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This Month's Column

Dangerous Curves, Sexy Women and DeVoe Signatur' Events

It was a real windy and cold Saturday, but the heat arrived with the Dangerous Curves... Tour!

As befits a true Curvy Diva, the New York leg of the tour was held at the Sheraton LaGuardia East, a very lavish and upscale hotel. Welcoming me were a smiling staff and tables filled with an arrangement of baby's breath and red roses. The backdrop on the runway was a very hip and large banner of, "Dangerous Curves...the Tour!"



In attendance were news reporters, designers, corporate sponsors and the family and friends of the models. It was an honor for me to be seated at the VIP table next to Chamein Canton (author), Thea Politis ([ElegantPlus.com](#)), Cathleen C. Laporte (President & Chief Executive Officer of the Black Fashion Designers Association, Inc.), Edwinta Rhue (plus model) and several other wonderful representatives from the curvy industry.

The show consisted of dazzling plus size fashions made for the world to see and appreciate. For years plus size women have demanded this attention from designers and it's finally here! The tours designers included:

- Oristyl Designs
- Ashley Stewart
- Big Girls United (BGU)
- Lawrence H. Levens Millinery
- Her Game 2
- Tuesday Conner
- Hy Fishman Furs
- The Plus Academy Graduates
- Victoria's Bigger Secret (Tuesday Conner)
- Mad! Couture

Michi Designer Knitwear
Voluptuous Woman Boutique
Richard Metzger

My personal favorite was Mad! Couture! I have always enjoyed her designs and had the pleasure of working with her personally during my first test. The results, were magnifico! But I must say that Cristyl designs, BGU, Tuesday Conner, Michi Designer Knitwear and Richard Metzger were also on my favorites list! Don't get me wrong - I thought all the designers were excellent but the ones mentioned above are more my personal style :-)

A special word for the make-up artist crew: Karen E. Duncan, Tiffany Grant, Lisa Smith and last but not least Jewel Whitfield. I have worked with Jewel and must say that she creates magic! Jewel, we are not worthy: -)

The scene that captivated me the most was the showcase of Victoria's Bigger Secret by Tuesday Conner, the lovely models paraded the runway in sexy lingerie with wings!



When the show was over, there was a standing ovation and I had the biggest smile on my face. I was so proud of the industry professionals represented on the stage by the gorgeous, voluptuous models. As I stood there, I knew that I was witnessing a very important day for the plus size industry. We grew that day with hard work AND class. We need more events like Dangerous Curves....the Tour!

Finally, the event coordinator, Gwen DeVoe, walked the runway to give her heartfelt thanks. The audience kept on clapping, and her smile said it all. Gwen is a pretty amazing woman. Using her former experience as a plus size model, her love for fashion and her passion for empowering women of size as a guide, in 1995 she founded DeVoe Signatur' Events, a production company specializing in plus size events. The rewards of founding this company have been life changing for both Gwen and for those who work with her. In her eyes no one should feel left out because of their size. Gwen is a success because she cares for her girls and they are more to her than just models, she wants the best for them and continues to guide them.

Do you want a life altering experience? Dangerous Curves..the Tour! is coming to a location near you! Please watch the VenusDivas.com website for more information and do not miss this event!

Meet Madeline Figueroa!

I had the pleasure of interviewing several of the Curves Tour Models. This month, I would like to introduce to House Model & Casting Director, Madeline Figueroa.

Olga: What is your full name?

Madeline: Madeline Figueroa

Olga: What is your zodiac sign?

Madeline: Libra

Olga: How long have you been modeling?

Madeline: Four years



Olga: What was your first Tear sheet?

Madeline: BBW Magazine, October/Fall issue 2002

Olga: BBW is a great magazine. Tell us a brief story of your work with them.

Madeline: I met the Fashion Editor of BBW Magazine on a shoot in Arizona. She approached me about modeling for their 'Sexy in the City shoot'. A few months later I went to Vegas for the shoot and had a blast. Betty Johnson and the staff made me and the rest of the models feel like Queen for a day. They worked very hard from morning until evening. Not once did they complain or make us feel uncomfortable in any way.

Olga: Who has supported you the most outside the modeling industry?

Madeline: My family has been most supportive. My mom keeps a scrapbook of everything I do. One of my sisters, Lori, has been my stylist for about three years now. My boyfriend is a photographer so we practice posing and do test shoots often.

Olga: Within the modeling industry who has given you the strongest support?

Madeline: Gwendolyn DeVoe and Betty Johnson have been the greatest influences. Ms. DeVoe's personality and drive is **Bigger Than Life!** In an industry where being on the bigger side of "Plus" is not always looked upon kindly, she has made a way for us to make a stand and a name for ourselves in the industry. Betty Johnson has been in the industry for many years and her advice to me has been priceless. I admire her strength, professionalism and friendship very much. She was also the first person to look at me without make-up and ask me to be in a magazine :-)

Olga: In your vision where do you see yourself in the next three years?

Madeline: I see myself working within the industry as a commercial model. I will do runway as long as runway will have me. I intend to continue to work behind the scenes and devote myself to the younger generation of curvy women.

Olga: Are you working on any special new projects?

Madeline: I will be working as the Casting Director for the next Dangerous Curves Tour in DC. I have also been chosen as a featured model for the Elegant Plus Calendar for 2004, and a contributing model/writer to the curvychick.com, magazine.

Olga: Explain to me and the Curvy Divas about The Plus Academy.

Madeline: At The Plus Academy we learn various things. Not only did we learn how to walk, apply make-up and buy appropriate undergarments for our shapes but most importantly we were given tools about how to proceed in our careers. There is something about being in a room with other women that look just like you, that is more empowering. You feed off each other's positive energy and experiences. I have made friendships that will last a lifetime.

About Diva Olga -

Olga is a professional model and actress. She was born in Jersey City (Single child of Colombian parents) and was raised in New Jersey. She is married with three beautiful sons and takes care of her mom who lives with them. The household is rounded out with two dogs, one cat and a bird. Olga works 9-5 for Corporate America and loves doing Yoga and going for long fitness walks. She is an avid reader and adores writing. She is a Taurus, full of romance and dreamy days!

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