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Sarah Palin's glasses are here! A Tampa optical store is spreading the word that it's got the Kazuo Kawasaki 704 series made popular by the new vice presidential candidate. Our Deal Divas have all the details at blogs.tampabay.com/deals. Better hit the ATM, though, because they'll set you back some benjamins.

WEST COLUMBIA, S.C. PLANE CRASH KILLS 4, INJURES DJ AM AND TRAVIS BARKER

Hours after performing for thousands of South Carolina college students, former Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker and celebrity DJ AM were critically injured in a fiery Learjet crash that killed four people, authorities said Saturday. Officials said the plane was departing shortly before midnight Friday when it hurtled off the end of a runway. It came to rest on an embankment and was engulfed in flames, said a member of the National Transportation Safety Board. Barker and DJ AM, whose real name is Adam Goldstein, were in critical but stable condition at a burn center in Augusta, Ga., on Saturday, a hospital spokeswoman said. Two other passengers — Chris Baker, 29, of Studio City, Calif., and Charles Still, 25, of Los Angeles — died, as did pilot Sarah Lemmon, 31, of Anaheim Hills, Calif., and co-pilot James Bland, 52, of Carlsbad, Calif., the county coroner said.

Associated Press



Design by Ivanka Ska

Design stars

Here's the 4-1-1 on a few of the local designers showcasing their work at Fashion Week Tampa Bay.

Robert Buck, 28, Tampa

The Mobile, Ala., native runs Habari Clothing Company, featuring "upscale casual" menswear and unisex caps.

Fashion education: Buck learned the ropes from his former business partner and his mother, who studied fashion.

Biggest challenge of working here: "I think we have some great seamstresses, some great pattern makers. It's just that they primarily work inside their home, so it's kind of difficult to find them cause they're not listed. So you have to network to find them."

How Tampa Bay can become a fashion mecca: Get celebs to wear locally designed clothes during the Super Bowl.

On the Web: myspace.com/habari-clothing-company.



Ivanka Ska, 37, St. Petersburg

The Polish native owns House of Ska, a women's boutique in downtown St. Pete.

Fashion education: Ska's parents taught her to sew.

Biggest challenge of working here: "Supporting local artists is still a new concept."

Ever thought about leaving? "Sure, I would love to have maybe another store in New York or L.A. or Tokyo. That's my dream. But... my home base will always be here."

Advice for designers: "Stay with your passion. It took me so long. If I can do it, you can do it. I came here not even being able to speak English."

On the Web: ivankaska.com, myspace.com/ivankas.



Essence Flowers, 30, St. Petersburg

The Polk County native runs Remarkable Designs By Essence, sewing swim suits, wedding dresses, evening gowns and other women's wear.

Fashion education: Flowers, whose grandmother taught her to sew, graduated from Tampa's International Academy of Design and Technology and has interned at Fashion Weeks in New York and Miami.

Biggest challenge of working here: "People in this area — and I'm generalizing — they think that mall shopping is the way to go."

Ever thought about leaving? "Last week I participated in New York Fashion Week. I actually showed my collection. I loved it, don't get me wrong, but I don't want to move. ... My inspirations come better here than in New York. I'm trying to break that whole 'Let's shop out of town' (mentality)."

On the Web: rdedesigns.com, myspace.com/dezine1.



Bebe Ziegler, 40, Brandon

Ziegler's Ice It By Bebe Z has licensing agreements with the National Hockey League and Discovery Communications, creating fitted T-shirts for hockey lovers and fans of TLC's *Miami Ink* and *LA Ink*. Ziegler uses three production facilities in Los Angeles.

Fashion education: Ziegler studied fashion merchandising at Seffner's Armwood High School.

Biggest challenge of working here: "Not having the celebrity contacts."

Ever thought about leaving? "Family's so important to me. My son is 7. I'm on a plane every month because of it, but I always have to come back home to Brandon."

How Tampa Bay can become a fashion mecca: Partner with designers in Orlando to bring in more celebs.

On the Web: iceitbybebez.com.



Bold-fashioned

Tampa Bay designers are ready to rock their looks

BY DALIA COLON
Times Staff Writer

Fashionwise, Tampa Bay can't compete with New York City. No one's saying it can.

But this town is home to some talented designers, and local shopaholics want them to stick around. So Wednesday through Saturday brings the first Fashion Week Tampa Bay, a series of events inspired by the festivities held in New York and other style meccas. The goal is to showcase local designers and encourage them to expand business here.

"New York may be the fashion capital or whatever, but not everybody wants to necessarily move to New York," said Nancy Vaughn, executive producer and senior event publicist of Fashion Week Tampa Bay.

A fan of boutiques in Hyde Park, Vaughn, 32, of New Tampa, realized many local designers are too busy to market themselves. She began organizing Fashion Week in 2007 with help from co-organizers Charlene McPherson, Sarah Combs, Aria Broxton and dozens of volunteers. All proceeds will benefit the YWCA and Best Buddies, a group that finds work and companionship for people with special needs.

Although New York's semi-annual Fashion Week is the crown jewel, similar festivals have popped up in cities like Charleston, Nashville, Cleveland and Detroit.

FAST FACTS

Fashion Week Tampa Bay

For info on passes and VIP tickets, call (813) 994-9807 or visit fashionweektampabay.com.

Sept. 24 6 p.m. Cocktail reception, book signing by Girls Getaway Guide author Casey Wohl. Tampa Artist Emporium, 1618 Snow Ave., Hyde Park. Open only to VIP pass holders. Passes are \$100-\$150.

Sept. 25 7 p.m. Runway show, Fashion Week Tampa Bay Boutique. Ritz Ybor, 1503 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City. \$40-\$55.

Sept. 26 Runway show and Fashion Week Tampa Bay Boutique The Coliseum, 535 Fourth Ave. N, St. Petersburg. \$40-\$55.

Sept. 27 Fashion brunch, silent auction. Pacific Wave, 211 Second St. S, St. Petersburg. \$15-\$20.

Fashion Week Tampa Bay will feature creations from 12 designers — some local, others with ties to the area.

Francisco Azucar, who attended Tampa's International Academy of Design and Technology, spent two decades here, designing clothes and Gasparilla costumes. A few years ago he went to Miami for surgery and

decided to stay. He found that South Florida offered "a lot more opportunities as far as people who love what I do, people who love my clothes."

In Tampa Bay, fashion was just a part-time job for Azucar. In Miami, on the other hand, he works full-time designing for Spanish-language soap opera stars and "ladies of society," he said. Regular networking events allow designers, models and photographers to meet and refer each other for jobs.

"Once you get known in the community, they just keep calling you," said Azucar, 44, who's working on wardrobes for an independent film. He says fashionistas in Tampa Bay need to step up their networking game in person and on sites like ModelMayhem.com, which connects folks in the industry.

Azucar's experience is common. Only 20 to 30 percent of fashion design graduates find jobs in Tampa Bay, according to IADT's career center. Fashion merchandising majors fare better: At least 50 percent of grads are placed in jobs in Tampa Bay, mostly in retail.

Vaughn plans to hold the event every fall and spring. She hopes to help local designers develop working relationships.

"When you bring people together," Vaughn said, "instead of having that competitive spirit, it can be collaborative in the fact that you're improving one another's game."



todo

1905 DAY As if one of Tampa Bay's greatest culinary institutions wasn't appreciated enough already: The Columbia Restaurant celebrates its 103rd anniversary today by rolling back menu prices to opening day rates. That means you can order chicken and yellow rice or boliche for just \$2.95. Soup will set you back 50 cents; sangria 95 cents; the original 1905 Salad, \$1.95. For dessert, try the flan for 35 cents. No reservations accepted today, and take-out items are not available, so you better get there early. The way the economy is going right now, we could use more anniversaries at the Columbia! Noon-7 p.m. at all of the restaurant's locations, including Ybor, 2117 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City; The Pier, 800 Second Ave. NE, St. Petersburg; and Clearwater, 1241 Gulf Blvd. columbiarestaurant.com.

BLACK KIDS The first act out of Jacksonville to hit it big since Limp Bizkit, the Black Kids have taken the indie-rock world by storm. They first earned recognition when MP3s of their 2007 demo, the *Wizard of Ahhs*, sprinkled the blogosphere. Their moody synths and the vocals of singer-guitarist Reggie Youngblood recall '80s bands like New Order, the Smiths and the Cure. But the lo-fi guitars, choppy beats and childlike eruptions are thoroughly 21st century. Their frenetic energy is as sweet as candy, but not bubble gum — more like a red-hot jawbreaker. 9 p.m. Crowbar, 1812 N 17th St., Ybor City. \$15. (813) 241-8600.

SHOCK TO THE SYSTEM: ZOMBIE LUAU It seems these days there's always some flesh-eating action going on somewhere in Tampa Bay. Not cannibals mind you, but our newest obsession: zombies. It was only a matter of time before the Pegasus Lounge got in on the act with their Shock to the System parties. Pegasus is known for pornographic karaoke and pretty heavy bands on a regular basis but it's well on its way to becoming the place to be and be seen if you're a member of the undead. 10 p.m.-3 a.m. tonight at 10008 N 30th St., Tampa. (813) 971-1679. pegasusniteclub.com.



Design by Essence Flowers.



Design by Robert Buck.



Design by Bebe Ziegler.

On Broadway, 'Two' down, more to come

BY JOHN FLEMING
Times Performing Arts Critic

The Broadway fall season got off to an uninspiring start this past week with the opening of *A Tale of Two Cities*, the *Les Miserables* knockoff that premiered a year ago at the Asolo Repertory Theatre in Sarasota.

New York critics were not kind to the Dickensian musical, with book, music and lyrics by Jill Santoriello. The *Wall Street Journal* called it "a revolutionary bore" and the *New York Times* dismissed it as "lumpish" and "the son of *Les Miz*." The show drew enthusiastic audiences in its

tryout last fall at the Asolo, but the lack of originality was a problem then and obviously remains one.

That opening aside, there's still a buzz on Broadway this fall, thanks to some Hollywood star power.

On Thursday, Daniel Radcliffe leaves aside Harry Potter to star (and briefly appear nude) in *Equus*, Peter Shaffer's homoerotic psychodrama about a disturbed stable boy who blinds six horses. Richard Griffiths — Harry's mean uncle in the movies — plays the boy's psychiatrist. It's at the Broadhurst Theatre.

St. Petersburg's Patrick Wilson is in the

revival of Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*, which started in previews late last week and opens Oct. 16. Scientology favorite (and Mrs. Tom Cruise) Katie Holmes makes her Broadway debut as Wilson's fiancée. Husband Tom was, predictably, gushy about his wife's performance at a preview he attended Thursday night.

When asked for his verdict on Holmes' performance, Cruise stopped for a moment while moving through the crowd at the Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre, telling the Associated Press: "Did you see it? ... It was extraordinary."

Other Broadway openings this fall

include a pair of musicals adapted from movies: *Billy Elliot*, about an English boy from a coal mining family who dreams of becoming a dancer, with a score by Elton John, Nov. 13 at the Imperial Theatre; and *Shrek*, with Brian d'Arcy James as the green one, Dec. 14 at the Broadway Theatre.

Elisabeth Moss (*Mad Men*) plays the role originated by Madonna in a revival of *Speed-the-Plow*, David Mamet's three-character play about Hollywood operators that also stars Jeremy Piven (*Entourage*) and Raul Esparza. It opens Oct. 23 at the Barrymore Theatre.