

Arts & Entertainment Magazine of The Taos News

Zandi

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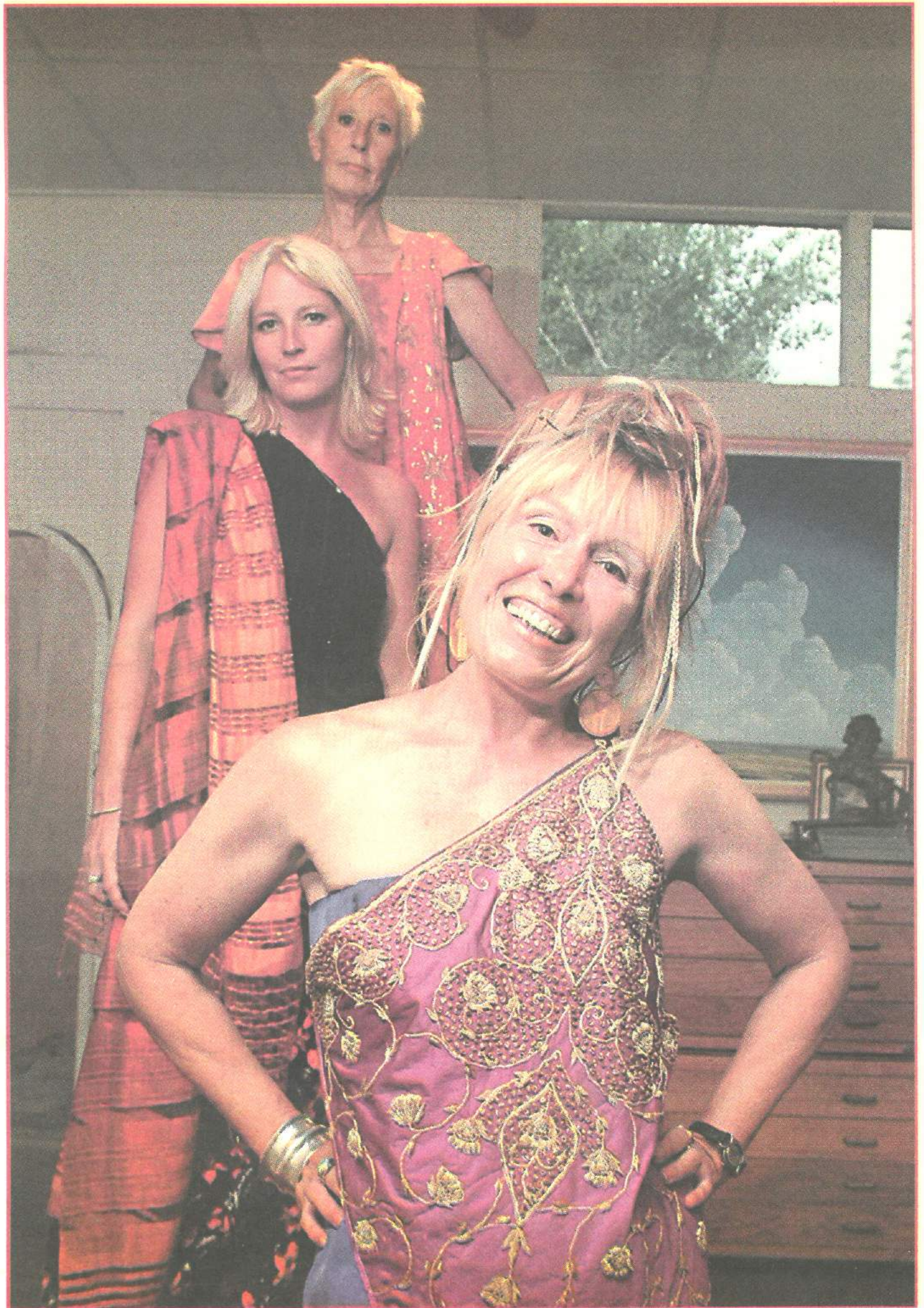
# Temp



## Fashion sense

Zandi puts 'Women on Pedestals'

**Zandi presents her**  
newest fashions modeled  
by Mo and Lisa Tredwin  
at the "Women on Pedestals"  
show at the Wilder  
Nightingale Gallery  
Saturday evening (July 10).



Greg Kreller

# Fashion sense

Zandi puts 'Women on Pedestals'

By R. Scott Gerdes

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as it New York or was it Taos? The Southwestern artwork hanging in the Wilder Nightingale Fine Art Gallery said Taos, but the fashions on display and the ambiance in the air during the Saturday (July 10) evening fashion show "Women on Pedestals" said *en vogue* in New York.

With big-city club music pumping in the background, beautiful women wearing unique and stunning apparel by local designer Zandi (aka Sandra Richardson) did catwalks around the gallery, smiling and floating as they fluttered by. And as the name of the show suggested, other models literally stood or perched on pedestals.

This was Zandi's first all-out fashion show, giving those in attendance not only a taste of champagne and dipped strawberries, but a fun and lively look at her impressive style. The glitter, shine, softness, texture, and colors of her magical ensembles spoke of ethnicity and erotica.

For gallery owner Rob Wilder, the show was a great opportunity to shake things up and do something different.

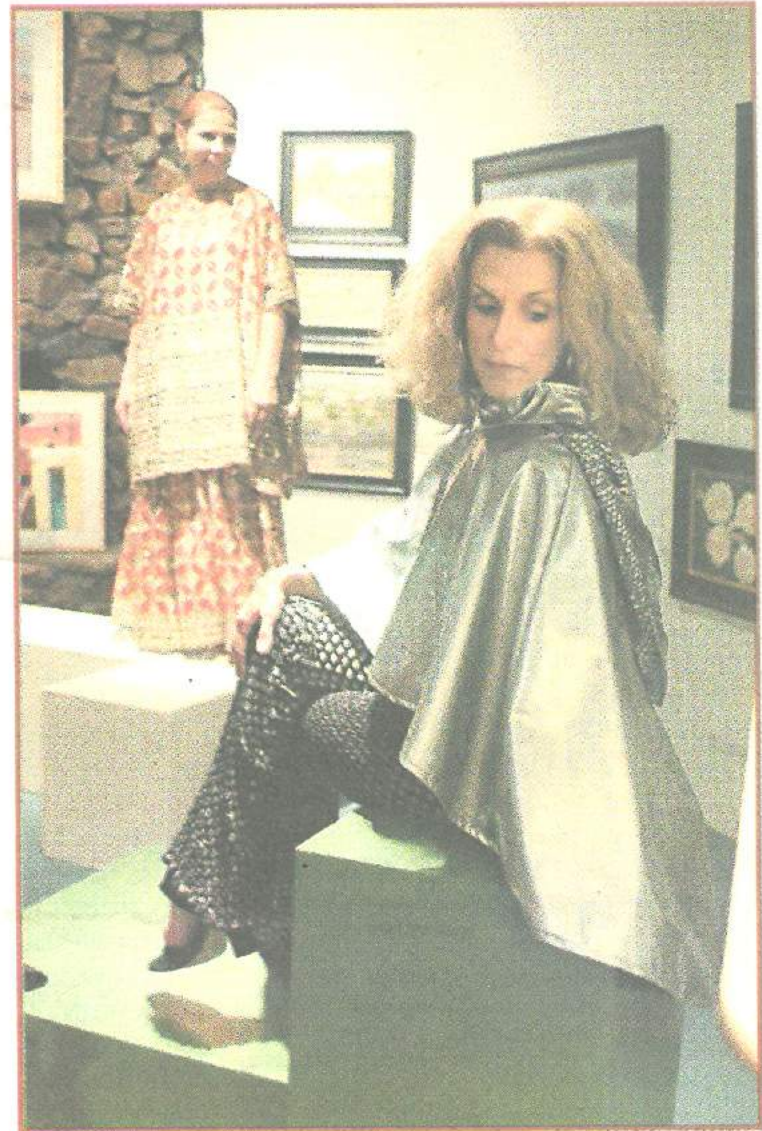
"I want to crank up the volume," he said in a dismayed tone regarding the beats in the background. "But I'm afraid I'll blow the speakers."

In what she hopes becomes an annual event, Zandi called upon eight friends (no arm twisting was needed) to model her assortment of tops, skirts, pants, dresses, vests and even a shiny "moon cape."

The mostly "I've never modeled before" models switched location every 10 minutes, going through three dress changes over the two-hour show. A red chicken-shaped egg timer resting on a pedestal in the back room signaled time for the next change — a taste of Taos in an otherwise very New York minute. Unlike fashion shows in the Big Apple and in Paris, Zandi's models showed playful expressions and would actually give you the time of day.

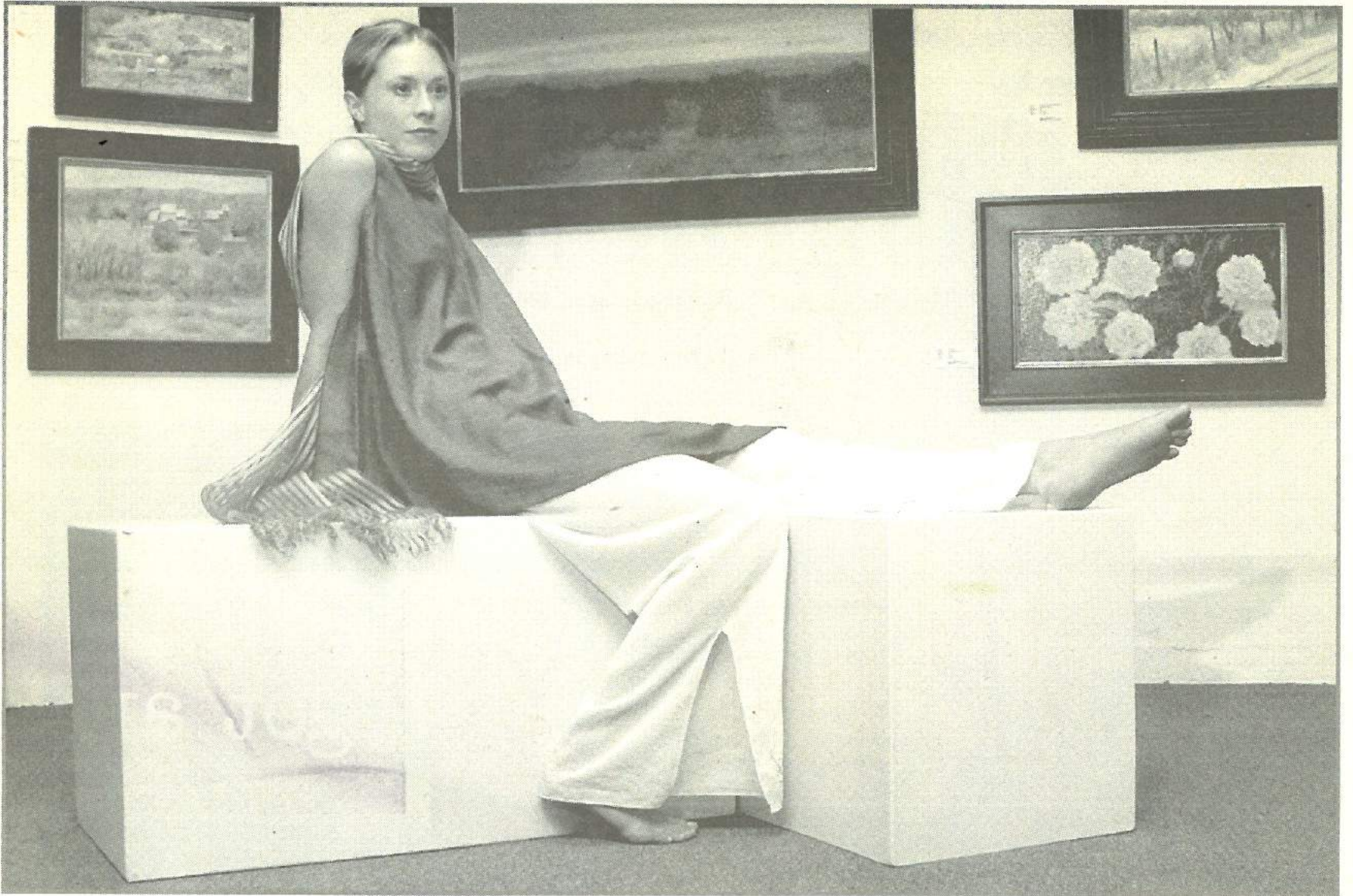
The show was a welcomed return to the fashion spotlight for Zandi model René Gala from Taos Pueblo, who in the past had done hair and runway shows and magazine work to name a few gigs.

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Mary Ann Soloway strikes a pose in her "moon cape" with Ilexa Yardley in the background.

Greg Kreller



Sandra Pratt models an antique silk overdress with a rose silk scarf.

Greg Kreller

## Zandi

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"Life gets you doing other things," she said from atop a white, cubed pedestal. "I've missed this."

A mother-daughter tandem was asked to participate, because as a nervous and very hands-on Zandi explained, "I like to show that my clothes look good on all ages."

Much of the fabrics Zandi uses are acquired during her yearly jaunts to Australia, with which she has dual citizenship. The Pueblo, Colo., native discovered the Land Down Under after graduating from the University of Colorado in Boulder. With stops to Third World nations along the way, Zandi discovered rich and gorgeous vintage 1960s sari fabrics from India, hand-spun cotton mud cloth dyed with Niger River mud from Mali, antique sarongs from Cambodia and traditional cloth from Indonesia and Thailand.

Zandi calls her designs tribal art and textiles, as she embroiders with sequins, beads and metallic threads in her "Eye Candy" collection; hand-screen prints American Indian pottery designs on textured vests in her "Anasazi" line; and attaches beads, feathers, fossils, spirals and talismans to suede for the "Shaman Collection."

Her newest creation is the "Ancestor Vest." Give her a photo of a relative (say, the 1888 portrait of Aunt Blanche in her Annie Oakley get up) and she'll print it onto a piece of cloth and incorporate it onto a handmade vest.

Zandi calls what she's doing with the vintage textiles "recycling." The rest of us call it "talent."

Looking at her exquisite feminine wraps, one might assume Zandi has an extensive education in fashion design. Not the case. She only discovered her talent for flattering the female form while teaching a fifth-grade sewing class at a public school in her hometown. She can only explain what happened next as discovering fate.

"This is what Taos does to you," the outgoing Zandi relayed with a laugh. "Really, this is a gift from God and a show from Taos Mountain."

Her designs, the fabrics and Zandi's "I'll always be different" nature are all about "the flow." She is particularly adamant about keeping her clothing hand washable and no need to press because "goddesses don't iron." She maintains that the true purpose for what she does is designed to "bring out the goddess in every woman."

"What about us men?"

"I want to do men's clothing, but you all have to tell me what you want."

And therein lies the problem. Where's the Fab Five from "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" when you need them most?

Maybe clothes really don't make the man or the woman, but in Zandi's case, they certainly enhance the "goddesses."

To view Zandi's fashions and/or to request a special order, call 505-751-1882, or view her work online at [www.zandidesigns.com](http://www.zandidesigns.com).