

CIRQUE DU



SURREAL

POPULOUS x **storia**
JOSH DAMPF EVENTS



POPULOUS IS KNOWN FOR WORK THAT DOESN'T ANNOUNCE ITSELF QUIETLY.

Projects that begin as questions then emerge as places
people can inhabit, gather within, and remember.

More often than not, that work
changes how the world feels.





Josh

This event marks the close of a year defined by ambitious work and exacting standards at Populous. Our role in this moment is simple: to support that level of care through a culinary experience that feels intentional, immersive, and fully considered.

In partnership with Josh Dampf Events, this evening is designed to reflect your vision—translating it into moments of hospitality that feel seamless, thoughtful, and generous. What follows is how we see the night: its flow, its tone, and the lasting feeling it's designed to leave behind.

Thank you for allowing us to be dreamers alongside you, and for the opportunity to take your vision and help bring it to life.



Jeff Rousselo
Vice President, Catering
Jack Stack Barbecue & Storia Fine Catering

THE SHAPE OF THE EVENING



The night is designed to move with confidence.

1700 people, across teams, geographies, and disciplines gathering in a space that encourages joy, discovery, and return.



At this scale, flow is everything.

From arrival through the final moments, the experience unfolds deliberately – expanding, contracting, and shifting tone without losing cohesion.



As the evening unfolds, the pace shifts.

Passed bites interrupt gently. Active stations anchor the room, drawing people back again and again.

Guests move freely—never forced, never stalled.



Density opens into breathing room.

Energy builds and slows, guided by moments of arrival and pause.

Food and drink help set the rhythm, allowing the experience to flex without losing cohesion.



WHO WE ARE

Storia Fine Catering was created to bring a new dimension to Kansas City's hospitality landscape – blending the comfort of American classics with refined, chef-driven creativity. The name Storia means "history" in Italian, a reflection of our founder's family roots and a belief that every hospitality experience adds a new chapter to life's collective story.

WHAT WE DO BEST

We design experiences. From gala dinners to philanthropic celebrations, Storia specializes in transforming themes into meaningful culinary moments. Our approach is rooted in three principles:

Imaginative Cuisine
Familiar flavors elevated through bold technique and presentation.

Seamless Service
Hospitality that feels refined yet unobtrusive, executed at scale.

Detail-Driven Execution
From floorplans to guest timing, no aspect is too small to elevate.

OUR PERSPECTIVE ON EVENTS

We understand that no two gatherings are alike – and that reputation is often built in a single moment of guest delight. Whether it's a curated canapé that sparks conversation or the smooth transition of 500 entrées delivered seamlessly, Storia's goal is to make every touchpoint effortless and memorable.

A DISTINCTIVE PARTNER

Heritage with Vision
A legacy of consistency paired with a fresh, modern approach to event design.

Creative Alignment
Menus, décor, and service strategies designed to mirror the tone and theme of the host.

Community Connection
Partnerships with local artisans integrate authenticity into the dining experience.

EVENT UNDERSTANDING

A CELEBRATION OF PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THE YEAR THAT SHAPED THEM

Cirque du Surreal brings together Populous team members from across the Americas to mark the close of an extraordinary year—one defined by ambitious projects, complex challenges, and the continued pursuit of design that reshapes how people gather, move, and experience the world. This evening is first and foremost a moment of recognition: a chance to pause, reconnect, and celebrate the collective effort behind that work.

Populous is known for creating spaces others get to inhabit – venues that host moments of joy, energy, and shared memory for millions of people. Cirque du Surreal is designed as a reflection of that impact. For one night, the focus shifts inward, honoring the designers, thinkers, and collaborators whose work makes those experiences possible.

Guided by the vision of Josh Dampf Events, the event is conceived as a gesture of appreciation. The experience is crafted to feel generous, thoughtful, and immersive – less about spectacle, more about acknowledgment. A thank-you expressed through hospitality, shared moments, and an evening that recognizes both the scale of Populous' work and the people behind it.

The result is a celebration that feels personal despite its size – one that honors the year that was, the spaces created, and the community that made them real.



MENU OFFERING

Cirque du Surreal's menu draws from familiar flavors and reworks them through unexpected form and presentation. Passed appetizers, action stations, desserts, and cocktails are designed to invite interaction and exploration as the evening unfolds.

PASSED APPETIZERS

Passed appetizers introduce the evening through small, composed bites that feel immediately familiar, then quietly unexpected. These dishes are designed to be approachable at first glance, with subtle shifts in form, temperature, or structure that reveal themselves as guests engage with them.

ACTION STATIONS

The action stations anchor the experience through interaction. Rather than presenting finished plates, each station invites guests into a process—cutting, assembling, finishing, or choosing—so the act of service becomes part of the experience itself.

These stations are built to feel intuitive and generous, offering moments of participation that feel intentional without becoming performative.

DESSERTS

Desserts reinterpret familiar forms and flavors through playful inversion. Sweet elements appear where they're least expected, and classic ideas are reshaped into new silhouettes, inviting guests to reconsider what they think they're tasting. The result is a dessert experience that feels indulgent, surprising, and memorable without relying on novelty.

SIGNATURE COCKTAILS

The cocktail program draws direct inspiration from Populous projects that feel most surreal in scale and experience. Each drink reflects the emotional quality of a specific space or design approach – translated into flavor, structure, and presentation.

VIP LOUNGE

PASSED APPETIZERS

GOLDEN HOUR

VEG, NF, DF

Crispy potato, tomato caviar, chives

FROZEN SUMMER

VEGAN, NF, GF, DF

Frozen gazpacho popsicle

THE BÉARNAISE DIVIDE

GF

Wagyu tartare, hot-and-cold whipped béarnaise, Parm crisp, purple potato

A PRIVATE MYTH

VEG

Miso peanut butter ravioli, Concord grape jus

ACTION STATIONS

THERMAL DYNAMICS

NF, GF

Fire-grilled beef bavette, chilled chili-citrus vinaigrette

RESIDUAL HEAT

NF

Pasta wheel station choice of protein or veggie, fire-roasted chicken or truffled mushroom ragout finished in Parm wheel

DESSERTS

PERSEPHONE ABOVE GROUND

GF, DF, VEG

Coconut "egg," mango filling, lime zest

DALÍ-SAGNA

NF, VEG

Crêpe lasagna, shaved chocolate truffles

KAFKA'S METAMORPHOSIS

NF, VEG

Grasshopper chocolate pie, chocolate soil



MAIN ROOM MENU

PASSED APPETIZERS

SOUTHERN COMFORT IN JAPAN

VEGAN, NF, DF

Watermelon "tuna" nigiri, seasoned sushi rice

GOLDEN HOUR

VEG, NF, DF

Crispy potato, tomato caviar, chives

CHICKEN OF THE SEE

GF, NF

Crispy chicken cracklin, lobster salad

A PRIVATE MYTH

VEG

Miso peanut butter ravioli, Concord grape jus

DESSERTS

PERSEPHONE ABOVE GROUND

GF, DF, VEG

Coconut "egg," mango filling, lime zest

DALÍ-SAGNA

NF, VEG

Crêpe lasagna, shaved chocolate truffles

KAFKA'S METAMORPHOSIS

NF, VEG

Grasshopper chocolate pie, chocolate soil

ACTION STATIONS

NOT HOT, NOT COLD

GF, NF, DF

Seared tuna loin, leche de tigre granita, crispy corn nuts

THE YUM & ITS PARTS

CONTAINS ALL ALLERGENS

Slow-roasted pork belly and sliced mortadella are carved to order and paired with artisan cheeses, fresh greens, and bread

PHOROMONES (PHO AROMA STATION)

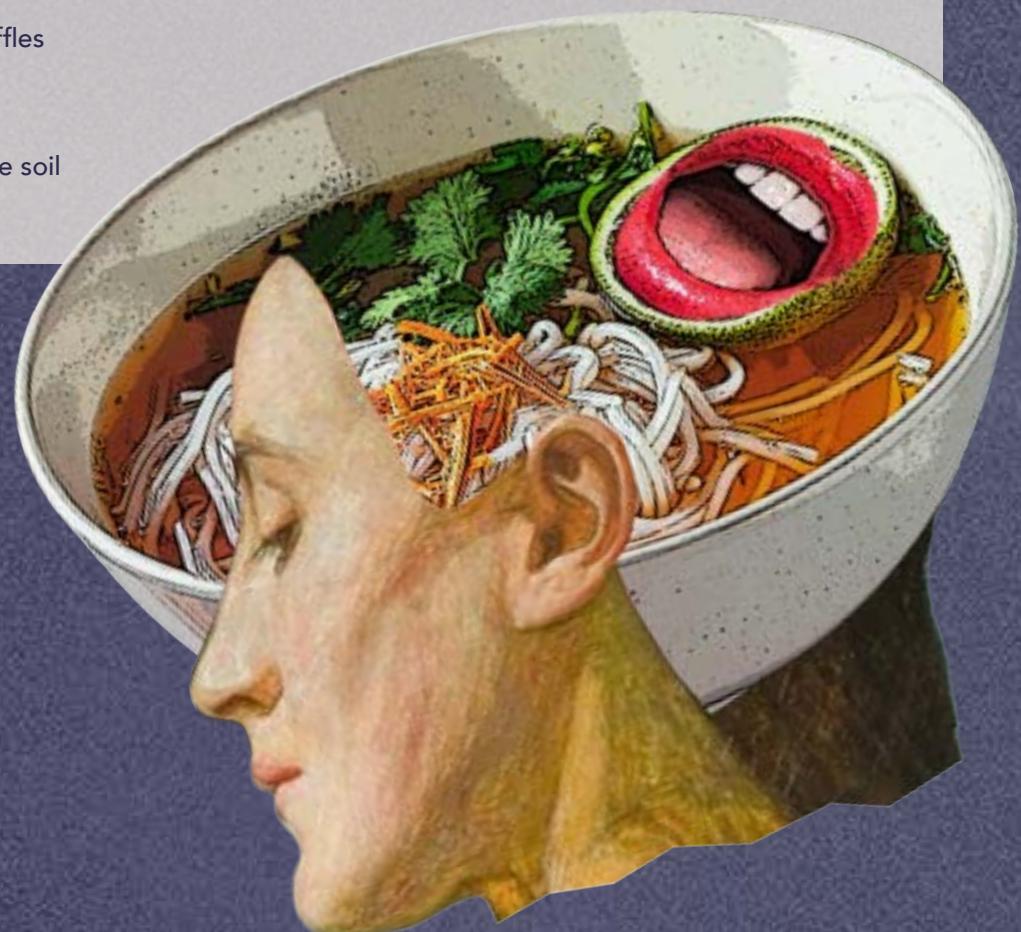
GF, DF, NF

Rice noodles, traditional pho garnishes

CAESAR SALAD WALL

GF, DF, NF

Fresh-cut lettuces, whipped Caesar dressing, beef tallow and roasted garlic butter candles, bread



LATE NIGHT SNACK

PASSED APPETIZERS

2001 NACHOS

GF, NF, VEG

A late-night reimagining of a familiar favorite. Crisp chips are topped with aerated cheese and candied jalapeños—light, salty, and just spicy enough to reset the palate.

CELESTIAL SLIDERS

NF

A classic beef slider, dressed for the after-hours. Juicy beef is served on a darkened bun, rich and satisfying, designed to feel grounding at the close of the night.

THE GHOST OF MR. SCHWAN

NF

A familiar comfort, returned with intention. Classic meatloaf is served warm with whipped potatoes and carrots – an after-hours nod to the frozen dinner era, reimagined as something freshly made and quietly indulgent.

SIGNATURE COCKTAILS

THE SPHERE

(Inspired by the immersive scale of the Las Vegas Sphere)

Vodka, white grapefruit, yuzu, vanilla, lightly seasoned – served in a rounded coupe.

A smooth, immersive cocktail built on bright citrus and soft sweetness, designed to feel seamless from first sip to finish.

THE CLIFF

(Inspired by the Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Stadium)

Bourbon, date syrup, lime, black tea, smoked salt – served in a rocks glass with a large clear cube.

Deep and structured, with restrained smoke balanced by warmth and acidity – designed to open slowly and hold tension.

THE HORIZON LINE

(A reflection of Populous' ability to create clarity and scale)

Gin, elderflower, cucumber, lemon, dry vermouth – served in a tall collins or highball glass.

Light, crisp, and precise – clean botanicals and citrus layered for clarity and balance.



SERVICE EXPERIENCE

STAFFING PHILOSOPHY

Service at Cirque du Surreal is designed to feel present without being intrusive. Our team is trained to operate with precision and awareness, anticipating guest needs while maintaining the rhythm and flow of the evening. Every chef, server, passer, and event captain plays an active role in shaping how the experience unfolds.

GUEST EXPERIENCE

From the first passed bite through late-night service, hospitality is choreographed to feel intuitive and continuous. Food appears when it's needed, retreats when it should, and supports the energy of the room without pulling focus. The goal is immersion; guests remain engaged with the space, the program, and one another, while service works quietly in the background.

DETAILS THAT MATTER

- Uniforms:** Streamlined, modern attire that reflects the elevated, contemporary tone of the event. Or, if preferred, the team is happy to dress in themed attire.
- Flow:** Strategic placement of action stations and passers to encourage movement and avoid congestion.
- Dietary Awareness:** Staff will be briefed on ingredients and can provide accommodations confidently in response to guest needs.
- Timing:** Service is aligned with natural shifts in energy throughout the evening, ensuring food feels timely rather than disruptive.
- Sustainability:** If selected, sustainable service ware and waste-reduction practices are integrated seamlessly.

OUR COMMITMENT

At Storia, service is designed to be felt, not noticed. Our familiarity with the venue allows us to anticipate challenges before they arise and to use the space itself as part of the experience. From load-in through final cleanup, every decision supports an evening that moves smoothly and finishes as intentionally as it begins.

OPERATIONS & LOGISTICS

EVENT SETUP

Executing Cirque du Surreal requires thoughtful coordination with the venue and a service strategy built for continuous movement. Advance walkthroughs allow our team to plan equipment placement, power needs, and service access, ensuring stations and support areas are staged efficiently without interfering with guest experience.

SERVICE LAYOUT

Stations are positioned to distribute crowds evenly and take advantage of the venue's layout. Back-of-house support areas are established to keep stations replenished and responsive during peak moments, while maintaining clear circulation paths for guests and staff.



STAFFING PLAN

- Event captains oversee defined zones to ensure consistency and communication across the space.
- Service teams are scaled for a high-energy, high-volume environment while remaining polished and approachable.
- Culinary support is positioned strategically to manage holding, replenishment, and real-time adjustments.

GUEST FLOW MANAGEMENT

- Crowd Movement:** Service is designed to work with the natural waves of the event, reducing bottlenecks and maintaining accessibility.
- Timed Waves of Service:** Passed offerings and station activity are sequenced to align with programming and energy shifts.
- Station Rotation:** Desserts and late-night offerings transition smoothly without requiring guests to relocate.

BREAKDOWN & CLEANUP

- Quiet Strike:** Breakdown occurs in phases to avoid disruption while guests remain on site.
- Removal & Waste:** All service materials are cleared promptly and responsibly.
- Venue Restoration:** Each service area is returned to its original condition prior to departure.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Additional staffing, equipment, and service capacity are planned in advance to ensure uninterrupted hospitality. Our team is prepared to adapt in real time—addressing changes in guest flow, timing, or dietary needs without impacting the experience.

BUDGET & PRICING

Executing Cirque du Surreal requires careful coordination across culinary design, service choreography, staffing, and operational infrastructure. The investment outlined below reflects a fully integrated experience where menu development, guest flow, and execution are designed to operate seamlessly at scale.

Pricing accounts for the complexity of multiple interactive stations, continuous passed service, dedicated culinary support, bar support, and the staffing required to deliver an evening that feels effortless to guests while remaining precise behind the scenes.

CULINARY

- Passed Service:** A curated selection of passed appetizers designed to introduce the evening's point of view through small, composed bites.
- Action Stations:** Multiple experiential stations, each staffed by culinary attendants and aligned to distinct themes, inviting guests to engage directly with the food.
- Desserts & Late-Night:** A combination of action desserts and late-night passed offerings that bring the evening to a deliberate close.

All culinary offerings are developed specifically for this event, with an emphasis on execution, consistency, and real-time service.

BEVERAGE PROGRAM

Beverage service is provided separately and integrated into the overall guest experience to ensure seamless flow throughout the evening.

SERVICE & STAFFING

- Event Leadership:** Event captains overseeing defined zones to maintain consistency and communication.
- Service Team:** Scaled staffing to support a high-volume environment while remaining polished, responsive, and approachable.
- Culinary Support:** Dedicated back-of-house and station support to ensure continuous replenishment and quality control.

Uniforms, training, and management oversight are included to ensure service remains cohesive from start to finish.

EQUIPMENT & RENTALS

- Required catering equipment is provided by Storia to support the execution of each station and service style.
- Venue support requirements include kitchen access, utility space, and designated prep areas to ensure efficient operations.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Sustainable tableware and eco-conscious service options are incorporated where appropriate.
- Unused food is repurposed or donated through local partners when possible, supporting waste-reduction efforts without compromising service quality.



ADMINISTRATIVE FEES & TAXES

- Administrative fees are applied to food, beverage, and labor to support planning, coordination, and execution.
- Applicable sales taxes are applied to the final invoice.

PAYMENT TERMS

- A 50% deposit is due upon contract signing.
- Final payment is due seven (7) business days prior to the event.
- Customized payment schedules or house account arrangements may be available upon approval.



COST BREAKOUT

VIP Experience @ \$45.00 (60 each)	\$2,700
Surrealism Experience (@ \$74.00 per person) <small>Includes: Passed Appetizers, Stations, Dessert, Late-night Passed & Specialty Drinks</small>	\$121,360
Appetizer China & Flatware Rentals	\$22,860
Estimated Glassware-specialty cocktails	\$5,000
Estimated Linen <small>Includes: Linen, Delivery, Setup and Strike</small>	\$3,400
Total Labor <small>Total Labor includes: Service Team, Chef Attendants, Bartenders</small>	\$16,000
18% KCCC Venue Fee	\$30,837
SUBTOTAL	\$202,158
20% Admin Fee	\$28,012
Taxes (KCMO) @ 8.475%	\$14,244
TOTAL COST	\$244,413
Cost per Guest	\$143.77

EXPERIENCE & REFERENCES

Storia Fine Catering is trusted by some of the region's most respected venues, cultural institutions, and philanthropic organizations to deliver seamless, high-profile events. From intimate celebrations to galas with 1500+ attendees, our team has consistently delivered on the promise of exceptional food, flawless service, and worry-free execution.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- **Children's Mercy Hospital – Red Hot Night:** A premier fundraising gala for more than 1,500 attendees.
- **The Midland Theatre:** High-capacity concert venue events with curated menus and themed catering activations.
- **Burns & McDonnell – The Principle's Dinner:** Annual corporate dinner honoring leadership, executed with precision and creativity.
- **Animal Health Corridor – Annual Meeting:** Multi-day conference hosting 1200+ attendees with plated meals and curated breaks at The Midland.

These experiences demonstrate our ability to manage both the scale and the nuance required for an event like the Cirque du Surreal – balancing creativity, precision, and partnership with event organizers.

REFERENCES

We are proud to provide references who can speak to our professionalism, creativity, and execution:

Katie Schillare
Director of Sales, The Midland
kschillare@aegpresents.com

Taylor Nizolek
Manager of Philanthropic Events,
Children's Mercy Hospital
tnizolek@cmh.edu

Laural Carlson
Events Manager, Burns & McDonnell
lcarlson@burnsmcd.com



CIRQUE DU SURREAL

THANK YOU

