

Anjali and Ted

On the evening of Oct. 1, motorists stopped at the red light at the intersection of Magazine Street, St. Andrew Street and Sophie Wright Place were no doubt drawn to the action in front of Il Mercato, the picturesque 85-year-old Spanish colonial-style events venue.

Musicians drummed; people danced and sang, and a man appeared riding on an adorned white horse. It was a spectacular party, and, though private, a few passersby even jumped into the throng uninvited to participate in the infectiously joyous vibe.

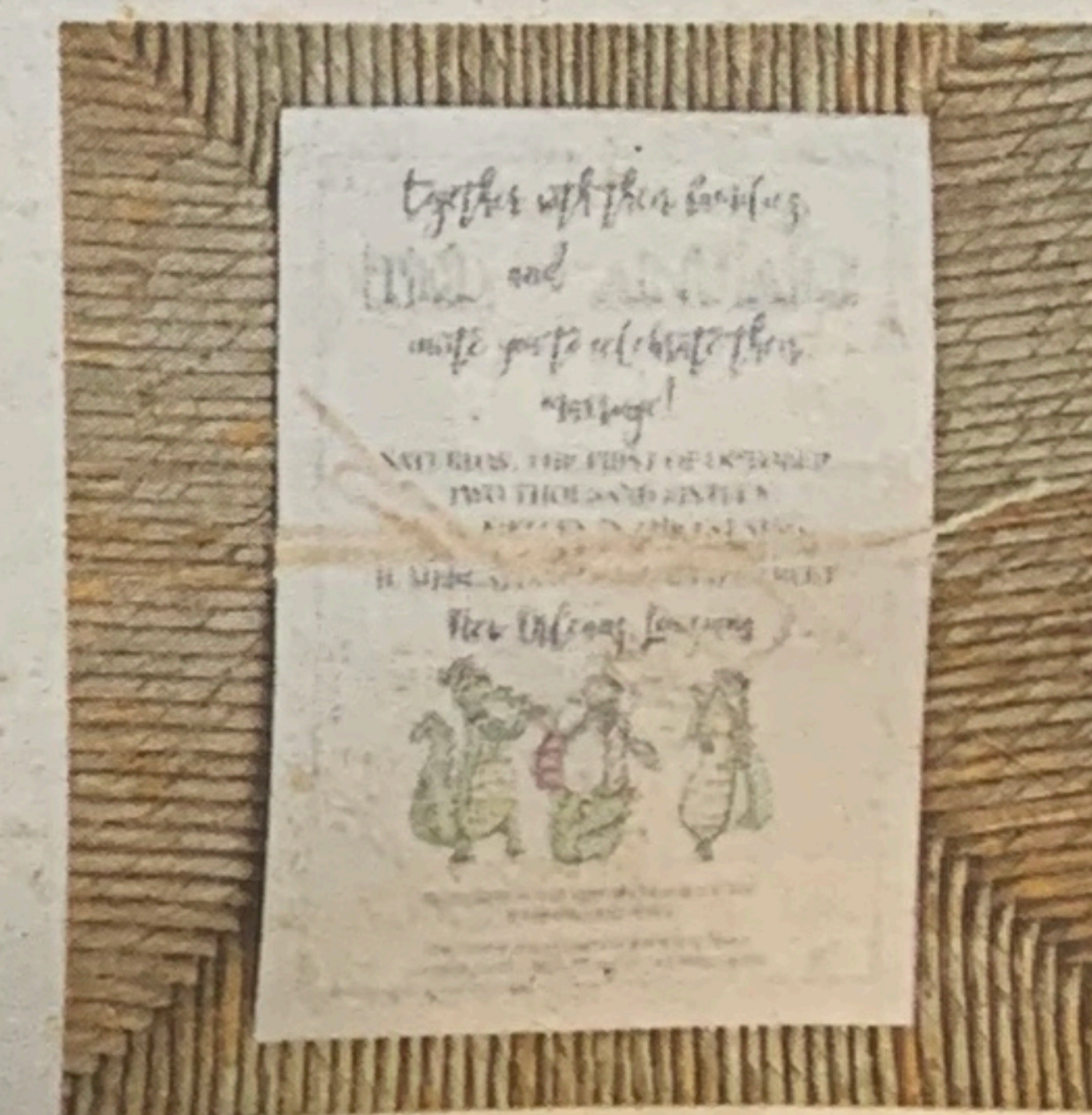
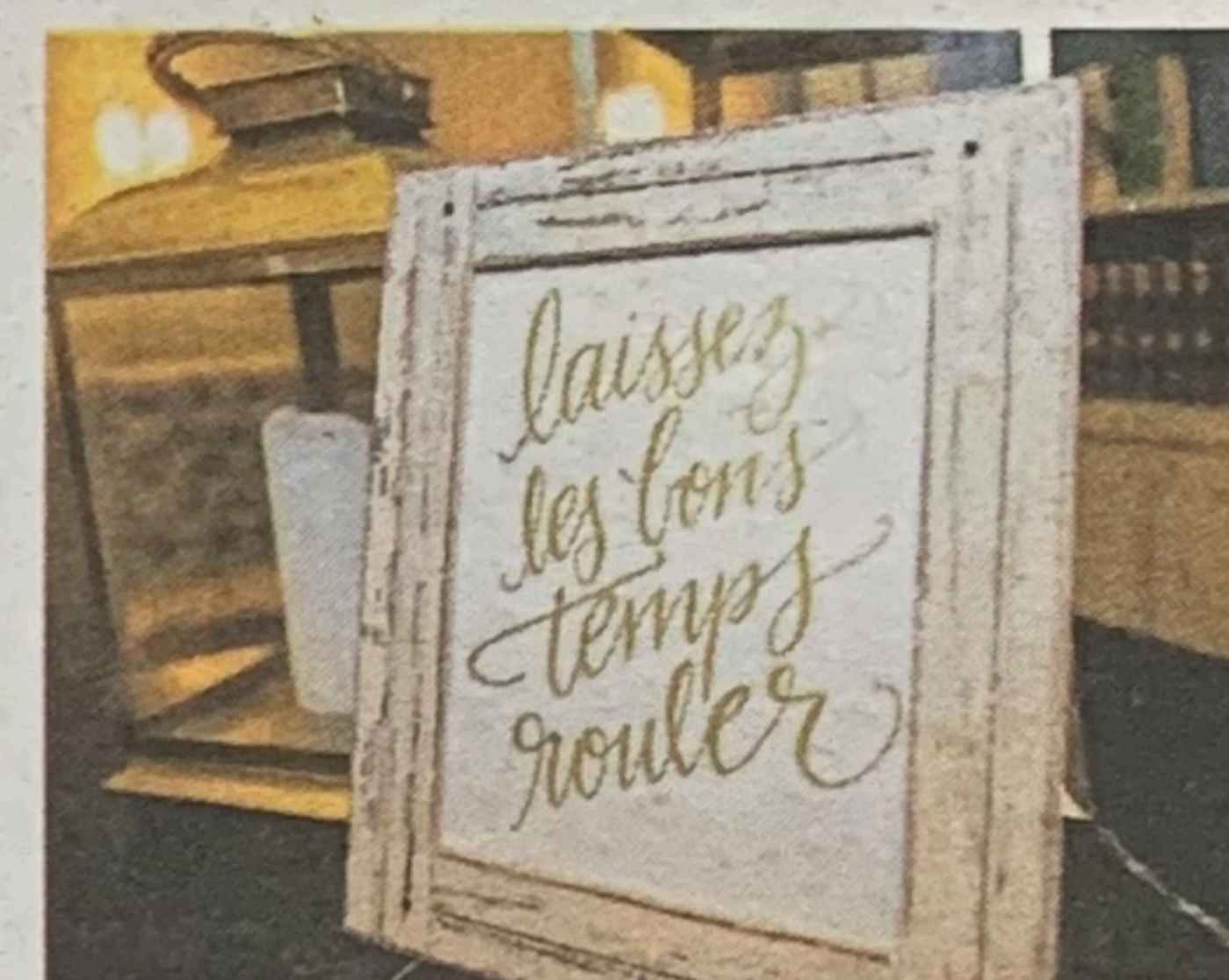
The celebration was part of the traditional Hindu wedding ceremony of Anjali Neela Kulkarni and Edward "Ted" Alan Featherstone.

The couple, who met at Wharton Business School at the University of Pennsylvania, decided to have their nuptials in Anjali's hometown of New Orleans.

The party at Il Mercato was the culmination of a three-day event, which began when Anjali and Ted were married in a short ceremony with their parents and Ted's step-parents as witnesses.

Then the women headed to Anjali's parents' home for a mehndi party, where an artist applied henna (mehndi) in a freestyle pattern on the bride's hand. Hidden in the design was the name of her groom in the palm of her hand.

The next day, a family brunch at Galatoire's led into the rehearsal dinner, catered by Saffron restaurant at Merchant





coffee shop in the Maritime Building. The building was one that Ted had worked on as a developer before he went to business school. The night concluded with a welcome party for wedding guests at Cellar Door.

The following day started early. The couple rented a home nearby to get ready along with the bridal party, which also included a "bridesman." Traditional Hindu garb for the wedding was worn by the bride and groom, as well as their parents and the bridal party. Before the wedding, the couple had traveled to Bombay, India, Anjali said, "to have Ted meet my family living there as well as do all of the wedding shopping, including getting everyone's clothes."

It was the baraat, the groom's wedding procession — which included Ted, his family and friends (the bride does not attend) — that passersby witnessed outside of Il Mercato. After the baraat, the groom and his entourage entered the venue, welcomed by Anjali's family and signaling the start

of the Vedic rituals for marriage: ganesh pooja (prayer to Lord Ganesh), vadhu aagman (arrival of the bride), mangalashtaka (exchange of garlands), kanyadaan (giving away of the bride), mangalsutra (tying of sacred necklace and the exchange of rings), vivaah homa (walking around the sacred fire), saptapadi (the most important part of the Hindu marriage ceremony, when the couple takes seven steps together around



the holy fire, symbolizing their journey through life and making seven promises to each other), finishing with the ashirwad (blessings for the couple, followed by the audience showering them in rice.)

Before the saptapadi, Anjali and Ted exchanged their own vows that were not part of the Vedic rituals.

After a quick change into a cocktail dress for Anjali, a midnight blue tuxedo for Ted, it was time to start the reception. A cocktail hour evolved into a sit-down dinner by Joel's catering and dancing, as well as a second line to music from D Play.

After a two-week honeymoon in Tanzania, the couple now lives in Denver, where Ted is a real estate developer at Zocalo Community Development. Anjali is taking a break and checking out her options. Previously she served in planning and strategy for Washington, D.C., public schools.

— Sue Strachan, Social Scene columnist

INVITATION

Designed by a friend, Jacquelyn Lee, and printed online with custom watercolor art; program: designed by Megha Narayan

BRIDE WARDROBE

Lehenga and odni (the shawl) purchased in Bombay, India. Reception dress: Jenny Yoo Collection, New York City

GROOM'S WARDROBE

Ceremony: Sherwani from Bombay. Reception ensemble: Midnight blue tuxedo purchased at Indochino

BRIDESMAIDS' WARDROBES

Purchased in Bombay

GROOMSMEN (AND "BRIDESMAN") WARDROBES

Salwaar kameez made in Bombay

RINGS

Blue Nile (online). Anjali: emerald-cut solitaire engagement ring and pave eternity wedding band; Ted: white gold wedding band

RINGBEARERS (Anjali

Kulkarni's nephews) Salwaars made in Bombay

OFFICIANT

Hindu priest Pandit Shridharan

FLOWERS

Beth's Flowers

CAKE (wedding and groom's)

La Louisiane Bakery

EVENT COORDINATOR

Nirvana Wedding

PHOTOGRAPHY

Lauren Carroll Photography

For more photos of the wedding, go to nola.com/weddings