



February 12, 2021

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Gourmet Cabaret Cirque Event (Bacio Rosso) - Report Back & New Location

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board receive for information the report back on the 2018/2019 Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event (Bacio Rosso) as outlined in this report;
- B. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve a request from Event Producer Scott Malcolm to host a Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event in the Burrard Civic Marina land storage area from November 2021 to March 2022, with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the Park Board General Manager; and
- C. FURTHER THAT, subject to approval of Recommendation B, the Vancouver Park Board approve an application from Event Producer Scott Malcolm to seek a Special Event Permit from the BC Liquor Control & Licensing Branch to serve alcohol at the Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event location, with a maximum capacity of 325 guests.

REPORT SUMMARY

The inaugural Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event (or “Bacio Rosso”) was hosted in the south parking lot at Queen Elizabeth Park between November 1, 2018 and March 10, 2019. The event was enjoyed by over 18,000 guests and received an overwhelmingly positive response from attendees, artists, suppliers, Vancouverites, and visitors to the city. A number of operational issues were also identified for improvement. The purpose of this report is to provide a report back on the first year of this event, and given the successful delivery and response to this initiative, seek Vancouver Park Board (or “Park Board” or “Board”) approval to host this event in a new location at the Burrard Civic Marina land storage area from November 2021 to March 2022, subject to the event meeting applicable public health directives during the duration of the initiative.

BOARD AUTHORITY / POLICY / PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Per the [Vancouver Charter](#), the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over park land use in the City of Vancouver, including any structures, programs, activities, fees, and improvements that occur within designated parks.

As informed by the [Special Event Policy & Guidelines](#) approved by the Board in December 2003, as well as current practices, Park Board approval is required for special events not included in the Annual Calendar of Major Special Events and/or that are in variance with one or more Park Board by-laws. On May 13, 2019, the Board [directed staff to update the aforementioned guidelines](#). Concurrent with this direction, the Board also instructed staff to maintain and support the Park Board’s current portfolio of commercial events and activities, but issued a moratorium on the introduction of any new commercial initiatives until after the Special Event Guidelines have been updated and approved by the Board. The Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event is an existing

initiative within the Park Board's commercial event portfolio that was in place prior to the introduction of the moratorium, and as such, is not impacted by that decision.

[VanPlay](#), the Board's Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan (2020) sets priorities and provides tools and policies to support the pursuit of equity, connectivity and access to parks and recreation for all. The Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event (Bacio Rosso) supports and aligns with VanPlay's directions to "Welcome Everyone" (parks and recreation experiences that improve quality of life) and "Weave the City Together" (parks, nature, recreation and culture integrated into everyday life).

On November 20, 2017, the Park Board approved an application from Event Producer Scott Malcolm to host a Gourmet Cabaret Cirque experience (Bacio Rosso) in the south parking lot at Queen Elizabeth Park, with a maximum daily attendance of 325 guests. The Board also approved an application from the Event Producer for a Special Event Permit from the BC Liquor Control & Licensing Branch to serve alcohol at the event.

BACKGROUND

Event Overview

The Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event (Bacio Rosso) was delivered between November 1, 2018 and March 10, 2019 in the south parking lot at Queen Elizabeth Park. With Vancouver's second largest destination park as its backdrop, Bacio Rosso:

- Offered guests a fully immersive 3-hour performance experience hosted inside an antique Spiegeltent lined with plush red velvet, hand crafted woodwork, and over 2,000 beveled mirrors;
- Featured a fusion of international circus artists, comedy, singers, magicians, and a 4-piece musical ensemble, complemented by a 4-course gourmet meal curated by one of Vancouver's award winning chefs; and
- Attracted audiences from a wide range of demographics and interests, and supplemented Vancouver's December holiday season.

Event Location

Bacio Rosso was hosted in the south parking lot at Queen Elizabeth Park and utilized a footprint of approximately 20,000 square feet, equivalent to 75% of the parking lot area. This first time event location offered a paved surface/hardscape, which was a key consideration in enabling this event given its activation during Vancouver's wet winter months. In addition to meeting the paved surface/hardscape requirement, the south parking lot also possessed the following important attributes:

- Low public use/significant available capacity during the event period;
- Alternative and convenient parking options located in the immediate vicinity;
- Event operations that could be supported primarily within the park (thereby reducing traffic impacts on neighboring residential streets); and
- Separation/buffer from nearest homes (150+ metres).

Event Producer Overview

The Gourmet Cabaret Cirque experience originated in Germany, and is offered across several major Western European cities, including Berlin, Vienna, Amsterdam, Nuremberg, Stuttgart,

Basel, and Munich, by industry-leading Palazzo Produktionen. Gourmet Cabaret Cirque was introduced into North America by German company Pomp Duck and Circumstance in 1995 (New York and Atlanta). It was expanded to other cities in the United States, including Seattle, San Francisco, and Chicago as Teatro Zinzanni, starting in 1998.

Mr. Scott Malcolm, a locally-based event producer is the principal behind the introduction of Canada's first Gourmet Cabaret Cirque experience at Queen Elizabeth Park. Mr. Malcolm has worked with each of the aforementioned companies, and is the past Artistic Director of both Teatro Zinzanni and Palazzo.

Event Highlights

The 2018/2019 Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event (Bacio Rosso) was enjoyed by over 18,000 guests, and received an overwhelmingly positive response from attendees, artists, suppliers, Vancouverites, and visitors to the city. A number of operational issues were also identified for improvement and are addressed later in this report.

Key highlights included:

Safety & Security

No major medical or safety issues occurred requiring Vancouver Police Department or Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services intervention. There was no damage or breaches to Park Board assets located in and around the event location. Despite the concentration of activity at the south parking lot, there was very little operational impact on other areas of the park.

Park Protection

Despite Bacio Rosso taking place during the wet winter season, there was no damage to paved surfaces/hardscape or adjacent grass areas during event set-up/tear-down or regular operations.

Transportation & Parking

The Event Producer developed a best practice-based transportation plan to reduce impacts on the event location and surrounding residential areas. While the event did produce some incremental traffic in adjacent neighbourhood streets, the plan was deemed successful and featured the following key elements:

- Promoted the use of public transit and taxis;
- Provided shuttle bus to connect the event location with nearby SkyTrain station;
- Directed guests to access the event location via the park's road system in order to reduce vehicle traffic on adjacent residential streets; and
- Encouraged guests to park in Queen Elizabeth Park rather than on adjacent residential streets.

Park By-Law Violations

A robust plan was developed and implemented to inform and enforce Park Board by-laws at the event. The plan proved effective and no by-law infractions were reported.

Sustainability

The event incorporated a number of sustainable practices, including:

- Implemented recycling and waste diversion practices, with clustering of waste and deployment of recycling bins with clearly marked signage throughout the event site;

- Used recyclable or reusable dinnerware, glassware, table settings, and table coverings;
- Encouraged and facilitated eco-friendly transportation;
- Significant use of digital technologies to reduce carbon footprint, including digital (paperless) ticketing, primarily digital advertising, and virtual meetings to reduce team travel requirements;
- Used LED lighting throughout the event instead of conventional fixtures, and lowered power draw outside of operational hours to promote energy conservation; and
- Utilized high efficiency washroom equipment and refillable water pitchers to reduce water use and unnecessary disposal of plastic bottles.

Public/Partner/Stakeholder Benefits

Benefits for the public, the Park Board, and other partners/stakeholders, included:

- Broad engagement of residents and visitors through artistic entertainment and food;
- Fostered civic vibrancy and community connectedness;
- Collaboration and support for local musicians, artists, and creative industries;
- Supported local businesses and created employment, including low barrier opportunities, for Vancouver residents; and
- Generated important revenues that were used to offset costs across other Park Board service areas and/or fund unbudgeted initiatives.

Reviews/Accolades

Gourmet Cabaret Cirque (Bacio Rosso) received numerous positive reviews and accolades during its inaugural year, including:

- “The acrobatics are stunning. These are world-class acts. And it is rare to see these dazzling feats in a setting so intimate... if dinner is a form of theatre, this is a glittery grandstand.” The Globe and Mail
- “It’s smart, spectacular and edible... I was impressed with the top notch acts and comic moments.” Vancouver Sun
- “Bacio Rosso is unlike anything Vancouver has ever seen... the show is boisterous and fun. The cast is stellar.” – The Georgia Straight
- “Bacio Rosso delights.” – Vancouver Weekly
- “The Spiegeltent is Vancouver’s very own life-sized jewel box – catch a glimpse before it’s gone.” – Montecristo

Event Delivery & Key Learnings

Gourmet Cabaret Cirque (Bacio Rosso) was enjoyed by thousands of guests and acknowledged as a strong success. However, as is the case with most first year events, a number of lessons were learned and several areas were identified for future operational improvements. These include:

Noise Impacts

Despite a strong focus on mitigating noise impacts during the planning process, which included reviewing sound monitoring data from other Gourmet Cabaret Cirque events and allowing for appropriate distance buffers from the nearest residences, sound bleed to a limited

number of adjacent homes proved to be the biggest issue. Managing sound emissions can be a challenging task and it is believed that the noise impacts emanating from the event were attributable to several factors, including sound engineering, tent insulation, music/artist genre, performance time/day, as well as weather conditions and the geography of the region (the first four elements are controllable, the latter two less so). Being a first time event site may have also contributed to resident discomfort and complaints.

The event received a total of 45 complaints during its 4.5 months of operation. Thirty-seven of those complaints were noise-related, with most originating from 6 to 8 households located immediately south of the event site. While the number of residences negatively impacted by Bacio Rosso was relatively modest, the magnitude of impact to these residents was considered meaningful. As a result, it was determined that a new location should be identified and utilized for future editions of a Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event.

The noise complaint data has been analyzed and shared with the Event Producer, and both Park Board staff and the Event Producer are committed to ensuring that future Gourmet Cabaret Cirque productions will take specific action to minimize noise emissions from the event venue. These actions could include the placement of real-time sound monitoring stations at key locations within the region, active response to noise complaints, improved sound engineering, and adjusting music/artist programming.

Other Follow-Up Issues

Consistent with the delivery of new events, every aspect of the event was analyzed by both Park Board staff and the Event Producer. Based on these assessments, a number of additional issues were identified for improvement at future Bacio Rosso events, including:

- Due to issues associated with sound emissions, tent insulation at future events should be increased and event performances should be concluded at designated times; and
- The event location at Queen Elizabeth Park lacked electrical power hook-ups, meaning that the event was powered with diesel generators which produced noise and carbon emissions; accordingly, future Gourmet Cabaret Cirque events should be located in spaces with electrical event power.

Stakeholder Feedback

Notwithstanding complaints from neighboring residents, the overall response to Bacio Rosso from Vancouverites and visitors to the city was very favorable. Key highlights are summarized below:

- Park Board received numerous letters of support from event attendees, performing artists, and event partners;
- Strong feedback was received across social media platforms;
- Post-event surveys conducted by the Park Board indicated:
 - o 98% of event goers enjoyed their experience at Bacio Rosso;
 - o 99% of respondents agreed that events like Bacio Rosso enhance civic vibrancy and arts and culture in Vancouver;
 - o 99% of event goers would like to see more events like Bacio Rosso in the city; and
 - o 98% of respondents felt that a park is an appropriate location for an event of this nature.
- Positive feedback from local tourism organizations and media.

DISCUSSION

Event Proposal

Given the popularity of the inaugural Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event (Bacio Rosso), and recognizing that the success and viability of the initiative is dependent on growing guest attendance and hosting the event over multiple years, the Event Producer is seeking approval to host a Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event in a new Park Board location from November 2021 to March 2022. Due to uncertainties created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the exact event dates will be determined later in 2021, and communicated to the Board once available. The back end of the event, including tear-down, will not extend beyond the end of March. Future editions of the Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event will be executed in much the same manner, and have similar requirements and form factor as the 2018/2019 event, with the exception of the following changes:

- Tent insulation would be increased within structural guidelines to reduce potential sound bleed;
- The event would be located in an area with electrical event power in order to eliminate the use of diesel generators; and
- Performances will be executed to end at designated times on all show nights.

For the Board's reference, a summary of some of the key event parameters are provided below.

New Event Location

Analysis by Park Board staff, in collaboration with the Event Producer, have identified the Burrard Civic Marina land storage area as the preferred and recommended location for year 2 of this event (see Appendix A). In addition to meeting the paved surface/hardscape requirement, the recommended site possesses the following attributes:

- Available capacity to host the event in an existing commercial space;
- Green event power kiosk located nearby;
- Large inventory of onsite parking; and
- Sizeable separation/buffer from the nearest homes – 450+ meters to the north, 400+ metres to the south, and 210+ metres to the east (separated by the Burrard Street Bridge and a greenbelt) – which when combined with the changes referenced above, are anticipated to significantly reduce the potential for noise complaints.

The Burrard Civic Marina land storage site is also located in an active area of the city with a notable amount of environmental background noise which will assist in absorbing and diluting any unexpected sound bleed from the event.

The event would occupy approximately 17% of the dry land storage area, leaving the remaining 83% of the lot available for traditional marina land operations. Park Board staff assessments have concluded that hosting Bacio Rosso at this location will not create any negative operational impacts on the marina's land operations.

The Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event area would be independently fenced off from the marina land storage area (with entry to the production located on the north side of the event site opposite the marina parking lot). Bacio Rosso guests would be able to enter the event location only and would not have any access to the marina land storage area. Accordingly, the safety and security of boats, vehicles, and equipment in the marina land storage area would not be compromised in any way, and given the presence of overnight security at the event, would likely be enhanced.

Event Set-Up/Tear-Down Period

It is anticipated that set-up for the event would occur in a phased manner and take approximately 30 days. Site tear-down would require roughly 15 days. The proposed set-up/tear-down periods are in line with other seasonal events taking place at other Park Board locations for an event of this nature (e.g. Bard on the Beach, the Vancouver Folk Music Festival at Jericho Beach Park, etc.).

Compliance with Park Board By-Laws

As with all initiatives taking place in Park Board locations, the Event Producer would be responsible for attendee compliance with applicable Park Board by-laws. Accordingly, a robust plan would be developed and executed to inform and enforce by-laws (most notably those pertaining to no smoking in parks).

Event Benefits

Staff recognize that sensitivities and concerns exist when access to public spaces is restricted, and as a result, consider all requests of this nature very carefully. Staff are supportive of pursuing this initiative due to its uniqueness, its marquee nature, its scalability with a park location, and the important benefits that would accrue to the public, event partners/stakeholders, and the Park Board including:

- Use of an underutilized and existing commercial space;
- Broad engagement of residents and visitors through artistic entertainment and food;
- Fostering of civic vibrancy and community connectedness;
- Collaboration and support for local musicians, artists, and creative industries;
- Supporting local businesses and creating employment, including low barrier opportunities, for Vancouver residents;
- Participation/integration in the Park Board's Leisure Access Program;
- Free event date (full entertainment and meal package) would be made available to the Park Board for fundraising or stakeholder engagement purposes;
- Generating important revenues that will be used to offset costs across other Park Board service areas and/or fund unbudgeted initiatives, and
- Community youth circus programs could be offered (in year 3 and beyond) by the Event Producer to introduce children and youth to the art of cirque. The circus camps would be conducted during daytime hours in the Spiegel tent, with the potential to expand to other Park Board locations in the future.

NEXT STEPS

Subject to Board approval, Park Board staff will work collaboratively with the Festival Expediting Staff Team (FEST) Committee members (including the Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services, Engineering Services, BC Ambulance Service, and the BC Liquor Control & Licensing Branch) to plan and deliver Bacio Rosso in 2021/2022 in the same manner and form factor as the inaugural event in 2018/2019. Both the Park Board and the Event Producer work hard to be recognized as good neighbors and will design and deliver the event in a manner which mitigates the identified issues and concerns, while simultaneously enabling Bacio Rosso to be a wonderful local entertainment experience and important contributor to Vancouver's arts and culture ecosystem and economy

CONCLUSION

Large scale special events activate public spaces, foster community connectedness, and provide enriching cultural experiences. The 2018/2019 Gourmet Cabaret Cirque event (Bacio Rosso) established a new marquee initiative for the city, enhanced the vibrancy of our city, and generated important benefits for Vancouverites and a wide range of partners/stakeholders.

Notwithstanding the identified operational/production issues typical of first year events, Bacio Rosso was a success and future editions of this production are eagerly being anticipated by Vancouverites and visitors to the city. Park Board staff have carefully considered the many aspects of this application and are confident that the initiative can be executed successfully and as intended at the recommended new location in 2021/2022. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve the application from the Event Producer as outlined in this report.

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Gourmet Cabaret Cirque – Proposed Event Location & Preliminary Site Plan

Proposed Event Location within Burrard Civic Marina Land Storage Area



Preliminary Site Plan



SK-001 Burrard Marina Layout
Scale: 1/32" = 1'-0"
Date: 05 OCT 2020
2006 - Spiegler

