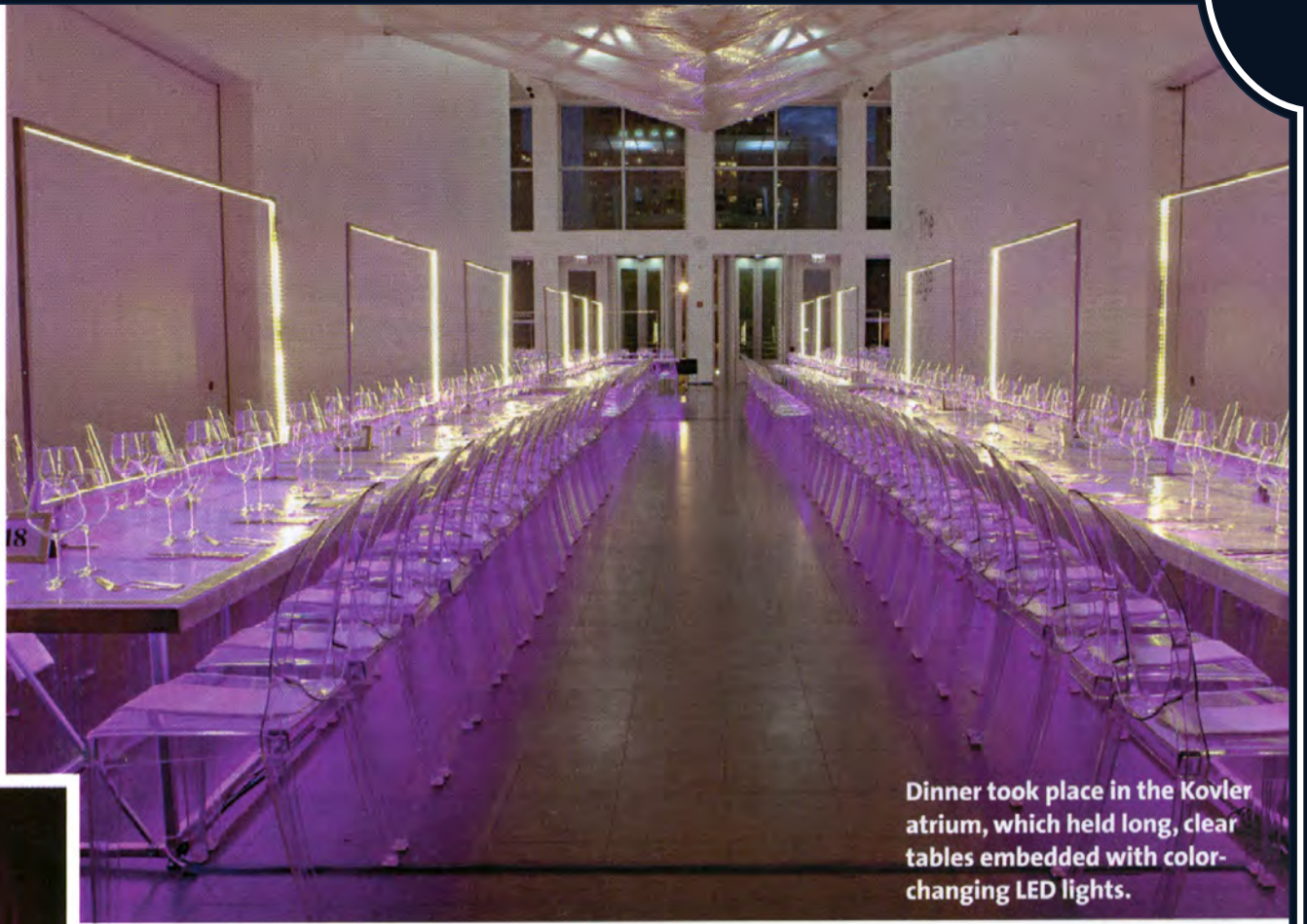




The tent had a cellophane ceiling and luminescent plastic walls.



Dinner took place in the Kovler atrium, which held long, clear tables embedded with color-changing LED lights.



For the concert, the “plastic ice box” from cocktail hour was transformed into a “technicolor dance palace,” Heffernan said.

Funked Up

The Museum of Contemporary Art combated midwinter blues with George Clinton’s music.

CHICAGO “Midwinter Funk?” asked the invitation to the Museum of Contemporary Art’s ArtEdge gala, which took place on February 4. The invite opened to reveal photos of artist Nick Cave’s Soundsuits dancing against electric hues of yellow, pink, and orange, and text encouraged patrons to “get out of your midwinter funk and celebrate ... with an evening of art, food, and funk.” Some 600 guests decided to do just that, and the gala raised more than \$1 million.

With a performance from George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic—and, of course, an appearance from the Soundsuits, performers in Nick Cave-designed costumes made of fabric, plastic, metal, hair, and other materials that make sounds when rubbed together—the evening was designed to “celebrate the incredible programming of the Museum of Contemporary Art and all the important people who support us,” said Gina Crowley, director of special events and rentals. “We also wanted to create an event that would wow the guests and rightfully represent the creative and unique style and programming of the [museum].”

For the first time, the cocktail reception and after-dinner concert

took place in a heated tent in the museum’s Sculpture Garden. Inspired by Clinton’s music and Oscar Tuazon’s plastic-wrapped installation on display in the atrium, Bill Heffernan of HMR Design Group created an “electric plastic” look for the cocktail reception.

With support from Event Creative, Heffernan employed shiny plastic walls and a cellophane ceiling embedded with color-changing lights. The effect, he said, was like a “unique and dynamic light show” set in a “plastic ice box.” Wolfgang Puck Catering prepared appetizers with a loose “electric soul food” theme.

Dinner took place in the atrium, where clear, shrink-wrapped dining tables were embedded with LED lights that changed colors. Served on clear plates, the menu items were bathed in

blue-and-pink lights throughout the meal, which made for “an electrified dining experience,” Heffernan said. Down the center of the tables were 50 illuminated frames that Heffernan referred to as “light planes.”

To signal the end of dinner, servers distributed spiked sweet tea, and the Soundsuits reappeared to usher guests back into the tent. By that time, “the plastic ice box from cocktails [had been] transformed into a hot technicolor dance place featuring George Clinton,” Heffernan said.

As the band played, passed treats included push-up coconut cream pie. Tiered dessert stands held Southern-inspired cakes, and an old-fashioned jerk soda station doled out root beer floats. In the lounge areas, guests found bottles of Svedka vodka, shot glasses, and grab-and-go funk concert attire: sparkly gold and silver bow-ties. —Jenny Berg



After dinner, the Soundsuits ushered guests to the tent for the after-party.



When conversing with tablemates, guests had the impression of speaking into mirrors.

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago’s ArtEdge Gala

Audiovisual Production, Draping, Lighting, Sound Event Creative

Catering Wolfgang Puck Catering

Decor, Design HMR Design Group

Entertainment George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic

Furniture Rentals, Rentals Hall’s Rental

Linens BBJ Linen

Photography Robert Carl PR Skirt PR

Security Global Security Associates LLC

Staging, Tenting HDO Productions

Transportation Metropolitan Limousine

Valet VIP Valet

Venue Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago