

CHIC

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ART | CULTURE | FASHION | TRAVEL
VOLUME 1 | EDITION 1

FALL INTO AUTUMN

The Vibrant Beauty of Las Vegas

A VIEW THROUGH THE LENS

Experience the Imagery of Mario Basner

GETTING THE BEST SHOT

Fashion, Captured by Mark Gunter

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Carolyn Muse Grant
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

From the Editor

Welcome to our new world, CHIC COMPASS!

Our exciting new enterprise is going to cover fashion, travel, music, food, culture and design. And who knows what else will find its way into our adventure.

As we all know there is so much talent in our environments and we want to get to all of it. We'll be here in the United States and who knows where else we will find the awesome endeavors to tell you about.

So please follow us and experience all that we will be offering. There are so many changes occurring in these areas and we are anxious to share!

Welcome on board!

Carolyn Muse Grant

COVER PHOTO

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Photographer: Oscar Picazo

Model: Cristina Pajara Clarke

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Model: Josie Jones
Photographer: Oscar Picazo

Contents

12

Rhythm Street

Ann Parenti

15

Jazz in Las Vegas

Carolyn Freeman

16

**Carlo Ronconcio
& Villa Anita**

Laura Henkel

24

**A View Through The
Lens of Mario Basner**

Heather Bednarczyk

33

Anne Fontaine

Carolyn Muse Grant

36

Summer Skin

Oscar Picazo

52

**Mark Gunter:
Getting the Best Shot**

Gerry Simpson

68

Las Vegas Market

Carolyn Muse Grant

70

**The Ultimate Travel
Experience**

Richard Stearns

74

**David Tupaz
American Couture**

Staff

82

**ACTV Making (Air)
Waves Everywhere**

Zen S. Laluna

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C O M P A S S

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Carolyn Muse Grant



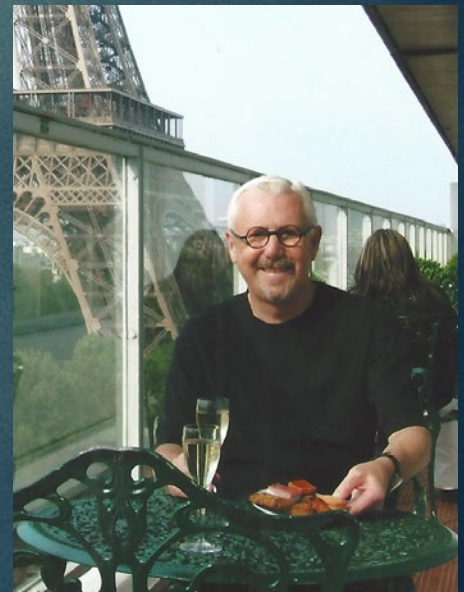
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On the Cover

CRISTINA PAJARA CLARKE

Gown by David Tupaz Couture | Photo By Oscar Picazo
Hair & Makeup by Nemi Rafanan

Cristina Pajara Clarke is a very stylish Las Vegas woman. In the nursing world she is considered the most glamorous nurse practitioner in history. Doctors tell her she is in the wrong profession and should join a pageant! But she is a woman of substance and would rather spend most of her day helping and assisting the sick, the dying and curing the homeless and assigning them to homes. She came to the United States in 2004 pursuing the American dream.

Her career began as a hospital ward unit secretary, earned a nurse assistant degree, later a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and got her job as a registered nurse in the Intensive Care Unit at St. Rose Hospital San Martin Campus. She now holds a Master of Science in Nursing/Family Nurse Practitioner at Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science-UCLA, Mervyn Dymally School of Nursing Advance Practice Nurse Curriculum Emphasis Areas-Clinical practice, a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Bachelor of Science in Nursing with affiliations and a member of Sigma Theta Tau International, Honor Society of Nursing in collaboration with Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science, Mervyn Dymally School of Nursing and Philippine Nurses Association of Nevada.

Her strong entrepreneurial experience sets her apart in her current practice. She utilizes an innovative approach to advance nursing practice and applies evidenced based modality in the care of her patients. She is highly respected in the professional arena and employs individualized care to her patients. She also supports the Philippine Nurses Association of Nevada and actively participates in promoting diversity as she advocates her cultural and ethnic background. She devotes a portion of her time to involvement in feeding programs to serve the homeless.

Cristina's husband Curtis works as a Cardiology tech at St. Rose Sienna Campus and shares the same passion in helping patients. They both love traveling whenever possible.

Cristina actively participates and supports social functions and fashion shows in support of the Las Vegas Fashion Council. She is a great supporter of charities like St. Jude's Children's Ranch, Forgotten Song Foundation and is on the advisory board of The LVFDC.







C O M P A S S

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RHYTHM STREET

By Ann Parenti

The season of summer madness arrived and the town was alive and hot with all sorts of wonderful shows, art gallery showings, concerts and musicals.

I was one of the fortunate ones to be able to see Hamilton at the Smith Center in June and it was as fabulous as everyone said it would be. I still sometimes can't believe we have a place like The Smith Center to call our own. One of my favorite spots at the center is Myron's Jazz Cabaret. I have witnessed so many outrageously talented performers in that room over the last several years that I would have to take this entire column to list them all beside what I have seen in Reynolds Hall. There is one show, however, that is very near and dear to my heart, The Composer Showcase. It happens once a month at 10:30PM on a Wednesday night. If you are lucky enough to get a seat, it tends to sell out every time, you will not be disappointed that you stayed up past your bedtime in the middle of a work week. The incredibly talented Keith Thompson, whose credits are too numerous to list, hosts the evening and it is never the same show twice. Performers from across the city join in that night to showcase an original composition that they personally created and they perform it in front of an audience and their peers. The caliber of songwriters, musicians and vocalists who perform the songs will

astound you. The Composer Showcase recently became a 501c3 foundation and Forgotten Song Foundation decided to gift them with a grant to assist in their new journey. I am told there will be some fun things on the horizon to look forward to this year. To learn more visit: www.thecomposershowcase.com.

In addition, Forgotten Song Foundation also gave The Joyce Straus Foundation a grant. They are a new foundation and their goal is to offer art classes to children and teens who are students at the Core Academy and

a host of others. Last year, we gifted Core Academy with a grant and with the formation of The Joyce Straus Foundation, we felt it logical to gift them directly. Visit joycestraus.com to see some of the wonderful things they do at their foundation.

We also gave a grant to American Jazz Initiative to help fund the CD, "The Las Vegas Suite" and Forgotten Song Music matched the grant funds and will submit to the Grammy's this next year. Read Carolyn Freeman's article in this edition to learn more about the exciting adventure that these two Fairy Godmothers of Jazz are about to partake in. Let's just say I see great things ahead! Find out more at: www.americanjazzinitiative.org.

Forgotten Song Foundation gave out \$10,000 in scholarships and grants at the VIVA Awards on May 19 at The Historic Fifth Street School. In addition to the three foundations mentioned above we gave out several scholarships to UNLV Jazz Studies and Art Studies students and a Jazz Studies



From Left: Ann Parenti and Stacey Guilandi at the 2018 VIVA Awards.

student at CSN, too. It was a great evening and even though the I-95 freeway was closed at Martin Luther King and Las Vegas Boulevard, our guests found their way to the event that was, of course, right off Las Vegas Boulevard! That is what you call dedicated and determined supporters of our foundation! Thanks to all who attended and happy to hear from so many guests that it was the best year yet. To see the additional photos and a video of the evening, visit: www.forgottensongfoundation.org.

Forgotten Song Foundation has some exciting events in store soon. We can't wait to share them with you soon. In the meantime, have a wonderful autumn ahead, and if you plan to visit Las Vegas or if you live here, go visit a gallery, go see a concert, get tickets to a musical or all the above. After all, it is Las Vegas, the entertainment capital of the world!



From Left: Andrea Thomas, Forgotten Song Foundation Scholarship Director, stands with scholarship recipients: Jeymar Perez Mendoza, Michael Gigante, Jason Vazquez, Peter Goomroyan, Amy Crosley, and Jake Macias.

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jazz in las vegas

By Carolyn Freeman

Summer arrived in Las Vegas bringing with it the heat. How appropriate that Nathan Tanouye and Clint Holmes' "Las Vegas Suite" is in recording session. "Heat" is one of the selections and Clint's lyric tells it all. The 35 members of the Las Vegas Connection have brought the Suite to life with their incomparable talent.

I am amazed at how easily I slipped into this orchestral jazz world. Twelve years ago I heard a composition for a big band by Nathan Tanouye and knew instantly this was the one who could arrange my late husband Russ Freeman's bebop classics for big band. I wanted Russ' music to live on. Nathan's younger ears could bring it to this century. Three CDs later Nathan and the Las Vegas Connection are thriving and about to release "Las Vegas Suite". The first two CDs are primarily arrangements of Russ' tunes ("Crossings" and "Remembering Russ"). The third CD, "11", is a compilation of many of the Latin jazz selections which Nathan composed for our annual "Sizzle Fest" Latin Jazz. "The Las Vegas Suite" is now in the late stages of production and it is our best yet. It is a tribute to our city.

I am the lucky person who sits with the engineer, Ron George, and sees and hears all that goes on in this very

complicated procedure. I thought my learning process was fading due to aging brain cells but I found that there are so many fascinating parts to producing a recording. I have found that I am a "rehearsal junkie". I love rehearsals and any steps to creating the final results. Working with Nathan and Clint is an experience. While Nathan and Clint were creating I felt I didn't want to intrude. One wonders what Nathan is cooking up next.

Clint, of course, is the consummate professional. Vocally he brought the feel of each tune appropriately to the theme. The "Las Vegas Suite" has five

selections: "Springtime in the Desert" with Clint on vocals; solos: Dave Loeb, piano; Marc Solis, alto sax; Nathan Tanouye, trombone. "The Boulevard" with Clint on vocals; solos: Phil Wigfall, alto sax; Gil Kaupp, trumpet. "The Hustle" solos: Wayne de Silva, tenor sax. "After" with Clint on vocals; solos: Wayne de Silva, tenor sax, John Belzaguy, Bass; "The Heat" with Clint on vocals; solos: Phil Wigfall, alto sax; Nate Kimball, trombone; John Abraham, drums. Dan Falcone is largely responsible for those only-dogs-can-hear trumpet highs.

The LV Jazz Connection has been dubbed "a symphonic jazz orchestra". We are so fortunate to have the finest musicians in our city and happily they are part of the Connection. The majority of them have been with us from the beginning (2006). I couldn't be prouder.

The CD will be released in 2019 and will be submitted to the Grammy's for consideration. We are in for some exciting times next year. We will announce the release of the CD early February 2019.



From Left: Carolyn Freeman, Clint Holmes, Nathan Tanouye and Ron George

CARLO RONCONCIO

ARTIST & PHOTOGRAPHER

By Laura Henkel
Photography by Carlo Ronconcio





Carlo the Photographer. The name rolls off the tongue with a sense of familiarity and flair. Upon meeting him, his larger than life personality and his genuine curiosity of others is undeniably disarming. It does not matter if you are in front of his camera or behind it, his spirit is magnetic and intoxicating. His keen ability to read people provide him the insight to capture the beauty of every person he photographs. You cannot help but fall in love with Carlo Ronconcio.

His multi-sensory, high fashion soirées at his lavish mid-century home in Paradise Palms are nothing short of epic. When you are with Carlo, something magical happens. You are transported into world of culture, an aesthetic that blends old world grandeur with modern form, and a moxie to construct exquisite culinary delights that commands reverence. Carlo embodies elegance and a playful savoir faire.

If you don't believe in kismet, you should. Enter David Aaron Smith.

A beautiful man with a perpetual twinkle in his eyes, Aaron embodies Cajun charm and Southern gentility. A prolific artist in his own right, Aaron is a classically trained multidisciplinary artist. His ingenious vitality is inspiring. It was inevitable that artistic collaborations would further broaden and nurture their independent and collaborative growth as artists.

Carlo had a home in Tecopa that he rarely visited. It was derelict when he purchased it, and the bright lights of Las Vegas certainly prevented him from attending to it beforehand. Slowly, the two men began to spend more time on the property. Channeling their energies to restore the humble abode, they inevitably restored their souls. "There is something freeing about the desert and the ability to be yourself unabridged," says Aaron. Over time, the single dwelling began to evolve into a compound of lush gardens with new structures made from reclaimed materials in the heart of Death Valley. They created an enchanted wonderland in the midst of one of the harshest and desolate environments.

Villa Anita was born.







The compound is named after Carlo's grandmother and sister who had the greatest influence on him. "They made me who I am today; a strong, proud, woman," shouts Carlo while pushing out a laugh. The property is full of personal touches that embody Carlo's upbringing as a child. It's this sort of commitment to building a family atmosphere that helped *Villa Anita* absorb new permanent artists in residence in Jack Holloman, Katelyn Doherty, and Alexander "Skandar" Reid.



Each brings with them a missing piece to the bright multi-media installation that is *Villa Anita*. Jack is the son of famed micro-biologist, Lorraine Symington. Double-majoring in Biology and Studio Art while at Brandeis University, Jack brings method to much of the madness at the Villa. Along with creating exclusive jewelry for the patrons of *Villa Anita* from mined minerals and hand-built ceramic pieces, he is transforming barren parts of the property to foodscapes.



Katelyn brings with her an eye for detail. You could say she adds the woman's touch to things. Her hand-made macramé wall treatments to areas and building installations with live plants and ornamental treasures enhance the Villa's beauty. She makes the Villa sparkle.

Skandar is the latest addition, bringing yet another artist of brilliant abstracted stone carvings to the Villa's growing oeuvre. As with the other figures in the *Villa Anita* constellation, Skandar is multi-talented. He offers vibrational healing to guests as a way to open energy pathways in their bodies.

Over the next two months, the team will break ground on a ceramics studio that will house a large kiln and multiple work spaces for throwing and hand-building. It's something Jack did for Brandeis University during his tenure. The new addition will lend well to *Villa Anita's* mission of creating educational programming along with being an out-of-the-box retreat.

The property is a living art installation that will continue to flourish. It is also a unique AirBnB where guests take in the work in progress. They become participants in the performance, and many find their

way behind Carlo's lens or Aaron's paint brush. But always, people take home a piece of *Villa Anita* to wear or hang on their walls at home.

The amalgam of Carlo, Aaron, Jack and Katelyn and the diverse patrons of *Villa Anita* make it a jeweled oasis in the heart of a bewitching desert. It is an experience that you will treasure always.

To learn more about *Villa Anita*, please visit www.villaanitadv.com.

“*Katelyn brings with her an eye for detail. You could say she adds the woman's touch to things.*”







Mario Basner

A VIEW THROUGH THE LENS

By Heather Bednarczyk

I have enjoyed a lifetime love affair with the camera. I find it very compelling that you can use a piece of technology to extend the vision of our physical eyes and capture a unique moment in time. As everyone well knows, a picture is worth a thousand words, and nowhere is that fact more evident than in the evocative images from the World Heritage Collection of Mario Basner, one of only 30 artists worldwide to be invited to the 2018 Venice Biennale, a highly prestigious, internationally renowned exhibition which will explore the deep communion between architecture, society and our surroundings.

Mario brings us images lifted from the pages of life, casting over us a spell of humanity, compassion, nostalgia and wonder that mirror the energy with which our community has grown, especially after the tragic events of this October past; and he'd like to show it not only to the world, but to Las Vegas itself, a public exhibition that will remind us of the softer, more humane side of our community.



Understandably, I am intrigued at the prospect of unveiling the mystery of the man behind the lens. I know Mario began his artistic career as a musician - a drummer, to be precise - and photography was an outlet for his personal expression as he toured the world adding his rhythmic signature to the colorful world of theater. What is fascinating is that, historically, drummers have played the role of holding the key to opening the gateways to spiritual dimensions. As a guardian of time, Mario has truly succeeded in transporting us to the past for a magnificent experience in human compassion.

Walking through the doors of his gallery at Tivoli Village, I am immediately filled with the sense that I have entered a magical space. Mario greets me warmly and instantly puts me at ease. I am his guest on this wonderful afternoon and am very much looking forward to the rare privilege of a private tour from the artist himself. Soothing classical music plays softly in the background, while the exquisite photos draw me in one by one to offer their deeply spiritual message. Ever the gentleman, he allows me to take the lead in choosing to explore the works that specifically speak to me.

As my eyes travel around the room, they come to rest on "Grandeur", an image of the elegant entrance to the historic Beelitz – Heilstätten Sanatorium. Mario reveals that this is the first building he entered after he was given permission to shoot the site. Located in a forest just 30 miles outside of Berlin, Germany, it was originally built in 1898 as part of an entire village designed to care for thousands of German citizens stricken by the devastating tuberculosis epidemic sweeping the country at the time. I am struck by the enduring beauty it projects; despite the layers of decay and ruin caused by years of

“He bring us images lifted from the pages of life, casting a spell of compassion, nostalgia and wonder”





abandonment, it looks more like a grand hotel than a place of healing. When asked what led him to choose this subject, he replies, "The subject chose me... humbled me... changed my life forever."

"Choices" is the next piece to draw me in for a moment of deep reflection, during which it quickly becomes one of my absolute favorites. In it, two hallways converge at the intersection of a corner wall

leading to completely different realities. What do you do when confronted with the proverbial fork in the road? A bank of windows on either wall offers the viewer glimpses of its outside world and the choice between life on Earth and transcendence. Mario leaves it to the observer to have their own unique experience with his work, feeling his greatest gift is in providing the opportunity for those very personal epiphanies.

***"The subject chose me...humbled me...
changed my life forever."***



Exquisite floor to ceiling bay windows, adorned with iron scrollwork, pull me into the haunting, shadowy allure of "Beauty Forgotten." I find this image eerily reminiscent of the Titanic. The juxtaposition of soil, light, and water damage to the ceiling, walls and floors suggests that this room with its lonely rusted hospital bed has just surfaced from being submerged in antiquity. In stark contrast, a reflective puddle echoes the lush greenery of the vibrant woodland outside. Mario's unflinching realism has opened my heart to the raw emotional impact of this space. And I can't help but see the hopeful promise of healing shining through the ravages of time and disease.



“Mario’s unflinching realism has opened my heart to the raw emotional impact of this space”

I take a moment to process what I have seen so far, for I am already so full... so deeply moved. Then one more image reveals itself to be savored by my eager mind. “Wealth” lights up that special place in my heart that adores the written word. Mario’s mesmerizing photograph inside the Peabody Library is an elegant tribute to the preservation of knowledge. As it envelops me in its panoramic display of pure intellectual brilliance, I can almost smell the paper and feel the enormous weight of endless volumes and the staggering amount of information they contain.

As I take it all in, Mario shares his observation of how we access information in the digital age. His perception of our cyber society is that we consume knowledge in small increments, then discard it with absolutely no connection to its origin. That unique point of view is what inspired him to use this image to reacquaint people with what it means to read a book. He goes on to explain, “When you pick up a book, it’s a body of work, it’s somebody’s life. You know about the author. You get a sense of what you’ve just absorbed. You have a chance to live that experience.”

I couldn’t agree more and I realize that, in truth, as much as I have been molded by the books I have read, I have been equally enlight-



ened by the man who has created these works.

Mario has allowed me to see the man behind the lens and he has radically altered my vision. My perception of the world is not the same as when I walked into his gallery a few hours before. He has given me hope for a better world by reminding me of who we can

be when we choose to express the greatness that lies within us all. Returning to the present, I bring with me the wisdom, care and passion of an artist determined to preserve the finest qualities of humanity for future generations. I am so grateful that our paths crossed in this lifetime. And I look forward to what this brilliant time traveler will choose to show us next!



“When you pick up a book, it’s a body of work, it’s somebody’s life. You know about the author. You get a sense of what you’ve just absorbed. You have a chance to live that experience.”



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ANNE FONTAINE

By Carolyn Muse Grant

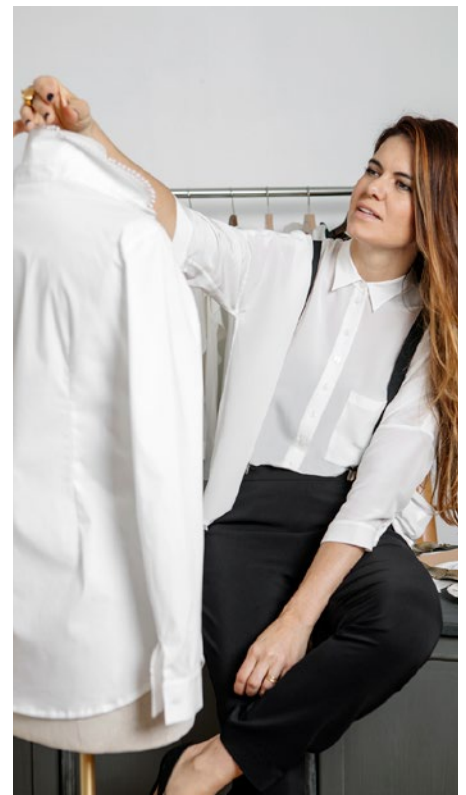


The fashion designer Anne Fontaine is a genius alive with exposure and capabilities in so many areas. Her fashion ideas have made a huge impact on feminine styles and identities. And as we know, they are a key fashion plate here in Las Vegas, as around the world.

One of the staples in her fashion line is the iconic white shirt for women. When asked about her inspiration for the style, she believes that “a white shirt is a timeless elegance and one with which each woman can express herself”. We know that all women have white shirts and they all take on different “roles” in their wardrobes. A lot of appreciation and thanks

goes to Anne Fontaine for her love of the white shirt! And part of the awesomeness of a white shirt is the fact that it can be worn casually, dressy, or elegantly!

Style definitely influences the Fontaine fashion world and she believes that women’s style should reflect and highlight each woman’s personality. As we know, when each of us shop for clothing, we know the styles we like and those that others like. It’s comes in great when shopping for gifts for friends and family too. When asked about style, Fontaine replied, “Being stylish is a story of having your own look, sometimes in advance or in lag. My style is timeless elegance and femininity.”



Fontaine believes that women connect with her designs simply because they like “her style and its French touch.” She also believes that the fabric and craftsmanship in her clothing is a huge appeal to ladies. We know that the classic styles and design in the Anne Fontaine line are key.

Anne’s love of Paris is a huge incentive for her designs and she believes that “lavish and diverse fashion” in Paris provides key essentials for designers. Her creativity and designs reflect that and will continue to do so.





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A nighttime photograph of a Las Vegas cityscape. In the foreground, a glowing, illuminated wig vest is visible, which is the subject of the article. The background shows a busy street with cars and buildings, including a prominent skyscraper with many lit windows. The overall scene is vibrant and colorful, capturing the energy of the city at night.

FALL INTO AUTUMN

Presented by Las Vegas Artist & Photographer Oscar Picazo

These glamorous images feature the vibrant beauty of Las Vegas. Oscar's unique visions shared in this special issue of Chic Compass showcase the sophisticated view he has of beauty during the Las Vegas autumn season. As one of the top photographers in the city, Oscar Picazo's attention to detail and overall concept capture the true essence of beauty.

Model: Dani Reeves
Wig Vest by Oscar Picazo





Model: Eryka Yar
T-Shirt by Guess

Model: Manuela Asane
Paper Dress by Oscar Picazo



Model: Jocell Villa
Dress by Roberto Cavalli





Model: Shelbi Byrnes
T-Shirt and Pants by Zara



Vdara

THE COSMOPOLITA



Model: Zitlaly Cervantes
Plastic Dress by Oscar Picazo



Model: Amy Lefevre

Model: Josie Jones
Dress by Labourjosisie





Model: Josie Jones
Dress by Stello





Model: Dani Reeves
Dress by Antonio Corbi





Model: Josie Jones
Dress by VERSACE



Model: Josie Jones

MARK GUNTER

GETTING THE BEST SHOT

By Gerry Simpson

Mark Gunter can honestly say that the seed of a career as a Fashion Photographer was planted in the 70's with a photograph that he snapped of his Mother dressed with style on her way out for the evening.

Gunter went on to enlist in the Military Services and served in The Gulf War. He used every opportunity to get behind the lens of a camera which allowed him to perfect his talents as a photographer.

Fast forward to the year 2013, Mark Gunter got his first opportunity to shoot for Sacramento Fashion Week. Mark's goal was to get the best shot, which has become his motto ever since. From that point, Gunter set his sights on the bigger picture, New York City's Fashion Week.

Shooting the runways of Sacramento, New York, Los Angeles and more gave way to an introduction to Sheen Magazine where Gunter receives credits for his editorial work. His fashion photographs appear in numerous celebrity and fashion magazines domestically as well as

on the international fashion scene. He has captured the visions of Fashion Designers David Tupaz, Colleen Quen, Vasily Vein, Maisha Bahati, Woody Wilson and more.

Gunter has been behind his camera in: San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Palm Springs, New York City, Georgia and St. Thomas Fashion Weeks to include events such as: The Soul Train Awards, The BET Awards, The BET Experience |BET's Fashion X, Rock The Runway, Miss Korea USA, Bronner Bros. International Beauty Show and more.

When on photo assignment Mr. Gunter is known to be sharply dressed often in a tuxedo which has become his signature style.

Mark Gunter's mission and his dream has fast become his reality, the dream of being a World-Class Fashion and Runway Photographer.





Design by Adolfo Sanchez
Photo by Mark Gunter



Design by Adolfo Sanchez
Photo by Mark Gunter



Design by Adolfo Sanchez
Photo by Mark Gunter



Model: Celai West
Design by Mario De La Torre
Photo by Mark Gunter



Design by Nina Gleyzer
Photo by Mark Gunter



Model: Jamie Lynn Williams
Design by Prima Jiva
Photo by Mark Gunter



Model: Erin Green
Design by Richard Hallmarq
Photo by Mark Gunter



Model: Madeline Berl
Design by Urica
Photo by Mark Gunter



Design by Malan Brenton
Photo by Mark Gunter



Design by Malan Brenton
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Design by Sue Wong
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LAS VEGAS MARKET

By Carolyn Muse Grant

The Las Vegas Market is the local shopping area for designers. “Las Vegas Market is the nation’s fastest growing gift and home décor market and the leading furniture marketplace in the western U.S. presenting 4,100+ gift, home décor and furniture resources in an unrivaled market destination. Las Vegas Market features thousands of gift, furniture and home décor lines, allowing for cross-category commerce among these industries.”

It is an amazing place to shop for designers and their clients, and

new things are coming. Lee Hershberg, Vice President of Home Decor Leasing at the market tells us about “a new extension of work with the design community - a venue showing off kitchens and bathrooms.”

The LVDC Kitchen & Bath Resource Center was ready for the summer market. Several local designers were involved and we would like to introduce you to the Kitchen Concept designed by Cary Vogel and Lance Robins (pictured in the advertisement to the right).

Vogel explained his venture. “We were delighted to have been invited to participate in the inaugural LVDC Kitchen & Bath Resource Center. This Resource Center was inspired by the Las Vegas design community’s need for a more comprehensive design center, bringing together onto one campus more of the local Las Vegas vendors related to home design and construction.”

“My kitchen will display state of the art appliances including a range from ILVE, in-wall coffeemaker provided by WOLF, a Samsung French door refrigerator, all through Monark Home, as well as porcelain slab countertops, so easy to maintain, and a porcelain floor tile providing a trompe l’oeil effect of a wood and marble chevron design, all from Walker-Zanger. Piano black cabinets with brass trim, custom made by Infinite Trend, make for a sophisticated space for both cooking and entertaining; counter stools from Vanguard Furniture, wall coverings from Thibaut, lighting from Currey & Co. All add to the timeless design appropriate for a home in Las Vegas or any other city.”

Nate Jones with Infinite Trend was selected as the cabinet supplier. “We were honored that Cary Vogel selected us. He came in with fresh ideas and we created a look for him that is totally unique, upscale and sophisticated.”

So be sure to stay with us to get more updates on what’s happened at our wonderful design arena in Las Vegas. More new experiences are coming.



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LVDC Kitchen Display
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ADVENTURES IN DINING AND TRAVEL

SPAIN

THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

By Richard Stearns

I have always been attracted to travel. See The World!! I started my travel at a young age with cut out photos for what was to become my bucket list.

Being a designer and importer traveling the world in search of products to import included working with the Ministry of Culture in the Forbidden City in China. I was immersed into the Chinese Culture far beyond a normal tourist's experience and I never got over it. That only encouraged me to see and do more. I have been very lucky in that regard and I have managed to make my original bucket list dwindle considerably. But, a new bucket list seems to have more and more items on the agenda.

What's next? A day here, maybe a few days there? How about a cruise to relax? Hmm.....No, not this time. Instead my husband Graham Palmer Stearns rented a



Ancient Roman Amphitheater and Castillo de Gibralfaro in the background.

penthouse apartment in the Historic Center of Malaga, Spain for a whole month. This would be our attempt to immerse ourselves into the Spanish Culture.

As we walked into our apartment for the first time, floor to ceiling windows covered the entire south side of the apartment. The view

was, quite simply, spectacular and breathtaking!! There, right before us, was a 400-year-old cathedral and an 800-year-old Moorish Castle to our left.

While we normally unpack first thing upon arrival somewhere, it wasn't happening on this trip. In moments we were out the door and ready to explore our new city. As we walked through the ancient streets and avenues you could, figuratively, feel the history of this ancient city just oozing from the buildings around us. Just a 10 minute walk from our apartment and we came upon an amphitheater which

had been built by the Romans over 2000 years ago. It is still in use to this day. As we continued to wander we walked by the birthplace of Pablo Picasso with his statue sitting on a park bench just across the street.

During the next few weeks we would discover museum after mu-



seum throughout this amazing city. They contained artifacts that included African Art, ancient Spanish ruins and restored art treasures from Spanish and Moorish artists and, of course, religious art treasures dating back centuries.

Among the ancient discoveries were Roman Fish Basins where fish was salted and then sent throughout the Empire for sale and consumption. Malaga was a major trading port for the Phoenicians, Romans, Moors and Spanish for centuries. This was a favorite port for King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. Yes, they sent Christopher Columbus to discover the New World (The Americas).

Food it seems is always front and center in Spain whether you are shopping for it, preparing it, serving it or eating it. Every part of it in Spain is an adventure. Our trip to the market, Mercado de Atarazans, was a culinary delight for the eyes. A visual feast that didn't stop from the moment we walked in until the moment we left. The market provides an overabundance of everything!! There is nothing in this market that is frozen or filled with preservatives. Everything is fresh, fresh, fresh. The fish has been caught in the morning and some of it is still alive and moving as you try to decide what you want. The meat selection and the choices of cuts and sizes are yours for the asking. Chanterelle mushrooms and

black truffles sit in huge mounds just waiting to be selected. Fresh fruit is bounteous and the variety would satisfy anyone. Spices and Herbs are colorful and plentiful filling your nose with their rich and exotic scents. Hams, the pride of Spain, are proudly labeled with the name of the farm that produced them. They are whole and still "on the hoof," hanging from hooks, sometimes hundreds of them, in grocery and specialty stores alike. All these hams are aged, spiced and prepared according to the region they are from (Jamon Iberico and Jamon Serrano are just two). Like wine, the price can be reasonable or very, very expensive. Sometimes, an exceptional ham can cost thousands of dollars.

Another new favorite for us was the locally produced Pâté. It was so fresh it simply melted in your mouth with flavors that exploded on your taste buds. It didn't take us long to buy a different Pâté every trip and take it back for an hors d'oeuvre to delight in with a glass of sangria before going out to dinner.

We crisscrossed the city every day, averaging 8,000 to 12,000 steps, while always watching the visual kaleidoscope of people, shops and cafes. Even the strolling street performers were at times so good we wondered why they weren't established as professionals.

We generally started out every morning without a plan except for breakfast. Our favorite place, we went there almost every day, had a waiter whose name was Pepe. He was truly one of those people who knew how to make the most of his job. He sang, he danced, and he would just shout out our order. Miraculously, the kitchen would hear him and our food would be delivered promptly and correctly. One day as we were coming up to the restaurant we noticed that Pepe wasn't working. Instead of our usual breakfast, we took Pepe's absence as a "sign" to go somewhere else. We ended up in a classic churro restaurant a few doors down and we had fresh deep-fried churros with a hot chocolate dipping sauce. Oh, YUM!!! We felt as though heaven had descended on us. What else do we need to say?

We would normally stop for our big Spanish meal of the day around

two to three in the afternoon. We made it a point to try and go to a different restaurant every day to experience as much as we could of the regional foods. And, of course, a siesta always followed. Then in the early evening we would once again stroll out into the streets to experience the ever-exciting nightlife. After all, this is the home of the Flamenco!! Ole!! Returning to the apartment at the end of a full day of experiencing Malaga we would just have a light tapa while we watched the cathedral and the castle light up as the sun would set and call it a night. What a GREAT way to live.



Malaga sits on the Mediterranean Sea with beautiful, wide clean beaches. One beautiful sunny day we walked down to the beach, La Malagueta, rented a palapas (for shade), two chaises and we just laid by the sea and enjoyed the day to its utmost. We watched the sea as it rolled in and out with gentle waves. We watched the peo-

ple as they sunned themselves and dove into the crystal blue water of the sea and frolicked by the shore. And then there was the food (there is always food).

The little seaside restaurants are plentiful and no matter which part of the beach you are on there is a restaurant close by. They all cook their food the same way, however. The seafood is skewered and cooked up against an open fire of old grapevine that gives it a wonderful flavor. With yet another pitcher of Sangria for refreshment you could hardly ask for a better or a more Spanish meal.

Another one of our favorite places to go during our walks was the park. It was just across the street from the seaport and stretched its entire length. The plants were established about 150 years ago and their massive size today proves it. There are Birds of Paradise, Palm Trees, fountains, ponds, and statuary throughout the entire park and it is always shady and cool as you walk through it. We enjoyed it so much that we managed to work it into our explorations every day, either coming from or going to our destinations. Along the edges of the park were horse drawn carriages that were available for rent. The horses had their manes and tails braided and the carriages were painted intricately.

After three weeks of history, museums, and festivals (one that featured over 100 decorated gypsy wagons going through the winding streets), the Procession of Victoria was even bigger. The Victoria Statue from the cathedral (The



official name of the Cathedral of Malaga is the Nuestra Señora de la Encarnación, but everyone calls it "La Manquita") was moved to the outside (pictured above) to view the entire procession. The whole thing began at five in the afternoon and continued until three in the morning with music, dancing and fireworks. This unique festival brought 10 different Madonna's from all different parts of the city for the elaborate procession. Each Madonna was dressed in robes that were richly brocaded. The platforms that held them were laden with candelabras made of gold and silver. Each of these platforms required approximately 300 men to carry them through the streets. I have never ever seen anything like this in my life and likely will never see another procession like it again. It was a once in a lifetime event. As it turns out, this entire religious festival was to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the crowning of the Patron Saint of Malaga.

As our time for leaving was coming upon us far too quickly we

reserved a table at the charming restaurant, La Reserva del Olivo. We had walked by it several times and had mentioned each time that we should try and eat at this place. The second floor of the restaurant had three small terraces that opened onto the street in front of the restaurant. As luck would have it they put us in the middle

terrace window and we had to pinch ourselves at the luck we were having. From our vantage point Malaga looked like a movie set. We reveled in watching everything below us as we enjoyed a magnificent dinner. The chef came out to meet us and we took our photo with him. He signed a menu for us and we thanked him as we left, walking into the setting sun and knowing our time in Spain had come to an end.

What I experienced in Spain for a month can provide, even late in life, a deeper appreciation of a different culture. By mingling with the locals and observing their way of doing things, it taught me we have more in common than we have differences.

Now, would we go back? Absolutely, without a doubt.

Viva España!



La reserva del Olivo Restaurant.



David Tupaz

AMERICAN COUTURE

Photography By Tolga Katas

*L*as Vegas designer David Tupaz was trained in the manner of the Haute Couture tradition. Paris, France is the main headquarters of Haute Couture with the institution called the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture Parisienne. It votes to qualify those to be a "couture" designer... but just IN PARIS!

Tupaz feels that in the USA the Couture center is Hollywood, California. It is the place where the most spectacular, fabulous and glamorous costumes, dresses and gowns that the world has ever seen were all designed, created and manufactured from the days of silent films to the time of Garbo, Monroe, Hepburn, and Kelly. The films documented the brilliance of American high fashion. So,

the new Tupaz brand is labeled DAVID TUPAZ "American Couture"

Tupaz has always been fascinated with "Old Hollywood" and he carries that aesthetic to his designs today. He updates it to the way women live in this generation and keeps that dignified grace which is "elegance", using the most luxurious materials and techniques from generations past. Most of his work is done by hand.

David creates the design details of embroideries, hand beading and applique embellishments himself. His work is like cooking! The required ingredients and recipes must be followed to perfection. David believes there is no compromise to Couture and says, "If you cannot give 100% to it... don't bother."

His designs and elegant creations are worn by some of the most stylish and glamorous women in the world - celebrities, movie stars, personalities, royalty, first ladies, etc.!

David adds, "I don't need to name drop the women who wear my designs. I am very private and most of these clients end up becoming good close friends...and using their image to promote my label is bad taste. To me my designs speak for themselves. That is how I believe the pursuit of excellence in design must be promoted. It is all about the product!"

And the fabulous designs keep coming. David Tupaz is a key to the continuous "American Couture".



Design by David Tupaz
Photo by Tolga Katas



“David believes there is no compromise to Couture and says, ‘If you cannot give 100% to it... don’t bother.’”

Design by David Tupaz
Photo by Tolga Katas





Design by David Tupaz
Photo by Tolga Katas



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Asian Culture Alliance (ACA) founder-president Cavin Fung (middle, in yellow shirt) and Asian Culture TV (ACTV) CEO Carl Magno (center) with show hosts, guest performers, and production crews during the taping of Music Asia Christmas Special filmed at the ACA Center in downtown Las Vegas.

ACTV

MAKING (AIR)WAVES EVERYWHERE

Article and Photography By Zen S. Laluna

Surely, it is poised to create tidal (air)waves in the near future.

Asian Culture TV (ACTV), a 24/7 Asian television network on Digital Channel 30.6 (Las Vegas), is distinctly making constant ripples since its launch a year ago. And there is no stopping it from creating ripples... till it churns into a tsunami over the airwaves, or online sooner than expected.

Conceived in August 2016 by joint venture partners ACA and VAsianTV, ACTV was formally launched on January 21, 2017 with its premier telecast of *Asian News*, the first ever newscast dedicated to Asians and Asian Americans in the Las Vegas Valley, and now, the world.

Since its launch, ACTV has not stopped its ascent from a single television newscast to its current programming that encompasses

multi-ethnic cultures, arts, entertainment, travel, tourism, lifestyle, Christian worship, and coverage of community events that impact the diverse Asian-American communities in Las Vegas and elsewhere.

Today, ACTV's station-produced shows include the *Asian News* (in English and Chinese versions); *Music Asia* that promotes local talents; *Under The Vegas Sun* with Steve Schorr, a show about movers and shakers of Vegas Valley; *Good Samaritan* with Dr. Paul Magno, which educates viewers on how to help others with non-serious medical issues; *Flags of Asia*, which introduces the Flags of the 48 Asian nations recognized by the United Nations; *Food Asia*, which introduces four of the top dishes from each of the 48 Asian nations; *Profiles*, a brief introduction by members of Asian Culture Alliance; *Window of Art* by Chinese artist and president

of the American Artist Association (AMA) Dingrong Liu; Qigong by Master Yuen; TaeKwondo by Master Starry Du; *Beauty by Cristina*, hosted by make-up artist Cristina Jacobs; *B&B Vegas*, featuring the many Bed & Breakfast providers in Las Vegas; plus a host of future shows already in the can.

ACTV also prides itself of local and international content contributors that provide entertaining programs aimed at the Global Asian market. These include Living Asia Channel's *On Foot/Young Asia*, *Animals Asia*, *Asia Lifestyle* and *Asia Travel*; *Inside Taiwan*, *Taiwan Travel* and *Fall in Love with Taiwan* - all travel-and-tourism themed shows; *Ultimate Guide* on how to live a happy life; *Praze* and *Las Vegas Tonight* - both Christian worship programs.

ASIAN NEWS

Asian News airs twice daily on Saturdays at 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Digital Channel 30.6 (Las Vegas), with simulcasts on [Youtube.com/AsianCultureTV](https://www.youtube.com/AsianCultureTV), www.actvus.com, and on the *ACTV-05media APP* worldwide, its own global platform. As a result, it is able to reach close to three billion smart phone users all over the world. ACTV's platform provider-partner, *05 Media LLC*, is a Silicon-Valley based entity founded by Dr. Sai Agahi.

Asian News, a weekly news broadcast, highlights activities and events that impact the lives of Las Vegas Valley's Asian-American community. Immediately after

its launch, the Chinese-American community created its own version in Chinese language.

Likewise, the *Asian News-English* version had attracted the attention of other multi-ethnic Asian groups in Las Vegas. Equally inspired, they followed suit and produced their own segments featuring their respective communities, local events and projects.

Mike Stajuana hosts and produces *Fil-Am TV*, focused on the Filipino-American community.

Joy Singphen helms the *Thai-Am TV*, produced by Sandy Muen-souk, for the Thai-American community. Pam Phan stars and produces the *Viet-Am TV* for the Vietnamese-American community. The *Afghan-Am TV* and the *Korean-Am TV* segments, to be produced by Sharifa Wahab and Oliver Lee, respectively, will soon air on *Asian News*, too.

Daniel Wang, a TV News personality in Taiwan for over 30 years prior to migrating to Las Vegas, broadcasts the Chinese version of *Asian News*. Rosaline Schorr, president of the Chinese American Group (CAG), anchors the show whenever Daniel Wang is on travel.

The *Asian News-English* version is anchored by a team of veteran female broadcasters namely, Shannon Yang, Melody Mojica, Diana Fung and Katherina Sherman, and Asian-American beauty queens Emily Jung and Esmeralda Padilla-Gould (who also writes "Vegas Vibes" for *Manila UP International*

Magazine based in California). Her own TV version of "Vegas Vibes" deals with music, live productions and pageants.

Shannon Yang also produces a stand-alone show entitled "Life with Style" which covers a wide range of Lifestyle topics including fashion, nutrition and sports.

Melody Mojica produces *Home Sweet Home*, a segment which focuses on real estate, health care, as well as government matters.

Immigration Matters, another major segment of *Asian News*, is hosted by attorney Vissia Calderon, a prominent Immigration lawyer in Las Vegas.

"*Asian News* is primarily about Asians and Asian-Americans, and about Las Vegas, secondarily.

While it focuses on local happenings in the diverse Asian-American communities in Las Vegas it also highlights national and international issues that impact Asian-Americans like immigration, jobs, and the economy, among the current hot topics," Carl Magno, ACTV Founder/CEO, says of his first show venture under the new ACTV network.

MUSIC ASIA

"*Music Asia*, another trendy ACTV program, is a shot-as-live musical show that promotes local mainstream and Asian talents crooning familiar tunes, but singing them the Asian way," Magno describes the now popular ACTV talents show.



ACTV Music Asia and Asian News segment-hosts (l-r) Art Mendoza, Pam Phan, Esmeralda Padilla-Gould, Shannon Yang, Dr. Vissia Calderon, Melody Mojica and Michael StaJuana (Photo by Bill Bon)

The hour-long *Music Asia* also airs twice daily at 10:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. and premieres new episodes every Saturday. *Music Asia* has recently shown a remarkable increase in its viewership among Asians and non-Asians alike.

“Eventually, as we get more financial and technical support, we plan to incorporate Asian instruments with the musical pieces to encourage local artists to pen original musical compositions,” reveals Magno.

Music Asia is hosted by a tandem of prolific performers namely Art Mendoza (the suave Fil-Am Frank Sinatra) and the beautiful and multi-talented Mrs. Asian-Las Vegas 2014 Esmeralda Padilla-Gould. Together, they either set *Music Asia* on-fire on-screen, or create more ripples to attract more audience and draw more talents into the show. Nelson Alcantara, *Mu-*

sic Asia’s musical director, accompanies performers with his superb piano playing.

Music Asia provides support to all performing arts talents by promoting their online portfolio, while providing viewers and talent scouts the opportunity to view or listen to the artists’ body of work.

“The worldwide exposure could pave the way for these artists to tap a source for paid bookings. It’s our small way of supporting local talents to gain traction in their career,” Magno adds.

Magno is no stranger to the challenges and triumphs of creating an outlet for Asian awareness in Las Vegas. Despite initial failure, he was undaunted in his mission to showcase the beauty and uniqueness of Asian culture and traditions, even as he highlights the migrant Asians’ contribution to the vibrant

economy of the City of Las Vegas, County of Clark, and the state of Nevada in general.

An alumnus of Ateneo University-Davao City, and armed with a B.S. in Business Administration, and an MBA in Marketing from Eastern Washington University in Cheney, Washington, Magno was not deterred in fulfilling his childhood dream.

Growing up in Davao City, he dreamed of migrating to America, acquiring American citizenship, and settling in the city of Las Vegas, the entertainment capital of the world. Captivated by his boyhood idols namely Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, and the Rat Pack, Magno never wavered in his aspiration. In 2007, his dream became reality.

Magno’s biggest break came when he and CCI Asia partners in the Philippines created and launched the first-ever television channel dedicated to travel. *Lakbay (Travel) TV* was launched on March 19, 1999, years ahead of Travel Channel. CCI Asia (a Manila-based company Magno founded) moved on to the pan-Asian market by re-structuring and launching the first Asian Travel and Lifestyle channel aptly called *Living Asia Channel* in 2001. It invaded the North American airwaves through Dish Network, World TV, and TFC in 2004.

Magno moved to Las Vegas in 2007 and teamed up with a Filipino-American content group led by Guy Rendon and Bill Bon, to form Vegas Asian TV, (coined as

VAsianTV) and its broadcast arm VAsian Group which included Jing Espiritu, Bob Jose and Robert Rivera. One of its memorable shows was a big hit - "It's Vegas with Lani" hosted by Asia's Nightingale and Las Vegas headliner Lani Misalucha.

Also under the mantle of VAsianTV were *Pinoy Street USA*, and *VegasLifeTV*. The original attempt to create a television channel in Las Vegas specifically for Asians met its untimely demise in 2013 when its TV platform KTUD Channel 25, went dark.

Co-founders Magno and Rendon went on to re-structure VAsianTV with new partners, including fashion icon David Tupaz, media star Steve Schorr, real estate broker Mark Bowman and Naturopathic practitioner David Knight. Together, they produced weekly shows

and aired them locally on Cox Cable, and distributed them globally via the channel brand *VegasLifeTV*.

Through the years, Magno's strong passion in promoting Asian culture to keep the multi-ethnic Asian communities in Las Vegas united never wavered. In 2016, Vic Esquivel introduced him to Cavin Fung, whose heart and passion also revolved around Asian Americans in Las Vegas. Talking with Fung on the same wavelength, Magno was more than convinced to revive his old 24/7 VAsianTV network.

Cavin Fung is founder/president of the Asian Culture Alliance (ACA), a 501 (c) (3) foundation established in 2014. The meeting between two like-minded entrepreneurs turned into a fortuitous partnership and proved to be a coup de grace. ACA and VAsianTV agreed

to a joint venture and created a 24/7 TV network specifically for the Asian American community in Las Vegas with plans to expand its reach later on elsewhere around the globe.

For Magno, it was a dream-come-true. He never gave up on his dream, never wavered in his passion for his Asian roots, fueled by his conviction that there is more to Vegas than The Strip and the downtown District.

So did Cavin Fung, whose fervor and devotion to the Asian American community of Las Vegas is legendary. Fung was steadfast in his belief that "The world is a wonderful place, but we believe it can be made more beautiful through sharing, uniting, and then moving forward together to create real change." Thus, the Asian Culture Alliance (aka ACA) was born.

The ACA has its new headquarters, called ACA Center, on 333 South 6th Street, downtown Las Vegas. It moved following a devastating fire that gutted its former operations base on Valley View Boulevard last year. ACTV films all its shows at the ACA Center.

To test the market and the strength of their partnership, both Magno and Fung agreed to re-create and re-launch the *Asian News*, the former's erstwhile flagship television program. Having witnessed firsthand how ACA cared for its members, providing open membership and some 40 free classes at the ACA Center, Magno's hope for the vibrant Asian American community in the Las Vegas Valley soared.



Asian Culture TV (ACTV) CEO Carl Magno (2nd from left) and Asian Culture Alliance (ACA) founder-president Cavin Fung (right, in yellow shirt) join Music Asia hosts Esmeralda Padilla-Gould (center) Art Mendoza, and pianist Nelson Alcantara (left) after taping *Music Asia Christmas Special* at the Asian Culture Alliance Center on December 14, 2017.

ACTV's main target for viewership and content are Asians. However, businesses interested in the huge Asian market, are naturally targeted, too. So, how does ACTV reach out to them?

"We have English and Chinese languages in our current programming, so obviously we are after 60% of the global Asian population - the Global Asians. We are creatively reaching our target audience through strategic and tactical relationships with people and organizations that can bring the message to our intended viewers," shares Magno.

Since ACTV is not funded by a major corporation or a large non-profit company, it has to rely on the strength of its very own people, according to Magno. "We carefully select the people who run the station, especially the hosts of the programs who are also our Ambassadors of Goodwill. It is a must that they believe in the ACTV mission, that they possess the heart for honest-to-goodness service to mankind- looking beyond themselves,

and believing that when we all do good, we will all be doing well," Magno explains ACTV's philosophy.

"ACTV is still in its infantile stage, so everyone's investing in its future. Some like-thinkers provide financial support, others expend time, while others burn the midnight oil and provide the much-needed technical and creative effort. Because we are not funded by an angel investor, the process of reaching our desired audience is a slow and tedious one," reveals Magno matter-of-factly.

ACTV has a lean organization. John, Magno's youngest son, directs the Production and Programming department. Bill Bon heads the Broadcast Design and Graphics department. Nathan Golden leads Post Production and assists in the production of station-produced shows. Kosta Bakalas guides the Program Acquisition. Eva Ren handles post-production of Chinese content. Guy Rendon continues to provide technical and technological support. ACTV's Chair, Cavin

Fung, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Rosaline Schorr, Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) David Knight, and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Carl Magno, fill in all the other positions critical to operating a 24/7 broadcast and online network.

The shows are currently funded by station sponsors, Go Global Realty, and F10 Inspection, plus a few advertisers. Fung and Magno themselves also dig deep from their own pockets. He acknowledges support from hundreds of active ACA members who benefit from the free classes and other assistance programs at the ACA Center. They in turn donate time and money to ACTV's partner - the Asian Culture Alliance (ACA) - which helps support the network.

On top of its multi-faceted programming, ACTV also features on live television the various ACA free classes being offered at the ACA Center. "The rationale behind this," according to Magno, "is to allow more people worldwide to benefit from the free classes on-air or on-line."

Depending on where one lives in Clark County, Nevada, Digital Channel 30.6 is easily accessible on FreeTV/over-the-air, by using an indoor (rabbit ears or amplified) or outdoor antenna; online or via live streaming at ACTVUS.com and YouTube.com/AsianCultureTV, as well as, on major social media platforms.

ACTV can be reached at:
(702) 979-1388 and/or
(800) 281-2849



ACTV's Asian News anchor Esmeralda Padilla-Gould preps with producer-director John Magno (center) and camera man Ian Bon (right) before actual taping of the weekly TV news program.

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A woman with blonde hair is standing on stone steps in front of a classical building with columns. She is wearing a white, off-the-shoulder, long-sleeved top with wide, flared sleeves and matching white wide-leg trousers. She is also wearing a white choker necklace with a small pendant and holding a black clutch bag with a white decorative border. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

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