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Award-winning author, host of the "Explore Your Spirit with Kala" show

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Embracing the Local in a Global World

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As I connect with the introspective energy of the winter season, I find that I am grateful to be living in the state of North Carolina. Over the years, I've found that my local area, known collectively as the Triangle, has blossomed in a balanced way, keeping a sense of decorum and dignity in a world that seems to be going mad lately. Sure there are struggles here in the state like everywhere else, but in spite of the situation, what stands out the most are the people here who are quick to reach out and help others and pull together with a strong entrepreneurial spirit. It may be the most valuable resource that the state has, for when we invest in people, we invest in the future of the community.

Each area of the Triangle, consisting of Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill and surrounding towns, has a distinct flavor and feel, while connecting together to form a strong energetic presence. The Triangle is growing rapidly, attracting a variety of art, science, business and culture to the area, while maintaining a strong community vibe. The local artisans, storeowners, visionaries and entrepreneurs are daily reminders that define what makes the local area so unique and inviting. There are lots of communities around the U.S. just like the Triangle, filled with people who appreciate and want to support their local businesses and communities while also struggling with the inevitable progress of a world gone global.

One of the best examples of "thinking global and acting local" I've seen was an event at the Durham Performing Arts Center (DPAC). DPAC, which has only been in existence for three years, has quickly grown into a world-class venue for the arts. In 2010, the Broadway musical *Wicked* came to DPAC and I eagerly looked forward to seeing this performance. To have a production of this caliber here in my proverbial backyard alone was a delightful treat, but as good fortune would have it, I stumbled across an opportunity to make the event even more memorable. Famed local restaurateur Giorgio Bakatsias of Parizade, Vin Rouge and several other restaurants was offering a special pre-show dinner and ticket package in connection with *Wicked*, which included VIP box seat tickets and a three-course dinner at DPAC, complete with Good Witch and Wicked Witch cocktails. Of course, I had to try both cocktails to see which one I resonated with most and between just us, wicked was the clear winner.

Giorgio's team served dinner in a lovely open area upstairs at the DPAC surrounded by windows where each diner had a view of the sunset falling over the city of Durham. Our group of four was seated at a table of eight where we chatted with the other guests during dinner, which included a beautiful young couple who had just become engaged after the young man had finished his doctorate at Duke, and alongside them were a couple who had received their tickets as a gift from their grown children.

Dinner at DPAC accentuated the global event with local flare, simultaneously highlighting and accentuating both in a complimentary fashion. While I could have seen *Wicked* in a variety of cities during my travels, the fact that I could now see it in my local area accompanied by a meal from one of the Triangle's renowned chefs, created a unique local/global experience. My hope is that this type of event will continue to be offered frequently, allowing local artists and entrepreneurs to be supported in the grandest style.

Wicked proved to be so popular here that it's coming back to DPAC again for the 2012 season. I'm hoping that DPAC will join forces again with Giorgio Bakatsias to provide another *Wicked* theme dinner and perhaps include other restaurateurs in this event throughout the month. I'd also love to see an indie bookstore like one of my favorites, The Regulator, there at the events with the *Wicked* books for sale at a kiosk, providing an opportunity for fans to purchase a copy of the book at the end of the evening.

There are many ways to merge and collaborate together as we embrace going global and strive to support local businesses in communities just like the Triangle. We the people of community are innovative and dynamic with a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Let us gather together to support one another while allowing our cities to evolve in a supportive and healthy environment.

As host of the "Explore Your Spirit with Kala" show and author of the award-winning "9 Life Altering Lessons: Secrets of the Mystery Schools Unveiled," "Ghosthunting North Carolina" and "The Awakened Aura: Experiencing the Evolution of Your Energy Body." Kala Ambrose's wisdom teachings are described as discerning, empowering and inspiring. A highly interactive teacher on a mission to educate, entertain and inspire, Kala presents workshops nationally on the Mind/Body/Spirit connection at the Omega Institute, the Learning Annex, LilyDale Assembly and around the U.S. Learn more about Kala at www.ExploreYourSpirit.com, and read her blog and buy her books on [Red Room](#).

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