

Colorado Burnal Equinox 2017

“And Now For Something Completely Different”

After Burn Report:

Statistics

- Attendance: 907
- Gross Revenue: \$19,936.04
- Total Expenses: \$7,449.79
- Net Revenue: \$11,486.25
- Philanthropy: \$1,250.00
- Planning Team: 23
- Total Volunteers: 176

Planning Process

The Venue

Planning for the 2017 Colorado Burnal Equinox (CBE) began on December 8, 2016 with a meeting to discuss possible venues. The CBE Steering Committee (CBESC) opened a venue suggestion form to the community prior to Colorado DeComp 2016; the form is open permanently so venue suggestions can be submitted at any time. The CBESC sent out two requests for submissions for CBE 2017 venues and by the December 29 meeting had received seven suggestions. Of the seven, one was an hour's drive away, several were not large enough to accommodate our anticipated crowd size, one was too expensive, and one would not respond to our attempts to contact them, leaving two possibilities: hold the event at Exdo Events Center, or do not hold the event at all. There was a strong desire to have the event, as founded, a BYOE (Bring Your Own Everything) event however the options were limited. Having coordinated a successful DeCOMp event with the management of EXDO Events Center, the CBESC voted and chose to hold CBE at EXDO (10 “FOR” holding the event at Exdo, 2 “AGAINST”, and 1 Abstain). That decided, the event date was set for March 4 and because of the very short timeline, weekly and then semi-weekly meetings were scheduled.

The Difference

The next discussions centered around what the event should look like given that the CBESC did not want to hold what was essentially a springtime DeCOMp. Brainstorming sessions followed, and consensus formed in dedicating the first seven hours of the event to workshops and a talent show. A call for art submissions was put out to the community for a themed social media banner and for stickers (gifts) to be handed out at the event. In order to entice more people to submit art designs and create a bit of hype, the CBESC voted to issue a crown or tiara to the winning artist.

The Art

A call for theme submissions was sent out to the community. Thirteen ideas were submitted and a vote took place on January 8. The idea selected was “And Now for Something Completely Different”. Theme art was submitted and voted on anonymously; the design selected was submitted by Steve Maruska, though no one on the CBESC knew it was his design until well after voting had concluded.

The Decor

A budget for decorations was not needed, as we utilized venue decorations from EXDO’s party the night before, which is the largest women’s monthly party in the US. The decorations for that event included a black and white checkered dance floor, white leather chairs and love seats, red curtains separating seating areas, and other Paris-themed decor.

The Workshops

A total of 17 workshops encompassed everything from discussions about consent and yoga instruction, to tutu, hat, and jewelry creation, to pillow fights, flow arts, and improv lessons. The talent show consisted of a karaoke set modeled after the Gong Show lovingly titled the “Dong Gong Show”, flow artists, singers, and dancers. Art grants were extended to include workshops, so anyone managing a workshop could apply for funds to help cover materials costs.

One Sound, One Vibe: No Violations

DJs were invited to perform at low volumes during some of the workshops, and were scheduled to take over the main stage at 9 p.m. There was no amplified sound outdoors so the event:

- a) did not require additional permits, and
- b) did not offend neighboring residents with volume.

The quieter atmosphere did not deter fire dancers, fire spinners and other performance artists from performing throughout the night, and gave participants plenty of space to gather and converse without fighting to be heard over music.

The Result

The event was a huge success, and we had little trouble getting the venue and art cleaned up afterward. During our wrap-up meeting, we determined:

- The communications lead should announce the event survey prior to the event through all the usual communication avenues to encourage participation.
- Only one person strongly disagreed about volunteering again; we are following up with that person to find out why their experience was negative (They informed us that they misunderstood the question and would love to help again)
- We will add emergency procedures to the “Queen Bee” (acting event manager) book
- A suggestion by a member of the community is that it could be beneficial to have stage managers for every stage, preferably ones with theater backgrounds to make sure acts transition smoothly, sound is monitored at all times
- LNT needs more volunteers in the future (We had a decent flake rate for after event sweeping. While we left the venue better than we received(per the venue manager) we hoped to do even better.
- We received great feedback about workshops and had requests to organize them at DeCOmP as well

The Gift to the Community at Large

Discussions were held as to determine to whom we would donate the charitable funds. After discussing a few considerations, a vote resulted in the decision to donate funds to the RiNo (River North) Arts Fund in Denver; due to the unfortunate circumstances of the “Ghost Ship”, a witch hunt has been occurring around the world (and in Denver) to dismantle DIY spaces. This organization has been trying to mitigate this process. Keeping the funds local and supporting the art scene were important to the group.