WEDDINGS BY LISA STAMOS

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY KENT DRAKE

Opposite page:The newlyweds headed down to Lake Michigan for photos. Above: The wedding party included the couple's closest friends and family.

Jackie & Brian Ruth

A BARRINGTON HILLS NATIVE AND HER SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN HUSBAND SHARE THEIR LOVE STORY AND SPECIAL WEDDING DAY DETAILS

Jackie, tell us about where you grew up.

I was born and raised in Barrington Hills, attending Saint Anne Catholic School and Barrington High School. I grew up with a Cuban/Polish family, and both sides of my families are very in tune with their cultures, which is something I was always proud to carry on. Like Brian, my parents always stressed the importance of family, and knowing how much Brian also valued family was something that we connected on. Five of my bridesmaids were friends I had from elementary school, and my one Maid of Honor, Keelin Rooney, has been my best friend since kindergarten!

Brian, tell us about where you grew up.

I grew up in Southlake, Texas. My two brothers, sister, and parents are the biggest influences in my life. My parents always stressed the importance of a strong family unit, and that has stayed with us all through our lives. My sister and brother in-law even bought a house less than a block away from Jackie and me!

Custom-designed invitations from M Studio.

Jackie, how did you and Brian meet?

We first crossed paths in September of 2016, but after meeting up at the bar, I ended up talking more with his friends than him. For months he would ask me to meet for dinner or drinks, but I always found an excuse for myself or felt too busy with grad school. After I finally agreed to a date in December of 2016, I was regretting waiting four months to go out with him! After that, we were inseparable.

Brian, what was it about Jackie that caught your eye?

She has a soft, simple, classy look about her. She is incredibly beautiful, but also has this fun personality about her. You can sense how genuine she is within minutes of talking with her and she can easily make anyone feel comfortable or good about themselves. I also love that she chose to work with children with special needs. It says a lot about who she is.

Jackie, where was your first date?

Our first date was at a Dallas Stars hockey game. I met his dad on our first date. He was at the game with friends and Brian brought me to meet him. I took that as a sign that it was obviously going somewhat well! After that, he came to Fort Worth to take me to dinner. We talked for so long at the restaurant that they were closing down and putting the chairs on the table. We were constantly taking turns making the drive back and forth between Dallas and Fort Worth to see one another for six months until I graduated and moved to Dallas.

Brian, how long before you knew Jackie was "the one"?

It sounds cheesy, but I knew right away that I didn't want to date anyone else. Within a month or two I knew I wanted to spend my life with her. Beyond just loving each other, we loved each other's families, and that made things all the better.

Jackie, tell us about schools you attended.

I graduated from BHS in 2012 and moved to Fort Worth, Texas to attend Texas Christian University. I majored in Elementary Education and ended up staying at TCU to get my Master's in Special Education. I'm a Special Education Behavior Interventionist in Dallas.

Brian, what schools did you attend?

I graduated from Southlake Carroll High School in 2010 and attended Texas A&M University. My degree is in Management Information Systems (MIS) and I'm now Director of Sales Engineering for Cisco in Dallas.

Brian, how did you approach the big question?

When I started to plan our engagement, I knew she would want to share the excitement of the day with her family and friends. I also wanted the day to be filled with surprises. I had a limo pick her up at her apartment and left a letter and book of pictures of us for her to look at on the way to White Rock Lake in Dallas. It was "our place" to go on walks with the dog. After I popped the question, our families came running out. We all went to dinner at her favorite restaurant and went for "after dinner drinks" at an outside terrace nearby. All of our friends were waiting for us there to continue the celebrations, many of which had travelled from all over to be there for us.

Jacklyn Trzaska has a moment before the ceremony.

Jackie, tell us about your choice of churches.

Our ceremony was at Saint Michael's Catholic Church in Old Town. My brother got married in the same church, so it was extra special for us. We both come from strong Catholic families, so having a full Catholic mass was very important to both of us.

Jackie, why did you choose Christina Currie Events?

Christina has been planning events for my family since I can remember. She planned my 8th grade graduation party, and every bridal shower, baby shower, and major birthday celebration for all my family members. It was kind of a no-brainer that she would be our planner for the wedding. Throughout the process Christina was the voice of reason I needed. I'm a very indecisive person, and wedding planning comes with A LOT of decisions! I always trusted Christina's opinions, valued her guidance, and was impressed by her knowledge of the entire process. She was always there to remind us this was our day and worked so hard to make our wedding unique.

Jackie, how did the idea of The Field Museum come about?

We had 11 weddings to attend in 2019, so we agreed that we wanted our wedding to be something different for guests, and we surely hadn't been to any other weddings that had elephants or dinosaurs at the reception! We also wanted a venue that was iconic to Chicago, and a place we could always go back to and bring our kids one day. There is something about being in Stanley Hall that gives you a "wow" factor on just a regular day, so I knew with the help of CCE and our amazing design partner Ramsey at Kehoe Designs the space would be magical!

Brian, what was it like to be in this amazing space?

It was such an elegant space and being there made me feel "small". The dinosaurs and elephants made me feel like a little kid the entire night. It gave this adventurous and historic feel that I hadn't experienced before. The room alone is incredible, but to fill it with all our family and friends, along with the incredible job of CCE and Kehoe, it was magical.

Jackie, tell us about the flow of your reception.

Cocktail hour was one of my favorite parts of the day. We had all of our guests on the Northeast Terrace of The Field Museum, on one side you had this beautiful view overlooking the lake, and on the other side the magical steps and pillars of The Field Museum. It was 75 degrees and sunny with a breeze. Chicago truly showed off its most beautiful weather for all our out-of-town guests. We had the Cover Girls playing violin covers of songs while our amazing caterer, Food for Thought, passed out an arrangement of hors d'oeuvres.

Kent Drake, our photographer, is amazing. I met him at my brother's engagement party in 2017. He makes everyone feel comfortable.

When it came to decor, Kehoe Designs and CCE absolutely nailed the look I was envisioning.

The ceremony was held at Saint Michael's Catholic Church in Old Town.

The 250 guests from across the country were greeted by the Field's iconic African elephants and dinosaurs.

Ending the night on the stairs of The Field Museum before heading to the after-party.

Blush florals by Kehoe Designs filled the room

I wanted to set a romantic mood and play off the absolute beauty of Stanley Hall. We added twinkle lights strung above the dance floor and up-lighted the pillars in the room for a dramatic look. The flowers, a combination of hydrangeas, roses, and greens, had soft pinks and white for a clean, classic, and romantic look. We used a lot of gold accents from shimmery gold linens to vases and candle holders.

Christina knew I loved Champagne and came up with the idea of a Champagne parade to kick off the night. After our entrances, the servers came out and all paraded around, each with a bottle of Champagne, to bring each guest a drink while the band played "Celebrate!" It certainly brought the energy to the room.

My parents, Maria and Rob Trzaska, surprised us with a "live" painting of our first dance by the incredibly talented Rosemary Fanti. It is one of my favorite things we have in our home and it is hung proudly to always remember our special day.

After a fantastic meal from Food For Thought, and several speeches that brought a lot of tears and a lot of laughs, we began dancing the night away. At the end of the night, we had a vintage Rolls Royce take us from the steps of the museum to our after-party!

We felt so blessed throughout the entire process to have the help and guidance of the entire CCE team and all of our amazing vendors, but especially our parents, who continue to be the most incredible support system and examples of a faithful, loving marriage. Our wedding day was all we dreamed of, and it wouldn't have been so without the generosity and support of the Trzaskas. We love you, Mom and Dad!