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Carnevale Ventura

Clothes make the Renaissance reveler! Now one and all have the chance to create, commission, or decide upon a wondrous costume at the Designers Fashion Show and Costume Marketplace on October 7, 2012 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in seaside Ventura, California. A prelude to the three-day inaugural Carnevale Ventura to be held on February 8-10, 2013, this grand event features costumers from near and far who will showcase splendid wear from the high Renaissance of Italy circa 1500 and the Carnevale of Venice. The Costume Marketplace gives enthusiasts, re-enactors and families ideas on how to best materialize historic or fanciful characters in time for Carnevale Ventura.

Carnevale Ventura takes its inspiration from the life-like Renaissance figures of world renowned artist/monologist George Stuart and the Carnevale di Venezia (circa the twelfth century and ongoing). The Ventura festival's theme highlights the Borgias, the subject of recent television dramas. Life-size re-creations of Mr. Stuart's popular Historical Figures from that infamous family, rendered by talented



Runway models will feature costumes of the modern Venetian Carnival. Image by: Alaska Dude

local artisans, will make appearances throughout. As a lead-in to the much-anticipated Carnevale, the Designers Fashion Show and Marketplace, according to Mr. Stuart, serves as "an educational and entertaining opportunity to demonstrate what can be done with this exotic theme. Professionals and amateurs alike will share their enthusiasm and skills and help focus all participants on that time from the past. What a sumptuous occasion this will be!"

The Designers Fashion Show takes place in the Crowne Plaza Grand Ballroom, with the Costume Marketplace of imagination and instruction on the lobby level. Renaissance and Venetian style designers, hairstyle and makeup experts, mask makers, and vendors of everything from jewelry to swords will cover every costuming need and budget. Individuals come away with personalized advice and assistance to fulfill head-to-toe festival wear desires.

Carnevale Ventura event coordinator Angel Jones, owner of the Wenches and Warlocks costume shop, encourages prize-worthy artistic creations made to elicit ooohs and huzzahs. "What is that sword, amulet or hat that brings you into that world at that time?" she asks. "We want everyone to take that step that makes you part of the event, whether it's a high-end authentic costume, something edgy, a modern take on grandiose Venetian style, a fantasy design, or simply a creative mask. There are so



The Historical Figure® of Juan Borgia (right) by sculptor George Stuart has been brought to life by Renaissance costume and mask designer Robert Robear Lamarche. Image by: Peter D'Aprix



Carnevale Ventura Fashion Show will feature Costumes of the Renaissance and Venetian Carnival. Image by: Leroy Becker

Right: Carnevale Ventura features Renaissance characters, including sculptor George Stuart's Borgia Family – Cesare, Rodrigo, Lucrezia and Juan. Image by: Leroy Becker



Mask makers will display a wide range of traditional to exotic masks in the Marketplace. Image by: Robert Robear Lamarche

many levels of involvement at February's Carnevale."

In keeping with Venetian carnival traditions, masks are encouraged. Mask-making classes are being offered in Ventura and online, locally and internationally, from October through February.

Pageantry, entertainment, surprise guests and giveaways accompany the October 7th preview event. Roving jugglers, acrobats, strolling musicians, street promenades, an exhibit of Mr. Stuart's Historical Figures featured at the Museum of Ventura County, meet-and-greets, photo ops, and celebrity signings await all guests. Themed drinks and dishes offer guests a taste of the Carnevale Ventura celebration to come. In the VIP Lounge, Designer Fashion Show VIP ticket holders can indulge in Italian coffees, teas and treats, and grab a libation at the hosted bar to raise a cheer. Designers Fashion Show will be held at Crowne Plaza Hotel in Ventura, California. For more details visit carnevaleventura.org.

—Photos provided by Leroy Becker