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A Budding Fashion Capital

NOVA Fashion Week sets the style scene by showcasing area talent

BY JENNIFER PULLINGER

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PHOTO COURTESY OF NOVA FASHION WEEK

Designs by Ra'mon-Lawrence Coleman, best known from season six of "Project Runway" (ramonlawrence.com)

When the words "fashion capital" come to mind, one automatically thinks of New York, Paris, London, or Milan. But Northern Virginia?



Don't dismiss that equation. Judging by the design prowess scheduled to show at NOVA Fashion Week, Northern Virginia has plenty to offer that will impress discerning fashionistas and other arbiters of style.

The event kicks off on October 21 at picturesque Waterfront Park in Old Town Alexandria with an opening show featuring Posh Couture, helmed by boutique owner and designer Jewell Green, wife of Washington Redskins vet and Pro Football Hall of Famer Darrell Green. The rest of the weekend brings such designers as KAS Collection, Natalia Sanz, Aidah Collection, Ra'mon-Lawrence Coleman (from season six of "Project Runway"), Elizabeth St. John, Andrew Harris, and Durkl.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF NOVA FASHION WEEK

Design by Natalia Sanz (nataliasanz.com)



PHOTO COURTESY OF NOVA FASHION WEEK

Design by Adiah (aidah.com)

But this event isn't *just* about fashion. In the midst of all of the high heels, Vogue-worthy frocks, and power suits on the waterfront runway, the event will highlight some worthwhile charities (event proceeds will go to The Lupus Foundation of America, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, and Baby Haven) while also inform the public of the importance of fair-trade, sustainable design practices in the fashion industry.

Here, NOVA Fashion Week Executive Director Andrew Roby tells us what else is in store for this yearly sartorial production and why it is a must-attend event for capital-area style mavens.

VL: What can we expect out of NOVA Fashion Week?

AR: As excited and nervous as we are, we plan to provide guests with an opportunity to see individual designer shows, which takes on a similar experience [like] thousands do at fashion weeks such as Mercedes-Benz. Our focus is diversity, which we feel we have successfully met through the designer lineup. We will provide a fashion week inside our own tent with décor, ambience and attitude that this area has not seen in years. The location is

Waterfront Park which overlooks the Potomac River and National Harbor; you simply cannot beat a view such as this. Guests will arrive having the opportunity to taste Barefoot Wine and Bubbly, meet and greet with designers, see exquisite Spring/Summer collections and most importantly give back to worthy charities.

VL: How would you describe the style scene in Northern Virginia?

AR: Believe it or not, Northern Virginia stands strongly on its own two feet for style. The pencil skirts with a flash of red as the liner to the purple-haired seamstress, Northern Virginia really does put an artistic flare to how the world sees fashion. The consignment shops and thrift stores are what I have seen to be the focus points for the area. Yet our high-end side is never to be mistaken. There are a slew of trends that come out of the Northern Virginia area and bleed into D.C. and Maryland. Northern Virginia tends to focus on the details of everything. However, with vintage earrings, belts, [and] cufflinks, you really do see how creative people can be when it comes to expressing their style through accessories.

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