

Burn in the Forest – 2016 Afterburn Report



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Executive Summary

The 13th Burn in the Forest event was held successfully from July 14-17, 2016, at the Cheam Fishing Village in Agassiz, British Columbia. This was our second year working with the Cheam First Nation, on the banks of the Sto:lo (Fraser) River. Our relationship with the Cheam Band continues to solidify, and the partnership was much more seamless and stress-free than in our first year, no doubt due to having a full year to work towards the event, as opposed to 6 weeks. The promoter who manages our relationship with the Cheam (KLAR) even brought their own sound stage in 2016!

2016 marked the final year of leadership by Simon Hunkin, the 3-time lead producer, and the transition to a new leadership structure led by a committee of equals, rather than an executive lead. The transition was successful, and the new committee has fully taken over all responsibilities for 2017. Other organizational improvements include adding associate roles for each producer, inaugurating an annual leadership retreat, formalizing and documenting many of our templates, procedures, schedules, reports, and other foundation documents. The 2017 team has a significant head start from previous years due to the immense groundwork done by the 2016 "founding" team.

Each new producer, with the help of their associate, was given complete executive decision-making over their work group, and as a result, many improvements in the individual pod work resulted. Notable examples include: roll-out and widespread use of new social networking software and a completely new financial system, a new fire safety team, a new Code of Conduct and a vastly improved Safety Plan, inaugural ICS training for safety leads, the formalization of DPW as a permanent, event-long presence and the creation of a new tear down team and lead role, the reimagination of Centre Camp, coordination of theme camp parties and sound camp stages by the Curation team, a re-imagined onsite Volunteer

Appreciation party, expansion of Volcor to register and track all volunteer contributions for directed ticketing the following year, the most comprehensive WWW we have ever had, a dedicated team for organizing town hall meetings and other pre-events, a series of regular internal "departmental" meetings and the creation of a departmental "issues list" by the Flow team.

The event was attended by roughly 1200 Citizens, who participated in creating an amazing Burn, with no serious injuries, police incidents, or incidents with the neighbours. 38 theme camps and sound camps participated, an increase of over 25%, and 53 registered art projects attended (an increase in 75%!) funded by over \$30,000 in grant funds from the Greater Vancouver Interactive Arts Society.

Although we had no serious injuries, we had a near-miss when a large climbable art piece collapsed with participants atop the structure. We were fortunate that nobody was seriously hurt, and the safety team are reviewing how to address climbable structures and structural safety reviews in the future.

Last but not least, the event was completed under budget, returning a net profit of \$13,680 to the Society.

Chair's Report

BitF underwent a significant reorganization in 2016. The first 12 iterations of the event followed a single-producer model similar to other Pacific Northwest events, however as the event grew over 1000 participants, the model exposed the producer position as a critical single-point failure; too many responsibilities, and too difficult to reliably find replacement candidates.

In the follow up from BitF 2015, a task force of production team members researched leadership models of regional events in the 2000-4000 participant range, most notably including Youtopia, Flipside, Apogaea, and Transformus. We reviewed the documentation (policies, org charts, etc) that was available online, and interviewed senior leadership

members through connections made at the *Burning Man Global Leadership Conference* and through the Regional Network.

By September, we had the framework of a model in place that drew from the best practices of the other events, and expanded our own traditions and conventions. This consisted of a committee of seven equal, voting producers (plus a non-voting chairperson, which for this year was the outgoing executive Producer) who would each oversee and have executive authority over a defined group of functions ("pods"), sorted based on roles that naturally "fit" together based on our shared experience. These groups were intended to manage themselves, creating their own traditions and mechanisms for promotion and advancement of leaders. The producers would meet together to coordinate interfaces between the groups, but otherwise administer their own group and meet separately.

One goal of the structure was to download decision-making authority down to the pod leads, meeting as a group with their respective producers. A perennial challenge of our organization is to retain experienced pod leads and to avoid "burnout", and our theory was that by moving much of the artistic freedom of managing a pod from a small circle of producers to a much larger group of pod leads, we would maintain the interest/passion of those leaders and reduce disenfranchisement and burnout, thus expanding the pool of production-ready leaders who could steward the event in any given year.

To create a real "sea change" for the new structure, we planned our first leadership retreat, and engaged a gifted community member to act as a facilitator for the weekend. I cannot overstate how critical this was to the success of the new structure. Kicking the team off with a bonding weekend set the tone for a tight, focused group that was team-oriented and had empathetic ties to each other, and choosing a skilled moderator who was not the outgoing producer had the effect of demonstrating to the new team that this was a new opportunity for them to expand their own visions of the event, and to assume full responsibility for their groups.

The team members exited the weekend with a clear understanding of their own responsibilities and powers and a clearly defined roadmap of timelines and deliverables required to achieve the goal of completing the transition to the new structure. During the retreat, we clarified all scope boundaries, set the agenda for the next two months of business and meetings, and started fleshing out interface definitions and dispute resolution mechanisms.

One item which was touched on during the weekend but not adequately covered and fleshed out was a conflict-resolution system. Although one of the Producers proposed a model, in practice it was assumed that if conflict arose, discussion, and if required, a vote would address all eventualities. This turned out not to be the case, as our Producers also strive for consensus; on one occasion, we had a bitter debate amongst the team that was not resolved until one Producer stepped down from their position. Although we believe in the ability of each of our team members to find compromise, we can better support them by ensuring a conflict resolution mechanism is in place to address entrenched positions and leave all participants feeling honoured and heard.

As part of the new structure, we introduced the Associate Producer ('Ass Prod') role for each producer; acting as a support resource and "understudy" to the producer, this individual performed much of the detailed work of the group, fully participating in the production team meetings as a non-voting member. The idea was that by the end of the event, the Ass Prod would be fully prepared to step into the producer role the following year if the sitting producers chose to step back, thus building a succession strategy into the structure.

A second critical pillar of the new production team structure was respect for each others' time. We reduced the number of meetings, urging each producer/associate pair to spend the saved time on group meetings and organization. We agreed to and exercised discipline in starting and ending meetings on time, following a preissued agenda and issuing timely meeting minutes. We created a centralized list of deliverables and due dates for each producer/associate pair through the lifespan of the production, and we held each other accountable by reviewing the list periodically as a group. As a result of this organizational discipline, we completed the event with most of our organizational foundation documents in place and organized, including role descriptions, templates, group-specific timelines, succession plans, etc.

To further reduce our reliance on meetings of the producers, we created a software platform using Socialcast software. Our target was to familiarize all producers, associates, and leads with the software, and to move much of the "chatting" of the org from meetings and emails to this interface. We had reasonable success for a new platform, with roughly half of the producers and leads using it as their primary coordination medium.

In short, the 2016 team of producers and associates did a hell of a lot of great work, and this was not without its costs. In addition to the chairperson, five of the seven producer leads stepped down after the event, in part because of the huge workload. However, due to the

introduction of formal succession planning, they were backfilled relatively smoothly and allowed to step back at their own pace without fear of leaving the event "in the lurch". This transition was anchored by the wealth of foundation documents created by the 2016 production team, which left a clear road map for the new 2017 team to continue the production of BitF based on best practices.

Successes:

Responsibility and executive authority for BitF was successfully transitioned from an individual to a team.

Each of the new Producer/Associate teams created a solid, cohesive group of leaders, oversaw them in the successful implementation of the event, and ensured a viable leadership structure for the following year.

A foundation of standardized core documents was created to facilitate implementation of future events.

Significant engagement with our new Socialcast project management software.

Room for Improvement:

The original intent of the new structure was that founding producers would return, feeling fully supported as leaders of their own subgroups. We underestimated the workload that would be required of the founding leaders; the number of non-returning producers and associates was unforeseen, and regrettable.

New leadership structures require careful bridge-building with all stakeholders. The board of the backing society (GVIAS) was not consulted adequately at some stages of the transition, and unnecessary drama arose as a result.

Systems Production Group Report

In 2016, we centralized project organizational systems under a single Production group with Benson Ho as the Producer and Ryan Trudeau as his associate. The scope of this group included:

- Cost Control, Payment Systems, and coordination with the Society Treasurer
- Ticketing and Registration
- Negotiation and signing of the land use contract
- Updating and administration of our project management software
- Administration of our online files
- Centralized Purchasing

In 2015, we used Trello software without much uptake or success, and finding a new software suite was a priority. This year, we implemented a Socialcast software environment for managing of Production Team actions and tasks. Each of the Producers, Associates, and Pod Leads (70 people in total) were added to the environment and it was encouraged as our primary coordination tool. We estimate that nearly half of the leads and producers actively used the software, which is relatively successful; for those that did use it, it cut down on emails and meetings considerably.

This year we created a new payment system using a dedicated cost control lead; this individual was given bulk allowances by the society that were deposited in a central event account, and then paid purchasers electronically from the account, thus side-stepping the delays we have historically had with payables. On the upside, purchasers were reimbursed more quickly, although adding another individual to the payment process increased the complexity and resulted in some miscommunication. For 2017, the GVIAS treasurer has envisioned some improvements upon this system. Financially, BitF returned all of its costs, and the requirements of GVIAS for its operations, plus a small profit. The financial summary is attached to this report.

The ticketing / registration team did a ton of work, and a wonderful job, to the point where we now have enough software support people to make the work manageable for the team. The team moved us over to (yet another) ticketing provider, this time Quicket from South Africa, who manage the Afrikaburn ticketing. Although it was a lot of work for the team, this provider

looks promising for the long term, and was used successfully for the GVIAS decompression event.

The registration team implemented a new system for directed tickets and for transfers also, using the Quicket software. Arthur and company spent a lot of effort creating a cohesive group, and the results were apparent; the system offered the best functionality we have seen yet, and there were a minimum of participant complaints. All four of the ticket sales went smoothly; a directed ticket sale for artists, theme camps, and Production Team, an advance pool sale for registered volunteers from the previous year, a public main sale, and a public OMG sale.

The handling of the contract was a breeze in 2016, with 10 months to plan. Benson and Simon took this on with the promoter, which included a meeting in the fall to discuss the terms of 2015's contract and propose tweaks for 2016. The contract was easily concluded by the beginning of 2016.

In 2016, we continued our system of centralized purchasing through a Purchasing Lead for major rentals and buys; new template forms for these orders were created, and the process went smoothly.

File storage for BitF continues to use the Google Drive platform, although GVIAS' web committee is looking at a more turn-key solution in 2017.

Successes

The Quicket ticketing solution was the best we have yet seen, and after years of difficult software and resulting stress on the team, it appears that they have finally found a long-term solution.

Implementation of the Socialcast software was widely successful, with decent uptake for a first-year platform, and it allowed the production team to cut down on meetings while simultaneously increasing the complexity of the organization.

Room for Improvement:

Ticketing/Registration is too complex to be coordinated at the production level by a Producer who is not himself involved in the process. A suggestion 2017 is to involve the registration team in early Production Team meetings to ensure communication for this vital function.

Payment continues to be a thorn in our side; a better system is needed which reimburses individuals promptly or handles event payments separately and in a timely fashion, while still protecting the Society from abuse.

The Event files still reside on the Google Drive of an individual; a more elegant solution is being envisioned by the GVIAS web committee.

Flow Production Group

Following up on the successful grouping in 2016 of the various teams that handle the influx of BITF participants, Producer Joan Mentanski and her associate Elisabeth Dent further honed this team into a cohesive Production Group, the Flow group. They took to the new setup enthusiastically, and formed a team which met regularly, communicated amongst each other clearly, and were well-organized throughout the event cycle. Responsibilities included:

- Gate
- Greeters
- Onsite Placement
- Parking
- Signage

Based on observations of the previous event, Flow took over the onsite placement function, where Flow members would guide incoming artists and campers to the correct locations; this required clearly establishing scope boundaries with the map creators, and meeting with them onsite to ensure a clean "handshake" between the two functions. This handshake has always been a difficult interface in the past, and in 2016 it was finally smoothed out such that no drama ensued.

Signage was also covered by its own flow group instead of the placement team in 2016. In the spirit of LNT Flow had signs and stands created that are reusable and could clearly mark various safety concerns, in addition to traffic flow concerns. This seemed successful.

In 2016 we negotiated a larger land area for parking, which made the task of the parking leads far less chaotic. They are a highly organized crew, and have the function down to a science; approximately 75% of the participant vehicles were diverted, although with so much room onsite we are not currently pressed to increase this ratio.

2016 marked the third year of requesting theme camps to volunteer as a group for greeter duties, similar to other local events. It is always very entertaining watching the creativity of the camps with respect to how they show up to greet.

Gate had their hands full, as always, and this year with (yet another!) new ticketing software suite to learn and understand. The software proved to be reliable, though and the support by the Systems team proved sufficient to manage the flow. A concern arose during the event regarding the security of the wristbands, which are as good as cash; Flow has incorporated new protocols for outgoing shift leads to formally register the number of bands to the incoming shift lead, as a mechanism to prevent potential theft of the bands.

Two areas of challenge for the gate continue to be 1) early event coverage, where a few volunteers need to pull very long shifts pre-event to ensure that the gate is manned, and 2) applying waivers to Cheam band members. This last is tricky, as visiting band members sometimes don't want to sign waivers, and gate volunteers are hard pressed to require them to. Further communication with the site representatives is planned, to ensure that all parties are aware of our liability & waiver requirements in advance of reaching the gate.

Successes

- Flow established a strong team dynamic with effective team meetings and communications, critical-issues lists, and plenty of team spirit!
- All participants were registered into the site without breakdowns of the system or any complaints of long lineups.
- Gate handled the new software successfully with no noticeable delays in the participant flow
- New, clear signage made wayfinding much easier, and the event safer as a result

Room for Improvement

- The issue of visitor waivers (particularly for Cheam band members) still needs a satisfactory resolution, The production team will continue to work with the Cheam and the promoter to ensure this.
- The ticketing software was adequately supported, although more backup support resources would leave everyone feeling easier about the reliability of the software solution in the press of peak flow
- Between adding security or finding more early-event volunteers, a solution is needed for properly manning the gate without burdening the producers with huge gate shifts during build week.

Safety Production Group Report

In 2016, we formalized the grouping of the various site security and safety functions with Rangering that was commenced in 2015, with Frank and Claire Roberts acting as Producers, and Andrew Martens as their Associate. This scope includes:

- Rangers
- Site Security
- Medics
- Harm Reduction
- Sound Marshalls
- Fire Safety
- Safety Plan
- Liaison with Police and Fire authorities

Grouping the safety elements of the event together offers the huge advantage of having decision-making for all safety elements coordinated through a single group; one disadvantage is that the Safety Producers and Associate had to take fairly heavy shifts, on an "essential services" basis, to ensure management coverage for safety functions. To compound this, each of the Safety Production members were also required to work Khaki ranger shifts as the BC Rangers grow their capacity, which resulted in fairly heavy burnout of that group.

The 2016 Safety Team oversaw an event that was largely incident free, although there was a concern by the landowner regarding a set of staging for one theme camp, and we had a near miss on our burn night when a large climbable metal artwork collapsed with several participants on top of it. Fortunately there were no serious injuries, and all involved were seen by the medics and sanctuary teams. Our takeaway was to incorporate more rigorous protocols (application, inspection, etc) for climbable pieces, and to start to look at how to build a body of safety expertise around temporary structures and climbable works, similar to our fire safety team.

The BC Rangers continued their impressive expansion of members and standards, to more closely align with the Black Rock Ranger standards. The BC Rangers are now viewed by participants as the go-to agents for any perceived trouble or threats, and they maintain a high degree of social capital. From a Production standpoint, they are an invaluable front-line resource, and integrating the Ranger leadership into the production team has aided coordination considerably.

Our long term security contractors returned and performed admirably, as always. They are familiar with burners and deftly straddle the line between ensuring coverage, and not being a heavy-handed presence. In 2016, we added a local Cheam security guard to the team, to act primarily as a liaison to local Cheam members who might wish to enter the premises during our contracted dates, since this is a cultural challenge for volunteer gate staff to deal with. In this regard he performed effectively; there were a few growing pains in terms of integrating with the experienced crew, but nothing unexpected.

2016 saw the creation of a new harm reduction team, which focused on creating/staffing a sanctuary, and working with the medical team to ensure smoothness of delivery with the participant experience. It was refreshing to have new, impassioned members of this team as there is much growth that can happen here; Piotr and the team provided excellent service on a few occasions throughout the weekend, and they have ideas for further expansion in 2017. Management of the paramedic contractors will likely fall under this umbrella, as there was generally not enough work for a full lead position in 2016.

2016 also saw the creation of a new fire safety team, which met as a group and attended Dave X / Propaniac's propane safety / construction course in the spring. The team was split into specialists for propane art, fire perimeters, wood burning (incl the effigy), and general site safety (campfires, cigarettes, etc). The team had a great success with the local fire department, who attended the effigy burn on Saturday, and were most impressed with the knowledge and organization of the team. This budding relationship will make permitting for burns easier in the future.

In 2016, (Andrew's partner) undertook a significant re-write of the event safety plan, updating the site-specific information and most of the protocols to match what actually takes place on the ground, while still maintaining the rigour of the document, links to FEMA resources, etc. Accompanying this, the safety team undertook its first ever ICS training held on a Saturday in the month before the event. Approximately 8 participant leaders joined the session, which consisted of a two-hour review of ICS training modules, followed by a 2-hour tabletop exercise. The day was well-received by the attendees, and it resulted in some improvements to our incident response system. More expansion in this area is recommended for 2016.

Finally, in 2016 we formalized a service dog policy, detailing how certified service dogs may be brought to site. There was plenty of passionate debate about this issue, and come the event two participants brought service dogs, with minimal issues, although it was fairly clear that the certified animal was the less problematic of the two.

Successes:

The fire safety team was created and worked as an effective team, impressing the local Authority Having Jurisdiction.

The harm reduction team was created and formalized into the production (this had been left to theme camps in the past).

The event safety plan and ICS capabilities took a huge step forward in 2016, and further improvement is expected for 2017.

Room for Improvement

The Safety Producer position is fairly work intensive during the event, particularly when they double duty as Khaki rangers. More experienced participants are required to lighten the load on these critical positions.

We were lucky with the structure collapse near-miss, and given the light coverage on effigy night, the event safety team could have been overwhelmed by a more serious incident. Further ICS training, and again, more experienced bodies are needed, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights.

The service dog policy can use refinement to ensure that all dogs are properly certified, since this was a hassle in 2016. Canadian policies are strict in this regard, and visitors from other areas may not be used to this. Further education would help prevent misunderstandings and ensure that all service dogs on the site are properly trained.

It was agreed that all disciplines should review their incident reporting practices, and develop more thorough reporting protocols, before the need arises.

DPW Production Group Report

Following up with their amazing job of clearing and prepping the new site in just a month in 2015, the DPW group was formalized with essentially the same scope and the same Producer, Jaia Kidd, as the previous year. Patrick Crossman joined him as Associate. The scope included:

- Advance Site Preparation
- Transportation of all Production gear, structures, etc
- Planning, setup, and maintenance of the onsite power grid

- Onsite build, maintenance, and tear down of all event structures
- Leave No Trace and final site restoration

Early in the program, Jaia and team divided the DPW work into phases with separate leads, which was a significant step forward; separate leads were responsible for the advanced works (mostly site clearing), for the transportation of all DPW gear (and all Production gear), for the assembly and maintenance of structures, and for the final tear down. The demanding schedule for these tasks has always made finding a DPW lead difficult, and dividing the work by phases was an excellent move.

The site was wetter than anticipated, due to some seasonal rains, which presented new challenges for flooded areas and mosquito control. The Site Prep team treated standing water puddles with vegetable oil which was extremely effective, and the Build team was extremely resourceful in creating temporary bridges for large puddles across significant water barriers, and eventually making these wheelchair-accessible upon request from the participants.

Having an identified DPW yard and permanent presence during the event was a first for us, and a huge advantage, as there are always little bits of maintenance that need looking after; this had been handled in an ad-hoc (inefficient) manner in the past. The DPW team left a message board at the station where requesters could leave messages for the team; the yard also increased security for expensive equipment through all phases of the event, and we had no reports of equipment going missing in 2016.

The setup and maintenance of the power grid was handled as competently as ever by our amazing veteran power team. The planning of the grid and coordination with the art/camp placement map continues to require more management attention than one would expect; one suggestion to improve upon this is to move Power into the Curation group so that the integration of all onsite planning falls under the purview of a single Producer.

Gear transport was handled by a lead instead of a Producer for the first time, and the production gear was collected, shipped, and unloaded smoothly in both directions.

The Leave No Trace leads returned from 2015, this time with a team of volunteers to assist, and the effort and creation of the MOOP map went smoothly and was delivered quickly. The report honoured requests from some participants to be less of a "shaming" tool, and to address areas of improvement more constructively. There was some confusion regarding

final demooping of Production gear, and an additional final cleanup trip was required, but this was minor and easily handled by the DPW Producer himself.

Overall, the DPW team did a great job of prepping, transporting, mobilizing and demobilizing the event for the first time without the management of the Executive Producer. In doing so, they created a cohesive and fun team, many of whom are planning to return in 2017.

Successes:

The site prep was handled smoothly and without the Production Team headaches of 2015.

The DPW yard was a convenient development and a welcome resource to all of the Production Team.

The division of DPW leadership work into phases created manageable chunks for volunteers, and none have reported burnout from their phase being too much work.

The creation of an autonomous, lively DPW team was a wonderful development that serves the event greatly.

Room for Improvement:

It was not made clear that DPW are first-in, last-out, creating some confusion as to who is responsible for the final restoration sweep. The team has addressed this in 2017.

It was not made clear who is responsible for the maintenance and final cleaning of the gators; they were returned with some dirt and damage, which jeopardized our excellent relationship with our long-time vendor. This scope has also been clarified in 2017.

Power could possibly be added to Curation, otherwise careful coordination is required between Curation and DPW during the creation of the draft and final site maps to avoid rework.

Volunteering Production Group

In 2016, the Volunteer Coordination production position was expanded to a broader team, responsible for:

- Centrally coordinating all BitF volunteers through the Volcor software
- Administering Volcor
- Design and Procurement of event swag
- Commissary
- Planning and managing in-event and post-event volunteer appreciation parties

Producer Laura Yates returned to the role from 2015, and was joined by Associate Stephanie Murray; they further expanded the team to include a half-dozen team leads to share the workload.

First and foremost, the team was effective in jelling as a team, meeting regularly and using the Socialcast project management software as intended, for most of the inter-meeting event coordination. Consequently, the team was well-organized and key coordination discussions with other Production scopes (swag selection, scheduling coordination, etc) were transparent and easy to follow.

The team successfully increased the event's usage of the Volcor software, which provides several advantages, including a history of participation to use in following years' volunteer ticket allotments, metrics on our participants and rates of participation, and a centralized database of all volunteering functions.

Not all teams experienced equal success in using the Volcor software, and the Volunteer Group intends to focus on this in 2017. More Volunteer leads are required to properly support the software for all groups, and more buy-in from the other Producers to use the software would allow BitF to unlock more of the full potential of this resource.

The team really dug its teeth into the Volunteer Appreciation party, which has always been something of an afterthought after the event since organizers are spent; the team held two volunteer appreciation events, one on the Saturday afternoon of the event itself, and a second, more conventional event the weekend after BitF. Both events were well-attended (far greater than any previous year) and well-received.

Swag selection, in the past done by the lead Producer, was delegated out to the team, and the products they procured were tasteful and well-appreciated. A lot of bandwidth was spent

deciding exactly who gets what, and debating the ethics behind some of our procurements of these items, although this can be expected as the swag philosophy progresses from an individual leader's selection to a group decision.

The commissary was led by the same lead and featured the same caterer as in 2015, the food was excellent, and the participants seemed satisfied. A small price-per-person premium was budgeted for procuring local produce, which the team felt was a good investment.

Successes:

Volcor expansion gave the event its first concrete list of volunteers and basic metrics of participation, which will aid 2017 planning and ticketing

The appreciation events were the first widely-attended BitF volunteer appreciation events that we have seen

Passing swag to a group opened up an internal debate of "why do we give swag", which is a welcome development as opposed to having the debate externally after complaints are received, which can occur

In general, expanding the Volunteer Coordinator position to a larger team served to support volunteering in our event by creating a group dedicated to the culture of volunteering, rather than a single individual desperately seeking to plug gaps for this year only.

Room for Improvement:

Some of the other groups did not have the same success in integrating the Volcor software, and this made support from the Volunteer group more complicated to obtain. Similar difficulties were encountered where Producers or Leads tried to "do their own thing" with regard to recruitment. The event would benefit from standardizing the usage of the software throughout the groups.

The workload was unevenly distributed throughout the Volunteer group, which led to a few members shouldering huge workloads. As the team evolves, this will surely even out as the scope of the group adjusts to the bandwidth of those who step up to do the work.

Information Production Group

In 2016, Communications Producer Squishelle Peacock returned, and with Associate Luisa Deziel transformed the position into the Information Group, which included:

- Administration of the Website and Facebook Pages
- Dissemination of event info via announces
- The What Where When
- Administration of the Socialcast software environment
- The onsite Acculturation Ambassadors
- Organization of the Town Hall Meeting and All-Leads meetings during the prep phase

2016 marked the first year that external communications - the core of the info function - was handled by entirely by a separate team and not in part co-managed by the lead Producer, which is a welcome devolution; the skill set of effectively disseminating information is quite different from that of team leading!

The Info group took on the web coordination interface with the different user groups, most notably the curation group who receives much of the inbound applications and such from the website, and the interfaces worked smoothly without major dramas.

In 2016, a lead position was created specifically to manage major information events during planning including the Town Hall Meeting and the two all-Leads production meetings; in the past the lead Producer managed this. Delegating this function took burden off of the Producers, and allowed more attention to the finer points of these functions.

The Info team made the move to centralize external event messaging on the website rather than a facebook page, for several reasons. This had the effect of simplifying the messaging, although it took some discipline to get all leads and Producers on board with this.

The What Where When had a team of volunteers, rather than a single lead editor, in 2016. They developed an online WWW submission form that allowed for simpler inputs by all stakeholders, and reduced the wrangling required by the WWW lead. The final product was very sharp and feedback from the stakeholders indicated the new interface was useful.

It was originally envisioned that the Info group would manage the Socialcast production team environment, although the scope split was confusing, as the lead Producer managed the rollout of the software, and Systems was responsible for supporting the platform. This scope

confusion led to some frustration, and it is suggested that all of Socialcast be rolled under a single Producer (either Systems or Info) in the future.

Our Acculturation Ambassadors have the onsite responsibility of meeting and acclimatizing participants, particularly new ones, and kick-starting the education process and onboarding into the burner culture. A solid team of veterans took up this task and performed admirably.

Successes:

Having an internal events lead organize the team development events helped share the load and ensure these events had proper attention to detailed planning.

The online submission tool for the WWW worked well, and the final product was the most polished that the event has had.

External communications were rock solid, there was a minimum of online dramas, and no notable complaints about a lack of information from the Production.

Room for Improvement:

Administration of Socialcast (or other internal communications software) should fall under a single Producer, whether Systems or Info.

Facebook usage continues to evolve; in 2016, multiple different pages, groups, and events were used to disseminate information, leading to a lot of duplicate effort. The Info team has plans to consolidate this in 2017.

The webpage is getting "creaky" as the wordpress structure and supporting forms get modified over multiple years by multiple different programmers with different styles. This also leads to additional effort, figuring out what notifications go where, who administers what, etc. The Info Team has plans to revamp the entire site in 2017.

Curation Placement Group

In 2016, we compiled most of the functions having to do with the artistic vision of the site under a single Production Group. Andi Arnot joined the team as Producer, having successfully produced the previous Decompression event, and was joined by Hilary Kaplan as Associate. This scope included:

- Theme Camp Coordination and Placement
- Artwork Coordination and Placement
- Sound Camp Coordination and Placement
- Workshop Coordination and Placement
- Mutant Vehicle Coordination and Placement
- Centre Camp
- The Effigy and Fire Performances
- Creation of the Site Map

Andi and Hilary took most of these functions over from a veteran couple who stepped back in 2016, and did a fantastic job, particularly as a first year producer, of creating and organizing a team to fill the vacuum.

2016 was our biggest year for theme camps with a modest increase over the previous year; 34 camps successfully applied and were placed.

Most of the theme camps were new, including new theme camp leaders and participants, as well as many returning BitF participants who formed new camps based on new themes. This diversity and creativity was inspiring to say the least.

2016 was by far our biggest year for art projects, as placed projects increased by 75% to 53 in total.

Our parent society GVIAS awarded over \$25,000 in art grants via the Grants Committee, a separate entity from BitF, chaired by Kim Gallagher. As always, these hardworking art lovers pull some long hours to run the competition and handle the administration of the disbursements. It is thankless, behind-the-scenes work, but it keeps the disbursement process objective, traceable, and accountable to the members, avoiding all manner of "where did the money go" dramas down the road. With a new Curation team in place, all of the interfaces with Grants needed to be relearned, and there were some growing pains,

however the Curation team and the Grants committee already have plans in place to smooth that coordination in 2017.

In 2016, the Sound Camp became a recognized camp, rather than just the stages. This concludes an evolution from centrally-produced stages (which were a requirement of the sound restrictions of our previous site) back to the traditional Burning Man sound camp format.

Our Sound lead Peter and team embarked on several initiatives to improve sound on the site, including:

- 1) Overhauling the Sound policy, in conjunction with the Sound Marshals, to reflect our new site.
- 2) coordinating between camps to ensure that parties were staggered, minimizing the sound overlap. A group meeting was held onsite amongst all sound camps to set expectations, introduce the stakeholders, and create a sub-community amongst the various stage leaders, with excellent feedback from participants in the meeting.
- 3) sponsoring and managing a set of "mobile" sound systems that could be signed out by various camps in order to increase the number of theme camp parties using sound, without propagating the number of large sound systems onsite.

Below is the list of Theme camps, art projects and sound stages:

ART INSTALLATIONS

1. Ballsy Rocker II
2. Tiltation of Light: a silly pair of teeter totters
3. Light Brite
4. Giant Tetris
5. Forever Hoop
6. The Love Bus
7. Saturday Morning Cartoons
8. Kick it in the Beans
9. Waiverlith
10. SparkleSketch
11. Heliolunachrone
12. Daisy the Solar Powered Tricycle
13. Silly Sex Ed
14. Bus Camp Thriving
15. Krooked Putt
16. Tree of Fire
17. PyroPulse
18. Balance Blocks
19. Cascadian Lanes
20. Illuminated Forms
21. Burn on Mars
22. Amanita Arcade
23. Cloud Cafe 3: Angry Dicks
24. The Nesting Consciousness
25. Fractal Blaster
26. Mission Machine
27. Soothing sky
28. Jellyfish Ocean
29. The Cupid Project Love Shack
30. The Battlepuppets
31. Firefly Lounge
32. Reflect-O-Flameamid
33. Strip and Slide
34. Horny Anchor
35. The Black Lighthouse Redux
36. Pedal Powered Water Cannon
37. Sky Light
38. Ninth Node Interactive Soundscape
39. Tar Pits
40. Earth Goddess
41. The Orca Project
42. Incendimus the Dragon
43. Decentralized Dance Party
44. Cascadian Lights
45. Lucifer, the Empress Flaming Lampost
46. XoX Temple
47. Synesthetic You
48. The Treehouse
49. Will'o'wisp Whispers
50. Interactive Selfie Guillotine
51. Horn of Plenty
52. Trirantula
53. Wailing Cock Launcher

SOUND CAMPS

- A. Vandango
- B. SynerG
- C. Boobs & Berries Yacht Cooperative
- D. Puck's Event Horizon
- E. Shadow Puppet Pavillion
- F. Camp Open Jam

THEME CAMPS

1. Action Faction
2. Cloud Café
3. Waffle Love
4. Coffee Camp
5. Viking Camp
6. Candyland
7. Doodle Camp
8. The Yard
9. OHM-One Hot Mess
10. Dante's InFURno
11. VertigoRope
12. Shadow Camp
13. Puck's Camp
14. Boobs & Berries Yacht Cooperative
15. Cupid Camp
16. Tribe Called Love
17. Burner King
18. Black Flag Cantina
19. Cirque de Relaxation
20. Milk & Cookies
21. SynerG
22. XOx Temple
23. The Empress Camp
24. Camp Beaverton
25. TreeHouse
26. Camp Play With Us
27. Vandango
28. The Whiptail Lizards
29. Unicorn Camp
30. The Floor is Lava
31. Space Jam
32. Radical Seclusion

Centre Camp was re-imagined as a hub of social activity and moved to the centre of the site, off the waterfront. It included a workshop / chill space, an information space and bulletin board, several artworks, and an adjacent coffee camp. One of the featured artworks were pillars showing the ten principles, which was a useful conversation starter and acculturation tool. The result was a well-used space for which we received lots of positive feedback.

Creators Tango and Dayna were elected at the town hall meeting to create their fifth consecutive effigy for BitF, and outdid themselves, designing and building a 25' fire-breathing dragon with an anamnetronic head that would follow passers-by with blinking LED eyes. The burn of this was spectacular, as was the opening Fire Show, executed by members of local Fire Troupe Radiant Heat and other BitF participants. They know how to whip up a crowd to burn a dragon!

Mutant Vehicles returned to the site for our third year, including a couple of Burning Man feature cars. As more vehicles pop up, the regulation around them will likely need tightening, but they were well managed by the participants and Production Team.

Successes:

We had our best turnout of theme camps and art projects ever

The Sound Camps were awesome, with regards to content, coordination amongst each other to not merely create a wall of competing noise, angling of speakers to provide maximum boom on the floor with minimal bleed outwards to the neighbours, etc. The BitF Community of sound camps have progressively developed into a Civically Responsible bunch since our sound complaint / eviction scare in 2013, and it is a pleasure to work with producers of great music, who also have such a high standard of respect.

The new centre camp really anchored the event and was well used throughout the weekend.

The Placement team met as a group to plan out the map and integrate all of the stakeholders into the final solution. The result was a minimum of space-related dramas.

Room for Improvement:

Coordination between the Curation group and the Grants Committee continues to evolve. These separate entities of volunteers have respective scopes that continue to expand year over year, and coordination is key. Having members who sit in both groups would be helpful.

The coordination between ticketing and Curation could be tighter; registration underwent a huge transition to new software and functionality, but this was inadequately coordinated with the Curation team who has to work around the moving deadlines for directed tickets for artists / theme camps, for example.

Appendix 1 BitF 2016 Financial Summary**BURN IN THE FOREST 2016 FINANCIAL REPORT****REVENUE**

Gross ticket sales (incl. GST)	\$	178,058
Less: GST	\$	(8,479)
Less: Ticketing Fees at source	\$	(10,146)
Net Revenue	\$	159,433

POD EXPENSES

Systems	\$	52,157
Flow	\$	1,511
Safety	\$	20,817
DPW	\$	9,434
Volunteer	\$	11,799
Info	\$	2,114
Curation	\$	2,845
Chair	\$	3,576
Total Expenses	\$	104,253

PROFIT TO GVIAS	\$	55,180
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BitF Art Grant Allocation	\$	20,000
GVIAS Community Art Grant Allocation	\$	1,500
GVIAS Operations Allocation	\$	20,000
GVIAS Allocation	\$	41,500

NET PROFIT TO GVIAS	\$	13,680
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Expense categories and inclusions

Systems includes: venue rental, gators, radios, toilets, permits, & insurance

Flow includes: gate, greeters, parking, placement, signage, wristbands

Safety includes: fire safety, rangers, security, medics

DPW includes: generators, power, LNT, transport, wood, fuel, site visits

Volunteer includes: commissary, swage, volunteer BBQ, volcor

Info includes: meeting venue, WWW, printing

Curation includes: centre camp, effigy, fireshow, mapmaking

Cheam includes: honoraum, misc production expenses, retreat, software