



wear it out

by Johnny Joseph Delgadillo, Johnny Love
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Fashion Week New Orleans

Fashion Week New Orleans is in its fourth year fifth season and is proving to get better and better. Tracee Dundas, the founder, has created an event that brings fashion boutiques and fashion designers together to show their creative sides with beautiful outfits styled and presented on the city's largest runway.

Well as things would have it, the same designer won both awards. The magic in that is that the designer who won was turned down years back by my event Alegria when she auditioned in front of a panel of judges to compete there in the same type of competition.

I asked Kristine what her collections inspiration was and she told me she based it on the colors of the Autumn sunsets in New Orleans and its romanticism. She also incorporated some tribal patterns giving it a bit of the ethnic flair that represents her.

I enjoyed watching the entire competi-

tion even seeing models I have worked with walking the runways. That always makes me happy. One more thing I enjoyed about the evening was the queens. Yes hunteeeeeeeeezzzzzz. The young queens. They were out in full force. One of the photographers was six foot plus in a red Joan Collins look with a black satin neckline beat for days.

trodding the boards
...from 23

Metropolitan Opera
HD Encore/La Donna del Lago

It only took 196 years for Rossini's La Donna del Lago to make it to the Metropolitan Opera but it was worth the wait. Inspired by a Walter Scott novel, Paul Curran's production may not have entirely untangled the crazy plot of warring Scottish factions but that was hardly the point when there was glorious music and singing to be had.

The sublime Joyce DiDonato made the most difficult arias seem effortless, approaching her entire role of Elena, beloved by two men yet in love with another, with sensitivity, delicacy, and strength when called for.

As the King who loves Elena (but he's in disguise so she doesn't know he's her father's enemy!), handsome Juan Diego Flórez's awesome tenor voice thrilled with ringing high notes as he conveyed an understated nobility. In duet, DiDonato and Flórez created peerless vocal beauty.

If the first act of La Donna was fantastic, the second was even better as exposition gave way to a steady stream of musical magic, and drab battle costumes were replaced by sumptuously regal court outfits.

In addition to DiDonato and Flórez, John Osborn, Oren Gradus and Daniela Barcellona all provided vocal pyrotechnics with expert control of dynamics and phrasing. Barcellona, in the trouser role of Malcolm, combined with DiDonato for an ineffably divine, and unusual, mezzo duet as they sang of their love.

not be the most expressive of singing actors, she improved as she went along; after all, as she commented "it's difficult to be a man on stage with a kilt."

As the broadcast's hostess, Patricia Racette elicited that observation and others with particularly intelligent interviewing technique, adding the cheeky comment that this was the rare opera where "the mezzo-soprano gets the mezzo-soprano in the end."

Racette will appear in the season's final broadcasts on April 25 and 29 as the tragic Nedda in Pagliacci, the second half of opera's most enduring double bill with Cavalleria Rusticana opening the show.

Broadway in New Orleans/Once at The Saenger Theatre returning April 14-19

I arrived at the Saenger to find a band playing Irish music, and a crowd on stage, drinking. After all, it was St. Patrick's Day and a festive time it was. I hoped this wouldn't turn out to be the best part of the evening.

Leaving after the show, I overheard someone commenting, "I liked it but..." My sentiments exactly.

Based on the Oscar-winning movie that was kinda based on real life, Once is a "Czech girl meets Irish boy, boy almost gets girl, boy goes back to old girlfriend" tale. Or "Guy" and "Girl" as they're called here.

That Once rejects a "and they lived happily ever after" ending is refreshing and it's not without its charms. But cliches and truisms prop up this thinnest of stories

let have. I am even thinking that I will serve next season. I will be showing my collection once again on the runway and filming an episode of my show Big Easy Glam which you can see on Youtube. So I feel the need to serve it next season. BAM BAM!

Now back to Fashion Week New Orleans..... I also liked the fashion boutique that was set up outside in the courtyard of the venue as you entered. Everything from handcrafted jewelry, to cosmetics, ties, custom denim, socks, hair care. Pretty much anything having to do with fashion and style was represented in the Style Lounge. Not to mention some hot ass vendors. Yes people. Those menzes were hot. Of course you can see me interview them on Big Easy Glam episode 5-6. Also see footage of the fashion competition in those episodes of Big Easy Glam.

With all of the fashion season events over I am happy to say I see good things happening here in New Orleans. It makes me happy to see the scene growing and



Top Designer Award Winner Kritine Pichon @ Fashion Week New Orleans

becoming relevant in New Orleans. I have always thought of New Orleans as a place that fashion should be relevant. I know we have a long way to go. I am thinking a fashion market place. Wholesale district. Manufacturing is a thing to come. With all of these vacant buildings still standing empty after Katrina. I see them as a place where 100s of industrial sewing machines could be making fashions to be shipped all over

[continued on 27]

making it easy to like but hard to love.

Having started in a small off-Broadway theater, Once might have lost something in the vastness of the Saenger. Despite its pleasantness, about halfway through the first act, the audience seemed somewhat restless as though they weren't getting the razzle-dazzle they had expected.

On its own terms, Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová's score includes some nice songs and the first act finale, Gold, is a potent one, but all the Irish-themed tunes tend to blur together; for me, the stand-out was the one number that offered Czech-style music.

The talented cast did what they were asked to do, broad characterizations and all; Natasha Katz's beautiful lighting heightened the romantic atmosphere; and I enjoyed the opportunity to go up on the Saenger's stage and see the auditorium from the actors' perspective.

Still, the Tony Award for Best Musical? Only cause it wasn't a very competitive year.

Next up at the Saenger is the first of the Andrew Lloyd Webber/Tim Rice collaborations, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

New Orleans Ballet Association through May 9

I'm a sucker for all things tango so I was excited that NOBA was bringing Unión Tanguera, a French Argentinean contemporary tango ensemble company, to NOCCA's Lupin Hall.

And when Nuit Blanche, or Sleepless Night, stuck to tango, the superbly done moves were deeply satisfying.

But the rest of this one-act exploration of relationships among a group of seven dancers was unfocused with superficial contemporary choreography, including way too much rolling around on the floor, by Co-Artistic Directors Claudia Codega and Esteban Moreno.

Though well-played by a piano/violin/bandoneón/double bass quartet, Composer

Pedro Onetto's score lacked the depth and incisiveness of great tango music like Ástor Piazzolla's, and recorded sound, some of it electronic, could've been omitted entirely.

Now in its second century, there is surely still room for tango to grow; I saw a remarkable program in Buenos Aires that had dancers partnering with a soccer ball and a construction set. When the rest of Unión Tanguera's efforts equals the talents it already displays in tango, it will be an exciting troupe indeed.

NOBA concludes its season with the legendary Limón Dance Company at the Mahalia Jackson Theater.

Contemporary Arts Center's Performing Arts Season through May 29/The Grand Parade (of the 20th century)

Double Edge Theatre's The Grand Parade (of the 20th century) was just that—an overview of last century's political, social and cultural highlights. So we got Harry Thaw murdering Stanford White, World War I, the Roaring '20's, women's suffrage, the Depression, Jesse Owens, Hitler, World War II, Einstein, '50's music, Martin Luther King, the moon landing, hippies, liberation (women's, black, gay) movements, disco, AIDS, Ronald Reagan, the Berlin Wall and a whole lot more in less than an hour.

And like a parade's floats that pass by without stopping, all we were given was the most cursory examination of all these momentous events; the brief section dealing with AIDS was the evening's sole affecting moment.

Though gorgeous to look at, I wondered why so much time, effort and, presumably, money was spent on something so inconsequential.

The CAC's season finishes up with drag icon Joey Arias singing the songs of Billie Holiday (Apr. 17) and the Birdfoot Festival of chamber music (May 26 & 29).

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the world bringing billions of dollars into the city every year. What a great idea one would think? We will see? I can only hope and pray that something happens soon because Jeffrey's house is beginning to look like a war zone with all of my sewing. LOL! Time for a work shop, and employees? HMMMMM? That would be nice.

Next on the fashion event horizon is Couture for a Cause. This will be the event's second year and it is going to be in June at

the Metro/Generations Hall and yes I am designing a collection for that show also. BAM BAM! I will update you all with the info for the event as we get closer but it is going to rock this year.

Stay tuned. Peace love and happiness to all.

Oh yes. Check out my show Big Easy Glam on Youtube. Episodes 1-4 are up for your viewing. 5-6 are coming this week.

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Miss Golden Lantern Monica Synclaire-Kennedy in Jubilee



Miss Gay Louisiana USofA Classic Kayla Krawford in Jubilee



Maybelline Maskara snagging MC Bradley during Jubilee



Zingo @ The Corner Pocket



NYC's Dwayne with CP's Michael @ The Pocket for Zingo



In for Zingo @ The Corner Pocket



Your Corner Pocket hosts Lisa Beaumann & Barry Bareass



Zingo with Matt, Brandon, Michael, Joey & host Opal Masters



Poncho celebrates his 25th birthday once again with Bob @ Cafe Lafitte in Exile



16th Crack Whore Ball



Country Club's John & Crack Whore Queen 16 Josh



Bartender Tony ready to serve you @ the Phoenix



Rudy & Kyle all smiles @ Phoenix



Rawhide bartenders relax for after weekend cocktails @ Phoenix



Ambush's Tony with GrandPre-s bartender Jimmy



Welcome Home Party for Jessica & Josh @ GrandPre's



GrandPre's bartender Wilhemina Crack Whore Ball ready

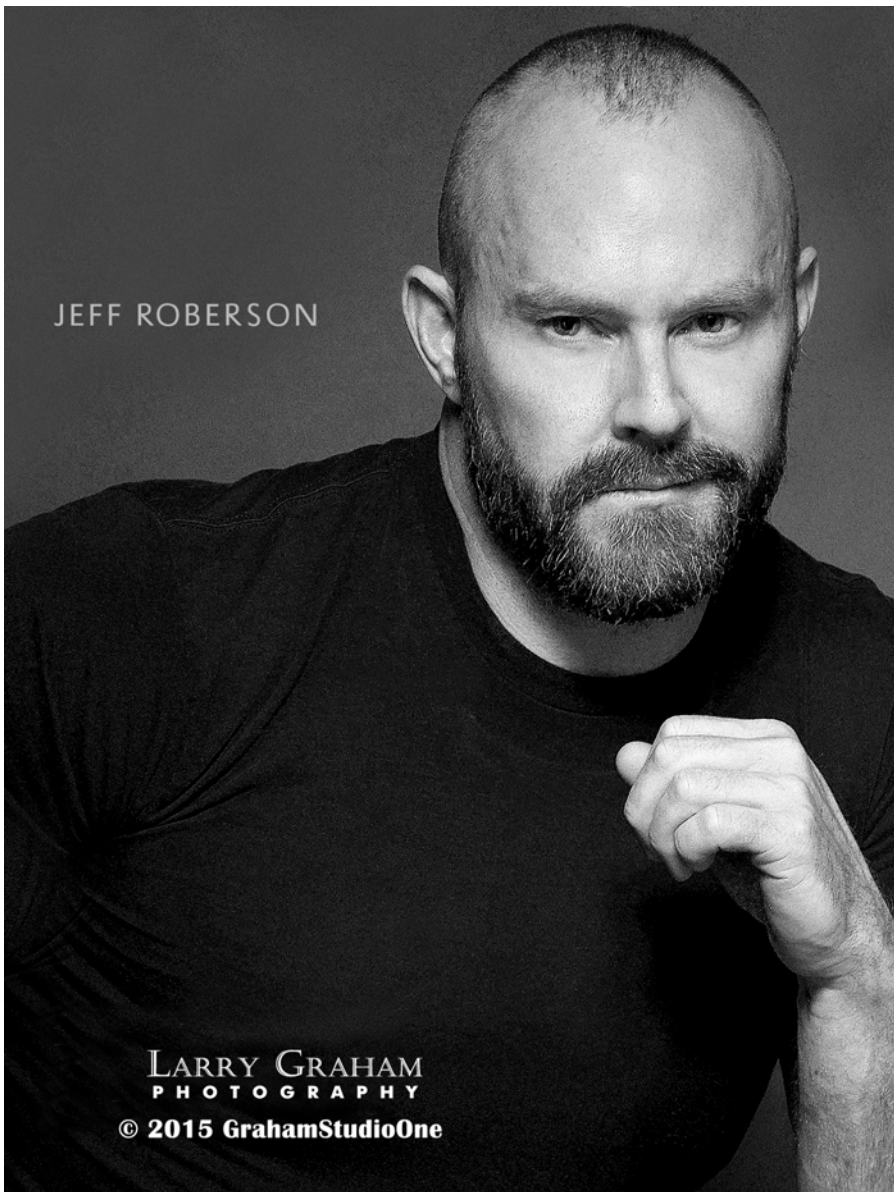


Troy, Ian, Oz's Kyle & Ambush's Paul



Francisco & Frank in for Trash Disco @ Lafitte's

The Club Scene ~ New Orleans ~ Photos by Paul Melancon, Rip Naquin, Darwin Reed



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The Social Scene ~ New Orleans ~ Photos by Tony Leggio