



Fashion Designers - Disguised Sensuality, The Motto and Vision of Gordana Radic

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When I walked into the Waldorf Astoria in New York City, I didn't know what to expect. It was my first time in that hotel and I was beside myself at how luxurious it was. There was wall to wall plush carpeting and marble flooring. The ceilings in that lobby were so tall that you'd strain your neck just to look up. Then again, it's one of the top rated hotels to stay at in the city and in my eyes the best place to hold a fashion show. With the remaining designers from the beginning of Couture Fashion Week attending, the concluding ceremonies last month were simply breath taking. That Friday night, I once again resumed the role of both journalist and model. This time it was with the fabulous Gordana Radic. Hailing from Croatia, this talented and creative designer has been a professional designer since 1989 when she opened up her first boutique. However, her training extends further than that. "Since I was a very little girl, fabrics and sewing needles consumed [the] majority of my time; they were [an] inseparable part of my childhood and my imagination. As a little girl, I spent most of the time constantly dressing up and down my dolls rather than just playing with them," Radic says, "At 12 years old, I started cutting and tailoring my mother's old dresses according to my visions, but I wasn't able to finish them properly. That imperfection prompted me to learn how to sew resulting in my sewing license at the age of 18, when I designed and made my first winter coat (I remember, it was black, maxi coat in military style, for which I received numerous compliments as freshman in college).



I also became skilled in sewing dresses and gowns for all seasons." It was years after college, with a degree in Biological Engineering and Masters in Veterinarian Science, that fashion became more than a hobby and her love for it a lot stronger. Her love for fashion was eminent as I saw the extensive collection. Inspired by the seven colors of the rainbow, Gordana Radic used a variety of colors and lengths of fabric to create a line that celebrates female beauty and sensuality. "With this collection, my intention was to apply color using its symbolism to celebrate and accentuate the natural beauty of the female body and being," Radic continues, "Using the concept of secluded sensuality, my overall artistic expression relies on softness and lightness, leaving space for new shapes to supplement the already existent fashion solutions." With well over 20 pieces, her newest collection is quite a jump from her first show she had ever done in her home country.



When she started as a designer, Gordana's first event was at the Hotel Intercontinental in Zagreb, Croatia. Collaborating with 10 designers, among those who had participated was Missoni from Italy. Radic recalls that, "I designed and sewed only 6 designs, but very glamorous and unusual (I was doing all the work on my own, because I was afraid that no seamstress could do the job quite right as I wanted). As soon as they saw my designs, the key organizers were delighted and they insist that I make the show right before Missoni on closing night as a symbol of the best Croatian and Italian fashion design. The following days, the fashion show with my designs filled newspapers and magazines all over country; the complements and congrats were arriving from everywhere. My first show followed by great success contributed to personal assurance and confidence in what I do and what I like to do." Seeing her drive and creativity come to life in person was quite extraordinary.



In contrast to JJ Schoeman's pieces, who was earlier on in the week at the West End Loft, Gordana's sophistication mixed in with a bit of a flirty, sensual appeal. Her beginning numbers had different kinds of fabrics, with layers of color paired well together. Like the seasons, they began with the light, warm colors of peach, gold, and creams. They later ended with deep plums and metallic blends. In certain pieces one can notice the amount of work and detail put into it. Radic had stated, "Some of them contain[ed] 60-70 meters of fabric in ruffles and are bordered with fine wire to accentuate the flaunting sense and with purpose of realization of [the] initial idea." One particular garment, I noticed, was the favorite of the evening. It was a grey metallic dress with a fan shell-like ruffle and gold shawl modeled by her daughter, Tena, who had also made a fashionable debut on the New York runway. It is my understanding, after speaking with Tena, the blonde beauty, who undoubtedly gets her drive from her mother, is studying for her MBA in the United States.



With a mother-daughter team gracing us for the first time in New York's Couture Fashion Week, there begs the question- are they even planning another go for next season? The answer is simple, YES! I asked them what they might have in store for the public for next season and Gordana replied, " I am definitely planning on returning in February and showing my Winter 2007/08 collection on the same Couture Fashion Week. That collection will be a high-end couture, commercial collection that will be distributed in US luxury stores and will be dominated by only one color, as opposed to [the] summer collection, which incorporated many colors." One thing that will not change is the inspiration behind the designs of her clothes. In each of her garments, be it past and present, Radic has kept the integrity of her work and her vision of fashion to one thing, women. With the obsession of being skinny overwhelming the tabloids and the magazines, Gordana Radic has made it a point that her dresses are fit for women of all ages and festive occasions. " 'Self-confidence' is the reason why my designs are quite diversified," she said, "because I dedicate them to different types of women, giving women the opportunity to recognize themselves in my designs. Woman is beautiful and confident, when the clothes fit her body and her soul- personality." It was with that philosophy, Radic had not only her daughter, but a slew of other models in different shapes and sizes, including myself, to show off the latest line. Simply put, this designer recognizes that women should be and are appreciated in all forms. To read more about Gordana Radic and flip through her previous works, go to [www.gordanaradic.com](http://www.gordanaradic.com).