

Creative Cuisine

At Dining by Design, charity has never tasted so sweet.
BY VICTORIA ABBOTT RICCARDI



THIS DECEMBER, get ready for one of Boston's most glamorous, creative, and charitable events. Dining by Design is a once-in-a-lifetime feast for the mind, body, and spirit in dozens of fantastical dining salons dreamed up by some of the city's most talented designers.

Mark Christofi of Mark Christofi Interiors, for example, is collaborating with Gleysteen Design, LLC, and Woodmeister Corporation to create a contemporary spin on a Japanese teahouse for their dining space. "We are thinking of having an industrial rust-orange exterior, a wood and acrylic table, and cushions and chairs [to seat 20]," says Christofi. "It will be a simple, practical space, but with raw elements that are shiny and intense."

Dennis Duffy of Duffy Design Group is planning a modern stylized garden pavilion using orchid-toned LED illumination alternating with panels depicting a modified floral pattern, all encased in a white lacquered framework; a sunken table seating 10; and a cascading steel-bead canopy. "The goal is to create an encapsulated space that doesn't feel closed. I want diners to feel like they are almost floating," says Duffy.

Dining by Design is a nationwide annual fundraising event that arrives at the Boston Design



Center on December 5. Founded by DIFFA, the Design Industries Foundation Fighting Aids, Dining by Design showcases the cream of the crop in the field of design—interior designers, architects, filmmakers, fashion designers, graphic designers, multimedia artists, photographers, landscape designers, and others—who transform 11-by-11-foot spaces into over-the-top dining rooms for 10 or 20.

In Boston the funds raised from this two-day

event will benefit DIFFA and another nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people living with HIV/AIDS: the CRI Community Research Initiative of New England, an independent community-based organization that is dedicated to leading the way in HIV/AIDS clinical research, ensuring access to life-saving medications, and providing financial assistance to obtain approved drug treatments and health insurance for those in need. National sponsors include Benjamin Moore, Hewlett Packard, Beringer Vineyards, and Stolichnaya, as well as *The New York Times*, *Architectural Digest*, *Gourmet*, and *Domino*.

This extraordinary fundraiser kicks off Friday, December 5, from 7 to 10 P.M., with Cocktails by Design (tickets are \$150 per person). Along with great music, Beringer wines, Stolichnaya Elit vodka cocktails, and sumptuous nibbles from some of Boston's top restaurants and gourmet food purveyors, including Rialto, Banq, and Orinoco, visitors will have the chance to preview each designer's elaborate expression of creativity.

On Saturday, December 6, from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M., the public can view the designers' work (tickets are \$15). That evening, the Dining by Design Gala will be held from 6 to 11:30 P.M., featuring a multi-course dinner prepared by one of the city's preeminent caterers, Max Ultimate Food. Last year's guests savored foie gras with apple relish, quail's eggs and caviar, lobster, porcini-crusted bison, sweets, and a selection of fine wines. Dining by Design Boston promises the same caliber of cuisine this year, again prepared by Max Ultimate Food. There also will be a silent auction and an after-hours soirée with dessert, music, and cocktails in the Boston Design Center. (Tickets for this event range in

price from \$800 per person to entire Silver, Gold, and Platinum tables starting at \$5,000 and going up to \$20,000.) "It is such an unusual event, visually and creatively," says Christofi. "It's just so fun, so uplifting, and for such a great cause." For more information and to purchase tickets for Dining by Design, contact Erin Molloy at 617-502-1726 or molloy@crine.org, or Cary Raymond at 617-899-3908 or caryraymond@earthlink.net.