



Designs by Alexandra King
Photography by Danilo Aquino
Styling by Ian Milan
Hair by Suede Salon
Playland Skate Center

DANCING ~~QUEEN~~ KING

Electrifying orange, yellow and red lightning bolts suspended from the ceiling cast a retro glow onto the glassy surface of the rink below. It's 3 o'clock at Playland Skate Center, in an hour the rink will be open to the public and children on orange-wheeled skates will glide across the floor to the timeless beat of YMCA.

A large checker floored room in the back of the rink serves as a makeshift dressing room. Among necklaces, collared shirts, rows of black heels and white booties, Alex King, designer, artist and devout admirer of Alexander McQueen, kneels at the hem of a floor length, cream-colored gown. Her hands tug gently at the fabric as she makes last minute fitting adjustments before the Spark Magazine editorial shoot begins.

King's featured collection of colorful and flowy pieces, titled Birds of Paradise suits the nostalgia of disco balls and side-swept hair while adding a modern, high fashion edge not often associated with brightly-wheeled skates. A senior design student at the University of Texas at Austin, King's collection was created to be shown at the Spring Fashion Show, dubbed High Voltage, April 29, 2010.



On Alex: Dress by Alexandra King | Gold Cross Necklace, \$42

Gold/ White Bracelet, \$24, Prototype Vintage | Paisley Swirl Earrings, \$4, New Bohemia

On Roy: Shirt by Shades of Greige, \$88, Trousers by Toddland, \$65, Service Menswear

As models Alex Connett and Roy Vasquez, also students at UT, took to the rink, the designs of Alex King translated well from the hanger to the human form. Particularly a one shouldered black mini-dress and gray, bell-bottomed dress pants. The design process of her collection, King explains, began with an inspiration board filled with a multitude of anything and everything she loved. What emerged were natural and organic elements.

In jumping from stepping-stone to stepping stone with ideas, King settled on the concept of tropical birds, also drawing inspiration from the rock-and-roll and disco eras of the 60s and 70s and the designs of Alexander McQueen.

“I just looked up pictures of birds in flight and I loved that movement and just liked the feeling of it and the idea of it and the essence of it,” said King. “And my color palette came from ravens. You know how like they’re black, but it has that iridescent shine to it.”

And after hours upon hours of labor throughout the past semester, King is satisfied with the finished products and admits to being more than happy to be done.

“Honestly I’m tired of looking at it,” said King with a laugh. “But I think it’s going to look really good in the fashion show. It’s a good show collection with a lot of attitude to it.”

At just 22 years old, the Allen, Texas native has already packed a lot of experience under her belt and gained acclaim in the Austin fashion community. She was featured as Austin’s emerging designer and showed 10 looks in the Nov. 2009 Runway to Heaven show. The event, also featured designs from Versace Menswear and Los Angeles label Poleci, was produced by local designer Linda Asaf, with whom King formerly interned.

On Alex: Jacket, top, and pants by Alexandra King
On Roy: Trousers by Toddland, \$65
Shoes by Converse by John Varvatos \$138
Service Menswear





On Alex: Dress by Alexandra King
Silver/Turquoise Necklace, \$28
Silver/Turquoise Bracelet, \$24
Turquoise Ring, \$46, Prototype Vintage
Silver Thunderbird Earrings, \$45, New Bohemia

“She saw the passion and energy that I have for fashion explains King about Asaf’s selection. “So she just called me on day and was like, ‘Hey, would you like to be featured as Austin emerging designer?’ And I was like, ‘Uh yeah!’”

From her internship with Asaf to an internship in London with a smaller label, La Petite Salope, King has learned the ins and outs of the fashion industry from designing to selling pieces to stores worldwide. With her experience comes knowledge about the industry, which she was more than happy to share.

“You really have to be independent and make opportunities for yourself,” asserts King. “You can’t depend on anybody else to do anything for you and you can’t just expect to get far by just emailing people and sitting by and not working hard. You have to know how to not sleep for a few days.”

Following her own advice to the core, King has planned a third internship with Diane von Furstenberg in New York City for this coming summer. King hopes this will be a door to a job after she graduates in Dec. 2010.

“I’m really hoping that I can land a job out of that internship because it is such a big company and I want to prove myself to them,” said King

Although she has always been heavily involved in art, King confesses she found her way to fashion design in a roundabout manner. After toying with an art major and considering retail merchandising, King found the perfect combination of the two things she loved most in apparel design: art and fashion.



On Alex: Dress by Alexandra King | Gold Cross Necklace, \$42
Gold/ White Bracelet, \$24, Prototype Vintage | Paisley Swirl Earrings, \$4, New Bot
On Roy: Polo by Gant, \$98, Jeans by Levis, \$58, Service Menswear

“I change my mind so much. I mean, I’ve always changed my mind since elementary school. In elementary school I wanted to be a princess!” laughs King. “But I started really getting into painting fashion figures and stuff my freshman year, but I didn’t realize what I was painting. That it was a fashion croquis. And my roommate was like ‘Are you a lesbian? Because you always paint women.’ I was like ‘No!’ But that was sort of my first realization that maybe I should do fashion.”

That moment was King’s launch pad and she continues to work her way through the cutthroat industry of fashion. Her ultimate goal would be showing her own collection at fashion week or taking over creative direction for a big label. Specifically, Alexander McQueen.

“He’s by far my favorite designer of all time. He’s just a genius,” she says with a sigh of admiration. “The way you can see his inspiration through his collection. Every piece that comes down the runway is like a work of art.”

So with unquenchable passion and unrivaled ambition, Alex King is prepared to use her experience, determination and sheer talent to reach those goals. Her senior collection is only the beginning.