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FEATURES

Creative Outlet



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Jo 'Boobs' Weldon, headmistress of the New York School of Burlesque, performs in a costume by Maddog Swing.

More features coverage:

Behind the Party Scene Blog

Advocate writer Pam Bordelon brings you a closer look at the party scene in and around Baton Rouge in her bi-weekly column. Check out her blog to get a closer look at what happens behind the scene once the party is over!

BR native finds success in New York as burlesque costume designer

By EMILY KERN HEBERT

Advocate staff writer

Published: Oct 27, 2010 - Page: 1D

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• SINGLE PAGE VIEW

Baton Rouge native Amanda Madden admits that she wasn't cut out for working in a cubicle.

Her new career gives her plenty of freedom and allows her to work with fun materials — sequins, crystals and, of course, plenty of ostrich feathers.

Today, Madden is a costume maker and fashion designer under the label Maddog Swing Costume, Couture & Corsetry. Her clients include New York City's top burlesque performers. Madden grew up in the Shenandoah area of Baton Rouge. She graduated from Woodlawn High School in 1991.

She taught herself to sew by reading books and by taking apart clothes and putting them back together.

"I had a very individual idea of style and wasn't impressed with what was in stores," she said.

After a period of "drifting about," Madden said, she moved to New Orleans, where she got a job making costumes for the theater troupe Running With Scissors.

Her work on the production of "Camille" won a Big Easy Award in 2002.

She was also making costumes for other individuals and had a successful business doing alterations — until Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005.

After Katrina, Madden said, "people weren't really thinking about costumes or new clothes."

Her rent was steadily increasing and she wasn't making enough money to pay her bills. Madden said she also was in a bad relationship.

"I just got fed up one day," Madden said.

Eleven months after Katrina, Madden left Louisiana.

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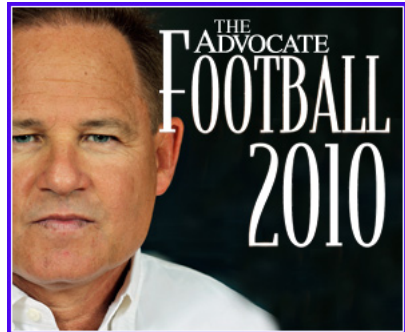
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