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At the May 30 Carnevale body-art competition at the Italian Cultural Centre, artist Nailla Minnebaeva followed a Russian theme when painting the body of model Kelly Dokter (above). To view more images from Carnevale, go to Straight.com. Rebecca Blissett photo.

## stylenotes

> BY CHARLIE SMITH

### Carnevale competition celebrates global body art

For nearly as long as people have walked the Earth, they've been adorning their bodies with temporary or permanent markings. The Aborigines of Australia cover themselves with pigments for traditional rituals and ceremonies; across the Indian subcontinent, brides are routinely painted with henna; and among indigenous people in South America, wet charcoal is one method that's used to transform the body's appearance. On May 30, this human tradition was on full display at the Italian Cultural Centre, where 11 artists spent several hours painstakingly painting the bodies of 11 models for the 14th annual Carnevale body-art competition.

Dominelli International College of Esthetics presented the competition and a banquet to benefit the British Columbia Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund. The fund's executive director, Tony Burke, kicked off the evening by telling the audience about his organization's fundraising drive to develop a \$25-million building on Main Street with suites for burn victims who are awaiting treatment.

In the body-art competition, each artist chose a country and attempted to showcase its culture, language, wildlife, and geography. A panel of judges, chaired by hair designer Richard Jeha, examined the models as they paraded across the stage while the rest of the crowd enjoyed their dinner. This was followed by live entertainment that included performances by baila vancouver, opera singer Christina Barbosa, Grupo Capoeira Malés, Harbour Dance jazz dancers, and Drum Cafe, which got the crowd roaring with an interactive show.

Later, the models strolled across the stage and onto the floor so that the crowd could get a closer look. The president of Dominelli International, Rita Dominelli, pointed out that the models had to stand for six hours or more because if they sat down, it would ruin the artists' work.

The winning artist, Samantha Rae, took home the \$2,000 grand prize after transforming model Regina Bair into a traditional Kenyan warrior, complete with a spear and traditional headgear. Rae, also the winner of last year's competition, had placed a white dove on Bair's left hand as part of her body art. It was a pleasant contrast to the bloodshed that erupted in Kenya earlier this year.



Samantha Rae turned model Regina Bair into a Kenyan warrior. Quana Parker photo.

The second-place finisher was Lucie Brouillard, who earned \$1,000 for her painted images of Spain on model Nicole Pilich. Brouillard, winner of the Canadian Body Art Championship in Calgary on May 2, included a spectacular Spanish guitar across Pilich's chest and stomach. An elaborately painted bull appeared on the model's right knee.

The third-place finisher was Jennifer Little, who presented images of Canada—including Canada geese, the Maple Leaf, and salmon—on model Sky Foletto. Little's design, which earned her a \$500 prize, included a stunning inukshuk on Foletto's back. So far, there's been no word of lawsuits by Vanoc for violating any Olympic trademarks. ♦