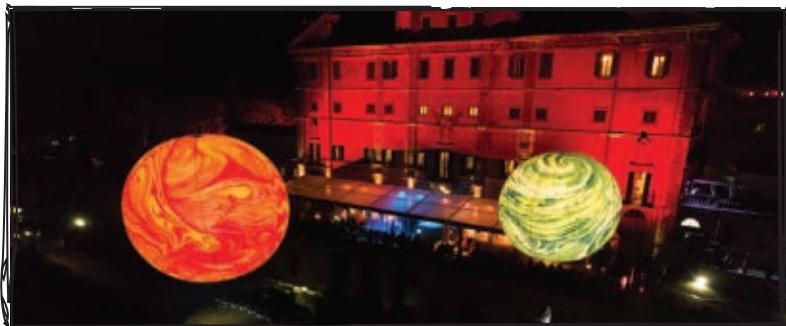


Fantastico Top left, Dancers interpret “Spring Awakening” under a suspended ceiling of fresh flowers at the gala dinner opening IBA2018. Top, Costumed performers greet guests at the welcome party for IBA2018. The event used 15,000 flowers and wheat stalks, as well as 75 dancers and other performers. Left, During dinner, IBA2018 guests watch giant balloons and flying acrobats along with three different fireworks displays.



ALL FIVE SENSES

- Welcome Party for International Bar Association 2018 Conference
- Oct. 7, 2018
- Villa Aldobrandini, Frascati, Italy (just outside of Rome)
- 4,000 attendees



Each year, the International Bar Association kicks off its conference with a party that gives international delegates a chance to get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere before a week of intense sessions.

In 2018, Professional Congress Organizer AIM Group International wanted to create a gala dinner that gave each of the 4,000 attendees a personalized experience while being of a piece with the overall conference, which took place at Roma Convention Center, Oct. 7–12.

The reception at the Villa Aldobrandini in Frascati, which is inhabited by the original family owners and rarely allows events, was organized so that it provided a “high level of personalization” of the artistic aspects, Alessia Ostorero, business manager, AIM Group International, told *Convene* via email. “We built a coherent story strongly linked to Italian culture, Rome in particular, and to the location.”

With its masterpieces of the baroque school, the villa’s art collection gave organizers the baroque theme that they injected into all aspects of the evening — from the entertainment to the feast, in keeping with today’s participant expectations “to be directly involved and emotionally engaged with all the five senses,” Ostorero said.

Guests were allowed to roam the villa’s rooms and nymphaeum, or fairy garden, where they watched performers bring to life scenes from 17th-century Italian courts, and floral-costumed dancers perform pieces inspired by the four seasons and the villa’s sculptures.

Delegates also were treated to a special production based on the 16th-century performance staged for the wedding of Ferdinando de’ Medici. The modernized show included aerial dancers, acrobats, pyrotechnics, and a video projection, which displayed a backdrop of mythological figures.

Outside, dancers in oversized, LED light-infused crinolines greeted guests in the front terrace while a jazz band played. Along the walk to the pavilion, performers dressed to resemble a Botticelli painting staged the Signs of the Zodiac Garden that represented each zodiac sign. Once at dinner on the villa’s terrace overlooking the valley and the dome of St. Peter’s in the Vatican, guests watched three fireworks displays, giant balloons, and flying acrobats.

“Being free to walk within the different areas, each guest was able to have a different experience, depending on the way they chose [to walk] and time that they decided to spend,” Ostorero said. “Personalized experiences are the key!”

The welcome party was honored with a first place win in the gala category at the 10th Global Eventex Awards. 🌟

—Curt Wagner



Alessia Ostorero

“We built a coherent story strongly linked to Italian culture.”

