

21st: Sublime Boudoir's aim is to "redefine and challenge traditional ideals of the events industry". Which elements in particular do you seek to redefine and challenge - that is to say, what do you find lacking in other large scale events?

SB: We really believe in the shared energy between the performers on stage and the audience. The exchange of that energy is what it's all about. Thus, we want the two to share that energy more, to really break the *fourth wall*. We aim to submerge everyone. It's different then heading to the theatre or club and sitting for the show; sure everyone is cheering and participating from their seats, but we ask our audience to become part of our productions. Whether it's by dressing up or simply attending; the moment they walk into the venue they are apart of the show. There is no other burlesque-focused event out there doing this.

21st: At the London event last year we were transported from a grand country manor to a luxury cruise liner, and then to a busy Shanghai market and opulent Chinese theatre. How do you go about making each event so authentic and immersive?

SB: It starts with a concept and with the knowledge that not only do we have to make you see it; we have to make you believe it. The audience's participation to become part of the show is one of our core ongoing ambitions. Authenticity comes with a high level of production and we try not to overlook even the smallest detail.

- How do you scout for and decide on each location?

SB: The ideal location comes from the preexisting concept for that show. Some repeating characteristics that we look for are places rich in culture and history, a blank canvas/venue, and overall accessibility.

- The attention to detail at Sublime Boudoir events is incredible; the flowers in particular are astounding. How did you source your team of specialists and how do you ensure every aspect of an event is equally precise and spectacular?

SB: We have about 8 creatives on our team. These individuals are with us from year to year. They bring with them their personal contacts, recourses and talents to ensure that our productions maintain the level our audiences expect. The Floral Director, Brenda Lee of Fiore Dorato, is from Singapore and has been a longtime personal friend of our Founder, Alston Stephanus. We also aim to use local suppliers to incorporate the city's participation as much as

possible. It really is a joint collaboration.

- Can you describe the planning process for each event, from conception to execution? Is there a choreographed series of events and experiences which everything else is built around?

SB: The concept is discovered through experience and imagination. We then select our city and our venue, while simultaneously creating mood boards. Then, ideally, concept art and set design would follow. Scouting for talent is a continuous venture. Other components like catering and floral design occur shortly after the set design has been confirmed. When it comes time for the actual execution, communication between all teams involved is a very important part of production.

- How did Sublime Boudoir become so particularly interested in burlesque performance, and why do you choose to focus on it? What do you look for in the burlesque performers you select for the events, and what is your impression of the burlesque community up to this point?

SB: Our initial interest came from our Founder, Alston Stephanus. He has a great deal of love and admiration for burlesque and because of his passion for the art form; it has become a shared interest for the entire Sublime Boudoir Team.

We look for a great deal when it comes to a performer, everything from look and style, to skill and talent. However, a very important trait is their uniqueness inside and outside the burlesque scene. We really scout for an individual that is multi-talented and well rounded, someone with ambitions to match our own and the drive to push burlesque further while remembering where it/we came from.

The community has a great scene and it's always amazing to see how interconnected it truly is internationally.