



Galen Weston, Waris Ahluwalia, and Alexandra Weston, director, Brand Strategy at Holt Renfrew.

Christopher Alexander, federal minister of citizenship and immigration, and Hedvig Alexander, founder, Far and Wide Collective.

Suzanne Boyd, editor-in-chief of Zoomer magazine.

David Hamilton, producer, Hamilton Mehta Productions, and director Deepa Mehta.

Dr. Parambir Keila and Anjali Patel.

Lynda Prince.

James and Cecily Eaton.

Akhilesh Mishra, Consul General of India, and his wife Reeti Mishra.

Afiya Francisco of the Style House.

Jay Strut and Tony Pham.

Bernadette Morra, editor-in-chief of Fashion magazine.

citylife

WHO'S SARI NOW

Holt Renfrew brings subcontinental chic to Bloor Street with Uncrate India



AMORYN ENGEL

Having recently returned from an awe-inspiring trip to India, I was thrilled to hear that **Alexandra Weston** was going to put the spotlight on that magical country within Holt Renfrew's H Project shops. Weston, the company's director of brand strategy, co-created the ambitious Uncrate India project with jewellery designer, actor and international heartthrob **Waris Ahluwalia**. They scoured local markets and workshops to fill the Uncrate India spaces with block-print textiles and hand-woven rugs, hand-picking each and every piece from local markets and artisans on their grand tour of the world's most populous democracy.

To kick off the spectacle, Holt Renfrew hosted an incredible night that hearkened back to their parties of yesteryear. Remember the ones where elbow room was in short supply? When you had to beg for a spot on the guest list, and the incredible whimsy and decor had your jaw hitting the floor? The night started with a chic dinner at the Café, where guests arrived in jewel-coloured saris, sitar players set the mood and the entire space was draped in incredible textiles.

Another 400 scenesters arrived soon after and were instantly transported by the vibrant sights and sounds of India as they were greeted with sparkling bindis. Almost everyone stopped at the photo station to pose with the fantasy rickshaw. Guests enjoyed a mehndi station and a bangle bar, where they were bejewelled with sparkling, colourful gems. The highlight of the night was a special performance by the Indian dance troupe Broken Dance.

VIPs joining in the fun included **Galen Weston**, minister of citizenship and immigration **Chris Alexander** and his gorgeous wife, **Hedvig** (whose Far and Wide Collective is available at Holt Renfrew's H Project shops), director **Deepa Mehta**, the Consul General of India **Akhilesh Mishra** and his wife, **Reeti Mishra**. Guests perused an array of spectacular treasures, from sculptural diamond earrings by House of Waris to hand-woven rugs and silk scarves. The happy crowd enjoyed spiced cognac cocktails and Indian delights as the party continued into the early hours.

"The idea behind the 'uncrate' concept is to showcase the incredible products of different cultures and support the continuation of these crafts around the world," said Alexandra Weston. "We began with India and sought to explore the artisanal depth and discover the extraordinary products of the country and tell their extraordinary stories within our H Project shops. We partnered with Waris Ahluwalia as he truly embodies the romance, vibrant culture and sophistication of India."

The shop will also support UNICEF's life-saving work for children in India with a \$15,000 donation to local health care and education initiatives.

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PHOTOS BY GEORGE PIMENTEL



Veronica Chail of OMNI TV's Bollywood Boulevard.

Sisters Jane Apor (of Bite Me More) and Amy Verner.

Jeevin Sandhu and her mother Amerjeet Sandhu.

Emily Ramshaw of the Coveteur.

Julie and Mark Derbyshire, president of Holt Renfrew.

Chris and Noella Milne, senior partner, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP.

Jagmeet Singh, MPP for Bramalea-Gore-Malton.

Jordan and Muriel Soloman.

Noelle Kadar, head designer, House of Waris

Lisa Tant, VP Exclusive Services at Holt Renfrew.

Kim Bozak and Kiren Singh.

Alison Eastwood, editor-in-chief of Hello! Canada and Moira Wright, divisional vice president of public Relations at Holt Renfrew.