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[Halifax: Katrina Tuttle's latest collection is all frills, but no fuss](#)



KATRINA TUTTLE Fall 2009. Photography by Brent McCombs

Gallery Page and Strange (1869 Granville St., 902-422-8995, pageandstrange.com), located in Halifax's historic Granville Square, houses the best walls in the city. Encompassed by the sleek columns, stunning molding and sky-kissing ceilings of a bygone era, the building's old brick walls have been slathered in a fresh, modern white that would make any artist salivate. These gallery walls, and the contemporary art that hangs from them, created the perfect setting for last Thursday's unveiling of **Katrina Tuttle's** (katrinatuttle.com) Fall 2009 designs—a collection that has painted classic ideas in a coat of modernity.

Much like the soap bottles and track pants that have ignited Tuttle's inspiration in the past, this collection has a quirky beginning too. The designer was out on a nature shoot (Tuttle has more than a knack for photography) when the bottom halves of trees, the textures of rocks, and the rich natural palette ignited her creativity. Toss in a moment with her front-loading washing machine when the churning garments had folded like a flattened accordion, rinse it all in a desire to fuse trendy with classy and you have the line's current aesthetic.



KATRINA TUTTLE Fall 2009
Photography by Brent McCombs

Working with gorgeous fabrics (from raw silk to cozy wool) and traditional patterns (from houndstooth to plaid), Tuttle took ownership of classic and retro silhouettes by adding the modern accents we've come to expect. Buttons were not only oversized and adorable, but also popped up at the top of those deep, drooped knife pleats, and the lush ruffles that hung from necklines, circled hems and encompassed hips were made casual with raw edges and spines of ribbon. The one element I didn't quite love was Tuttle's use of elasticized waists and necklines, which awkwardly cinched crisp, raw silks into a bunched, bulky band. I'm all for playing with the potential of fabrics, but not when the result is a touch more frump than fierce. Her signature cuts made up for it though, with bubble skirts galore and natural waists a-plenty—two looks that I'm nowhere near over.

Beyond providing the perfect backdrop (the gallery's brick walls were coincidentally lined with artist Drew Klassen's rainforest and jungle canvases), Gallery Page and Strange did even more for Tuttle's show. An intimate space meant guests were seated a mere arm's length from the floor-level runway, providing an up-close perspective of the intricate design work. A chocolate sweater dress I've been pining for since Atlantic Fashion Week doubled in beauty when I could see the plush knit of cashmere and alpaca, a prim little skirt that held its upside-down teacup shape became even more lovely from a few feet away, and the rich print of a stunning backless mini-dress was unveiled as a fine, embroidered silk.

With all those details, Tuttle's latest collection makes it easy for the girl who's under the ruffles and pleats—all the accessorizing has been done for you. And from a designer who insists she's not a girlie girl, it makes for a polished, of-the-moment look without all the fuss.

Torontonians can catch Katrina Tuttle's Fall 2009 collection at Toronto's Alternative Arts and Fashion Week (www.alternativefashionweek.com) on April 21, 2009, in the Distillery District's Fermenting Cellar.

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Posted April 14th, 2009 | 8:00 am | By [Nadine LaRoche](#) |

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7 Responses to “Halifax: Katrina Tuttle’s latest collection is all frills, but no fuss”

- *Holly* says:

[April 14, 2009 at 9:13 am](#)

I loved reading your article — it was like all the pieces were running through my head again, almost as crisp as they were in person.

The first photo in your blog is of my favourite dress, and I was so impressed by the quality of this show. It having been my first, I’m a bit scared that I’ve gone to the best one right off the bat! But, from what you’ve been writing, it looks like Halifax is ready to take it up another notch.

- *Jenn* says:

[April 14, 2009 at 11:47 am](#)

Another great Halifax-highlighting piece! And I’m so stoked that you - and Katrina Tuttle - aren’t over bubble skirts yet. Actually, I don’t think we should ever get over skirts so cute, girlie, and flattering!

- *Sarah* says:

[April 14, 2009 at 12:20 pm](#)

So great to see Tuttle’s solo line is such a delight- nice and clean! The pieces at the Atlantic Fashion Week showcase were tempting in a sneak peek kind of way-, but it looks like the fall line is going to be warm and cozy and still feminine. Sounds like it was a great night!

- *Jenny Cooper* says:

[April 14, 2009 at 12:52 pm](#)

LOVE IT! Bubble skirts for life!

- *Jenny Cooper* says:

[April 14, 2009 at 12:54 pm](#)

On a side, I am really excited to see how Atlantic Fashion Week will expand in the coming years. SO Many great venues in the city for shows, and there is no lack of creative talent to be showcased.

- *B.B. Roskeworth* says:

[April 15, 2009 at 9:34 am](#)

Being at this show I can say confidently that you have written a great piece about a ... well a wonderful show. The setting was perfect. One of my favorite galleries in the city in my favorite area of the city of Halifax. An area that doesn’t get the walking traffic that it deserves.

I have to admit that I was not a big fan Of Tuttle’s line before this season. This season she step up her game. The garments are beautiful, flattering, and stunningly designed to make a woman more glamorous. Even her long wool sweaters have tailoring that I have not seen in the industry. They are cut to be slimming and make the body seem longer with two seams running down from the armpit. thus framing the body better. I could go on but bore ya.

Tuttle has an eye for recreating god in her details.

- *Sara* says:

[April 15, 2009 at 5:45 pm](#)

I am inspired by the actual venue and the idea of it. The designer certainly has the drive to create a proper fashion event unfortunately when you look at her designs up close close they are ill-fitting and poorly made. The evening dresses at the end looked like regurgitated mounds of silk tied together with bits of string.

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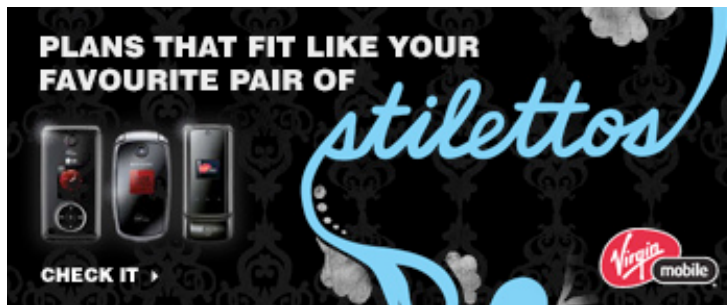
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