



Drew Ripley

Entertainer, Artist, & Professional Speaker

Chief Twisting Officer, Owner, Drew Ripley Entertainment

Chair, Kwartzlab Makerspace, 2018 - 2019

President, Kwartzlab Makerspace, 2019 - 2020

Building a life out of balloons was not the original plan, yet as a full-time artist, Drew has discovered a medium that can stir the emotions and create the unexpected. Ideally, every piece will create a positive memorable reaction. While his art focuses on the balloons, technology rigging, and acting skills are required to create the most difficult projects. As an entertainer, his desire is to leave a sense of whimsy and delight with the audience.

Created in 2009, Drew operates an entertainment company that specializes in one-of-a-kind Balloon Art, Décor, and Entertainment. He uses his finely tuned balloon skills to create one of a kind balloon shows, costumes and displays. His talents have led him to several major projects in Canada, the USA, Qatar, and even Israel. These one of a kind projects are designed for major events and typically use a minimum of 40,000 balloons.

In addition to his art, he is the Business Director for Canada's National Twisting Team. This is a group of top balloon artists across the country that competes internationally. At the World Balloon Convention. In 2016, the team won a Bronze Achievement award for their medium sculpture, placing 5th overall in the category. In 2018, they won a Bronze Achievement Award for technical difficulty in the consecutive 27-hour competition, a first for a Canadian team.

Drew has received multiple awards including the prestigious Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award, awarded to him by his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Phillip, himself. This award is designed to encourage youth to become more consistently engaged with society with weekly targets in physical fitness, skills, and volunteering. He was awarded the Commuter Challenge Trophy for Highest Participation Rate for a small business, where he commuted daily by unicycle. Through Lions International, he has achieved the Lions Quest Fellowship, which is awarded to those that really care about children. He has also received the Bruce Murray International Youth Camp Fellowship, an award for members who work towards creating and fostering a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world.

Drew is based out of Kitchener Ontario where he spends much of his volunteer time as President of the local MakerSpace Kwartzlab.

News Appearances

CBC News, Children's entertainers find new ways to reach audiences in Waterloo region, March 30, 2020
Rogers Tv, InStudio (Waterloo Region), September 30, 2019
CBC News, Kate's 5 fun things Todo, September 6, 2019
570 News, The Mike Farwell Show, September 4, 2019
570 News, the Mike Farwell Show, April 16, 2019
CTV Kitchener, In Your Backyard (Waterloo Region), February 27, 2019
CBC The Morning Edition (Kitchener Waterloo), February 26, 2019
WGN, Most people inside individual balloons, (Chicago), January 31, 2019
CBC Short Document (National), Released Dec 2018
CTV Kitchener, In Your Backyard (Waterloo Region), August 28, 2018
CTV Kitchener, News at 6 (MakerExpo), June 2nd, 2018
CTV Your Morning (TV, National), April 6, 2018
CBC Here and Now (Radio Toronto), March 21 2018
CBC The Morning Edition (Kitchener Waterloo), March 21, 2018
Rogers Tv, InStudio (Waterloo Region), March 13, 2018
Rogers Tv, Daytime (Waterloo Region), March 14, 2017
CBC Radio (National), Competitive Balloon Twisting? Meet the Talented Drew Ripley, May 18, 2016
Rogers Tv, Daytime (Waterloo Region), April 20, 2016
Rogers Tv, Daytime (Waterloo Region), Feb 4, 2016
TV Cogeco, Taking Niagara by Storm (St. Catharines), Mar 6, 2015

Online

Balloon Artist College, Getting through the Pandemic, recorded August 13, 2020
University of Waterloo, Impact Stories, Pushing the Limits, Oct 24, 2019
Balloon Artist College, Host of Acting Panel, September 5, 2019
Balloon Artist Podcast, Season 8, Chapter 3, Veterans, From Twister to Performer, 2019
Balloon Artist Podcast, Season 2, Chapter 10, Gertrude and Friends, September 2016

Print Media

The Record (Waterloo Region), Kwartzlab opens new space to show off skills, tools and talents, March 4, 2019
The Record (Waterloo Region), Local team brings their air-game to big blow-up, March 20, 2018
The Record (Waterloo Region), Balloon Artist Delights Children at Waterloo Region Museum, Mar 21, 2016
The Record (Waterloo Region), A Twisted Talent, April 27, 2016
The Record (Waterloo Region), Maker Expo draws thousands to Kitchener City Hall, Sept 11, 2016
Communitech News, Coding Adds new twist to balloon artist's craft, June 24 2015

Major Projects

Theatre of Whimsy, KWLTL, Waterloo Ontario Canada, September 7th, 2019
Ballonizem Wild West, Balloon Costume Designer, Haifa Israel, October 2018
Baldur's Balloon Cave, Maker Expo, Project Director, Kitchener Ontario 2018
Sorcerers Serenity, Competitive Build, World Balloon Conference, San Diego California 2018
Festival City, Airigami, Doha Qatar 2017
Kayloth the Maker Dragon, Maker Expo, Kitchener Ontario, 2016
Balloon Adventure: Journey on the Genesee, Airigami Team Leader, Rochester New York, 2016
Gwen the Gondwanatitan, Project Director, Kitchener Ontario, 2015

Underwater Adventure, Airigami Team Leader, Rochester New York, 2015
1/3rd scale Space Shuttle, Airigami Transplant Games, Houston Texas 2014
Jack and the Beanstalk, Airigami Team Member, Rochester New York, 2014

Awards

Bronze Achievement, World Balloon Conference, 2018 Large Sculpture
Toastmaster: Competent Communicator
Bronze Achievement, World Balloon Conference, 2016 Medium Sculpture
Bruce Murray International Youth Camp Fellowship
Lions Quest Fellowship
Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award

Emcee

Housing Cooperative Galla, February 13th, 2020
KWpet Expo, Costume Competition, May 4th, 2019