# JESSEL

BRIAN JESSEL MAGAZINE

2024 | SPRING/SUMMER EDITION




Chef Rob Feenie - A New Phase of Le Crocodile

Jacob Tremblay - The Local Young Star Shines Brightly

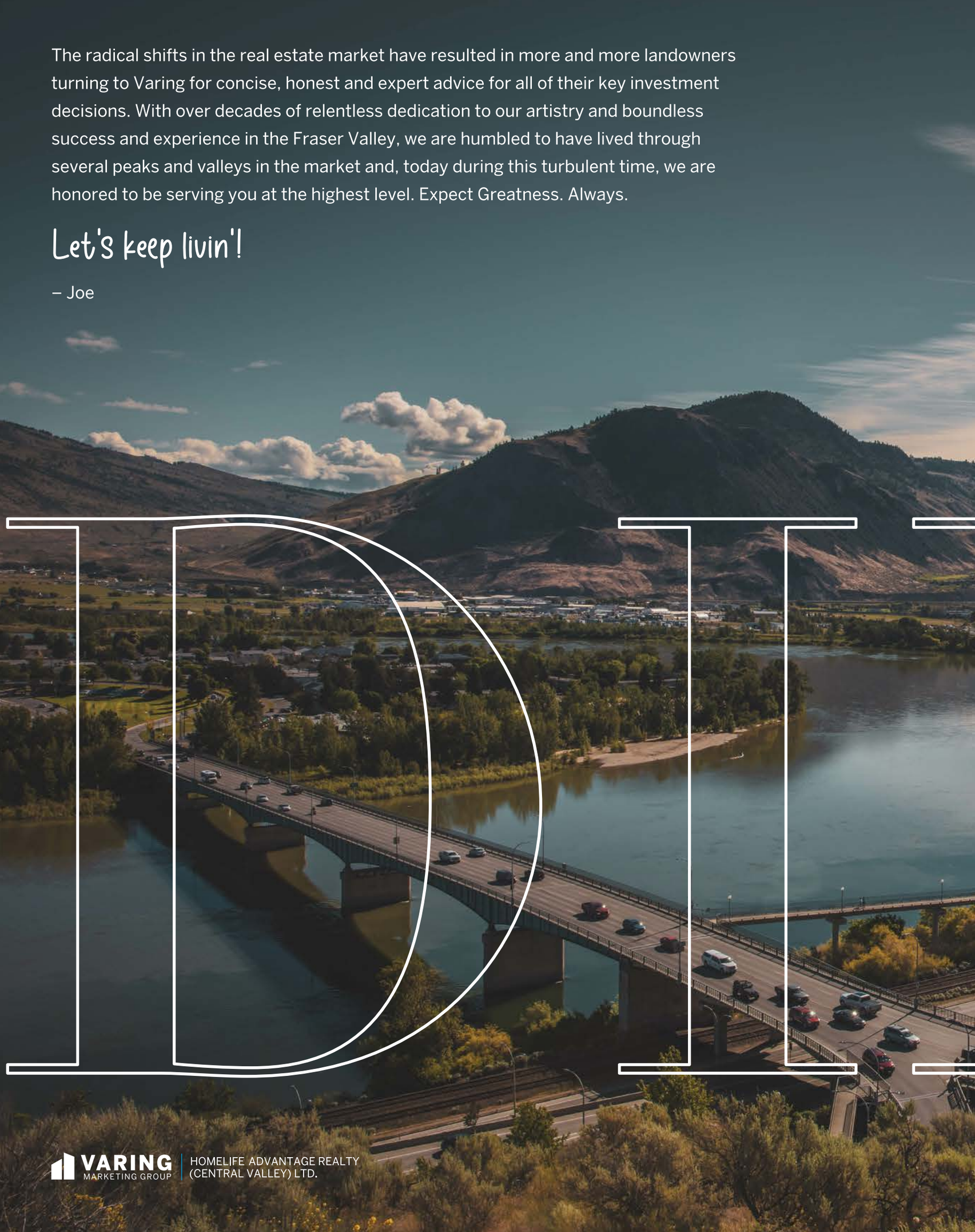
Daniel Frankel - Expanding the Tap & Barrel Empire

Garry Sangha - From Drywaller to Major Developer

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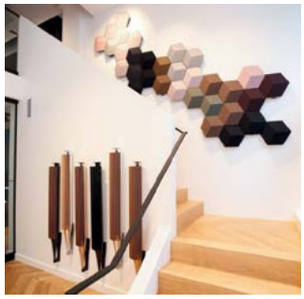
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## The Bang & Olufsen Vancouver Flagship Store

The Bang & Olufsen journey extends far beyond just their exceptional speakers. With a flagship store nestled in the heart of Vancouver, customers can immerse themselves in an unparalleled auditory experience while shopping, free from the burden of cable logistics. Our store goes above and beyond by providing on-site consultations, wherein an in-house technician personally visits your home to meticulously plan the perfect cable layout, ensuring seamless integration into your space.

Located at 410 Howe Street in the heart of Downtown Vancouver, the Bang & Olufsen Flagship store displays a wide variety of B&O products, ranging from the $349 Beosound Explore, a portable, water-proof speaker perfect for everyday use, to the $210,000 Beolab 90, a pair of elegant speakers that showcases the brand's engineering expertise. The Beolab 90 stereo system outputs 16,400 watts of pure sound.

## A Luxurious Shopping Experience

The products in the store are divided into 3 categories, each designed to address different problems a music lover may have. "On-the-go" products are designed for portability, where ease of transport and weight are given priority during the design process. "Flexible" products can be placed anywhere in your house, and they blend in seamlessly with your interior décor. "Stage" products are monoliths that create powerful and high quality sound that fills your living space.

Bang & Olufsen products are designed not only to sound fantastic but also to look like pieces of art in your home or office. This could not be more true for the Beolab 90, B&O's state-of-the-art floor standing loudspeaker. Taking inspiration from a four point sail, the Beolab 90 has a visual gravitas your guests won't be able to ignore, even when it's not blasting all 36 drivers. Another customer favorite is the Beosound A9. Its minimal, round design seamlessly integrates with any interior décor, regardless of placement, delivering beautiful music that complements your home perfectly.







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# *Green Innovation: Paving the Way for Eco-Friendly Surfaces*

In the bustling realm of home décor, where style meets substance, one name stands out like a dazzling gemstone: Vicostone Quartz. But what sets this brand apart isn't just its breathtaking beauty—it's also their commitment to the environment.

First things first, let's talk aesthetics. Vicostone isn't just about slapping a countertop onto your kitchen island and calling it a day. Oh no, it's about transforming your space into a masterpiece. Picture this: sleek surfaces that catch the light just so, turning your kitchen into a chef's paradise or your bathroom into a spa-like oasis. Whether you're a minimalist maven or a lover of lavishness, there's a Vicostone Quartz design with your name on it.

Now, here's where things get really interesting. Vicostone Quartz isn't content with just being a pretty face—it's got a heart of green gold. You see, Vicostone doesn't just declare its love for the environment; it backs it up with action. How, you ask? Well, for starters, they've got certifications coming out of their ears. Okay, maybe not literally, but you get the idea.

Ever heard of NSF? No, it's not some secret government agency (or is it?). It's the National Sanitation Foundation, and Vicostone Quartz is proud to flaunt their NSF certification like a badge of honor. What does that mean for you, dear reader? It means that when you're chopping veggies on your Vicostone countertop, you can rest easy knowing that it meets the highest standards for safety and cleanliness. No nasty chemicals leaching into your food here!

But wait, there's more. Ever heard of Greenguard Gold? It's like the Oscars of eco-friendliness, and Vicostone Quartz is strutting down the green carpet like a star. This prestigious certification means that Vicostone products are low-emitting and won't pollute your indoor air quality with harmful substances. So go ahead, take a deep breath of fresh air—it's cleaner than ever with Vicostone around.

In conclusion, Vicostone isn't just a brand—it's a lifestyle. It's about turning your home into a sanctuary of style without sacrificing your values. With stunning designs that make your heart skip a beat, and environmental certifications that make Mother Nature proud, Vicostone is the perfect choice for the conscientious homeowner who refuses to compromise on quality or ethics.

So go ahead, embrace the beauty of Vicostone Quartz and let your home shine bright like the eco-friendly gem it is. Because when you choose Vicostone, you're not just making a statement—you're making a difference. ■



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**Panda White,** BQ8928

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The Art of Quartz

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# JESSEL

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# MESSAGE FROM BRIAN



**Brian Jessel, President, Jessel Magazine**
**Photography: Human Biography**

Welcome to the Spring/Summer edition of *Jessel Magazine*!

As we usher in a new season, I am reminded of the incredible journey we've had over the past 20 years since we moved to our fabulous current location. It has been our privilege to cover an array of remarkable stories that celebrate the vibrant luxury lifestyle, robust business networks, and the latest happenings in Vancouver. Our dedication to bringing you the very best content has never wavered, and we are thrilled to continue this journey with our loyal readers and new audiences alike.

This magazine marks an exciting new chapter, as we are proud to announce that we are now publishing in both English and Chinese. This expansion allows us to share our carefully curated content with an even wider audience, bridging cultural divides and fostering a greater sense of community among our readers.

At *Jessel Magazine*, we strive to be the ultimate source for businesses looking to reach a wide audience in the upper market. Our publication is not just a magazine, it is a platform for connection, a showcase of luxury, and a beacon of the finest in lifestyle and business. Whether you are interested in the latest trends, seeking to build valuable business networks, or simply staying informed about Vancouver's dynamic scene, *Jessel Magazine* is your go-to resource.

Our team works tirelessly to bring you insightful articles, stunning visuals, and in-depth features, which capture the essence of luxury living and business excellence. From exclusive interviews with industry leaders to coverage of high-profile events, we aim to provide content that is both inspiring and informative.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in *Jessel Magazine*. Your readership is what drives us to excel and innovate. As we look to the future, we remain committed to delivering the highest quality content and serving as your trusted source for all things luxury and business.

Here's to many more years of exceptional stories, invaluable connections, and celebrating the best that life has to offer.

Sincerely,
Brian Jessel, President, *Jessel Magazine*



# OUR CITY TONIGHT

Story: Jim Gordon
and Leeta Liepins



## THE SUMMER COCKTAIL – EXTRAVAGANZA

### Warmer weather, patios and summer cocktails

We reached out to one of our "cocktail experts," Martin Kovalcik, beverage director for Glowbal Restaurants. Our timing was perfect, with Kovalcik ready and waiting to offer up his latest creation, the Extravaganza. "If you are looking for sophistication, style and innovation in the world of mixology," Kovalcik says!

### Sophistication, style and innovation in the world of mixology

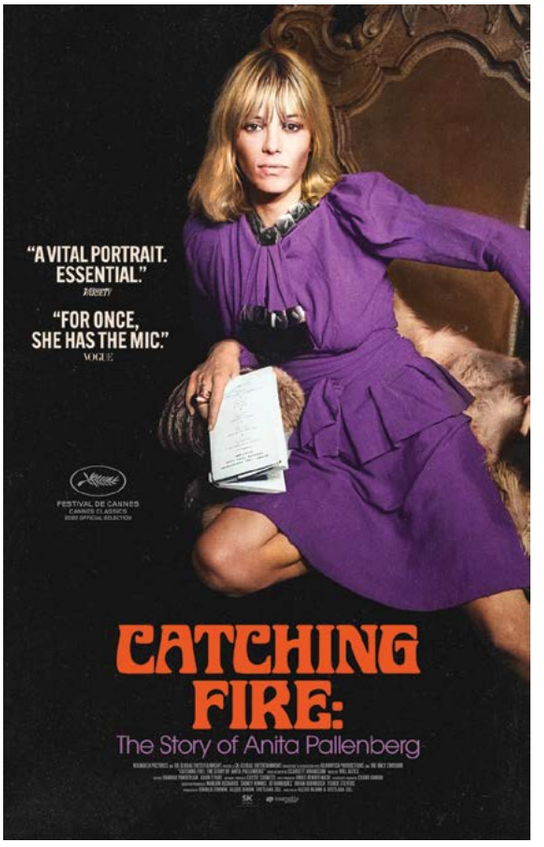
Combining premium ingredients and the new Twin Probe 2 by Jetchill, which enables bartenders to use all the benefits of dry ice in a consumer-safe, sophisticated way. Comprised of 1 oz herradura reposado, 1 oz hpnotiq, 0.75 St-Germain, 0.75 fresh lime juice, and 0.5 blue spirulina syrup. Shaken with ice and using the Jetchill to serve. Glowbal Restaurant, 590 West Georgia Street, www.glowbalgroup.com

---

## THE SUMMER FILM – "CATCHING FIRE: THE STORY OF ANITA PALLENBERG"

During the 60's and 70's German-Italian actress, muse, model, artist Anita Pallenberg was the "It Girl" of her time -- and a style icon. Kate Moss looked to Pallenberg because she had elegance and flair. The original "bohemian rock chick," Pallenberg was also the mother of Marlon, Angela and Tara, from her relationship with their father, Rolling Stones legend, Keith Richards.

The fascinating documentary "Catching Fire: The Story of Anita Pallenberg," which directors Alexis Bloom and Svetlana Zill hope will remind viewers of this independent, free-thinking yet troubled, woman. At the heart of the film is, "A woman who was at many points in her life a newspaper headline, a Rock 'n' Roll Goddess, a Voodoo Priestess and an Evil Seductress, once accused of trying to break up the Rolling Stones." There is no denying she was the focal point of the artistic and cool at the time. Pallenberg's words come courtesy of her unpublished life story voiced by Scarlett Johansson. There are fascinating glimpses behind the glitzy rock 'n' roll world, thanks to contributions from home movies, her children, friends and thoughts from her former partner, Keith Richards, who says in the film that one of the things he loved about her was a "naturalness." "We stuck together through a lot," Richards says, adding, "But she made a man out of me."









# THE HOT SPOT – JUNGLE ROOM

On an early May night, we stopped by the Jungle Room in Vancouver's West End. Touted as Vancouver's first jungle-inspired cocktail lounge, the space has been steadily gaining dedicated regulars seduced by the combination of elevated Indonesian and Japanese street food.

**Exquisite cocktails:** A "Mexican Sunset," carefully crafted with Patron Reposado tequila and a Singaporean Tiger Beer, before moving on to the appetizers – all recommended by our wonderfully accommodating server. The Beef Tartar (with fish sauce dressing, egg yolk, chilli crunch, toasted cashew and Tempe, cilantro, and green onion), and Hokkaido Scallop (with spiced coconut broth, cilantro and lime oil. Pickled mustard and chilli, and toasted coconut) were excellent and perfectly portioned for two.

**For our main course,** we continued sharing plates, opting for the slow cooked Pork Belly Babi Guling and the roasted, free range, Indonesian Chicken Taliwang (with cashew curry, steamed coconut rice, green papaya salad, and grilled lime), well prepared and just right for two people. Jungle Room offers house-churned ice cream, which we devoured as well as their vegan sorbet. Strictly for research purpose,s we indulged in one last dessert choice: Yuzu Meringue Tart (with calpico gel, sour lime gel, house-made shiso furikake, and torched matcha meringue).

**Head Chef Krisyanto and Pastry Chef Mariko Foster** deserve top marks for their culinary creations. A culinary experience both sublime and affordable surrounded by the perfect ambience. Jungle Room is certainly deserving of the recent Golden Plate award for "Best West End Restaurant." ■



# Bringing Cool Taco Vibes to Kits Beach

**Story: Joe Leary**
**Photography: Jacob Couture**
**Location: Taco Loco**

## Sanjay Pandey has impressive restaurant credentials.

They include a degree in Hospitality Management and hands–on experience working in such global culinary hotspots as Miami, Los Angeles and London, England.

Locating to Vancouver in 2002, he would eventually set his sights and restaurant expertise in the Kitsilano Beach area.

In 2013, Sanjay opened the vibrant resto-bar known as Charqui Grill on Cornwall Avenue to great success.

"Vancouver is a beautiful city and I really wanted something in this neighbourhood," he says, of his prime spot – just two blocks west of Kits Beach.

The plan all along was to, at some point, pair it with a neighbouring location. When that opportunity arose last year – within the same block and actually next door to Charqui Grill – an exciting new concept was born, 'Taco Loco.'

As proprietor and owner/operator, Sanjay Pandey had a bolder vision for his newest innovation.

> **"I wanted something with a Latin American vibe and I wanted to create a really cool, sexy neighbourhood bar."**

Teaming up with longtime Vancouver chef Quang Dang, the pair has accomplished exactly that.

Quang's vast restaurant kitchen resume includes pivotal roles at such acclaimed Vancouver dining hot spots as 'Diva at the Met' and the iconic 'C' Restaurant, among others.

"This city has really embraced taco culture and we're kicking things up a few notches here," says Quang. "Tacos have become a fixture on the food scene over the last few years, but there aren't too many places in Vancouver to find really good and creative tacos. That's where we come in."

Quang Dang's role as food consultant pairs his culinary expertise perfectly with Pandey's overall Latin American vision.

The menu presents a number of sharable starters, with a focus on the bar area where Quang's artistry adds a creative flair to the taco fare.

Taco Loco offers tantalizing items including Fraser Valley Pork Carnitas, Smoked Beef Brisket Barbacoa, Organic Chicken Tinga and Wild Pink Salmon Al Pastor – all freshly made at the bar.

Complimenting these bites is a specially-curated selection of cocktails, which showcase the restaurant's ample selection of tequila and mezcal.

The featured menu includes a Classic Margarita and Paloma, along with a regional selection of beer, such as Negra Modello, Pacifico and Dos Equis.

Taco Loco opened its door to Kits Beach area residents in March, and locals and visiting fans alike are showing love to this chic cantina for adding authentic, upscale tacos and cocktails to Vancouver's ever-increasing dining options.

With a cool vibe encased within a hip and vibrant space on Cornwall Avenue, Taco Loco is clearly poised to become a Kits Beach mainstay.

Taco Loco – 1965 Cornwall Avenue, Vancouver
www.tacolocokits.com ■








# *ELIO VOLPE,*
## THE LATEST ADDITION TO THE BANDA VOLPI FAMILY

**Story: Joe Leary**
**Photography: Aaron Aubrey**
**Location: Elio Volpe**



Located on West 17th near Cambie Street, Elio Volpe is the latest jewel in a growing culinary crown.

Owner Paul Grunberg opened his newest addition to the Banda Volpi collection, with business partner Craig Stanghetta, on March 14 of this year. The project was a few years in the making.

"We originally had a handshake deal on this location, the day before the original Covid lockdown in 2020," he says, of the sensational new spot, formerly occupied by an automotive shop. "We had met with the landlords and were negotiating the lease, and the lockdown occurred the next day, so we backed off, respectfully."

Grunberg and Stanghetta couldn't commit to the space because of the obvious uncertainty, which the landlords understood and proceeded to move on to a new tenant.

"That deal fell through and they circled back to us."

Elio Volpe is the most-anticipated new eatery on the Vancouver dining scene and joins Savio Volpe, Pepino's, and La Tana, within the Banda Volpi family.

"Serendipitously, this location was a mechanic shop, which is similar to our original [Cunning Fox] location, Savio Volpe, which was a tire shop," says Grunberg. "We like unique properties, that's why we got so excited about the auto shops. We strive to be neighbourhood restaurants so we look for locations off the beaten path."

Grunberg adds, they wanted to add to the Fox family, but were also very careful in the process to ensure the location and concept were met.

"With thought and timing, our teams work incredibly hard to assure that hospitality is at the forefront of everything we do."

It's clearly evident within all Banda Volpi operations, that the guest is the star and the food and service perfectly compliment the overall experience.



> ***"We strive to be neighbourhood restaurants so we look for locations off the beaten path."***

"One of our cultural pillars is, we are 'guest obsessed.' Hospitality is in our DNA," he says. "We show up for each other and keep learning and growing. That really is what our core values and philosophy are. It's no doubt that service is always at the forefront because we work extremely hard to ensure that it is."

The growing brand falls under the banner of Banda Volpi Hospitality.

"Essentially, it means 'gang of foxes' in Italian. We developed the hospitality company to shoulder and manage the restaurants and it was a fitting name," he says. "We have Pepino's Spaghetti House, aka 'The Mouse,' an Italian-American concept, which we love and is doing wonderfully. Its next door neighbour is Caffè La Tana on Commercial Drive, an alimentari and wine bar that serves lunch and dinner and is unique and beautiful."

And with a portfolio of acclaimed dining spots, it's safe to assume more locations will follow.

"At this point we're keen to grow, but it's going to be systematic and thoughtful," says Grunberg. "We're not in a rush because everything takes time and we want to make sure that our current operations are established and doing well."

Grunberg notes their restaurants all embody a certain level of magic and, again, it comes back to hospitality, food programming and the work and effort they put into every single detail.

"Our culinary director, Phil Scarfone works very deliberately with our teams ensuring food quality is top notch," he says. "Operations director, Jason Cisneros, runs front-of-house with a strong focus on the guest experience. My business partner, Craig Stanghetta, is in charge of design, while our partner Emily Goodrich, ensures operations are running smoothly."

Already a bona-fide hit with Vancouver's culinary-forward crowd, Grunberg describes his latest venture as a welcoming dining experience for all.

"I would categorize our restaurants as upscale casual –- family style dining, fun and approachable," he adds. "Some may say high-end, but I think we serve a delicate niche that everyone loves." ■


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FOOD BURNABY


LE CROCODILE
BY ROB FEENIE



# RESETTING THE TABLE

## LE CROCODILE BY ROB FEENIE: A NEW PHASE OF CULINARY EXCELLENCE

Story: Joe Leary
Photography: Aaron Aubrey and David Martin
Hair and Make-up: Molly Etherington and Farrah Sanei
Location: Le Crocodile by Rob Feenie


LE CROCODILE

Le Crocodile has been a beacon of the local fine dining scene since Michel Jacob opened its doors, shortly after he arrived in Vancouver in 1983.

The acclaimed chef named his venture in honour of what he fondly describes as the finest culinary expertise he had ever personally experienced: 'Au Crocodile' — the three Michelin-starred restaurant located in his hometown of Strasbourg, France.

Le Crocodile in Vancouver was originally on Thurlow Street and offered a refined French cuisine menu with west coast flair.

When it was announced earlier this year that Chef Jacob was stepping away from Le Crocodile after forty years, demand for reservations went into warp drive; with patrons clamoring to have one last experience at the fabled eatery under his leadership, prior to its conclusion on April 30.

It also coincided with news that Le Crocodile would indeed live on, albeit in a revised version, helmed by none other than Rob Feenie.

A food star in his own right, Feenie's list of credits and acclaim is vast.

He was at the helm of an internationally accredited high-end restaurant among other positions, which included creating the signature dishes and overseeing menu development for the Cactus Club Restaurant chain.

The crowning achievement on Feenie's resume' of accomplishment was most certainly winning the coveted 'Iron Chef America' competition title in 2005 in a highly viewed Food Network TV battle against the legendary, Masaharu Morimoto.

Feenie was the first Canadian to earn such a distinction.

Michel Jacob was looking forward to a well-deserved retirement but uppermost in his mind was the next phase of succession and the transitional choice of Rob Feenie to take the reins could not have been more obvious.

As a Burnaby boy, Rob Feenie's flair for food creativity developed early on.

"I took off to Europe as an exchange student when I was 16 and lived in Sweden for a year," he says.

"I also traveled to Norway, Denmark, Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy and when I came back home a year later, I kind of switched to thinking that I may want to be a chef."

"I saw a whole different side of food there."

His culinary career took many turns in the ensuing years and eventually Rob Feenie and Le Crocodile would connect.

"I came here in 1992 when the restaurant was still on Thurlow and Michel hired me as Sous Chef.



**Left to Right: Chef** Michel Jacob, Brian Jessel, Jim Murray, Chef Rob Feenie

"After a few years I shifted towards wanting my own restaurant."

That venture was the highly accredited Lumiere that opened on West Broadway in 1995.

For Feenie, his professional life has been something of a legend, having been involved with some of Vancouver's most high-profile food properties over the years.

Earning the title of 'Iron Chef America,' while taking down a legend — took his status to the stratosphere.

"The irony with 'Iron Chef' was that I had achieved so many things prior to that in terms of accolades, restaurant-wise," he says.

"It was on the first season, and I didn't think I was going to beat Chef Morimoto.

"We filmed it at 6:30 in the morning and I didn't think much of it.

"Then later in the day, word started coming to me that we were close, so I wanted to show up at the studio to congratulate him on his win.

"After that I thought our team would just go back to the hotel for a good dinner.

"When they announced, "The winner is Chef Feenie," you could see on my face — I was stunned.

"As chefs in competitions, there are always bruised egos and when I was on 'Iron Chef Canada,' there was a lot of expectation on me, because so many Canadian chefs wanted to beat me due to that win on 'Iron Chef America.'

"Earning the title of 'Iron Chef America,' while taking down a legend — took his status to the stratosphere."



> "'We call it 'Le Crocodile by Rob Feenie' for a reason,' he adds. 'It's to pay tribute to Chef Michel and I think the name makes sense because I don't want to change it.'"

"Things happen sometimes in life and maybe I got lucky that day because Morimoto is an amazing chef, and I don't ever gloat about it."

The relationship between Chefs Michel Jacob and Rob Feenie was cultivated over the years.

"Michel is not just my mentor, he's the Godfather of my daughter and he's one of my closest friends," says Feenie.

"We have vacationed together with our families.

"I would frequently pop into Le Crocodile when I was at Lumiere and he would pop in to see me there a couple of times per month."

As for how the idea of the transfer of power from chef to chef came about, Feenie suggests it seemingly happened naturally.

"I brought it up to him a couple of years ago," he says.

"With my exit from Cactus Club, conversations started coming about and my group of partners started talking to him.

"I never thought that he was going to retire, so it's kind of a combination of both."

When we interviewed Rob Feenie in April of this year to get his take on the end of an era at Le Crocodile, the affable and well-spoken chef simply said, "I've done my best to let it (the handover) be about Michel.

"It's been an extraordinary journey to watch how much people love and respect him and love this restaurant.

"It was very daunting on my side, watching this knowing that when we take over a lot of people are going to be looking at me for what he's done.

"I think that's kind of why he picked me in a way to take over because I worked in Alsace with his mentor; I've worked at Au Crocodile; the original three Michelin-star restaurant where he got the name.

"I've met his family, and the list goes on and on.

"I think it's the comfort level he has of me understanding the food of the Alsace region and what he's done here at Le Crocodile.

"His life has been involved in this restaurant for forty years.

"My own kids have been around this restaurant for numerous occasions over the years and even they have said, "Dad, don't change it too much."

Feenie notes that in this situation, it's much more than simply a business transaction.

"We call it 'Le Crocodile by Rob Feenie' for a reason," he adds.

"It's to pay tribute to Chef Michel and I think the name makes sense because I don't want to change it.



Steak Au Poivre



Foie and Scallop

> "Even after a stylish, Art Deco renovation, Michel's mark is still visible in many areas of the restaurant."

"There is some change to the décor and the menu, but people have a feel for the old 'Le Crocodile.'

"The menu will be half mine and half his because that's what people are expecting.

"For those that want it to be the same, I'm going to do my best as tribute to Chef Michel.

"But people also want to come and see me and see what I can do."

Le Crocodile by Rob Feenie re-opened its doors in June and under his leadership, the new version reflects respectfully on the legacy of the hallowed venue.

"Even after a stylish, Art Deco renovation, Michel's mark is still visible in many areas of the restaurant,"
he says.

"I'll never be able to fill his enormous shoes.

"I can only be Rob Feenie." ■



**Left to Right: Chef** Michel Jacob, Chef Rob Feenie


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# ALL THAT JAZZ

## Nina Horvath heads up the Vancouver International Jazz Festival

Story: Joe Leary
Photography: Courtesy of Vancouver Jazz Festival 2023



**“What is most important to us is to keep producing opportunities for artists to collaborate and perform and continue to present accessible music and concert experiences for our community.”**



Above:
Isaiah Collier & The Chosen Few

Long considered a staple on our annual events calendar, the Vancouver International Jazz Festival draws artists from all corners of the globe, encompassing any manner of forms of the genre in the process.

As executive director, Nina Horvath's penchant for the arts figures prominently – and her passion was developed early.

"My love of music started from childhood, as my dad and older sister played piano and I followed suit from a very young age," she says. "Much of our family life is centered on music."

While her personal listening tastes and educational journey are rooted in classical music, those tastes began to broaden as she, "Took agency over the music I listened to and purchased."

"Now, I listen widely from classical to jazz to hip hop to anything that catches my attention," says Horvath. "The endless depth and diversity of music are among its greatest joys and I cherish discovering new and surprising sounds."

At the helm of the Coastal Jazz and Blues Society and overseeing the Vancouver International Jazz Festival since November, 2021, Horvath was excited at the prospect of working with an organization, "that cares so much for its community and presents accessible performances to thousands of people each year. What other organization do you know that offers so much world-class music for free?"

Horvath adds she deeply appreciates the way the organization has always supported local musicians.

"How they treated them equitably to big-name stars, and how they gave them an equal platform to perform," she adds. "The future of the arts can sometimes feel bleak with constant strains on funding, but what doesn't feel bleak is the depth of talent to celebrate."

The Vancouver International Jazz Festival has been an integral part of the local events calendar since 1985 and has garnered a reputation as being one of the most beloved and anticipated each year.

Horvath notes, enlisting a roster of acts and corresponding venues can be a somewhat daunting task.

"The festival is generally planned in a one-year cycle with bookings for the following year starting in the fall when many of the jazz festivals across Canada gather to plan routing for artists," she says. "More significant strategic pieces and dreaming can extend further into the future, up to five years in advance."





Top:
Lisa Cay Miller

Above:
Biboye Onanuga





While continually presenting a world class festival each year, the plans ramp up as a special milestone is on the horizon, but looks beyond that with great optimism for the future.

“2025 will be our 40th anniversary so we’ll be planning something special to celebrate such a milestone,” she says. “Looking further ahead, Coastal Jazz faces the same challenge many festivals across Canada face – how to find a sustainable way to produce a festival in a post-pandemic world.”

Horvath notes, with rising costs and static funding from many government and corporate partners, the margins become slimmer and slimmer each year.

“Resiliency, ingenuity, community partnerships, and developing relationships with local businesses will be keys to ensuring that success.”

Horvath adds, it’s a given that undertakings of this magnitude are ingrained in Vancouver’s cultural mosaic and the organization is looking forward to keeping these events alive.

“What is most important to us is to keep producing opportunities for artists to collaborate and perform and continue to present accessible music and concert experiences for our community,” says Horvath. “Being able to attend a concert without financial barriers provides us all with the opportunity to joyfully connect, something that the last few years have taught us is more important than ever.”

Horvath hopes Coastal Jazz will continue doing what it does for a long time – uplifting the voices of unique artists from Vancouver and across the globe and sharing those voices with the local public.

“It’s important to me that we continue to place our community at the forefront, work to support and develop local talent and bring in big-name stars, and celebrate the wild splendor of musical creativity from all over the world.”

Visit coastaljazz.ca for more information on the 2024 Vancouver International Jazz Festival and events schedule, to purchase tickets, or to donate to the Society to support future live events and programming. ■

Above:
Killer Mike

Left:
JP Carter





Above:
Aja Monet



Above:
Hand to Earth

Left:
Teresa Marie
and the Three

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# HENRY SHAPARD

## PRINCIPAL CELLIST OF THE VANCOUVER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Story: Joe Leary
Photography: Dylan Duffault
Stylist: Arezoo Aliperti
Clothing: Holt Renfrew Vancouver
Location: VSO School of Music



# HENRY SHAPARD HOLDS THE COVETED POSITION OF PRINCIPAL CELLO OF THE VANCOUVER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

Additionally, he also bears the distinction of being not only one of its youngest members, but the youngest of anyone holding down that chair among any major orchestra.

It's a heady task and one that was offered to him three years ago at the age of 21.

It's particularly impressive considering this was not initially his life plan growing up in Cleveland, Ohio.

"When I think back to my childhood, my primary dreams (at least from around age seven to age thirteen) revolved around baseball," he says.

"I was a pitcher and am a very competitive person, so I think I always imagined that I would somehow claw my way into the starting rotation of a MLB team someday.

"Of course, like most children with professional sports dreams, those melted away when I became a teenager, but my love for the game and admiration for the work ethic of professional athletes remained."

Citing extremely supportive parents, the Shapard family somehow got a Cello into young Henry's hands at the age of three, and the rest would quickly become history.

"My mom was in charge of ensuring that I practiced every single day and so by the time I was a teenager, I had built up a fair amount of technical skill," says Shapard. "Around that time my baseball dreams fizzled and I fell in love with watching the Cleveland Orchestra."

He adds, transitioning from playing baseball to madly practicing cello was a natural switch and he's grateful to the many role models in Cleveland who ensured he stayed the course as he grew.

In May 2020, Henry Shapard graduated with distinction from Yale University with a degree in history and was named Phi Beta Kappa.

In addition, he was awarded the Bach Society Prize, the Sharp Prize, the Selden Memorial Award, and the Berkeley College Arts Prize.

While at Yale, Shapard served as Principal Cello of the Yale Symphony Orchestra, assistant conductor of the Yale Symphony Orchestra, and Music Director of the Berkeley College Orchestra and Saybrook College Orchestra.

Aside from his orchestral duties, he led an all-cello rock group at Yale called "Low Strung," touring to China, Singapore and the U.S.

Prior to his current appointment, Shapard held the position of Principal Cello with the

**“Some days, as I'm walking onstage at the VSO, I think of my childhood dream of walking onto the field in Cleveland and try to convince myself that I'm not so far off from what I fantasized about back then.”**

Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra, where he was named by former VSO Conductor, Bramwell Tovey.

Then in 2021, Canada beckoned in earnest.

After a successful audition – conducted in a rather nerve-wracking, secretive selection process – Henry Shapard became the youngest member of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

Now a Vancouverite, he speaks glowingly of the acclimatization to a new country and the inherent bond with his fellow musicians.

“I have the best colleagues!” he says of the VSO. “They have always treated me as an equal, which has been helpful – not just for my day-to-day confidence at work, but also my growth in the Principal Cello role.”

Shapard notes one thing about playing in a professional orchestra is musicians spend an enormous amount of time in very close quarters with their colleagues so they bond quickly.

“This has made it so that my primary tie to Canada is, in fact, my colleagues and the work environment at the VSO,” he says. “Four years here have absolutely flown by.”



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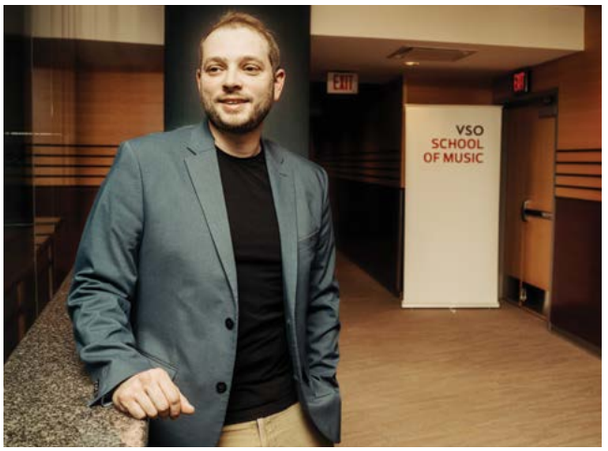
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Above: Jay Schreiber, Director of Facilities Operations and Customer Service, VSO

# VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF MUSIC

The VSO School of Music is a 25,000 square foot, state-of-the-art music school on Seymour Street, adjacent to the Orpheum Theatre.

Founded in 2010, the school's mission is to enrich lives.

"The VSO School of Music is a bustling institution with programs, master classes and events that serve our creative community in Vancouver," says Jay Schreiber, Director of Facilities Operations and Customer Service. "Our youngest students can start at three months of age with 'Mini Music Makers' classes and our oldest learners are well into their 80's."

The School of Music offers individual or group instruction by members of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, in addition to numerous other high caliber music educators.

"Our incredible faculty of over 150 music professionals in the Metro Vancouver area is anchored by our orchestra members and dedicated instructors in the areas of jazz, cultural music, early childhood education and composition."

Additionally, the school features the spectacular performance theatre, Pyatt Hall and accompanying reception space, ideal for a vast array of arts, entertainment, or by corporate or private groups utilizing the space for performances, recordings and special events.

Away from the stage of the Orpheum, Henry Shapard is actively involved as a faculty member of the prestigious VSO School of Music.

It's within this role he offers his expertise in the hope young aspiring musicians will similarly follow suit and develop a genuine love for, and connection with, the world of music.

Outreach is another element of this young man's life, including performing his craft in prisons. Playing casual cello sessions at institutions for incarcerated adults and youth is something he developed in his home State of Ohio.

"These experiences have proven to be deeply meaningful,"

As has his instrument of choice, the cello.

"I have always loved the sound. Often, professional musicians are asked if they could go back in time and pick a different instrument, what would they select.

"Most of my colleagues in the VSO say they'd go back and pick the cello. Cellists usually say we wouldn't choose anything else!"

And while his current 'Field of Dreams' is the stage at the opulent Orpheum Theatre, Henry Shapard still has visions that harken back to his earliest memories in the U.S. Midwest.

"Some days, as I'm walking onstage at the VSO, I think of my childhood dream of walking onto the field in Cleveland and try to convince myself that I'm not so far off from what I fantasized about back then." ■


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# *FAANA:*

## BE A BRIDGE BUILDER FOR CULTURAL INTEGRATION

**Story: Caroline Yao**
**Photography: Aaron Aubrey**
**Make-up: Farrah Sanai, Loretta Yu**



From Left to Right: Breanna English (Platform On Camera), Steph Song (FAANA), Christian Lagasse (Platform On Camera),, Pu Shasha (FAANA).

Many Canadian-born Chinese may not know the treasure that is Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage – shadow puppets and traditional Chinese realistic painting. Little do they know that Cui Yue, the daughter of Chinese shadow puppet master Cui Yongping, lives in Vancouver. It is her aspiration to bring her father's precious shadow puppet collections here for exhibition.

Bu Zhaoyu, along with his son Bu Xinghui, heir to the traditional Chinese realistic painting master Bu Xiaohuai, will soon visit North America with the manuscripts from the founder of the well-known Bu-styled illustrations. The initiative of promoting positive cultural exchange comes from Pu Shasha, one of the founders of Film Artists Association of North American (FAANA).

As a non-profit organization established in 2023, FAANA made a debut by successfully holding the Short Film Festival last year, winning widespread praise. While this is their exploration into film and TV areas, FAANA's vision is to introduce a wider range of artistic forms to mainstream Canadian culture and other ethnic groups. On FAANA's wish list, Chinese opera, painting, folk art, folk music, and more.



Platform On Camera Talent: Kylie Bring



Back Row Left to Right:
Alecia Hack, Brooke Bourgaize, Lamya Monisha Rahman, Anna Marie Moen, Emily Wildeman, Isabel Hanes, Colleen Zander

Middle Row Left to Right:
Maia Pisco, Csilla Hicik, Baylee Crute, Charlee Fitzgerald, Megan Guay, Melody Meilin, Abby Metcalfe, Elisha Shen, Mila Wallis

Seated Front Row Left to Right:
Breanna English (Platform On Camera) Milli Goodearle, Layla Thal, Elliza Bowie, Arianna Elsworth, Steph Song, Shasha Pu ( FAANA) ,Aila Sears, Briar Maschek, Keanna Lakovic, Kailin Strang, Kylie Bring, Christian Lagasse (Platform On Camera)

Pu Shasha, who graduated from the Beijing-based Central Academy of Drama, is a screen and stage actress and director, as well as an international producer committed to cultural exchanges and helping artists collaborate across borders.

"Art has no borders. We hope to explore a variety of inclusive art forms to connect people from different cultural backgrounds and bridge the divide for Chinese creators to enter mainstream culture," says Shasha.

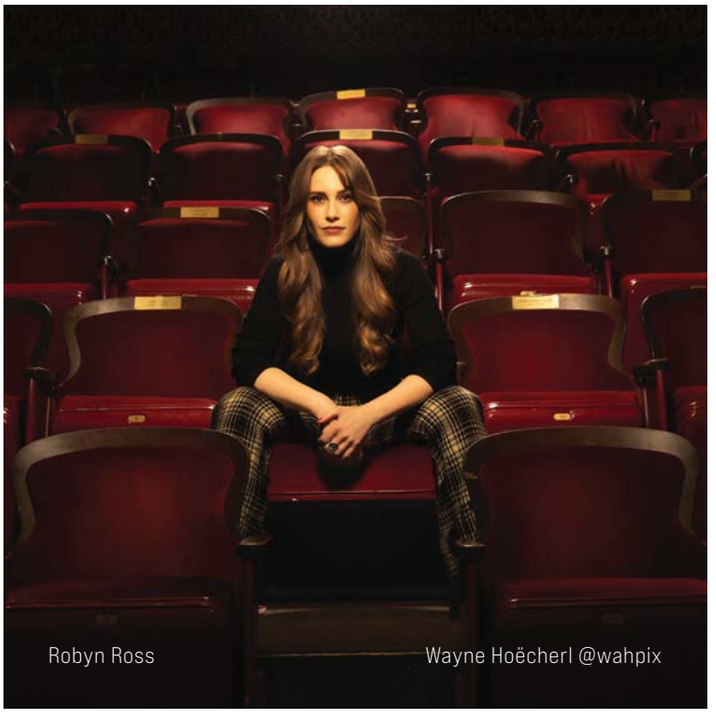
"For example, the combination of Chinese opera and western music, the fusion of painting and modern dance, the crossover of sculpture and digital media and other cutting-edge forms of expression, will showcase the integration of "Chinese" culture with mainstream art. This is our initial thought and our mission."

However, Shasha notes, cultural integration doesn't happen overnight. Vancouver is populated with Chinese immigrants, so there's no shortage of art projects. What is lacking is space and venues for artists to communicate and spark ideas.

"There are many commercial properties in Vancouver, some of which are partially idle," she says. "We are now actively reaching out to the owners of these properties, encouraging them to leverage their vacant shops, warehouses, schools, cafes, etc. for artists' use for vital events, such as seminars, auditions, script readings, rehearsals, exhibitions and auctions."

Shasha says this partnership would enable business owners to enrich cultural atmospheres and increase exposure. For the artists, it would help implement and incubate their works and projects. For FAANA, it does its part to foster cultural integration.

Shasha isn't the only one. FAANA's current board members include Malaysian actor Steph Song, who starred in the Canadian TV series, "Blood and Water," and Canadian actor, Robyn Ross. Song is working behind the scenes as a producer, focusing on exploring movie and TV talent from Southeast Asia, to help them bring their work to North America. Song joined FAANA, giving much recognition to its role of bridging people and culture together for diversity, and creating more resources for the art and film communities.



Robyn Ross Wayne Hoëcherl @wahpix



From Left to Right: Pu Shasha (FAANA), Breanna English (Platform on Camera), Steph Song (FAANA)

> ***"Art has no borders. We hope to explore a variety of inclusive art forms to connect people from different cultural backgrounds..."***

"We need quiet and safe venues for script creation and auditions," she points out, "particularly those emerging talents who need the most support. FAANA can play a part."

As an actor and coach in Canada's arts and entertainment industries, Ross believes local mainstream art groups look forward to working with FAANA.

"In a time when government and educational institutions are funding the arts less and less, it's imperative that there is a place where creativity can be fostered and supported," she says. "I will be developing plans and assembling teams of visionaries, to help FAANA achieve its goal of subsidizing projects, connecting creators, building bridges internationally and acclimatizing new artists who have immigrated to this country. I want Vancouver to one day be known as a global cultural capital."

FAANA is currently cooperating with career development program Platform On Camera to integrate elements of Chinese opera into its choreography. This idea has been embraced fully by Platform On Camera founder Breanna English.

"The collaboration with FAANA is a great match, both with similar views and goals, collectively coming together to develop an interactive live movement with a traditional and westernized tone for all to enjoy."

FAANA believes that such collaboration enables local audiences to connect with artists from different ethnic groups. They'll continue to be cultural interpreters and bridge builders allowing more talented artists and their work to be seen and recognized. ■



Left: Platform On Camera Talent: Melody Meilin
Right: Steph Song (FAANA)

# FROM CONCEPT TO COMFORT

## Amanda Evans Interiors merges luxury with livability

**Story: Sandra Thomas**
**Photography: Courtesy of Amanda Evans Interiors and Provoke Studios**

Award-winning interior designer Amanda Evans, says liveability is key when designing any home — no matter how luxurious the space is.

"That's really important to us," says Evans. "A lot of our clients will say, we don't want to live in a showroom, we want to live in something that we're comfortable in, but obviously still very aesthetically pleasing."

In fact, Evans has made "liveable luxury" synonymous with Vancouver-based Amanda Evans Interiors, which she founded in 2008. And, that concept is certainly front of mind, when she deals with clients, including high-profile executives and their busy families.

"Our team is dedicated to making the design process as seamless and comprehensive as possible," says Evans. "Our job is to manage the entire design process from concept to completion in a way that is smooth, engaging and encompasses a high level of service while ensuring that the finished product reflects our client's needs."

Evan's process is creative and collaborative, starting each project by gathering inspirational images with her clients to create a cohesive concept, which she carries through her design scheme. Evans became enamoured with design at an early age and excelled in the interior design program at the British Columbia Institute of Technology. Since launching Amanda Evans Interiors, Evans has helped multitudes of clients achieve their vision through her personalized design process.

"We strive to bring comfortable luxury to spaces while paying close attention to detail, this process allows us to achieve beautiful and functional spaces tailored to our client's elevated lifestyle," says Evans. "We take a collaborative approach with our clients, architects, trades and builders to ensure we are thoughtfully translating our client's wishes for their home to reality."

While Evans describes her approach to design as layered, creative and collaborative, when it comes to a trademark style, she won't be buttonholed.




“A lot of our clients will say, we don't want to live in a showroom, we want to live in something that we're comfortable in, but obviously still very aesthetically pleasing.”





"That's a tricky question. As a team, we really pride ourselves on working on all different types of projects and there's definitely a common thread," says Evans. "But we definitely stretch ourselves creatively. We work on some projects that are a little bit more transitional in style, and then we work others that are a lot more contemporary."

But no matter which style a client chooses, Evans promises the end result is sure to be elevated and approachable and, above all, have plenty of storage.

"It's always a priority for clients. A lot of our clients want to have a place for everything, so in the beginning, we interview them about their needs," says Evans. "The kitchen is a big one. How do they cook, how do they bake? Do they do their own dinners or they bring people in? We find out a lot about what their needs are and a lot of that relates to the kitchen, but also about things like the mud room and principal closet. So, we find out what kind of clothes they wear, how many pairs of shoes they have. We get the full picture."

In 2015, Evans was the proud recipient of two Ovation Awards including "Best Interior Design Custom Residence" and "Best Custom Home Under $750K" in collaboration with Naikoon Contracting. In 2020, the National Kitchen and Bathroom Association of BC named her firm the top designer of the year. In 2021, the company won a prestigious award from *Western Living Magazine* naming them the Emerging Designer of the Year.

From initial interview to finished product, Evans promises the perfect mix of luxury and livability, creating spaces that are not only visually exciting, but also exceptionally comfortable. To see some real-life examples of Evans' trademark "livable luxury" style, visit her Instagram page, @amandaevansinteriors, or her website, aeinteriors.ca. ■






# PNE AMPHITHEATRE

Story: Joe Leary
Photography: Courtesy of the PNE

In what can only be described as exciting news on the Vancouver entertainment scene, the PNE has teamed up with Canadian wireless service provider Freedom Mobile, in a 12-year sponsorship agreement to create a state-of-the-art amphitheater on the hallowed fairgrounds. This new entertainment facility is set to be unveiled in 2026.

As the city's most venerable, annual summer attraction for more than 114 years, the Pacific National Exhibition has played host to the giants of entertainment throughout the decades, by way of its various venues, stages and structures.

The roster of superstar talent to grace the fairgrounds over the years has ranged from Elvis Presley, The Beatles and Frank Sinatra to Billy Idol and ZZ Top.

This new – as yet unnamed – amphitheater not only promises an ideal performance facility for all artists, but in an intimately and uniquely West Coast setting.

PNE President Shelly Frost is thrilled at the prospect of what lies ahead.

"Really, there isn't anything like what this new venue will be," she says of the existing entertainment landscape. "It will overlook the North Shore Mountains and Burrard Inlet, under what will be the longest open span wooden roof in the world and feature the very unique view for the artists on an amusement park and roller coaster."

The PNE sought a one-of-a-kind concert venue experience to enhance the facility.

"To be honest, we wanted something completely unique and as inspiring as the natural surroundings it would be set in, Vancouver and BC deserve nothing less," she says. "I'm very proud to say I think we've delivered on that commitment."

While the annual fair will continue to showcase a range of genres, Frost says visitors can expect to experience a different level of production and talent in the new structure.

"This venue will take us up a performance tier due to increased capacity," she says, "but what I'm also really excited about is the increased production values built in.

"This means that we will be able to technically support tier-one artists, but will also be able to look at creative opportunities such as multi-day runs and residencies in order to accommodate the world's top performers."

The setting can be configured from an intimate setting to more of a large capacity venue.

"That's the beauty of this venue's design," says Frost. "It will be a wonderful intimate experience for smaller music and culture events, but we also have the ability to scale up to 10,000 guests."

Frost notes, because of the size of Hastings Park, the PNE could also could expand into other stages in adjacent areas of the site for events such as festivals.

"Conversely, we will have the ability to tailor, customize and support our local arts and culture community through smaller, intimate events of 2000 capacity."

This being an outdoor Vancouver venue, one expects inclement weather to pose its share of challenges throughout the calendar year.

And while in theory, the venue will be accessible 365 days of the year, it's expected the peak timeframe will be March through end of October.

As for the caliber of performers expected to hit the stage, Frost suggests the range is limitless.




"That's the beauty of it being a PNE venue, as a not-for-profit organization, rather than a shareholder or corporate-profit driven organization," she says. "We are dedicated to showcasing local, regional and national talent and creating memorable experiences for British Columbians."

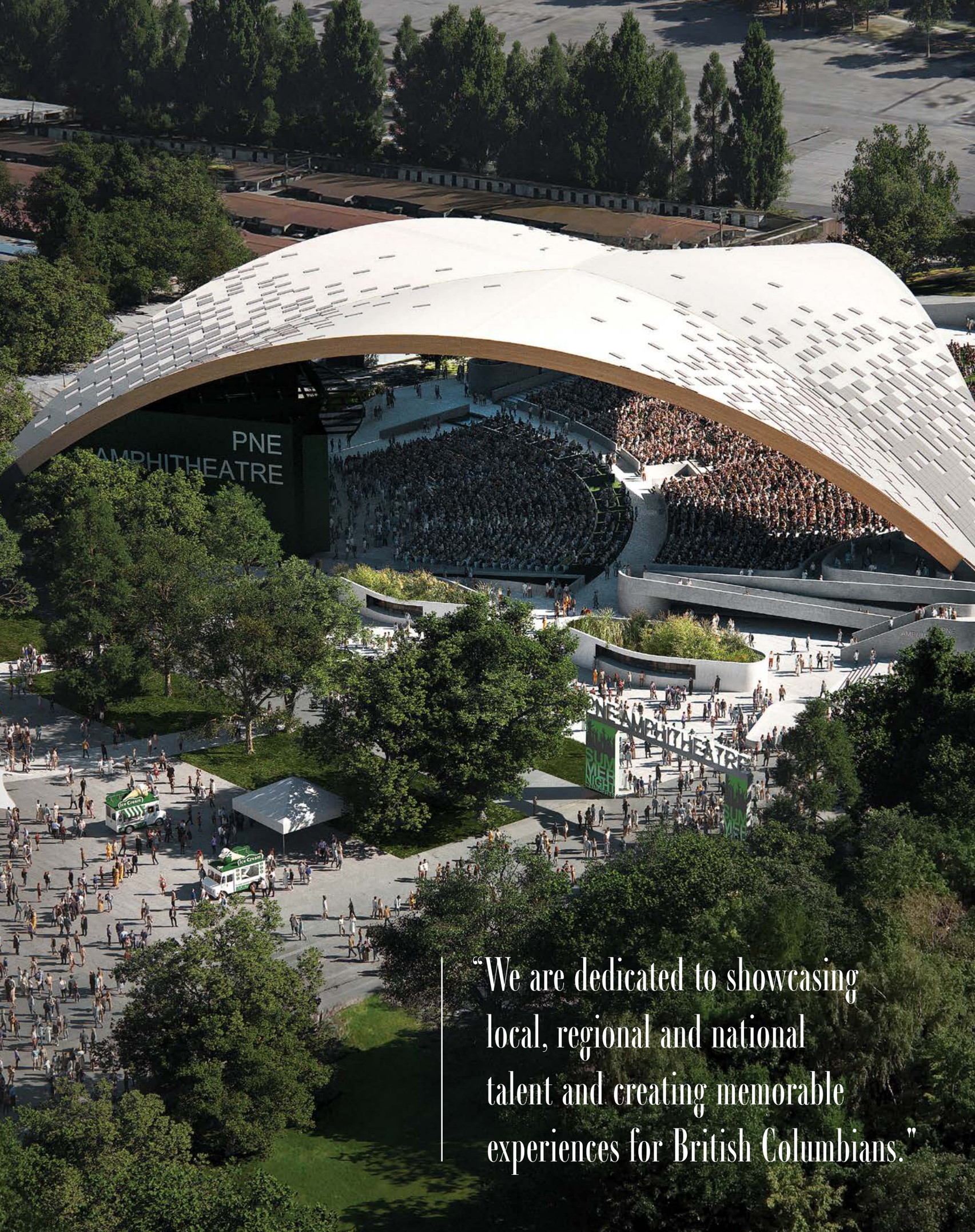
Frost notes, although the PNE will adhere to a business model, the organization will have the flexibility to host up-and-coming music artists, cultural and live arts performances.

"To be honest, I think this is one of the most compelling aspects of this project, because of our model this will be an incredibly important venue for artists and creative types at all stages of their careers."

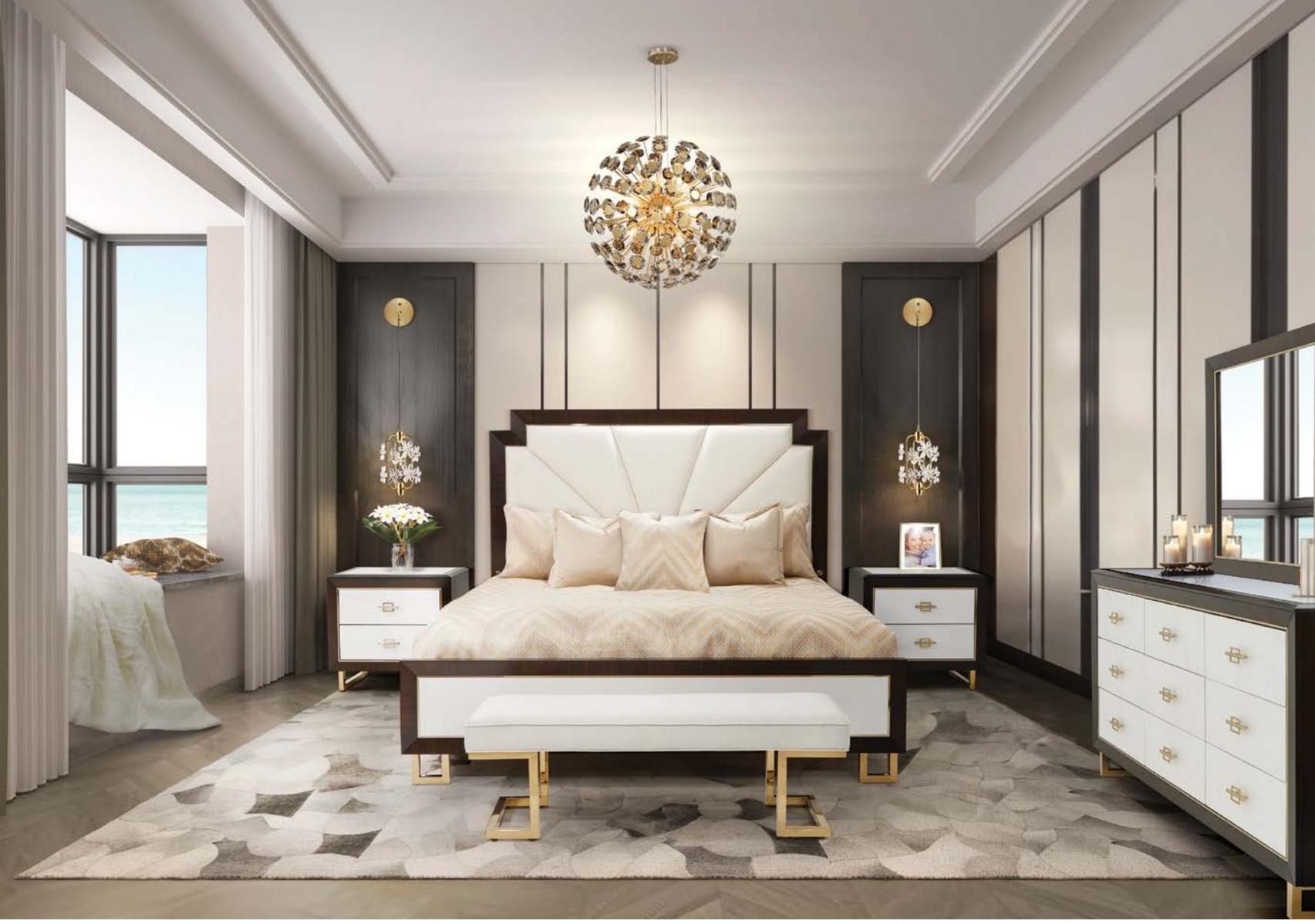
While it's too soon to ponder who the inaugural act will be, the PNE promises that it will be an event fitting of a major opening night at one of the most important music and cultural venues in North America.

But it doesn't end there.

"I would stand by for a series of monumental evenings throughout 2026 for this venue." ■




"We are dedicated to showcasing local, regional and national talent and creating memorable experiences for British Columbians."







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# MONTBLANC




## 100 YEARS OF A DISTINCTIVE AND ELEGANT BRAND

Story: Joe Leary
Photography: Courtesy of Montblanc

There is no signature brand that denotes greater distinction in the world of writing instruments than that of Montblanc.

And among their curated collection of classic offerings is the "Meisterstuck." To this day, it remains the company's flagship line of stylized, hand-crafted pens.

Since its inception in 1924, Montblanc has been hailed and revered worldwide, as the iconic writing instrument it has since become. Today, the Montblanc emblem is the ultimate seal of perfection and 2024 marks the centennial year of this historic brand.

A century ago, the craftsmen behind the Montblanc name began to receive requests for "Sunday-use" fountain pens. Having already created a truly, one-of-a-kind writing instrument, they decided to make their creation more widely-available.

That served as the standard for a few decades until Montblanc introduced a trio of models of these treasured pens, the "142," "144" and "146."

In 1952, a new addition to the classic Meisterstuck family was unveiled, and the ultra iconic "149" entered the landscape.

Simply put, the name Meisterstuck means "Masterpiece" in its native German and, by definition, it truly conveys the advanced artistry of the instrument.

With its exquisite European craftsmanship and design, Montblanc – as an international brand – is regarded and hailed as being among the finest in the world.



> "Whether collected and cherished for their ease of penmanship or acquired as pieces of artwork, status symbols or potential investments, Montblanc is heralded internationally as being the mark of ultimate distinction within the pantheon of writing instruments."

Whether collected and cherished for their ease of penmanship or acquired as pieces of artwork, status symbols or potential investments, Montblanc is heralded internationally as being the mark of ultimate distinction within the pantheon of writing instruments.

With more than 600 Montblanc boutiques worldwide, including Vancouver's Alberni Street location, the Meisterstuck line of pens remains sought-after among writing instruments available anywhere in the world.

It's regarded and widely-acknowledged as being an iconic innovation and achievement that has proudly held its place in history, now for 100 years. ■







# BEHIND THE ROPES WITH THE BOLLYWOOD BOYZ

Story: Joe Leary
Photography: Dylan Duffault
Stylist: Arezoo Aliperti

Clothing: Atelier Munro
Location: Atelier Munro
Vancouver Showroom

Born in Burnaby, and graduates of Moscrop Secondary School, brothers Gurvinder and Harvinder Sihra have become a phenomenon in the exhilarating world of big time professional wrestling.

As a tag team collectively, Gurv and Harv are known in the ring as the "Bollywood Boyz." The duo has earned their stripes, so to speak.

Debuting in 2005, the pair wrestled across Canada for various promotions and made tryout appearances for Ohio Valley Wrestling, as well as American professional wrestler and promoter, Harley Race, in Eldon, Missouri.

Originally, they performed as individual wrestlers, with Gurv credited as "Bollywood Don," and Harv identified by the name, "Golden Lion."

Soon paired together, the Sihra brothers were initially billed as the "Bollywood Lions," whereupon winning the ECCW (Elite Canadian Championship Wrestling) Tag Team title, a star tandem was born.

The WWE spotlight shone on the Bollywood Boyz in April 2017, as they made their major debut on "Smackdown," then performing under their professional identity as the "Singh Brothers."

Three years later, they returned to the Bollywood Boyz moniker and, today, maintain a travel-heavy schedule, touring and performing across North America and points beyond.

*Jessel Magazine* caught up with Gurv and Harv for a "Behind the Ropes" peek into life on the professional wrestling circuit.





## Q: AT WHAT AGE DID YOU DEVELOP AN INTEREST IN WRESTLING? WERE YOU AND YOUR BROTHER HARV, CONSTANTLY WRESTLING EACH OTHER IN THE HOUSE AS KIDS?

**Gurv:** The earliest memory I have of watching wrestling was when I was six years old.

I still remember watching highlights of the Hulk Hogan/Ultimate Warrior match from 'Wrestlemania 6' in Toronto and then 'Wrestlemania 9' from Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas in 1993, watching the entire build-up of Bret Hart versus Yokozuna.

By the time 'Wrestlemania 12' rolled around we were both deep in and watching the entire storyline between Bret Hart and Shawn Michaels, 'Iron Man' Match.

By this time, we knew this is what we wanted to do when we got older. We had the entire match between Bret and Shawn memorized and we'd have our own match in our parent's living room.





## Q: OVER THE YEARS WHAT KIND OF PHYSICAL TOLL HAS IT TAKEN ON YOUR BODIES? HOW MUCH HAVE YOU BROKEN OR BRUISED DUE TO WRESTLING?

**Harv:** I've had my knees done and recently feel my neck getting very stiff. I guess that's just part of the physicality of it. Every wrestler has something they have to live with in terms of injuries.

**Gurv:** There's a saying in wrestling: 'Save your bump card,' meaning we only have so many bumps in our careers, so we need to be wise with them.

Obviously when you're young and breaking into the business you're eager to do as much as you can. You're trying to 'make it' so you think you have to do everything.

As we approach close to twenty years of doing this, we're starting to feel each one more and more, especially the day after the match when the adrenaline has completely worn off.

My shoulders have always given me problems, but it's something I've trained my mind and body to live with, and perform with.

## Q: HOW DID YOU GET ON THE WWE'S RADAR INITIALLY?

**Harv:** We've been on their radar for as long as we can remember. We sent our first promotional package to the WWE in 2006, when we were only two years into the business, and this is the time when we were still sending things into their office with hard copy DVD/VHS tape and promotional pictures.

Even though nothing came to fruition until 2016, we stayed in touch, because we felt you never know when that call may come. When it finally did come, it was for their Cruiser Weight Division show called 'CWC,' which eventually became 'WWE 205 Live.'

## Q: OVERALL WHAT WAS THAT WHOLE WWE EXPERIENCE LIKE FOR THE BOLLYWOOD BOYZ CAREER?

**Gurv:** The experience itself was very rewarding. We accomplished a lot of bucket list goals that we had dreamed about as kids.

For example, we got to perform at Rogers Arena multiple times. The same arena we watched our first live WWE event in July 1996, and watched many other WWE shows throughout the 90's. We got to work at Madison Square Garden, the Mecca of sports, which was also the home of WWE for many years.

Being able to walk down the aisle at Wrestlemania in 2018 is definitely a core highlight for me.

We got to travel the entire world, ten times over and finally wrestle in India – our parents' home country.

Plus we got to be in major storylines with greats like Randy Orton, AJ Styles and John Cena.

We also had the privilege to train under the guidance of Shawn Michaels down at the [WWE Performance Center.]

**Harv:** Wrestling for WWE was a very rewarding journey. We got to travel the world to work with heroes and legends, and truly live our childhood dream in every sense. No job is perfect, however being able to experience life at its fullest while getting paid is the epitome of living your best life.

## Q: I KNOW YOU ARE BOTH BIG FANS OF THE VANCOUVER CANUCKS. DID EITHER OF YOU EVER PLAY HOCKEY?

**Gurv:** Yes, we grew up playing hockey for Burnaby Minor Hockey Association for eight years and played at Scotia Barn when it was still called 4-Rinks.

We've been fortunate enough to develop a very good relationship with the Vancouver Canucks through our wrestling careers and the entire organization has always been very supportive and featured us at their home games.

We've also had the chance to develop a great relationship with Roberto Luongo, a legend in the city of Vancouver, with our paths crossing while we were in WWE.

**Harv:** Like every Canadian, our first dream was to play in the NHL. We both played hockey from about the age of six until 17. It was something that our parents really enjoyed also and made sure we got to experience that as kids. We're very blessed how much our parents invested in us as kids, especially a sport like hockey that isn't cheap.

## Q: WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT WRESTLING STATUS AND HOW DEVOTED ARE FANS OF THE BOLLYWOOD BOYZ AS YOU TRAVEL THE WORLD?

**Gurv:** We are still fortunate to be wrestling full-time and still making a living at it.

Our fans are extremely devoted and help us stay booked from place to place and we certainly feel a connection with the audience that has grown stronger than ever.

The folks around the world – no matter where we've gone – have embraced our cultural representation.

## Q: WHERE DO YOU SEE YOUR CAREERS IN FIVE YEARS?

**Harv:** I think currently, we are actually in the prime years of our career and see us fulfill the remaining wrestling dreams we have. We've invested so much into this career and job and passion, that the fruits of our labour are being shown to us now and we're very excited. ■






Gurv and Harv interact with former Vancouver Canucks goaltender Roberto Luongo.


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# BREAKING BOUNDARIES

## FIRST CHINESE CANADIAN

## Realtor to Achieve Top Spot at Christie's International Vancouver

**Story: Sandra Thomas**
**Photography: Aaron Aubrey**

Realtor James Hau credits some of his success to the fact he has an international mindset, combined with a local approach and local knowledge. Hau was the first Chinese Canadian realtor to achieve the number one spot at the prestigious firm, a ranking he has held for four years in a row.

"I feel like one of the biggest assets I've had with Christie's is, we don't just sell on a national level. There are many agents who have a generalized standpoint, so all of Greater Vancouver or maybe Metro Vancouver," says Hau. "But for us, I start from the very granular, from the sense of that individual neighborhood, to that asset, product, type, price range, but we also compare it on a national, as well as international level."

Hau says that international knowledge is a big asset because if someone is selling a luxury home worth $10 million or even higher, those buyers have options across the globe.

"So, in order for you to serve your client, and essentially sell high-end assets, you need to understand what's also happening in many other international marketplaces, as well as their politics."

But, Hau also credits his parents for instilling in him, a strong work ethic and appreciation for the life he enjoyed growing up as a first-generation, Chinese Canadian. His parents arrived in Vancouver as immigrants, who initially spoke no English.

> “I really believe in quality. And that translates to every single facet of our practice. Life is about all the small details, and I want to ensure that every client gets the best of the best and it doesn't matter what that is.”



“They had to start from scratch and toiled away to really give my sister and I a better chance in life. My mother always taught me, ‘James, go after the things you want in life. However, when you get to a certain point, you always have to think about the community around you. Because without community, there is nothing,’ and that always stuck with me,” says Hau. “And for my mother, she’s a very intelligent woman, but I think the best trait about her is, she’s the kindest, most loving person who would feed a complete stranger just because she thinks they’re hungry.”

Hau has never forgotten his mother’s advice about giving back to the community, so takes great joy in getting involved with charitable groups such as PLEA Community Services, and Doctors Without Borders.

“I would have to say over the years, there’s been many challenges, especially within the last few years because of the tumultuous nature of the cycle,” says Hau. “However, I’m able to talk not only about success, but more importantly, been able to contribute back to the people and the community at large. That’s something I’m very proud of.”

Hau adds because Vancouver has become such a huge metropolitan and international city, buyers and sellers have become extremely sophisticated. As such, his practice has evolved over the years to provide solutions to the complexities of transactions and curate individualized marketing campaigns that effectively sell high end real estate.

“Competition is fierce in the high-end, and the seller I’m representing isn’t competing only against other luxury assets in their area, but also those in the Beverly Hills, Bridal Falls, and perhaps even in the United Kingdom. More than ever, having an impactful branding, and marketing campaign is imperative to succeeding as a seller. Every client, and property is different, especially in the luxury segment. Which is why I tailor a campaign specifically for each asset. Thats what ensures my clients net the most profit.” says Hau. “That allows us to market the home effectively and allows us to really understand what type of obstacles we may be facing. It sets the tone for a much stronger marketing and advertising campaign.”

Hau notes the slogan his practice embraces is, “Real estate. Marketing. Refined.” A concept he truly believes in.

“I really want to elevate the standards of the industry. It doesn’t matter what it is, the way we take photos, the way we do our videos, the way we use luxury cars, or even our business card,” say Hau.

“Everything has to be elevated. And I really believe in quality. And that translates to every single facet of our practice. Life is about all the small details, and I want to ensure that every client gets the best of the best and it doesn’t matter what that is.” ■

# IN THE MEDIA

FINANCIAL TIMES · REW · MANSION GLOBAL

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. · HAVEN · BOULEVARD

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*Offered At: $4,280,000*

SOLD



*870 W 59TH AVENUE MARPOLE, VANCOUVER WEST*
*Offered At: $2,758,000*

LISTED



*3707 W 23RD AVENUE, VANCOUVER*
*Offered At: $3,500,000*

SOLD



*1520 AVERY AVENUE, VANCOUVER*
*Offered At: $4,280,000*

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The Georgia Bar

# The Rosewood Hotel Georgia Sports a New Look

**Story: Joe Leary**
**Photography: Courtesy of Rosewood Hotel Georgia**
**Location: Rosewood Hotel Georgia**

The Rosewood Hotel Georgia has been a fixture in Vancouver life since 1927. In the ensuing years, the fabled downtown property has played host to countless celebrities and performers, dignitaries and monarchs, and virtually everyone in between.

With such a storied history it was imperative the structure maintain its rich sense of history while undergoing recent renovations.

Now after an extensive makeover, Vancouver's most fashionable retreat has reopened with re-imagined culinary concepts and luxurious rooms and suites, which further pay homage to the venerable structure.

After more than 84 years, the heritage building was last renovated in 2011 when it was rebranded as Rosewood Hotel Georgia.

"Our goal with the property's design was to curate the ultimate gathering place for culturally minded travellers and local aesthetes, that melds the history and heritage of Vancouver within a modern setting, complemented by a robust program of exclusive experiences that celebrate its dynamic heritage," says Safwan Abu Risheh, Managing Director.

"The property's new design connects contemporary elements with classic luxury features, all while showcasing materials ranging from polished marble and rich, dark wood to plush velvet textures that reflect both the bustling coastal city with the surrounding Pacific Northwest landscape.

"Aligned with the new design, the property's food and beverage concepts are also re-imagined with enticing culinary programs that celebrate Vancouver's dynamic cultural heritage.

"Celebrating the rich tapestry of the city, the refreshed 1927 Lounge offers an exquisite version of fine dining and artisanal cocktails that weave in the rich narratives of Vancouver's neighborhoods.

"Enriching its reestablished setting, the lobby also features a rotating entertainment line-up that covers a variety of musical genres ranging from R&B to jazz and soul on select nights."

Further embodying the spirit of the hotel's gilded art deco era, the Georgia Bar is well-established as the place to be and with a refreshed focus on mixology, centered amid its dramatic, horseshoe-shaped marble top bar; it most assuredly will take guests on a further journey through the heart and history of Rosewood Hotel Georgia.

**"Celebrating the rich tapestry of the city, the refreshed 1927 Lounge offers an exquisite version of fine dining and artisanal cocktails that weave in the rich narratives of Vancouver's neighborhoods."**





1927 Lounge



Deluxe King Room

"The signature cocktail menu features odes to the property's heritage," he says, adding, "selections include the Patricia, a spirit forward cocktail that takes its name from the "Patricia Room," dedicated space for HRH Edward, Prince of Wales, dating from the original hotel's grand opening; and the Herrick, a wine-based cocktail with elements of Earl Grey tea and Verjus Blanc that honours Fred Herrick, who served on the property shining shoes for 54 years.

"Additionally, the Georgia Bar's culinary program was carefully curated to take guests on a journey through the greater Vancouver area with menu items including Canadian "Caviar Bumps," offering guests a taste of sustainably sourced and flavorful caviar paired with fine wine and spirits."

Another of downtown Vancouver's most popular spots to sip and savor, Reflections Terrace, is set to be reintroduced in the second half of 2024 as a year-round dining destination

Upon its debut, Reflections will feature a new, fully retractable roof and elements inspired by Vancouver's natural environment and landscapes, via access to direct nature.

"It's all centered on an exciting and innovative concept that increases connectivity and further brings the outdoors in." ■



Safwan Abu Risheh
Managing Director, Rosewood Hotel Georgia

# SATIAR SHAH



Story: Joe Leary
Photography: Aaron Aubrey
Stylist: Arezoo Aliperti
Clothing: Holt Renfrew Vancouver
Watch: Franc Muller, Exclusively at Rodeo Jewelers
Hair and Make-up: Farrah Sanei
Location: Bang & Olufsen, Vancouver

It's rare to meet a hockey-crazed Canadian who began life in a non-traditional hockey environment like the Middle East.

But such is the story of Sportsnet 650 Radio host and Canucks TV analyst, Satiar Shah.

"My parents fled Iran in 1985, during the height of the Iran/Iraq war and wanted a better life for them and me," he says of his early life. "It was not only because of the conflict, but the Draconian rules brought on by the new Iranian regime at that time. So we moved to Sweden when I was just over a year old and lived there until 1996."

It was there young 'Sat' would quickly develop a passion for Canada's game.

"In Sweden; hockey and soccer is King, so I grew up playing soccer in the spring and summer and playing hockey in the fall and winter," says Shah. "I just fell in love with the sport as a kid and it didn't take long for me to become a big fan of professional hockey in Sweden, but also the NHL."

That was where Shah became enthralled with the Vancouver Canucks most exciting player, ever, "The Russian Rocket."

"First time I saw Pavel Bure play a game made me an instant fan," he says. "My dad had a satellite dish at our home so I was able to watch NHL games as a kid and when I saw Bure play, all I could think about was how much better - and different - he was than anyone else. It was like Bure was from the future so I became a Canucks fan from afar."

His love for the Vancouver Canucks prompted him to learn about their home environment.

"I started learning more about the city and how it was renowned for its natural beauty. When my parents told me we're moving to Canada in the mid 1990s, I pleaded with them to settle in Vancouver," says Shah. "Even though we first moved to Toronto in 1996, a few months later we picked up and went to Vancouver after my dad came to the Lower Mainland to scope out the city.

"He fell in love with this city and the rest is history."

Holding down the afternoon time slot where he co-hosts "Canucks Central," alongside Dan Riccio on Vancouver's Sportsnet 650, Shah possesses a broad knowledge of sports. Despite being on the flagship radio station and broadcast rights holder of the Vancouver Canucks, the daily talk content exceeds well beyond the ice.

"As much as I love hockey, I'd definitely classify myself a sports nut," he admits. "I love watching and following football, soccer, basketball and baseball, while also maintaining significant interest in golf, tennis and Formula 1. My favorite teams in other sports are the Browns, Lakers, Blue Jays and Chelsea FC."

Playing sports as a youth, Shah came to the inescapable conclusion that being a professional athlete wasn't in the cards for him.

"Once I realized I wasn't good enough, I knew I still wanted to be involved in sports in some capacity as an adult," says Shah.

"I always thought to myself, if I can't play professionally, I'd love to either be a sports broadcaster or work in some sort of sports management capacity.

> “I always thought to myself, if I can't play professionally, I'd love to either be a sports broadcaster or work in some sort of sports management capacity.”



“I toyed with the idea of becoming a sports agent, going as far as taking the law school administration test and applying to law schools. But the pull to go to sports broadcasting was greater.”

The radio bug eventually bit in 2006, and following stints at Z95, Rock 101 and TSN 1040, Shah joined the ranks of Sportsnet in 2017.

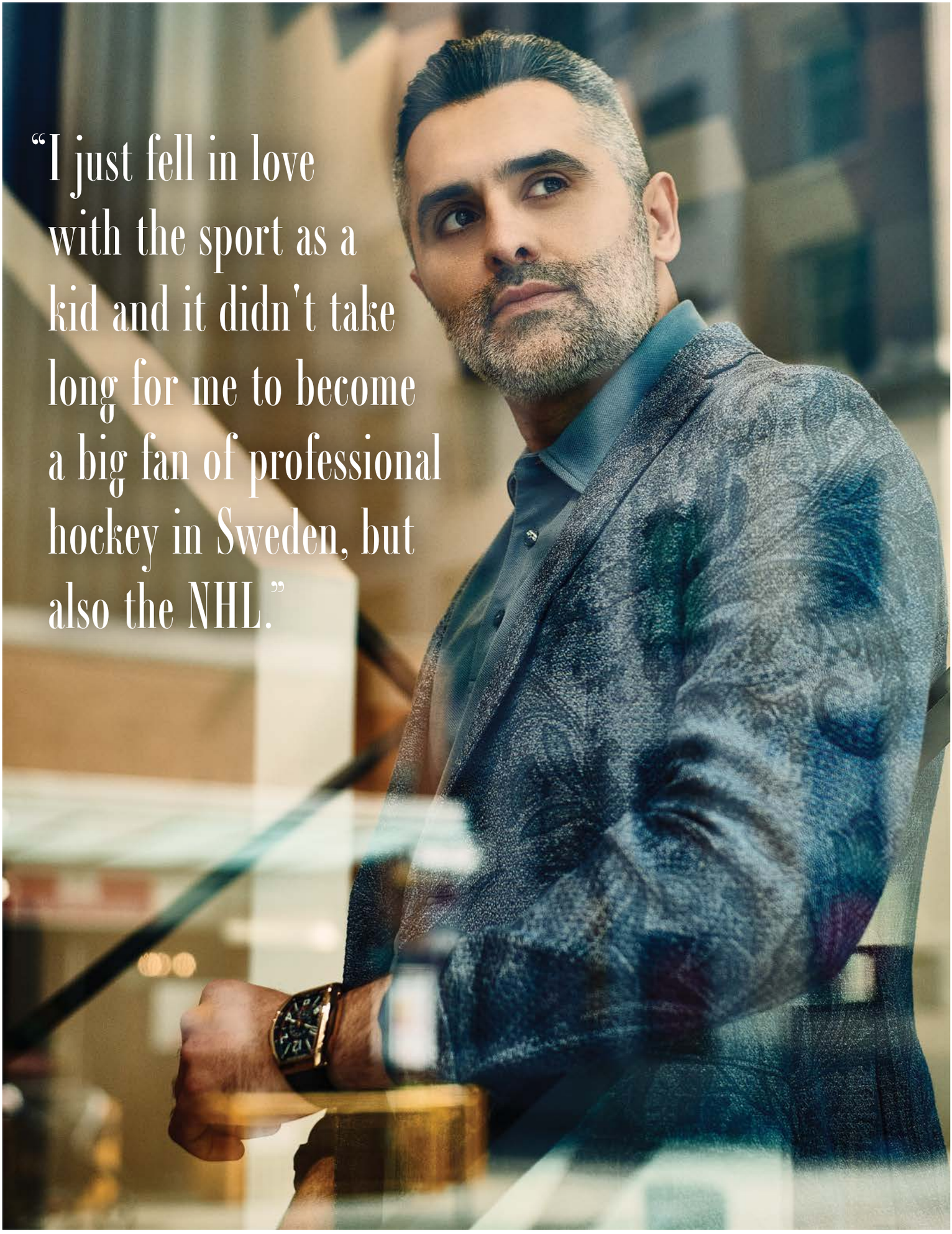
The media roles have increased accordingly, as have the accolades that follow his journey in broadcasting. That praise includes veteran sports journalist and elder statesmen, Greg Douglas, “Dr. Sport.”

“At a time when the sports media industry is in a downcast state, the presence of Satiar Shah on radio and television offers renewed inspiration for aspiring young broadcasters,” says Douglas. “Satiar was determined to work his way up the ladder in the Vancouver market and he did when his name became prominent during the early days of TSN 1040 Radio as a producer for both the Bro Jake morning show and David Pratt afternoon show.”

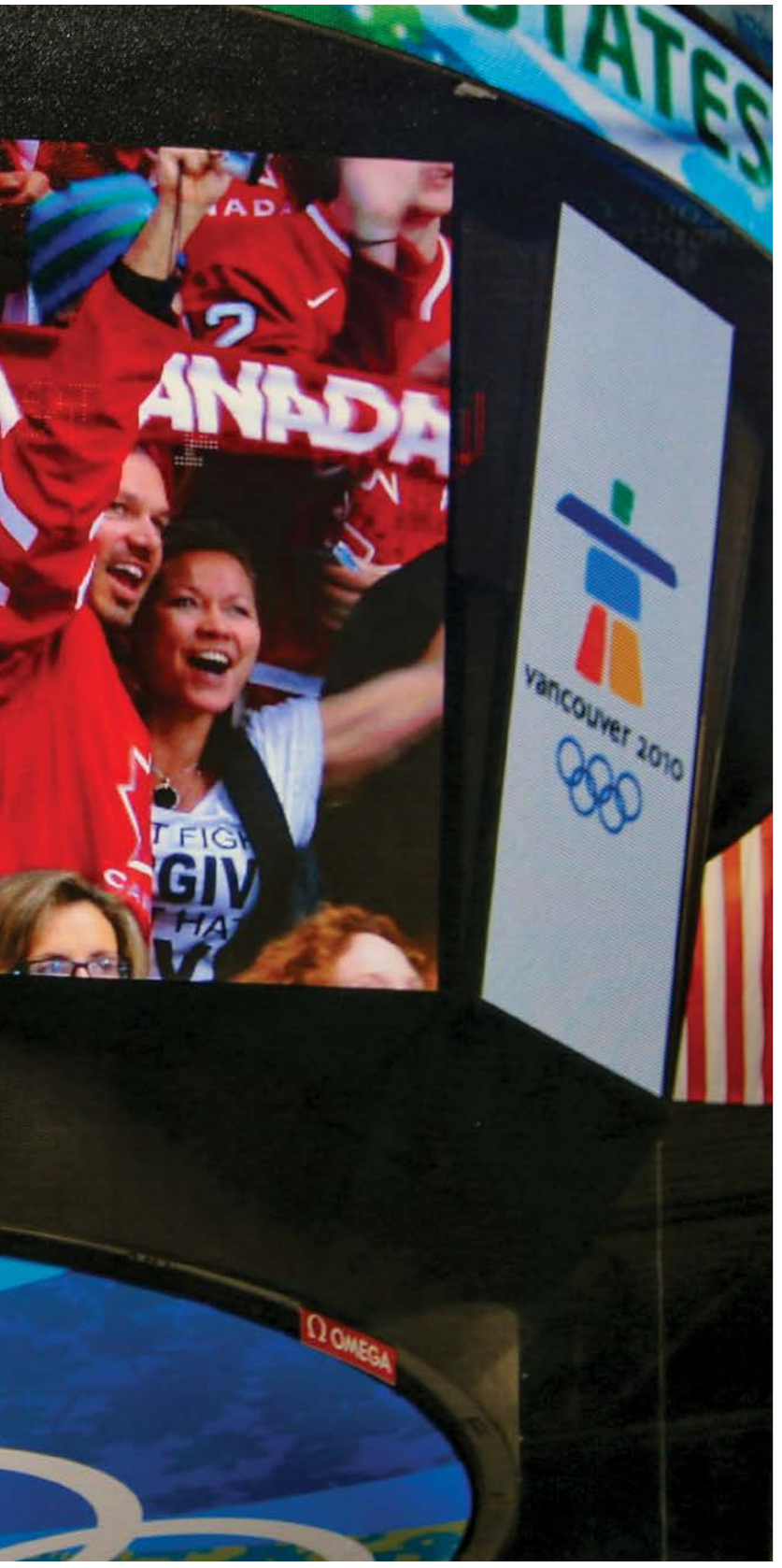
Douglas notes, today Shah has become a respected personality.

“I have met and dealt with Sat through all levels of his career and he has never changed, something that certainly cannot be said about so many others who have come and gone in the industry,” says Douglas. “Sat is a ‘people person,’ and I have watched him at various functions converse with sports celebrities and regular fans on an equal level. The ego game is simply not part of his makeup.”

While seeing his beloved childhood favourite Vancouver Canucks lose the Stanley Cup both in 1994 and 2011, mark his most disappointing sports memories, there are similarly two occasions that he ranks as the best.


“I just fell in love with the sport as a kid and it didn't take long for me to become a big fan of professional hockey in Sweden, but also the NHL.”


vancouver 2010
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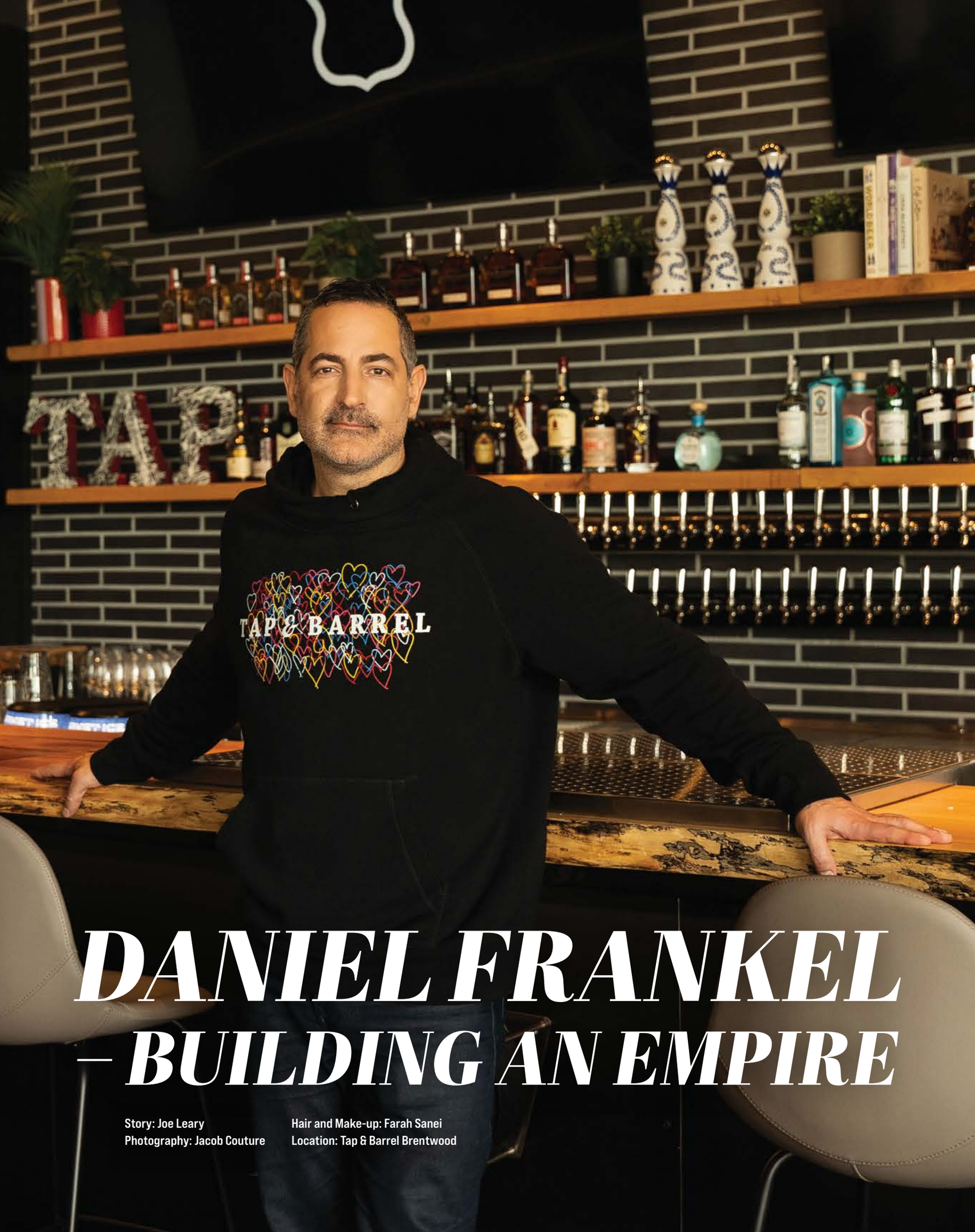

> "Watching Sidney Crosby score the golden goal at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, was by far the biggest sports thrill I've experienced."

"The two biggest thrills I've had as a sports fan as a kid, was watching Sweden win the Gold Medal at the Olympics in Lillehammer in 1994 and beating Canada in the Gold Medal game," he says. "The other big thrill was also in 1994, when Sweden won Bronze at the World Cup of Soccer."

Both pale in comparison to what Sat ranks as the best sports moment ever.

"Watching Sidney Crosby score the golden goal at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, was by far the biggest sports thrill I've experienced." ■

**Gold Medal Memories** Jim Murray (far left) and Brian Jessel (to Jim's right), 2010 Olympics, Gold Medal Men's Hockey Game




# DANIEL FRANKEL – BUILDING AN EMPIRE

Story: Joe Leary
Photography: Jacob Couture
Hair and Make-up: Farah Sanei
Location: Tap & Barrel Brentwood



There are few greater success stories in the world of Canadian hospitality than that of Daniel Frankel. From his earliest days in 2001, as a basic 'Mom and Pop' shop, selling sandwiches, muffins and coffee in Coal Harbour alongside his wife, Frankel today sits atop an ever-growing empire as Founder and Owner of Tap & Barrel Group, employing more than 1,300 people in the process - and rising.

It's a story of ideals and determination, coupled with a keen sense of knowing and doing what you do well, and maintaining laser focus.

"In 2003 I opened my first licensed restaurant, the Mill Marine Bistro," he says of his early foray into the culinary world.

"The next nine years were basically my hospitality education where I ran the Stanley Park Pavilion and opened a few other places throughout Vancouver."

Realizing these properties were disparate endeavors, it became evident to Frankel that he needed a specific template from which to develop a concept and expand his business model.

"When I won the tender for what became the first location of Tap & Barrel in 2012, I realized that I needed a brand," he says.

Despite the naysayers - who didn't share his optimism that the Olympic Village would be a viable marketplace - Frankel remained headstrong.

"I built Tap & Barrel truly by design," he adds, emphatically.

> ***"I love supporting local and I wanted places with casual comforts, real materials, offering a warm and welcoming environment with a dramatic look, yet inviting, and with big patio spaces."***

"I love supporting local and I wanted places with casual comforts, real materials, offering a warm and welcoming environment with a dramatic look, yet inviting, and with big patio spaces."

Today, the Tap & Barrel model is one to be envied.

With six Tap & Barrel locations, including the recently-opened, spectacular, three-storey space at 'The Amazing Brentwood' complex at Lougheed and Willingdon, and a soon-to-be-opened, seventh location in Langley's bustling Willowbrook Mall area, along with the company's brewery and beer hall concept, BREWHALL, the Tap & Barrel brand continues to flourish.

"When we opened Tap & Barrel at the Shipyards in North Vancouver in 2015, it took things to a whole new level," he says.

"Overnight, it became the largest licensed restaurant in Western Canada with 750 seats, and patios facing south, west and east."

With this latest Brentwood location, and Langley soon to follow, one gets the impression that just maintaining isn't in the plans, but elevating those plans certainly is.

"This Brentwood location first came to us about ten years ago and we came to take a look at it. At that point though, it was just scale models and there was nothing really definitive in terms of a structural build."

Despite Frankel's designs on the specific location he currently holds at Brentwood, there was a previous tenant who had laid claim to that space at the time he was first introduced to the project.







BARREL
ople who really
care do it better




"I knew what I wanted," he says, with respect to his vision.

"I want marquis, flagship locations, and this was not available when I first looked at Brentwood."

As luck would have it, the original tenant backed out and suddenly Frankel's ideal location for a Burnaby Tap & Barrel became available in 2020.

Further negotiations ensued and, by that point, the overall structure of the new Brentwood complex had become infinitely clearer.

Tap & Barrel Brentwood opened in April of this year.

That will be quickly followed by the all-new Tap & Barrel Willowbrook in Langley set for launch August 6th.

The plans also include an expansion of the brand across Canada with negotiations on additional venues, not only around the Lower Mainland, but with Alberta and Ontario in the purview.

"There are more Tap & Barrel locations in the future," says Frankel, who in addition to being a successful restaurateur and business visionary, is also an accomplished musician and artist.

In fact, Frankel's painted work and murals adorn the walls and stairwells of the chic Brentwood venue.

And when asked to expound on his personal business mantra, Frankel reverts to sage wisdom passed along during his time working toward his graduate program at Harvard Business School.

"Frances Frei, my former professor at Harvard, taught me that the main thing is to keep the main thing, the main thing."

The Tap & Barrel story is testament to that. ■


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# *FLYING HIGH WITH ANDERSON AIR*

**Story: Joe Leary**
**Photography: Aaron Aubrey**

At just fifteen years of age Ryan Anderson knew his life was headed skyward and earned his private pilot license.

He completed the test in the summer between Grades 10 and 11.

That would serve him well as he now heads the entire operation of Anderson Air; Vancouver's oldest aircraft management company, in operation since 1980.

"I was a busy kid," he says of his early employment.

"I was working two jobs through high school; as a bus boy and line cook.

"During the week I worked at The Keg and on weekends I worked for Whistler Mountain at Pikas and the Roundhouse".

After secondary school, the North Vancouver-born businessman earned a Bachelor of Business degree in Aviation.

Prior to joining the family operation and upon graduation, Ryan's first flying gig was at the controls of a Piper Navajo, from YVR to Vancouver Island and the BC Interior - in the middle of the night.

His job was delivering bundles of *The Province* and *Vancouver Sun* Newspapers, hot off the press!

"I still remember being completely covered in black from the ink on the papers at the end of my duty day".

Since the creation of Anderson Air forty-four years ago, the family-owned operation provides everything from management services to private, corporate and executive charter services that span the globe.

Seemingly, it was pre-ordained that Ryan would follow in the Anderson family footprint.

"When I joined the business in 2001 I was involved in all areas, from co-pilot to managing the company marketing; to dispatch and flight coordination, to answering telephones and preparing quotes.

"We had one airplane at the time and I was so happy following and living my passion every day."

Taking a brief hiatus in 2006, he then turned to the family's other business, the Oppenheimer Group; who grow, market and distribute over 100 varieties of fresh produce from numerous countries to retailers worldwide.

This is where Ryan Anderson fine-tuned his business acumen sense.

"I started working in sales and then the warehouse before moving up to category management."

Simultaneously keeping his flying ratings current, he continued piloting part time at Anderson Air.

As the company's leadership was facing imminent retirement, his father, John Anderson's siblings, Dave and Jody Anderson were then running the business and had a decision to make.

"Do we find someone from the outside to run it or do I return full-time," he says of the situation.

"The decision was not easy but in the end, realizing I would return to an industry that I am most passionate about was just too tempting.

"There's nothing like the smell of jet fuel in the air every day."

He would eventually transition back into Anderson Air as Vice-President, then President and COO from 2017 to present, while also serving as an Oppenheimer board member.

"Understanding what makes a global business - in some 30 countries around the world - work and being part of one of Canada's best managed companies and one of the most admired corporate cultures has been an exciting ride.

"I've been able to bring a lot of these 'best practices learned' to Anderson Air to aid in our strategic leadership and day-to-day management."

Ryan Anderson maintains a full and demanding schedule; keeping current by flying their fleet's Falcon 7X, while running Anderson Air and still serving as an Oppenheimer board member.




ANDERSON
AIR

**"People often ask me how I have a smile on my face all the time. It really is the by-product of the incredible journey I am on with the support of family and the team around me."**



Last year alone the airline logged over 1.25 million miles worldwide among its ten jets and one helicopter.

Working closely with every department within the corporate structure, he still serves the front lines as a crew member to transport their valued clients.

“It helps me to be more effective as a leader and provides me the opportunity to have a 360 view of our operations; giving me the insight into exactly what is going on and what makes this business work.

“Having a pulse on our family business - where the stakes and costs can be very high - is extremely important in my mind.

“What really fuels me - as well as my team - is dominating in client service and really making a difference in people’s lives”.

Clearly, his passion has not waned and being able to approach each day with unbridled enthusiasm for what the daily routine entails, fills Ryan Anderson with inordinate gratitude.

“People often ask me how I have a smile on my face all the time,” he notes.

“It really is the by-product of the incredible journey I am on with the support of family and the team around me.

“To live my passion every day; have a higher calling of serving others and be there for my three amazing kids and beautiful wife of 19 years, I could not be a happier man”. ■

# BEING THERE

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# FROM GOOD BOY TO WONDER MAN

## Jacob Tremblay shines bright in Hollywood

**Story: Lesley Diana**
**Photography: Dylan Duffault**
**Styling: Arezoo Aliperti**
**Hair and Make-up: Sara Sadr**
**Clothing: Holt Renfrew Vancouver**
**Location: The Ventura Room**

Jacob Tremblay was the darling of the 2016 awards season for his break-out, starring role in the feature film "Room." The film garnered a total of 107 awards, including an Oscar win for Brie Larson for Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role.

Jacob delighted talk show hosts across the globe, including Jimmy Kimmel, with the excitement of the accolades being earned by the film. Every talk show wanted him — and they were not disappointed with his charisma and charm. Being only eight at the time, Jacob was uninhibited, free, and excited with the whirlwind adventures the film was creating for him. And, after sharing such emotional roles on screen, Brie and Jacob are still friends and will remain so for a lifetime.

Jacob is the recipient of 23 awards, including a Canadian Screen Award, and Critics' Choice Movie Award for his work in the film "Room." One of Jacob's most challenging roles, the feature film opens a window into a world of darkness — a harrowing nightmare for a mother and son held captive in unimaginable circumstances.

Jacob's equally powerful and emotional role is in Lionsgate's film "Wonder," based on the New York Times bestseller, which tells the incredibly inspiring and heartwarming story of August Pullman, a boy with facial differences who attends a mainstream elementary school for the first time. Filmed in Vancouver, Jacob spent hours a day in make-up to create the face of a young boy living with Treacher's Collins Syndrome. With Julia Roberts playing



"Jacob is the recipient of 23 awards, including a Canadian Screen Award, and Critics' Choice Movie Award for his work in the film 'Room.'"

Below: Jacob with Oscar winner Brie Larson in the feature film "Room." Photo credit: Element Pictures.

his mother and Owen Wilson, his father, the movie has a gentle message about the power of kindness and the consequences of bullying.

Jacob graduated from high school at the start of this year and to celebrate he bought his first car, a BMW. Completing high school will now allow Jacob to focus solely on the film industry, instead of having to split his time between acting and his education, as he has for the last thirteen years. Recently, while promoting his lead role in the delightful animated Netflix feature film "Orion and the Dark," Jacob was surprised with a graduation cap and gown by *Today Show* hosts and thanks to a small amount of time off from acting he was able to attend his graduation ceremony and celebrate with his friends and family this past June.





Sam in the independent film "Queen of Bones" photo credit: Queen of Bones Film Inc.



Jacob voices the character Orion in "Orion and the Dark," photo credit - Dreamworks Animation - Netflix.

# PLATFORM
## On Camera

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## His list of credits is the envy of any veteran actor twice his age...

In the film, Jacob voices the character Orion, a boy with an active imagination who faces his fears on an unforgettable journey through the night with his new friend, a giant, smiling creature named "Dark" played by Paul Walter Hauser. His other roles in animation include Luca, in "My Father's Dragon," and the voice of Flounder in "The Little Mermaid."

It was when Jacob tagged along with his sister for an audition as a young boy, that he was also asked to audition. The audition quickly led to him booking several commercials. Following those, Jacob had a few guest roles on a TV series, and a TV movie, "My Mother's Future Husband," starring Lea Thompson ("Back to the Future"), which is when, as the Unit Publicist of the film, I first got to meet Jacob. So, to sit down and interview him 10 years later and see how grounded and invested he is in the film industry is encouraging.

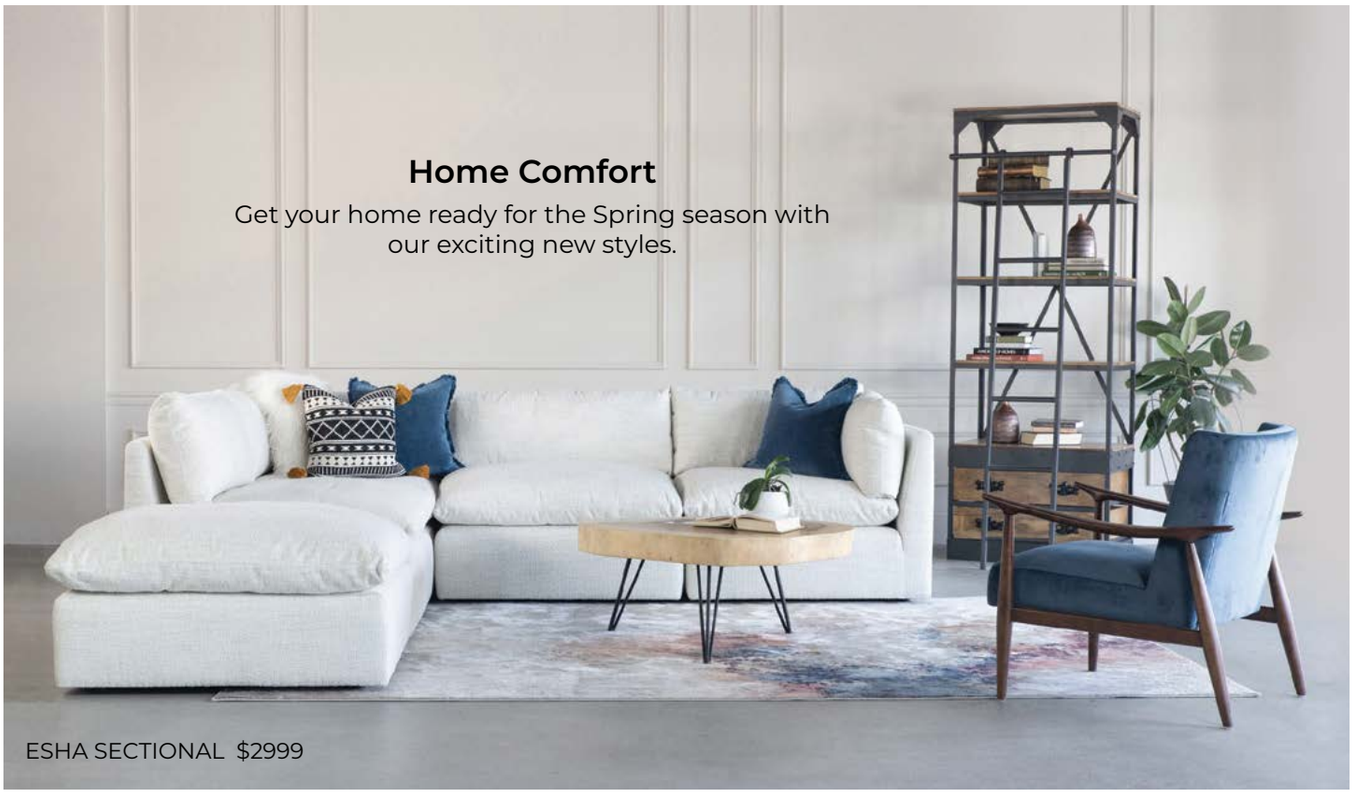
Jacob's first theatrical debut was as 'Blue' in the live-action film, "The Smurfs 2," which thrilled him because he was such a big fan of "Smurfs" at the time. Jacob had a starring role in "Good Boys," produced by Seth Rogen. A funny story Jacob likes to tell describes the day he went with his friends to see the film, but wasn't allowed in the theatre because he was underage. Jacob even pointed out the poster to the attendant to prove he was in the movie, but it didn't matter. He did finally manage to get in when a friend over 18 joined them.

This past December Jacob attended the 2023 Whistler Film Festival to promote his leading role in his first-period piece, as 'Sam' in the independent film "Queen of Bones," now screening on the festival circuit. This year Jacob is also taking on his first role in a true-life story, filming "Sovereign" with seasoned performers Nick Offerman and Dennis Quaid.



His list of credits is the envy of any veteran actor twice his age and, while working alongside many A-list actors, Jacob has received guidance to help him navigate his fast-paced career. Historically, many child actors have trouble transitioning to teen actors, but with the help of his parents and team, Jacob has managed to stay grounded. His father, a police officer with the Vancouver Police Department, also dabbles in acting on the side, while his two sisters are also known for their acting resumes.

When he isn't on set or promoting his movies worldwide, Jacob has a great group of friends with whom he enjoys spending time. With that strong support from his co-stars, team, friends, and family, we're confident we'll be watching Jacob on screen for years to come. ■




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# ALL IN THE KALLAS FAMILY

**Story: Joe Leary**
**Photography: Dylan Duffault**

Our country's rich history is rife with stories of immigrant families now calling Canada home, having arrived on our shores with the hope of creating a better life.

George Kallas exemplifies that ideal.

His Canadian journey began in Montreal in 1962, when his parents made the trek to this newfound land of opportunity. George was just eleven years old.

It was a far cry from life in their native Greece, in which a Civil War saw his father enlist as a guerilla fighter. At 19 years of age, George ventured west and made his first visit to Vancouver for a holiday.

Soon realizing there were actually parts of Canada that weren't submersed in ice and snow during the winter months, Kallas planted roots and called it home.

"It was January 10, 1970," he recalls of his first impression of West Coast life.

"I came in the deep days of winter and there was green grass in mid-January."

Working for Bombardier Aerospace (then known as Canadair) at the time, Kallas phoned in his two week's notice upon his arrival in Vancouver and never looked back.

Turned out, working in the sheet metal profession by trade would be of great benefit in the future, especially because he wanted to operate his own business – particularly something in the creative field.

Visiting a local printing plant provided the impetus and Metropolitan Fine Printers Inc. (MET) was born in 1977.

"Our initial location was at 3rd Avenue and Quebec," says Kallas "In 1979, we secured a lucrative contract to print Asian cookbooks for the popular TV show of the era, 'Wok with Yan.'"

This necessitated relocating to much larger facilities where the business grew exponentially.

Fast forward 47 years, and today MET Printers occupies 20,000 square feet in a multi-million dollar, state-of-the-art printing and distribution facility in East Vancouver.


Brian Jessel BMW
Brian Jessel BMW


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From a staff of just two people in 1977, the company now employs more than fifty – and continues to grow. The brand has also expanded to include not only printing, but packaging, merchandise and apparel, with a client base that counts Brian Jessel BMW among them.

The family business footprint has further developed in the ensuing years and today, George's son Nikos, holds the position of CEO, MET Printing.

Subsequent to the regular business of the day and at the heart of the portfolio is a very special pet project – the family's award-winning, unfiltered, extra virgin olive oil, Kallas First Press.

A sought-after commodity, it recently garnered international acclaim and accolades, including Gold at the New York Olive Oil Competition. There it outranked thousands of competitors worldwide, including the top manufacturers in the world.

But, oddly enough, it's not available for sale. Kallas First Press is produced annually, bottled and uniquely rebranded each year. Despite the demand, it's offered strictly as gifts to the numerous clients and friends of MET and the Kallas family.

Originating from their olive orchard in southern Greece, Kallas First Press is purely a labour of love.

"I inherited the land in the Peloponnese about twenty years ago," says Nikos Kallas. "It's all olive trees, a few hundred or so, and they only produce every second year. Half produce one year and the other produce the following year so we time it accordingly."

Nikos adds the family used to bring the olive oil home to Canada for personal consumption.

"It was my dad's idea to package it up and give it as a gift," he says. "We worked with a couple of design agencies to do the branding for it and it evolved from there. I product manage with the design team and we do brand-new, rebranding of the packaging every year."

George Kallas maintains a role in MET to this day as Chairman, while Nikos handles the day-to-day overseeing of production, clients, merchandise and more.

"My dad is no longer day-to-day in the business," says Nikos. "So he goes to Greece each year to press the olives for us." ■

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GARRY SANGHA

# THE SKYE'S THE LIMIT

**Story: Joe Leary**
**Photography: Jashan Deol**

Garry Sangha is a multi-faceted man with a list of accomplishments that includes numerous business ventures. These range from a bustling construction and development operation, to a budding hospitality empire.

And the "Skye's the Limit."

Growing up in rural Punjab, India, Garry (born Gurpreet), felt a compulsion early on to voice his opinions against social ills, eventually being elected President of the Students Union in college.

In 1996, at the age of 18, Garry and his family left India and moved to Vancouver.

"My father believed that this was the land of opportunity," he says. "We thought that money grew on trees and you just picked it up off the ground in buckets."

Once settled locally, Sangha enrolled at BCIT with the intent of pursuing a degree in engineering.

He eventually made the decision to drop out of school altogether – against his father's wishes – and pursued construction full-time.

With a strong work ethic and rife with determination, Sangha quickly began to climb the business ladder, despite facing instances of discrimination along the way.

This would only prove to empower him further and become a vital turning point and motivation for the emerging entrepreneur.

It was then he made a vow to always be inclusive in supervisory and managerial capacities, learning vital lessons in team building and corporate growth in the process.

"The country we come from doesn't give you a lot of dreams," he says. "My dad aspired to come to Canada because he had dreams of a better life."

Sangha notes at the time, his dad had only $20 in his pocket.

"I didn't have a choice as my dad was the decision maker. I played soccer. My dream was to play for the National Team in India – my dad wanted me to go to school, I didn't — I just wanted to work.

"I am the only uneducated member of my family, everybody else has education degrees."





> ***"He's relentlessly focused on moving forward and motivating his team to have the same drive and energy and has a true commitment to the idea of family."***

Sangha started as a laborer on a construction site where his father was also a laborer.

"He brought me there and becoming an apprentice and learning the trade was probably the best experience of my life," he says of that time.

In 2005, Sangha joined forces with family members and created CCI – Crystal Consulting Group, a major, large-scale construction company in the fields of drywall, masonry, waterproofing, roofing and construction management.

CCI undertakes construction and real estate development work all across Canada.

"I would say to people that I'm just a dumb dry-waller," says Sangha, of the term that has become something of a personal catchphrase in his life.

It's also the title of his YouTube series of videos, which he regularly hosts and produces.

In addition to other areas across Canada, CCI has a number of projects underway in Surrey, a city clearly in expansion mode with a boom in growth rapidly taking hold.

In fact, the population of Surrey is projected to overtake that of Vancouver and become B.C.'s largest city within the next five years or so.

As the CEO of CCI, Sangha oversees numerous major construction and development projects, which are quickly springing up around the sprawling metropolis, including "The Grand on King George," due to be completed this year.

CCI is also about to break ground on their second project, a 375-unit development called "Skye Living," followed by a third Surrey project – an 1,100-unit development.

Also under the umbrella of the CCI group is Skye Avenue Kitchen and Lounge, a spectacular 6,000-square foot facility in Central City Surrey.


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> ***"Talking with Garry Sangha and feeding off his enthusiasm, boundless energy, and big-picture vision, you truly sense that everything is possible and indeed, the 'Skye's the limit.'"***

Following his corporate tagline of "The Skye's the Limit," this well-appointed and stylish new dining hot spot is testament to Sangha's commitment to quality.

In addition to an extremely well-curated food, wine and cocktail program, Skye Avenue also boasts the largest private collection of whisky found anywhere on restaurant shelves in Canada.

It's an ideal culinary concept and environment for someone with the credentials of Richard Goodine, Skye Avenue Vice President Hospitality Development.

"Over the years I've had the pleasure of working with many Founders and CEOs and the common thread I've seen is an unwavering belief that anything is possible," he says.

"When I first met Garry Sangha, he took that to a whole new level. His philosophy of the "sky is the limit" truly comes through in everything he does," says Goodine. "He's relentlessly focused on moving forward and motivating his team to have the same drive and energy and has a true commitment to the idea of family. He's a big personality and definitely larger than life, but wrapped inside this massive ball of energy is a very kind heart."

Garry Sangha serves as his own competition with achievable goals.

"I want to do better today than what I did the day before," he says. "People ask me who I compete with. I compete with myself. What did I achieve yesterday and what can I achieve today?"

The CCI Hospitality division was created to fulfill a professional requirement in order to meet one of Garry's personal bucket list goals.

"I tried to buy a professional sports franchise," he says.

Sangha is a major sports fan and a courtside season's ticket holder of the Los Angeles Clippers.

"I reached out to a broker who was trying to negotiate a deal and looking for people to invest in the franchise," he explains, of his motivation upon entering the restaurant business.

It turns out that among their requirements is that any prospective ownership group needs a hospitality component within their portfolio.

"Being as we're so heavily invested in Surrey, it became an obvious choice to plant the seeds of our hospitality division right here in the heart of town," adds Sangha. "This city has no real upscale restaurants so we thought we would be pioneers in changing the look and feel of Central City."

Thus, Skye Avenue Kitchen and Lounge was born, with additional locations in a number of cities set to follow.

"We're looking at a second location right now and down the road we want 30 locations worldwide."

And the sports ownership dream is still very much alive for Sangha in the future as well.

"My promise to my son is that on his 21st birthday – that is my gift to him."

His son is now seventeen.

Talking with Garry Sangha and feeding off his enthusiasm, boundless energy and big-picture vision, you truly sense that everything is possible and indeed, the "Skye's the limit." ■

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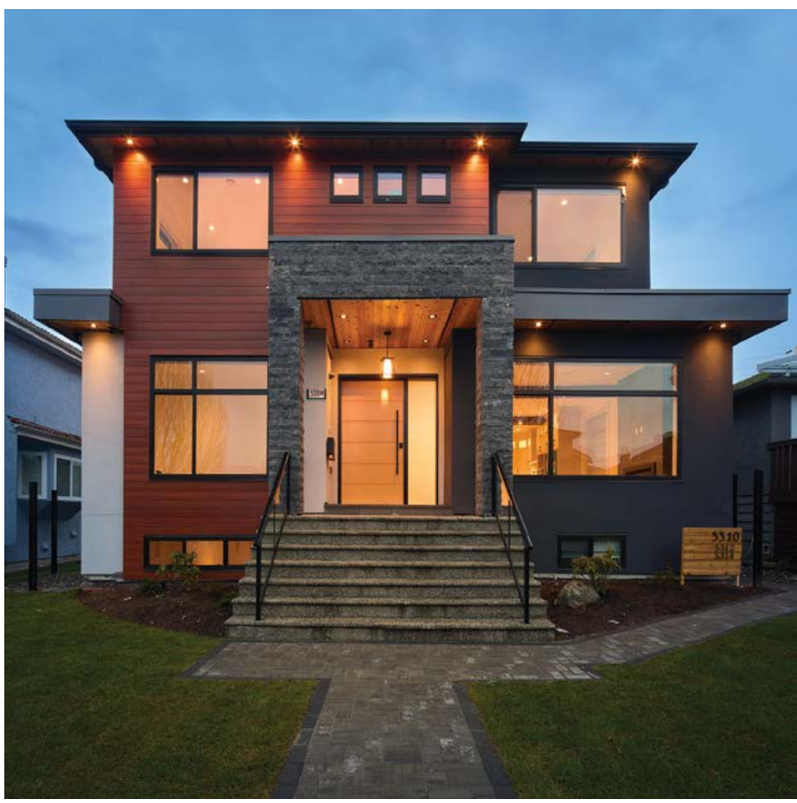
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# LORENZO DECICCIO: ALBERTA BOUND

Story: Joe Leary
Photography: Dylan Duffault



Lorenzo DeCicco has spent nearly a quarter century as a Senior Executive within the Canadian telecommunications industry.

Since 2020, he has held the position of Chief Commercial Officer of Metropolitan Fine Printers in East Vancouver.

That abruptly changed in May when it was announced that DeCicco had secured the job of Chief Operating Officer of the Calgary Sports and Entertainment Corporation.

Formed in 2012, the group oversees all of the city's sports properties: the CFL's Calgary Stampeders, the Roughnecks of the National Lacrosse League; both a WHL and AHL junior hockey franchise and of course, the NHL's Calgary Flames.

There are truly only a handful of dream management jobs within Canada for a diehard hockey fan.

This is one of them.



## "I am rarely at a loss for words," he says. "This opportunity has left me speechless"

"As a Canadian kid growing up, winning and losing the 'Stanley Cup' of road hockey on the streets of Kamloops with my buddies every weekend; to now being to be able to be part of such an iconic NHL franchise; city and league is a dream come true!

"It's one of those extremely rare career opportunities for which I am very humbled, honored and grateful to have been asked to take part in".

## “The beating heart of Southern Alberta is the “C of Red”, and IMHO, the very best fans in the NHL.”




Born in the BC interior and Vancouver-raised, the affable and ever-engaging DeCicco views this relocation to Calgary more as a homecoming, having made the Calgary Flames his hockey team of choice some years ago.

“I fell in love with Calgary and the Flames while I was a Senior Executive with Telus starting in 2012.

“The beating heart of Southern Alberta is the ‘C of Red’, and IMHO, the very best fans in the NHL.”

Serving as a Board Director with the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, DeCicco was actively involved and deeply-immersed with their local sporting communities; harkening back to his youth.

“As an Italian immigrant family, the game of choice was always soccer for me,” he says, of the sport he shares tremendous passion for.

So how exactly does Vancouver’s Lorenzo DeCicco get on the radar of the Calgary Flames for their top job?

“I was contacted by Kevin Gregor; the head of DHR Global, a world-renowned executive search firm.

“Kevin and I have known each other for a very long time and share a common history with the Chamber of Commerce and the Southern Alberta business community.

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"He called to let me know he had something really big to discuss.

"I had no idea just how big it was until we got into the details".

Big indeed!

And while Vancouver's loss is clearly Calgary's gain, he knows only too well that holding such a high profile job in a hockey-crazed market - in Canada - is tantamount to being on the front line of all things sports-wise in Calgary – both good and bad - going forward.

"Absolutely," he states, unequivocally of the immediate task at hand.

"Expectations are extremely high in Calgary for all of our teams, and they should be!

"I look forward to connecting with our fans, partners, sponsors and the many incredible people that support this amazing organization and am keen to share our heartfelt appreciation to those who have helped raise and donate more than $64M back into local charities, NFP and grass-roots organizations across the various communities and youth and volunteer groups in Southern Alberta".

"It's something the Flames and Stampeders Foundations are grateful for and extremely proud of".

Looking ahead, Lorenzo DeCicco envisions much brighter days ahead for the Calgary Flames.

"I want to be talking about our triumphant return to the playoffs and relentless focus on winning another Stanley Cup," he says of the team's imminent plan.

## Looking ahead, Lorenzo DeCicco envisions much brighter days ahead for the Calgary Flames.

"The Calgary Sports and Entertainment Group have a culture of winning and teamwork and all of us will come to work each day prepared to do whatever it takes to give our teams the very best chance to win and be successful inside and out of the various arenas.

"This ownership group is deeply committed to success and when you combine that with the incredible passion and support of our incredible fans, partners and sponsors... it's a formula for success.

"It's not a matter of "if" but "when"... and I am so very excited to have the opportunity to be a part of it all".

Lorenzo DeCicco is dedicated and both respected and admired in the business world.

Given his new assignment with the Calgary Flames, and having seen the Provincial-rival Edmonton Oilers make it all the way to Game 7 in this year's Stanley Cup Final, the battle lines for NHL supremacy in Alberta are clearly drawn again.



# Glen Bohnet

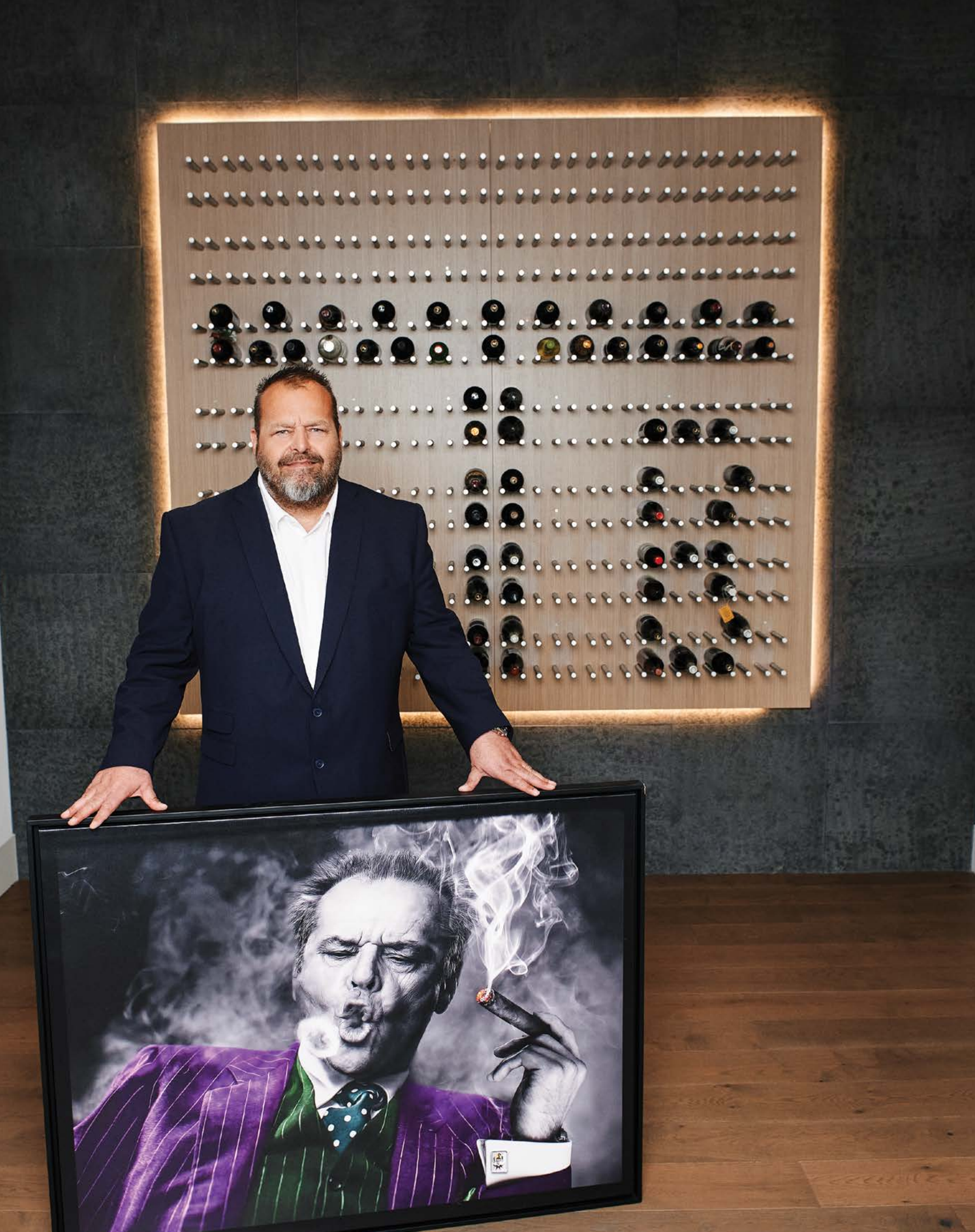
**Story: Joe Leary**
**Photography: Aaron Aubrey**

Glen Bohnet and his Teambold have established themselves as a collective realty group focused largely on the Tri-cities area. His introduction to real estate came in 1993, selling a 24 single-family site in Burnaby called Deerbrook. It was a career launch that would bolster his confidence and guide him in the distinguished career he holds today. Selling additional subdivisions and enjoying the overall client interaction, Bohnet started receiving requests for Anmore — a picturesque land area of 27 square kilometers north of Port Moody and situated along the shores of Indian Arm.

"Eventually I was presented with a large development in Anmore called Pinnacle Ridge Estates," he says. "This was a different opportunity. The buyers had alternate needs from any of my other clients up to this point. They wanted land and privacy — and this is what Anmore offered."




BOSS



> **“We had a chance to purchase one of my builder’s properties. We jumped on it and made it our home. We moved in, got married and both of us are proud to be able to enjoy the wonderful lifestyle we have created.”**

Over the years, Bohnet’s Teambold focused heavily on the beautiful community of Anmore and in the process, became the foremost experts on the area. Anmore is among the most sought-after real estate property in the Lower Mainland. “This opportunity changed my life. It’s also when I met my wife, Julia. She loved the area,” says Bohnet. “We knew this was where, we too, wanted to live.” Glen and Julia are now proud Anmore residents.

“We had a chance to purchase one of my builder’s properties. We jumped on it and made it our home. We moved in, got married and both of us are proud to be able to enjoy the wonderful lifestyle we have created.”

Bohnet has coined the area, “The Hamptons of Vancouver,” likening Anmore to the exclusive properties and affluent lifestyle the residents of Long Island, New York regard as their getaway destination. Since focusing on this beautiful community, Glen Bohnet has noticed a huge spike in interest among potential buyers looking to become part of an exclusive environment. Over time he has seen a change in what clients expect from multi-million-dollar homes, and that is safety and privacy, but still being a part of a fine neighbourhood. That’s exactly what Bohnet and wife Julia found living in Anmore.

“It’s like our parents’ generation, where you could run next door if you needed a cup of sugar,” he says. “We enjoy the local lakes and natural beauty like everyone but we also enjoy the peace and tranquility of being away from the hustle and bustle of day-to-day life. “We laugh and enjoy our neighbours, sitting around the fire pit and drinking fine wines.”

While Glen remains the biggest proponent of the pastoral splendor of Anmore, he ponders what lies ahead. “This is the best and most livable area we know. Sometimes we joke amongst each other that we don’t want this secret to get out. We might start seeing line-ups.”

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# *IS ANGELA HAER THE FACE OF CHANGE FOR VANCOUVER?*

**Story: Joe Leary**
**Photography: Aaron Aubrey**
**Hair and Make-up: Farrah Farane Sanei**

Angela Haer is elevating her public profile as she navigates the path from civic service to that on the national stage.

In October, 2023, the 49-year-old single mother of three and elected member of the Vancouver Park Board, announced plans to run for the federal Conservative Party in the pivotal riding of Vancouver Granville, currently held by the Liberal Party.

In her time with ABC Vancouver she is considered a rising star.

Haer remains steadfast to the principles of making communities better for all to live and prosper.

### Q: What made you want to throw your hat in the federal ring and what attracted you to the Conservative party?

**Angela:** My decision to run for federal office is deeply personal and driven by my life experiences and values.

Growing up in Edmonton, Alberta, I was surrounded by a community that emphasized hard work, resilience, and conservative principles. These values have stayed with me throughout my career as an entrepreneur in real estate development for over 15 years, and as a director in a Life Sciences/Healthcare business for the past five years.

I've seen firsthand how government policies can impact lives and I believe the current Liberal government has failed Vancouver Granville.

Issues such as safety, a lack of affordable housing and the negative impact of high taxes on small businesses are critical areas that need immediate attention.

I'm running because I want to be the face of change in Vancouver, advocating for common-sense solutions that will improve the lives of my constituents.

Winning with ABC Vancouver in the municipal election was a pivotal moment for me. I moved the most motions for the people of Vancouver and demonstrated the power of strong, community-focused leadership.

### Q: What is your impression of Pierre Poilievre?

**Angela:** Pierre Poilievre is a leader who embodies the core values of the Conservative Party with unwavering dedication and integrity and his ability to communicate effectively and connect with Canadians from all walks of life is truly inspiring.

Pierre is not just a politician; he is a person who deeply cares about the future of our country and works tirelessly to promote policies that benefit all Canadians.

His commitment to conservative principles, combined with his pragmatic approach to problem-solving, makes him an exceptional leader.

I believe his vision and leadership will guide Canada towards a more prosperous and secure future.






***"Winning with ABC Vancouver in the municipal election was a pivotal moment for me. I moved the most motions for the people of Vancouver and demonstrated the power of strong, community-focused leadership."***

**Q: How do you see the Conservatives addressing economic issues that face Canadians?**

**Angela:** The Conservatives have a comprehensive plan to address the economic challenges facing Canadians.

Our approach focuses on reducing taxes, cutting red tape and promoting business-friendly policies to stimulate economic growth and job creation.

By fostering an environment where businesses can thrive, we can generate more employment opportunities and ensure that families have the financial stability they need.

**Q: Can a Conservative government grow the economy and make life more affordable for all Canadians?**

**Angela:** Yes, we can. Growing the economy and making life more affordable for Canadians are at the heart of our economic strategy.

By implementing policies that encourage investment, innovation, and entrepreneurship, we can drive economic growth and create a more prosperous future for everyone.

Our goal is to reduce the financial burden on families and ensure that every Canadian has the opportunity to achieve financial stability and a high quality of life.

**Q: If successful, how will you balance life in Vancouver and your commitments in Ottawa? And how do you spend down time?**

**Angela:** My commitment to serving the people of Vancouver Granville is unwavering.

I have a strong support system in place and believe in maintaining open communication with my constituents.

My family has always been my source of strength and motivation, and their support allows me to pursue this important work.

To unwind, I love skiing with my three children — which is a great family activity to do together — and my cold plunges at the Scandinave Spa in Whistler. I can now do at least five minutes at a time. ■



# *BEAUTY, BRAINS, AND BRAUN: FORGING THE INDUSTRY*

**Story: Sandra Thomas**
**Photography: Aaron Aubrey**

From the moment Dr. Martin Braun strides into the boardroom of Vancouver Laser and Skin Care Centre, it's clear that he is a man on a mission. His enthusiasm fills the room, his words flowing endlessly as he discusses everything from the newest laser machine he acquired to inclusive care, and from stem cell research to his celebrity son's recent appearance at the MET Gala. Though he rarely pauses, every word he speaks holds weight and importance, showcasing his dedication to his craft.

Throughout the discussion, it becomes evident that Dr. Braun is a trailblazer, pioneering advancements that have shaped the industry in Canada. Dr. Braun's contributions are legendary. He was the first doctor to introduce laser hair removal to Canada, and he's been aptly dubbed the "Botox King" for his unparalleled expertise in Botox treatments. His influence extends beyond clinical practice; he has penned numerous papers and consistently pushes the boundaries of cosmetic medicine.

Dr. Braun's journey into the aesthetic field began unexpectedly after a skiing accident in Whistler in 1996 left him bedridden. While recovering, a Vogue magazine article about laser hair removal sparked his interest. This moment of curiosity led to the founding of his laser hair removal business in a shared dentist office on West Broadway, which has since evolved into the expansive Vancouver Laser & Skin Care Centre and the Vancouver Aesthetic Training & Study Centre, now occupying multiple floors of the Fairmont Medical Building.

His entrepreneurial spirit didn't stop there. The business has expanded to include the R-Medy Executive Health Clinic,

> **“We don't necessarily sell the Kardashian image, but we want someone to have that same level of self-esteem, to feel good about themselves,”**

R-Medy Functional Health Clinic, and R-Medy Aesthetics Burnaby, with a new location in West Vancouver opening soon. Dr. Braun is dedicated to pushing the boundaries to advocate for his patients.

For him, it isn’t just about vanity. While everyone wants to look good, healthy aging profoundly impacts mental well-being and society. His approach encompasses not only cosmetic benefits but also significant health advantages. “Botox is wonderful for headaches,” he notes, advocating its use for chronic migraines and other head pain relief.

Dr. Braun emphasizes that a little self-care goes a long way, and his commitment to this principle is evident in the complimentary child-minding services available at his Vancouver office for both staff and clients, making self-care more accessible in today’s demanding environment.

Dr. Braun is a vocal advocate for preventative medicine, often criticizing the Canadian health system for focusing too much on treating chronic conditions rather than preventing them. His clinics aim to bridge this gap by addressing both cosmetic and general health concerns, emphasizing the connection between beauty and internal health. “The skin is the largest organ in our body and reflects our aging process. We’ve been working on it from the outside for so many years, but how are you from the inside?” he asks, highlighting the importance of holistic health. By integrating cosmetic treatments with overall wellness, Dr. Braun underscores the vital link between external beauty and internal health.



Dr. Marin Braun MD



From Left to Right: Megan Lao, Sandy Chen, Dr. Charles Wong MD, Clarrisa Houston, RN, Tara Dowran, RN,
Dr. Shannon Trainor MD, Dr. Rachel Skocylas MD, Dr. Joan Li, Dr. Marin Braun MD

"Vancouver Laser & Skin Care Centre's reputation extends beyond local borders, becoming the top choice for celebrities visiting our beautiful city."







Dr. Shannon Trainor MD and Dr. Joan Li MD

Despite his sometimes-controversial views, Dr. Braun remains steadfast in his mission to improve health and wellness. His enthusiasm for helping clients live their best lives is as strong as it was 25 years ago. He emphasizes that true well-being comes from feeling good in one's own skin, beyond mere cosmetic enhancements. "We don't necessarily sell the Kardashian image, but we want someone to have that same level of self-esteem, to feel good about themselves," he says.

Vancouver Laser & Skin Care Centre's reputation extends beyond local borders, becoming the top choice for celebrities visiting our beautiful city. Under Dr. Braun's leadership, the clinic has become the largest cosmetic rejuvenation clinic in Canada, a testament to his inclusive approach and his belief that everyone is beautiful in their own way. By enhancing natural beauty and promoting overall well-being, Dr. Braun continues to revolutionize the aesthetic industry in Canada, inspiring both his team and his clients to embrace their best selves. ■



Top: Clarrisa Houston, RN, Tara Dowran, RN
Bottom: Dr. Rachel Skocylas MD











Top: Amanda Coleman, Aeron Avinou
Bottom: Dr. Charles Wong MD and Dr. Marin Braun MD

Top: Dr. Charles Wong MD, Dr. Shannon Trainor MD, Dr. Rachel Skocylas MD, Dr. Joan Li MD, Dr. Marin Braun MD
Middle: Harman Chahal, Netanyah Carter
Bottom: Robin MacWilliams, Lini Tan

# AI Tools, You Need to Know About that Aren't ChatGPT

Story: Mike Agerbo: Get Connect Media



In the past two years, tools like ChatGPT from OpenAI, the large language model, have begun to change the way we see and interact with artificial intelligence.

Through simple prompts, users can ask it to create blogs, entire essays, social media plans, job descriptions or code a website, all within seconds.

In most cases you can get professional results, in the worst case, it provides a framework to build on. In both, the time savings are immense. Companies such as Microsoft, seeing the foundational changes beginning to occur, have jumped feverishly into the deep-end, investing billions of dollars and changing their business course.

**The next five years is going to accelerate our use of these tools and, most importantly, our acceptance.**

Recently launched, Copilot is a heavy integration of OpenAI's technology into all facets of Microsoft products, such as Office and Windows. So confident of this change, they've even announced that the Windows key on Windows laptops and desktop keyboards is being replaced with an AI Copilot key. AI help is just a click away. Even Facebook has a new AI icon that you can do anything with. Intel's new Corel Ultra computer chips have Neural Processing Units built in, designed to do the heavy lifting for AI processes.

The next five years is going to accelerate our use of these tools and, most importantly, our acceptance. But you're limiting yourself if you don't do a little exploring to see what else is out there. There are hundreds of other AI companies that you need to know about!

Whether you're a business owner or simply needing to up your skills, here are five AI tools that aren't ChatGPT or Copilot that you need to learn about. Do you need to be an expert in using them? No, but you need to have awareness of these tools and find the parts that can help you grow your business or your skills. Once you start understanding the fundamentals of how they work, it's an easy transition to using others.

So, what's the learning curve? In most cases, it's pretty quick.

## Midjourney

There are several popular text-to-image engines out there, including Dall-E from OpenAI, and Stable Diffusion, but Midjourney is at the top of the heap when it comes to quality and creativity. Used by graphics professionals, its output is mind blowing. The caveat? It's not easy to use. You need to set up a Discord account and then access it through the messaging platform. But if you can get past the initial hurdles, it will blow your mind. My company uses it for logo creation and creating photographs to replace stock images.

## Fireflies AI

How many Zoom or Team meetings are you on in a week? Too many, I'm guessing. Fireflies AI will make your life easier by doing the listening for you, so you can spend more time engaging, instead of taking notes. It will transcribe the meeting and summarize all the key points so you can use the information for proposals, presentations, blogs and more.

## Autodraw

Need to sketch out a new product design, but you draw like a three-year-old high on sugar? Autodraw to the rescue. Even the worst artists can turn their sketches into professional looking objects, characters or products. Great for taking your pitches and presentations to the next level.

## Rask

Expand your business into other countries with an amazing tool that translates your podcasts or even videos. This tool will automatically convert your content into more than 130 different languages, even lip syncing your videos, so it truly looks like you are speaking. Plus, it has voice cloning to make it sounds like you, in whatever language you choose.

## Tome

Tome is a tool that can help you generate presentations and pitch decks in a fraction of the time. It can help with marketing materials, presentations aimed at investors, or even for school assignments.




# Learning Curve

So, what's the learning curve? In most cases, it's pretty quick because AI does the work for you! Of course, you'll want to dig a little deeper to truly unlock their benefits. Most of these tools have great tutorials through their respective websites.

I also join and follow the specific user groups on Reddit and Facebook. They are great places for inspiration on using the tools above. The key is to start. You have nothing to lose, except all the time it used to take you to grow your business and skills! ■

# IS IT REAL OR IS IT MEMOREX?

Story: Mike Agerbo: Get Connect Media



## Can you tell the difference between content generated by AI and humans?



That question became the tagline of a 1973 commercial, featuring Ella Fitzgerald hitting a high note and shattering a wine glass. The premise being that Memorex cassette tapes could capture live recordings with such fidelity, users couldn't tell the difference between them and the real thing.

The announcer asks the question, "Is it real — or is it Memorex,' with no knowledge he's foreshadowing the new paradigm of artificial intelligence (AI) in our world today. It's one of the most key questions everyone is asking me — where is AI taking us in the next 10 years, and will we be able to tell the difference between human and machine?

**It's one of the most key questions everyone is asking me — where is AI taking us in the next 10 years, and will we be able to tell the difference between human and machine?**

## What do all these tools mean to us culturally and as a society, when real and unreal blend together?

With tools like ChatGPT and Microsoft Co-Pilot (both using OpenAI technology), we are able to create essays, presentations, websites, marketing plans, and blogs in seconds. Are they perfect? In some cases, the output is on par with what a human could produce, many times it's better. Not perfect, but getting closer and closer.

After all, they're using billions of pieces of data inputted/scraped/stolen into their large language models. But, who created the data? Billions of us humans. So, while the content output is generated by AI, we're essentially plagiarizing ourselves.

Text to image engines, such as Dall-E, Midjourney and Stable Diffusion, are distorting reality from a visual perspective. With the right inputs, or prompts, they are able to create "original" art, drawings and photographs rivalling the real thing. This technology is disrupting creative industries and jobs as we speak, and only accelerating that change.

Low and mid-level graphics artists, photographers and video editors who aren't embracing the change are in jeopardy of losing jobs partly due to companies such as Midjourney.io, which can create specific photographs of any subject matter with photorealist results. These used for business presentations, movie and TV posters (like Loki and Civil War), advertising and marketing materials.

Suddenly now, your marketing coordinator is a photographer, graphics designer and social media content creator all in one. Of course, the downside is the immediate loss of jobs and the potential for misuse when realistic images are being used to create false news on blogs and social media platforms. In many cases, we can't tell the difference.



## Teachers are not winning this battle

We've seen generative AI as an enormous challenge for education and it's obvious an overhaul of the education system, from K12 to post secondary, is a certain guarantee over the next five years.

Students are able to have ChatGPT complete a coding assignment, or generate an entire 3,000-word essay in seconds with just a few inputs, forcing teachers into a digital arms race as they try to determine which work has been written by their human students.

Tools that can verify human or AI authorship are constantly being updated and then thwarted by AI. There's originality.ai, a subscription service that can weed out AI generate content — but wait, then there is undetetable.ai, which can make your AI generated content fool AI detectors.

One thing is for sure, teachers are not winning this battle. Much like the calculator (a tool) changed how math was taught, generative AI will change how education in general will be transformed to teach students how to use these powerful new tools.



## Can you tell the difference between content generated by AI and humans?

As if generative AI text and image engines were not enough to keep on top of, new text-to-video AI tools are beginning to surface. One of the most anticipated is Sora, from OpenAI. Still in Beta to a small group of testers, the example videos that have been released will startle you with their realism. Imagine drone shots following a truck down a mountain highway and flying over an old west town with horses riding down the main street, or people and animals interacting with their environments.

They are so photorealistic and, for most, impossible to tell that they were generated by a machine. To limit misuse, they're already limiting video outputs to a minute or less. It will affect videographers, editors, directors, actors, game publishers, television and movie studios, news organizations, and even adult content businesses, such as OnlyFans and adult websites.

What do all these tools mean to us culturally and as a society, when real and fake blend together? Imagine the next 10 years when everyone is a math genius. Everyone is an award-winning photographer. Everyone can make movie like Martin Scorsese. Your lawyer is an AI chatbot. Your AI doctor will Facetime you to make sure you are taking your medication.

All of this begs the question Is it real, or is it Memorex? Can you tell the difference between content generated by AI and humans? The answer today is kind of. The answer 10 years from now is... ■

# JESSEL EVENTS

## Sarahang Jawid Concert

Brian Jessel BMW & *Jessel Magazine* sponsored the Jawid Concert where guests experienced a harmonious blend of music and luxury lifestyle. Amidst the captivating melodies, *Jessel Magazine* was prominently featured, offering a glimpse into the refined tastes and cultural appreciation of the attendees.










## Dr. Robert Morrell VIP Reception Event

*Jessel Magazine* proudly sponsored and supported the Medical Rejuvenation Center VIP Cocktail Reception, marking a splendid collaboration with the esteemed Dr. Robert Morrell. Throughout the evening, guests indulged in the opulent ambiance, with *Jessel Magazine* providing insights into the intersection of Beauty and luxury living.





















## German Canadian Business Association (GCBA) Christmas Gala

Embracing the festive spirit, Brian Jessel BMW was a proud sponsor of the GCBA Christmas Gala. Amidst joyous celebrations and networking opportunities, the dealership reaffirmed its commitment to community engagement and support.



### Drishti Award Ceremony

Recognizing excellence and vision, Brian Jessel BMW was a title sponsor at the Drishti Award Ceremony. *Jessel Magazine* adorned the event, offering a glimpse into the elegance and sophistication synonymous with the dealership's ethos.













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# EVENTS

Brian Jessel BMW created a memorable Holiday Staff Party, recognizing the hard work and dedication of its team members. Brian Jessel BMW treated its team to an evening of indulgence, with *Jessel Magazine* offering glimpses into the high-end experiences awaiting their valued clientele.








**Brian Jessel BMW Holiday Party**












## Burberry and Brian Jessel Magazine Collaboration

In collaboration with Burberry, Brian Jessel BMW and *Jessel magazine* co-hosted and sponsored an exclusive event, epitomizing the marriage of luxury lifestyle and high-end fashion.














# EVENTS

Brian Jessel BMW and *Jessel Magazine* hosted the launch of a new magazine featuring Ryan Beedie on the cover for the winter edition. *Jessel Magazine* took center stage, embodying the essence of refinement and prestige.

**Launching the winter edition 2023 of Jessel Magazine**





















BRIAN JESSEL MAGAZINE




BRIAN JESSEL MAGAZINE




JESSEL
BRIAN JESSEL MAGAZINE

# EVENTS

Brian Jessel BMW hosted and sponsored an exclusive VIP Christmas Party, welcoming esteemed guests to an evening of luxury and festivity. Amidst gourmet delights and entertainment, attendees celebrated the spirit of the season in style.



**The Luxury Connect VIP Christmas Party**













## The Luxury Connect Appreciation Party

Brian Jessel BMW's Customer Appreciation Party was an ode to luxury lifestyle and unwavering dedication. As host and sponsor, the dealership provided guests with a glimpse into the opulent experiences featured in *Jessel Magazine*, reinforcing their commitment to exceptional service.











## Military Dinner

Honoring the bravery and sacrifice of servicemen and women, Brian Jessel Foundation and *Jessel Magazine* sponsored and participated in the Military Dinner. This solemn yet uplifting event paid tribute to the contributions of the military community, reflecting our respect and appreciation.






# EVENTS

Brian Jessel Foundation and *Jessel Magazine* proudly sponsored the 'Breaking Bread and Building Bonds' event. This uplifting interfaith evening facilitated meaningful dialogue and camaraderie, uniting communities, business leaders, and local officials.






**Breaking Bread and Building Bonds**







**The Luxury Connect VIP Dinner with Burberry**

*Jessel magazine*, Vancouver's premier luxury magazine, joined forces with Burberry and Gryphon Development to host a fabulous private dinner, where everyone dressed to impress in Burberry and arrived in their sleek BMWs. Our magazine creates unique lifestyle opportunities and values for our customers, making events like these truly unforgettable.







## Fencing Tournament Event

Brian Jessel BMW proudly hosted and sponsored an exhilarating Fencing Tournament, drawing together talented athletes and enthusiastic spectators. Our president, Brian Jessel, was in attendance to celebrate this remarkable event, highlighting our commitment to supporting local sports and fostering a strong sense of community. It was a day filled with skill, sportsmanship, and memorable moments.











## Face the World Foundation Gala

The 2024 Face The World Gala, hosted by Jacqui Cohen, was an intimate evening of power and generosity, successfully continuing its tradition of supporting vital community programs in Vancouver.

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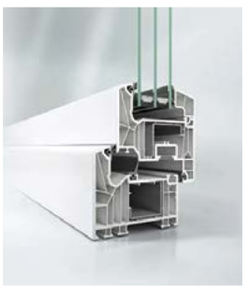
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## 3800 SERIES –

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# FAITH WILSON



Passionate expertise, integrity, discretion, exceptional client services, smart business judgement and innovation are the core values and skills Faith Wilson, founder of Faith Wilson | Christie's International Real Estate, has remained committed to during her meteoric rise to the top of the West Coast real estate industry.

Of note, in 2018 Faith sold the most expensive home in British Columbia and, to date, has closed more than $215 billion in real estate sales.

Faith began her career in 1993, quickly becoming one of the Top Realtors® in Vancouver. Not long after, she aligned herself with the #1 national real estate brand where she continued to refine her talent, and the results soon followed.

During those early years, Faith made a commitment to invest in the development of her personal brand, implement innovative real estate marketing, and was an early devotee of technology. Of most importance she has always put her clients' goals first and foremost and worked hard to help them achieve their goals.

"And I continue that mantra to this date," says Faith. "To ensure I can put my word to this, we have to stay on top of market trends, be ferocious in our marketing initiatives, and ensure that our client properties are being marketed to the broadest audience, which means both local and global exposure, which we have in spades."

To that end, Faith opened the doors to Faith Wilson Realty Group in spring of 2011. In 2017 she formed an affiliation with Christie's International Real Estate, the global authority on luxury real estate and the elite clientele those properties attract, to become Faith Wilson | Christie's International Real Estate.

"Our core values align, it's a natural fit, and the benefit to our clients is an imbedded local brand with global reach and the most penetrating marketing initiatives of any firm in our area—or Canada, for that matter," says Faith.

Faith notes, hard work, dedication and technology aside, it's the success of a very simple tool of the trade she's most proud of—word of mouth.

"For me, it has been a career built upon the success I have created for each of my clients, who in turn speak of me in positive terms to their family, friends and associates," says Faith. "This is a relationship business and, for the most part, we are selling someone's most valued asset, which is also the roof over their heads. Our clients place their trust in us—it is well placed."

Being a third generation Vancouverite, Faith is also imbedded in the fabric of community, so it makes sense a commitment to give back is imbedded in the philosophy of the firm. Just some of the numerous local groups faithwilson | Christie's International Real Estate has supported in the past and present include Union Gospel Mission, KidStart: PLEA Community Services, BCSPCA, Animals Asia Foundation and the Greater Vancouver Food Bank—to name a few.

"This business is all about people, and realtors are a part of each of their clients' lives for a time, so although it is business, it's also personal, it is full circle," says Faith. "We are blessed to live in and serve our community."

Reflecting on the past year, Faith says a highlight was the opening of a new office on Kelowna, and hints Whistler might be next on the agenda. Looking to the future, Faith is excited about growing the brokerage with like-minded professionals who embrace the core values of the brand and value the luxury experience.

"For us, luxury isn't just a price point, it's a lifestyle and a service," says Faith. "The realtors who work at our brokerage are immersed in what it means to be 'luxury,' and this is exemplified in how we work with our clients to help them achieve their goals." ■



Blind Date Book Club - Photo credits: W Network/Hallmark

# LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

**Story: Lesley Diana**

This year is shaping up to be a great one for Hollywood North. The industry is reaping the rewards of our homegrown talent in front and behind the camera. The rest of 2024, is busy with multibillion-dollar productions, which is an excellent boost to our local economy and puts B.C. third behind Los Angeles and New York.

Here are a few B.C. productions for you to enjoy.



Deadman's Curse - Photo credit: The HISTORY Channel

One of the most explosive TV series, *The Last of Us*, starring Pedro Pascal, has moved to British Columbia. Under the Bridge, starring Riley Keough and Golden Globe winner Lily Gladstone, is now streaming on Disney+ and Hulu.

*Tracker* is a hit series on CBS/CTV that stars Justin Hartley (*This is Us*) as Colter Shaw, a lone-wolf survivalist who roams the country as a reward seeker using his expert tracking skills to help private citizens and law enforcement solve all mysteries, has been renewed for season two. CTV/CBS.

The Canadian legal drama *Family Law* has been greenlit for a fourth season. Abigail Bianchi (Jewel Staite) is tackling intriguing new cases as she juggles work, family, and her love life. Abigail's father, Harry, is played by award-winning actor Victor Garber. Seasons one and two air on STACKTV.

We say goodbye to ABC/CTV's hit series *The Good Doctor,* the long-running medical drama after seven seasons. Star and EP Freddie Highmore says, "Playing Dr. Shaun Murphy has been an immense privilege and one of the most remarkable and rewarding experiences of my life."



Feature Film Sight – Photo Credit: Angel Studios



The Good Doctor - Photo credit: CTV/ABC



Pottery Throw Down - Photo credit: Erich Saide for CBC

Hallmark Movies, a staple in the B.C. film industry, *Blind Date Book Club* stars Erin Krakow and Robert Buckley. A bookstore owner finds love and direction after agreeing to review a famous author's new novel in her blind-date-with-a-book club. STACKTV.

*Legend of the Lost Locket* starring Viv Leacock and Natasha Burnett. When an antique expert takes on a quest to find a long-lost locket that promises to bring the wearer true love, she finds herself in conflict with, but also attracted to, the town sheriff. STACKTV.

We couldn't be happier seeing Vancouver's A-list actor and comedian Seth Rogen's reality TV show *The Great Canadian Pottery Throw Down* airing on CBC Gem.

In *Deadman's Curse*, prospector Kru Williams, young Indigenous explorer Taylor Starr, and her father, master carver Don Froese, join seasoned legend hunter and mountaineer Adam Palmer to solve the mystery of Slumach's lost gold mine. The HISTORY Channel and STACKTV.

*Get Fast* stars multi-award-winning actor Lou Diamond Phillips, shot in Kamloops and Cache Creek when the thief's (James C. Clayton) partner is kidnapped after stealing millions in cash from a ruthless drug lord Nushi (Fei Ren).

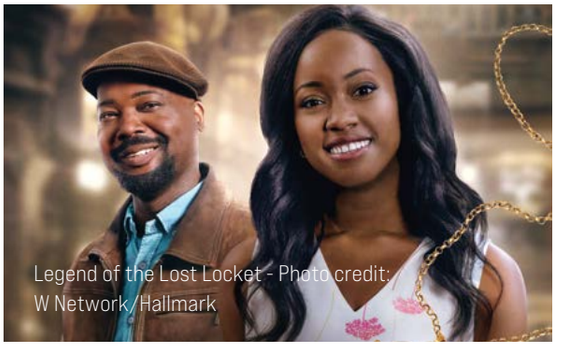
The feature film *Sight*, starring Greg Kinnear and Terry Chen, follows the inspiring true story of Ming Wang, an impoverished Chinese prodigy who flees Communist China to become a pioneering eye surgeon in America. When tasked with restoring the sight of an orphan who was blinded by her stepmother, he must confront the trauma of living through the violent uprising in his youth, the Cultural Revolution. Sight is in theatres worldwide. ■



Feature Film Get Fast - Photo credit: IndustryWorks Studios



Family Law - Photo credit: Global TV



Legend of the Lost Locket - Photo credit: W Network/Hallmark



Tracker - Photo credit: CBS/CTV

# BETTER DAYS FOR GASTOWN

**Story: Joe Leary**
**Photography: Ewald Penner, Jellybean AutoCrafters**



With such a storied past the cobbled streets of Gastown, the original "downtown" core of Vancouver is looking to have brighter days on the horizon. In fact, the area predates the city of that name. Gastown was the initial settlement that evolved into Vancouver.

As Vancouver's oldest local commercial district, still bearing a number of the elements of its rich Victorian-style architectural past, the historic neighbourhood has been through its share of bumps and grinds over the years.

The future appears much brighter indicating the area's plight has not fallen on deaf ears. Plans to restore Gastown to its original luster are underway. Earlier this year repairs and upgrades began and the City of Vancouver staff launched an initiative to make the fabled street safer and more accessible. A permanent design.  A "Gastown Public Spaces" plan making significant strides to enhance its vibrancy, safety and appeal," says Vancouver City Councillor Mike Klassen. "The city has been diligently replacing damaged brick pavers and asphalt patches in Maple Tree Square."

The Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot in July and August will be car-free, creating a safe and comfortable environment for visitors. This means Maple Tree Square will be closed to vehicles with two central, car-free blocks during the summer months.

"For me, Gastown is a captivating neighborhood thanks to its cobblestone streets, Victorian architecture and trendy cafes," adds Klassen, stating that the area's restaurants, boutiques, galleries, nightclubs and bars contribute significantly to commerce and tourism.

"Entrepreneurs thrive here with a fashion district; curated decor boutiques and top-notch culinary offerings. While primarily known for its commercial and tourist appeal, Gastown also has residential areas and office space for many companies in the high-tech sector."

"Gastown is part of the Downtown East Side and we recognize that challenges persist around the resident population facing precarious living conditions, as well as the need for more support around mental health and addictions," says Klassen. "Ongoing efforts to collaborate with the community are essential to enhance public safety. Council is committed to making our historical neighbourhood's safe and vibrant for all who live, work and visit." ■

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