



Open house

WHO: Bernard Gauthier, producer at *Bravo!News* and associate producer of *Arts & Minds Bravo!*

WHAT: 1,500-square-foot one bedroom in a Victorian low-rise apartment complex, complete with grand tiled foyer and cantilevered ceilings.

WHERE: The gaybourhood.

HOW LONG: Gauthier moved in a little over three years ago when the former tenant — who had lived there for 23 years — moved out. “No one moves out of this building,” he says.

FAVOURITE THING: Unsurprisingly, Gauthier loves the size. “The generosity of the space. It allows me to be generous and invite people over. It’s very welcoming — people feel comfortable here.”

LEAST FAVOURITE THING: “The dust! In one day, my desk gets covered in a thick layer — and not gentle white dust, but black soot from the construction and the cement trucks and loading trucks. People should be more community-minded and not idle their trucks.”

THE STORY: Though it was impossible to tell from the pristine state of his spacious apartment during our visit, Bernard Gauthier had just opened his doors the day before to friends who were out celebrating Pride on adjacent Church Street. “It’s not as clean as I’d like it to be,” he says. “I had about 70 people in here yesterday.”

Gauthier clearly loves entertaining and he’s taken pains to ensure that his place is not only a personal refuge, but also an ideal hang-out space, whether for an intimate chat with a new friend over lemonade on the balcony or an all-day, open-house soirée. The Montreal native has lived in Toronto for 20 years and he has met numerous artists while working at *Bravo!* for the past 12 years. His white-washed walls hold a gallery-quality collection, including works by both established and emerging talents. Gauthier has a souvenir print from a Montreal shoot he participated in while filming a story on the photographer Spencer Tunick, who is famous for posing mass numbers of naked people in public spaces. A piece by video artist Sharon Switzer plays on his wide-screen television, chosen to complement the painting by Paul Butler that hangs above it (both juxtapose slogans against landscape imagery). He’s also been known to play virtual aquarium and fireplace DVDs.

Gauthier’s enthusiasm and warmth extends to those he doesn’t invite inside as well. “It’s an urban theatre out there,” he says. “As nice a neighbourhood as this is, there are dealers and prostitutes and young bad boys and not-so-nice girls as well. In one night, there are people breaking up, whores and pimps screaming at each other. You have to be tolerant. You name it, and I’ve seen it. There’s an excitement about it that you wouldn’t get on a farm, or living in Scarborough. It’s great.”

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