



ALEEM AND VICTOR



TRANSFORMATIVE. FLUID. REIMAGINED.

Aleem and Victor's three-day wedding weekend, was a momentous celebration that kicked off both the wedding season and Pride Month globally. The main event on Saturday, June 1, 2024 took place at the iconic Phantom Creek Estates Winery in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley. The day was defined by three key principles: transformation, fluidity, and reimagination — concepts that shaped both the wedding and the fashion. The grooms dazzled in four couture looks each, while guests embraced the "Met Gala" theme with their most fabulous attire. Grand gestures, such as a helicopter whisking the couple away, were paired with over-the-top glamour, fashion, and entertainment, all while leaving pretentiousness at the door.

EVENT PLANNING by Countdown Events

IMAGES by Hong Photography

Aleem Kassam and Victor Kazakov first met over 12 years ago, shortly after Aleem had returned home to Vancouver after living in London, Milan, and Chicago, ready to focus on his career. Within a week, he joined the dating app Grindr and connected with Victor. Sparks flew on their first date, and within a month, Aleem was spending most of his time at Victor's apartment.

In 2021, after nine years of dating, Victor surprised Aleem with a heartfelt proposal at home, just before they were set to leave for a spa trip. The day unfolded with a series of extraordinary surprises, including a private flight over Vancouver and the Gulf Islands, a luxurious spa experience, an engagement photoshoot, and a breathtaking helicopter ride home. Victor also arranged a private shopping experience at Gucci, followed by a romantic dinner and final champagne toasts to celebrate their future.

Aleem and Victor are a power couple in Vancouver, each excelling in their respective fields while building a life full of love, resilience, and impact. Aleem is the owner of the award-winning and internationally published interior design studio, Kalu Interiors. Victor, with an equally impressive career, now serves as the Co-Founding Lead Engineer of an innovative AI technology company, Catio. Together, they are deeply rooted in their community, not only as successful professionals but as advocates for equality and representation.

When it came time to plan their wedding, Aleem and Victor commissioned event planning and design gurus Jenny Roberts and Soha Lavin of CountDown Events to orchestrate an entirely unique wedding that would challenge and redefine "traditional" wedding norms. The high-fashion celebration was held over a three day weekend in British Columbia's beautiful Okanagan Valley, with the ceremony and reception at Phantom Creek Estates Winery. The fashionista couple knew they wanted their wedding wardrobe to play a starring role.

They chose Denis Gagnon, a renowned couturier from Montreal, Quebec, as their wedding designer—a decision that perfectly aligned with their vision for boundary-pushing, bespoke fashion. Known for bending the rules of traditional couture with modern and fashion-forward elements, Denis was a natural choice for the couple, who had been loyal clients for nearly a decade. When Denis and his team agreed to design their wedding attire, Aleem and Victor were thrilled, commissioning not one but three distinct ensembles for each groom. These outfits, composed of 18 intricately detailed pieces, represented a true departure from conventional wedding fashion and featured removable elements and accessories, ensuring they could be repurposed beyond the wedding day.

Collaborating with a designer across the country was no small task, requiring three trips to Montreal over six months, and countless hours of design discussions, sketches, emails, calls, and fittings. The process also brought its share of challenges, including a nerve-racking moment when all the outfits went missing in transit to Vancouver just one week before the wedding!



VERSATILE STYLE
Aleem and Victor designed their wedding looks to be versatile and timeless, curating ensembles with separates and interchangeable pieces for adaptability and longevity. Aleem's look featured a massive bow and train attached by a corset overlaying his blazer, while Victor's bow seamlessly integrated with his blazer, tied elegantly to one side. The use of mixed textiles—crisp white and ivory, satin and matte textures, and bold hardware like oversized ivory pearls—added depth and sophistication.

Even their ceremony entrance reflected their unity, as they walked down opposite sides of the amphitheater and met in the middle, where their looks interlocked through mirrored draping and complementary design.



RAINBOW CONNECTION

Set atop the mountains in Canadian wine country, PHANTOM CREEK ESTATES WINERY provided the perfect backdrop as the rain cleared just in time for the ceremony, where a rainbow appeared at the exact moment Aleem and Victor exchanged vows—a truly magical moment.



DRAMATIC DEPARTURE

After the ceremony, a helicopter whisked the newlyweds away for a dramatic and scenic photoshoot led by Ellen Ho of HONG PHOTOGRAPHY, while guests enjoyed cocktail hour.

TABLE HARMONY

Inclusivity was at the heart of the celebration, perfectly timed with the start of Pride Month. The (very!) long central table symbolized unity, self-expression, and shared joy.



REAL WEDDING

Aleem & Victor



EQUAL PARTNERSHIP

Before the reception kicked off, the couple changed into their bolder, second looks by Denis Gagnon. Bows, lapels, and pockets were contrasted in satin textures, with design elements from their ceremony looks — such as the signature bow — reimagined in black. Victor's outfit featured a removable cape, while Aleem's included a detachable 7-foot skirt, symbolizing their complementary and equal partnership. The outfits were specifically curated to create a dramatic "WOW" moment as Aleem and Victor re-entered their wedding reception. At the same time, the removable elements allowed for greater comfort during the seated dinner and festivities that followed.



STAR POWER

Aleem and Victor made it their mission to ensure their guests felt like stars. From red-carpet interviews with Vancouver personalities Fred Lee and Rachel Beau to dozens of musical acts and performances, white-glove service, endless hors d'oeuvres and cocktails, and photographers capturing every moment for a jumbo LED screen, the event was nothing short of star-studded. With over 40 musical performances — including an award-winning and Juno-nominated artist, a choir, a quartet, duos, a 12-piece band, a jazz musician, and an opera singer — an entertainment coordinator managed the technical aspects of the evening.

STORIED DETAILS

After dinner, Aleem and Victor made a re-entry to the reception, led by a saxophonist, unveiling their third set of looks. Designed in collaboration with Eduardo Ramos, these outfits featured hand-embroidered lace, silk, and diamante details layered with pieces from Denis Gagnon's collection. Additional combinations were showcased in their Feature Film *Love Story*, screened on large-format projectors and TVs in the courtyard.



SYMBOLIC MOMENTS

After dessert, Aleem presented Victor with a sculpture symbolizing their marriage as the couple revealed their fourth black-and-white looks by Denis Gagnon. Aleem's outfit reimagined the corset from his ceremony attire, embracing gender fluidity.



Credits

- ALEEM @aleemkassam VICTOR @victorkazakov
- CATERING CHEF Alessa Valdez and @phantomcreek
- CEREMONY, RECEPTION, & DANCING LOOKS @boutiquedenisgagnon_ca
- DECOR & SIGNAGE @perspectiveeventdesign
- DRONE SHOW @pixelskyanimations
- ENTERTAINMENT COORDINATOR @iamdjpri
- EVENT PLANNING & DESIGN @countdownevents
- FLORAL DESIGN @jamstudio.ca
- HAIR AND MAKEUP @truebeautymakeupartistry @paigegriffithmakeup
- HELICOPTER @skyluxhelicopters
- PHOTOGRAPHY @hongphotography
- PORTRAIT PHOTOBOOTH @luckybooth.ca
- BEHIND THE SCENES CANDID PHOTOS Gonzalo Castro
- PRIMARY DECOR @eclatdecor
- RED CARPET PHOTOGRAPHY @visionphotogs
- SPEECH & CAKE CUTTING LOOKS @eduardo_fashionstudio
- STATIONERY @violetgreycreative
- TABLE SETTINGS @pedersenseventrentals
- VENUE @phantomcreek
- VIDEOGRAPHY @hongcinema
- WEDDING CAKE @cakeforbreakfastbc