



STOP WORRING ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS PRINTING NEEDS

FREE ESTIMATES

FREE LOCAL PICK-UP

FREE LOCAL DELIVERY

Toll Free: 866-668-6838

order@pleseprint.com



Kim T. Plese
Owner

A Symphony of the Best

THE WEATHER WAS JUST beginning to change, and though the day had been warm, the evening was crisp and too chilly to forgo a coat. Pulling mine tighter across the front of me, I stepped out into the cool evening air and started walking up the ramp from the parking garage.

A four star hotel glistened in the evening against the dusk sky, and the elegant lights of the hotel danced in front of me. Groups of people were flowing into the hotel, bound for one of the fine restaurants inside, or perhaps they were going to cocktails or an event.

Crossing the street, I walked underneath the bright-bulbs of the marquis in front of an impressive turn-of-the century theatre. There was a jazz performance that night, and I could see through the large picture window in the front that it had not yet begun; people were still milling about in their finery, sipping glasses of wine and catching up with old friends.

A few feet down the block, three band busses were parked in the street outside of a concert hall. A big burly man with biceps bigger than my waist, and wearing a dark pair of sunglasses – despite the fact that it was well beyond dark at 7:45 p.m. – stood with his arms crossed, next to one of the busses, daring anyone to even consider loitering nearby. As the door to the venue opened, letting a few people trickle out, the explosive sounds of heavy metal ripped through the quiet evening. A gaggle of twenty-somethings in low-slung jeans, black t-shirts and slouched posture huddled in a heavy cloud of smoke, gathered outside the door, shivering in the cold as they puffed down the last bits of their cigarettes before returning to the raucous, yet somewhat alluring, interior of the venue.

I kept walking, and crossed the street, reaching my destination for the evening: an art deco theatre with ornately painted murals on the walls and ceiling. It was opening night for a symphony that was performing, and based on the packed house, complete with men in tuxedos and women in long dresses, a huge number of people were committed fans.

Can you guess what bustling city I was in that evening? If it sounds like New York, Paris or Chicago, guess again. It was downtown Spokane on an early fall evening a few weeks ago. I was walking one and a half blocks from my parking space to the Martin Woldson

Editor's Letter



Theatre at The Fox for the opening night of Spokane Symphony's 2009-2010 Season. During that short walk, I passed a four star hotel, numerous packed restaurants and three different venues where three very different musical performances were occurring, all in one evening. What an amazing city we live in - all of that variety can be found within two city blocks.

As I sat listening to the stunning talent of the Spokane Symphony, getting lost in their mesmerizing version of Ravel's *Boléro*, I thought about what makes Spokane one of the best places to live. We have big city events, jazz concerts, rock concerts, great fashion, a fabulous symphony, cultural events, fine dining, elegant hotels and cocktail lounges, and recreation activities available to us year-round. Of course, we don't need to tell you what is so great about Spokane; you obviously know, given the feedback you gave for our Best Of survey. Based on ballot results, from you, our readers, we are pleased to bring you the results of the 5th Annual Best Of awards, beginning on page 59.

While this is our Best Of issue, my goal is to have every issue be one that celebrates the best of this region. Some wonderful aspects of life in this area simply cannot be summed up as a category on a double-sided ballot, but they still contribute to what makes us say life here is the best.

Just as the different instruments and members of the Spokane Symphony work together to create beautiful and breathtaking performances, the different events, establishments, style and people of Spokane all work together to create a place that is like a symphony. It is lively, entertaining, dramatic, mesmerizing and beautiful.

Blythe