

local style

TOP LEFT: THE ALWAYS STUNNING JILL MOMADAY IN A CREATION BY LAURA SHEPPHERD

TOP RIGHT: TANYA RACHE (OUTFIT BY SILVER & SAGE) WITH HER FAVORITE COWBOY HANK HENLEY MODELING FOR HOP A LONG BOOT CO.

BOTTOM LEFT: EXOTIC CREATION BY HEAT, WORN BY EQUALLY EXOTIC KIMBERLY DIERINGER

BOTTOM RIGHT: CARMEN BRANDENBURG IN A SIGRID OLSEN ENSEMBLE FROM SILVER THREADS

It's a balmy evening in June and I have parked about a half a mile from Geronimo's restaurant. The walk is invigorating, the breeze cool. Galleries are closed, so the tourist crowds have mostly dispersed and I enjoy the solitude and the anticipation of *localflavor's* first-ever fashion photo shoot... then I see the Rolls. Nothing special, just a 1963 Silver Cloud III we have brought along for a backdrop. It dominates the scene in front of Geronimo's restaurant, where diners on the portal gawk, and owner Tom Hitch, of Automotive Resources Inc., winces whenever an SUV tries to squeeze by.

I join the *localflavor* staff, which is awaiting arrival of our clothing designers with models they have dressed for different performing arts events, in keeping with this issue's theme. One of the first to arrive is designer Pilar Agoyo, who, with Virgil Ortiz, owns Heat, "the freak boutique," on Guadalupe, near Alameda. For quite some time now, I have wanted a chance to interview Agoyo because, well, it's not often you run across a punk store, run by Native Americans, who design vinyl corsets, skin-tight pants, and dresses cut "down to there." Pilar is bedecked in jewelry by Cody Sanderson, a Navajo silversmith whose work—gothic crosses, spiked belt buckles, heavy symbol rings—is anything but traditional. Her own ensemble is a sheer, black robe over a black skirt-set adorned with safety pin accents, ala old-school punk rock. Then her model arrives. Ooh la la.

Corseted in mustard suede and plate silver, model Kimberly Dieringer exudes exoticism in a skin-tight, ultra-bright dress made from Walmart's jersey sheets. This outrageous outfit would make any Paris designer drop to his knees and beg for mercy. On her neck, a sterling o-ring necklace by Cody, and on each arm, her bodyguards. Faces bejeweled and muscles bulging, they wear Agoyo's stretch-tight tough-guy shirts. In this outfit, Kimberly will need their protection. Her performing art event? She's off to a Vegas show, of course, and naturally, she's the star.

Next to arrive is Carmen Brandenburg, who represents Silver Threads, on the plaza, at 125 Lincoln Street. Carmen is dressed for a late afternoon Chamber Concert and early dinner date, in Sigrid Olsen's charming, button-down, linen dress with matching cropped pants. The unusual coral color brings out her peaches-and-cream complexion, and is beautifully highlighted by the late afternoon sun. Her neck is adorned by a vintage Patrice necklace of handmade, mixed metal. The dress's simplicity and modesty showcase lovely Carmen in a way that only understatement can.

Our photographer begins to click away, as I greet New York cum Santa Fe designer, Laura Sheppherd, with Model Jill Momaday, in one of her unique cut-velvet ensembles. Sheppherd's boutique of bridal and formal wear is located at 65 west Marcy Street, kitty-corner from the main library. Jill is dressed for the Santa Fe Opera, in an outfit perfect for a summer evening outdoors. The burgundy jacket features a bold, feminine design adapted by Sheppherd from a Victorian wallpaper pattern. Underneath, Jill enjoys the comfort of an understated, hand-crinkled, silk and chiffon skirt and top set. Tassels adorn the long jacket, providing panache, while the chiffon skirt and top are cut long and easy, in a wearable style that's both sexy and classy. A delicate necklace and earrings provide the final detail. These are made of hand-cut citrine beads and briolettes, designed by California artist Dana Kellin, whose work is carried exclusively by Laura Sheppherd.

Next up are Models Hank Henley and Tanya Raché. Hank represents Hop A Long Boot Company, located at 3908 Rodeo Road, specializing in vintage and gently-worn western wear and boots. He and Tanya plan to direct the driver straight to Santa Fe's own Buckaroo Ball. Outfitted in matching Tony Lama boa-skin belt and boots over black, suede pants that cling just right, you could say we have found the epitome of tall, dark and handsome. On Hank, a stunning, vintage cowboy shirt with mother-of-pearl snaps is paired with a fringed, black, suede jacket. A vintage, rodeo belt-buckle completes the ensemble. We asked Hank if that black, Stockman hat made him a classic bad guy. Hank checked his own reflection in the Rolls' window and commented, "Oh, yeah, I'm bad."

Hank's date, our own office manager, Tanya Raché, represents Silver and Sage, a family-owned boutique in Plaza Bonita, at the corner of Paseo de Peralta and Old Santa Fe Trail. Their specialty is romance and femininity, with a focus on comfort and easy care. Tanya's look is "romantic western," in a dramatic, green, Marrika Nakk ensemble. This sleeveless top, a-glitter in sequins, sets off the long, silk skirt, pouffed-out with ornamental green tulle.

As our designers and models meet, they remark upon the distinctive styles each represents. They ooh and aah over detailing, fabrics and jewelry, exchange business cards and generally get to know each other. Then someone in the crowd makes the comment of the evening... "You mean all this is local?"

You bet it's local. Every stitch.