

# QC's most fashionable kept things jumping

I am still trying to recover from a marathon weekend of fashion events. But even in my aching-foot-buggy-eyez state, I'm endlessly optimistic about the state of philanthropy, creativity and style in the Queen City.

In a scheduling conflict that should make the best event planner shudder, Charlotte's most fashionable

## IF THE SHOE FITS



RACHEL SUTHERLAND

were lined to choose between three events last Thursday night (photo, page 38). I attempted to hit all of them.

The inaugural three-day Charlotte Fashion Week festivities at the

State hotel were the smallest affair, but promising.

Former *Charlotte* and *Project Runway* judge Catherine Webber

was the emcee, mentor and teacher during the festivities.

"I would have given anything for something like this event when I was on the way up," she said Friday night before the runway show.

The models and designers were beautiful in their style, mood and body-shape diversity.

It was refreshing to see such enthusiasm — on the runway backstage and from the many volunteers who helped bring organizer Anthony Silvestri's vision to fruition.

What wasn't welcome was the cynicism displayed in the front row during Friday's show. A gaggle of women snickered, obviously disapproving the plus-sized models and designers.

I was embarrassed for them. I

fought the urge to tell them, "If you're an ally of something different, stay home."

Charlotte's creative community will be happy to move on without you. It's already on its way.

## Big names and a great cause

On Thursday I began my night at the Diner for Success event at the Merchandise Mart. The fab organization helps disadvantaged women gain economic independence by providing free professional attire and support. The group honored new owner Marcia Simon with the Paragon award and Carolina author/actress/TV show spokeswoman Annie MacDonnell was the keynote speaker.

I had no time for hugs, much to my friends' dismay (I had the boys and a single schedule — there'll be no hugs for me in our immediate future. But I did offer up some smooched almonds while on toast). We dashed over to the State hotel for a fashion tea for the Kristin Davis Fashion show and the debut of Charlotte Fashion Week.

The Davis fashion show could have used an editor — it was a bit too long. Still, the event was well attended, rumored to be around 300 people. And the "Yes and the City" star was as polished and nice as you'd expect in an ensemble from her own holiday collection, which is set to hit Bell stores later this fall.

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Event sponsored by 704-334-5440; [charlottefashionweek.com](http://charlottefashionweek.com)



## Front Row STYLISH HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN



PHOTO BY JAMES L. WELLS • SPECIAL TO THE OBSERVER

CHARLOTTE FASHION WEEK Models strut down the runway on Friday during the first Charlotte Fashion Week, a three-day event at the State hotel.



CHARLOTTE FASHION WEEK: Carmen Velez, designer, author and former *Project Runway* contestant, poses Wednesday before Friday's show.



CHARLOTTE FASHION WEEK: Models Kathryn Coleman, 22 (from left), Najla Odeh, 22, and Saveria Bourque, 20, model backstage at Charlotte Fashion Week on Friday.