



Fashion Week rocks NYC

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A model walks the runway during the Andres Aquino fashion show at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City on Saturday night during Couture Fashion Week.

By Kathleen Loughran

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NEW YORK, N.Y. -- The stage at the Waldorf Astoria Grand Ballroom was set: A grand piano was placed on center stage, statues of dancers were installed to the left and a microphone stood front and center.

Though the setting seems typical for a classical concert or an opera, Saturday's 250-person audience wasn't there to see a musical event.

They were patiently waiting for the Janerations and Andres Aquino show at Fall 2010 New York Couture Fashion Week to begin -- and like the weekend's other shows, it started fashionably late.

Janerations premiered her line first, a collection of knit sweaters with touches of fur and leather trim. The sweaters were accented with big buttons and poufy shoulders. She worked with mainly black, cream, gray and pink.

Along with the brand Janerations, Couture Fashion Week producer Andres Aquino showed his collection. His showcase was more of a concept than a mere runway show -- models danced down the runway in pastel silk dresses. They began their number amidst the sculptures, mimicking the poses of the statue dancers as they waited for the other models to finish their walks.

Aquino also had his models perform other numbers in his designs, including a Spanish-inspired dance with a form-fitting black gown embellished with gold thread and beading.

While the two designers showed their collections, musicians including Alexito and Miss Pennsylvania Maria Sciorillo performed.

Ten-year-old Alexito rapped during the show and said his experience was "great."

"I love it. I like to sing," he said. "Singing is my favorite thing."

But the Janerations and Andres Aquino show was the only one out of six on Friday and Saturday to incorporate visual art, singing and dancing.

The other five shows focused more on a typical runway show with models wearing luxurious clothing from high-end designers Walid Atallah, House of j'OLA, Edwing D'Angelo, Catalin Botezatu and Adrian Alicea.

Atallah said he spent three months creating his collection of about 80 dresses and one wedding dress. He incorporated geometrical designs and crystals to show his idea of the "Queen of Emeralds."

"It's a queen, so I want [the wedding dress] to be rich and unique," Atallah said. "I want her to be something that if you look at the dress, you see a queen with one emerald at the top of her crown."

In addition to the wedding gown, he also showed gowns in ruby, sapphire and emerald coloring. Most of the dresses were slim-fitting with trains, but he did showcase some knee-length dresses.

Earlier on Saturday, House of j'OLA designer Joan Isisoma Okorodudu also premiered her collection, which was inspired by youth and color.

"I like doing colors and working with the youths, even though I'm 52 this year," she said. "Being an African, we are just used to doing colors, and this day, we have people saying 'You can't mix this color with this color,' and I don't believe in that."

Friday's shows showcased numerous other designers as well, including Edwing D'Angelo, whose fashions were seen in the movie "The Devil Wears Prada."

Delvon Johnson, author of "Love Yourself First," came to the show with Dwight Eubanks from "The Real Housewives of Atlanta."

"I'm a fashion buff, so I love the clothes and the celebrities," Johnson said. "I'm here to witness the fabulous fashion for 2010 and enjoy fashion within itself as a whole."

Catalin Botezatu also showed his collection on Friday. He said he was inspired by the universe and "spirit of the planets," using night colors such as black and silver in addition to wicker balls placed in the models' hair.

"I design for women that are very glamour, very rich and very independent," he said.

Angelina Shipilina, who has worked with Botezatu before, was one of the models who wore his collection.

"I love very much that expensive, rich, dramatic look because it's part of my culture, and I like the creativity and the edge," she said. "That's why I like to work with him, because of all the drama."

Sushma Patel and Adrian Alicea also showed their work on Friday, but at the 3 p.m. show.

Alicea said his collection was mainly inspired by his travels -- he worked as a model for 20 years before branching out as a designer. He particularly likes Brazil because of the hot weather and because it's "sexy."

Attendee Holly Daugherty, who also works as a model, was at the show and thought Alicea's collection was "absolutely amazing."

But Sciorillo's favorite outfit was shown in Patel's collection.

"It was the all-sequined silver gown, and [the model] looked stunning in it," Sciorillo said. "She was a brunette, so it really popped."

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