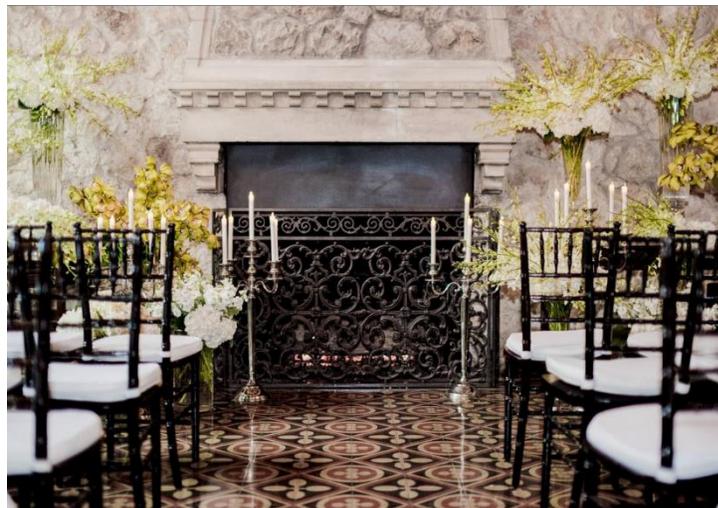


After planning literally thousands of events during his lifetime that include exclusive clients from a Who's Who of household names like Trump, Sinatra, McCartney and Madonna, Austin's own Creative Director of the Premiere Events in Austin, Texas, Ken Sharples gave his husband Pat Soffner (now Pat Sharples), a grand Roaring 20's wedding, one that even Gatsby would have found impressive. "Pat is the love of my life. I wanted our wedding to be perfection, every detail that could be imagined – down to the fireworks and a green light illuminating Lake Austin, just like in the book, *The Great Gatsby*." Sharples noted.

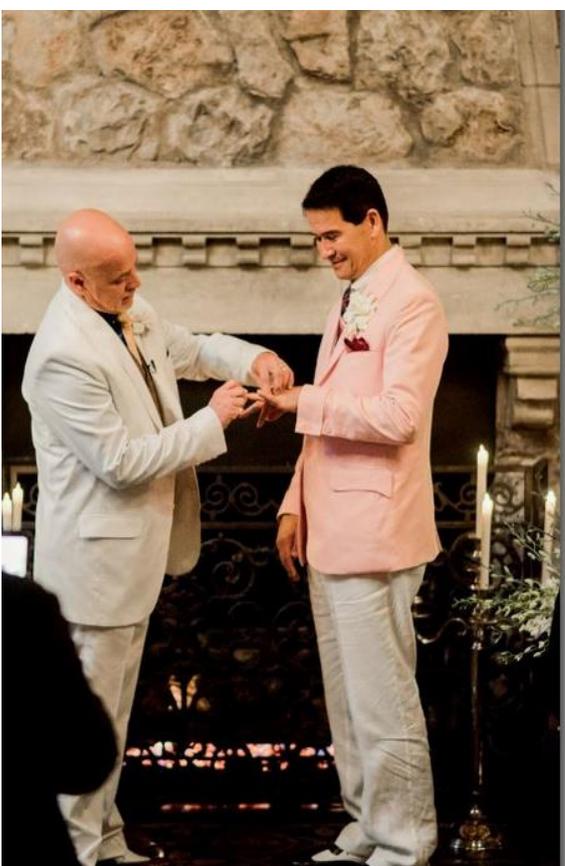
The list of Jazz Age details was long, starting with Ken's Rolls Royce. "Automobiles were at their grandest during the 20's so my two tone blue Rolls had to be featured. Austin's Westwood country club includes a pristine 1920's mansion that was perfect for the ceremony and their enormous

pool was the center piece for the reception. I created a clear stage on top of the pool that appeared to float for dancing and entertainers. It was magical with colored lights reflecting on everyone, the huge oak trees and every surface." Ken stated.



Family and friends came in for the entire weekend from all parts of the world and each of the 150 guests - bedazzled in flapper dresses or tails, were transported back almost 100 years. "I love the decadence of the 20's. It was all about abundance, extravagance. It was very boozy back then, so I made sure to capture that in our wedding. The martinis flowed and champagne popped all night, even the menu was straight from the time – one of my favorite dishes was the steamship round, hand cut by

waiters in white dinner jackets, served pool side. I wanted to make sure that everyone had a really memorable evening." Sharples said.



Their friend, Darlene Dattel, who introduced the couple three years ago, became an officiant so that she could perform the ceremony.

Both men were just themselves, in custom made jackets created by the company that made the men's clothes for the movie by Baz Luhrmann, during the wedding (Pat wore pink!). Then they changed in to Gatsby inspired tuxes, complete with wigs, "We had so much fun becoming 1920's gentleman." Ken added, "It just added a whole other level of fun!"



A six foot tall, all white extravagant dreamy white wedding cake rose to the occasion in the center of a Dessert Room, all by Simon Lee Bakery. 1920's inspired troupe performed songs and dances, then the feather dance made famous back then, wowed the guests. Everyone roared with delight when a drag queen performed on the clear stage then changed clothes and preformed again - wearing plenty of fringe and pearls.

But the most fun was the male dancer, wearing sock garters and white undies a' la 20's style, who danced in the champagne glass, complete with millions of bubbles. "I had the champagne glass created for the hot tub performer. The first half of the reception



was for the straight guests, after 9 pm, I entertained my gay guests." Sharples added with a smile.

Being front and center in the party planning industry for decades allowed Ken to use all of his best vendors, the lushest rentals and call in the best flowers to make sure no detail was too small. Ken added, "I have worked with so many talented people over the years, so on my own wedding, I wanted the best that Texas has to offer. I even researched the most popular

flowers of the time – gardenias and hydrangeas- so I used them. I didn't want to look back and think that I should have done one more thing." Sharples noted.

Pulling from the Premiere's warehouses of the most delicately engraved stemware, elegant table lines, fine china, crystal chandeliers, black, white and golden chairs and other accents. Then, ordering even more supplies, completed the final look. Many of the pieces were custom creations and all of the flourishes just seemed 1920's perfect.

The one more thing that was on his list that he had to have was the over the top firework display, after the first kiss. "I had to have fireworks, of course! Our rings will last forever, our love with last forever but the fireworks are more fleeting than flowers. It was perfect that we sealed that moment of our first kiss as

Mr. and Mr. We will have those sparkling memories for the rest of our lives." Ken smiled with the thought.

The Sharples have a second home in Philadelphia, where they hosted an evening for their friends that couldn't attend. The couple will honeymoon in Sicily, Italy. Gatsby never knew a Texan bash but he would have loved it, if Ken Sharples was in charge.

