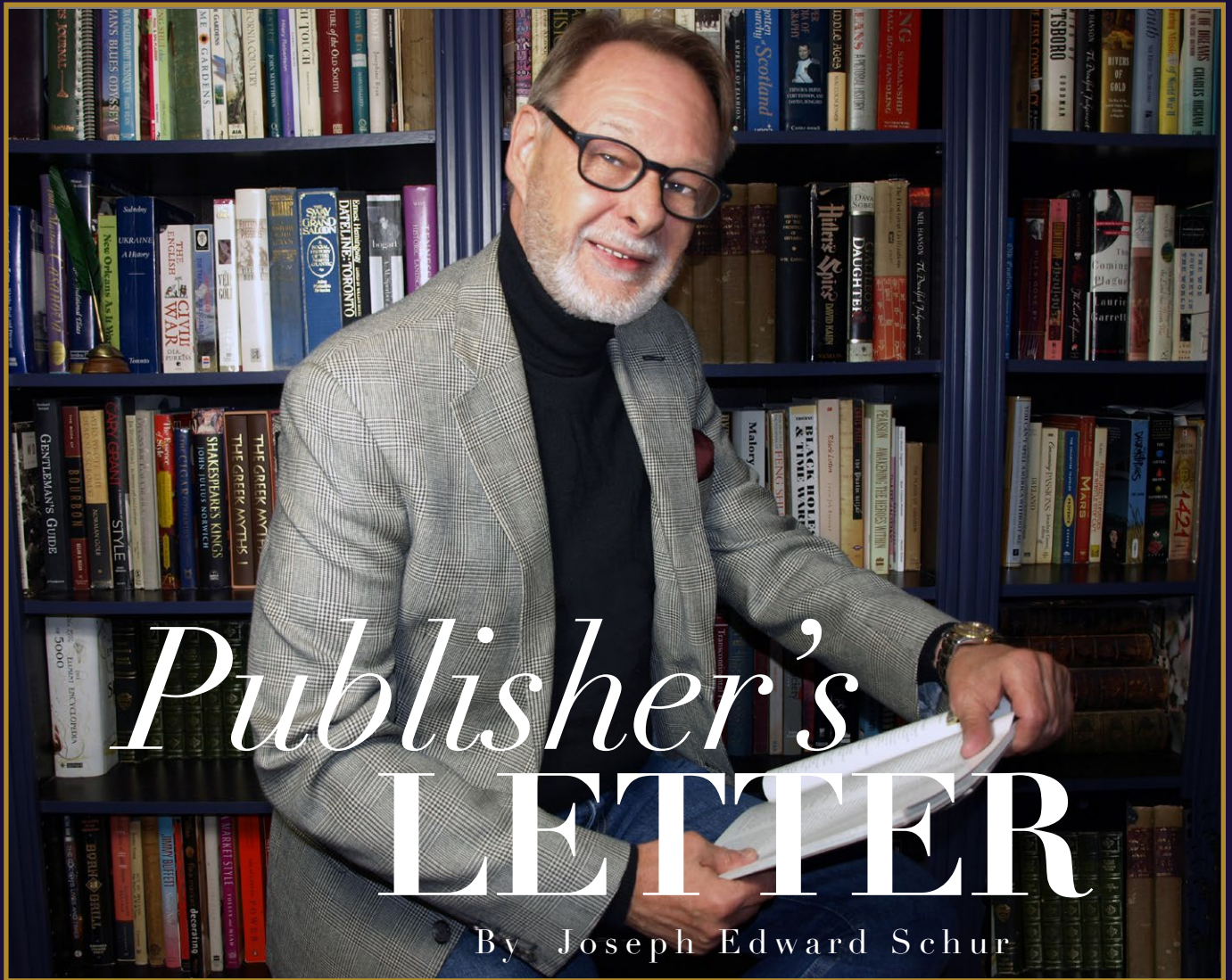
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2021 and beyond: On the precipice of change

Are we *really* on the precipice of change? Your guess is as good as mine, but let's agree that the sun will rise tomorrow.

See how easy that was? We can actually agree on something! Now let's expand on that. Let's agree that we are sentient beings, and for the most part, with a conscience. We're all passport-carrying members of this planet that we call Earth.

So why is it so difficult for us to get along? Regardless of culture, religion or color, let's embrace the fact that we're all here sharing the same sky, the same clouds, the same air that we breathe. And sharing hopes and dreams for the future. Our future. Our *dream* of the future.

As a child, I was reminded often that 'I was nothing but a dreamer.' Incredibly hurtful words for a kid. It was like a black eye to the ego. Yet the foundation of progress is built on dreams. Please read Jadyn Rylee's commentary on the subject of bullying on page 32.

I'm not a kid anymore; I'm the Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of this magazine. A publication that serves to inspire, motivate, educate and entertain.

That's Spencer.

In the spirit of Spencer, be the architect of CHANGE, now and beyond 2021!

joseph.schur@spencermag.com

An Editor's Eye

Rose Marie Bresolin as Managing Editor



Rose Marie Bresolin is a former teacher and elementary school principal. She brings to Spencer the richness of her career background and the skills of a seasoned writer and editor. Intrigued by the potential of a written word, she sees Spencer as the ideal platform for using it to motivate and inspire.

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At Spencer we are set to bring you stories that will ignite your interest. Stories rooted in our country and around the world, they will inform and entertain you, and stir your curiosity to explore further. With a mandate to promote fashion, arts & culture, design, and lifestyle, Spencer is well positioned to impact creativity and the ways in which it is perceived in education and the work force. Our research tells us that the public stage is ripe and ready for fresh ideas, and you can trust that Spencer will contribute with conscience to the evolution of the world of magazines.

The Team at Spencer Magazine also wants to convey the sense of excitement and the bustle behind the scenes, as we deliver to you the dream we started with!

I will forever think of Spencer as Joseph's Dream, a dream that he described so vividly that we were made privy to the many colours of the celebrated coat worn by Joseph of the biblical account.

In laying out a blueprint to illustrate how as a Team we could produce a magazine of quality and timelessness, we came away convinced that he possessed the skills and the imagination to lead us into making it a reality.

Contact Us

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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From a young age, James became a passionate car enthusiastic, racing cars and motorcycles. When not on the track he enjoys writing and collecting cars. He is a member of the Trillium Auto Club.



Darren Dobson

Spanning over a decade, Darren is a veteran of assignments in Canada, Europe and the US. Writing credits include covering luxury automobiles, yachting, private jets, motorcycles and luxury travel.



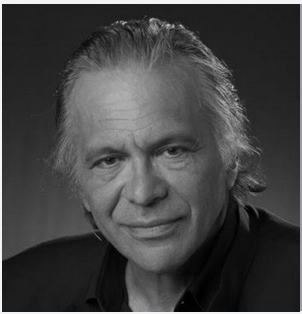
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Beth is an author, editor, and public & media relations specialist. She is a contributing author in 8 international best-selling, award-winning books. She also coaches authors and motivational speakers.



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Vian Andrews is a Canadian writer residing in the west coast city of Vancouver. Vian studied theater at Brock University. Later, Vian took a law degree at UBC and pursued a career in law and business.



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Steve is an actor and editor, working across a variety of genres and subject matter. Currently, he is working on a handful of pre-production television and movie projects in Canada and Europe.



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An award-winning architect and designer based in Canada, Monica is of Greek-Romanian heritage, influenced by a European fashion sense. She is also the designer of the Musesa jewelry brand.



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Wanda has an extensive background in the music industry. She is the Founder and Managing Director of Dandelions of Courage Performing Arts & Entertainment Group In Toronto, Canada.



Buzz Spencer

Buzz is a feline connoisseur, specializing in everything and anything that tastes good. He has mastered a Parisian accent, with a distinctive 'Le Meow' which often earns him compliments.

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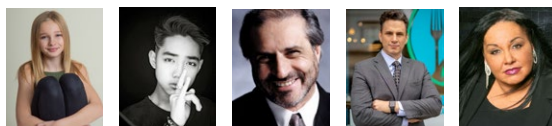
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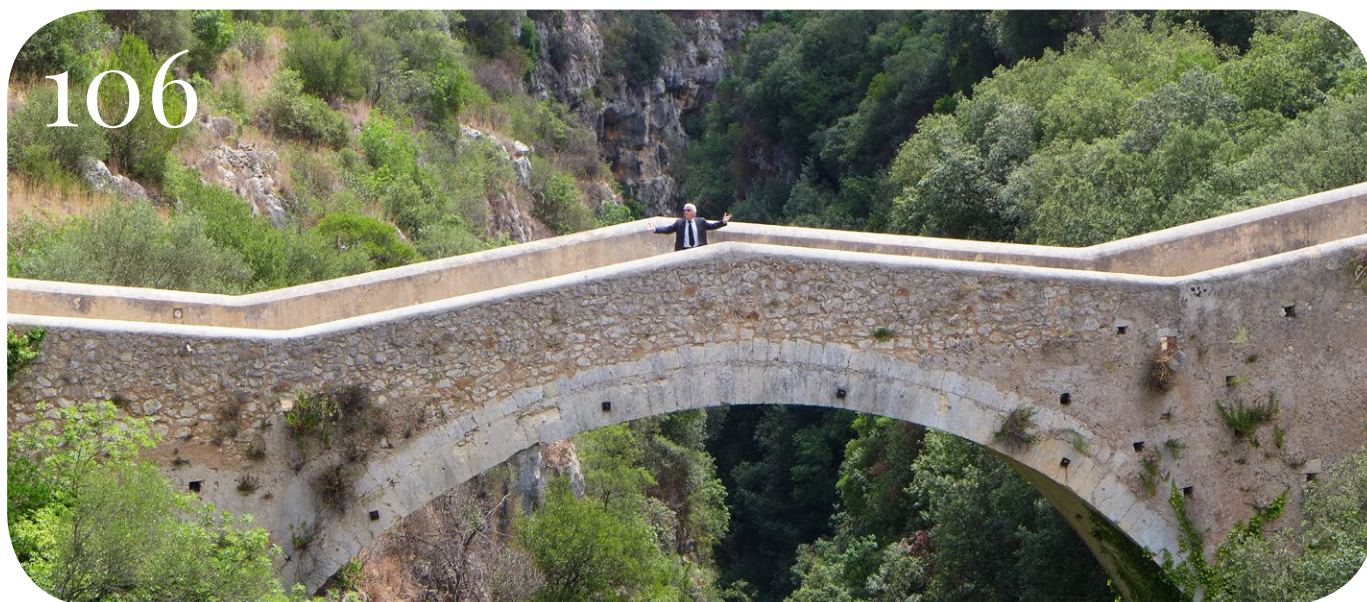
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Spencer's World

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We are Spencer, we are the World



Part 1

The *Creek's* FALSE DRAMA

Vancouver in 5 Walks and a Train Ride

By Vian Andrews

A Vancouver playwright takes a Toronto actor on a walk around the seawall of Vancouver's False Creek where the actor learns how the city's immersive theatre scene is reflected in the Creek's rising and falling tidal waters.

The article is the first of a series of six that will take readers on five revelatory excursions through various parts of Canada's laid-back west coast city PLUS a ride on SkyTrain, the regional rail system that penetrates the

city's booming exurbia. The writer offers not a pedestrian experience, but a moveable feast and an all-senses take on art and culture in Vancouver and its surrounds in dialogue with specially chosen friends.

Not long ago, a Toronto actor, friend of mine, came this way for the first time since 1971. In those days he was a lanky and unencumbered youth with a weed-fumed urge to see Lotus Land for himself.





Back then, he carried a backpack crammed with high ideals and a thousand hopes for a future full of leading roles in brilliant plays. He returned to Toronto, to his fated life (for wasn't Canadian theatre really a Toronto thing?) and enjoyed success and failure in equal measure.

To his What's new? question I suggested a walk around False Creek, a three-kilometer long, saltwater inlet that keeps Vancouver's downtown from chafing-up against the rest of the city. At its narrowest, about a hundred meters wide, three hundred at its widest. Three bridges carry vehicles and pedestrians from one side to the other, while scores of walkers, runners and bicyclists make their way around a walkway – a seawall – that wends its way along the Creek's



bays and coves. In some of those, small craft bob at anchor, but in the largest coves, there are mazes of docks where power launches rise and fall on the tides beneath the yachts of the rich and the super rich.

Off we went, my friend and I, on a day when sunlight filled the air and kaleidoscoped on the Creek's breezy waters. Banks of titanium-white clouds marched slowly across the blue Serengeti of a high, wide sky while gulls turned in the empty, salt-tinged air below. Movement everywhere at once accompanied by sounds so subtle they are not consciously heard but register somewhere in the mind, the tink-tink of metal ropes on metal masts, murmur of adults, shriek of kids, flag flap, bike bells, roller blade wheels clacking on brick pavements, the shuffle of chairs on outdoor patios, the distant hum and honk of traffic on the bridges.

The actor declares the *mise en scene* to be as impressively dramatic as any he has seen on his many travels. And I, playwright, answer that no, it's not dramatic, it's chamber music that's played into your ears before your very eyes, but

background stuff, all of it. If there is a narrative, it's buried in Vancouver's short history. Plot and sub-plot ditto. The protagonists and antagonists, well, they are the city itself in its various, pleasant selves, hardly ever stirred by comedic or tragic conflict.

“My friend turns to me and says tell me about theatre in Vancouver.”

On False Creek's south side, where my actor friend and I walked, housing is low rise, some of it fronting the walk, but much of it pushed back behind swards of grass and berms of flowering trees, shrubs and the miscellaneous perennials that adore Vancouver's sometimes wet weather. There is even a pond fed by a small waterfall next to a dog park next to a school and its playground.

He stops, climbs the foot-high stone slabs that form the water side of the seawall, and strikes a pose while he looks across the Creek to its north side. There, one's eyes are confronted by a wall of determinedly high, glass condo towers, sometimes fronted by rows of townhouses that are cheek-by-jowl with the sea wall.

At the western end of that shore, there are a couple of largish parks that create a little space between the buildings and the water, but at the very eastern end there are some brutally designed towers squeezed in around Pacific Stadium where roads run like Alph the Sacred River in the cavernous shadows. The stadium is like an immense, multi-legged sea creature tossed-up on the shore then turned on its back by a giant bird, no longer kicking, life gone out of it.

Over there, people in their tens of thousands are stacked-up and boxed-up and submit themselves to live in very expensive small spaces. If you want to look out into the vivifying openness of False Creek, you will pay a helluva lot more than those who will have to look at the lives their neighbours live in the next building and the next. All, however, can access the Creek, its parks and its seawall within moments, and that is something, part of the city planners' plans to soften the effects of Vancouver's ongoing, city-wide "densification."

My friend turns to me and says tell me about theatre in Vancouver. Maybe he'll move west, audition a few roles that call for a grizzled veteran.

The landscape of False Creek is analogous to the city's theatre scene. It does not want for busyness. It is constantly in motion and for those relatively few (compared to film goers, sports fans, club goers) who are its practitioners and its audiences, theatre here is an immersive experience.

Our largest theatre spaces are often booked for musicals - mostly out of New York and London. (There is nothing like the siren call of works that critics and audiences in those places have pre-certified as great.)

The Arts Club, our largest independent theatre (and many of the smaller theatres), produce a good many "proven" plays that have also been lauded in those international centers. Mostly these are re-stagings of old chestnuts, but some, having made their way into the category of the illustrious, might be just three or four years old, but new to us.

The annual Push Festival, which mixes "proven" plays and other performance works from "away" with some of the best of recent local works. Bard on the Beach, presided over by a fustian and aging Artistic Director, runs a tented Shakespeare Festival every summer in park by English Bay where local actors enjoy their hour (or three) upon the stage.

But, a lot of original, local work does find its way into small venues around the city. These are written, produced, directed, "teched" and acted in by a very large number of earnestly creative people, mostly the young who are freshly committed to the theatrical ideal. Alas, a great deal of their work goes unrewarded, or poorly rewarded, at least, financially,

So, would be stage actors who might otherwise mature into prodigious talents if given the chance, can't stay in the game. They make their way, if they can, into background or day work in the plethora of American TV and film productions that get done in Vancouver, and some even land good secondary or tertiary roles, to support the imported leads from Hollywood. Or they get "real" jobs and are lost to the stage forever.

In short, theatre in Vancouver has a resonating and salutary energy to be sure. But, just as the architecture of the city does not include any home-grown masterworks, despite our efforts, none of our plays, with one or two exceptions in fifty years (at least) have made their way to the category of the illustrious, let alone to audiences in other cities.

And what does my actor friend say, as he casts his eyes west down the length of False Creek into the eye of the setting sun, into the vanishing point? It's the same in Toronto.

Yes, and in Calgary and Winnipeg, Montreal and Halifax and every other place where theatre is done in Canada. But, we have False Creek, and you don't, I think to myself. Because I do not want to offend or, what could be worse, inject a misbegotten sneer in this dialogue of fools.

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Raising a Cuppa

TO A BLACK CANADIAN PIONEER

Anderson Abbott attended schools in both Canada and the USA, returning to graduate from the University Of Toronto Faculty Of Medicine in 1861, to become the first Canadian born Black surgeon and family physician.

By Beth McBlain



While Black Lives Matter demonstrators are marching in one part of Toronto there is a small café located in the most southerly part of the city that is named for and honors one of Canada's most unknown famous Black men – Dr. Anderson Ruffin Abbott, a free born Canadian surgeon, family doctor and decorated hero of the American Civil War.

The Abbott, a small café on Spencer Avenue in the Parkdale area of Toronto has been in existence for 10 years now and from the very beginning it has honored Dr. Abbott (1837-1913).

Anderson Ruffin Abbott was born to free Black parents in 1837. They were transplanted free born Black Americans who came north to escape the much more lethal form of racism that existed in the United States in those days. The family were originally merchants, operating a general goods store in Mobile, Alabama. After they relocated to Canada, Abbott's father (Wilson Abbott) made his money in real estate eventually becoming active in the politics of early Toronto and winning a seat on the City Council in 1838. Abbott had 2 siblings who survived to adulthood; Amelia Etta and William Henson.

As a young man, Anderson Abbott attended schools in both Canada and the USA, returning to graduate from the University Of Toronto Faculty Of Medicine in 1861, becoming the first Canadian born Black surgeon and family physician.

When the American Civil war began he applied to serve in the Union Army but was rejected when he refused to serve only in the segregated corps of the army. He was ultimately taken on as a civilian contractor, one of only eight Black surgeons in the entire Union Army. During his time in the Army he became a friend of President Abraham Lincoln and was one of the doctors in attendance after the President was shot in 1865.

After the war Abbott returned to Toronto, marrying Mary Ann Casey, an 18 year old barber's daughter in 1871. The newlyweds settled in Chatham, Ontario where Abbott opened a successful medical practice. The couple had and raised seven children.



Dr. Abbott, a friend of Abraham Lincoln, attending the President on his deathbed

This article is too short to detail all of Abbott's accomplishments over his lifetime but some of the highlights include: Becoming the first Black coroner for Kent County in 1874. He held this position until 1881. He served as the President of the Chatham Medical Society. Simultaneously, serving as President of the Wilberforce Educational Institute from 1873 to 1877; a school that prepared African Canadian students for university studies. From this position he campaigned against racially segregated schools.

After living in various other parts of southern Ontario the family moved to Chicago in 1894 where he served as the surgeon-in-chief (eventually becoming the Medical Superintendent) of the hospital now known as Provident Hospital of Cook County. At

the time it was the first training hospital for Black nurses in the United States.

The family returned to Toronto in 1898 where he continued to teach, write and lecture. His areas of interest included medicine, Black history, the Civil War, Darwinism, biology, and poetry.

Abbott died in Toronto in 1913 at the age of 76. He is buried at Toronto Necropolis which is located on the west side of the Don Valley near the Riverdale Farm. It is the resting place of several other well-known Canadians.

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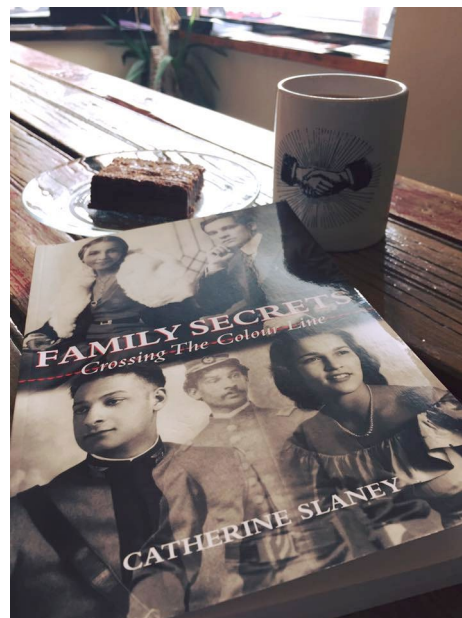


The café named The Abbott is located at 99 Spencer Avenue. If you drop by, look for the name Abbott which has been spelled out on the tiled floor of the café and raise a cuppa java in his memory and honour.



Catherine Slaney

As a coincidence, Catherine Slaney, the author of "Family Secrets" and great-granddaughter of Anderson Abbott, just happened to be in the Parkdale neighborhood and dropped into The Abbott for a quick coffee. She had no idea about the café's tribute to Dr. Abbott. Catherine, a professor of animal science and ethics, generously gifted the owners of the café with a signed copy of her book.



Hitting the Trails at Limehouse Conservation area

A surprising gem under an hour's drive north of Toronto, Ontario, Limehouse Conservation Area is located just west of the city of Georgetown, near the Village of Limehouse.

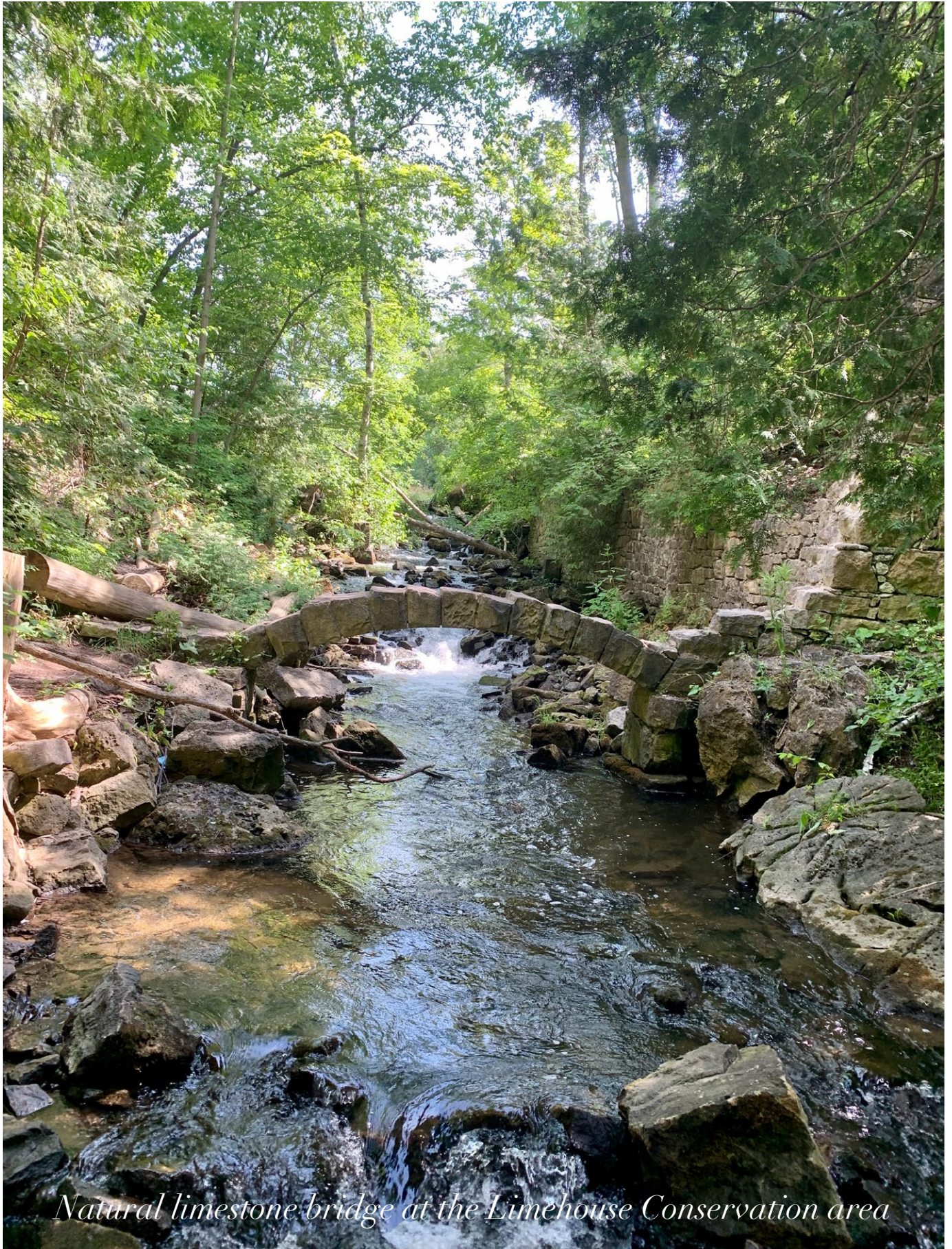
The area is part of the Niagara Escarpment and is owned and operated by Credit Valley Conservation. Included in the watershed of the Credit River, it is bisected by its tributary, the Black Creek.

The beautiful limestone kilns at the Limehouse Conservation Area add to this trail's uniqueness. A walk across a naturally formed bridge will have you feeling as though you're entering special ground. You can negotiate the limestone slabs over running water under the sun or walk the

5 kilometers of cleared trails under a canopy of trees and taste the freshness of the air. Follow the sound of cascading water and you'll come upon a waterfall whose drop is eased by sloping landscape. Redside dace, a provincially threatened species of fish, can be spotted in the waters. Descend into a gaping crevice and you're at risk of being taken back to the childlike wonder of Alice as you walk through a tunnel forged between large slabs of granite. The plunge is also sure to cool the heat of summer's day. Round the hike off with a picnic on the grounds or pay a visit to the town of Limehouse. Parking is free.

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Photo Credit: Kristina Koumaneeva



Natural limestone bridge at the Limehouse Conservation area



Flying to the Rescue

By Beth McBlain

Picture this – you’re in a small plane, sailing through the clouds at 7500 feet with a slender white cat at the controls... wait, what?! The cat is flying the plane!!!

You and I are probably not supposed to know this but I suspect it’s a fairly frequent occurrence when you’re on a rescue mission with Pilots n Paws – an animal rescue organization that connects pilots/owners of private planes with animals

that need relocating in order to save their lives with an opportunity for a new ‘forever’ home.

Pilots n Paws is a non-profit animal rescue organization that operates across North America – connecting animals, volunteer pilots and animal rescuers in Canada, Mexico and the U.S.

The organization was the brainchild of Debi Boies. She was living in South Carolina and she caught wind of a Doberman in Florida that was in need of a new home. She was frustrated by the distance between her and Brock, the dog she wanted to rehome, when a friend with a pilot’s



license offered to pick the dog up and deliver him to Debi. That 2008 flight was the beginning of a vibrant and far reaching network connecting furbabies who need rescuing, with humans on the ground and in the air who are willing to help animals who might otherwise lose their lives because shelters in a given area are overfilled or unable to provide the special attention required to rehabilitate animals who need extra care.

Since it launched Pilots N Paws has relocated more than 150,000 animals – including cats, dogs, a snake, a bear cub and even a dolphin. There have been more than 6,000 flights with the time and fuel donated by pilots. Volunteers on the ground deliver the animals to the airfield and volunteers are waiting on the other end to deliver the animals to shelters or foster homes or forever homes. Some journeys even involve multiple handoffs as the furbabies hopscotch their way across the continent. It is all done strictly by volunteers who organize themselves via the website.

If you are interested in helping out or getting involved you'll find all the information you need at: www.pilotsnpaws.org

If you want to purchase merchandise or offer a donation you can do it through their website. Pilots N Paws is a staunch supporter of spay neuter programs everywhere.

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Spencer Feature Article

Circling Hawk Farms

Bees please!

By Rose Marie Bresolin

Bees are social creatures. By watching them at work, we learn a great deal about their ability to build community and make decisions in large groups. Although bees cannot see red, they can see the other colors in the ultraviolet spectrum, and they use color to recognize their way home.

The waggle is how bees communicate where food can be found. A bee can go out in the morning in search of food, and after returning to the hive, she will waggle her tail, adjusting her waggle to the movement of the sun throughout the day. This enables her to accurately tell her hive mates where the food is.



Entrance to Circling Hawk Farms

It's early autumn and there's a chill in the air, but the welcome at Circling Hawk Farms, just north of Toronto, is a warm one. Made at home by the owners Michele and Gregg Scott, we are seated in a sunroom that opens to a panoramic view of horses over their farm and over the adjacent Polo Grounds. I am taken into the calm of what seems to be another world.

Rose Marie Bresolin: Thank you for agreeing to the interview. My mission is to find out how bees are prepared to survive the winter.

Michele: Gregg is the expert on that. I defer to him for much of the process.

Gregg: There's quite a bit of preparation and Michele rolls up her sleeves like the rest of us. Fall is when we deal with the mites and make sure any weak hives are boosted. The population of bees drops from a peak in about the second week in September, to a much lower one ahead of winter. The bee population will go from 60 to 80,000 bees per box to 10 to 20,000 bees per box.

That's astounding. And by this you mean worker bees? Any queen bees in that count?

Well, normally there is only 1 Queen in a box. In some of the boxes, I have been finding 2 Queens, but that's rare. That's usually a mother and a daughter, and it's a matter of time before the mother is superseded by the daughter.

Hmm, I'm afraid to ask how that happens.

Usually the daughter kills the mother.

Michele gives a nervous laugh as do I; we're both moms.

Kind of suspected that might be the case. Okay then, goodbye mom, and another squeamish laugh exchanged between Michele and me.

Another reality is that the females kick the males out at the end of the year, but maybe we'll skip those unpleasant details. So, to go on with what takes down the bee population.



What we have is these varroa mites on the bees. Imagine a mite as being a large sized grapefruit stuck to you and sucking your blood. Well, that's about the relative size of the mites to the bees they suck on. In the ratio of mites to bees over summer, we determine that about 1% to 2% of the bees will have mites. But, when the population of bees goes way down, the mites don't die. In fact, the mites continue to proliferate.

But does the bee population go down as drastically because of the mites or are there other factors at play?

The decline is a natural thing. Bees can't sustain themselves; they can't keep the colony going if there's no food coming in. And so, over fall, they can still find food on nice days like today, when there's pollen to be had. But there will be fewer days with weather like this and more bees will die.

The ratio of mites goes way up so the bees require treatment. We begin by checking the colonies; if some are too weak, we will combine them with a stronger colony. We'll take frames of honey and bees from other colonies and then add them to the weaker ones, so that the colonies are all equally strong. And next we wrap them in their boxes. As you can see, we've already started doing some wrapping, using a double layer of insulation to protect the bees over the winter.

What are the bees eating while they're in the boxes?

They're eating the honey that's in the hives. We took the boxes for collecting honey off in the second week of September,

so they have what food they collect from then to now to sustain them over winter. The boxes are jam packed with honey because in the second week of September, there's a full-on nectar and chemical free pollen flow that comes from the golden rod and aster flowers that you see out across the property. So, the bees can just pack it – hundreds of pounds a day from the bee yard.



The picture is becoming clearer. Now, the queen bee; you told me that part of what you do is to breed more queen bees and sell them. How has that been going?

Really well. We're part of ORBS. It's the Ontario Resistant Honey Bee Selection Program, a provincial organization. I think there are only 20 registered members in Ontario who do the hygienic testing to make sure bees are capable of cleaning out disease from their colonies quickly. We have people coming in to help us test our bees and they also help us to select which colonies to use for the purpose of breeding.



Impressive. So, what's the interest been like? Have more people been appearing at your gate or going to your website since you began breeding? Has there been a show of enthusiasm to start up new colonies?

It gets pretty busy in the Spring. It's not something people start at this time of year. The queen breeding stops the second or third week of August, and we announce that on the website.

But how has the process been from when it was initiated? Has there been a growing interest?

Yes, there are now a lot more backyard beekeepers; a lot of them are local to the area.

That's good news for bees, and for us. In terms of growing your operation, if you were to look at a next step what would that be?

Just getting more bee yards and getting someone full time to help manage the bee colonies. I do have someone helping me part-time. He's a fireman but he's really good with bees. He comes 3 days a week. We also have a volunteer taking a Backyard Bee Course at Humber College who comes every weekend and while we value both, it still leaves a gap. With the relationship between farm and schedules being something quite unique, the work requires consistent attention. I guess the next step would be to formalize; have someone who's here daily all season long, and to get more bee yards. Right now, we have 5 yards that we manage; our yard here, and the others all within a few kilometers of here. And I know that we'll be expanding quite a bit this Spring. I'm expecting the bees to get through winter and survive because they're much healthier than last year; probably due to the weather and the

improvements in our breeding programme. We think that the two things combined have made our bees much stronger.

We've just been approved for funding that's available for farms in general. It's through the Canada/Ontario funding model to help farmers. We've made multiple applications over the years but this one has been approved so we're set to purchase smaller boxes for our colonies. The funding will provide 200 more boxes in the spring

so we can split the colonies, and they're insulated boxes, so we won't have to build the protection into them for winter. That will take us from 150 to - 350 boxes.

So, the message I hear is that if you feel strongly about what you're doing and are persistent as you two obviously are, then the sky's the limit. Does that sprawling structure behind the farmhouse play a part in the operation?

I originally built it to house an aquarium, but we stopped the project after the costs got too high. Now we use it as our honey extraction building. My father is really dedicated to handling that.



Truly a family operation! You mentioned a student from Humber College. Is that only in a volunteer capacity? I know that Niagara College has a co-op program aligned to their study of beekeeping and I'm wondering if Humber College might have one as well.

The student is a neighbour who came by and offered his help. So far, it's worked out well for both of us.

And do you see more of a space for the education piece to grow? It would certainly promote interest and potentially churn out graduates to





sustain the industry and consequently advocate to protect our environment.

Yeah, I can see that. We also have 2 other people through the Canada Summer Works Program; a Canada/Ontario combination of funding for youth workers. The fireman is one, and there's another. So yeah, we'll probably apply again next year. We actually haven't reached out to the colleges, and that would be a good idea. The course at Humber College is for backyard beekeeping per se and the one at Niagara is for the commercial side of the operation. We'll likely want to bring in a Niagara College student next summer.

Sounds good. Maybe after you build up a reserve of trainees, you'll make time to speak at the Colleges? You might want to organize this cornucopia of information and experience, and convert it to a course for teaching.

Hmm, it's not something I see now, but down the road, sure.

Great. So now, something about the importance of bees to our environment, and what's to be done to sustain them in that role.

Well, we know that bees are probably one of the most important creatures on the planet. They

provide pollination services to almost all fruits and vegetables, so expanding them is a good thing. Our work here is significant in that it helps reduce the number of bees we'll need to import. We've had a lot of bee losses over the years and so basically, we've had to bring them in. We've had them flown from California and Hawaii.

The sustainability comes as we begin to see a marked reduction in the number of bees we import, and in having the right equipment and using the right practices. By breeding our own queens on a regular basis, eventually we won't need to import bees at all. I think that's the short of it.

Home bred! That has a wholesome ring to it.

Gregg turns to Michele and asks if there is something he left out.



Pure Honey, the Elixir of Life!



Michele: Think this might be the forum to dispel the myth about honey that has crystallized?

Good point. If the honey that you buy never crystallizes, like this jar here did over a period of time, then it may not be pure raw honey. Honey is the third most counterfeited food, worldwide.

If it doesn't crystallize with time, it might be filtered or pasteurized honey; it may not be pure raw honey. What's important to understand is that when honey crystallizes it is a very good indication that the honey is pure, without anything added or taken away.

Michele also reminded me before you came that I should explain what's happening in the marketplace. As it stands now, 20% of the honey on grocery store shelves is tested and has shown that particularly for honey that comes from other countries, it's often not real honey; it's been altered with the use of additives to make up the weight.

I believe that The Canada Food Inspection Agency has recently injected approximately three and half million dollars into food counterfeit anti-measures, in the effort to control the importing of products masked as honey. The tariffs placed on honey is large because of the required testing,



and as a result, some countries are now sending their honey to other countries who then repackage it and label it as coming from a place where there are no tariffs; and the honey gets in that way.

The other way for the supply chain to cut costs is through the additives; honey wholesale sells for \$2.20 a pound, so when more sugar or other additives are added, they're not having to pay that cost, and are able to undersell their honey. They can undercut everybody in the local market as people are generally drawn to buy the cheaper brands.

**What a scenario we've created!
How do you see us getting out of this?**

Getting on the education in the very early years, for one, so that the existing threats to bees including the chemicals that cause them irreparable harm, are made known.

If when a child first marvels at a blossom, we explain that the oxygen the plant emits into the air provides the very breath we need for life itself, there'd be no better way to ensure their respect for our environment.

Michele: And, you'll be sharing this information, so that's a help. We have to trust that the responsibility will follow.

I want to finish with a few words for those who prefer the honey in its fluid state. You can soften real honey that's been crystallized, by melting it down slowly in a warm pot of water; this won't hurt the honey. No microwave and no boiling water, just warm, gently heated on the stove until the honey melts. To maintain the over 200 properties of honey intact, honey should be kept at room temperature, and away from light.

Gregg: Oh, and I would be remiss if I left out what I learned at a presentation by Paul Kelly of the University of Guelph, last summer. He reported that veterinary students are being taught to use honey as a dressing on flesh wounds. Honey that has been kept away from light and excess heat contains hydrogen peroxide with its anti-septic properties. Dressing prepared with honey is less prone to drying out than antiseptic creams and less likely to stick to the injury. So, removing them causes less pain for the animals. Paul also reported that their recent testing at the University suggests that some Ontario honey produced at certain times of the year contains as many anti-inflammatory and antioxidant benefits as the widely promoted Manuka honey (Manuka is from Australia and New Zealand).



And to continue to expand their education further, the innovative and adventurous duo recently travelled to England to visit one of the largest bee farms in the UK. Another family operation that began with only 2 hives, Quince Honey Farm in Devon is yet another story.

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Photo Credits: Circling Hawk Farms

BEE SMART!

Here are some interesting facts about bees:

Bees smell with their antlers.

Because they can see reflection, they are able to locate the water they need to hydrate and to use for building the hive.

The wax required for the hives is secreted by the glands.

The hive must face the sun because bees are dependent on the sun's energy to sustain them through the day's foraging; the nectar they collect is for making honey.

Bees have been recorded as living up to 7 weeks – that is a long life for a bee, since their wings continue to tear with use.

A community that ends up having 2 Queen bees is compelled to kill one of them; a community can only have 1 Queen.

A hive is populated by thousands of worker bees. Bees do sleep. Evidence that they dream is that their antlers move while sleeping.

If the community is attacked, all the bees combine their energy against the attacker until it is brought down. In example, many lives are sacrificed in bringing down a hornet.

As bees die, their bodies are dragged out so that a healthy colony is maintained.

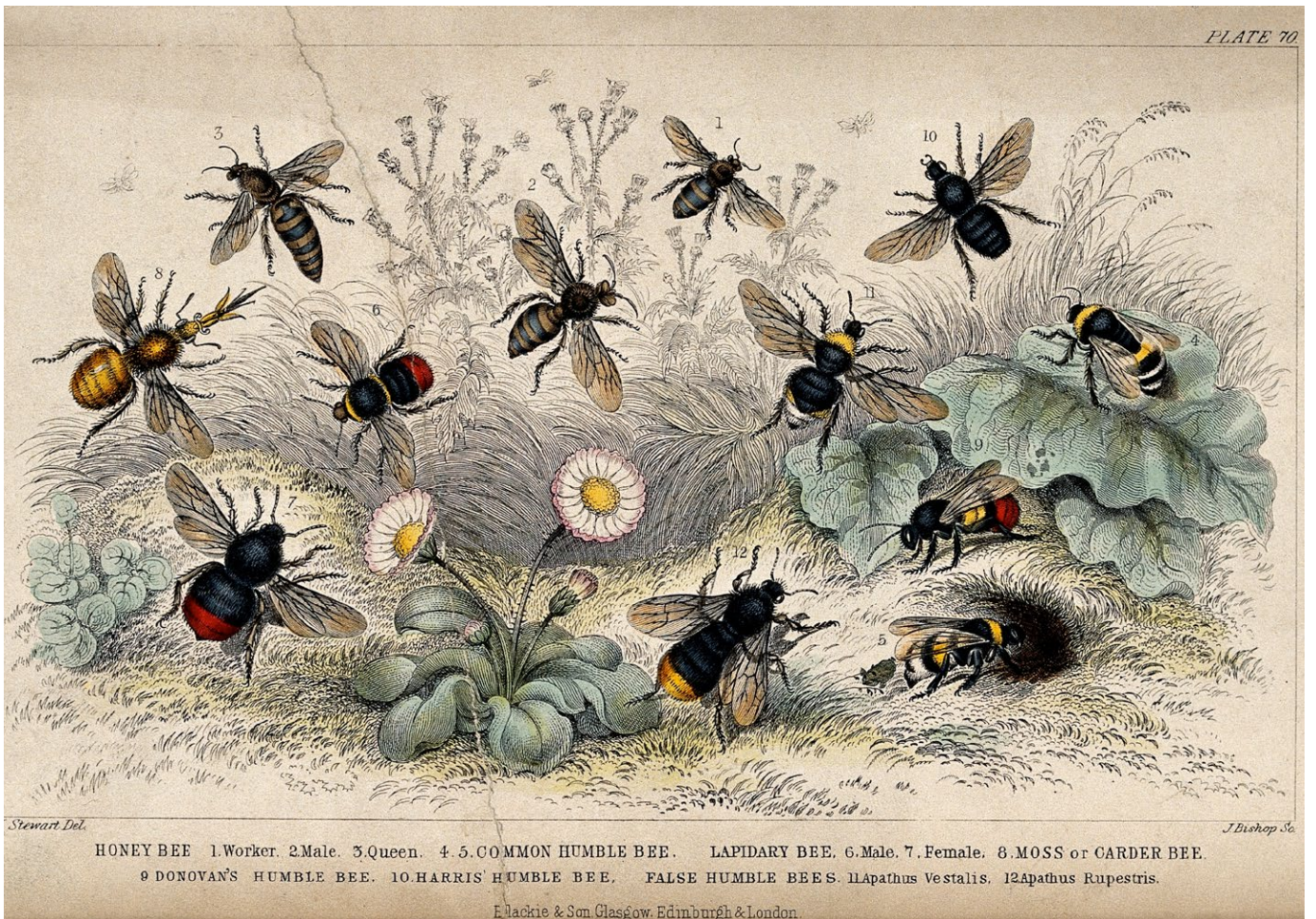
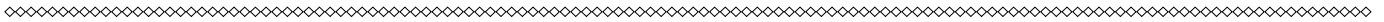
Except for collecting of food by individual bees, they act as a community.

Words of Lenore Newman

“Disrupting the bees” winter dormancy to transport them (for mass pollination) puts them under stress and concentrating them in a restricted area facilitates the spread of disease. A lack of diversity puts them under even more strain: as true for bees as it is for us, variety is key to healthy eating.



“We have to think about how we grow monocultures, and that is much bigger than an individual issue. We have to look at regions where we take billions and billions of bees to pollinate one crop, and say ‘Okay, what could we plant here so that we could have bees here all the time?’ Because ultimately, bees are not supposed to move. They build a colony, they stay there, they map out where everything is ... they’re like us, moving into a new city. The solution might be diverse enough agriculture in the region so that the pollinators don’t have to move.”



Voices

Everyone has a voice, right? But how many people have an applebox to stand on so they can speak to the world?!

From celebrities to philanthropists... Spencer is that applebox!

Do you know someone with a special voice? Let us know at voices@spencermag.com

JADYN RYLEE

Hello everyone,

My name is Jadyn, and I am 14 years old. I would like to talk about bullying. This subject for me has been my everything for the last 5 years. I advocate, help speak up for others, as an ambassador for several organizations in Canada and the United States. If you are ever going to be something please be a voice for someone who is scared too.

Bullying can happen in various forms attacking ALL types of people. Physically, verbally, and online encounters to just name a few. It creates headaches, stress, depression, and anxiety. It doesn't happen to just one age.

Bullying happens in the workplace too; adults experience it as well and it's not just kids. This is often based on appearances, genders, or race. It's everywhere and it's awful and we have to stop it. We are all human and smile and breathe like everyone else. We need to be heard louder when it comes to this subject. No one deserves to wake up every morning scared.

I stand up for kids who are too scared to be themselves. I am not afraid to tell any one of my peers if I see it happening. Being that voice and helping someone else feels amazing. Stopping something that is wrong feels even better.

Be brave and be that person to listen. Be there for someone going through bullying, and tell them they have a friend who's willing to help. Be someone's super hero.

Jadyn Rylee is an inspiring young artist who is very well known for her amazing voice and widely known for her eponymous Jadyn Rylee YouTube channel with over 300 thousand subscribers. You will see Jadyn soon on the big screen playing Sean Penn's daughter in the feature film "Flag Day."



PEYTON GARCIA

Hello Spencer Readers!

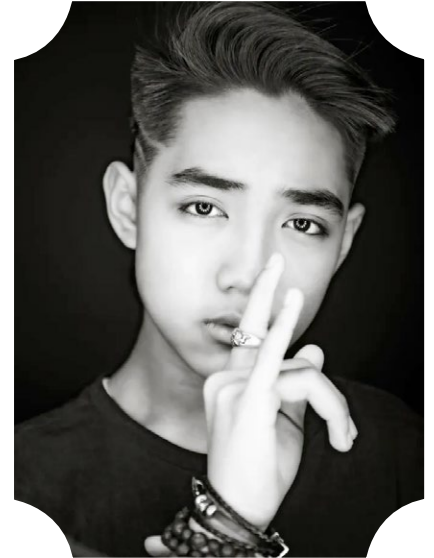
Balancing the importance of an education with my love of music, can often feel like a juggling act. As an elementary student going into high school from a French Immersion School in Newmarket, Ontario, Canada, the academic expectations are high.

Beyond school, I love making people smile through music and music has given me so much to be grateful for. When someone first meets me, I may seem quiet, but when I take the stage, my passion for performing gives me the confidence I need to share my voice and moves.

In June 2018, over 630 children auditioned for the Mini Pop Kids, and I was one of the 8 chosen. Since then, being a Mini Pop Kid has been a whirlwind experience; a bi-coastal tour with over 40 shows, recording the latest new pop cover songs, recording original songs, filming music videos, and appearing on radio and television shows, such as Breakfast Television, CTV, Global Morning and ET Canada.

My inspiration to work hard and follow this dream is my uncle who passed away of heart disease at an early age. He always encouraged me to do what makes me happy, and being a Mini Pop Kid has been an amazing experience that has shown me the path I need to take to follow my uncle's advice. I am currently trying to gain more experience in movies and theatre. My future goal is to be a Music Recording Artist.

I am currently working on writing and making my own original music. I am excited for what the future holds and hope that you may be singing along to my original song on the radio in the very near future!



JOEY CEE

"I am and have always been in the business of making people happy."

Joey Cee

From the time the Canadian music industry was in its infancy to the powerhouse it is today, Joey Cee has played an active role in its development. Still going strong, Joey has many exciting projects and developments on his current agenda. For those looking to pursue a career in the music business today, Joey is perceived as a mentor and musiciatrist. Over the decades Joey has been heralded as a hit-maker and talent scout, with a keen sense for discovering artists and music that is well documented. He achieved tenure as a radio station music director, a weekly music columnist for major newspapers and as a weekly host on a national radio program. He is a publisher of several major music industry magazines.

Joey Cee has been acclaimed for his work with many of the world's greatest recording artists and was involved in a number of internationally known music projects in various capacities.

Having done it all is an understatement! Over the past 56 years, Joey has successfully tackled many areas of the music industry, and along the way, he became known as a trendsetter. The list of his accomplishments includes stints as a mobile deejay, a recording artist, songwriter, music publisher, record label owner, concert producer and promoter, record producer, music journalist, concert emcee, radio broadcaster, publicist, music writer, music consultant, music project developer, graphic artist, headline wordsmith, photographer and yes – a poet!

Voices

CHEF JAGGER GORDON

"I was happy in my own life, but I wasn't happy with the way things were in the world, and I knew I needed to do something about it!"

Our mission is to make a difference in the lives of fellow Canadians who are in need of assistance with securing nutritious food and regular balanced meals.

It's not what the community can do for you, it's what you can do for the community."

Chef Jagger Gordon

Chef Jagger Gordon is the founder of Feed It Forward, based in Toronto, Canada.

His mission began in 2014 after he witnessed the copious amounts of food going to waste following a catering gig he hosted with his company. He saw a problem and knew there had to be a more efficient way of dealing with food waste.

To test his theory, Jagger decided to open a pop-up kitchen at the Trinity Bellwoods Park on Queen Street West in Toronto. Within three hours, he served over 300 free meals to the community with food that would have otherwise been destined for the landfill. Hence, his drive for feeding families became stronger.

His desire to feed those less fortunate became his vision and mission in life. Feed it Forward is a Canadian not-for-profit with two main goals: to feed Canadians that are food insecure, and to reduce food waste.



LIBERTY SILVER



"Know Thyself. You are Divine. You are what you Believe."

Liberty Silver

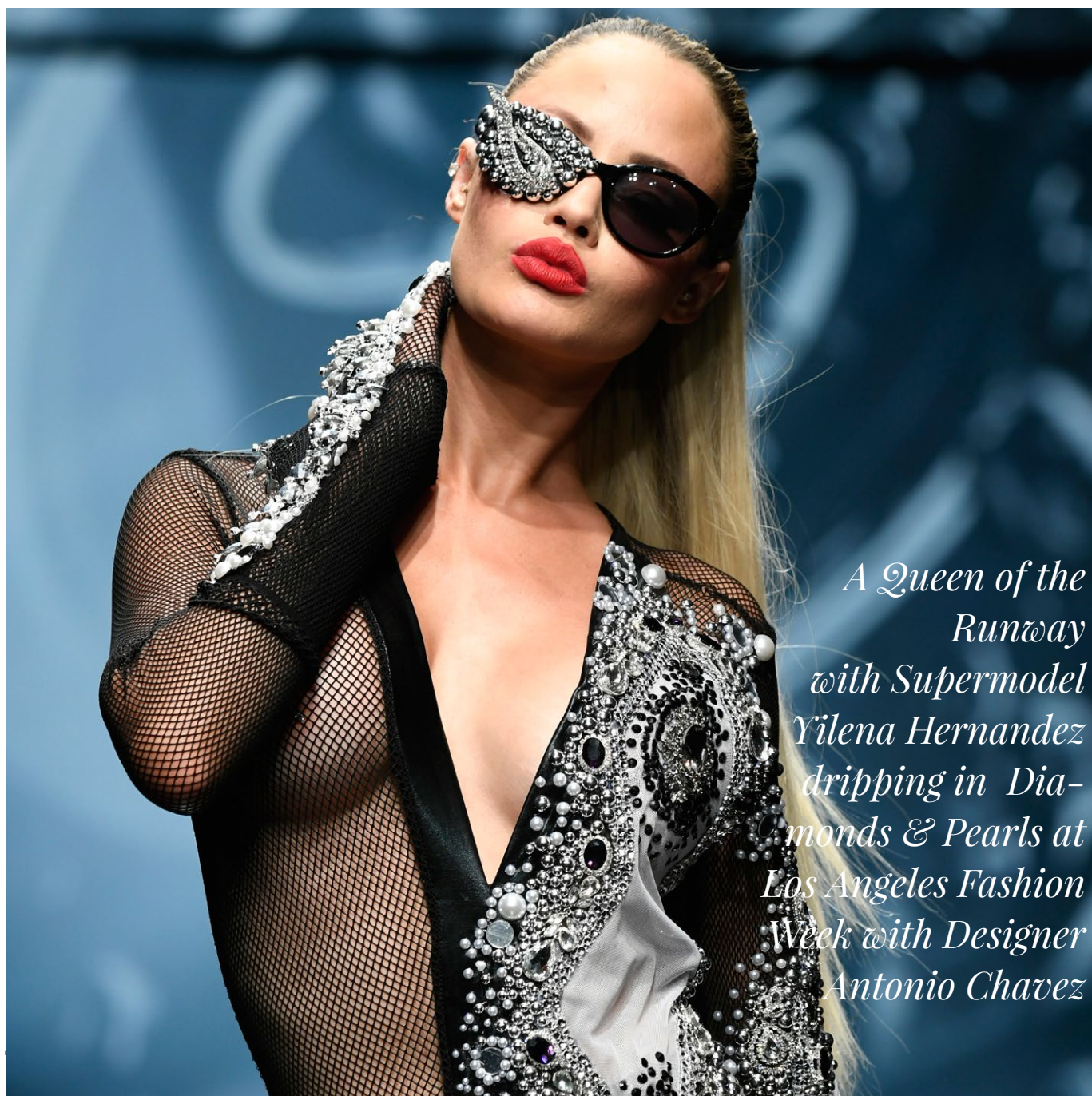
Curator of the "Liberty Silver Foundation for the Performing Arts," the foundation is positioned to educate, learn from, and inspire positive energy among youth.

Liberty is a singer, songwriter and multiple 'Juno' and 'Grammy' award-winning recording artist.

Liberty Silver is the first black woman to receive a Juno Award. Her 'Grammy' award, a collaboration, was in recognition for her performance on the single 'Tears Are Not Enough,' together with some of Canada's most celebrated artists, including Gordon Lightfoot, Ann Murray, Burton Cummings, Brian Adams, Neil Young and others. The funds generated from the group endeavour were dedicated to relieving the famine in Ethiopia.

Spencer Style

Klaudia Capalbo, Rockin' The Runway With Antonio Chavez, Designer Yulia Oliynyk of JeiZER, Designer Demaine Nelson of Demaine Tyrone, Toronto Kids Fashion Week, John Fluevog, From Pearl To Pearl



*A Queen of the
Runway
with Supermodel
Yilena Hernandez
dripping in Dia-
monds & Pearls at
Los Angeles Fashion
Week with Designer
Antonio Chavez*



Spencer Feature Interview

KLAUDIA CAPALBO

Branding in a

NEW TERRAIN

In the face of current challenges to the fashion industry, this daring entrepreneur tests new ideas.

By Rose Marie Bresolin

Klaudia Zinaty Capalbo, Professor, Marketing Consultant and Director of Corporate Relations at the Toronto Fashion Academy was appointed as the 2020 FGI Regional Director for Toronto. Impressed by her numerous accomplishments and wanting to get a sense of the energy that drives her, Spencer Magazine arranged for an interview in person.

Rose Marie Bresolin: Klaudia, I know how busy your schedule must be, so thank you for agreeing to the interview. Perhaps we can start with where you're at right now by having you tell us about FGI.

Klaudia Capalbo: Yes, of course. FGI stands for Fashion Group International. We're a global organization situated in 7 countries with 29 chapters all over the world and our headquarters are based in NYC. I handle the Toronto Division and we have about 200 members right now and growing. We have 12 Board members, including myself. We are a non-profit organization with approximately 5,000 members all over the world: we're in The Dominican, Seoul, USA and London, England to name a few. It feels incredible to be leading an organization in Toronto with this kind of global reach and potential!

The organization is here to support, grow and develop, not just the fashion industry but anything that touches on fashion - interior design, visual arts, beauty, film and photography. We organize monthly events for our members, whether it's bringing in professionals and guest speakers from the industry or providing a platform that gives our members an opportunity to network and collaborate. At our Toronto Division we provide a unique event we call Mentor's Dinner, where we bring in 10 mentors from different facets of the industry. They sit with our members for an intimate dinner and answer questions about their careers or industry. We've had George Pimentel, Jessica Mulrone, Cheryl Hickey, Peter Papapetrou, Aluad Anei, Stephan Caras and Vanessa Craft to name a few.

The Mentor's Dinner for this year was held at the Shangri-La in March. The guests were seated with the mentor of their choice and asked questions that could help them with decisions. It was a great opportunity for our members to have their moment with a mentor. Also exciting was that each mentor shared a personal story from their own career path. Another event we do, called the Visionary Awards happens in October where we celebrate key people from different sectors of the industry who have made an incredible impact on it. We really try to recognize people who give back.

I imagine a connection made at such an event could well become the link for someone burning to get into the field, or even to just to be able to test the waters.

Yes, that is the intent of the organization. After I joined FGI two years ago, I was so impressed with how it helps entrepreneurs in our industry, I knew I wanted to lead it. I was so excited when, on January 21, 2020, I was officially announced as the new Regional Director.

A life ambition realized! I know by accounts I've read that you made a fashion statement even as you studied Math at York University. Flashing your neon shoes with matching earrings would have turned heads on any campus, not to mention those in your math class. Clearly, it set you apart. Still, while pursuing a bachelor's degree in mathematics, did you ever in your wildest dreams envision where you are today?

To be honest, I loved fashion from such a young age; it was always my dream to get into the industry. So, to see where I am today, it really does feel like a dream come true. I think when you have a passion for something, even if it's dormant for awhile, eventually it finds its way through. I started out as a Math Teacher and went on to many career changes. I worked with the NBA for 9 years, moved into broadcasting, and then into publishing with Flare Magazine for 7 years. It's amazing when I look back now and realize I really have come full circle. I love fashion and I love teaching. I'm a professor in Fashion, Marketing and

Opposite page:

Klaudia with FGI Board of Directors: It's said that the person in an organization that the public interacts with first is the one it's measured by. Selecting Janice Ronan of Fashion Foundry to manage the Public Relations on the Board of FGI represents another of Klaudia's winning moves. Janice is standing second from the left.



Being congratulated by outgoing President Roger Gingerich



FGI Board of Directors (Toronto Division, 2020) in photo

(back row, left to right)

Kavita Suri (@Kavitasuri_beauty) » Celebrity Beauty Expert & Founder of @infusedmedspa

Janice Ronan (@jjfoxy) » Director of PR @fashionfoundryofficialpr
Fashion, Beauty & Lifestyle Publicist

Cynthia Florek (@thetrendoffice) » Trend & Design Consultant

Klaudia Capalbo (@KlaudiaFashionFix) » Professor, Stylist & #FGIToronto's Regional Director

Yvonne Faulkner

Jennifer Rabanillo (@lady_styleworthy) » Creative Event Producer & Founder of Styleworthy

Anita Bhandari ->Diamond Jewellery Designer & Co-owner of @AarkishDiamonds

Audrey Ross (@tresaudrey) » Logistics & Customs Specialist, @OrchardCustomBeauty

(front row, left to right)

Marcus Wyss » VP of Store Experience at @HoltRenfrew

Elle Bulger (@ellebulger) » Director of Client Success, @PinchSocial

Mario Christian (@mr_nogu) » Designer, Marketer & Co-Founder of @Nogu jewelry

Matty Nyman (@MattysFabAvenue) » Founder, Matty's Fab Avenue



Public Relations at 4 different colleges. So, it's like the two things that I really love have forged together and taken me into the leadership for this organization - heavily involved in the fashion industry, in a position where I can support amazing emerging talent. And there's so much of it!

We really need to elevate that support because I think Canadians are very humble and we wait for recognition to be given us. We need to do a better job in terms of really letting everyone around the world know how incredibly talented we are and to boast about our successes; to showcase where Canada is as a whole in terms of the fashion industry, and in all aspects of art, beauty, interior design and film. It's about elevating, educating and empowering. That's what FGI is about.

I love going out and supporting all the designers during Fashion Week. It's my favourite time of year, I'm a kid in a candy store. I look at every fashion originality, the vision, the uniqueness behind it and the attention to detail. For me, noting the diversity of every collection is elevating.

Tell us what your day looks like; give us a bird's eye view into the way you manage the numerous hats you wear.

Every day is different because I work for various companies. I'm at the Fashion Academy a few days a week, I teach 4 different courses at different colleges and I also do consulting for clients. I try to balance my days. No two days are the same..

It still begs the question; What made you begin your University studies with the Maths and Sciences?

Well, I loved both subjects all through school, and there weren't opportunities in the fashion industry back then like there are now. Being in the studies I chose wasn't necessarily easy. The challenge was that there weren't many women in the courses I took, like 4th year calculus. I realized that with girls so poorly represented in them, it could be intimidating or discouraging for them to put up their hands. I wanted to be a role model for other girls - to say they can have the confidence to raise their hand and answer questions without worrying about making mistakes, despite the fact that there are mostly boys in the classroom. But after I graduated, there was a teacher surplus and I was hired as supply teacher in Math. I loved it so I continued teaching for a few years. But I really wanted my own class with my own students.



At that time, the NBA was just starting out in Canada with the Toronto Raptors and Vancouver Grizzlies. I had done some marketing during the summer and when word about my work reached them, they offered me a job. My initial response was to try it for a year or two. Nine years later I found myself still enjoying it. The experience was amazing. It never got boring. We were representing all 29 teams at the time, not just the Raptors. To travel and watch basketball grow in Canada was so rewarding.

"We need to do a better job in terms of really letting everyone around the world know how incredibly talented we are and to boast about our successes."

I share that story with my students, impressing on them that you can always learn something from the path you're on. I never played basketball in school, but the experience of working for professional sports leagues was a steppingstone. The skills that I learned from that took me to the next thing, which was broadcasting and then publishing, which ultimately took me to fashion.

So I say to my students, when opportunities are offered to you, take them, be-

cause, although it may not be what you had initially expected, the skills you'll walk away with are going to be essential for the next, and the next. It really is a journey.

From what I'm learning about the spectrum of the arts, there's been an impression of it as an industry where a person can be expected to cast their fate to the wind. Many find themselves suffering financially. Knowing that, how did your parents feel about your choice for a career?

My parents are very traditional, so they liked that I was studying maths and sciences. But, basically, they were prepared to let me do what I wanted. Back then, there wasn't a lot in fashion, so while my parents supported my love for it, they encouraged me to find a career that would provide more stability. And that's how I started teaching. But now when my parents see what I do, the many times I've been published, on television or podcasts, and even walked the runway for a good cause, they're very proud. They see how excited I get and how my eyes light up when I talk about it. They're truly happy for me.

At a time where we read of fashion shows like Paris taking a serious hit with some major designers not contributing their work, and Fashion Week in New York and here in Toronto cancelled, want to take a run at trying to change a view that making a career out of fashion could well lead to a life of struggle?

Fashion as a whole is a tough industry. The production behind each of these shows is extremely expensive and it's become an increasing struggle to secure investors. I think a lot of the shift has to do with the financial aspect. In terms of the turn out, making sure that the right people turn out and in healthy numbers has been challenging. Why did Toronto Fashion Week get cancelled? I really believe it was because of the finances behind it. At the end of the day, it is a business and it has to be a profitable one to survive. Whether it's the cost of venue space or production, you need investors and you need to have the sponsorship dollars behind it. When I first started attending Toronto Fashion Week, Mastercard was a title sponsor, along with other sponsors such as Mercedes and Maybelline. There were some heavy hitters helping fund this event.

The big dollars now going to social media and other areas of marketing, it's very difficult to put on a big production for 7 days with limited investment. So, that's a huge issue not just here but everywhere. You and I had talked about the effect of the Corona Virus. Yes, of course it's had an impact, but Fashion Week was scheduled before we were made aware of the threat, so I don't really think the change



Outgoing President Roger Gingerich

can be attributed completely to the pandemic. The facts are in – every year production gets more costly- lighting, set up, models... The venue space for example is so expensive. You have to have corporations who see the value of this industry reaching its core audience and to want to invest into it.

You mentioned a decline in the attendance at these events. Why do you think people are not turning out? And if sustainability of the old ways has run out, in what direction do you see the fashion industry shifting?

Well a lot of designers are showcasing their collections online or arranging more intimate gatherings at their store or smaller venue space, to save costs. Showing them online does provide an opportunity to reach people globally no matter where you are in the world. You can watch it on YouTube, Facebook or Instagram and experience it that way. Personally, I love seeing the way the fabrics sway as the models walk. I love the overall experience of it, from the lights dimming to the music pumping loudly as the collections make their way down the runway. I get excited looking at their way down the runway and all of the details up close. You can't see that on a computer screen. So, as unfortunate as it is right now for the industry here in Toronto, with Fashion Week being cancelled I have to commend the organizers for finding other ways to have designers showcase their work.

Now there's a strong positive outlook. Tell us more about those innovations.

I tell my students, they are fortunate that there are so many more opportunities today by way of employment. Now we have social media and the internet, and you can do so much with it: You can.

You can turn blogging into something full-time and make that a career. You can become an influencer, or you can create brand new opportunities. You could choose to work behind the scenes; whether it's videography or production at a photo shoot or television show. Those types of opportunities weren't necessarily a job back then.

Navigating the changing times. So, where should our aspiring youth be looking to for their support? Can they really imagine fashion becoming a career?

Oh, a hundred percent yes! I think if you're passionate about something that you absolutely love, do not give up on that dream. There are a lot of good organizations in place in Toronto to receive support from. Obviously, Fashion Group International is one of them, offering incredible support for you to learn, grow and network. But there are other organizations such as Toronto Fashion Incubator, Fashion Takes Action, Art of Fashion and others that are also incredibly helpful.

Also, find yourself a good mentor. That's key to succeeding in the industry. I was very fortunate to meet my mentor Roger Gingerich who introduced me to other professionals. He invited me to different events and helped me navigate through the fashion industry. And when he was heading Fashion Group International, he asked me to be on his Board of Directors. When you have a mentor like that, to help guide you, direct you and provide opportunities for you, it helps a lot. So, I would tell people to join a really good organization that 'speaks to you' and seek out a mentor.

That makes good sense. But wouldn't it shorten the process if you narrowed the search and looked for an organization more specific to your interest?

Yes, of course. We have some organizations that cater to very specific needs. For instance, Toronto Fashion Incubator provides studio space at a very low cost for designers who can't afford Toronto prices to open up their own studio. There are numerous organizations; whether you're in design, beauty, art, film or interior design. You need to find the best one where you feel the most compatibility with your business needs.

With FGI, for example, we provide a student rate specifically to encourage those looking to get started. You can join Fashion International as a student for only \$40.00 US a year. With that, you get access to all of our industry professionals and board members. For example, we have a stylist who works in television, a designer, an owner of a jewelry company, a person in PR, a social media expert, an event company owner and the VP of Marketing of a luxury retailer to name a few. In

"Find yourself a good mentor. That's key to succeeding in the industry."

being able to rub elbows and have an opportunity to connect with these business industry professionals, as well as in attending our mentor's dinner and other planned events at student rates, you have an incredible advantage to network yourself.

I tell my students all the time when I teach them, 'whatever I get invited to, you get invited to.' For events I'm involved in, if they want to volunteer, it gives them a great opportunity to see scenes or out front, they get to see what goes into the production; virtually everything behind the scenes. I try to impress on them that 'when you watch an event, you may have no idea of the tremendous amount of work, effort, stress or chaos going on behind the scenes, and once you work in it you get a firsthand experience of what it entails. After seeing it, you can ask yourself, is this is what I really want or is this what I thought it was?' The experience allows them to get their feet wet.

I've never had that opportunity, so I want to give our next generation of fashion entrepreneurs the tools and provide them with a platform. Where they take it from there is up to them. I am really happy about being able to offer those first steps, and the ones that really want it will go for it.

Great message! And with adding the Spencer platform to share your message, hopefully the path is made a little easier to navigate; kind of a roadmap to help aspiring artists feel they are less alone. Thank you for that.

And, one more thing, I add in Colombo fashion, before we part, "You spoke of balance. Does all this leave any room for a personal life?"

Breaking into that sunshine smile of hers, eyes brightening even more, Klaudia responds with a definitive Yes!

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rockin'!
the
RUNWAY

with
Antonio Chavez

By Joseph Edward Schur

Rarely would I ever storm a catwalk and hug a designer following a show, especially while he's taking a bow. And yet that's exactly what I did.

It was a couple of years ago when a colleague of mine, Vanessa Sonia Lachman, insisted that I attend a fashion show that she had organized for Antonio Chavez. I'd never heard of this designer but I thought, why not.

I really enjoy attending fashion shows, but to

be honest, I wasn't expecting much. Just another designer. But once the lights went dim and the catwalk lit up, my jaw dropped. It was the most extraordinary fashion event that I'd ever seen.

The theme was ancient Egyptian dresses (think Cleopatra/Nefertiti inspired) with a contemporary twist. A 40-piece collection of "Wearable Art Couture." Different. Creative. Outstanding! Right then I knew that I had to find out more about this imaginative and brilliant designer.



*One Goal:
To redefine the
Fashion Industry
in the Areas of
Innovation
and Design
Ingenuity*

So... who is Antonio Chavez and why should Spencer readers get to know him?!

Chavez has made a huge impact on the international fashion scene with his unconventional designs. Having shown at important fashion weeks in Toronto, Montreal, London, Dubai, Madrid, Los Angeles, Miami and Melbourne, he is on an exciting journey of self fulfillment.

Although now highly respected, his beginnings were humble.

Born in a small Mayan village in Totonicápan, Guatemala to a working class family, Chavez had ambitions from an early age. His fascination for art, whether paintings, movies or music can be credited for igniting a passion for fashion design.

As a teen in the 1980s with big ideas, Chavez knew that if he were to realize his dreams he would have to leave his home and family. Guatemala was embroiled in a ruthless Civil War, between the government and leftist rebel groups. Facing certain forced military service, he made the bold and courageous decision to venture north. Following several failed attempts, he arrived in Los Angeles, California with not much more than the shirt on his back.

The turning point in his life came when he registered for Refugee Status in Canada. Once accepted, he made his way to Toronto, Ontario. He could finally pursue his lifelong dreams.

His keen sense of innovation and design inspired him to tackle the fashion industry of women's and men's footwear, including various fashionable accessories, such as men's ties, belts and wallets, and transformable heels for women.

It was his invention of transformable shoes that would change the course of the fashion industry for decades to come; a product never before seen on the market, allowing you to change the look and style of your shoes with interchangeable straps to fit any occasion.





*America's Next Top Model
Monique Victoria
dazzling the runway in a
diamond studded dress.
Los Angeles Fashion Week*



*Diamonds & Pearls -
Wearable Art Couture
by Chavez
Los Angeles Fashion Week*

*You
can never
have too much
bling!
The absolutely
stunning
model
Briden Starr
strutting
the runway
at Los Angeles
Fashion Week*

However, he did not stop there. His drive and ambition for much more had led him to designing and creating women's couture; dresses, bathing suits, and catsuits that perfectly combine avant-garde design with wearable practicality – also known as Wearable Art Couture.

His approach focused on fusing shimmering gems, crystals, and diamonds into abstract concepts with various accessories that further complement the overall aesthetic and appeal of an entire outfit or design. His couture has been coined world-wide as Wearable Art that is unique, daring, and one of a kind.

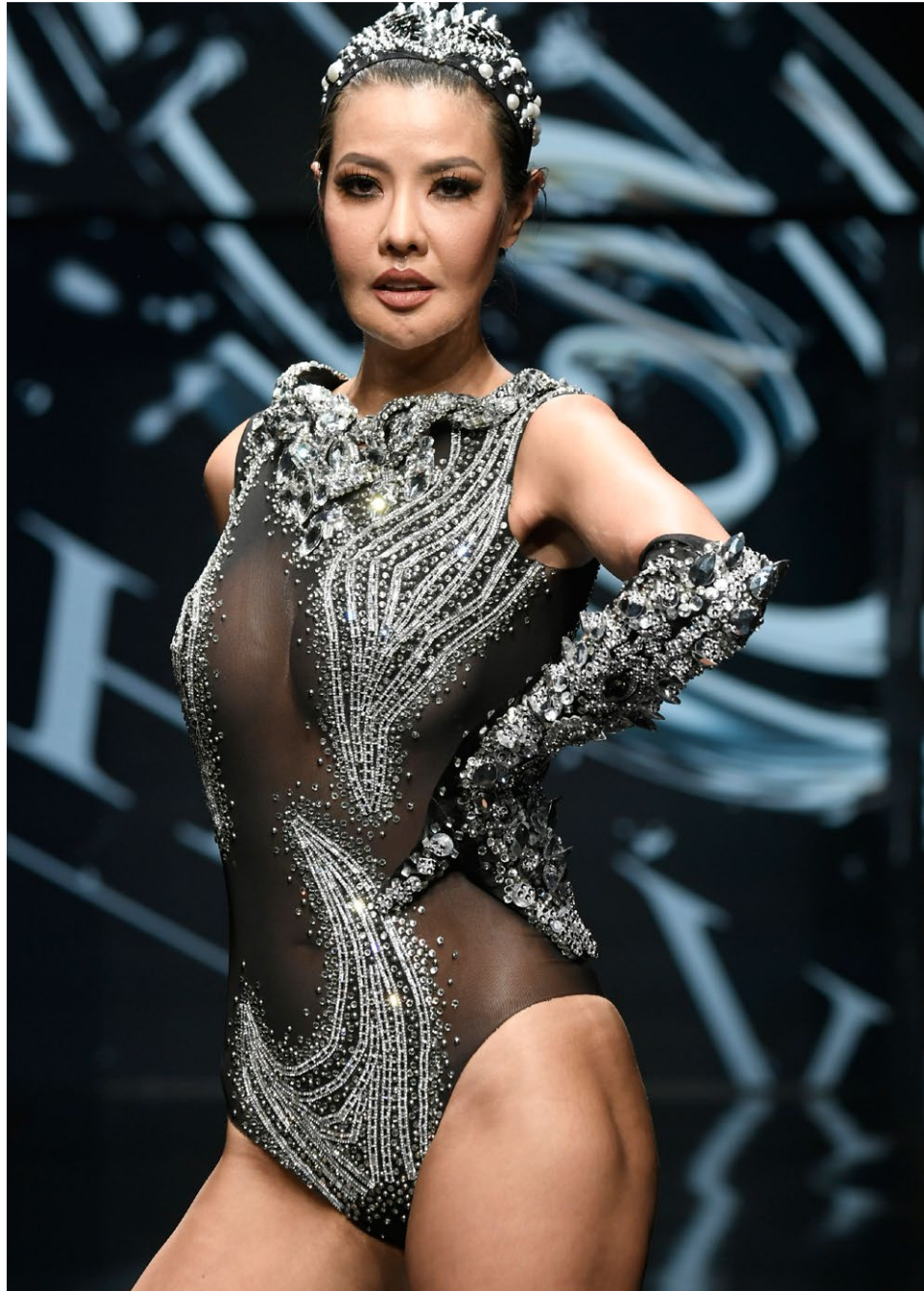
For the past 5 years, Chavez has innovated men's & women's fashion on a global scale, with designs and products that have shifted the course of the industry into a new era, with Chavez Inc. on the forefront of this new and exciting landscape.



*"If
you want
to achieve
success,
be prepared
to suffer
through
the process."*

Antonio Chavez

Chavez and his loyal and dynamic team at Chavez Inc. continue to travel the world attending fashion shows and events, from across North America's fashion capitals, including Los Angeles & New York, to Europe, including the United Kingdom, France, and Italy.



From such humble beginnings to being on the world stage, sharing his unconventional creations is an incredible achievement and should serve to inspire us all to follow our dreams. As per his one goal: to redefine the fashion industry in areas of innovation and design ingenuity. Mission accomplished.

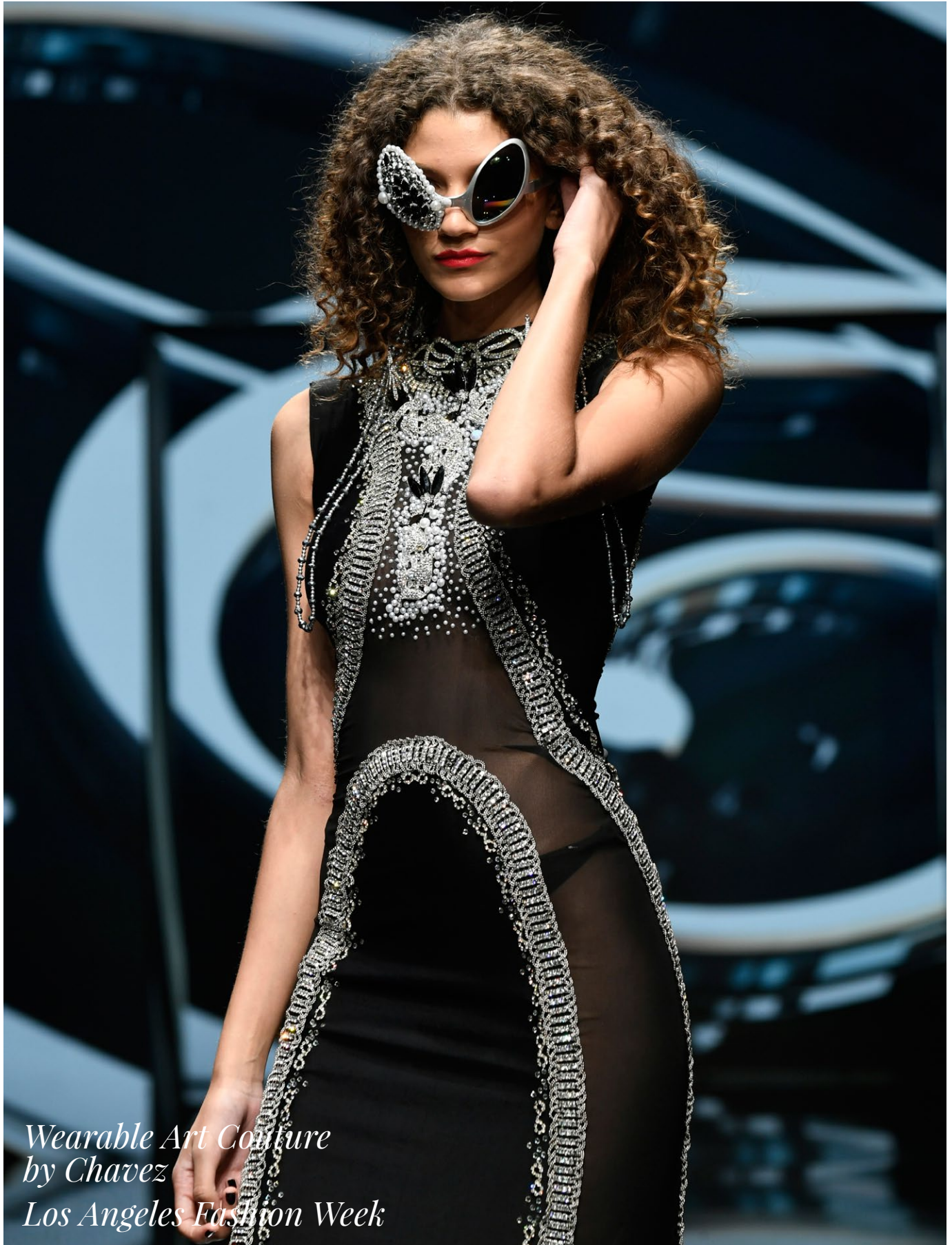
As you can imagine, I really look forward to seeing what Chavez has planned next. I'm sure that it will be spectacular! He's a great guy and deserves all of the accolades. Antonio Chavez, I salute you!

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*Wearable Art Couture
by Chavez
Los Angeles Fashion Week*



*Wearable Art Couture
by Chavez
Los Angeles Fashion Week*



*Dripping in Diamonds
by Chavez
Los Angeles Fashion Week*

SPENCER STYLE



Spencer Feature Interview

JEIZER DESIGNS

Style for the Millennial Man

"The modern world is moving towards blurring the boundaries between genders, but we want to convey the message that many persons in this world still like bright and strong male leaders who are able to take responsibility for the situation and at the same time to take care of those around them."

Yulia Oliynyk

By Joseph Edward Schur

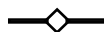
One of my all-time favorite things that I enjoy is attending fashion shows. The energy, the excitement, the anticipation... So when I was invited, along with Spencer's Managing Editor Rose Marie Bresolin, to attend a fashion show in Toronto, I jumped at the opportunity. Our friend and colleague, Klaudia Capalbo, generously provided us with front row seats; yes, we were in the heart of the action!

The night before, I dropped by the organizer's pre-show event where I met designer Yulia Oliynyk and her colleagues. Through her broken English and my rusty Ukrainian, I could capture just how passionate she was about fashion design. I was excited to see what she would unveil on the runway.

No surprise to our readers, based on this interview, that I was blown away with Yulia's show. She is no ordinary designer. Yulia's vision inspired me to learn more about her.



INTERVIEW



Joseph Edward Schur: On behalf of Spencer Magazine, we're thrilled to be having this interview with you. Please, tell us something about your background.

Yulia Oliynyk: When I was in high school, I attended a theater studio. I played on stage and helped the director to stage performances. The theater played a very important part in my life. I discovered a completely new world. It taught me to feel, to love and to see beauty in people and all things around me. I learned to live out that greater depth of feelings and emotions on the stage. The theater revealed my sensuality, the emotional

perception of everything around. It conjured up a vision of the world through the prism of images. For me it was like a parallel reality, which I wanted constantly to draw up.

What's the most interesting thing about you that we can share with our readers?

It is probably interesting to say that I also express my feelings for loved ones through design and sewing clothes. For me this is a manifestation of concern. I can share a story about how on a cold winter's day I met a young pilot who was wearing only a thin pilot jacket. I really wanted to take care of him and warm him. Then I took a woolen military fabric from my grandfather's coat and sewed a coat for the pilot a few days later. He wore it for a long time and with pleasure. Now this pilot is my husband.

Tell us about your interests outside of being a fashion designer.

I love poetry, arts (painting, graphics, architecture, sculpture.) My favorite artists are: S. Dali, P. Picasso, O. Claude Monet, V. van Gogh. I consider Cubism, Surrealism to be the progenitors of modern forms and a new perception of the world. I love technology, cars, especially sports cars and roadsters of 1930's and the neo-design of modern cars, streamlined space. In addition to becoming a designer, in my youth I also dreamt of being an actress, a director or an architect. I focused on professions where you can express feelings and emotions through forms. I feel the form at the level of proportions, express it through the lines, and through their colours and textures. This is how I breathe life into my creations and make them alive!

What made you decide to start your own fashion label?

For me it was an obvious decision, because I felt I had something to share with the world, and I needed to do it! I hatched the idea of my brand



over several years. I worked earlier as a designer with both men and women. In 2012, I created my first collection of women's clothing. But it seems to me that my collection was too modern and ran ahead of its time.

I realized that I needed time to create my own team of people as passionate about my vision as I was.

But if you really want something and feel inside that it is your destiny in life, then nothing can stop you. You do not even ask yourself the question is it worth or not, you just know that you were born for this. Therefore, the decision to establish my brand was so natural to me.

How did you come up with the name "JeIZER Designs" and how did your brand come to life?

The name of my brand is JeIZER, and when I came up with it, my head was full of ideas and the word geyser was spinning in my thoughts, because it seemed to me that I was ready to splash these ideas outward as some kind of powerful source. But I also wanted to somehow connect the brand name with my name, and I created JeIZER.

"Our clothes are not created for the common people, we make them for «alpha men»."

The life of the JeIZER men's clothing brand began a couple of years ago, when I was with some of my close girlfriends. It was a fun time, with everyone in a very playful mood. One of them asked me what I would do if I were with a naked man on a desert island, and I replied that I would dress him in something amazing ...

So the conversation began about men, about brand, fashion, about what inspires men and how to emphasize it in my images. Next, I found a partner in my business, a person with whom I could talk to about men of all ages and who provokes me to make brave decisions!

That is how we decided to create a brand of men's clothing and to call it JeIZER.

What is the one significant signature of your brand that makes you recognizable, and allows JeIZER Designs to stand out from the rest of the crowd?

I believe it is a combination of emotional message and architectural forms in a cut; in our emotional message lies the male sexuality, the way we understand it. The modern world is moving towards blurring the boundaries between genders, but we want to convey the message that many persons in this world still like bright and strong male leaders who are able to take responsibility







for a situation and at the same time to take care of those around them. Highly intelligent and creative men able to see a common goal and unite people around them. Brave and charismatic individuals, who move our planet forward and faster than anyone else.

This is probably what sets us apart from the others. Our clothes are not created for the common people, we make them for «alpha men».

What motivates you the most about having your own brand?

I want to help people to feel special and unique. In our world, there is the tendency to be like others. For me this is not enough. This is probably a



natural process in a society as personalities develop in a move forward. My vision is to give people a sense of freedom, through style, fantasy, and diversity.

My clothes represent a man's personal freedom; this is his choice, this is his challenge over a flat grey society where all people are faceless.

What colors get you excited during the design process?

I get very excited about the color combinations that I find in nature; the colorful underwater world, the amazing plumage of birds and shades of the sky and flowers. These combinations are very harmonious. Nature is a tremendous and endless source of energy and creativity for us.

You utilize amazing fabrics in your designs. How do you source them?

I select fabrics for the collection based on the feelings and vision of the image and the tactile sensations of various textures, so that they convey the emotional state of the conceived image and reflect its flavor. I prefer to work with natural or innovative material, which satisfies the needs of modern people. It is about environmental friendliness, functionality, and comfort.

“I prefer to work with natural or innovative material, which satisfies the needs of modern people.”

We really liked the varying textures and fabrics that you chose for the fashion runway show in Toronto, earlier this year. What are your favorite fabrics to work with?

It all depends on the choice of the season. If it is autumn-winter, I choose wool and cashmere for coats, cotton with impregnations and technological processing of the fabric surface to ensure that they become waterproof as raincoats. For suits, as a rule, I choose high-quality wool with various

textures and weaves. For everyday wear: cotton, wool, and knitwear. I also like to use neoprene on a natural basis – cotton or wool for outerwear. I like to complement the images with knitted things and accessories. For the spring-summer season I prefer linen, thin cotton and wool with silk, for suits.

Although you are reaching out to an international audience, while being headquartered in Ukraine, I'm curious as to whether there are cultural influences which have made an impact on your designs.

Yes there are! For me the history of various cultures is a colossal source of inspiration. By studying them, I pass them through my vision of the human body and its aesthetics. On a subconscious level, I feel the influence of Ukrainian culture and, in particular, of our national costume. Its shape and colors often come up when I am creating new images. In fact, nationality is a very conventional concept, because if you look at the history of the costume of various nations, many elements in them overlap (either in forms, or in color schemes, or in textures.) Only an ornament carries a peculiar signature, the seal of a certain culture.

Do you think that Ukrainian fashion has a distinctive look?

Ukrainian culture itself is very rich in legends, myths and vivid images. Male and female roles are considered equally valuable and perceived to be very strong. Courage, freedom, and a family rooted in deep traditions are very important. This can be expressed in any form of creativity, including design. But at the same time, economic and political problems certainly do not contribute to the development of creative industries, and therefore those who are engaged in this in our country, as a rule, are devoted professionals in their field.

Therefore, I think Ukrainian fashion has not yet fully formed its distinctive look. But we will

definitely do it, because there are many talented designers in the country!

What are your favorite fashion destinations?

I prefer intellectual or conceptual fashion. For me fashion is not about things or places, but about the ideas of which they are made of. This is a stimulating process for learning. It makes consciousness a trend and it makes you think. To be fashionable, it is not enough just to wear designer clothes, you need to grow up with it as a person.

“For me the history of various cultures is a colossal source of inspiration.”







It has its own exclusivity and authenticity. This is a new aesthetic, where clothing manifests itself as sculpture. The style that we create is timeless. It has its own architecture and a striking emotional message.

If you had a chance to show your collection at one specific fashion show, which one would it be, and why?

There are many interesting and famous fashion shows around the world.

I make clothes first of all for the person, not for the body, although for it too, but the person is my primary target. Therefore, if we talk about a special fashion show, I would choose one where it



would be possible to show how my clothes help to reveal men's personality. Perhaps this is something related to reincarnation right on the catwalk, when a person changes before the eyes of the public, or even shows his talents. I would like to somehow show this magical moment of reincarnation, when the body suddenly reveals its soul and begins to shine from the inside. I want to turn on this light. I would like to show this fiction somehow!

Who are some of your favorite designers and/or design houses?

My favorite designer, whose work I admire, is Elsa Schiaparelli; her surrealism in clothes is amazing. Bright colors, accessories, very feminine and at the same time daring forms. I am very impressed by her courage; I know it was an incredible challenge. Another revolutionary in fashion is Yves Saint Laurent who opened the world to a new woman through his images. Strong, independent and sexy! I am just delighted with the elegance and courage of his images. I have always admired and respected innovators!

"In the past decade, we have seen a dramatic resurgence in the art of men's style."

In the past decade, we have seen a dramatic resurgence in the art of men's style. It seems that men care as much about their fashion and grooming as women! Is that the reason why you focus on men's fashion?

For us, this is not just an analysis of the market or the study of its trends. We just really like and admire men! First of all, this is a desire to create that unique masculine image that we ourselves fall in love with. We are inspired by strong personalities who create their own story! We want to give them more opportunities for full self-expression. And when this happens, when someone manages to help in finding that person, then this is always a good exchange of energy.

What are some pieces from your collection that every guy should wear?

I think in my collections there are a lot of things that every guy can wear, because in each of them lives a kind of hero. I do believe that our coats represent a unique sample of our ideas and style, because it's a very important piece of clothing in everyman's wardrobe. But clothes should be in harmony with your soul, therefore I am for freedom of choice, expression and diversity.

What sartorial advice would you offer men when investing in their style?

Trust yourself and in your feelings, do not be afraid of criticism. There is a lot of criticism in our world because people don't allow themselves much and it's not just about clothes. Look inside yourself to discover your real oneness and your unique features. Style, first of all, is the courage to be yourself! Do not be afraid to be bright, to be a leader and not be afraid to attract attention!

Who would be the one celebrity you would like to style the most?

About celebrities, I would be interested in dressing Johnny Depp and David Beckham because they possess the qualities of a strong multifaceted, courageous, creative modern man who so much attracts us.

It would also be very interesting to work with Elon Musk. I think it would be difficult, but extremely exciting. For me, his image is the image of a man of a new time, so it would be interesting to study, reveal and create an image of self-expression specifically for him.

Who is your number 1 style icon, working in men's fashion, and why?

The number 1 style icon in men's fashion is German fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld. He managed to create his own unique image in which his personality preserves all the elegance of his image and the mystery. At the same time, he was able to carry this balance through his whole life.

without losing either the originality or sophistication of his image. Probably because this was the embodiment of its essence!

If you could partner with one of the leading design houses, who would you choose? And why?

I would choose the fashion house Vivienne Westwood. I am impressed by her courage and theatricality and extravagance in the images. A bold combination of colors and various textures. Her style expresses the spirit of freedom!

It would be also interesting to work with Yohji Yamamoto. I'm fascinated by the complexity of its cut and by the eccentricity of the forms. All this is the embodiment of a man of the information era.







What plans does JeiZER Designs have for the near future? More runway shows?

Creating a new collection for a person of a new era is a rethinking and revival of the connection between person and nature. This is a balance between different directions in fashion and the desire to preserve the authenticity, identity of the person in the flow of information and in the rapidly changing realities of the new digital world. Of course, we plan shows and participation in international exhibitions. We use this rather difficult quarantine time for creativity and planning. We want to tell our vision of a modern man to the whole world! Ahead there is a lot of work, we are only at the beginning of our journey, but we plan to journey for a long time!



What can we expect for JeiZER Designs in the coming years?

I hope this will be a brand that will contribute to a fundamental change in men's fashion in the coming years. The brand that will shape the image of the new modern man.

We also have many ideas for launching a full line with shoes, underwear and accessories for men.

But our main mission is to help modern men to express themselves as unique and special human beings.

In closing, I can see that Yulia is a fashion designer following her own exciting path. I'm so glad that I had a chance to meet her in person.

Of course, I look forward to our next rendezvous!

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Photo Credits: JeiZER Designs



Spencer Feature Interview

DEMAINE NELSON

Big & Bold

“I love sharp, put together looks that are sophisticated, elegant, cool and statement making.”

Demaine Nelson



By Joseph Edward Schur

When I met Demaine for the first time, I had no idea who he was. He's a big guy, towering over most people, and I assumed that he must play professional basketball or football. But what I really noticed first was his very cool style.

I found him engaging, articulate and confident, so naturally I was curious to find out more about him. When our conversation shifted into discussing his style, he proudly exclaimed that he was a fashion designer!

Weeks later, I attended Demaine's first runway show in Toronto, where he received a standing ovation for his designs. That's when I decided he'd earned an opportunity for an interview in Spencer.





Joseph Edward Schur: Thank you for this interview, Demaine. We're curious about your beginnings.

Demaine Tyrone: My background is Jamaican, and I grew up in a big family with lots of gatherings and celebrations. Early on, I noticed fashion and statement looks that are a part of Jamaican culture. I found inspiration from being surrounded by style, and especially looked up to my parents who were always well dressed. I lived in Fort McMurray and Vancouver during the past ten years, and just recently returned to my home base of Toronto about two years ago. Spending time in different Canadian cities has helped me understand the Canadian fashion landscape even more.



Demaine, we're getting personal here but what's the most interesting thing about you that we can share with our readers?

Playing basketball through high school and college was incredibly important to me because I learned so much about discipline, practice, and drive. These fundamentals have poured into my fashion career and given me the advantage of understanding hard work and persistence. Something interesting to share is that I actually knew Demaine Tyrone would be a brand before the brand was an idea because the concept was a reality I dealt with. As a tall player with big and tall peers, we all shared the common struggle and boredom of trying to

dress well within what sizing was available to us while also trying to avoid wearing the same outfits! This was where I started to see a need for fashion beyond the big box label brands that was size inclusive, unique and on trend.

Share with us about your interests outside of being a fashion designer.

Cars, basketball, travel, and most importantly, my friends and family. Spending time with my loved ones, and being a supportive brother, son, uncle, Grandson, cousin. My family is big and they are a big part of my life! Community work and mentorship have been significant contributors in my life, therefore it's important for me to give back. Through Demaine Tyrone, I plan to develop mentorship and internship opportunities that will empower young designers and build a community for designers, collaborators and clients alike.

You received a standing ovation for your runway show in Toronto. How did it make you feel?

The standing ovation was a truly overwhelming, butterfly inducing, and exciting experience for me. Not many people know this but it was the first Demaine Tyrone runway appearance. When the crowd stood, it was an unbelievable feeling that justified all of the hard work and sleepless nights tenfold. I knew that Demaine

"A Demaine Tyrone piece will always make you feel seen, heard and celebrated in your look on bodies of all shapes and sizes."

Tyrone was on the right path at that moment. It was a total rush of pride, accomplishment, validation and celebration. An amazing thrill to see the looks come to life on the runway for the first

time and to be so well received. I'm chasing that feeling now and it's fueling the next Demaine Tyrone collection.

Bravo! Not bad for a first runway show! I'm curious, how would you define your own personal style?

I define my own personal style as suave or dapper. I love sharp, put together looks that are sophisticated, elegant, cool and statement making. I use colour, texture and fusion of detail to achieve my best personal style from faux fur to sequins, silk to denim. All can be found in my closet and in Demaine Tyrone pieces.

Why do you think that fashion and style is important?

Fashion and style are important because they are means of self-expression and confidence and this is what Demaine Tyrone truly stands for. The brand is about inclusive, confidence emphasizing, statement pieces that will elaborate your story, style and liberate your inhibitions. A Demaine Tyrone piece will always make you feel seen, heard and celebrated in your look, on bodies of all shapes and sizes.

At what age were you when you began exploring your own sense of style?

My parents always dressed me fashionably within their means. They taught me the value of a good image and positive self-esteem for which I am grateful. I started to explore my own sense of style at age 12, when I also started to notice that girls were noticing my style too.

What was the first piece that you ever designed?

It was a pull over black and white leopard print faux fur sweater which is now converted into a jacket.

is now converted into a jacket. I still have this piece and don't think I will ever part with it as it marks the true beginning of Demaine Tyrone, my first piece that was custom fit and confidence boosting. It was a sigh of relief and joy that said "finally!" a liberating, belonging feeling that embodies the brand.

What would you consider as your first big break in your career as a designer?

My biggest break was the realization of the Demaine Tyrone customer. It dawned on me that this underserved, untraditionally sized customer was struggling to be celebrated and catered to in the boutique fashion lane. I think a lot of these people have been waiting for the moment where they feel



recognized and uplifted in style and that's why Demaine Tyrone is here. Creating a sense of belonging and making space for bodies of all shapes and sizes in boutique fashion was the birth of the brand. Since then, being noticed in Toronto, by some of the most influential and senior industry folks has been pivotal in my career. I love to network and immerse myself in the amazingly diverse and talented community of Toronto fashion and design. It has been truly rewarding to do so. My runway in March 2020 was my biggest break that came about because of Demaine Tyrone clothing and the amazing network and support. Since the show

in March, Demaine Tyrone has many exciting events and more milestones on the way!

"Toronto is my biggest inspiration and the brand's home base. My peers in the fashion design industry inspire me."

Being a designer is a lot of hard work and true commitment. What part of the fashion design process do you enjoy the most?

Fabric shopping! For Demaine Tryone, selecting fabric is the first page of a piece's story and everything else falls into place after that. I spend a lot of time in fabric stores and I know when I find something that will speak to the Demaine Tyrone message and customer. Personality and wow factor are ignited in that moment. Seeing fabric is seeing a piece, the vision is then rolling and I'm ready to bring it to life. The final product of a piece after the journey is also the best, when I know it will bring confidence to someone who probably thought they would never find something so bold and fit to size.

Where do you look for creative inspiration?

First and foremost, the streets of and nightlife scene of Toronto and my CN Tower view from my condo. Toronto is my biggest inspiration and the brand's home base. My peers in the fashion design industry inspire me. It may be old school, but I stay on top of my ideas with a white board and note pad too so I can track inspiration. I draw creative inspiration from all types of fashion whether it be my Caribbean roots, Japanese street wear, red carpet look, hip hop musicians, or NBA players. Most importantly, I always look to my friends and peers who are not traditional clothing store sizes for inspiration because I see their struggle



trying to try to dress with confidence and expression but missing their voice when they can't find pieces in standard labels or stores that work with their body types. That is where Demaine Tyrone comes in, to give those people and those moments their voice and joy back, with stylish, quality, feel-good pieces, no matter what their size.

How would you describe your design vision?

The design vision of Demaine Tyrone is quality, custom and size inclusive. To provide customers with quality, bold, unique garments alongside an outstanding customer experience that upholds confidence, dignity, and self-expression. To reduce the shame and embarrassment that goes along with shopping in boutique stores as a hard to dress shopper with fear of items not fitting. To encourage creativity and statement-making pieces that don't exclude different body types. To bring the joy of style and shopping to people who may have never discovered that feeling because of their size. The body shapes and sizes outside of standard sizing are under-represented and underserved in the stylish, exclusive and high-end retail space and Demaine Tyrone is the answer to filling that space. Custom is an integral branch of Demaine Tyrone with my customer consultations, fittings and one-of-a-kind pieces.

How does culture influence your creative process?

The culture of high-end, boutique fashion being made for traditional model body types is a huge influence and inspiration. We are now seeing big



label brands expanding their sizing to cater to all types of bodies and this is such an important step forward for day to day wear. Demaine Tyrone

"I am extremely passionate about my brand as a black business owner with a message of inclusivity, self-love and accepting diversity."

elevates this movement by bringing size inclusivity into the high fashion, boutique space. The brand is proud to emphasize the message and movement of size inclusivity in areas of high fashion for runways, events, red carpet, nightlife looks and even day to day looks with Demaine Tyrone collections and custom pieces. These pieces are made to accentuate my customer's uniqueness, to



bring their style and self-expression out relentlessly and to embody confidence for all occasions on all body types.

What would you say is the biggest challenge that you have had to overcome as a designer?

The biggest challenge is brand awareness and growth especially starting out in the development phase. Striving for the top in a fashion capital of the world like Toronto is challenging because there is competition, saturation, and a fast-paced attention span. These challenges have helped me learn to be adaptable and resourceful but to stay

“Demaine Tyrone helps give people an identity and my creativity flows through that concept.”

true to the Demaine Tyrone brand vision and with that I have come to learn more about my consumer and building brand loyalty through impeccable customer service and quality garments.

Your designs consist of incredible fabrics, textures and an attention to detail. Where did you learn this craftsmanship and what inspires this aesthetic?

I would say my aesthetic is inspired by the idea that fusion of colour, texture and detail can come together into a statement-making piece that captures a feeling perfectly. I love engaging pieces that show the craftsmanship I’ve learned with mentors, tailors, and seamstresses. It’s important for me to push the constructive envelope when creating pieces because the clothes themselves are made with the idea of pushing boundaries and discovering beauty and confidence that way.

What makes you passionate about your brand?

I am passionate about Demaine Tyrone because of two things, my customers and creativity. Demaine Tyrone helps give people an identity and my creativity flows through that concept. No matter

what size you are, because I cater to everyone, the passion for me is building a piece of character that gives the loudest or quietest person in the room confidence and a story to tell through their look. I am extremely passionate about my brand as a black business owner with a message of inclusivity, self-love and accepting diversity.

I know that often, money and fame can be the driving force that can lead to compromising brand integrity. How important is commercial appeal to you?

Commercial appeal is important to me but not what I build Demaine Tyrone on. I want to preserve the intimacy of one on one customer service, fittings and including clients in the creative process. Demaine Tyrone is most appealing as a boutique brand but I am always open to growth, collaboration and expansion now and moving forward.

If you could design for one celebrity, who would that be?

Drake! Drake is a homegrown, Toronto ambassador. He is the man of hip-hop culture, a fashion icon in his own right who oozes confidence, the vision of Demaine Tyrone pieces. Demaine Tyrone looks are right on the pulse of the lifestyle and image of Drake and would highlight his style perfectly. So Drake, if you're reading this, it's not too late!

Aubrey is reading this! Now, here's an interesting question for you to ponder... If you were given a \$100,000 voucher, to a single store, and a round trip chartered flight to any city in the world, where would you go?

I could not put \$100,000 to good use in any store but a fabric store! Actually, I'm going to have to say I would take that money with me to a city like Milan, London, Paris, Tokyo or Mumbai and just load up on amazing, one-of-a-kind fabrics. That would be a dream come true!

Here's another off-the-wall question: How would you describe fashion to someone who is blind?



SPENCER STYLE

If I had to describe fashion to a blind person, I would use words of feeling like bliss, charm, mystique, fearlessness, tenacity. I would also use sounds or songs and textures and stories to bring understanding to the explanation. Fashion really is about that feeling you get when you feel understood, catered to and confident in yourself not just because of what you're wearing but because of the sounds, textures and feelings that build a piece and story.

So what skills would you consider to be the most important for someone thinking about a career in fashion design?

Strong sense of design, color, texture and superior skills in pattern drafting are the most vital! Once you know how to pattern draft, you have the single most important skill of constructing your vision to product.

Where do you see yourself in the next five years?

I see Demaine Tyrone growing steadily in the next three to five years becoming a brand positioned as a leading size inclusive, quality, and custom retailer in Canada. I'd love to be achieving international demand as well through continued



fashion events and showcase opportunities, social media and strategic partnerships or collaborations with existing aligned brands. Spotighting the issues of limited custom, luxury clothing for non-traditional sized customers who currently do not have access to many boutique clothing brands that create pieces in their size is the mission that will define the next five years. Having a store front, studio and mentorship program in place are plans for the brand. Fabric design or fabric design collaboration is also on my radar. Overall, I see Demaine Tyrone consistently bringing pieces to customers that celebrate uniqueness, difference, and bring a wow factor and joy to statement piece style seekers.

Where do you see fashion heading in the next two years?

I see fashion continually evolving to be inclusive, diverse and I'm proud that Demaine Tyrone will be a part of the movement.

What can we expect to see at your next show?

Demaine Tyrone has historically focused on menswear but is branching into womenswear too. In the future, there will be themed collections with his and hers, hers and hers or his and his collections. I love the concept of unity in clothing too and want to explore some creative visions within that. There is also an idea coming together for an exclusive track suit line. Demaine Tyrone stays active on social media where you can follow along to find hints on what is coming up.

In conclusion of this interview, I remain incredibly impressed with this young designer. The accolades bestowed upon him are deserved and yet he remains humble. I can't give Demaine all the credit, though; his family plays a role in his success. As it should be.

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Photo Credits: Aprille Deus, The Creadive





kickin' it up at
Daniel's Spectrum!

TKFW S/S 2020 – Season III

By Joseph Edward Schur

I enjoy some fashion shows. But this show was different, better than what I'm used to. The stylish people, the incredible energy, even the chaos... and add in kids, it's a real "wow" factor.

Of course, Spencer is all about people, and style, for both the young and old(er). I find it interesting to see how such respected designers invest their time and creative energy into fashions for children who will, undoubtedly, grow out of them. Can we say designer hand-me-downs?!

From the moment that I arrived at Daniel's Spectrum in Toronto's east end, I knew that this show, the third for Toronto Kids Fashion Week, was going to be different. It was going to be fun.

After signing in at reception, I entered the great hall and was dazzled with the festive decorations, providing a warm and inviting atmosphere. This was my third time attending TKFW and I continue to be impressed with how well organized this event is.



Jamaal Magloire with Shawn Byfield

Before long, I was greeted by Demi Theo, one of the volunteer organizers. I always enjoy seeing Demi as she has an air of sophistication and lends class to any event she is involved with. I congratulated her on TKFW's success, in anticipation of another outstanding show. I was thrilled when she told me that the event was more than just sold out, they had to bring in an extra 87 chairs to meet the demand for ticket sales!

During the pre-show reception I had the chance to spend some time with my friend Ned Ma, the celebrated and internationally acclaimed Fashion Photographer and Celebrity Stylist. Of course, he looked amazing, blinged out in Versace and Chanel. As we chatted about the show, the designers and the kid models, we agreed that TKFW has the potential to

be trendsetting in promoting children's fashion on the world stage.

The venue was filling up quickly with excited guests. Anxious to see one of my favorite performers before the show, I was able to navigate through the crowd and snuck into the main auditorium,



SPENCER STYLE

with the stealth of a ninja. Well, okay. Not exactly a ninja, but I got in. And there she was, the center of attention, the singer/actor/anti-bullying activist Jadyn Rylee, who at only 14 years old has earned the respect and admiration of millions of fans from around the world. I was looking forward to seeing Jadyn again, with her mom and dad Tara and Colin, and her cute-as-a-button kid sister, Dev. I have so much respect for this family.

Upon exiting the auditorium, I caught up with my colleagues from Spencer Magazine: Rose Marie Bresolin, our Managing Editor; Marcia Reid, our Communications Director along with Wanda Ryan and Jonathan Levy, from our Editorial Board of Directors. Jonathan is also Spencer's brilliant Photographer, providing the pictures you see here.

Fast forward to the Fashion Show. As the lights dimmed, I settled down to enjoy what would most certainly be a spectacular show, including special performances.



Until next time...

Designers featured in TKFW III:

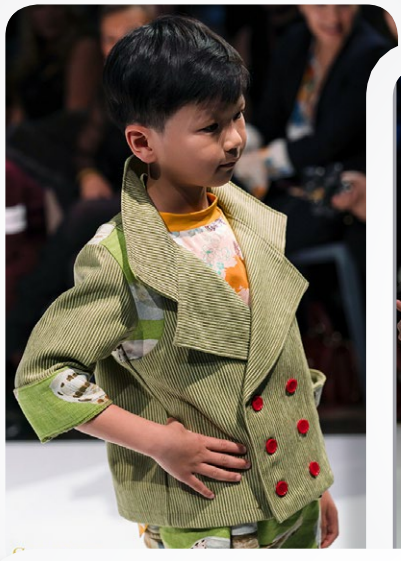
Moka Collection, VC VANCO, Crawford Boys, Supreme Tamu, CoyotePretty, Tie & Tiara, MiMozah Kids, Art & Anna, Drole d'Oiseau, Anti Bully N and Zara. Following pages:

Photo Credits: Jonathan Levy











*We are all part of a mosaic. I can not do what I do alone.
I need a team of people. The staff and the factories and
the customers are all part that mosaic.*

John Fluevog



Spencer Feature Interview

JOHN FLUEVOG

the SOUL
behind the
SOLES

By Rose Marie Bresolin

My first experience with the John Fluevog Brand was after a walk to The Toronto Distillery District some years ago. Friends had come down to the city to visit me in my new home, and to shop. We were all taken back at the uniqueness of the shoes our eyes took in! Thus, on visits by family from the States since, I have felt it as the place to take them to for shoes. My feelings have been supported by the big smile on a photo from a niece in Michigan, modelling the trademark blue shoes that her mother bought while here. So naturally, when the opportunity arose for an interview with John Fluevog himself, I didn't hesitate.



Rose Marie Bresolin: John, your shoes are so very different and have been from the start. What gave you the courage to shift as far away from the more conventional footwear?

John Fluevog: I never thought of them as being so non-conventional. I only wanted to make a product that felt and looked good to me; footwear that expressed how I saw the world and what I'd like others to feel.

What constituted your initial market?

My market has changed over the years. I have never been one thing and never had just one customer.

Don't forget I have been through disco, the boring early 80's, punk, grunge club, and each era has its own feeling.

When you started up In Vancouver, you had a partner. You were already experiencing success when you two parted ways, so, tell us, did you have even a moment's thought to closing up shop and taking life easy?

I never thought of taking it easy because there has never been a time when I think I have "made it" and can relax.

What inspired you to reduce the footprint by your shoes on the environment, and to make the shift

towards earth friendlier and sustainable materials in their manufacture?

That to me is not inspired; it's just plain good sense. We all need to do what we can in our everyday lives. Not to do so is wrong.

Powerful words for stirring conscience. John, I'm also impressed that your shoes are manufactured in small numbers, even with the growing number of stores being supplied around the world. That would explain the attention to their detail. And, I'm thinking it may also be to protect the time required to attend closely to the finer detail that's involved?

Yes, precisely. All our shoes are made in small factories where we know the owners and the families that own and run the factories. Our factories are like our partners. We are all working for the same goals.

Can you talk a little more about how you view the relationship with the people who manufacture the shoes, the shop keepers as well.

We are all part of a mosaic. I can not do what I do alone. I need a team of people. The staff and the factories and the customers are all part that mosaic.

Has your family been involved in any part of the production or promotion?

My middle son is the CEO of the company. The other two have worked for the company from time to time, and needless to say, are part of a growing family.

What were some of your funniest moments?

I hope everything is funny! I try not to take it all too seriously or I would cry!

There's a Jimmy Buffet line if I ever heard one. Haha. And, the most challenging?

Getting my shoes out of the factories the way I want them.

About your book, when did the thought of taking on yet this new adventure first begin?

I began to think about the book I when I realized that fifty years were fast approaching. It's a long time to be in the fashion business.

What has the response since launching it been like for you?

The response has passed my expectations... not that I had many expectations, but the presales and the press have been very encouraging.



SPENCER STYLE

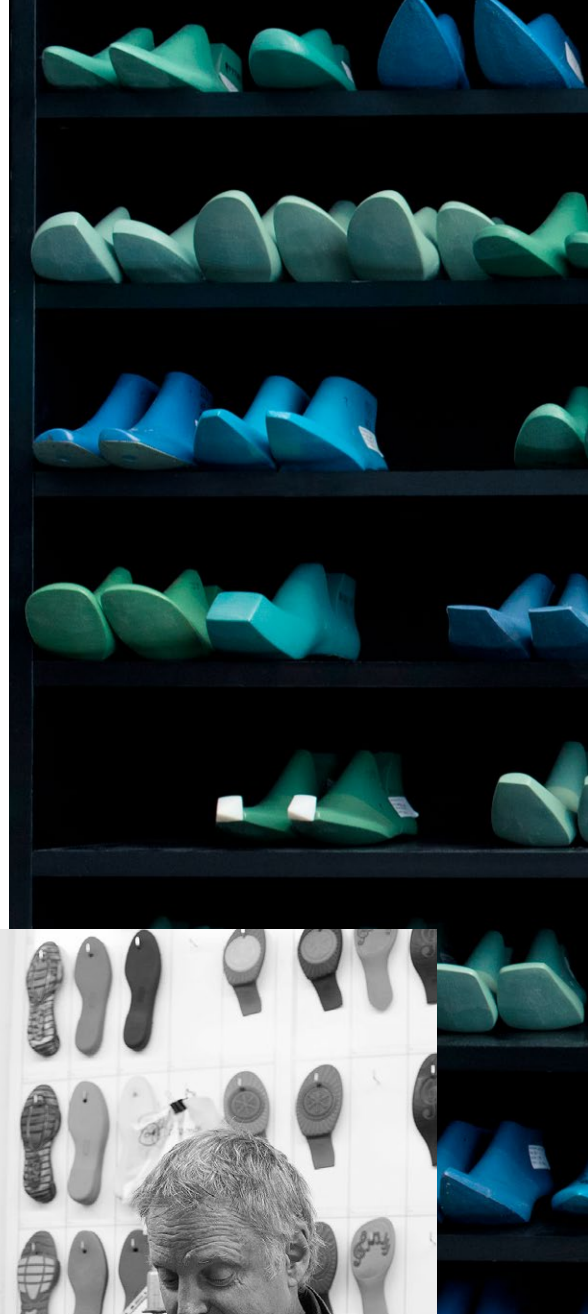
What words of wisdom for the creative among us, on the brink of a decision as to whether to risk pursuing our dreams now, or to wait until they're more financially secure and see if it's still there?

Get on it. Don't delay, Do both. Or do one. Just start!

John, at the end of your website, you're quoted, 'Thank you for wearing my shoes.' On behalf of everyone who has experienced the creativeness and craftsmanship of your footwear, 'thank you for your dedication to the artistic rendering behind it.'

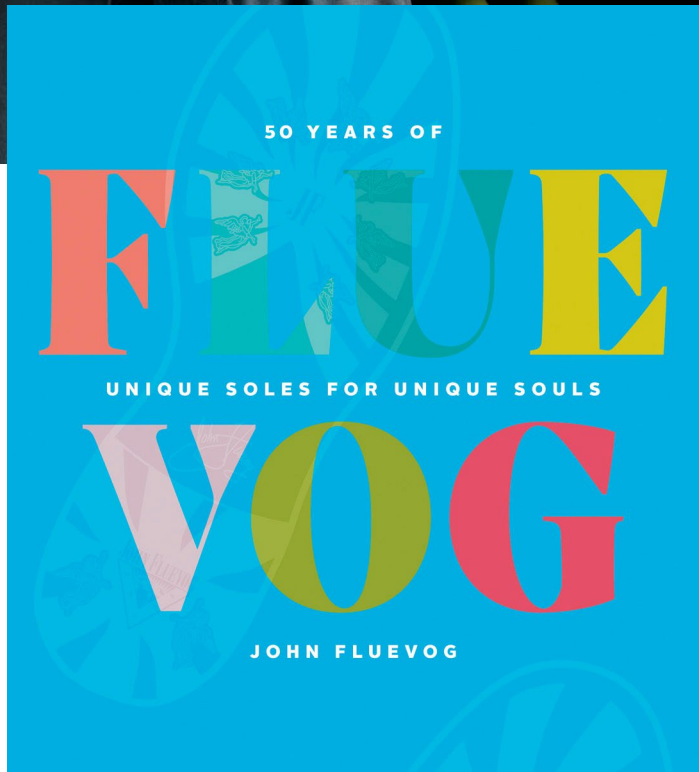
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Photo Credits: John Fluevog





Canadian John Fluevog has been named as one of the world's most innovative companies in the fashion industry. Fluevog Shoes employs people worldwide, and since opening their first Australian store in Melbourne in 2019, the numbers have climbed to more than 200. His philanthropic reach extends to various causes and in support of numerous charity events.



from PEARL *to* PEARL

Pearls offer an astonishing array of colors for everyone to love. From classic white Akoya pearls to jet black Tahitian pearls, silver and gold South Sea pearls and even deep shades of lavender to yes, even blue!

By Monica Frangulea

Women love pearls, they have always loved pearls, but lately they're looking for newer, edgier, "less perfect" ways to wear them.

As it is with the ready-to-wear world, jewelry experiences trend shifts from season to season and year to year.

Dainty necklaces and classic hoops have been ruling the accessory scene for quite some time. This is why we are noticing a shift as this year's hottest jewelry trends are playful and unapologetically bold.

With the tremendous variety of pearls on the market today, pearls are considered the least understood of all gemstones.

One of the most important considerations in selecting a piece of pearl jewelry is determining the type of pearl that is best suited to your budget and preference.

There are two basic varieties of natural cultured pearls: freshwater and saltwater. Freshwater pearls are grown primarily in man-made lakes and reservoirs in China. Saltwater pearls, which include Akoya, Tahitian and South Sea, are grown in bays, inlets and atolls in many places around the world. Saltwater pearls are considered more valuable than freshwater pearls, although rare and very high-quality freshwater pearls can be exceedingly valuable.

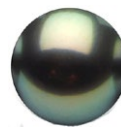


Akoya pearls grown off the coast of Japan, China and sometimes Vietnam using the *Pinctada fucata martensii* saltwater oyster have been the classic pearl of choice. When one pictures a round strand of white pearls, they are usually thinking of akoya. The color white is associated with purity, which is why pearls have traditionally been worn by brides.



Freshwater pearls are known for baroque shapes, white and pastel body colors and softer luster than akoya. There are dozens of naturally occurring colors found in freshwater pearls.

The most common colors seen on the retail market today are lavender, white, peach and black but by no means illustrate the full spectrum of possible colors. Freshwater pearls are rich in orient, an optical effect where rainbows of colors shimmer beneath the pearl's surface. This effect is similar to shifting rainbows reflecting on soap bubbles.



Tahitian pearls grown in French Polynesia and the Sea of Cortez in Guyamas, Mexico are the only naturally dark pearls. Although often referred to as black, Tahitian pearls come in a rainbow of exotic colors.

Polynesian lore describes the god Ono coming down from the heavens on a rainbow to gift his beloved princess the first black pearls. The pearls were imbued with the colors of his magical rainbow.

Round Tahitian pearls are quite rare but other fun shapes like drops, baroques and ovals are highly-sought and still considered very valuable.

The most common overtones for black pearls are Peacock (Green, Gold and Rose mixture), Green, Blue-Green, Rose, Silver, Copper and Aquamarine.



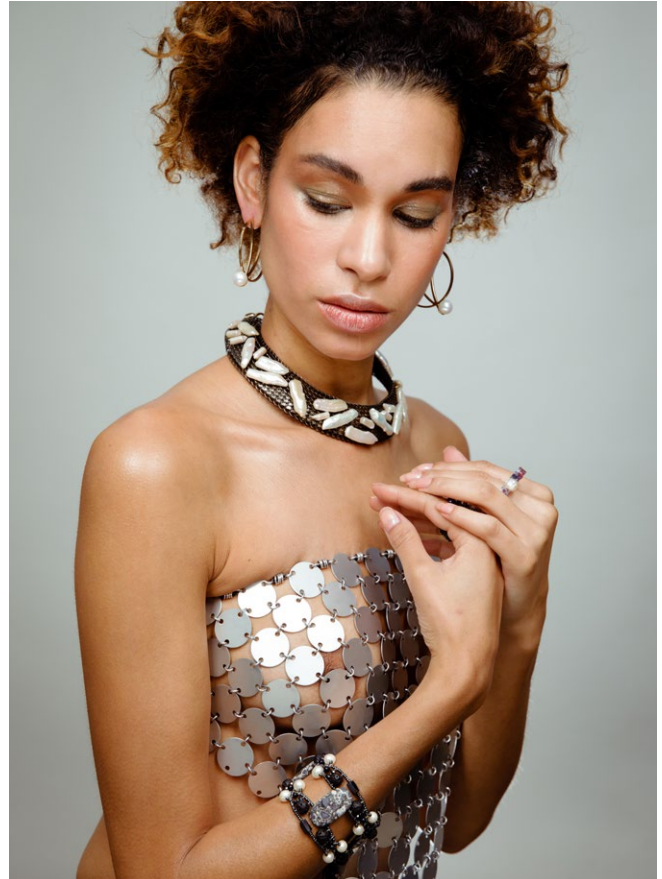
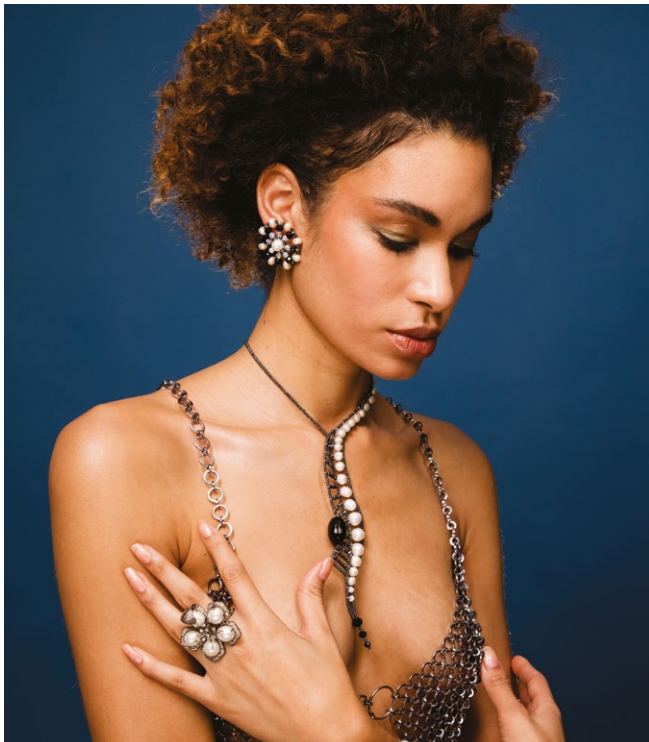
South Sea Pearls ranging in color from white to gold, are the largest salt-water pearls grown today.

Opulent, luxurious and best of all, naturally colored, Golden South Sea pearls are some of the largest and rarest cultured pearls in the world. Ranging in color from pale Champagne to intense 24K golden hues, these cultured pearls hail from the tropical lagoons and atolls of the Philippine Islands and Australia.

Because of their tremendous size, perfectly round South Sea pearls are quite rare. Other more common shapes are drops, baroques and ovals. They all have notable value.

Golden pearls are said to imbue their owner with wealth and prosperity. The Chinese often depicted their dragons (said to be harbingers of great luck) bearing golden pearls in their mouths or claws.

We can get a big variety of colors as natural pearls can be industrially treated or dyed. Fresh-water pearls can be dyed easily within a short time (few hours or few days) because of the soft nacre.



South Sea pearls need much more time (one or two months) and are very costly to be dyed. Due to the compact nacre, it requires a strong light to accelerate the penetration and uniform distribution of dye, which is called "laser dye," "radiation stain" or "roast color." Currently, the method is only being used for the South Sea pearls. And some golden South Sea pearls are dyed and even look more beautiful than natural golden ones. In other words, dyed golden South Sea pearls have metallic fluorescence which will make the golden color deeper because of long-term exposure of glaring light.

Pearls are the world's only organic gemstone, and therefore, tend to be quite delicate. Proper care of your pearl jewelry is essential to ensure your investment will last a lifetime. Personal care products, such as perfume or hairspray, can severely damage the luster and beauty of a pearl.

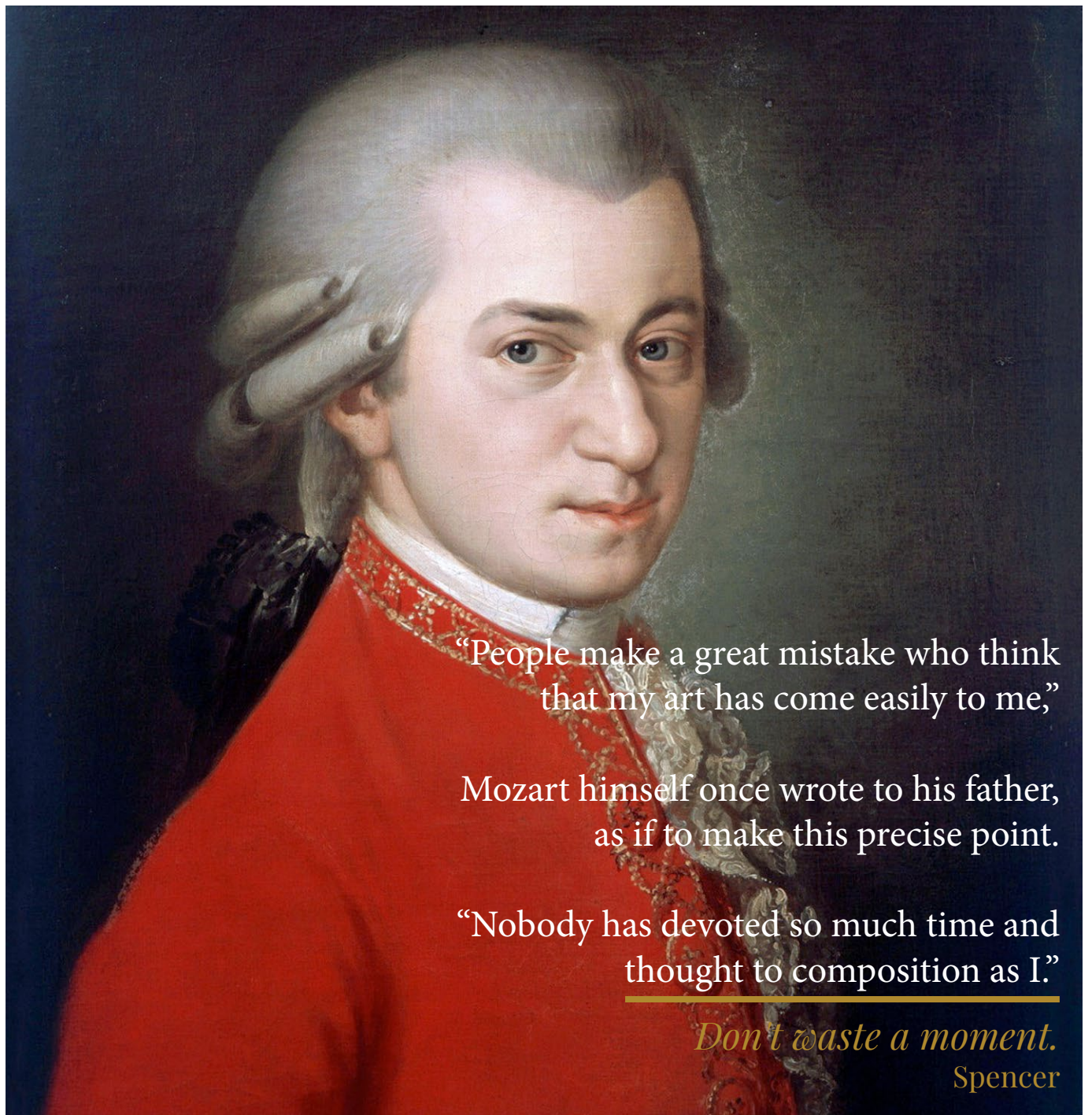
Photo Credits: Koko Tchorbadjian
Model: Honey Benjamin
Hair & Makeup: Marisa Tipkanok

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Arts & Culture

Kate Campbell's Boundless, Road to the Lemon Grove, Nick Mancuso's Myth of Night Magic, Liz Taylor, Comedy Records, Grenville Pinto, Jonny Starkes, Reve De Moi, Peter Triantos, Filomena Pisano



“People make a great mistake who think that my art has come easily to me,”

Mozart himself once wrote to his father, as if to make this precise point.

“Nobody has devoted so much time and thought to composition as I.”

Don't waste a moment.

Spencer

spectacularly

BOUNDLESS

With Kate Campbell & Dini Petty



Kate Campbell's exciting film recognizing the contributions of the courageous women pilots during World War II

By Rose Marie Bresolin



INTERVIEW

After listening to Dini Petty speak with passion about the aviation film *Boundless* and Kate Campbell who directed it, I asked if she could arrange an interview. I knew there was a story in it for our Spencer readers and was excited when the answer came back as yes.

Rose Marie Bresolin: So, Kate, thank you for agreeing to the interview. And Dini, welcome back. Dini, as a woman who was born near the end of WWII with planes thundering overhead as they bombed London, your reaction to such a fearsome experience could have taken you either way; either you'd be drawn to flying or cringe at the thought of airplanes. Thankfully for us, it went in favor of your choosing to fly.



Dini, I'd like to put a few questions about *Boundless* to Kate first and then have you take us into your experience of the filming.

Kate, *Boundless* is described as a historical fiction, a narrative that was inspired by your grandmother, Betty Grepley. And while a pilot, she herself was not in the war. She's deceased now, but her impact lives on in you, and now through this film, she stands to impact much more widely. That must bring you a great degree of satisfaction. Tell us a little bit about this special someone you refer to as your best friend.

Kate: It does bring me satisfaction. It's been a fairly long journey and obviously my grandmother was an incredible woman who still inspires me. This project is a love letter to her and what she represented to me. I don't know where I would be without her. I grew up hearing her stories about

flying and watching her interact with male pilots as they compared notes and it was in one of her stories that I first heard about Dini. My grandmother got her license in the 50's and Dini got hers in the late 60's and they both flew out of Buttonville airport in Ontario, Canada.

Such a vivid image, thank you. Given that much of the information you were seeking was buried for so long, what level of cooperation did you receive in the developing stages of the film?

Kate: A lot of help actually. I began with the First Canadian Chapter of the Ninety-Nines in Toronto, Canada where my grandmother was a member. The more research I did, the more women pilots I found and then I discovered the

Women Airforce Service Pilots known as WASP, and I was astounded that no one knew their story. Then I moved to Los Angeles and eventually began interviewing women pilots in California, Seattle and Texas. I discovered that the Women Airforce Service Pilots held an annual homecoming every year on Memorial Day weekend in Sweetwater, Texas where they originally trained. I started going every year, filming the surviving women and some of the planes they flew. Originally, I wanted someone else to write the story and I approached the only three writers I knew. They were all men and fortunately they all said no.

So, with lots of encouragement from mentors and friends, I started writing the story myself. I had moved to Los Angeles to continue pursuing my acting career. I had some success but along the way I learned just how messy and painful the struggle is and how strong you have to be to follow

your dreams. Soon after I landed in LA I began singing again and launched a career with that, so by the time I started writing Boundless, I had the tenacity and the courage to do it. This is where historical fiction comes in, because when you spend so many years researching the facts and hearing the stories, it provides a rich tapestry to write from. Then I further developed it over the years with an incredible collective of artists to flesh the story out.

While you were in the various stages, did you ever think about abandoning the project?

Kate: Many times, but I knew that I wouldn't, which was terribly frustrating. I learned what it meant to be a woman not only in that time but also today, as women still face many of the same issues. We've come a long way, but we still have a long way to go.

Yes, and I think it's worth underscoring, that you allowed yourself to think about quitting and then you carried on. And here you are! How did you drum up the funds, and I realize now that

was another new experience for you, just as the filming was. So, take us into that.

Kate: Yes it was. I decided I wanted to shoot a short film version of Boundless because I was tired of waiting for someone to do something about it. So, I organized a fundraising concert in my hometown of Haliburton, Ontario, Canada. I also received some grant money from the Haliburton County Development Corporation. There have been other community and private donations as well.

We tried an online campaign with Indiegogo, but it didn't do well, mainly because I didn't have the team in place before we launched. But thankfully, a fantastic team did come together. We are still fundraising and seeking sponsorships.

One thing the movie brings out is what happened when the war ended, and the men came home. Talk to us about this and some of the other findings in the process of researching and interviewing female pilots across North America. for the film.





Kate: The women who had been ferrying the military aircraft were disbanded before the war actually ended. As we started to win the war the men returned from overseas and there was no place for the women to continue. Society as a whole, was not supportive of the women continuing on the path of piloting military aircraft or any career in aviation.

Might women in general have felt justified in becoming part of that resistance in a belief that they were protecting their husband's jobs?

Well, that too, but there's a deeper issue, one that still exists today. Society was not prepared for these powerful women or their contribution. There's programmed patriarchy in all of us. It's been ingrained. So how does a society shift consciousness? Men are not to blame. Now especially, women hold a lot of responsibility for this change. It takes a lot of work, the facing of oneself, and it takes guts to change anything.

I've been surrounded by a lot of powerful women and, for better or worse, it gave me what I needed to step into myself. We have a responsibility to ourselves and to younger generations. You never know who you're affecting.

There's transparency and honesty in what you're doing. I imagine you're also looking to dig deep to see if there is a general will to make the change? It'll take a lot of energy from like-minded people to cause a societal shift from a position long fixed. It's always promising to hear of people willing to play a part in it. Hopefully the positive light shed by the film will help to allay some fears; maybe help grease a rusty wheel... Tell us where and when the filming began?

Kate: We shot in September, 2019.

I thought it had been earlier.

Kate: We actually pushed the date back twice. We shot mainly in Guelph, Canada because it was rural and reminiscent of Avenger Field in Sweetwater Texas, where the women trained, and we could still land the planes that we were working with. We ended the shoot at the Niagara Military Museum in Niagara Falls, Canada. On one of the days, we had 60 extras to travel to Guelph, in a no-budget situation plus 35 to 40 crew members too, so feeding all those people was challenging. Kirtida Kitchen, a great Indian restaurant in Guelph, had their food truck come out to feed us all our hot lunch that day. It was wonderful.

My mind just keeps saying wow. Now tell us about the little girl who could.

Kate: Yes, my production manager and I were working online in a program called Zoom where our cast and background actors could just video call into our space to confirm and show us their wardrobe. So, while I was under the gun working with my production manager in my apartment, (that looked like a bomb went off!), we forgot that the computer screen was even on, and this young woman popped up. “Oh!” I responded after being taken aback. And the girl went on to say that she was calling from Winnipeg and wanted to tell us that she was coming out for the shoot. I was so excited. I mean, she flew herself out for one day and was so proud to be a part of it. It was stuff like that; people came out of the woodwork to offer help. We were given all of the camera equipment from SIM, a really incredible camera rental house in Toronto, Canada. A lot of production support came from Buck Productions and two post-production companies have come on board, Clark Stanley and Rolling Pictures.

And yet again, wow! Lots of good souls out there. And Oshkosh?

Kate: Oh, yes. That was for the teaser that I shot in in 2018; some of it was filmed in Los Angeles, some of it in Ontario, Canada and some was in Oshkosh, Wisconsin which is the largest aviation convention in the world. It goes on for miles in every direction. You could attend the entire convention and not see all of it. It’s like Disneyland for aviation geeks.

I see how that could be exciting.

Dini, at this point intrigued with the direction the interview is taking, interjects.

Dini Petty: There was something I’ve been meaning to ask you Kate. When did you first hear the story of WASP? Who first led you there?

Kate: It was in the early stages; the more research I did the more women pilots I found. I was floored by their stories. I then began to realize how long it was going to take and how much work it would require. I was overwhelmed.

It does sound overwhelming.



Dini: One of the things that impresses me about the film and unless you're a pilot, you might not appreciate it, is that these women were only required to have 35 hours of flying time to become a WASP! 35 hours is so little time! Today you need 40 hours for a private license and a hundred for your commercial license for one type of aircraft. These women were flying several different kinds of planes. That's extraordinary!

While the excitement must have been high, I'm also imagining the fear. Thanks Dini. Okay, Kate! What do you want the film to do?

Kate: I want the film to be a calling card for the miniseries which we already have in writing development, and the film will also tour the film festival circuit. I also hope that it will speak to younger generations of women and girls; to share

that this is something that is possible. Only 6% of all pilots globally are women. Not a large percentage.

Dini: What film festivals will you be entering it in?

Kate: I'd love to try for Cannes, and then hoping it will go to the Palm Springs Short Festival and TIFF, among others.

Dini: What about Sundance?

Kate: I love Sundance, and it's definitely something to aim for. We'll see.

What markers will you be looking for to tell you if the film has achieved your goals? How will you know if your digging went deep enough?



We have a responsibility to ourselves and to younger generations to pass down the stories of the female pilots who played a part in WWII. When girls see themselves represented, it gives them permission to do the same. You never know who you're affecting.

Kate: I think if it moves people. And if it can attract more support and financing, as we move into miniseries territory. And when it gets its due recognition for what it is.

What about education, how do you see that playing out as one of your supports?

Kate: I'd love to share it with schools. I have shared it with my hometown school. They'll be the first people to be impacted, having seen the process, not just the story. It's important, not just for girls to see women represented and acknowledged, but for the boys as well.

I can see the impact having value for both genders, and in both the elementary and secondary panels; to see girls written into a history they had a part in making. Another positive way to help expand awareness.

Kate: Absolutely. And it's also working with organizations like the Ninety-Nines, the organization of women pilots founded by Emilia Earhart in 1929 that my grandmother was a member of and of which I'm a student member. I also had a booth at an event called Girls Take Flight, in April at the Oshawa Airport in Ontario, Canada where they welcome young women and girls to learn more about the world of aviation and they get to go up in a plane. So, there are more and more outlets for getting the information out there.

Dini: Did you know that Emilia Earhart wanted to start an association for women pilots? She sent out hundreds of invitations and 99 women showed up and the Ninety-nines were born.



This is amazing. So, Dini, I believe this was your first role in a movie?

Dini: No, I've been in several, but most often cast in the role of an interviewer. I would like to do more.

How did it make you feel to be a part of a mechanism focused on delivering an incredibly powerful message?

"The hope is that younger women see themselves in these stories because that's what my grandmother was for me too."



Dini Petty taking flight in Boundless





Dini: Terrific. As Kate and I were becoming friends she told me about her grandmother who also flew out of Buttonville Airport but when I realized Betty Grepley and I knew each other, I was amazed! So when Kate asked me to do the part, my first thought was “the circle is complete.” I’m thrilled to be part of Kate’s dream honoring women in aviation. But I hadn’t acted in a long time so I was apprehensive and I think Kate was a little nervous, maybe?

Kate: I wasn’t nervous about you doing it, Dini. I just didn’t want you to feel you had to pitch or sell anything because it was such a private moment. I wanted you to be comfortable enough to be vulnerable, and you were just so lovely. After the first take, I turned around and 35, 40 crew members were teary eyed. It was just beautiful.

Kate, my experience is that the moment you’ve done something that has a serious impact, it automatically becomes the seed for something else, something more. What do you see next?

Kate: I think the seed of it is to do it on a larger scale and to not stop. To keep telling more stories, more women’s stories. It’s a great time to look at our current reality. And there are so many fantastic

women’s stories now being told. It’s empowering. There is something transformational about narrative work. It changes lives. I saw “A League of Their Own” when I was growing up, and it launched my whole high school athletic career. I was a national athlete back then and I learned a great deal about myself because of that film. The hope is that younger women see themselves in these stories because that’s what my grandmother was for me too. I could see myself in her because she had done it.

“Emilia Earhart wanted to start an association for women pilots. She sent out hundreds of invitations and 99 women showed up and the Ninety-nines were born.”

There’s so much pressure, even more so on women and girls today, to look and be and act in a certain way especially with social media. The pressure on the psyche from the technological age that we are in can be crippling. Information overload and everyone feeling that they have to have a picture-perfect life lacks human connection. I think that narrative stories are so powerful because if they’re done well, they speak directly to our humanity and bypass the superficiality. They have the power to change lives.

Seems I've said it too many times, and not enough, and I see the same message on Dini's face as well. We're simply amazed. Thank you, Kate, and our thanks to the late Betty.

Photo Credit: Samantha Falco

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Spencer Feature Article

DIRECTOR DALE HILDEBRAND

Road *to the* Lemon Grove

By Steve Pryce

*Starring Burt Young, Nick Mancuso,
Rossella Brescia, Charly Chiarelli,
Loreena McKennitt, Tomaso Sanelli.*

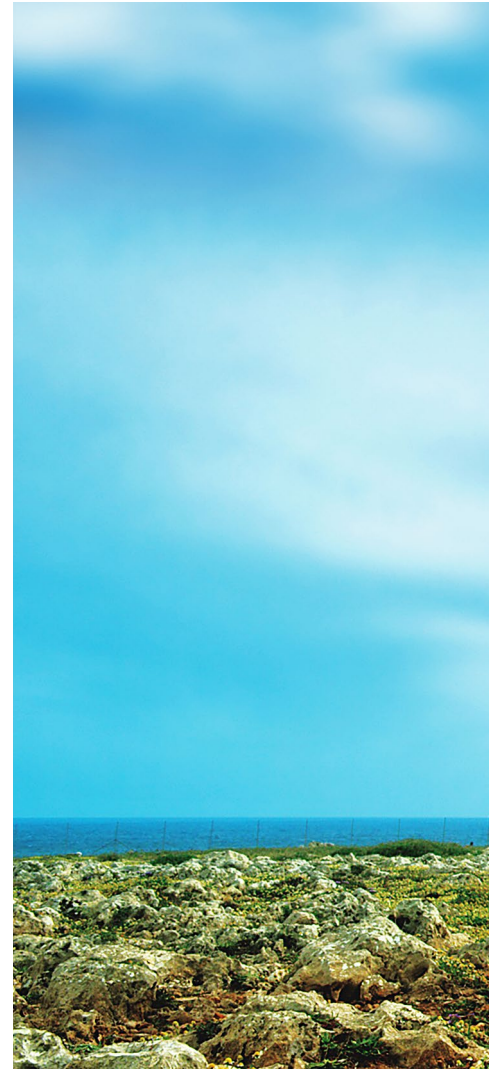




Director Dale Hildebrand

The film 'Road to the Lemon Grove' brings an intimate look at its creators' understanding of their own history. Co-written by its star Charly Chiarelli, musician and story-teller, and Dale Hildebrand, a highly experienced maker of films for cinema and television, its ninety-something minutes addresses the reality of growing up and living as an adult in an expatriate community - in this case, the Sicilian diaspora of greater Toronto.

Not content with his first feature co-write, Chiarelli plays multiple roles in his first feature as an actor. As Calogero, an established Canadian academic, the ghost of his recently-deceased father Antonio (also Chiarelli) requires him to return his father's ashes, hence to the lemon grove in Sicily that he left behind to build a new life in Canada.





On set with actors Nick Mancuso, Rossella Brescia and Director Dal Hildebrand

Ghostly father and son travel through Sicily together, bantering the differences that still remain between them. As a much-younger Antonio, Chiarelli appears in a flashback to the 1950s; he frequently breaks the fourth wall as narrator, then goes on to play a minor character in Sicily. Chiarelli's versatility in his first feature film is impressive. Lemon grove is very much a vehicle for Chiarelli, but the ensemble



On set with actor Charly Chiarelli

Italo-Canadian cast all put in worthy performances. Italy's prima ballerina, Rosella Brescia, makes a beguiling movie premiere (never apparently so) as an actress tired of paparazzi attention; Nick Mancuso plays a rare comedic role.

Road to the Lemon Grove alludes subtly to the history of the Italian diaspora. Its comedic references are now-unacceptable jokes and slapsticks that defined the evolution of humour through Calogero's lifetime; a subtle look over the shoulder at seventy years of one part of how society defines, and re-defines, itself. Similarly, every character is on its way somewhere new. The father Calogero, hiding his true intention throughout, manipulates his son Antonio to set himself free from the boundaries and assumptions created by the cultures they both grew up in, and in doing so liberates himself. When on the journey Calogero talks with the ghost of his father, he liberates all those whose path he crosses from some of their social inhibition. Calogero's ultimate resolution of the material conflict in Road to the Lemon Grove is that he just doesn't care about his presumed motivations; that it's more important to



compromise a mutual satisfaction on the limited number of trips around the sun that is the common human condition.

It is worth taking the time to watch *Road to the Lemon Grove*. It brings no simplistic message, the sublime humour of the plot and its implementation leaving much room for the viewer's interpretation. Its partial illustration of the collective memories of expatriate Italiana serve to make the viewer reflect on the lives lived by them, and by the viewers themselves.



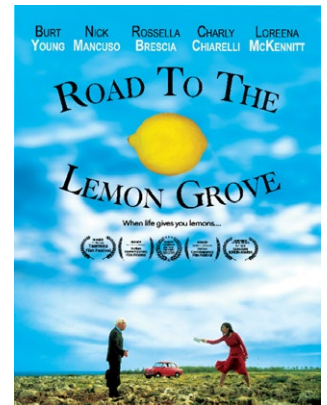
The metaphors are incomplete, giving the viewer room to add their own experience in the completion of understanding. Remember to bring your intellect, relax, and take your time to enjoy and think in your own time, about its meaning to you. Be open. *Road to the Lemon Grove* might make you laugh at aspects of yourself.

Starring Burt Young, Nick Mancuso, Rossella Brescia, Charly Chiarelli, Loreena McKennitt, Tomaso Sanelli.

Filming locations: Toronto, Canada and Catania, Sicily, Italy.



Photo Credits: Dale Hildebrand



night MAGIC

Night Magic is a 1985 Canadian-French musical film written by Leonard Cohen and Lewis Furey and directed by Furey. The film stars Nick Mancuso as Michael, a down-on-his-luck musician whose fantasies begin to come true after he meets an angel (Carole Laure). The film's supporting cast includes Stéphane Audran, Jean Carmet, Frank Augustyn, Louis Robitaille, Anik Bissonnette, Nanette Workman and Barbara Eve Harris.

By Nick Mancuso

I starred in *Night Magic*. And I feel guilty about it. A marvelously original musical by two geniuses: Leonard Cohen and Lewis Furey. Take a listen. Find this lost Canadian film. I say geniuses because there is no doubt that Leonard Cohen remains one of the great legends in music history, poetry, and writing in the latter part of the 20th century in the period known as the 60s. As for Lewis well take a listen.

Leonard Cohen. A legend. *Night Magic* the unknown unsung movie he wrote starring myself, Carol Laure, Stephan Audron, Jean Carmet, directed by Lewis Feury ~ his first time at the bat. Cinematography by Philippe Selot. Choreography and dancing by Eddie Toussant Ballet de Montreal and Frank



Augustine of the National Ballet of Canada.

A class act of a film and a complete flop. It reflected a time of mythic figures in cinema: Fellini, Kurosawa, Godard. And music: The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Jim Hendrix,

Jim Morrison, Bob Dylan, and from the frontier country of olden Canada... Leonard Cohen, Joni Mitchel, Neil Young, Gordon Lightfoot, and all the other illuminated crazies that infused my generation with the sheer force and hope for a shimmering bright new future. It reflected the echoes of a time that would once and all-time end the war to end all wars. And bring about a time of peace and love. To my mind at least this was the subtext of *Night Magic*. Yes, it was to be peace and love and this unknown little film spoke about it all. Success. Fame. Love. Immortality.

We started in Montreal, in the late summer of 1984. It was a wonderful summer that year in Canada in my favourite city. *Night and Magic*. The

Baby Boomers born from desperation and sprung from parents who had survived the worst event in human history and who were not one of the corpses piled in the millions into mass graves. Who had not been transmuted into hot ashes or evaporated by the nuclear flash of Hiroshima. We children were survivors and children of survivors. We had done something right to be alive and to stay alive and therefore had a purpose a reason to be. A reason to sing and dance. Leonard Cohen was to be the voice of our generation. He was one of these amazing children born in Montreal in 1934. A Jew who was not hatched in Europe but born into a safe harbor called Canada. His father was a successful merchant, his mother the daughter of a distinguished rabbi. His teacher was one of Canada's greatest poets: Irving Layton. His guitar teacher, who was an immigrant Spaniard, taught him some basic chords and then committed suicide. He was an artist through and through. A

Leonard was a born poet but he wanted to be like David, to play the harp and sing.

true Bohemian, not a hippy or a yippie and certainly not a yuppie or the X generation. Leonard learned three chords and started strumming along to the song of the Universe. Leonard was a born poet but he wanted to be like David, to play the harp and sing. To God and for God. And my character Michael

was modeled on this modern cinematic David. These are the thematics of this little unknown orphan of a film shivering in a snowbound laneway. LOL as the theologically correct cynical children of today smirk. Buried and forgotten.

The film is, in fact, a very biblical and religious fairy tale. Carole Laure is not only a per-



fect angel but also she is the Virgin Mary and Suzanne all wrapped up into one brunette Marianne. A modern fairy tale lost and forgotten in a Quebec winter. How odd in the Age of Beyonce and Lady Gaga and COVID to think that a film like this could ever be made. And yet

it was. Another era. In 1964, Leonard was at the perfect age and the perfect time. And in the perfect country; Trudeau's Canada. The land of peace. Hope and brilliance were in the air. One day in 1965 my old friend (then young, now-deceased) Alex Gottlieb announced to me that Leonard was writing songs and singing. At the University of Toronto, we

knew him only as a poet, a protege of Irving Layton. Alex put on the scratchy disk. "Susanne takes you down to her place by the river/ you can hear the boats go by/ you can hear the river answer. . ." What? An awful voice tuneless like fingernails on a chalkboard: hopeless he was. There was no future for this unknown Canadian poet.

Who the hell wants to hear songs about razor blades in the age of the Midnight Rambler? Alleluia. It's ironic and fitting that Night Magic, which he wrote with Lewis Furey should remain unknown, hidden in the amnesiac snows of Canadian Cultural History. Like all things Canadian which do not exist until they exist in the outside world, until they are recognized and lauded by the Americans or the British or, God forbid, the French. Night Magic disappeared into the night. I feel guilty about Night Magic and this article is by way of an apology to make amends to this little gem of a film playing that singing poet. I feel guilty because I did not go to Cannes when the film was accepted into the Directors Fortnight Category. I feel guilty for not walking the red carpet with the paparazzi screaming "Over here! Over here!". I feel guilty because I helped bury the film by not suiting up and showing up. Because you see, this film is a gorgeous work of art musically and visually imaginative and more than deserves to be remembered.

The film is about lost love, and love found and lost again, and the egocentric selfishness of the artist and his obsessions with himself and the consequences thereof. In the context of the larger picture I was perfect for the part at the time. My Salad days, though slightly wilted. When Carol asked me to star in it while shooting Bobby Roth's Heartbreakers with Peter Coyote I balked. I'm neither a singer nor a dancer and Michael was both. Stage fright paralyzed me. "I know you can do it" Carol told me. We had worked together on several films going back to the time of John Hirsch's CBC and Gille Carl. So I took the leap. Rehearsals began in Montreal a month before principal photography and in that time I learned to sing and dance. Somewhat. I did it all by the numbers with much help from some marvelous people. But my voice was to be Lewis. I had done this sort of dubbing thing before when I filmed the rock star in "Blame it On the Night", an original story by Mick Jagger. I gave a concert for three days at the San Diego Sports Arena singing in Ted Neeley's Voice (Jesus Christ Superstar) in a four-octave range

Night Magic betrayed itself and I, like a good Mephistophelian, actor played along.

and blowing out my voice in front of ten thousand people. I was on stage with Billy Pres-

ton and Mary Clayton. Faking it. Pretending. An actor's utter madness. But no risk, no gain. And here's the kicker. No gain means no fame and vice versa. Cosmic law in showbiz. And as Charlton Heston once told me while shooting a film called Motherlode, with Kim Bassinger directed by Heston and written by his son Fraser: "The trouble with show business is that it's business that is show and show that is business." Ya can't win unless you get the loot. Leonard never cared much about the loot.



Nick Mancuso in Night Magic

Night Magic made neither loot nor fame. It cared not a whit. "It is to such as you /that we were sent/ to speak directly to your deepest shame/ and light the fires of experiment. . .

" So sang Michael in Night Magic so sang Leonard Cohen. " We claim you now. . . in the name of that which/ you have never done before /the victim shall be smitten on his Sore/ The Haughty One shall have a

Visitor" What language!! Not exactly Rocky Horror!! Almost Elizabethan. Chilling words. Michael loses everything including the Angel that loved him "I burned the House of Love tonight". Again, Leonard. This film is very much about the fires of experiment. To my mind the fires that electrified the sixties. My generation. And Leonard's even more so, born fourteen years earlier. The hope of a generation that betrayed itself. Look around you and listen to the music in this film beat its heart out against the diminishing rattle of a shifting human Wave, the heart sounds of Gaia our Planet. A cacophony of sound. Splintered chords in syncopated 7/8 time. The music of Shtokhausen divided by Bertold Brecht. And so it began. We had a nothing budget and Robert Lantos, who had produced the movie, ran out of money so we the principal players threw some of our salaries back in. So why would I not go to Cannes? That was the question. Was it indifference? No, I had massive stage fright. I hated the red carpet. How bizarre." I never thought / I'd get this far: "Michael" we always knew you would!

The Angel's fear is an ugly thing. Fear of success. Fear of the red carpet. Fear of judgment. Leonard had fear of neither success nor failure. He was a free man. But the film did not liberate itself. Was the film afraid? It was afraid of its

It was afraid of its own genius. Afraid it would be captured and compared. Afraid of its novelty. Who was the villain in the story? No one. It was self-betrayal. It was treason, which according to Dante was the greatest of all sins. Night Magic betrayed itself and I, like a good Mephistophelian, actor played along. But for Leonard it was different. His Buddhism and dharma and Sangha kept him balanced. He bought a small house in the immigrant section of Montreal. To which he returned every now and then to "renew his neurotic affiliations". He chopped wood and carried water for his old Roshi on Mt

of Montreal and Frank Augustine of the National Ballet; he asked if he could bring me water or a coffee. Thank you. He was of service to others at all times. When he offered me the rights to Beautiful Losers, his first novel, I accepted. I was a beautiful loser and did nothing with the rights. The film itself became a beautiful loser. "I burned the house of Love tonight/ it made an awful ring" Michael/Cohen Night Magic.

Leonard was kind and gentle and sweet with an impish sense of humor. There was no anger nor frustration in the man. He had the feeling of a man who

"Because I wanted to produce... you know... films." He was, of course, talking David Korda films, MGM... you know films. Gone With the Wind films, The Red Shoes... Star Wars, The Godfather, Rambo. In a relative world, we are all of us... losers. It's hard to believe Night Magic the film was ever made. Before the existence of MTV and music videos, a film totally ignored by Canada written by a Canadian legend. How utterly fitting. It's a marvelous gem of a movie and I am happy to have been a part of it. Thank you Leonard Cohen. Thank you Night Magic.

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This film is very much about the fires of experiment. To my mind the fires that electrified the sixties.

Nick Mancuso, Paris 2020

Baldy In California. He knew the score. He was not afraid. He stayed humble because from the get-go he knew everyone was in trouble. He didn't kid nor kill himself much as he sang about it. He loved women and he loved song and he loved life and he was grateful to his maker the Creator of heaven and earth. He understood the essential magic of the universe. There's a crack in things. That's how the light gets in.

I first met Leonard Cohen in a macrobiotic restaurant in Montreal at midnight. We became instant friends. He asked if he could come and watch us rehearse at the National Theatre School. Of course. Dancing and sweating every day with Edie Tausant Ballet

knew the jig was up. With him, everything seemed possible because there was a smile at the end of the Universe. The cold razor blade reality was not his. It's something he wrote about. "Everybody knows/the war is over/ everybody knows/ the bad guys won." So drink eat sing and dance deep into the night for tomorrow you will pay the bill.

Night Magic was originally entitled The Hall. I think it was Robert Lantos, the producer of the film, who gave it the name Night Magic. The Hall was a classic Cohenism, too prosaic for Mr. Lantos. He went on to become, along with Garth Drabinski, Canada's most successful producer and yet when I asked him years later how it felt to have succeeded, he told me he felt like a loser. "Why?" I asked?





Spencer Feature Interview

LIZ TAYLOR

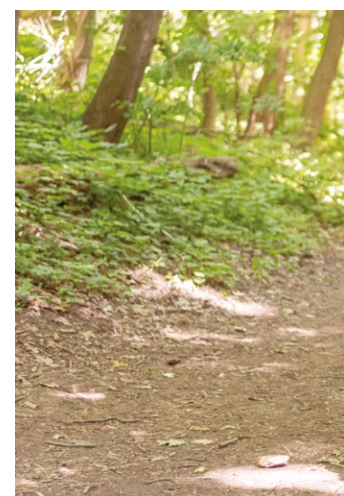
A Whole New WORLD

*Liz Taylor Shatters the Myth of Midlife Crisis
to Blossom in a New Career.*

By Rose Marie Bresolin

Born to parents who emigrated from Poland after the second world war, Liz Taylor, yes, that is her name, sits fifth among their 5 children. She grew up in an ethnically diverse neighbourhood in St Catharine’s, Ontario, known as the “Facer Street” area. A community rich in multiculturalism, Liz still makes it a point to attend the Annual Street Party.

Liz describes her childhood as a time when she could play outside with other neighbourhood kids until the streetlights came on. She has fond memories of her family going to Queenston Heights, or Niagara On the Lake for Sunday picnics where they could listen to bands playing in the open air.





She learned traditional Polish dance from a teacher named Helena Kaczmarczyk, who gave her a lot of solos in dance and in singing. She called Liz a shining star. “What a beautiful thing to tell a young kid!!” Even though Liz stopped Polish dancing at around 16, she believes those words played into the confidence she needed to take up acting at 50.

Liz began working when she was 12, picking strawberries with her mom. By the time she was 18, she was managing a fitness club, teaching aerobics classes and working at Shopper’s Drug Mart as a Dispensary Assistant. At 19, she became the youngest Realtor

ever licensed in North America. One of the first houses she sold was her childhood home. Having lived there from the time that she was born, it was very emotional. Thirty-six years later, Liz continues to be a licensed realtor with the same company! “Loyalty is kinda my thing!”

She attributes the sense of loyalty to a father who had the courage to leave home at 12 years old for work on a farm in Germany during WW II. He would never see his mother again, and when he left Poland again in 1957, he came to Canada with nothing. “He built a wonderful life simply from the will to create family and to provide a better life for them. He also helped his siblings to immigrate to Canada and to get established here. When his brother in Montreal fell ill, he provided for his family so that they could stay together. To be able to do that while still providing for his own family, he worked 3 shifts at General Motors and did lots of overtime. Liz credits his example for having taught her honesty, fairness, and a good work ethic. Teodor passed away in January 2020 at the age of 93.

A refreshing mix of confidence and vulnerability, add to that a happy nature, and you’ll begin to get a sense of the Spectrum that is Liz

Not all the influencers in Liz’ lifetime were pleasant. There were boyfriends and husbands who were unfaithful. She was divorced twice by the time she was 28! “Liz Taylor... after all,” she says with laughter.

Liz raised her son Maxx completely on her own, so when he left for residence at the University of Toronto, she was expecting it to feel like freedom. In fact, it proved to be one of her hardest times. With no one there for her to nourish, a huge part of her sense of purpose was gone. She hit bottom. It was from that pain that she determined to create a new life for herself.

And soon after that her friend presented her with a book called, ‘The Artist’s Way.’ With a style of journaling that can help to zero in on what you really want to do, before Liz finished reading it, she wondered why she had waited so long.

Not to lose her bearings in the leap, she decided to take it step by step; to try acting just for the fun of it while she continued in Real Estate. She also began to host an Airbnb so that she could nurture people while providing them with a great travel experience.

Her aim was to create balance and if one thing failed, she would have back up.

Liz began by making herself available for meet-ups with filmmakers and actors. She volunteered for script readings, acting in student films, and to help with other projects. She seized any opportunity to learn. She feels fortunate to have met people who were supportive and took her in as an actor in their films. She found a good agent right away and was booking gigs regularly and having fun. She spent the first 5 years of her career learning on set.

Liz developed a love for character acting and went on to play a diversity of roles. The first film Liz acted in, Figment, was written by Mithran Maharajan. She was also credited as an Executive





Liz enjoying a moment in nature with her son Maxx

Producer, along with Javier Augusto Nunes, who is now an award-winning director in California. That short film won first Place at the “Global Mobile Film Awards” in San Diego. From there she was cast as Yia Yia (a 70-year-old Greek Grandmother) in the series Fak Yaass, produced by Bulldog Productions and aired on OUTTV. The work was non-union, and she continued in that vein until becoming a full fledged ACTRA member only recently. Joining ACTRA came of an exceptional circumstance when she was booked as a Season Regular for a CBC Comedy Series called The Amazing Gayl Pile for Season 5 and this gave her the onset time requirement without having to apprentice. While doing work she refers to as an absolute blast, she was invited into the LaRue Entertainment Production, soon to be released on CBC Gem show.

More challenging was the experience of reading a script for a short film called Marital Aids written by Drew Tapley. She had worked with Drew on other projects including the film Hoover Dam, also written by him, and directed by Danny McIvor. Before she read the script, they added that she could direct it if she wanted to. While difficult at first to take the offer seriously, her Yes! was motivated by the fact that they knew her work and that they would be there to help. To have that kind of confidence expressed in her was akin to a green light for an engine highly charged.

Keeping herself surrounded by like minds, Liz took the script to the “Toronto Indie Movie Support Group” meetup. They all found it hilarious and as she continued reading, she began to picture the right person for each character. Bursting to get started, she asked them and suggested they begin rehearsals on the following week. Amused, Danny and Drew explained that a film shoot couldn’t be pulled together in a week. Assuming her new role of director, and against the rolling of eyes, she ran the question past her chosen cast again, and they agreed to do it. Committed to paying them from her own pocket to cover for the time they had to take off work, the shoot was wrapped up in two days! When she asked her friend, Mark Berry, a record producer from AMG) for the loan of music from his library, he responded with a stack of CD’s for use at no cost.



Liz accepting an acting award

To acknowledge that generous favour, Liz added his name as an Executive Producer in the Film Credits without his knowing. The act may well have set off a spiralling effect, because just before the film was completed, Liz received a call from Mark to say that he had shown the rough copy to his friend, Bob Shami in New York, and he wanted to distribute it! Following that, the film was distributed on Amazon Prime, and a series of other platforms. It was aired on ShortsTV in the U.S.A.

and is available on ShortIndies.com, a site owned by Bob Shami for streaming free independent short films. The film went on to be selected for 26 Film Festivals and Won 10 Awards.

That gave Liz the confidence to ask Bob if she could partner up with him and help other Indie Filmmakers get Distribution for their films through her company “Wild-Maple Films.” Short Films don’t tend to make any money but having distribution acts as a “Calling Card” for the filmmaker, and an important step to access grant money to create more projects. It gives them credibility. Bob’s willingness set the stage for helping numerous other filmmakers to get their work out to the world, at no cost.



Liz Taylor is her name, through marriage. On the advice of her father she kept it after her divorce



While grateful that as a woman in her fifties without acting lessons was given the opportunity to learn on set, Liz does not play down the importance of taking classes. Since joining ACTRA she is more convinced that to learn the tricks of the trade from the professionals is invaluable. It was only because work kept coming her way that it took her three years to find the time. She had attempted to take classes, but incredibly she’d receive an offer for a gig scheduled for the time of the class she signed up for. The fact that she was encouraged by Lewis Baumander at Casting Central to accept the work, pushed the training that much farther.

Keeping in mind that Casting Directors typically look at resumes to see where you’ve studied, she initiated classes with an instructor from Second City in L.A. and with Ron Leach. To add to her formal training during the pandemic, Liz has been taking virtual courses. While she acknowledges that it’s necessary to take her learning on-line for now, to stare at a computer all day isn’t how she wants to live her life.

Asked about a mid-life crisis, she believes it's real and can present as a serious challenge. She also believes that times of greatest difficulty can stir up our best creativity. For her, Menopause coincided with her son going off to university. As such it presented as a double whammy that left her reassessing her life. What did she really want to do?

"At 50+, Liz rides a motorcycle and only 2 years ago began to take up surfing!"

Liz can go on record for shattering not one myth, but two; the mind set that mid lifers should be sent to pasture, and the other myth that a girl's worth should be based on her age. At 50+, Liz rides a motorcycle and only 2 years ago began to take up surfing! She had the courage to grow out the silver in her hair for the TV Series *Fak Yaass*, against a fear she may never get hired again. To her surprise, she was subsequently booked for Modelling Campaigns for companies like BMO, Endy Mattress and BITE Beauty with the silver in. She stands convinced that a person's mind-set and outlook on life take precedence over age.

Liz expresses gratitude for the doors that opened to her and is determined to give back. She finds great satisfaction in helping other filmmakers by providing connections to get their work out into the world. A sort of Pro bono in the world of film. She believes that our true value comes from character built of the contributions made to create happiness for those around us.

For those starting out in acting, Liz stresses the importance of enjoying what you do and avoid comparing yourself to someone else. If you believe that what you see for yourself can happen, the sky becomes the limit and it has room for an infinity of stars. Positive energy has a way of drawing others in.

On the practical side, her advice is that you appear for auditions fully prepared, and in good spirits. Never let yourself be caught acting; your job is to draw people into the storytelling that is acting. When it comes to choosing someone for a role, you'll get noticed for your reaction to what the other characters are saying. No doubt it can be scary at the beginning... but if you can bring your authentic self to the character they're looking for, you'll overcome the fear and come away with the part. To underscore how important it is to make connections and learn new skills, she brings out the trophy she received from CMTC (Canadian Model and Talent) for Best Commercial Talent in 2016. She regards it as a good place to start for young people looking to get into any area of performing arts.

Her aim is to keep on learning new things, while also having fun. A good reminder that the combination goes a long way to keep us healthy and happy. As I review the article to see if it has balance, I am left wondering, what if her friend Cherie had not given her the book?

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The quality of giving is not strained, it falleth as the gentle rain... the quality being second nature to Liz, it has set off a spiraling effect

BARRY TAYLOR

Mining Laughter

Widening the Road of Perception

Barry Taylor, noted Canadian comedian, along with Tim Golden, launched Comedy Records in 2010 as Canada's first record label dedicated to stand-up and sketch comedy.

By Rose Marie Bresolin



Barry's photo a commanding presence, I ask if there had been a career prior to comedy that shaped the serious look, or if this was yet another element of surprise behind his success as a comedian.

"Actually, it was the only photo I could come up with on the spot. But, yes, it is serious." And, breaking into a smile, he continued, "I like your take on it though. I don't do a lot of comedy now, as much as spending time to find work for the comedians we represent. Maybe that's what brought out the serious side of me in the photo."

Barry Taylor, noted Canadian comedian, along with Tim Golden, launched Comedy Records in 2010 as Canada's first record label dedicated to stand-up and sketch comedy. An initiative to take a 'strength in numbers' approach to all of the challenges in the Canadian comedy industry, the release of the album, Comedy Records Presents 10 Years, was also in celebration of its 10th anniversary on the 10th of July 2020.

Comedians are by nature an independent lot, with many pressed to work at more than one job, so after beginning Comedy Records in 2010, Barry



the word out and left it to circulate among them. An initiative to get comedians organized, Comedy Records is set up to draw more work their way and to broaden the base of comedy. To sustain itself, the new structure does take a fee, but only if they provide the work. Comedians remain independent to seek and to accept other work.

Comedy in Canada is challenging in general. The size of the country makes touring difficult task. “Comedy Records has been a great way to

expand our reach into the comedy industry. We don't represent every comedian we release albums with, but we do work hard to provide opportunities for every artist we work with.”

Comedy not recognized as an art by the Canadian Government, accessing grants and funding has been a challenge. Viewed as one of the country's greatest resources, a combined voice for comedians can increase their strength. The frustration experienced by stand-up comedians is made

worse when trying to work in the U. S. and internationally. The Canadian Association of Stand-up Comedians, CASC, a non-profit organization was formed in 2017 to present a more powerful, unified voice for Canadian stand-up comedians. Sandra Battaglini is one example of a Canadian comedian whose request for arts funding was denied. After being faced with thousands of dollars and bureaucratic red tape to take her comedy into the U.S., American comedians not being faced with the same restrictions when coming to Canada to perform, she began a relentless lobbying for reciprocity.

Sandra Battaglini is one of the most important voices in Canadian Comedy. Her relentless work to have comedy recognized as an art form in Canada is unprecedented. "It's frustrating that so many arts are supported in Canada but when comedy is asked to be included we're continually told no." However, some politicians are paying attention, and Barry, along with other fellow comedians applauds Sandra and believes her efforts will lead to positive change.

The Comedy Records recording is a compilation featuring comedians from the Comedy Records roster that include Arthur Simeon, Clare Belford, K Trevor Wilson, and more. This completely independent label has since released dozens of albums in a variety of comedy styles that have reached the top of the Apple Music/iTunes Comedy and Google Play charts, and is the only label to press Canadian comedy albums on vinyl. Comedy Records has received multiple Juno nominations and released albums by top comedians including



K Trevor Wilson, Steph Tolev, Sterling Scott, Mike MacDonald, Nick Reynoldson, Sandra Battaglini. Many have been featured on Conan and Jimmy Kimmel Live. The albums have topped the digital Comedy charts.

Comedy Records Presents 10 Years features comedians from the Comedy Records roster including Arthur Simeon, Clare Belford, K Trevor Wilson, Monty Scott, Jay & Eytan, Todd Graham, Mark DeBonis, Efthimios Nasiopoulos, Pat Burtscher, Dena Jackson and Garrett Jamieson and Sprattacus. The album made its debut with Ben Miner on SiriusXM's JFL Canada channel on July 1, 2020.

Comedy Records has produced multiple charity basketball games at festivals including Just for Laughs and New York

Comedy Festival. It has facilitated the first monthly Canadian comedy showcase in New York City.

Barry's vision is to expand the membership and provide more opportunities right here in Canada, and to showcase Canadian comedians in the U. S. "With the opportunity in Canada limited, comedians need additional places to perform. We need to show the world how good we are at comedy." It would also help comedians to achieve more recognition on home ground. Ideally it helps to work from a base that is strong in support, and Barry sees that growing.

"Comedy Records has been a great way to expand our reach into the comedy industry."

Where in many other sections of the arts, performers are driven by

a thirst to make the leap into having what they love to do sustain them, those in comedy need to accept that they will likely continue to need backup to make a living, at least for the near

future. Barry's advice to those contemplating the craft, "If comedy is a passion in you, I say go for it – life is short, and you don't want to have regrets!" He also cautions them to pursue other career options. The way comedy stands today, it is an industry where it's possible to manage both.

Barry's motivation continues to be fuelled by the need that exists for mining the enormous source of talent that exists in Canada. His fun and stress release still come from basketball, another of his loves. It was in the organizing of charity basketball games as a way to do something fun with comedians that didn't involve comedy, that Comedy Records was started. "Along with comedy, basketball has always been one of my true loves throughout my life."

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Photo Credits: Shawn McPherson

Opposite and Below: Barry Taylor

Some of the Funniest CANADIAN COMEDIANS

So many Canadian comedians have achieved international acclaim. Here are just a few:

John Candy	Michael J. Fox
Jim Carrey	Will Arnett
Mike Myers	Catherine O'Hara
Leslie Nielsen	Michael Cera
Dan Aykroyd	Dave Foley
Ryan Reynolds	Tommy Chong
Seth Rogen	Mike Smith
Eugene Levy	Dave Thomas
Norm Macdonald	Russell Peters
Kenny Hotz	John Dunsworth
Phil Hartman	Jay Baruchel
Colin Mochrie	Rob Wells
Rick Moranis	Rick Mercer
Martin Short	Will Sasso





GRENVILLE PINTO

In his new album that is a rendition of signature songs, accomplished violinist, Grenville, takes you on a 'mystical journey'; an escape into places where pleasure and passion ignite your soul...

By Wanda Ryan



Grenville Pinto is undeniably one of the most unpredictable, charismatic, intense, and chic contemporary artists. His uniquely sophisticated and dynamic style has made him recognizable worldwide.

He has been described as ‘the Violinist who puts the cool into Classical.’ With his brand of fusion, the ‘Risk-taker Pinto has the world on a string.’ Published in the Whatever Issue by Max Maccari.

I admire Grenville’s dedication to his two most valued roles in life; as a seriously creative and gifted performer in front of the spotlight, and as a loving member of his family, where he is son, brother and uncle to nieces and nephews who add a special meaning to his life.

Grenville and I met in the summer of 2006 through a mutual friend who was enamoured by his unique style and the magnetic connection with his audience: “His performance is unlike anything I have ever seen,” she said. “You have to meet him!”

After spending a day in the life of Grenville Pinto shortly after our introduction, I realized this was just the beginning in the making of an iconic artist; a renowned performer who would break barriers, astonish audiences around the world and leave a legacy for others to follow.

The day began at 11 am at a corporate function in an exclusive country club where Grenville serenaded the audience with contemporary and classical signature songs that took in Frank Sinatra, Stevie Wonder, Jazz, rhythm & blues and concluded with Elvis Presley. His next show was a 2pm Baptismal luncheon where he performed

classical songs including Ave Maria for a small private party of family and friends. Other beautiful symphonic choices were from signature composers as well as contemporary artists. The performance was breathtaking.

In the early evening Grenville was booked to play at a traditional high-end Greek wedding; his performance was nothing short of spectacular. Grenville transformed classical violin into a fusion of contemporary modern-day pop, dance and soft rock. Connecting with and engaging the audience came naturally to him. Grenville not only played the violin, he became the vessel that invoked the power of life and love impeccably as he transitioned his sounds from classical tradition to a completely different fusion of Rock n Roll! He performed ACDC and Led Zeppelin! It was riveting and explosive! It was like nothing that I had ever imagined.

Grenville was born into a musical family. His mother and father both sang in the choir and he and his two sisters played piano. At the early age of 7 by sheer luck, he ended up crossing the street,

literally! And there, he tried his hand at violin. He started taking lessons and ended up training privately in the Royal Conservatory of music. He went on to play in numerous recitals and performances, including the Hamilton Youth Philharmonic Orchestra.

Wanda Ryan: What was the fascination that inspired you to play the violin?

It’s the sound it produces. You don’t just strike a key and it produces a sound, you produce the sound from different parts of your body and from your whole being. Your expressions come from



the inside and it shows. When you're performing, people can feel the passion! When I play the violin, I become the Violin.

Grenville's fondest memories growing up in a musical family include the gathering around the piano after dinner with family and friends joining in the harmony and song.

There was always music in our house. That was the highlight of the day.

His fondest moments also include his mom sitting in the back of the church singing as he performed in the church choir, and at recitals and weddings.

In 2019 Grenville re-released a Christmas album called, Christmas Glow. It was a dedication to his mother who passed away in 2011.

It was how I dealt with my grief and loss. She was my role model, and music was my avenue to get through the grief. In addition, I had never had a Christmas Album, so it was an opportunity to produce one and recognize my mother's passing.

Did this help?

Absolutely! And it also helped my family; they were very proud and happy it was done.

A very memorable moment for Grenville was in 2016 at his Christmas Concert at a hall in Toronto when his father joined him onstage to sing Jamaica Farewell and a few other songs.

It was one of the most memorable moments on stage with my dad.

What are the most courageous things you've done in your life?

Transitioning my music to full-time. It was challenging as it was only a hobby, but I loved doing it. At the time my passion was in Publishing & Marketing.

Grenville studied at McMaster University and received a business degree in marketing. He worked in the publishing industry for over a decade on the creative side with marketing products and branding.





My music was part-time, and it was challenging to transition because you have gigs, but you never really know if you will have enough to support yourself and survive. It was a risk to produce albums on my own and travel the world to produce music videos. Being alone in the big cities, doing things myself and not knowing if I was making the right decisions was challenging. I learned that there are no handouts, and that doing this involves big money and you don't know what the return will be. These are big challenges. I had to learn how to reach out to people and not be afraid to ask questions on how to accomplish different things in order to make my dream come true.

What are you most curious about in life now?

Maximizing my music potential because it's a big unknown; how far can I go and what can I do creative-wise with my albums, both musically and visually.

What were your proudest moments in life?

Making my parents proud and having their approval no matter what I did. I think everybody wants that. Putting on a concert is another high-point. It is the representation of my entire being and to be able to do that, is a dream coming to life.

Grenville and I discussed his latest album, ESCAPE, which was launched in the Fall of 2019.

This album is a departure from anything that I've done so far. It's more rock with an edge.

ESCAPE is Grenville's fifth album and is a combination of six original songs and four signature covers.

The original songs on this album were concepts I brought to life. They came to me when I was a teenager. The opening song is a riff on a guitar that I came up with when I was in high school which I turned into a full song. The music ideas came about at different points of my life so the message in them changes. One song is called, In the Meadow. The melody takes you into a place where you can escape. If you close your eyes, it takes you into a meadow with green grass that

hasn't been mowed and you're in this field just dancing around and being free. Then there is the song called, The Resurrection, which is a melody that came to me previously. It changes and builds into this climactic point, which is why I titled it, The Resurrection. Each song has been titled for a reason and there's a journey in each.

Following your journey through your last five albums, I have to ask what you'll be working on next.

I'm always exploring new ideas, so I'll be looking to bring those ideas to life again in another album. I'm looking to work on different genres, new fusions, perhaps in the hip hop field. Could be ethnic or eclectic. It may be a compilation of musical styles and genres all in one album.

In closing, what is it that you want to say to your fans?

I'm honoured to know that 'there are people out there who enjoy the music that I love to create.' And that we find this common thread together; this personal connection that's being received, and just knowing my music is being appreciated is beyond incredible! Thank you!

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Straight to the Heart

Singer, songwriter and acoustic guitarist, Jonny Starkes specializes in folk-rock & country music.

By Wanda Ryan



Born and raised in Hare Bay, Newfoundland, Canada, Jonny was introduced to the guitar at the young age of 7 by his late grandfather who learned to play while overseas during World War II.

Jonny's original songs are derived from the rise and falls in his personal life and the events in the world around him. In his music, he delivers a soulful grit, and, in a style that holds back nothing, his words find their way to the heart.

When not immersed in music, Jonny turns to the martial arts. He received a black belt at 18, while competing in Korea, the US and in Canada. He was selected for team 'Ontario' where he received world medals and trophies. From there, he went on to become a Martial Arts instructor in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

His true passion clearly music, Jonny released his debut album *Father's Boy*, written in the sadness of losing his father to cancer in 2017.

Jonny recently released a new single called "These Four Walls" and is working on other originals for release in the very near future.

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Rêve De Moi

ART EXHIBIT

*An extraordinary collaboration by two visionaries:
Estelle Ohayon & Allan Kliger.*

By Joseph Edward Schur

What do you get when you bring together some of Canada's most accomplished artists? A remarkable alliance, creating some of the most exciting mixed media art that you will ever see.

When Spencer Magazine was invited to attend the very private Rêve De Moi Art Exhibit, I was thrilled to have a chance to see the latest works of a coterie of established artists, recognized both in Canada and abroad. They include Max Jamali, Peter Triantos, Anthony Ricciardi and Diogo Snow.

Joining me at this event was Spencer's Photography Director, Jonathan Levy. With much anticipation, we arrived at CABINE, on Toronto's tony Hazleton Avenue in Yorkville. Nicholas Mellamphy, the legendary fashion icon and the venue's host, warmly welcomed us on the stairs leading up to the hot pink door of the classic brownstone.

*Above, From Left to Right: Peter Triantos,
Estelle Ohayon, Max Jamali, Allan Kliger*



From Left to Right: Jennifer Lipkowitz, Nadia Di Donato, Estelle Ohayon, Peter Triantos, Joseph Edward Schur, Seraphina Triantos, Anthony Sirianni, Anthony Ricciardi, Mitch Krystantos, Max Jamali and Allan Kliger

Upon entering the gallery, we soon realized that this was no ordinary collection. There is a definitive wow factor, especially considering the scale of the art. At first I didn't recognize the connection between the evocative original art on display and the adjoining photography.

With my curiosity peaked, I wanted to learn more about this exhibition. I approached the visionaries responsible for creating *Rêve De Moi*, Estelle Ohayon and Allan Kliger. They offered us a narrated tour and what we discovered about them and this ambitious project is truly impressive.



Artist Peter Triantos and Jonathan Levy



Max Jamali, 'REVE DE MOI' - Genuine Silver, Diamond Dust and 2,000 Swarovski Crystals on Canvas

Immersed in her career as an international art dealer, Estelle was looking for a distraction. Although she enjoys connecting private sellers and buyers in the acquisition of Old Masters, Impressionist Period and Contemporary art pieces, she needed a creative outlet.

Estelle met Allan Kliger, a highly respected photographer, through a mutual friend. They immediately clicked. He expressed an interest in doing a project together and *Rêve De Moi* was borne.

Estelle started creating scenes that she wanted to shoot, with a specific vision in mind for the mood the images would create. The themes were whimsical, dreamy and sensual. “My actresses and models were instructed to recreate emotions in specific scenarios in order to achieve the shot I was looking for,” she says, “This led to images that for me seemed empowering and

“My actresses and models were instructed to recreate emotions in specific scenarios in order to achieve the shot I was looking for.”

conveyed strong emotions. I felt that the resulting images conveyed less vulnerability and gave them the strength of character to lead to a name such as 'Rêve De Moi.' Dream of me, means confidence, to imply that one can know their own power to allow others to dream of them."

"Why not create images that are a backdrop for original pieces by different artists?"

While looking at their creative files she had a thought about mixed media and layering in art. She realized that many artists use a pool of iconic images as a backdrop for their art, like Brainwash, Russell Young and Dain. And that's when it struck a chord with her.

"Why not create images that are a backdrop for original pieces by different artists?" she says. "I reached out to artists who I work with and asked if they would be interested in this experiment, and they all jumped on board full on."





Allan Klinger, 'PARTEL' - Museum Grade Acrylic Print. Limited Edition of 25



Diogo Snow, 'MOITIÉ VOILE' - Mixed Media Photography on Foam Board, Placed on Canvas, Layered with Graffiti Fabric, Acrylic and Diamond Effect

Relational aesthetics comes to mind.

Before long, Estelle and her team realized that multiple talents, combined together, could create multi-layered and multi-faceted art... with unlimited potential of growth artistically, creatively and as a business concept.

The project grew organically while Estelle was planning their first exhibit at CABINE.

The experience of Rêve De Moi has been enlightening for Estelle. It has shown her that regardless of artistic differences, by putting creative people together, greater art can be achieved.

“Most artists are not thrilled to share the lime-light with others,” she admits. “In our case it was crucial that the team I chose had none of these ego issues. Otherwise, this experiment would not have worked. Synergy is crucial. No one steps on

anyone's toes, everyone adds in their own special way." Even still, I can feel a tension between Allan's photographic images and the artist's interpretations. There is a dynamic energy that has a lasting impact.

The response to the concept and exhibit has been phenomenal. Having enjoyed the success of this "experiment" thus far, Estelle looks forward to collaborating with other artists, internationally, in this mixed media photography. She will keep shooting new material with new ideas, and it will be the new artist's interpretation that will innovate how the process evolves.

"New artists, different styles," she states with enthusiasm. "I have a roster of international artists who are waiting to join our team."



Estelle Ohayon, Rêve De Moi



Anthony Ricciardi, 'ALL OUR SMILES' - Acrylic and Mixed Media on Canvas





Artist Peter Triantos with Joseph Edward Schur,
'FIREEE' - Acrylic on Canvas

Of course, it's quite an achievement to create something original, especially in the world of art. I'm impressed with the collaborative efforts required to pull this pioneering project together. Both Estelle and Allan should be proud of their accomplishment.

Rêve De Moi shows the potential to efficaciously engage art enthusiasts from around the world. In the near future the exhibit will travel to Dubai, Paris, Monaco, Miami and New York City.

The Canadian Embassy in Dubai is currently working with Estelle to include Rêve De Moi in the Dubai Expo 2021, representing Canada in their pavilion.

As Jonathan and I said our goodbyes and left CABINE, I had an overwhelming feeling that this project promises to make waves in the contemporary art scene.

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Photos Courtesy of Rêve De Moi

Opposite: Allan Kliger, *'LIBERTE ARTISTIQUE'* - Museum Grade Acrylic Print. Limited Edition of 25



“Toronto, Ontario has a lot to offer to an artist, to anyone. It's the versatility of the city, the blend of so many different people. It's a unique place where everything is a mix. It's the mix that makes everything so special and gives for a lot of creativity.”

Peter Triantos

Spencer Feature Interview

PETER TRIANTOS



a Contemporary abstract ARTIST

with a Monumental body of work

By Joseph Edward Schur

It seems to me that many artists, young and old, are prisoners of their emotions. Not Triantos; I can imagine this brilliant painter scaling a 12 foot barbed wire fence just to face his emotions, and welcoming the chance to share them with joy and love. In fact, when I asked him how he faces a blank canvas, he responds: “My energy transfers onto the canvas. It’s the energy, passion, vibrance, speed, stuff like that, immediate thinking. I don’t ponder and fixate on things. I have zero fear and I immediately attack.”

No fear. I like that. And I can see it in his work. He has a certain *je ne sais quoi*. So, of course, I had to dig deeper into who this incredibly popular artist, Peter Triantos, really is.

Triantos was born in Romiri, a small, tranquil village in the mountains of Greece, where the olive trees grow in abundance. He immigrated with his family to Canada at the age of 5. He recalls the trans-atlantic voyage with great enthusiasm, arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1966. What an adventure for a young boy! Even at that tender age he could see the *magical dreamland in art*.

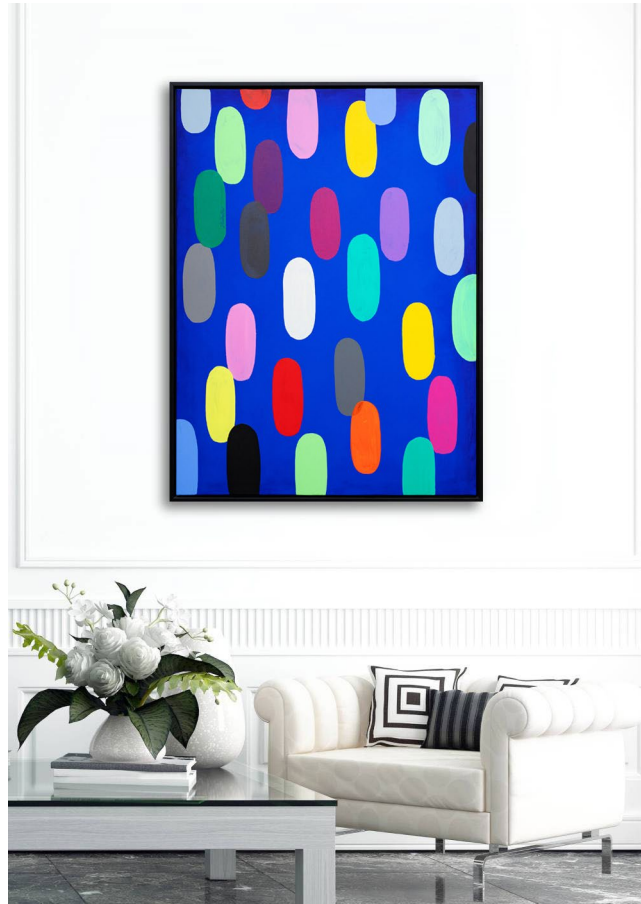
Little did he know that his journey would take him to be one of the most highly respected and admired Canadian artists of our time.

In middle school, playing with paint and colour in art class, he knew that he was destined to be an

artist. While most of us were simply playing with crayons (I was not half-bad with finger painting!), Peter was planning his future. From the very first moment that he touched paint, it brought him tremendous joy. And he already had a grasp on the power and influence that continues to define his life: ART.

However, like the Beatles song of 1970, it was a 'Long and Winding Road' for Peter. There were challenges. I'm reminded of a powerful quote by Maya Angelou:

“Life is pure adventure, and the sooner we realize that, the quicker we will be able to treat life as art.”



*Installation of Painting from the
"Jelly Bean " Series, #69*

Opposite: Artist Peter Triantos with one of his Jelly Bean Paintings





Triantos dropped out of high school and joined the honorable ranks of the construction trade, as a carpenter. He worked tirelessly for many years building multi-million dollar homes. For most people, that would have been enough. But he craved the joy that art brought him and besides, he always had bigger plans.

Like many of us, he eventually reached a fork in the road: go left or right? To choose from the security of remaining a carpenter to the unknown of facing the blank canvas as an artist. It takes courage to choose the right path. And through the brushstrokes of faith and fate, I'm glad that he made the right choice.



Above: Installation of Painting from the "Splash of Colour 2" Series, #177

Below: Painting from the "Splash of Colour 2" Series, #177



Opposite: Artist Peter Triantos with an Iconic Painting from the "Storm" Series

Fast forward 30 years and this brings us right up to *now*.

And now could not be more exciting for this passionate artist, earning international attention with his enchanting, neo-abstract expressionist style. I suggest that he is changing the course of contemporary abstract art by looking at life with a different kind of lens.

There is nothing static about his paintings. They are bold, striking, electric, expanding beyond the canvas with an invisible energy that seems to... no, it actually draws you in.

Is this the "*magical dreamland of art*" that Triantos envisioned as a child?



Painting of "A Woman and a Cat Screaming"



Abstract Portrait, 2018

Perhaps. This magical dreamland that he shares with us now has provided success, both creatively and financially. His relationship with designers, architects, developers and loyal collectors is enviable. And yet he remains incredibly humble. Recognition as a star artist hasn't blinded him, and keeps his works exciting and compelling!

There is a high demand globally for his work. As such, Triantos has become a prolific artist, working on multiple paintings and commissions at any

given time. You can find him working in his 20,000 square foot gallery/studio in downtown Toronto. This is where he exercises his artistic muscle. I'm intrigued with his creative process:

"Basically throughout the day I'm always thinking, storing stuff... always trying to put things together but in the end when I start on a painting it takes on a life of it's own," he says. "Everything that you wish... it's like going on a field trip. You have an idea of what it's going to be like but in the end





Above & Opposite: Installation of Painting from the "Black & White" Series, #98

it's a million times better. It's always fascinating when you can let go and let it take you for a journey. If you want to control the canvas, I don't think you're going for a ride."

A ride, indeed. The resulting works transform standard notions of abstraction into a uniquely expressive form. Akin to a hurricane, intense energy on the outside, yet calm and cerebral in the eye of the storm.

I asked him what makes his paintings unique,

uncommon, and his response was quick: "You don't eat the same thing every day, and I don't paint the same every day."

That may explain why his monumental body of work appears so random and unpredictable. Dealers and gallery owners can't understand this. He's like a lone wolf. And yet, he has a distinctive signature. Wandering through any gallery, whether in Shaghai, New York, or elsewhere, you would likely recognize a Triantos painting.



Installation of Painting "Venus Cries"

I was curious about how he uses art to communicate to the world, and what his motivation was.

“Originally the motivation was a true passion for art but later I realized that it’s now starting to give me a voice and that motivates me even more,” he says. “I can get young kids to believe in themselves and build a strong foundation going forward, so that’s the motivation... the motivation is getting the youth of the future to build a strong foundation and do what they want regardless of education, financial wealth or whatever the situation where they live and build a strong core.”

"I can get young kids to believe in themselves and build a strong foundation going forward, so that’s the motivation."

Looking closely at his paintings, I realize that he has brought objects from different eras and levels of existence together, in scenes that take place outside any average conception of time. His style

seems to push abstraction toward the future, and so I asked him a rather relevant question, to imagine the future, 200 years from now... how would he expect a person to react to one of his paintings, or one of his collections.

“This is probably how I would envision it: they’re going to see the time that we’re living in, that’s what I’d like them to see,” he says. “I don’t want to be painting paintings where I’m misleading in the wrong century... I’m not painting 17th century paintings, I’m not painting 19th century paintings... I’m painting in this time so I want

them to see, so I want to read or see stuff in my art that represents and tells the time, tells the story, tells the period.

That’s the truth I want them to know. What we’re going through and what we’re enjoying and what we’re in love with.”

For Triantos, it's all about truth, authenticity.







*Installation of Painting from the
"Storm" Series, 2018 #5*

He's convinced that everyone is an artist. As long as they can remain authentic to their vision, beauty can be created. Encouraging words of wisdom from a person who didn't receive a lot of direction at the beginning of his art career.

"I wasn't really given much advice. I never had a lot of artist friends," he says. "You take anything you can and put it together and try to become a better person, a better artist. I'm not going to say that one person is going to change your life, it's an amalgamation of many things that makes you great and the best that you can be."

Many artists struggle with knowing when a piece is finished and then letting go of their work. Triantos, probably a reflection of his maturity, knows the moment when a painting is finished and he's fine with that. He doesn't fixate on letting go. "It's like having sex, when it's done it's done," he exclaims confidently. "It's like a good meal."

He admits that being an artist has been an incredible journey for him, but that it always looks brighter from the outside.



*Installation of Painting
"Blue Gorilla" 2020*

“The amount of work is a lot more than people can imagine and age doesn’t guarantee success. I hear some young artists say 'Oh, when I’m your age I will have all...' but age doesn’t guarantee anything. You have to work towards goals that are achievable. You’ve got to have dreams and try hard to make them happen. Only you can make them happen because if you leave it in other people’s hands I believe you will be let down. So make that dream happen. Try as hard as you can.”

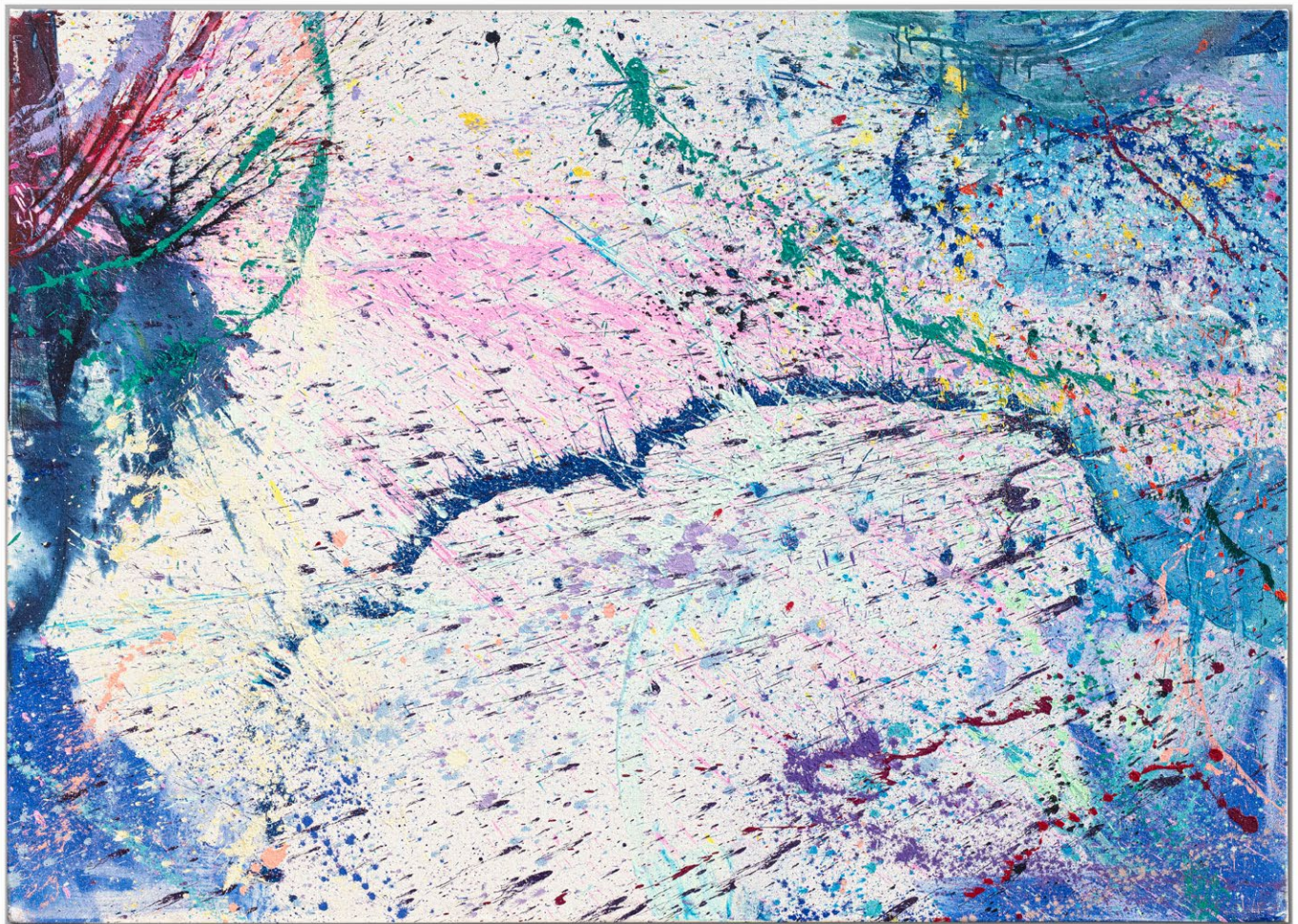
It also helps if you have amazing people in your corner, supporting you, and especially your significant other, right?

A few years ago, he was enjoying a coffee on the patio of a cafe in Toronto. When he caught a glimpse of a beautiful woman entering the shop, he couldn't resist introducing himself. As they surrendered to destiny, this special woman became his wife and partner!

And now, Seraphina, his wife of eight years, is the art curator and director at their galleries. She's intelligent, fashionable and loves art. A winning combination!



Installation of Painting from the "Napa Valley" Series, #77, 2019

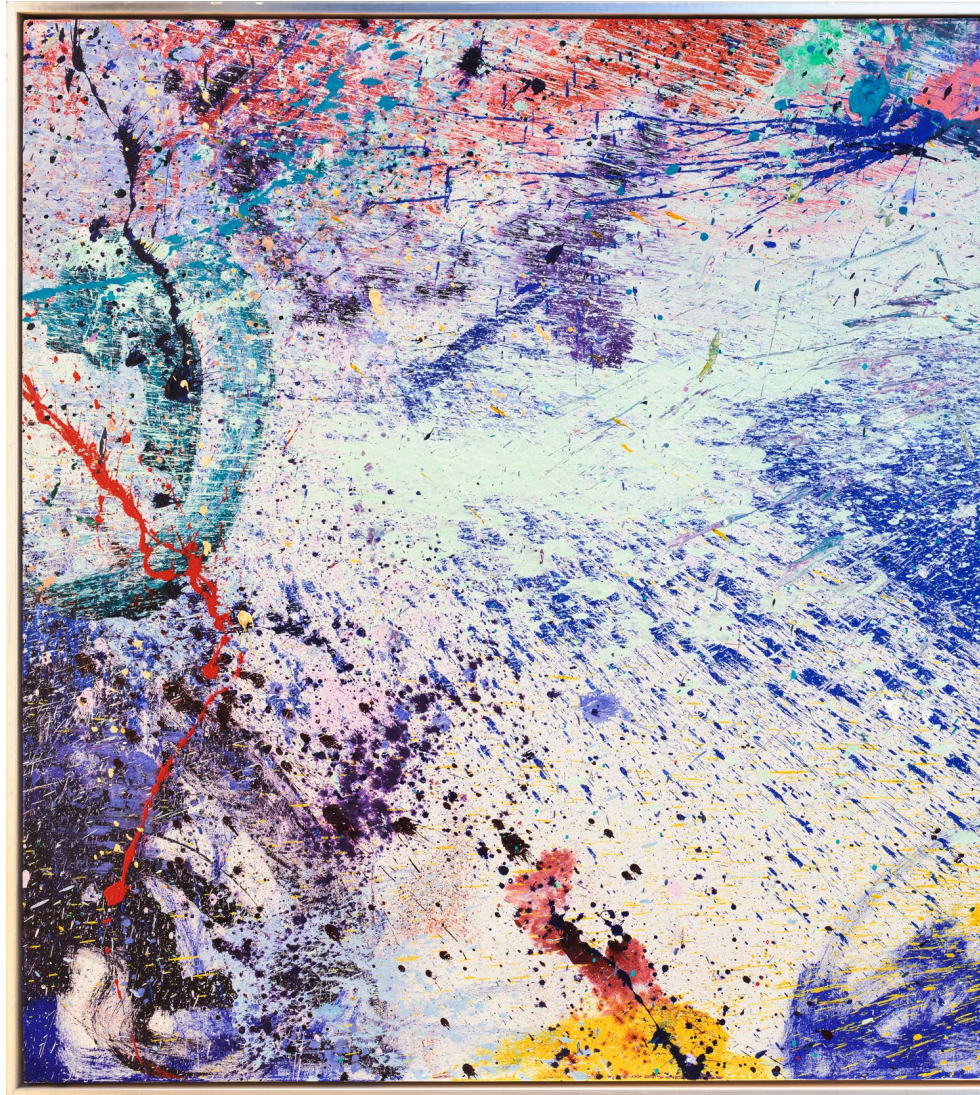


Painting from the "Napa Valley" Series, #77, 2019. Above: Home Installation of Painting

Not surprisingly, there are many layers to his character. Triantos is a humanitarian and a philanthropist, and as such is incredibly generous and doesn't hesitate to give back.

“How can you not give when someone comes to you and we give to everybody,” he states emphatically. “Imagine enjoying the warmth of the sun, seeing grasshoppers... that great childhood vision and dream... philanthropy is a natural thing. I'm no different than anyone else. I give as much as I can with open arms and immediately. I mean, there are just so many great causes.”

No kidding. Just a few of his generous contributions include the Bay Crest Foundation's Brain Project, the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada, Mount Sinai Hospital, Gold Medal Plates Olympic Foundation, CIBC Fundraising, Camp Oochigeas for Childhood Cancer, the Annual Charity Bowl in support of the Serge Ibaka Foundation, the Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research, the Sick Kids Foundation, and Gilda's Club.



*Installation of Painting from the
"Napa Valley" Series, #60, 2018*

I'm inspired, and yet at the same time feeling embarrassed that I don't contribute as much as I should. Peter holds the bar pretty high.

As time has unfolded, there have been many exhibitions for Triantos, including Art Auckland in New Zealand, Hong Kong, Scope NYC, Basel, Miami, Palm Beach, Napa Valley, California and even a collaboration with Drake, Jessie Reyez and Shaggy at the exclusive Apres Noir events in Toronto.



He also plans to return to Greece soon, too, for an exhibition in Mykonos.

Now, what's a story without a bit of trivia? The world isn't so big after all. Meghan Markle used to live near Peter and Seraphina in Toronto's Annex, and they ran into each other often, before she married Prince Harry. And just as interesting, some of the Triantos paintings were featured on the hit television show that Meghan starred in - Suits.

For all of you artists reading this article, I lay down the gauntlet and challenge you to pursue your dreams, as Triantos did. No risk, no reward, as the saying goes.

I'm constantly on a mission of discovery. And now that I've found this outstanding artist, Peter Triantos, I want to share the discovery with you.

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Photo Credits: Peter Triantos Gallery

So what's next for Peter Triantos?! As it happens, a lot. The future is looking even brighter for him than the past.

He recently returned from a successful show in Korea, at the prestigious BOK Art Center in Se Jong.

Along with expanding his galleries, there are exhibitions scheduled in several places around the world, including California, Seoul, Dubai, London and Miami.



Above: Installation of Painting by Triantos "Homage to Basquiat" - Also on the Following page





Spencer Feature Interview

FILOMENA PISANO

Art = Life!

“For me, there is no greater elixir than making art. I feel a great sense of peace and tranquility even when it’s not working on the canvas.”

Filomena Pisano

By Joseph Edward Schur

First impressions are truly important. With so many incredible artists from across Canada, working in various media, it's hard to shortlist any one of them deserving of a profile in Spencer Magazine.

However, when I was introduced to Filomena at a charity event organized by a colleague of mine, Mark Sarson, I was immediately impressed with her artistic passion. She had generously donated one of her spectacular paintings to raise money for Operation Prefrontal Cortex, an initiative founded by Julien Christian Lutz (better known as Director X).

Joseph Edward Schur: Thank you Filomena for agreeing to this interview. I'm sure that our Spencer readers will enjoy your story and will want to learn more about you!

Filomena Pisano: Thank you, Joseph! I immigrated to Canada from Italy with my parents when I was three years old. It was not easy to come to a new country, but we settled in Alberta's Crows Nest Pass. We had other family there so it made it somewhat easier. We lived there for several years before moving to Toronto.





What's the most interesting thing about you that we can share with our readers?

I think the most interesting thing about me might be that although I am approaching 60, I live my life through a child's filter. I still look at life with childlike wonder. I love to be silly and I laugh at myself a lot.

Please, tell us about your interests outside of being an artist.

Well, I love to write poetry. I enjoy photographing people and I love to cook for my family. I enjoy music and live theatre as well as visiting art galleries both local and abroad when I get the opportunity to do so.

What do you enjoy the most about being an artist?

Being an artist is one of the most fulfilling acts of self-expression I have ever done next to giving birth to my children. Painting, or rather playing,

in my studio, gives me so much joy. It allows me to express my inner being with freedom. I paint and in it I continue my learning. I love to grow artistically. I study other artists through history and develop technique through my own work as well. Plus, I'm my own boss so I have no one to answer to. Well, possibly my husband who affords me this freedom to develop my art. He's my biggest supporter!

Why did you start making art?

Since I can remember, I've always loved to play with crayons. I love how creating art takes me away from the worldly plane and into a realm of being fully present with paintbrush and canvas. I started creating art as a means to calm my mind from anxiety. For me, there is no greater elixir than making art. I feel a great sense of peace and tranquility even when it's not working on the canvas. The mere act of showing up with a brush in hand and a blank canvas excites me!

Are you glad that you have become a full-time artist?

I love it! It's a dream come true for me. Every day I wake up excited to go into my studio. Especially now that I have this most amazing place to call my own!

What is your favourite experience as an artist?

It would have to be the time I went to dinner at our local Pizzeria here in Niagara-on-the-Lake. In the middle of winter, after having been in my studio for days, I really needed to have some human contact.

When I went into Pieza Pizza, I expressed to Larissa, one of the owners, how lonely I was feeling. A couple nearby had overheard me and invited me to dine with them. Through our conversation I discovered that they were art collectors! Yes, I know, it's hard to believe! I told them I was an artist and immediately they wanted to see my art. I showed them my pieces on my phone. They stopped scrolling at the third photo and claimed, "I want this one!" I sold a painting to strangers in a pizzeria! They picked up the piece the next morning!



What an amazing story! Thinking about that... As an artist, what does success mean to you?

Success to me is to paint with no agenda in mind and create something that resonates with a future collector or me. It isn't always planned. It develops without ego and time is irrelevant. It's a stream of consciousness that dances into my canvas! It is this process that I enjoy immensely. When I'm able to repeat this process, although never quite the same, I feel a deep sense of accomplishment.

What is the hardest part of creating an original painting?

The drying process! It drives me insane. Especially when I am using oils! I have no patience. I am learning slowly and finding ways to overcome this default of mine. It takes more patience than I possess but it's a process. I'm always working through something, be it the act of painting or developing a part of myself that is challenging.

What obstacles do you face in creating and exhibiting your work?

Covid brought many obstacles. I ran out of paint and canvases and had to wait weeks for new supplies. Exhibiting my art has been easy for me. I've had galleries approach me to show my work. I was given a major solo show at Trish Romance's gallery in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and another solo show at Guelph University. I've had restaurants ask for my work. I've been blessed and so far haven't had to chase anyone down.

What exactly does your artwork represent to you? During the creative process, do you decide on what message you are trying to convey?

My artwork represents life and what is occurring in the moment on my journey. The innate beauty of the human face inspires me. I've always loved to draw eyes. In our fast paced society, I like to create work that calls for your attention. That draws you into a moment of stillness. I meditate before I paint, and I never decide anything. I simply move with what's in front of me. What I am feeling, how I may have experienced last night's



sunset, or a conversation I shared with a dear friend. I have no agenda other than being fully present.

What is the one instrument/tool that you couldn't live without in your studio?

My brushes! Some women collect shoes or jewellery. I love to collect different types of brushes. Currently I'm in love with a huge massive brush I had made for me. I haven't had the space until this week to use it. I can't wait to set up the room for it. It hangs from the ceiling!

What is the one piece that you are most proud of?

I am most proud of my piece "Retorno a Venezia". How it came to be was magical. It was the first piece I created in my then garage studio. I had no idea another face would show up, but it did. I am happy to say that the artisan plates that fell from the shelf on my very first show at Pieza Pizzeria in Niagara-on-the-lake found their way onto my piece two years later. I was so happy to save those hand-painted plates and make the rubble into art! After two years I can now say that it maybe became my first self-portrait.

Looking back on all of the masters, over the centuries... who do you think has made the greatest impact on you as an artist?

Oh, there are so many! Frida Kahlo moves me to tears. Michelangelo's Sistine chapel caused me to experience my first bout of Stendhal syndrome. Stendhal's syndrome or Florence syndrome is a psychosomatic condition involving rapid heartbeat, fainting, confusion and even hallucinations, allegedly occurring when individuals become exposed to objects or phenomena of great beauty.

I was so afraid when it happened as we were corralled through the chapel on a very hot day. It was the Carabinieri that recognized my symptoms and brought me into a private seating area till I was able to walk again. I had stopped talking and could barely walk when I looked up to the ceiling and saw all that beauty at once!

Do any of the current trends in the art world influence you?

I'm not a trend follower. I paint from how I am feeling. Trends fade away. I want to stick around for a long time.

What are you working on now?

I am currently working on organizing my amazing new studio in one of Canada's oldest schools dating back to 1873. I am setting up my space and preparing to create an extensive body of work! It's a very exciting time for me to finally have a studio outside my home. It's been a beautiful journey so far and one that I look forward to continuing.

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Spencer

Design

Karim Rashid, Bethan Laura Wood, Sarah Barber



*Bethan Laura Wood -
Presented with Nilufar
Gallery in Milan:*

Moon and Hot Rock tables

Spencer Feature Interview

KARIM RASHID

THE SLIDING *RULE of FATE*

In a display of brilliance in intelligence, creativity and precision, Karim's design success was imminent. Even the hesitation at 16 to narrow down a profession, worked in his favor.

By Rose Marie Bresolin

Operating out of his studio in New York City since 1993, Canadian industrial designer Karim Rashid continues to make an indelible impression on the world of design and architecture. When we learn that Karim's application to the Architectural Studies Program at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario was not completed in time to be admitted, we might ask if the design that first earned him universal fame resulted from a twist in fate.

Karim's approach to design is broadened by an interest in anthropology; how we sit in and enjoy space and how it can improve the quality of our lives. Imbued with a desire to investigate our relationship with space at multiple levels and to witness how it serves and affects us, Karim is a true pluralist. It is from that perspective that he flirts with art, fashion, and music, determined to creatively touch every aspect of our physical and virtual landscape. He has a passion for color, and his understanding of





how it is applied in relation to the distance from the equator has motivated him to expand our awareness and to advocate for change. His belief that a paradigm that uses more color in our built environments in very warm climates should be reversed, is reflected in some very striking building projects. That Karim enlists a team of architects who work with mechanical and structural engineers to ensure the physical integrity of his boldly creative designs, has opened doors for him and positioned him to greatly influence the future of design.



The Oh Chair. Karim's work is featured in 20 permanent collections. His pieces are exhibited in museums worldwide, including the MoMA, Centre Pompidou, and SFMOMA.



Inspired by the sensual shape of actress Greta Garbo, The Garbo went on to be displayed at the Museum of Modern Art, New York

The doors to a future in design were opened for Karim at the age of 7, when his father took him and his brother to Expo 1967 in Montreal. While there, Karim found himself overwhelmed by wonder almost daily. His eyes took in a utopian world as shaped by people like Buckminster Fuller, Eero Saarinen, Luigi Colani, George Nelson, Andre Courreges, Marshall McLuhan, Isaac Asimov, Philip K. Dick, Pierre Cardin, and many others. He recognized the richness of a world he looked forward to grow up in. And, when at the age of 11, he visited the new Domestic Landscape show at MOMA in New York, he fell in love with Italian Radical Design. That experience galvanized a desire to design and shape the world of the future.

Sorting through that broadening maze to choose a place where he might begin however, was not as easy. In his teens he found himself confused as to what profession to enter. He had been accelerated through high school, so when it came time to apply to university, he was only 16. Torn between architecture, fine art, and fashion, he initially applied to study architecture at Carleton University in Ottawa. But by the time he applied, the program was full.





Consequently, he accepted an offer to enrol in the 'architectural stream' of Industrial Design. He expected to ultimately slide into architecture, but as fate had it, the second that he took some industrial design courses, he knew that it is what he wanted to do.

Karim loved the Italian product design landscape. The reality that the many products he admired in his own home over the years were designed by architects, he assumed that one had to

“We experience dissonance when an object is beautiful but unfunctional. I am interested in designing products as complete Raptures of Experience.”

be an architect to design a chair or coffee machine or any product. But in fact, Italy did not have an industrial design school until 1984. The Carleton Program being only in its second year, it lacked the faculty to teach the wide range of courses in industrial design. As a result, his experience was drawn from the combined study of engineering, architecture, philosophy, languages, among others in a broadened diversity of courses. From his own teaching experience gathered over several years,



he has concluded that a designer needs a broader experience. In fact, he believes that design should only be taught in graduate school, after the broad-based course of study.

Karim continues to value the great memories collected during a rigorous education at Carleton. He is grateful to the faculty for their dedication and for bringing in the likes of great guest speakers such as George Nelson, Ettore Sottsass and Marshall McLuhan.

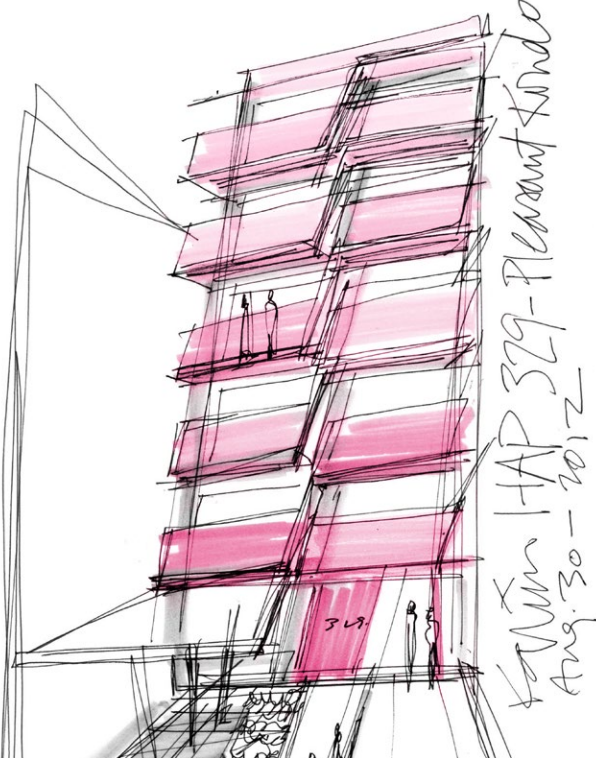
There were lots of surprises along the way. One was The Garbo, a softly rounded bucket in recycled polypropylene. The Garbo is still one of Umbra's biggest sellers and is also placed in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Karim believes its great success was

a case of rationalism meets sensualism. At that time, the ubiquitous plastic wastebasket on the market was a rectangular black can with absolutely no character and there was little alternative. He immediately thought of a sensual, yet functional object and it taught him that design must work. It can be artistic, conceptual, but must always function perfectly.

Karim describes the merging of the world of architecture with that of design as being a gradual and organic expansion of his sensibilities and opportunities.

It had always been his intention to be a pluralist and touch all aspects of life. His first realized interior was Morimoto restaurant in 2001 (Philadelphia) with Steven Starr, that went on to win many awards. Designing a successful restaurant interior afforded him many more interior projects which eventually led to building design. His first condo for HAP Investments in NYC opened the doors for him to design many more residential interiors and buildings.





Unique to Karim is a style of looking at the human experience from an anthropometric perspective. So, rather than to look at architecture as more objectified or a style of a building, he considers how we're using and experiencing it. He attributes that slant to a way of thinking from the mind of a product designer. Another dimension to his design approach is to see what kind of innovation he can come up with, if not in construction, at least in material. And if not in materials, at least in social behaviors in space.

"I think people aren't sold color, so they don't expect to buy color. 90% of people are going to buy the color on display rather than use their imagination to visualize the other options."

When asked if he sees creating as an act of hope, and if so, to take us to where he sees his creations at work to resolve dissonance, Karim responded:

"We experience dissonance when an object is beautiful but unfunctional. I am interested in designing products as complete Raptures of Experience. Our lives are elevated when we experience beauty, comfort, luxury, performance, and utility seamlessly together."

Pleasant Avenue, with its pink balconies as an example of his striking use of color

In a condominium, for instance, Karim thinks about lifestyle, the way people live, reconfiguring space so that those who occupy it can have a better domestic life. He recognizes dissonance when he sees a beautiful building in New York, and the architecture is beautiful but when you go inside, you find a total disconnect.

Suggesting that a look at the architecture in any major city of the world reflects a certain degree of dissonance, Karim points out that it takes a healthy dose of dissonance to track the course of history. In seeing architecture from the 17th to 21st centuries side by side not only marks the different eras in which the city was built, it also denotes the eclecticism of the urban fabric. Karim states that we're in the midst of a movement in that right now — a design driven by the digital age.

Asked about his strategy to convince people that color can impact their energy, and the overall quality of their lives, he responds:



When applied to architecture, 329 Pleasant in New York, completed in 2017, is an example of color at work. There was some controversy and push back on what ultimately became a final design that is beautiful and awe inspiring. But the colors are far more subdued than the presented renderings. Karim had put up a poll on Facebook during the design to see what color selections the public preferred. He was disappointed about the fear that people have of color. As an emotional and visual phenomenon, he believes color can make us feel alive and more positive, and can ‘imbue a sense of warmth, and evoke a pleasurable human spirit. The white glass always looks so elegant and the purity and cleanliness contrasting with the graduating pink hues running up the building from fuchsia to almost white gives the building an ethereal glow.’ The facade gives off a beautiful melancholy that can fill one with a warm feeling, akin to what a New York City Spanish Harlem sunset can evoke.

“I think people aren’t sold color, so they don’t expect to buy color. 90% of people are going to buy the color on display rather than use their imagination to visualize the other options. The beauty of this farrago in life is the broad diversity and choice of everything. I always disliked the idea that bright colors and primaries are only for children and when we get older, we conform to dark hues, to banal grey and browns. Color should spread across all the years, children should be brought up with sophisticated colors and hues too, not (simply) brash primaries.”

And where color is concerned, Karim walks the talk. ‘That we live in an age of casualization allows us to drop the facades of dress code, ritual, tradition, and formality. It frees us to be who we are and express the way we feel. Style is a way of being, a love and respect for one’s immediate environment and oneself. But style should be a mirror and reflection of the time in which we live and not just appropriating the past.’





Karim's goal to change the mentality of people has not been without its criticism. Experience has shown him that it can take until a project is complete and has come together, to really see the effect of the color palate. In many cases the process requires patience.

Given the ease of success that Karim experiences in the field of product design, and in the face of potential challenge to his use of color with designing buildings, one might ask why he persists in architectural design. But then, one only needs to witness the many building projects he is both engaged in and has lined up, to abandon the question.

Presently he is involved with the building of budget design hotels for Prizeotel throughout Europe: Bern, Bonn, Dusseldorf, Erfurt, Munich, Munster, Rostock, Vienna, Wiesbaden. Another new design hotel 4-starl in Rome and a second resort for Temptation in Punta Cana, renovation of hotel in Greece, a 6-star hotel in Bahrain, hotel in Jaffa, Israel, hotel, offices, youth hostel in Budapest, offices in India, and condominiums in Galveston Texas, Washington D.C., and Moscow.



Karim's inspiration is not dependant on any one place or thing. He derives it from within the creative process itself, within the criteria of a project, and from functional needs and desires. He has always found himself with more ideas than could ever be produced. His senses and his mind are kept alert by a keenness to observe and analyze and dissect everything within our built environments.





Karim strives for what he refers to as Sensual Minimalism. To put this in lay terms, it means that there are no straight lines, yet the object is minimal, without any superfluous adornment.

“For the longest time design only existed for the elite and for a small insular culture. I have worked hard for the last 20 years trying to make design a public subject.”

As I completed the interview, I came away feeling fortunate for Karim’s passionate resolve; a passion with a reach that’s aimed at enriching some aspect in the lives of each and everyone of us. I also wondered at the alignment of the stars at his birth.

Photos Courtesy of Karim Rashid

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A large, wide, woven straw chair with a high, rounded backrest, supporting the woman.

The woman is wearing a multi-colored patterned shawl (pink, blue, green, and yellow) over an orange dress with pink embroidery. She also wears yellow shoes with a flower detail.

A circular artwork on the left side of the image, featuring various abstract shapes and patterns, possibly related to anatomy or nature.

A tall, blue, textured ceramic vase with a matching lid, positioned to the left of the woman.

A large, circular rug with a bold, abstract pattern in yellow, orange, and teal, positioned on the floor.

Large, colorful wall art on the right side of the image, featuring abstract, branching shapes in shades of pink, blue, and green, resembling coral or seaweed.

A table covered with a white cloth, holding various decorative items including a glass vase, a bottle, and floral arrangements.

A circular artwork on the right side of the image, featuring abstract shapes and patterns, similar to the one on the left.

Spencer Feature Interview

BETHAN LAURA WOOD

British Designer *commands* ATTENTION

*Bethan Laura Wood
at Toronto's Interior Design Show.*

By Rose Marie Bresolin

Recognized for her unique designs, award winning British designer Bethan Laura Wood whose exhibits were in the Milan design show in 2018, studied Three-Dimensional Design at the University of Brighton, graduating with honors in 2006. She continued on to the Royal College of Art, where she studied Product Design under Jürgen Bey and Martino Gamper, earning a master's degree in 2009.

As I sipped on a glass of wine in the Media Hospitality Suite on opening night of Toronto's Interior Design Show (IDS), the striking image of Bethan Laura Wood stirred my attention enough to have me walk across the room to introduce myself:

Rose Marie Bresolin: I'm now speaking with Bethan and I'm going to let her tell you what it was that made me gravitate towards her, in a room packed with other people also looking well designed by fashion.



Uniqueness of Design sets Bethan's work apart



*Made with artisans in Italy:
Criss Cross Kite Chandelier*

Bethan: Well, hello to Spencer readers. I am a multi-discipline designer and I've just been invited to talk about my work. In my practice, I tend to like a lot of colour and pattern, so that's why you were noticing me from across the room.

Yes, precisely. Now tell us something about the work you do.

OPPOSITE: The Tree designed by Bethan for the Maison named HyperNature, boasts curves, petals and colours that were inspired by a journey to Champagne. While visiting the Maison Belle Epoque, the family home of Maison Perrier-Jouët in Epernay, Bethan was immersed in Art Nouveau, and her repertoire was enriched by the floral detail throughout the house.





*Above and opposite: Sculptures for
Tory Burch Commission*

I really enjoy exploring the relationships we make with objects in our everyday lives, and to question how they can become cultural conduits. I am interested in critical approaches to achieving sustainability in a mass consumption, production-driven context.

What set you on the path of creating designs that are very different from the models that would have been in place at the time you studied?

“I am interested in critical approaches to achieving sustainability in a mass consumption, production-driven context.”

I guess I'm really curious; I've always tended to look at simple things from a different angle to see what else they might have to say, and I have great respect for our environment. And, it seemed that from there, everything else just fell into place. I felt lucky to have met Pietro Viero in a residency programme for New Artisans in Vicenza, Italy, where we worked with their local artisans. I designed my first collection of chandeliers with him for Nilufar gallery in Milano. I try to collaborate

with him at least once a year – it's such a joy to meet people who have strong passions about a material or technique and to share in that.

You mentioned work commissioned by Tory Burch, and I imagine there were others captivated by your startling designs.

Yes, and for that I am truly grateful. Hermès requested displays for its U.K. store windows, and I filled them with extra-large fruit in 2014. The next year, when Tory Burch commissioned works

in the spirit of Dodie Thayer's iconic lettuce ware, I designed sculptures that looked like oversized canapés. And when the accessories brand Valextra asked me for a line of handbags, I came up with the bags with squiggly handles and clasps that look squeezed from a toothpaste tube. My latest collaboration has been with Perrier Jouet for HyperNature, a full-size Tree that travels around the world for their different events.

And where does Bethan Laura Wood call home?

“Hermès requested displays for its U.K. store windows, and I filled them with extra-large fruit in 2014.”





I presently live and work in London but I continue to do a lot of work with the Nilufar Gallery in Milano.

For those of you who made it to hear her talk at the Interior Design Show Toronto, I'm convinced you would agree that Bethan's creations represent mixed discipline on a large scale. Inspired by everything from the 1970s architecture and Otomi fabrics of Southern Mexico to her 'bonkers' flea-market finds, you can 'find' more of her work on the website.

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Photos Courtesy of Bethan Laura Wood



Presented with Nilufar gallery in Milan: Moon and Hot Rock tables







get to WORK!



Brandishing the laser-sharp motto and the proven success behind it, Sarah Barber takes her Designs to Another Level.

By Rose Marie Bresolin

Sarah Barber Design Studio is located in the popular Yorkville Village of Toronto, Ontario. Its owner of the same name had initially planned for a career in architecture, but on learning more about interior design, she saw just how much crossover there is with architecture, and shifted her plan. Envisioning design as her new direction, she threw herself into

it, and has been consistent in applying that degree of passion to every project since.

Sarah finds great satisfaction in a style of working that includes the construction process. From that point for start she can head the design, the build, and interior detailing all in the same project. She has become convinced that unique-

ness in design comes from the user's own personality and lifestyle. She integrates different design elements to create a style of its own. Summed up in her words, "It's all about balance."

Unique to her design is a personal style that involves a layering of traditional architecture. In example, Sarah layers crown moulding, trim work and cof-



ferred ceilings with modern elements and sleek furnishings. Or by reversing the process, she approaches a minimalist space and adds luxurious stylings. To create comfort, she takes great care to balance the masculine and feminine vibes. Adding a client's personal items such as travel keepsakes and artwork is key to achieving optimum results. Keenly aware of the importance of a good lighting plan to make or break a space, it is never overlooked or undervalued throughout the planning.

Sarah acknowledges that previous companies and employers in her experience have had a hand in her success. She is also grateful for the big break that came from a particular client who is a property owner, property manager, and real estate investor. He provided Sarah with opportunities that allowed her to work for herself while also learning invaluable lessons in real estate and construction.

Asked about her design vision, Sarah's response to clients is bold and forthwith. "I am not here to build my dream space, I am here to build yours." Sarah puts a lot of time and focus on the pre-construction stages. The planning and prep work are part of the discovery and the learning process. She believes it is imperative that clients find themselves reflected throughout the design stage. This results in successful projects and clients thrilled to be in their new environment.

*"I
am not
here to build
my dream space, I
am here to build
yours."*

As to Sarah's impact on an environment we all share, she holds to an internal compass that keeps her accountable and always mindful of it. As much as possible, in her work, Sarah uses natural and sustainable materials and products, avoiding plastics as best she can. She designs a home to be energy efficient, and a kitchen to ensure that recycling and composting is made easy rather than being made a chore to tax human energy.

Once Sarah got a taste of what it was to run her own show, she never looked back!





A favorite project of hers was a restoration of a historical home to convert it into a luxury wallcovering showroom. Sarah kept the feeling of it being very high-end residential while adjusting it to its new purpose to showcase stunning prints. It gives her satisfaction knowing that the design and architecture community gets to visit and enjoy the space, a space she's proud to have had a hand in.

While most would think that the work Sarah does is very creative, she has learned that the creativity comes in problem solving! "Renovating always brings surprises by way of unexpected plumbing, electrical, mechanical, structural, and so much more." To prepare the clients for the challenges, Sarah preps them in advance to plan for changes after demolition week.

In her role as designer, Sarah works with people's personal space, and has built some fantastic relationships with clients, many of them becoming personal friends. Beginning with the initial meetings to get to know each other, giving them an understanding of the process, her fee's, etc., she becomes familiar with their lifestyle, their needs and wants. In taking time for the lead up to their working together, the process becomes a fun experience.

*“Creativity
comes
in
problem
solving!”*



Sarah describes herself as a planner who obsesses over research. As a result, she truly enjoys the beginning stages - planning to make sure that all details are well thought out. Recently she spent an entire day sourcing the perfect wall mounted radiator, and when it turned out like a piece of art, she was affirmed that her research is worth the time she dedicates to it.

In the way of a break from her work, Sarah describes travel as a source of endless inspiration. As something that is presently not an option, she can't wait to get back to it. She also highlights the role her kids play in keeping her balanced - "100% guaranteed to bring in lots of fun, relieving distraction, and always up for a hug."





When asked what she is working on, and what next, Sarah's reply is filled with excitement. "Presently, I'm on the horizon of becoming my own client. This means redeveloping properties and bringing quality houses to smaller communities. I am also always interested in giving back. Currently I am planning a fundraiser with my children, focusing on systemic racism in schools. It's empowering to be working with my children on a project that is as universal. I see it as a way for paying it forward."

S

Photos Courtesy of Sarah Barber Design Studio LTD

Following Page: Sarah Barber Design Project of a Private Residence

Sarah Barber Design Project of a Private Residence in East York, Ontario, Canada



Spencer

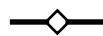
Lifestyle

Spa-tially Motivated: Nordik Spa-Nature, Distilling's Yellow Brick Road, Scuderia Ferrari Club Toronto
When Z Stands For Sizzle, Urban Escape, Comstock Tales: Virginia City, Nevada and Buzz Spencer





Spencer Feature Article



Spa-tially

MOTIVATED

The Art of Wellness

 By Darren Dobson

Quebec-based Groupe Nordik has been mastering the art of personal rejuvenation since opening its first Nordik Spa-Nature in Chelsea, Quebec in 2005. With a base of two solidly successful wellness spas over 14 years, the Winnipeg location opened in 2015, Groupe Nordik is well-equipped to embark on an ambitious growth plan. This plan foresees ten spas by 2027, with the third location in Whitby, Ontario. Projected to open in spring 2021, the newest Nordik Spa-Nature location is being developed in Whitby's spacious Cullen Central Park. The new facility features numerous spa rejuvenation spaces such as dry and steam saunas, outdoor baths (cold, hot, and thermal), and cascades. A full range of relaxation treatments like massage therapies, and body-care wellness treatments will also be available. Highlighting the experience is the salt-water pool, or Kalla, which will offer an incredibly relaxing experience of weightlessness to wellness devotees seeking to unburden themselves. Refreshing the mind and soul is one thing, and nourishing the body is another. With this in mind, Groupe Nordik's new Whitby facility will feature three distinctive dining spaces that will allow for either social, or solitary experiences.



The Nordic Spa Difference

Generally speaking, most North Americans think of a relaxing massage with a hydrating facial mask treatment when they hear the words 'spa treatment.' Keeping this in mind, Groupe Nordik set out to broaden the spa experience to include a 'multi-sensory rejuvenation experience' based on centuries-old Scandinavian hydrotherapy techniques: hot and cold waters, dry and steam saunas, etc. Many Canadians have, or know friends who have participated in a traditional New Year's Day 'polar bear dip.' Seemingly crazy behavior to some, it is not without regenerative properties. Ever wonder why famous secret agent, James Bond, utilized a showering technique of hot water, turned quickly to cold?

Science shows that these changes in temperature are an ideal way to stimulate the body's natural immune system. It's important to note that those with heart conditions and high-blood pressure should be mindful of such shocks to their circulatory systems. Healthier observers can view this hot and cold stimulation as a good way to increase metabolic rate, which in turn activates the body's natural immune system. This immune system activation stimulates the production of white blood cells which may help to ward off infectious diseases like pesky office colds.

Spatial Considerations

Once known as Whitby's regional tourism destination, Cullen Gardens, today's Cullen Central Park offers a spacious setting and optimal location for a spa experience grounded in nature. Set among stunning views and encompassing environs of nature, the Nordik Spa-Nature facility and grounds will be spread across a 385,000 sq. ft. footprint. The location, only 45 km from Metro Toronto, is easily accessible to both destination tourist and adventurous Greater Toronto Area residents alike. As a company dedicated to environmental considerations as much as the well-being of their clientele, design features allow the new facility to relax into its setting as though sprung from the natural flora. Antoine Lagarec, Design Manager for Groupe Nordik, believes the Whitby facility will build on their design experiences to date. "The guiding principles of this project's design are the flow between areas,

optimal space management, and respect for the environment." For the fortunate visitor this means not only an appealing euro-influenced design aesthetic, but also a facility that takes into consideration what natural surroundings have to offer and a design that enhances them rather than seeking to dominate them.

Twice a year, Nordik creates a special day for youth of 8 years and older. In addition to ensuring that they enjoy the spa facilities, staff members provide educational tips on the benefits of the thermal cycle. They also offer workshops on different sauna rituals, such as "create your own exfoliation salt" or "How to do an Aufguss". These days have become very popular in the other locations and the spa intends to offer the special occasion more often.



Well-Being Begins with Being Well

It would be impossible to highlight the entire menu of unique spa treatments that Nordik Spa-Nature will offer in a 1000-word magazine article. There are websites and social media for that. Instead, let's focus on some highlights that will introduce "Wow!" into a visitor's lexicon of relaxation. In addition to a Scandinavian hydrotherapy focus, the spa's treatments will draw from other culture's ideas of relaxation and rejuvenation. None more encapsulating, literally and figuratively, than the Rasul mud therapy. Inspired by North African and Turkish Hammam traditions, the Rasul is a 45 minute, 6-step process that begins and ends with tea. Between the refreshments, Rasul participants begin the treatment with showering and an exfoliation regimen featuring salts mixed with essential oils to open pores. The next step involves the application of special mud silicates on the body and face and is combined with the relaxing embrace of heat from a steam sauna. The final step is a mud-dissolving rain-shower rinse, leaving one refreshed, revived, and spoiled with more tea and treats. A uniquely solitary experience, the Rasul at Nordik Spa-Nature will be a multi-sensory experience with music, lighting, and Moroccan inspired delicacies, all present to stimulate the senses. As devoted wellness artists, Groupe Nordik aspires to balance their clients' nutritional well-being along with the physiological nature of spa treatments.



The Kalla, salt-water pool, offers visitors a chance to float weightless



Whether participating in spa treatments or not, visitors will be able to refresh their palates in three different settings: lounge, resto, and bier garden. Although concepts will be different, each design will share warmth, relaxation, and rustic accents inspired from the site's surroundings. Menus will be setting specific: e.g. charcuterie and artisanal cheese boards in the lounge, full-course offerings in the resto, and grill-centric comfort foods in the bier garden. Visitors will enjoy a full menu of alcoholic beverages, along with fresh-pressed juices and other non-alcoholic offerings. For the more adventurous, picnic boxes will be available to enjoy al fresco dining experiences at various on-site locations: e.g. beside a natural pond or under the shade of a tree. Although each space will be different in ambiance, each will share a commitment to locally and seasonally sourced artisanal-inspired fare.



Nordik Spa-Nature's Sauna Spaces

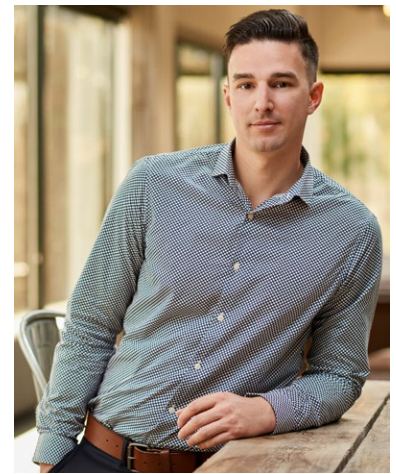




*Martin Paquette
Founder & CEO*



*Daniel Gingras
Co-owner & Senior VP*



*Alexandre Cantin
VP of Growth & Development*



Nordik Spa-Nature Whitby: where wellness is an art to be enjoyed



Overview of Nordik Spa-Nature Whitby's nature-centric setting

Sustainable Well-Being

Just as Groupe Nordik is committed to the wellness of its clientele, they are demonstrably devoted to the wellness of the environment they conduct business in. Armed with a corporate consciousness that recognizes environmental stewardship as a good business practice, Groupe Nordik is building this ethos into everyday operational facets of the new spa's operation. Design innovations such as heat recuperation and recycling from saunas, cooling and heating equipment, provide client comfort features such as heated floors and walkways. Collecting and recycling rain-water run-off for aesthetic features like streams and plant irrigation systems is designed into the development. In an effort to reduce the environmental impact made by our guests, Groupe Nordik practices kitchen waste composting and uses biodegradable packaging for bier garden and picnic-box food service.

These are only a few of the eco-friendly innovations designed into the operation of Whitby's new Nordik Spa-Nature, and when coupled with a proven formula of delivering inspired personal well-being, shine a spotlight on Groupe Nordik's well-deserved reputation as elite wellness artists.

Photo Credits: Groupe Nordik



Distilling's Yellow Brick *Road*

By
Blair Phillips
&
Davin De Kergommeaux

As it hugs the shores of Lake Ontario from Toronto to Niagara – a region dubbed “The Golden Horseshoe” for its burgeoning entrepreneurial sector – the Queen Elizabeth Way has become a yellow brick road for spirits lovers. Here, in cocktail country, you can find all the ingredients you’ll need to make stunning summer cocktails when you return home.



Wayne Gretzky Estates

Niagara-On-The-Lake, ON





Our journey begins in Niagara-on-the-Lake where Wayne Gretzky has put as much heart into building a distillery here as he did on skates. When the doors opened in 2017, three new whiskies stood tall like trophies on the shelf. One of these was Wayne Gretzky No. 99 Ice Cask, poised and ready for mixing, with icewine sweetness and bursts of rye spices. To make the whisky, casks that once held Vidal icewine were re-filled with a blend of mature rye and corn whisky, then left to bask for four months in the spectre of icewine's glory. This whisky will imbue your cocktails with glowing rye, exotic wood, floral tropical notes and round, fruity-honey sweetness.

Gretzky Ice Cask is the beating heart of a list of cocktails that Gretzky Estate's mixologist, Zac Kvas, has built using a range of other ingredients exclusive to the region. His simple syrup, for instance, begins with hickory, spices and local dark maple syrup that balance on a slightly bitter tonic. This brings viscosity, bitters and sweetness to Kvas' stirred whisky cocktails while balancing any acidic components. The simple syrup and whisky are both available at the distillery.





Dillon's Small Batch Distillers

Beamsville, ON

Dillon's Small Batch Distillers, twenty minutes up the road, in Beamsville, is the brainchild of Geoff and Peter Dillon. In this self-contained cocktail emporium, Dillon distils bitters, gin, whisky and vodka along with the collection of spirits and liqueurs needed to make every conceivable cocktail under the warm Niagara sun. Dillon's plans to use 100% rye grain as the base for his vodka changed when a team of



distillery technicians arrived from Germany to build his pot stills. They convinced him that grapes, though more expensive than rye, provide a silkier mouthfeel.

While the distillery was under construction, Dillon worked harvesting grapes for local wineries. Connections made then paid dividends as Dillon's became the first distillery in Ontario to make vodka using 100% local Niagara grapes. A smidgen of that grape character shines through on the pillowy, mouth-coating palate of their Method 95 Vodka. It simply begs to be shaken or stirred in a chilled vodka cocktail.



Forty Creek Distillery

Grimsby, ON



In 1992, practically next door to where Dillon's is today, whisky maker, John K. Hall bought a struggling distillery and put whisky back on the yellow brick road. Canadian Whisky's return to grandeur is synonymous with Hall and Forty Creek. Since Italy's Gruppo Campari bought Forty Creek in 2014, his distiller/blender, Bill Ashburn, has continued Hall's practice of releasing innovative award-winning whiskies.

Innovation is one thing, breaking whisky tradition is another, but Ashburn did just that when he summoned the courage to infuse Forty Creek whisky with fragrant herbage. His careful balance of juniper, Labrador tea, mugwort and spruce tips yielded a new botanical whisky called The Forager. Citrus and herbaceous top notes accent Forty Creek's trademark fruity tones making The Forager ideal for fizzy cocktails.



Reid's Distillery

Toronto, ON





In 2019, the gin-crazed Reid's family brought the fragrant aromas of newly distilled gin to their Toronto neighbourhood when they opened Reid's distillery. Martin, Calvin, Graham and Jacqueline set the bar high with their first Reid's Signature Gin. The eleven botanicals in this well-balanced, traditional gin elevate cocktails with a brightness reminiscent of a freshly watered garden exploding with crisp flavours. A blend of Italian and Canadian juniper form the gin's core, characteristics along with its familiar pine-like

note. A spritz of citrus offsets mild woody characters that originate from aromatic sweet fern foraged near Hudson Bay.

Reid's showcase their signature gin in the distillery's cocktail lounge, in a diverse list of gin cocktails. You won't find Dorothy clicking her ruby red slippers here because seated at the bar, the Reid's make you feel right at home.

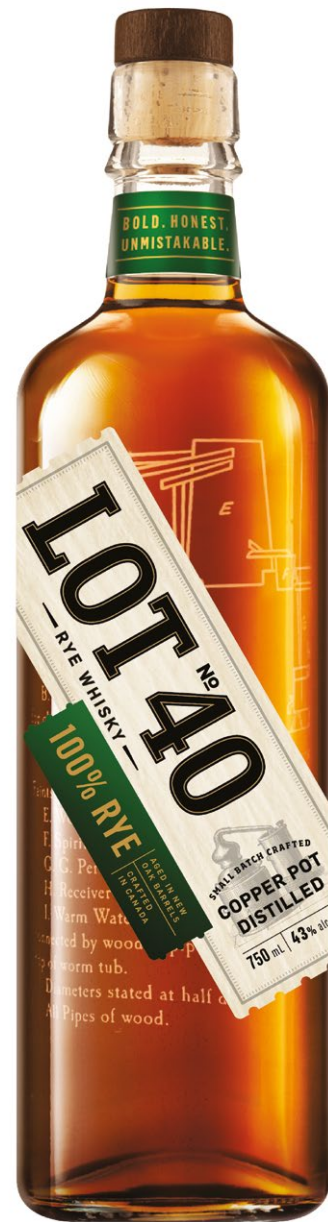


Hiram Walker & Sons Distillery

Windsor, ON

For the adventurous, a four-hour drive connects the Golden Horseshoe with the Windsor corridor. We're not in Kansas anymore, but at Canada's oldest distillery. Hiram Walker & Sons Distillery has been making whisky here since 1858, including a quintessential rye named Lot No. 40 which, has captured the hearts of bartenders across the planet.

Lot 40 fell on hard times in the late 1990s. In a world where cocktails, such as the Cosmopolitan were all the rage, the whisky was ahead of its time. Then, in 2012 newly appointed Master Blender Dr Don Livermore revived it. His version is just as rye driven as the original, with some modern finesse and rounding. Sweet floral esters and dark rye fruits add polish to the hard rye spices giving whisky-forward cocktails a twister of flavours. Once a month Livermore offers whisky blending classes for hard-core spirits geeks.



Visiting these five distilleries will encourage you to explore more of Canada's vast distilling scene. With over 200 distilleries across the country, you will soon become a cocktail wizard using their ingredients. So, hop in the car, then pull back the curtain on cocktails using Canada's finest spirits.

You can read more about these and 200 other Canadian Distilleries in Davin and Blair's new book, *The Definitive Guide to Canadian Distilleries* available now wherever books are sold.

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Photos Courtesy of Blair Phillips and Davin De Kergommeaux



Blair Phillips

Blair is a lifestyle and spirits writer specializing in Canada's growing landscape of spirits and distilleries. He is the Canadian contributing editor for Whisky Magazine and writes for the popular Distiller app. He also contributed features for drinkingmadeeasy.com during the TV Series' three season run. He judges several spirits competitions including the World Whisky Awards and Canadian Whisky Awards.



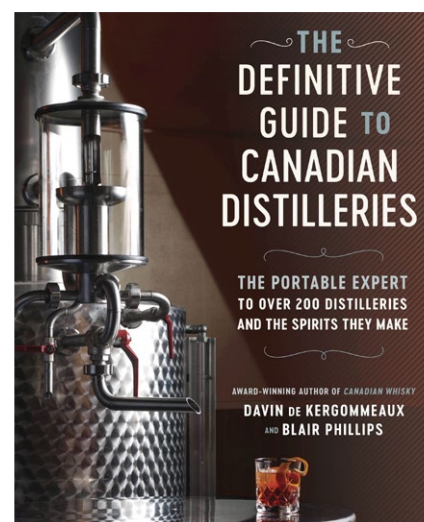
Davin De Kergommeaux

Davin is a drinks writer, public speaker and spirits judge, recognized as the world expert on Canadian whisky. He has travelled to four continents to visit spirits producers and distilleries, and make presentations about Canadian spirits. In 2016 the Globe and Mail named him one of the 50 most influential Canadians in food and drink, then in 2018 the New York Times said his significance in the revival of Canadian whisky could not be overstated.

The *Definitive Guide to Canadian Distilleries* is an indispensable guide to the past, present and future of Canada's distilleries. Written by bona fide Canadian spirits expert Davin de Kergommeaux, this book covers more than 200 of the most exciting and cutting-edge distilleries, large and small, who are shaping the industry today.

Just a decade ago, fewer than a dozen distilleries, concentrated in two provinces, produced almost all the spirits (mainly whisky) made in Canada. Today, there is a movement afoot in Canada's spirits world. There has never been a better selection of rich specialty spirits--from gin to moonshine, from flavoured vodka to liqueurs--to tempt the palate and supplement your long-time favourites. Despite flourishing public enthusiasm for Canada's distillers, other than incomplete and inaccurate web-based information, no one has offered consumers an all-inclusive guide... until now.

Using a trademark (and witty) blend of narrative, tasting notes, inventive cocktail recipes and vibrant photos, de Kergommeaux shares the unique genesis of each of these distillers who are pushing the boundaries and flavours of spirits of all kinds. Divided geographically with suggested distillery routes, and filled with key tour information as well as breakout features of the most exciting people and spirits today, *The Definitive Guide to Canadian Distilleries* is a treasured souvenir and fun companion to the distilleries in every corner of the country, and a must-have guide for curious drinkers and expert connoisseurs alike.



SCUDERIA FERRARI CLUB

The Official Ferrari Passion
TORONTO - Canada



Scuderia Ferrari Club Toronto is all about people, and the passion for Ferrari culture. Established in 2013, on the behest of Scuderia Ferrari Club of Maranello, the Club is recognized as the best Foreign Scuderia Ferrari Club in the world.

Their collective efforts are focused on supporting and promoting the Ferrari culture, the Ferrari trademark, together with F1, and by educating and engaging in sporting, cultural and social events, across Ontario, Canada and globally.

President Antonio Folino is passionate about his club. "We believe in diversity, gender and youth engagement, with a focus to grow and unite people sharing the passion for Ferrari," he states emphatically. "Our vision is to expand our Ferrari family together, and welcome many new members, sharing the energy and passion for Ferrari, aiming to be the best Scuderia Ferrari Club."

In fact, since 2013, the Toronto club has been awarded as the best Scuderia Ferrari Foreign Club, and second worldwide. With Folino's leadership and the club's committed Board of Directors, the organization is sure to continue to grow, with already over 900 members.



President Antonio Folino







"We like that our club is growing," Folino says. "Men and women, children, families passionate about the history of Ferrari, the pursuit of excellence Enzo Ferrari has left as one amazing legacy, and what Ferrari represents to the world, the strongest and most loved brand."

And what a history!

Enzo Ferrari was born on February 18, 1898 in Modena, Italy. From an early age, he was fascinated with cars and racing. At the age of 21, he landed a job as a test driver for Alfa Romeo. Within a few years he was winning championships. For good luck, he decided to adorn his cars with a prancing horse, which now of course, is one of the most famous logos in the world.

Enjoying success as a race car driver, Enzo launched his own racing team, Scuderia Ferrari, literally translated to "Ferrari Stable."

In celebration of Enzo Ferrari's incredible

achievements, the Toronto Club organizes events year round. You can see from the pictures in this article just how much fun members have!

There are monthly dinners at the clubhouse, group trips to Italy, golf tournaments, and even a Christmas party for kids featuring Santa Claus.

This is no ordinary club.

As Club Treasurer Mariana Todorova states:

"Many think Ferrari is about cars only, or more about Formula One, and it is for men... mostly... and yet an expensive vehicle that few can really buy, but Ferrari is about love, passion, and a family before anything else. Ferrari is trust, performance, excellence and one incredible drive for achievement that has united people from all over the world and from all walks of life."

Photos Courtesy of Scuderia Ferrari Club Toronto



when **Z** stands for

"I'm not missing my Corvette Z06 at all, and I am definitely loving my sizzling new 2020 Camaro ZL1 1LE. "

By James H. Adams

General Motors Camaro is now in its sixth generation. First built in 1967 to compete with Ford Mustang, the 2020 ZL1 1LE is the ultimate Camaro.

So why would a lifelong Corvette car enthusiast consider the purchase of a 2020 Camaro ZL1 1LE? First of all, it looks incredible with its carbon fibre rear wing and aggressive front fascia including dive planes for added downforce.

Add to that the Corvette Z06 sourced LT4 supercharged engine, built in the Bowling Green, Kentucky Corvette assembly plant, delivering 650 hp and 650 ft. lbs. of torque. Who wouldn't have interest in this awesome pony car from General Motors?

This very limited production vehicle is a superb track day car for the auto enthusiast as well as performing as a daily driver for you and family. (Just don't expect anyone older than 8 years of age to fit into the back seats—there is literally NO leg room back there). Albeit, not the most practical family vehicle, it does get the job done in a high performance way and most will agree is exactly what you are looking for in a powerful pony car.

If you are a performance orientated type person the small back seat in the Camaro and perceived poor side and rearward vision complaints will not upset you at all. Overall, the Corvette does not offer any better visibility than the Camaro.



SIZZLE



Camaro ZL1 1LE
The Ultimate Camaro



With the addition of the Extreme Performance Package the ZL1 1LE is no slouch and holds its own against much higher priced supercars including; Porsche, Audi, Ferrari, Lamborghini, McLaren, BMW and can outperform both pony car segment rivals; the Ford Mustang and the Chrysler Challenger.

Pricing of the Camaro ZL1 starts at \$70,850 CDN. if you can find one. The Extreme Performance Package adds \$8,500 and is worth every penny. The Performance Data Recorder which operates through the Infotainment System will add another \$1,500. All worth looking at when building your ultimate Camaro!

The Extreme Performance Package with DSSV coilovers are built and supplied by world renowned Canadian manufacturer Multimatic of Markham, Ontario. Their involvement in Formula 1 Racing and other globally recognized racing venues has led to the development of the Dynamic Suspension Spool Valve technology (DSSV). The Camaro ZL1 1LE ride would be considered stiff by most drivers but for the track enthusiasts these purpose built coilover shocks are what the car needs with front adjustable ride height and camber adjustments to tune the suspension for track days, time attack or auto cross.

The LT4 supercharged V8 engine sounds awesome whether you choose touring mode or all-

out track mode due to the dual mode exhaust that, when set to sport or track, unleashes that great v8 sound.

The newly available 10-speed automatic transmission is flawless in operation and gives you another choice along with the 6-speed manual gearbox.

With plenty of colours to choose from, you can flash your new ride up with lots of accessories. You can choose the combination best suited to you and dress it up in carbon fibre options as well.

The wheel and tire package accompanying the Extreme Performance Package gives you 19 x 11 front and 19 x 12 rear forged alloy wheels with summer only Goodyear Eagle F1 3R tires best suited for track day events.

Built in GM's Lansing, Michigan plant, the 2020 CAMARO production is set to continue into the fall before the 2021 production line starts. This is due to GM's strike this year and, of course, the world changing COVID-19 issues that have affected all of us.

Paint protection will be an important consideration for most new car buyers today. After all, who wants chips and scratches on their new ride? I trusted Al Norrie of Norrie Automotive Solutions to apply the paint protection film and ceramic

coating to my 2020 blue Camaro ZL1 1LE with less than 200 kms. It was extremely important to me that I get the paint protection applied before miling her up. Rest assured that the Paint Protection Film (ppf and ceramic coating) will keep your brand new car looking great for years to come. I strongly recommend that you seriously consider this extra process as the results are spectacular and makes keeping your vehicle clean much easier as well due to the nano-technology in today's paint protection coatings. "Ceramic Pro nano-technology allows the ceramic nano-particles to fill the smallest pores in the paint creating a glossy mirror effect resulting in superb colour depth, smooth and extremely slick finish. This ceramic process prevents environmental contaminants such as: bird droppings, bugs, dirt, tar or even brake dust from bonding to the surface. You will never regret ceramic paint protecting your vehicle, it's a great investment that will keep your ride looking new with less maintenance for years to come," declares Al Norrie of Norrie Auto Solutions.

So, yes, this is the converted speaking. Don't get me wrong, I loved all the Corvette Zo6 cars that I have owned and there have been a few of them over the years. Now, they have all found new forever homes with Corvette collectors and enthusiasts. I'm not missing my Corvette Zo6 at all, and I am definitely loving my sizzling new 2020 Camaro ZL1 1LE with the Extreme Performance Package. That's 650 ponies that will provide years of over-the-top fun and enjoyment both as my daily driver and on the track.

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Photo Credits: Beth McBlain



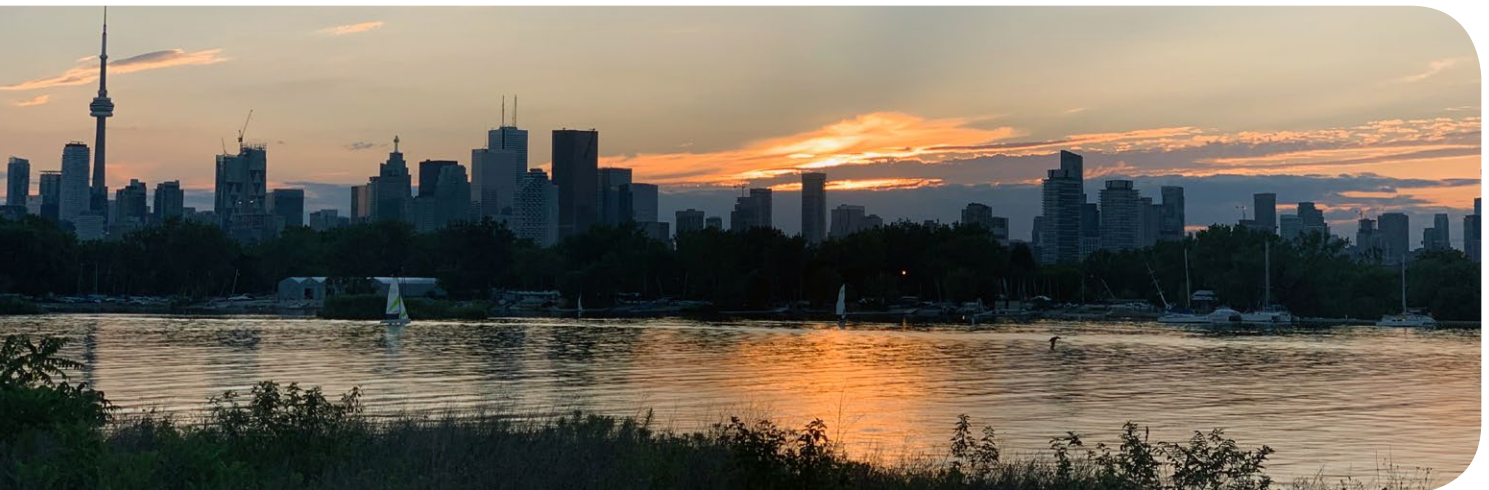
Urban Escape

*Re-imagining the Downtown
Sector as a Travel Destination*

By Vicki Di Stefano

At a time when flying off for a holiday isn't feasible and the soaring cost of cottages moves beyond reach, many look for other options to break away from the bustle of the city. Having taken that on as an endgame, a Toronto couple shares their first-hand experience with Spencer.

They began with a search of recreational properties and concluded that the current demand for cottages has yielded any waterfront property as disproportionately overvalued. When they added in the 2 to 4-hour commute it would take to get to a cottage located within a reasonable distance from the city, the couple who will remain anonymous, turned their search around.





Being welcomed into the camaraderie of a Boating Community is like happening on A Whole New World

The young professionals confess that they knew very little about boats before beginning to look at boating as a possibility. Motivated by previous visits to the Toronto International Boat Show, they zeroed in on power cruisers. After looking at a few, they decided that they were indeed the best fit for their lifestyle as they typically have all the comforts and conveniences of home. The serendipity of then finding a marina that they liked within only 10 mins from their home cinched the decision to buy in. It gives them the sense of being outside of the city while being right downtown. With a view of the CN tower to the west and the urban wilderness of the Leslie Street Spit a stone throw to the east, they're in an area that is home to over 300 species of animals.

The pair has since discovered that the boat culture and community are very friendly, generous with their time and advice, which is imperative for newbies like themselves. They're also finding that there's something extraordinary about a





purpose-built 700hp vessel that cuts through the water regardless of how stormy; while they can

Motivated by previous visits to the Toronto International Boat Show, the couple zeroed in on power cruisers

sleep, cook and shower aboard. In fact, the 42-foot Sea Ray they now own even has a built-in attachment for a blender in the galley (kitchen). Not bad for those impromptu daquiris and margaritas while out on the lake. How great does that sound?

In describing the process of making the purchase, they say that they were lucky to have found a broker, a surveyor and sellers who were all incredibly transparent and quickly earned their trust. In being made to feel like

part of a family throughout the transaction, it highlighted the importance of meeting and having a conversation with the seller to get a real understanding of how the boat has been maintained. It became apparent that the boat they ultimately purchased was truly loved and treated with great care. They found the boat survey (the equivalent of a home inspection) and sea trial (the equivalent of a test drive, but with a professional boat mechanic) both enlightening. The experienced



surveyor and seadog helped them to understand more about the inner workings of the boat. The sea trial gave them a real taste of the capability and functionality of the boat, from plumbing to HVAC to central vacuum and more. They came to view the vessel as a floating cottage right in the city.

Having learned that the buying process can be very near as complex and stressful as in buying a home, they suggest that others looking to purchase surround themselves with experienced professionals, and take their time to research every detail to avert any rash or imprudent action.

It's said that in the care of their vessels, boat owners develop an emotional connection with them. Who buys their boat is important to them - an adoption process aside from, and independent of the money- sort of like 'who will take care of our baby and will this person show our craft as much respect as we did?' By their account, the couple got the sense that who would be taking over the vessel mattered a great deal to the previous owner. After many years of babying and diligently maintaining her, he got quite emotional upon handing over the keys.



The new owners have maintained contact with him and are keeping him abreast of how his 'old girl' is doing. In his parting words, 'it got a good home', he seemed to be comforted.

They came to view the vessel as a floating cottage right in the city

For the novices, the boating community has become an instant fit! "First day in, our neighbour across the dock introduced us to some of our other neighbours. It really is an open and welcoming community." They've found that, essentially, when people are on their boats, they are in vacation mode, so you are always greeted with a smile. There is always a helping hand, especially when trying to dock on a windy day. You have the freedom of taking part in the communal party-like atmosphere, or choose to have a quiet night in, watching a movie in your cozy cabin bed below deck.



As a couple they were ready for a new challenge, and boating is a team sport. Learning to operate and maneuver a 16000-pound vessel certainly qualified. They wanted something that was for fun in the outdoors, yet still quite intellectually stimulating. In the search across various marinas to determine where they would become members, one of the draws at the marina they ultimately chose was that WIFI was included. They envisioned this as a huge benefit allowing them to take zoom meetings from the boat and seamlessly finish out workdays while onboard. Ironically, what has materialized is quite the opposite; not only is the WIFI so weak as to make web conferences impossible, but the cellular signal is spotty at best. A blessing in disguise, forcing them to shutdown and recharge.

For those who, like them, have not grown up around boats, they recommend that you spend a little time learning with an instructor. Captaining a boat is not as stringent as getting an automo-

tive driver's license. In their opinion, it is actually too easy. With no practical training mandated, if you are going to lay down a significant amount of money to purchase a cruiser, it's wise to protect that investment by getting some hands on, practical driving (and docking) training. All to help an end game which is to have fun while keeping safe.

And on the theme of safety, there is a lot that can go wrong on the water, so spending additional time learning all the navigational and warning flags and signs is imperative. The limited amount of training one receives from the online licencing course is sparse. Being at the mercy of the weather, you need to be prepared for the inevitable: you will be faced with inclement weather conditions at some point. All in all, it is simply easier to enjoy stress free days out on the water when you have the confidence that comes from a solid foundation in boating skills.





In looking back on a journey begun in mid summer, they describe their first week as an adventure, even though they hadn't left the docks! Some family members came on board to share a cocktail and offer their congratulations. They met countless new people at the marina, and spent hours reading through the myriad user manuals and operating instructions. What they look forward to is completing the practical lessons so they can venture out and explore all that Lake Ontario has to offer. Whether it be the Toronto Islands, rafting up with some of their fellow marina mates or travelling across the lake to other destinations (like the Thousand Islands, Prince Edward County and Niagara on the Lake), and beyond, there is a whole new world that has opened up to them and they anticipate the many journeys up ahead.

Boat ownership helps the duo to disconnect from the city and its inherent stresses. They have committed to a boating mantra of "take your time!" A look of great adventure in their eyes as they say this, I'm wondering what they'll name their new adoption!

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Photo Credits: Jonathan Levy



off the beaten path...

Once the richest place in the WORLD: Comstock tales...



By Joseph Edward Schur

When I was a kid, a million years ago, my treasures included some Mickey Mantle baseball cards, rare marbles, and my killer ride: a bike with high bars and banana seat... but my most valuable possession was my six-shooter cap gun with a real leather holster. Yup, I was a cowboy through and through, influenced by movie stars like John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, Alan Ladd, Henry Fonda and so many more.

Fast forward a couple of decades and I somehow ended up on a ranch near Johnson City, Texas, working as a cowboy. Seriously, a real cowboy. A dream fulfilled! Minus the cap gun.

No wonder that Virginia City, Nevada holds a special place in my heart, where time stands still,





allowing my imagination to run rampant again. An extraordinary travel destination that you will appreciate forever!

What fascinates me the most about this vibrant western town are the colourful characters of the past, and for the sake of inclusivity, the present.

There are many places in this world to visit as a tourist, but very few offer the historical significance of Virginia City, Nevada. In fact, this small town changed the world as we know it.

It all began just before the Civil War, with prospectors searching for gold in the Sierra Nevada. They hit pay-dirt, with one of the most important gold and silver strikes in history, known as the Comstock Lode.

Here's a bit of interesting trivia for our Canadian readers: Henry Tompkins Paige Comstock, known familiarly as "Old Pancake" was born in Trenton, Ontario, Canada in 1820. He drifted out west as a fur trapper, and settled in the Great Basin's Gold Canyon, turning to mining. In 1859,



Henry Comstock, 1859. Born in Trenton, Ontario, Canada

Henry Comstock and others discovered a rich silver vein and staked a claim at Gold Hill, giving his name to the ore deposit.

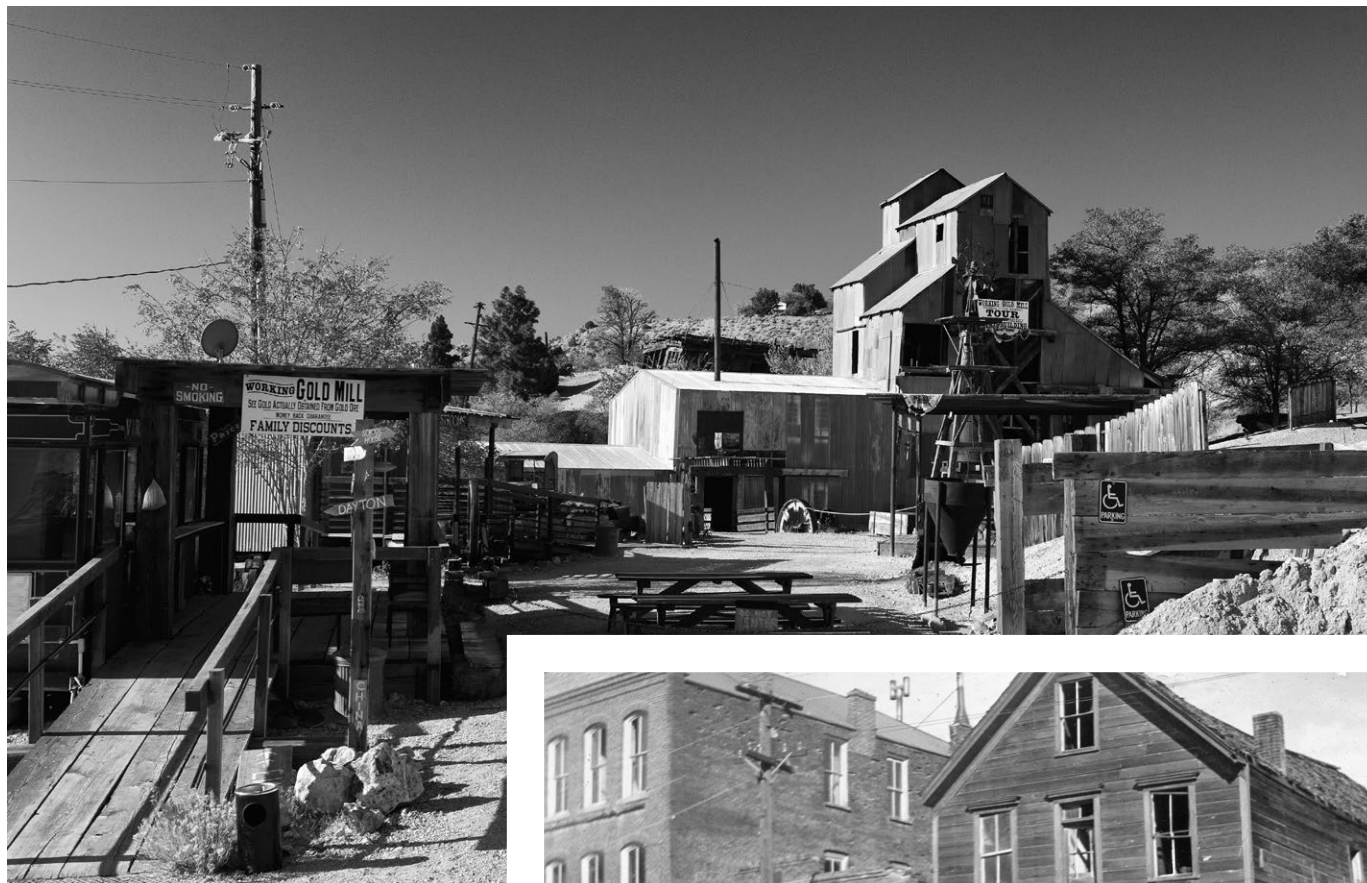
Virginia City became a boomtown overnight. At its peak, with a thriving metropolis of 25,000 people, the community of miners were eventually known as Comstockers.

Sadly, the story doesn't end well for 'Old Pancake' Comstock, though. Before realizing his fortune, he sold out and moved to Montana. In 1870, he shot and killed himself. But his name, at least, will live on forever.

Now here's where it gets exciting!

For a time, Virginia City was the richest place in the world. And the world is a better place for it. The wealth from mining silver and gold here helped finance the U.S. government during the Civil War, and may have helped save the Union. Imagine that?!





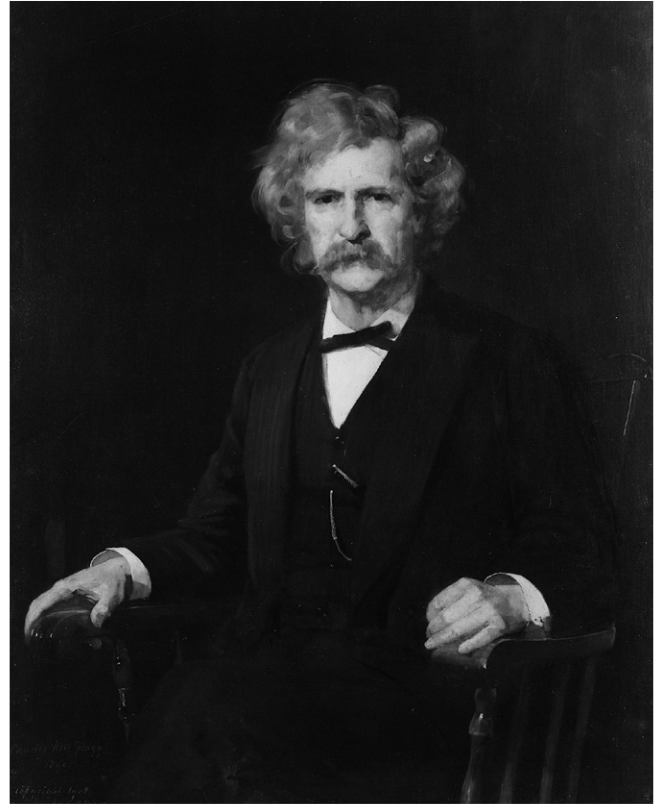
Yes... Money. Power. Political influence. Virginia City was undeniably the most important social hub of the American West. With over 110 saloons in town, you know it was one heck of a social place!

And now? If you enjoy stepping back in time as much as I do, you'll appreciate everything that this remarkable place has to offer. No wonder that this vibrant, historical town attracts more than 2 million visitors a year.

So, let's start this journey by taking a stroll along the old wooden boardwalk, just like they did, back in the day. Take a look up at the facades of this western town; they are real, not Hollywood.



How about dropping by the Mark Twain Museum at the Territorial Express? One of 17 Comstock newspapers. Sam Clemens, arriving here in 1862 with his brother Orion, was hired on as a young reporter. It's here that he began using the penname Mark Twain. You'll see the old printing press and the desk where Clemens once wrote. You'll even find a wooden privy (toilet) with a sign "Mark Twain sat here." Okay, confession time, I hurdled the barrier and sat on Twain's toilet. I had



to (not for that reason!) and I sat there, contemplating... because I wanted to imagine what it was like... and isn't that what this journey is all about? Experiencing, albeit vicariously, through what it must have been like back then? Nope. I just wanted to say that I sat on Mark Twain's toilet! How profoundly improper. And no, I didn't take selfies.





The infamous "Bucket of Blood" saloon in Virginia City, Nevada

From there I was in the mood for a beverage, old style, and I don't mean sassafras, so I hit the "Bucket of Blood" saloon. Expecting more of an "Amusement Park" kind of place, I was thrilled to see that it was old. Very old. Dating back to 1876. Authentic. Western. I was in my element! There were a lot of cowboys at the bar, with holstered six-shooters. I took a wild guess and figured they

were actors, part of the team who perform daily, reenacting the famous bar brawls and gunfights.

I suppose that I was taken up in the moment, and with my imagination returning to my six-year-old self, I could have missed what was staring at me out of the corner of my eye. A ghost. When I turned to face this spirit, it vanished.



The sprawling Silver Terrace Cemeteries

According to paranormal investigators, Virginia City is one of the most haunted places in the United States. With more than a dozen 'haunted' landmarks, it's a huge draw for tourists. There are guided tours for the adventurous. Consider "Bats in the Belfry" as they offer walking ghost tours of the Comstock year round.

One such spooky landmark is the Silver Terrace Cemeteries on the edge of town. With the courage of a couple of (not sassafras) beverages I visited this sprawling gravesite, just before dusk. The burial plots date back to the 1860s. Many of the people buried there were the victims of gun fights, mining fires, disease and terrible accidents. It wasn't unusual to have one funeral a day. Walking around this place I really got a sense of the history, the triumphs and tragedies of the people who built this city.

On my second day in Virginia City I was determined to find out more about this Comstock mining town. After dropping by the Visitor Center, I had a whole day planned.





First, I took a ride back in history aboard the Virginia & Truckee Railroad's steam locomotive. It's a 35-minute scenic trip, following its original 150-year-old right of way, passing gold and silver mines, finally reaching Gold Hill.

Upon my return to Virginia City, I headed over to the famous Chollar Mine, established in 1859 by prospector Billy Chollar. This is a must-visit if you want to experience first hand what life was like for the Comstockers.

Our guide led us down a dark, narrow mining tunnel about 400 feet, all the while describing the conditions the miners had to work in. The heat, sometimes exceeding 130 degrees must have been unbearable. And the superstitions! Then the lights went out. Our guide lit a candle to show how the miners had to work in the darkness.

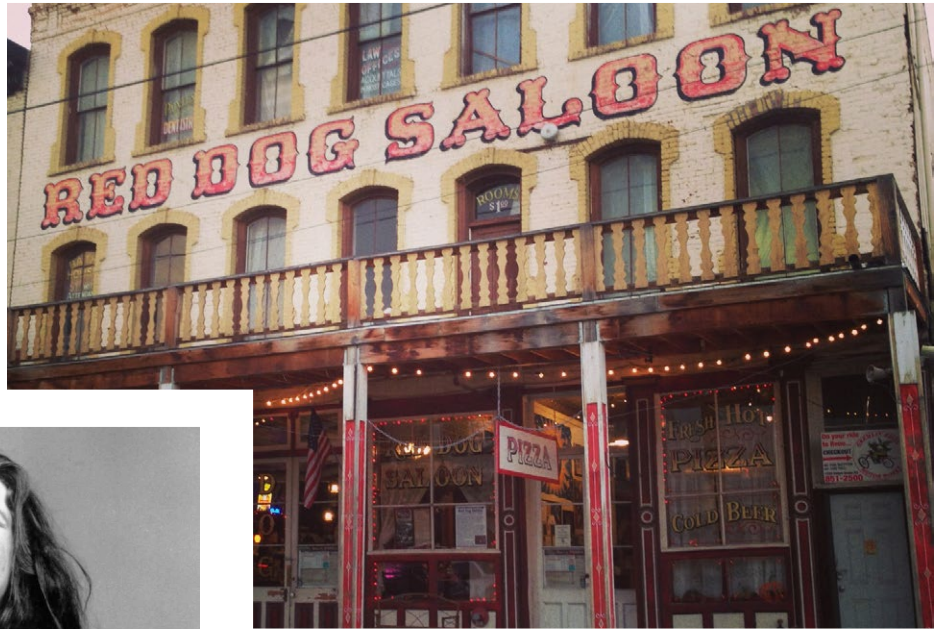
Briefly terrified, I was ready to be above ground again.

This particular experience, beyond all others, really made me appreciate how lucky I am to be living now; I take nothing for granted. These men worked hard, and lived hard.



LIFESTYLE

Back in town and with daylight stinging my eyes, I headed over to the Red Dog Saloon. I was intrigued to discover that back in 1966 the legendary Janis Joplin took the stage there with the house band Big Brother Holding Co.; later becoming her backup band. Rock history, of a different kind.



road magnate Darius Ogden Mills. Of course, like many of the town's saloons, it has a seriously haunted past. Many say that it's the most haunted location in the West. I didn't stay to find out.

Still searching for more history, and maybe another beer, I dropped by the Washoe Club, or better known as The Millionaires Washoe Club of 1862, the oldest saloon in Virginia City. It was the place to be and be seen if you were rich. Gunslingers, performers, writers, businessmen and the most skilled miners gathered on the exclusive second floor.

The club hosted such luminaries as Ulysses S. Grant, actor Edwin Booth, and rail-





Anxious for a bit of culture, I decided to visit Piper's Opera House. The current structure was built by German immigrant John Piper in 1885, replacing his earlier opera house which was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1875. Stage performances included Lilly Langtree, Al Jolson and John Philip Sousa, Buffalo Bill, General Grant and Mark Twain. In the 1940s, my boyhood hero, Errol Flynn auctioned off historic Piper memorabilia from the Piper stage during a live NBC broadcast that coincided with the premiere of Flynn's movie Virginia City. Slightly before my time. Storey County purchased Piper's Opera House in 2017 from the Storey County School District. It is managed by the Virginia City Tourism Commission.



Ready for some grub, I considered my options. There are so many great restaurants in town with excellent menus but I had a hankerin' for a burger.

On the advice of a local I decided on the Delta Saloon. I ordered their Chuck Wagon Burger. While enjoying my dinner I was reminded of the Delta's storied past, involving a Faro Bank Table brought to Virginia City in the 1860s. According to legend, three gamblers have shot themselves dead after heavy losses over this table, earning the name "The Suicide Table." No matter where you go in this town you'll find relics of the past!

As another day passes, and the veil of darkness descends upon me, I considered...

I did not want to leave. I wanted to stay in Virginia City forever. I feel connected to the "triumphs and tragedies" of the past.

Then the buzzing of my cell phone reminds me that I am here, in the present. And that I am always welcome to visit the past. And you can bet that I will! There is so much more to see and do in Virginia City.



Whether you visit this vibrant town alone or with your family/friends, it's a wonderful opportunity to combine fun with education. I suggest that you plan your itinerary by dropping by the Visitor Center.



The following list gives you an idea of what you can do in and around Virginia City:

- Take a stagecoach ride
- Catch the Virginia City Outlaws Comedy Show
- Watch old-fashioned bar fights by actors in the saloons, reenacting the behaviour of ruthless Comstock miners and cowboys
- Try your hand at panning for gold at the Virginia City Mining Company
- Take an old-time photograph
- Check out all of the artifacts on display at The Way It Was Museum
- See an original classroom from the 1870s at the Fourth Ward School. While there, ring the old school bell!

- Take a fun horse-drawn carriage ride through the back streets of town
- Visit the Mark Twain Museum
- Tour the Mackay Mansion Museum. Built in 1860 by George Hearst, father of the newspaper baron William Randolph Hearst. The mansion was later owned by John Mackay, a mine owner and the richest man in the world at that time. He went on to become the founder of AT&T
- Take a trip on a real steam locomotive, aboard the V&T Railroad ride.

Virginia City also offers year-round events and many parades:

- Rocky Mountain Oyster Fry
- Virginia City Grand Prix
- Chili on the Comstock
- 4th of July celebrations
- Virginia City Rodeo
- International Camel and Ostrich Races
- World Championship Outhouse Races
- Christmas on the Comstock

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Photo Credits: Amy Demuth, Virginia City Tourism Commission



Family fun gold panning at the Virginia City Mining Company

Spencer resource directory

In this issue...

The Abbott
99 Spencer Avenue, Toronto, Ontario
416-876-3855

Limehouse Conservation Area
12169 5th Line, Limehouse, Ontario
905-670-1615

Pilots n Paws
4651 Howe Rd. Landrum, S.C. 29356
www.pilotsnpaws.org

Bees Please!
905-737-4945
www.circlinghawkfarm.ca

Antonio Chavez Fashion Designer
www.chavezfashion.com

International Fashion Encounter
16 Soho St., Toronto, Ontario
647-993-8320
www.internationalfashionencounter.com

Jeizer Design
Ukraine, 02059, Street Olena Pchilk
380936652505

Demaine Tyrone Clothing
www.demainetyrone.com

Fluevog Shoes
www.fluevog.com

Kate Campbell's Boundless Movie
www.katecampbellfilmmaker.com

Road to the Lemon Grove Movie
www.roadtothelemongrove.com

Liz Taylor, Actor
www.showbizliztaylor.com

Comedy Records
www.comedyrecords.ca

Grenville Pinto, Violinist
www.gpinto.com

Rêve De Moi Art Exhibit
647-505-0420
www.revedemoi.art

Peter Triantos, Contemporary Artist
1042 Bathurst St., Toronto, Ontario
416-539-0275
www.petertriantos.com

Filomena Pisano, Contemporary Artist
416-841-2639
www.pisano.art

Karim Rashid, Designer
www.karimrashid.com

Bethan Laura Wood, Designer
+44(0) 7754 064070
www.bethanlaurawood.com

Sarah Barber, Interior Designer
Barber Design Shop
162 Cumberland St., Suite 300,
Toronto, Ontario
416-928-4874
www.barberdesignshop.com

Nordik Spa-Nature | Whitby
300 Taunton Road West, Whitby, Ontario
1-866-484-1112
www.whitby.lenordik.com

Blair Phillips | Davin De Kergommeaux
The Definitive Guide to Canadian Distilleries
www.canadiandistilleries.com

Scuderia Ferrari Club Toronto
551 Jevlan Drive, Woodbridge, Ontario
416-677-3842
www.scuderiaferraritoronto.club

Virginia City, Nevada Tourist Commission
775-847-7500
www.visitvirginiacitynv.com



Visit the *Spencer Magazine* Website for more
detailed contact information.

PHOTO CREDITS in this issue of *Spencer Magazine*: Sarah Barber Design Studio, Circling Hawk Farms, Creadive, Amy Demuth, Aprille Deus, Samantha Falco, Neil Garcia, Dale Hildebrand, Kristina Koumaneeva, Jonathan Levy, Arun Nevader, Peter Triantos Gallery, Beth McBlain, Shawn Mcpherson, Pilots N Paws, Karim Rashid, Rêve De Moi, Koko Tchorbadjian, Virginia City Tourism Commission, WikiMedia, Bethan L. Wood

BUZZ SPENCER

Bonjour, mes amis félins!

*A feline with a great passion for
everything*

Best is saved for last. Winter is my time to sleep by the warm fire... eat, stretch and eat, and more sleep. But I'm not here to tell you what I like, even though I like food and hanging with my friends like BeBe and Pudge. BeBe's like me, but with a fuzzy girly face and without thick beautiful hair, and Pudge, well... he's a large round snorty pink thing with no hair.

BeBe and Pudge like to eat, especially my crabby cakes or as the French call "gâteau au crabe" way too much and never have any left over to share with any hooman.

So hoomans, I'm leaving my directions here for making my extra special love of my treaty life "Crabby Cakes."

If you see



and

don't give them any.



See you in the Spring issue.



Gâteau au crabe

Purrfect to share with your friends.

Pawsitively Purrfect!

Ingredients

- ◆ 1 pound of lumpy *crabe* meat
- ◆ 1 teaspoon of mustard
- ◆ 1 teaspoon of Worcestershire sauce
- ◆ Spritz of Apple Cider Vinegar
- ◆ 1 large egg
- ◆ 1/3 cup of mayonnaise
- ◆ 1 cup of unsalted crackers - crumbed
- ◆ A pinch of salt

Directions

Preheat broiler.

Pick through *crabe* meat.
NO cronchy shells!

In a biggie bowl, mix mustard, egg, Worcestershire sauce, apple cider vinegar, mayonnaise.

Mix good. Add *crabe* meat and crackers.

Make into *crabe* cakes.

Broil 10 to 15 minutes until lightly brown.

Maybe share with hoomans.



Exquisite taste! Above: Tiffany & Co. Bamboo Pattern Crystal Bowl, Birks Sterling Dinner Bell, Spode Copeland China Bowl and Saucer, Birks Sterling Silver Candle Holders, Silver Napkin Ring, Silver Platter

*Coming soon
in the next issue...*

The upcoming Spring 2021 issue of Spencer Magazine promises to be extraordinary! We have so many awesome stories that we'll be sharing with you, our valued Spencer readers.

Spring 2021 issue:

Canada's Top Fashion Designers, showcasing up and coming talent, including kid's fashion

The Chef's Table with Chef Jagger Gordon

*Five Canadian Spirits for Spring-inspired Cocktails
with Blair Phillips and Davin De Kergommeaux*

Seven Days in Dublin - A Photographic Journey with Henry Gordillo

Cruising the Thousand Islands and Boldt Castle

The Run to Monaco, the World's Greatest Driving Adventure

Summer 2021 issue:

*Spotlight on some of Canada's best shopping destinations, including Yorkville Village,
The Distillery District and Liberty Village*

*Excursions: Following the "Group of Seven" through Ontario's Algonquin Park
And so much more!*



1



2



3

1 DISTILLERY DISTRICT

2 LIBERTY VILLAGE

3 YORKVILLE VILLAGE

Spencer will be showcasing 3 of Toronto's top shopping destinations in the upcoming Summer 2021 issue



*The Run to Monaco
The World's Greatest Driving Adventure*



Boldt Castle, Thousand Islands, New York





We are Spencer, we are the World