

ENTERTAINMENT IN MOTION

Instead of the same old song and dance at your next soiree, why not try something unique and a bit eccentric to get your guests chattering away while hovering over your delectable hors d'oeuvres? Imagine this; an engagement party inspired by Parisian art and culture. Among the aromas of sweet and savory crepes and photos of Champs-Elysées nightlife, there are replica statues dotting the room, seemingly straight from le Louvre that suddenly come to life.

Mannequin in Motion, a locally owned company, is an expert in just that, providing everything from décor to living mannequins for any particular theme no matter how extravagant. A facet of the larger entertainment company Osprey Productions, Inc., Mannequin in Motion retains more than 100 performers trained in remaining still until the time is right to shock partygoers with their subtle movements. Experienced in everything from Mardi Gras to Greek goddess events, the living statues provide a discreet yet exceptional way to amuse and entertain any guest. There's nothing same old about that.

"In the beginning using living statues was merely to draw a crowd to a store window," explains Loren Daniels, the Production Director of Mannequin in Motion. "But then I realized there's really a need in the entertainment industry for something that's a little bit different. Mannequin in Motion is just that, an alternative to the usual options for themed parties, conventions, grand openings and product launches."

Since 1988, Daniels and her company have put together performances utilizing talent from right here in the Twin Cities year after year. Singers, dancers, musicians and even children, or manne-kids, make up a majority of the mannequins that perform monthly at national and international events. From private parties to corporate fundraisers to the Euro-American Festival in Shanghai, the local living statues have the ability to create buzz wherever they go. "Not everyone can do what we do, because it takes a lot of understanding," Daniels says, "from developing a character to meditating so you can focus on the isometrics that it takes to move like a robot."

The idea of statuesque entertainment came to Daniels at a very young age, even before the 80s film "Mannequin" hit movie theaters. "This was an early inspiration for me," Daniels explains. "Working as a



Photographer: Scott Strebbe

teenager at a fashion show, I was asked to pose in the window. That's when I thought, this is what I want to be when I grow up, a mannequin."

From that first insight Mannequin in Motion has now merged into Osprey Productions, a full-fledged entertainment production company with businesses like Osprey Entertainment & Events. Both have the capability to offer their clientele custom ideas for every little detail of any occasion. In six months, Mannequin in Motion has transformed some 40 events nationwide.

"We had the opportunity to work with Giuseppe Armani, an Italian sculptor, for a new work he was introducing," Daniels says. "I created a living mannequin on a pedestal with the costume custom designed to look exactly like the sculpture, and then at the end he presented the work to me, which was quite an honor."

Whether you're planning a small garden gathering or a large Guitar Hero tournament party, just imagine the possibilities. Maybe a few gnomes that come to life and dance, or a shrine to Slash that comes to life to rock out could be just what your party needs. The options are endless. ■

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