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Real Simple Holds Real Big Tag Sale

Now that Martha is in prison, something had to fill organizational guru void. Enter Real Simple magazine's Get Organized New York campaign, which invited New Yorkers to clear the clutter from their lives by organizing their stuff and donating unwanted items to a gigantic tag sale, held under the name Runway Playfield in Central Park. Thousands of people waited a reported two hours to shop at the sale all proceeds were donated to the Fund for Public Schools. Dan Oshayack, vice president of brand development and special marketing projects for Time Inc., oversees the campaign's events, which included a pop-up store at a park nearby on Friday, and the weekend-long sale itself.

This year's Get Organized campaign was the magazine's second: the first was held in White Plains, New York, last year. The tag sale concept is a natural fit for a magazine that promotes a simplified lifestyle, which includes an organized home. "In order to get organized, Real Simple suggests you first toss what you no longer need, organize the things you want, and those in between. (You'd donate to charity)," said Real Simple special events senior manager Tamara Regis. "And in an effort to help you get organized, we'll take it off your hands and sell it at a tag sale, where the proceeds benefit the Fund for Public Schools. It's truly a full-circle contribution."

Regis planned the tag sale's 12,000 sponsored-ticketed pop-up store and silent auction (at jazz at Lincoln Center's Allen Room) for 300 guests, including Sarah Jessica Parker and Caroline Kennedy. Masters & Company covered the tables with pale blue cloths accented with pastel-colored runners, bright fuchsia orchids in vases, brushed steel vases, and blue water glasses. (Dining, however, competes with the Allen Room's view: a 30-by-70-foot floor-to-ceiling glass wall overlooks Columbus Circle and Central Park South.)

Great Professional: The course doubled as decor. In the spirit of simplified cuisine, guests were served plates of greens to garnish themselves with sliced mushrooms, roasted nuts, banana peppers, tomatoes, and other salad items fitting low, square vases placed in the center of the table. A fillet of beef tenderloin with potato pie and pheasant fondue entree, and warm chocolate chip cookies with a shot glass of cold milk for dessert, followed.

On Friday, shoppers who wanted to get a jump on the goods paid \$25 each to attend the preview shopping day. (And one celebrity's wish to another woman's wishes: One shopper walked away with leopard-print heels from Betta Midler's closet.) And Saturday and Sunday's free-to-the-public tag sale drew more than 20,000 shoppers, and raised \$500,000 for the Fund for Public Schools.

The entire campaign exceeded publicity expectations. "The [media] impressions are just ridiculous, there's so many," said Regis. "In terms of awareness and building the brand, we're very happy. And Ann Marie, the C.E.O. of Time Inc., wrapped her hands around the project, and she's thrilled [with the results]."

But will it be back next year? "That's the big question," said Regis. "We don't know yet."

—SUMMIT, NY



For its 12,000 pop-up dinner for Real Simple's Get Organized New York tag sale in Central Park, Masters & Company covered the tables with pale blue cloths accented with applied-colored runners, bright fuchsia orchids in sculpted, brushed steel vases and blue water glasses.



The dinner was held in the Allen Room at jazz at Lincoln Center.



Street auction items filled the cocktail area.



Masters & Company decorated the main bar in the silent auction area with a leafy hydrangea and sunflower floral arrangement.

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- ALLEN ROOM
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- LiorFish Design
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- Big Tag Events
- CHERRY BLOSSOM EVENTS
- JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER'S FREDERICK P. ROOSEVELT
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