



A man in a dark tuxedo and white shirt with a dark bow tie is shown in profile, looking towards the right. A woman's hand is resting on his chest. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a path.

DANCING IN SEPTEMBER

STACY SMOLER & NATHAN FINCH

September 1, 2019 | Glencoe, Illinois | Photographed by Stoffer Photography

Though Stacy Smoler and Nathan Finch had recently relocated from Chicago to San Diego because Nathan had started his medical residency, the couple knew they wanted to get married near their families and chose a beautiful alfresco venue in the “Windy City” for their upcoming fall wedding. The botanic garden is situated in one of their favorite spots in the suburbs: nearby Downtown Chicago and in the heart of the North Shore. “I think the

venue is unique because you can host your entire celebration outdoors, and the lush scenery makes for such an incredible backdrop,” describes the groom.

With the help of a wedding planner, Stacy made the vast majority of the creative choices, though she relied on her mother and groom for insight on big decisions. The bride opted for a clean white color scheme to create the minimalist modern, yet sophisticated, aesthetic she envisioned.

RESOURCES

Beauty

Rhoda Kane - hair
Suky Vazquez - makeup

Bridal Gown/Salon

Mira Couture

Bridesmaid Gowns

Parker NY

Cake

Lana's Dazzling Desserts

Catering

Culinary Landscape

Consulting

Jamie Joffe Events

Entertainment

The Gold Coast All Stars for Gold Coast Events

Favors

Garrett Popcorn

Floral Design

HMR Designs

Formalwear

Hugo Boss

Honeymoon

Ho'ailo House

Invitations/Calligraphy

Arabella Papers

Jewelry

Costco; Hakimian Imports Inc.

Lighting Design

FROST Chicago

Linens

BBJ Linen

Photography

Stoffer Photography

Registry

Bloomingdale's

Rehearsal Dinner

The Art Center Highland Park

Rentals

HMR Designs

Shoes

Rebecca Minkoff

Veil

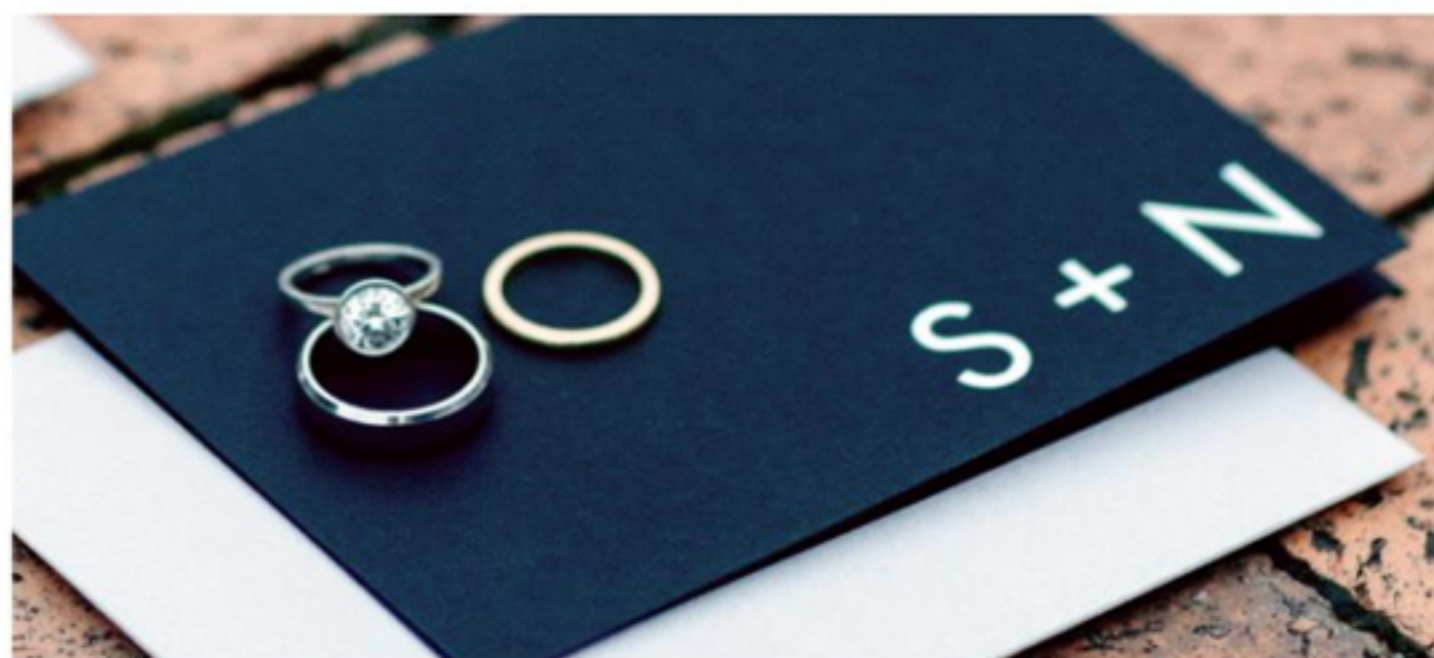
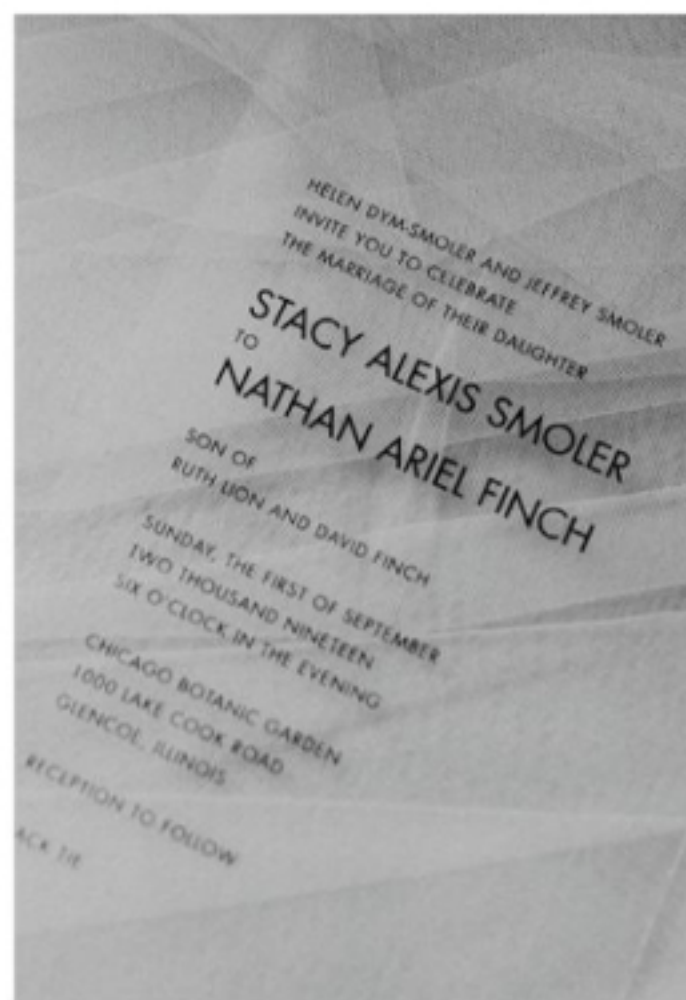
Diana's Bridal

Venue

Chicago Botanic Garden

Videography

Elbaum Video Productions





To help shape an intimate setting for the nuptials, guests sat in a semi-circle facing the acrylic chuppah complemented with fresh orchid arrangements atop mirrored podiums. The sleek structure was covered in the tallit of the father of the bride, as a sign of tradition and protection, for the customary Jewish service. “The entire ceremony was memorable. The religious component was unexpectedly meaningful,” recounts the groom of the vow exchange.

The couple was also sure to incorporate personal touches, such as the soundtrack for the day. Nathan and his groomsmen started the procession set to his favorite rock tunes by Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix, while Stacy made her grand entrance to “Here Comes the Sun” by The Beatles. She wore a long-sleeve fitted gown with a low V-back, and her hair was pulled back in a polished ponytail. In lieu of a typical bridal bouquet, she chose to hold flower stems formed into a heart shape and displaying a white orchid in the center.

At the reception, loved ones took their seats at spotless monochromatic white dinner tables surrounded by Ghost chairs. Even floral centerpieces created by HMR Designs took on a contemporary look. Fresh orchids and hydrangeas were placed in illuminated boxed fixtures that ran the length of each table and provided additional ambient lighting. Stacy opted out of table linens to keep in line with a clean, modern style and selected vanilla fine china in a square design bedecked with silky napkins and cool short stemless glassware.





“The band leader really took charge and allowed the evening to flow seamlessly.”

Having initially met after high school while on an immersive group tour to Israel called Shorashim, which is a Hebrew word meaning “roots,” the couple thought it was important to thank their guests for being the “roots” to their relationship. The newlyweds showed their gratitude, acknowledging they would not be around if it were not for their Holocaust-surviving relatives, and they likely would not have met if they hadn’t taken that trip in 2007.

After the dinner service, dancing ensued, and The Gold Coast All Stars, led by Danny Chaimson, played everything from rock and roll to rhythm and blues. “The band leader really took charge and allowed the evening to flow seamlessly,” remarks Nathan, who says he couldn’t have been happier with the live entertainment selection. At one point, the groom shares, “Three of the wind players came out onto the dance floor with their instruments and played with the crowd. They even let the father of the bride play the drums for one of his favorite songs.”

At the end of the night, the couple’s friends and family linked together to form a giant circle on the dance floor. “We did not plan that at all, but it really felt like our lives and pasts were coming together as one,” the bride remembers. Her only regret: “Wearing my heels for three hours of pictures before the ceremony. I wouldn’t do that again!” she laughs.

NICOLE PALACIOS



