



## **NEVERLAND TEA SALON OPENS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20th in KITS** ***Murphy bed stage, tea infused cocktails and bathrooms to die for!***

September 16, 2013

**Vancouver, BC** – Locally owned and conceived, Neverland Tea Salon will be opening its doors this coming Friday, September 20 2013. Another tea salon? Not quite. Neverland is unlike anything that has ever hit Vancouver. A bit like its co-owners Terri Tatchell and Renee Iaci, it refuses to conform to preconceptions of any kind. Let's just say the Murphy bed stage and tea infused cocktails are merely the tip of the iceberg.

Driven by a multitude of diverse passions, a few personal frustrations and possibly a smidgen of insanity, Tatchell and Iaci set out eight months ago to fill a void in the Vancouver salon scene. What salon scene you may ask? Oh yes... the void was huge.

Harkening back to the salons of 18<sup>th</sup> century Paris, Neverland's soul comes from a place of creativity, inspiration and gluttonous self-indulgence. With backgrounds in film (Tatchell is the Oscar nominated co-writer of District 9) and theatre (Iaci is an original founder of Shameless Hussy Productions), the two creators have literally built an environment, menu, team and beverage list traditional restaurateurs would deem impossibly excessive. You can't be the best at everything. They beg to differ.

### **The Space**

The front of house is deemed "The Tea Bar" and will carry 60 types of tea, pastries, breakfast fare, salads, and sandwiches and despite the name, some seriously good coffee. The Neverland Dining Room's piece de resistance will be the hand made high tea towers overflowing with deliciousness and served into the evening with tea infused cocktails. But their other menu items have been meticulously crafted as well. There is seating for eight outside and a white high counter inspired by "Despicable Me 2". Now here is a real deviation from press release etiquette; the bathrooms are exceptional. You just need to see them.

### **The Treasures**

Most pieces are from the late 1800's early 1900's and every last piece was sourced on Craigslist. Not just that, but every piece comes with a story. Like the window removed from Christ Church Cathedral during a seismic upgrade, which sat in the contractor's basement for years until his daughter wanted to earn some money so he let her list some "junk" on craigslist. His junk is now Neverland's treasure and separates the Tea Bar from the Neverland Dining Room. Or the seven-dozen teacups collected from thrift stores by Tatchell's 92-year-old grandmother and Iaci's 83-year-old granddad. Too much to list and a press release in itself.

### **The Tea**

Iaci spearheaded the sourcing of sixty different teas, which will be sold under the Neverland label. "These teas have been chosen by taste and taste alone," says Iaci. "I gathered teas from ten to twelve different sources ignoring cost, and we spent months doing cuppings. Harrod's English Breakfast had been Terri's favorite for years, and it took a while to beat it, but we did!" Neverland's own blend 'Take Me To Neverland' is playfully scented with chocolate and mint, while their customized 'Celebration' is a blend of Darjeeling and jasmine.

### **The Special Diets**

Tatchell's daughter Cassidy is unable to eat gluten or dairy and frustration over the lack of truly decadent options was a strong motivator in months of recipe development by Tatchell, who eventually admitted defeat and hired Neverland's executive chef Victoria Reichert. A bit of a pastry wunderkind, Reichert, formerly of Hawksworth and Wedgewood's Bacchus customized a complex blend of flours, which renders the gluten free items literally indistinguishable in taste and texture from the regular items. The idea is to have the growing number of kids and

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adults with dietary intolerances not just feel included, but honoured for their differences. Eggs, dairy, gluten? They promise to wow you with indistinguishable variations of their high tea pastries, home comfort pasta, savory flatbreads and varied sharing platters.

### **The Artists**

Step just one foot through the door of Neverland, and there is little doubt that Artists drive the pulse. Not just the owners, but also the counter staff, the servers, the kitchen and bussers. It has to be more than a coincidence that everyone has some serious artistic pursuits and talents on the side: writers, musicians, dancers, filmmakers and actors. Fingers crossed the liquor board approves the entertainment enhancement to Neverland's liquor license so the Wednesday night open mic's can get under way. In the meantime, there will be plenty of inspiration with the planned Artist Tea Talks, featuring the likes of self-publishing game changer, Amanda Hocking.

### **The Business**

Full of vision, energy and belief in what they were creating, Tatchell and Iaci admittedly broke out in hives when asked if they had prepared a business plan or financial projections. Enter The Fifteen Group Restaurant and Hospitality consultants, with a client list ranging from Edible at the Market to Chambar and Joe Fortes. With expertise in the areas of menu, service and business development, they have ensured that the technical side of things is as exceptional as the conceptual will continue to be a key member of the team throughout the opening process.

### **The Name**

"As is often the case with writing, the title, 'Neverland Tea Salon' actually came first," explains Tatchell. "It filled me with images of a very special retreat from the chaos of everyday life, where people could check their adult worries at the door and remember what it felt like to be carefree kids. It didn't take long to realize this was too big to be a screenplay. It had to be real!" And so it is, opening this Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

### **About Terri Tatchell**

Tatchell is an Oscar nominated Canadian screenwriter, best known for co-writing the screenplay for District 9. She also received nominations for the Golden Globes, Saturn Awards, Hugos, Satellite and BAFTAs. Tatchell has re-teamed with husband Neill Blomkamp for 'Chappie', a feature film that is currently shooting in Johannesburg, South Africa. She won the 2009 Bradbury Award from the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America. Tatchell is developing Amanda Hocking's 'Trylle' trilogy for television with Media Rights Capital, and Vancouverite Susin Nielsen's 'Word Nerd' for film.

### **About Renee Iaci**

Iaci is one of the founding members and co-artistic director of Shameless Hussy Productions. Her directing credits include the Jessie Richardson award-winning production of 'Frozen' as well as an original play for young audiences (adapted by Tatchell) 'Woman Idiot Lunatic Criminal', Susan Miller's 'My Left Breast' and the original hit, 'Sonofabitch Stew: The drunken life of Calamity Jane'. Also an accomplished actress, Iaci has performed in a multitude of productions. This fall she is directing the upcoming tour of Dissolve, as well as creating Love Bomb, a play that will have its first staged reading at Neverland, November 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Contact:**

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