

THE GEORGETOWNER

NOVEMBER 29 - DECEMBER 5, 2006

Since 1954

VOLUME 54, NUMBER 4

T.H.E. AGENCY:

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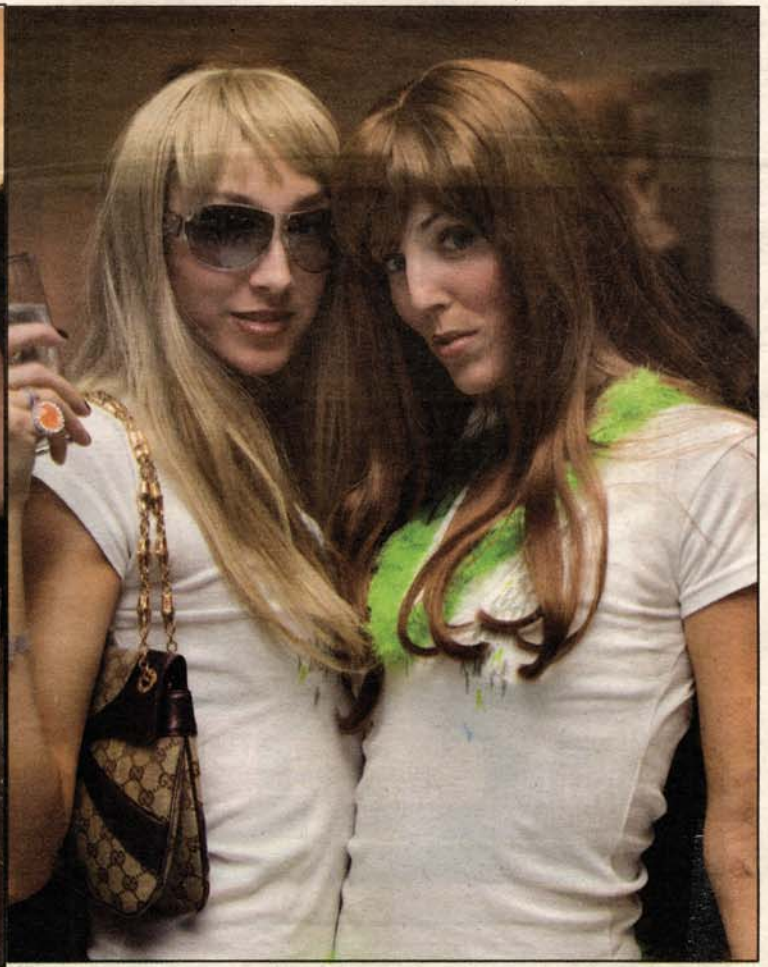
GEORGETOWN'S T.H.E. ARTIST AGENCY: 21 YEARS YOUNG

By MICHELLE DELINO AND JESSICA LAGER

WASHINGTON, DC, WIDELY KNOWN AS AN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL HAVEN, IS EXPERIENCING AN ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL BOOM THAT HAS RENEWED AN APPRECIATION OF FASHION, STYLE, AND DESIGN. WALK THROUGH GEORGETOWN, CHEVY CHASE, AND DOWNTOWN DC AND YOU WILL SEE INCREASINGLY MORE HIGH-END BOUTIQUES AND SHOPS LINING THE STREETS. THIS NEW WAVE OF FASHION AND DESIGN SAVVY CONSUMERS ARE PART OF WHAT CONTINUES TO FUEL GEORGETOWN'S T.H.E. ARTIST AGENCY AS THE PREMIERE AGENCY IN DC REPRESENTING THE HIGHEST CALIBER OF MODELS AND STYLISTS IN THE MET-

ropolitan area. To celebrate the agency's 21st year in business, founder and president, Lynda Erkiletian, and her partner, Elizabeth Centenari, vice president and director, threw an Act Our Age party for over five hundred of their clients, models, stylists, family, and friends to express their gratitude.

A la Project Runway, the hosts of T.H.E.'s Act Our Age 21st anniversary party encouraged invited guests to design an original shirt/dress using the official Act Our Age tee shirt mailed out prior to the party. "Models Gone Wild" and "Lucky 21" tees were among the contenders for the coveted awards. Prizes were awarded by fashion executives from Washington's leading magazines and department stores to the most creative "designers" in each



of the following categories: Haute Couture, Groovy 80s, Diva Lina, Rock Star, Party Pooper, T.H.E. Choice Award, and Fashion Forward.

One of the most highly anticipated and beautiful parties of the year, the 21st anniversary celebration was held at Christopher Reiter's Muléh, a chic fashion and furniture showroom transformed into the perfect venue. The sophisticated studio-like setting with a groovy lounge atmosphere showcased a compilation of black and white photography, a stunning tribute to the past 21 years of talent and client contributions. DJ Heather Femia got the party started and set the stage for the live sultry sounds of the New York City-based band, Groove Collective, who kept the guests dancing all night long.

"The Act Our Age party was to thank all the people who helped make T.H.E. the premiere agency for talent in Washington. Our longevity in this business is attributed to the quality of our talent and our savvyness to forecast trends," says Elizabeth Centenari. "Our clients know that when they book a T.H.E. model or stylist they are getting the highest level of talent in Washington," She added. In addition, "keeping the business local has helped spawn economic growth within our own city."

Founded in April, 1985, T.H.E. Artist Agency was originally conceived to address the

lack of stylist representation in the DC market. Ms. Erkiletian remarks, "as a free-lance stylist and former actress and model myself, I recognized a need for talent representation and consistent industry standards in Washington." Lynda's client base and business acumen provided an opportunity for clients to hire in the DC metropolitan area, "and not pull from other markets." Her instincts were correct, and stylists, then a year later, models were eager to accept the concept of exclusivity in return for career guidance and the highest level of professional clients.

Elizabeth Centenari, who joined T.H.E. in 1988 as director of talent and client relations, was no stranger to the modeling business. Her mother, Diane McFarland was a former model and talent agent in Denver, Colorado, who exposed her daughter to an industry that would later become her passion. The two had opened an agency in Denver when love drew her to the East Coast where she married her husband Paul and raised two beautiful daughters. Her journey to D.C. led her to T.H.E., where Erkiletian and Centenari realized immediately that they shared the same philosophy and integrity of talent representation and providing the highest level of customer service. Their union of hardwork, honesty, and intuition has proven to be a successful partnership for the past 18 years.

Twenty-one years later, the boutique agency is recognized nationally and internationally.

T.H.E. models and stylists have graced the editorial pages of major local and national magazines – working with acclaimed photographers such as Annie Leibovitz and Ruven Afanador. T.H.E. Artist Agency represents over 500 stylists, commercial print, and fashion models that service over 1,200 clients around the globe. The fashion division has provided models for the runways in New York, Paris, London, Milan, South Africa, Brazil and Hong Kong. In addition, T.H.E. models and stylists are booked by the major department stores, boutiques, and publications in the DC metropolitan area for fashion shows, informals, campaigns, and charity events.

As the agency has thrived, T.H.E. has given back to the community that has supported them throughout the years. Both Erkiletian and Centenari have served on the Board of the Greater DC chapter of Fashion Group International (FGI), a non-profit global organization. For the past several years, T.H.E. has given and continues to pledge an annual FGI/T.H.E. Scholarship Award to support and encourage the future talent of the fashion industry. In addition, T.H.E. and their talent often contribute their time and assistance to local charitable organizations. "The party was a culmination of two decades of determination and hard work," says Erkiletian, joined in celebration by her four children. "We have a lot to be thankful for, and what a fun way to act our age."

