



*Ninimomo-
3 Doll Dior*



Spotlight on NiniMomo & Live Auction Entry “Dior Couture, Spring 2007”

The theme of this year’s convention, Barbie on the Runway, was brought to life by the many extraordinary auction dolls, all beautifully created and generously donated by such artists as Angie Gill (Gilly Gals), Artist Creations, Bruce Nygren and Peter Nickel, Camilli De Bellis (Cover Girls), Jeff Bouchard (Joshard Designs), Magia 2000, Matt Sutton, Steven Fraser (Dressmaker Details), and former Mattel designer Carol Spencer. Publisher Pat Henry was particularly enthralled with one entry in particular—that of NiniMomo—which she bid on...and won.

NiniMomo designer and owner Nik Moronese, who holds a B.F.A. in Photography, merges his interests in the fashion industry and beauty pageants with his work on small-scale models. Associated with several of the state preliminaries for the Miss USA/Universe pageant systems, Moronese enjoys coaching young women to personal success, which he believes to be the result of a good attitude. Over the years Moronese’s freelance fashion photography has been published throughout the U.S., and he has worked with such agencies as Wilhelmina, Elite, Click, and Storm Models. With this background to his credit, Moronese feels he brings a special talent to NiniMomo, the company he started with Marie Le Breton. Nik and Marie first met when Moronese coached Le Breton for the 1992 Miss New York USA pageant (in which Le Breton wore a gown of her own design).

Marie contributes, among many other talents, her lifelong love of sewing to the success of NiniMomo. At a very young age, Marie’s mother introduced her to the sewing machine, and she quickly began making clothing for herself and her friends. Before collaborating with Moronese on NiniMomo creations, Marie’s professional career

focused on non-profit work for a New York AIDS organization where she coordinated client services. Desiring more time to exercise her creative skills, Marie joined Nik in pursuing doll craft and design full time.

“When we found out that the theme for the 2008 National Barbie Collector’s Convention in Kansas City was Barbie on the Runway, we couldn’t have been more thrilled,” says Le Breton. Since 1996, NiniMomo has been creating one-of-a-kind beauties in the most glamorous of hand-beaded evening gowns from the world of entertainment, film, pageantry, and fashion. During the past three years, Nik and Marie have featured much of their pageant-themed OoAK delegates wearing replica ensembles from the world’s great designers. It has been the work of John Galliano for Christian Dior that has particularly inspired the two.

NiniMomo believes that Galliano profoundly captures fashion as art in all his couture creations. Particularly fascinated with Dior’s Spring/Summer 2007 Haute Couture show, Nik and Marie quickly decided this was the theme they wanted to recreate. This spring collection marked Galliano’s tenth anniversary designing for the House of Dior. The designer dazzled the audience with the marriage between Japanese art and folklore and the timeless elegance of Dior.

As reporter Sarah Mower said in her review of Galliano’s Dior show, “What psychological process did it take to lift John Galliano to the extraordinary place of brilliance he reached—or rather, rediscovered—in his spring couture? Everything about the Dior collection—inspired, he said, ‘by Pinkerton’s affair with Cio-Cio San, Madame Butterfly’—reconfirmed his unique talent to evoke beauty, sensitivity, narrative, and emotion in a fashion show. Kimonos, obis, and geisha makeup were Dior-ified, transformed into delicate translations of New Look peplum suits and full-skirted dance dresses. Each look sprouted yet more miraculous planes of origami folding, their stiff geometries creating necklines like flowers or hovering birds. Every dress had an intense color and character of its own: a hot pink, an eau-de-nil with coral, cascading shades of burgundy and imperial purple. Some were painted, others sculpted from curviform furls of woven straw.” (See <http://www.style.com/fashionshows/review/S2007CTR-CDIOR/> for full review.)

"His attention to detail, such as his concentration on origami as fashion, is evident in NiniMomo's replicas for this year's live auction" says Nik. Representing three of their favorite looks from the collection, Nik and Marie inspired the conventioners to bid on their Dior entry and contribute to the worthy cause of The Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City. The elaborately staged dolls were presented in a three-room display on a rotating stand, each in its own tableau. The piece raised an impressive \$4,500 for the charity.

For more on the incredible miniature couture of NiniMomo, check their website for their pageant costumes, haute fashion, and current collection: <http://www.ninimomo.com> ♦

