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MUSINGS ON THE CULTURE OF KEEPING UP APPEARANCES

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### 'Passion...Revealed' pops up during L.A. Fashion Week

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As L.A. Fashion Week/Month moves along, a few random events are popping up amid the already fractured schedule. Last night at the church-turned-event-space Vibianna, "Passion...Revealed" attracted hundreds of people who came to support an evening featuring a mix of visual artists, musicians, food, fashion and dance. The lineup highlighted mainly Filipino artists who displayed paintings and photographs throughout the space and into the courtyard. Even the alcohol was from the Philippines, including coconut vodka, mango wine and the country's most beloved beer, San Miguel. The fruity wine, popular beer and warm, breezy evening had everyone in high spirits, mingling, enjoying and exploring the various exhibits and attractions.

Then came the fashion component, which included designers Philip Rodriguez, Alexis Monsanto and Furne One, who showed their collections between performances by a scantily clad tween dance troupe and several announcements and recognitions. Ultimately it was a two-hour-long show that at points seemed disjointed and unfocused.



L.A.-based designer Monsanto's line was an overwhelming mash-up of looks, including one-shouldered jumpsuits, lace baby-doll dresses, heavy-handed evening gowns and several men in Speedos.

Furne One had models dressed in uber-jeweled, frothy gowns form a tableau at the top of the runway. Individual models broke away from the formation to walk the catwalk and show off their headdresses made of toys and objects such as small bicycles, helicopters and bowling pins painted white. The items were anchored to the head, which was wrapped gift-basket-style with a piece of ombre chiffon.

Rodriguez pulled inspiration from traditional Filipino clothing, incorporating bolero style jackets, Barongs (men's formal dress shirt), structured shoulders and intricate applique onto dresses. Though the collection needed editing, it was refreshing to see ideas culled from the designer's culture and worked into many of the pieces. Overall, each line needed styling, editing, a uniform hair-and-makeup concept and accessories that made sense to each look.

Long show aside, attendees didn't seem to mind and watched eagerly as the show switched in and out from dance number to designer, dance number to designer...

The event was full of various elements, some better than others, but there was indeed plenty of passion. Passion that fueled all of the many aspects piled into the project -- the most impressive being the charitable component. Proceeds from the tickets will go to several charities including the Trevor Project, FASGI (Filipino American Service Group Inc.) and HOPE4Children. Money from raffle tickets sold during the event will benefit victims of the recent flood in Manila.

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