

The Host Manifesto

To start, you must ask yourself: what are you trying to achieve with your event? Purveying parties can be an endless cycle that doesn't allow space for reflection. What made you wake up today, open Adobe Illustrstor (or GIMP in my case), and create an image that promotes nightlife?

Once you've found an answer that satisfies you, the next best practice is to open Instagram and save every poster you see. Study them. Digest all the typefaces, art styles, and most importantly, the Hosts. Study these Hosts; don't actually look at their profile or consider who they are, but rather contemplate how their name looks upon the poster on your iPhone screen. And don't you dare actually go to the event for which the poster is advertising- that's a distraction from the goal here. You should be able to look at a poster, perhaps leave a comment, and feel instantly connected to the cast of characters listed as Hosts. It's not an illusion. You are, in fact, the kith and kin of every NYC Host you digitally interact with. They're here for you, and they're nothing without a vessel from which to host.

It's important to keep in mind that each Host's presence upon your poster should be hyper-intentional. Gone are the days of massive blocks of text with a slew of unrecognizable names. What we're selling here is a feeling- don't let that morph from Joy to exclusion. It's important to remember:

Golden Rule #1:

Each name added after exactly 6 Hosts to a poster will decrease desire to attend by 10%. Curation yields elation.

Selecting Hosts

So who are these 6 Hosts you should grace your beautiful poster with? Selecting Hosts is a balancing act, a simultaneous game in two parts. You have to plate a meal and make informed chess moves with both hands. Too much spice or lackluster stirring will spell disaster before your event can even begin. Leading too quickly with a rook, or crowding one side of the board will doom you to a swift loss.

According to Angel's pioneering dissertation on Host vocabulary and best practices (2022's "Going Host"), a Host should be thought of as a floating signifier, a collection of symbols and schema that comprise a mostly hollow message whose power lies in its mere presence, rather than its content. McLuhan's "medium is the message" philosophy can be extended here into Dean Kissick's "persona is the message", which can be extended into Angel's "the host is the medium, and the message doesn't exist". This doesn't mean we can pick just anyone as host though.

Actually, we CAN pick anyone as host, but we SHOULDN'T just pick any old name that comes to mind. Lucky for you, Angel has also devised an ideal class of hosts that's sure to deliver you the most balanced, impactful Host list for your event.

Angel's Golden Cast:

"The Zeitgeist"

This one should lead, and works as a bait to draw the eye in. Should be someone in high demand who's name is appearing absolutely everywhere. This Host is universally, unequivocally liked by society.

“The Community Partner”

This person hosts a similar party as you with a largely overlapping crowd. Or perhaps they operate in some other capacity in the exact same sphere as you. Activating them as host for your party signifies community strength and the development of a “cultural moment” and “scene”.

“The Head Scratcher”

This Host's strength lies in its power to disarm, effectively the opposite of “The Zeitgeist”. An initial response to seeing this Host on a flyer should be confusion and disbelief: “Does that person even live in NYC?”, “Aren't they low key beefing with *name of other Host*”, “Wow, I didn't think that person is the type to host a party, or even go out at night in general.” This final example is most key, as it maintains the “Once in A Lifetime Experience” ethos upon which all great events set their anchors.

“The Wildcard”

This Host exists in a gray area of controversy, riding the edge of a recent scandal. Activating this host can yield a huge payoff or an absolute catastrophe, so this character warrants some rules of its own:

1. The Wildcard cannot be a podcaster.

2. The Wildcard cannot be a transphobic filmmaker sibling duo.
3. The Wildcard's recent controversy has to be scandalous enough to warrant city-wide conversation, but not so hot that if the Wildcard was actually guilty of the matter at hand, they'd be seen unfavorably. Write that down.
4. The Wildcard cannot actually attend the event they are Hosting.

Angel can tell you about how much I try to avoid coming off as a Hater. The last thing I want to be is a washed up party promoter sipping margaritas bitterly in the back while I Hate on everyone around me. But when curating "The Wildcard", I strongly suggest taking the Hater's Perspective, if only for a moment. Uncover the worst dirt you can on your potential host before a poster-enjoyer does. Their scandalous behavior must be air tight.

"The Legacy Host"

This Host works perfectly as a closer, an outro. They're wholesome and have mass appeal, a warm blanket to counter the stormy intensity of "the Wildcard". The Legacy Host's presence on your poster should feel like Dick Clark's *New Years' Rockin' Eve* on NBC: it's always been there ambiently in the background while you experiment with other New Years party activities and Hosts, and it's ready to accept you back when you realize that sometimes tradition can, in fact, put novelty to bed.

Optional add on:

“The Lie”

This host is completely fabricated and hasn't actually been contacted to host, remotely or in person. It can be a celebrity, or a completely fictional character. The effect of adding “the Lie” to your party is double: it either fools people into thinking someone will be at your party, thereby increasing the poster's efficacy, or it enriches your position as Puppetmaster, a joker, a tongue in cheek promoter who isn't afraid to mess around. The identity of “The Lie” theoretically can be anyone, but it's intent shouldn't stray too far from Randomness. Any attempt to subvert, shock, or dazzle has already been achieved by the other cast members (“Head Scratcher”, “The Wildcard”, and “The Zeitgeist”, respectively). Suspend disbelief; follow your heart. “The Lie” shouldn't be overused, or else trust will be broken. This is Angel's favorite Host.

A Guide for Hosts

So, you've activated your Hosts and arranged them in order (extremely important) on your flyer. What now?

If you're like me, you receive texts from your Hosts like “What does that even mean?”, “Do I have to do anything at the party?”, “How big is my guest list?”

My personal guidance for any readers that find themselves engaged in the holy act of Hosting is what you might expect: post the flyer on Instagram, send it directly to your friends, pack your guest list, show up early, etc. While these are best practices, there's a more

general rule I believe serves the Puppetmaster of the party more directly:

Golden Rule #2:

The best Hosting requires minimal guidance.

Hosts should freestyle their way through the promotion preceding the night in question. This creates an organic and highly original sequence of online occurrences that are extremely interesting. In fact, if you follow this rule, the promotion and online buzz about your event will outlive and outshine the event itself.

Illusion and deception are perfectly acceptable substitutes for actual experience. Attending a party is like going out to the store to buy something, while enjoying a party via its poster and cast of hosts is like getting something Amazon Primed to you overnight. Are the products actually any different? The means have changed but the party lives on. Jubilation, dance, desire, excitement, Oneness: these are matters of the heart, and the heart responds to community stimulation whether it's in person or online. "Imitating reality" is itself an oximoron. Reality is what comprises your own personal experience in each and every changing moment. The heart outlives a party, in any form.

A party is a cultural reflection, improvisational jazz of ideas and identity moments. The poster, being the most functionally timeless facet of an event, therefore becomes the Moment itself. What happens at the party does not matter in the least bit. It's the combination of curves and punctuation on the flyer that criss cross and take on some kind of medium of their own the second eyes are

laid on them. Of course hosts don't functionally help a physical party go well- it's the lead up and perceived cultural impact people experience anyways. A final rule to follow:

Golden Rule #3:

Your Hosts are archetypes of the future. They're borne of your event, and live eternally.

Posters and flyers are not for parties. They're for repeatedly rewriting the rules of Culture over and over and over. Hosts, curated to perfection, become the tenets of your mind's eye, they speak volumes with their mere presence, yet they say absolutely nothing. The interactions of Hosts between each other, Hosts between audience, and audience amongst themselves is a microcosm if the Idyll, a simulacrum that resides in your heart and the collective global cyber-brain. A poster is a party, and the hosts are the medium. The message is Nothingness, and thus culture is produced.