



# Drew Ripley

## Entertainer, Artist, & 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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. Recently he has been recognized in Waterloo Region as a favorite professional Clown.

Drew is based out of Kitchener Ontario where he spends much of his volunteer time as Past-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 2<sup>nd</sup>, 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**

Kids Entertainer Academy Podcast, recorded August 28, 2020  
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), Local Photo, Max's Monster Mash, October 31, 2020  
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  
Communitel News, Coding Adds new twist to balloon artist's craft, June 24 2015

## **Major Projects**

Theatre of Whimsy, KWLTV, Waterloo Ontario Canada, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 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  
1/3<sup>rd</sup> scale Space Shuttle, Airigami Transplant Games, Houston Texas 2014  
Jack and the Beanstalk, Airigami Team Member, Rochester New York, 2014

### **Awards**

Platinum, Clown, 2020 Reader's Choice Winner  
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 Gala, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
KWpet Expo, Costume Competition, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019