

Love at First Sight

An instant connection leads to a forever fairytale

BRITTNI MCKINNEY & DERRICK JOHNSON

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CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER
TRAVIS DANIELS

Brittni McKinney and Derrick Johnson's love story didn't begin with a chance encounter or serendipitous meeting. The two were introduced at a birthday party of a mutual friend, but the connection was instant.

"One of my cousins said there was like a spotlight on both of us," McKinney says. "We just kind of gravitated towards each other by the end of the night."

McKinney was a Kansas City native, and Johnson was a linebacker for the Kansas City Chiefs. After four years of dating, the couple took a trip to the tropics that ended with an over-the-top proposal for the soon-to-be-bride.

"We were in Turks and Caicos, and he rented out a yacht and surprised me

at sunset in front of the boat," McKinney says. "He always told me he would never propose in front of anyone, so I thought we would be at home watching TV. I had no idea."

McKinney turned to Bonnie Walker, who helped Johnson coordinate the proposal, to help plan the couple's summer 2018 wedding at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

"We invited 340 guests, and there aren't a lot of venues here that can hold that many people," McKinney says. "The Nelson can. When I saw the venue, I could just see myself there."

Local designer Sheraz Pompey created the elegant gold-toned bridesmaids dresses, while McKinney walked down the aisle in a strapless Ines Di Santo gown.











From the ceremony to the reception, the duo's modern affair was filled with lavish arrangements of white roses and hydrangeas accented by touches of gold and silver. Modern white couches and ghost chairs provided plenty of seating for the newlyweds' 300-plus guests, who were served dinner at different food stations and dessert from a five-tier cake from Classic Cakes.

"We wanted a modern wedding with a party atmosphere," McKinney says. "The pictures are exactly what my vision was."

And although the day's events played out without a hitch, it was the bride's first sight of her groom that stood out

the most.

"My favorite memory is walking out and seeing Derrick at the bottom of the steps," McKinney says. "He designed his suit, so it was the first time I had seen it. I was blown away—I thought he did a really good job."

The bride and groom and their guests danced to music from DJ E Feezy, who kept the party going throughout the night. And if a new husband wasn't enough, McKinney was also surprised with a new car before the two made their getaway.

"We replay that night over and over again, and there's nothing we would change," McKinney says. "It was perfect." ♦

who did what

CEREMONY AND RECEPTION:

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Travis Daniels Photography

WEDDING PLANNER:

Bonnie Walker of Bonnie Walker Events

INVITATIONS:

More Than Words Fine Paper

CAKE:

Classic Cakes

WEDDING GOWN:

Ines Di Santo from Lovella Bridal

BRIDESMAID'S DRESSES:

Sheraz Pompey

GROOM'S TUX:

Gentlemen's Playbook

GROOMSMEN:

Men's Wearhouse

CATERING:

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

MUSIC:

DJ E Feezy

FLOWERS:

Edge Florist

BRIDE'S HAIR:

Aisha Ogletree

BRIDE'S MAKEUP:

Mickey Gonzalez