

Joseph T Oliver



Name:
Joseph T Oliver

Position/occupation:
Director, Bash Creations.

Residence:
Central London.

“Engaging young people in sustainable development is fundamental and the entertainment industry is an ideal avenue if you know your market.”

Joe founded Bash Creations, an eco-entertainment movement specialising in events and art exhibitions, the first of its kind in the UK. Bash launched in January 2007 with the ‘Worlds First Carbon Neutral Student Gig’ for student charity Nightline London. Since this Joe has on average produced a green event every two weeks across the capital. “I wanted to start a multi-disciplined entertainment company which had a strong emphasis on ethical considerations and quality of experience.”

Sustainability experience

“My business is all about merging top quality entertainment with sustainability” says Joe. Since setting up Bash Creations, Joe has co-founded another eco-events company, Resolution, which is comprised of a panel of directors and representatives from a number of established companies including: The Sustainable Development Foundation, imagine if, and The Ethical Fashion Forum. Resolution generates support and publicity for sustainable events, and maximises the eco-friendly potential of the entertainment business. “It’s an ideal situation, I have a job that brings together my two passions, creativity and my ethical stance, not many people are able to say that. Engaging young people in sustainable development is fundamental and the entertainment industry is an ideal avenue if you know your market.”

Joe also advises organisations and events teams on addressing the environmental impacts of their entertainment functions to ensure that sustainability is built into protocols and that there is a legacy from every event he’s involved in. His guidelines cover issues such as energy consumption, locally sourced products and services, travel and capacity building. “It’s not

all about change but improvement – events are made better by incorporating sustainability guidelines.”

The entertainment business in London is huge. Joe cites Shoreditch as an example, “there are over 50 clubs and bars within a one mile radius that host regular live events so you can imagine the potential scope for change across the whole city.” Bash Creations is still in its early days but Joe hopes that the business can have a simultaneous impact on the music, fashion and art worlds. At the moment he is also producing a green events directory with Resolution, which will give Londoners an open source of information on green events. Recently, Joe was appointed project manager for building the UK’s first completely green members’ bar on the South Bank, for members of The-Hub, a pioneering social entrepreneurs organisation.

According to Joe, the highlight of this work is seeing people changing their normal business practices. “When I started my company it was the first of its kind in the UK that was specialising in cultural events; art, music and fashion. Ultimately I wanted to set an example, to show that sustainability is feasible within such a sector and influence more organisers to take into consideration the environmental impact of their events from the outset. By setting an example Bash has shown that it is possible to provide an amazing sustainable night without losing any of the experience or fun that ultimately makes it pleasurable.”

The sustainability challenge

“Attitudes are changing and people are waking up to the idea that things are not necessarily disposable, that every person has their own impact, which with a little thought can be lessened, but there is a long way to go.” Joe thinks that many Londoners are reluctant to make lifestyle changes when there are so many large corporations that create huge amounts of pollution while being given minimal fines, or not being held accountable at all. “Good examples are out there though and most people are willing, but the government and other leaders

have to set the precedent if there is to be a major shift in making London a more sustainable city.”

“To me sustainability is fundamental to the way I try and live my life. Our unsustainable lifestyles are placing a massive burden on the planet and if we don’t adapt then our children will be the ones picking up the pieces. Taking action may be the result of a sense of duty, but I would rather see it as a logical response to our planet’s situation.”

Joe believes that the biggest challenge in making London more sustainable is changing established business and economic practices, and that if more people understood the consequences of their actions then there would be a stronger commercial and public movement towards changing lifestyles.

In his own business field Joe believes there is a huge opportunity to set an example to the rest of the world by requiring all public events/ festivals to have a sustainable remit. “This would be a very public display of the strengthening attitudes towards making entertainment more sustainable and of London’s leadership in this.”

There are also actions that everyone can take to ensure a more sustainable London and for Joe this is about making a little step each day in the right direction. “Today, go and change your energy supplier, tomorrow start recycling, the day after decide only to buy recycled paper to print on, etc...”

Don’t try to do it all at once, its can be overwhelming. I’m still learning.”

London Leaders

“I hope that my experience in the arts and entertainment worlds will help me as a London Leader to work within the sector to find more sustainable ways of production and methods of practice. I want to work in partnership to help encourage best practice and raise awareness that we can all make small changes that have

big impacts. As a London Leader I intend to demonstrate that it is feasible to work within a city and within the entertainment industry whilst improving the conditions for generations to come.”