

# VOICE

EXPRESSION

## SPRING ICE: A CREATIVE PONDERS VANCOUVER 2010

BY CRAI S. BOWER



EVERYONE'S GOT A VOICE. LET YOURS BE HEARD. LOUD AND CLEAR.



“

The new issue just arrived and it looks great. I receive very few magazines that I want to read cover-to-cover.”

Crai S. Bower  
Contributor, Create Magazine

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# 1909

The Association for Women in Communications was originally established as Theta Sigma Pi at the University of Washington in Seattle in 1909. It did not become Women in Communications until 1972.

Source: The Association for Women in Communications

“Where would the writer be without TiVo?” I ponder, prattling through the evening logistics of running a business, as my beloved Canucks struggle to make the playoffs in the background. Two decades removed from my collegiate playing days, watching hockey remains welcome respite from eight hours of writing in my studio.

The Seattle hockey scene emotes the vigor of melted ice, so I often travel to Vancouver to feed this obsession. When I first meet Pamela Groberman, I think I'd died and gone to the old Montreal Forum.

Groberman plans her evenings around the Canucks' schedule. The former first division volleyball player receives whispered updates from Maitre D' Mikel Canter when she entertains at Elixir, the Yaletown Bistro she represents. At Umberto's Il Caminetto (exceptional food – no televisions), she's been known to take a midcourse skate across the Whistler Village cobblestone and check a bar's monitor. You would think this rising star on the Vancouver PR scene would be all over the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games. Well, yes and no.

Yes, Groberman is poised to position her clients like Adara Hotel, Whistler's only avant-garde residence, to prosper from the international spectacle. But no, she is not signing the first offer presented (And what an offer! Canadian communications giant TELUS asked to occupy Adara as its media center).

“The challenge is to create brand equity, because what happens after the Olympics is more important than during the games,” she observes. “Does it really benefit Adara to become a media center?”

For the Style Network? Perhaps. For TELUS? Not exactly.

And Groberman knows presence. Opus Hotel, Elixir's home and Adara's sister, is routinely crowned the hippest lodging in North America. Groberman, who sublimely leads you towards Vancouver's best dirty martini or Whistler's après ski secrets, has represented owner John deC Evan's concept hotels from inception.

“It's all about forming synergetic partnerships,” she notes. “But whose hand do you hold? The upstart venture that might (or might not) get huge, or the sure bet?”

Like overtime hockey, the prospects are equal parts thrilling and anxious.

One thing's for sure, when these Winter Games end, the goodnight kiss better leave a lasting impression.

The imprint the Vancouver Olympic Committee (VANOC) has left thus far is far from romantic. They've sold the world on the 2010 vision, but manifestation is proving as frustrating as it is daunting. One reason may be the sluggish hire of creative contractors.

cont. on 19 ▶

# VOICE

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

◀ cont. from 18

Consider SmartDesign, a world-renowned hospitality branding company, responsible for such high-profile projects as STAPLES Center and Wembley Stadium (Principal Nick Baker is quick to note that SmartDesign was brought on in relief to the beleaguered Wembley project).

"We keep looking at what's going on, and we want to yell, 'It's all about the infrastructure!' But no one seems to be listening," declares Baker.

SmartDesign is thus far feeling as challenged by the geography as VANOC (2010's foot print ranges from Whistler to Richmond, 140 km to the south).

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"We're already working with London 2012, but here, in our backyard, we remain on the outside looking in. VANOC needs to tap into local talent because, given the obstacles, a poor result could prove nightmarish for the Games and Vancouver alike."

Invitations better post soon.

Groberman agrees. "There's a feeling in the creative community that VANOC could implode. We've assumed their partnership, but now we can't help but wonder if they'll prove a liability," she says.

Like the shinny games on Ottawa's Rideau Canal where I played as a child, picking sides may prove tricky, but it's time to make up teams.

My advice to Northwest creatives? Throw your sticks in the center and get skating. And, of course, keep your martinis dirty. ■

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Crai Bower lives and writes in Seattle. He composes copy for Microsoft, Intel and Kelley L. Moore, among others. His travel writing takes him to the Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival for an endless vacation, on a tour of East Coast colleges for *Lexus Magazine* and, through claustrophobic spelunking on Vancouver Island for *Seattle Magazine*. His comments are often found in the Voice section of *Create Magazine*, recently writing about the new lounges of Belltown, how creatives work with non-profits and the Whistler Film Festival. Reach him at: craisb@FlowingStreamWriting.net.

## LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD.

Got any comments, feedback, statistics, questions, thoughts or photos that you would like to share with us? Send them to [feedbackpnw@createmagazine.com](mailto:feedbackpnw@createmagazine.com).



Associate Editor Sandra Carr takes a break from zooming around on her Stella scooter to read the Summer issue of *Create Magazine* at Lake Eola Park in Orlando, FL.



*Create Magazine's* designer Brenda Raza's peeps and her husband hang out in Times Square in New York City. (l-r) Rolando Ruppert, Rafiq Raza and Ruben Ruppert

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*Create Magazine* is popping up around the corner and around the globe! If you've got a picture of yourself with a *Create Magazine* in hand while traveling, we want to see it! Snap a picture and e-mail us the photo and caption to [newsfnw@createmagazine.com](mailto:newsfnw@createmagazine.com).

## QUESTION OF THE ISSUE



# What are the pros and cons of working as a freelance creative?

E-mail your answers to [feedbackpnw@createmagazine.com](mailto:feedbackpnw@createmagazine.com) and sound off!

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Image courtesy of Ablestock



## DID YOU KNOW?

The Seattle International Film Festival is the largest film festival in the United States.

Source: City of Seattle Mayor's Film & Music Office