



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

CERI EDWARDS



Amidst the swaying palms in the Muscat InterContinental gardens, a specially erected catwalk, bathed in spotlights and accentuated by multi-coloured flashing lasers was the centrepiece for Karen Green's latest project. As a bid to raise funds for the Al Amana Centre and to endorse the message of peace and intercultural acceptance, the One World - Unity with Elegance show combined fashion and dance acts to inspire and entertain the 750 strong audience.

The show was held on March 2 in conjunction with the South African Embassy. In keeping with the theme of racial unity, the Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre, flown in from South Africa were the first to take the stage. By fusing aspects of Indian, South African and European choreography, the ethnically diverse group grabbed the crowd's attention with their dynamic performance and set the scene for what was to follow.

After the drums fell silent and the dancers made their final steps, key players in the organisation of the show made an appearance in order to welcome guests and signal the beginning of the fashion parade. Deputy head of mission at the South African Embassy, Desmond Nxiweni welcomed the audience on behalf of H E Yacoob Abba Omar, the South African ambassador to the sultanate. Nxiweni delivered the Ambassador's message of unity. He added that the planet was now facing its greatest challenge and the world community needed to remember that they were "one people, in one world."

Michael Bos, director of Al Amana Centre concurred and explained that, as the show's beneficiary, the Centre gave its full backing to events such as this, which encourage inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue. "As the Middle East is currently such a centre for geopolitical concern, we want Oman to be an entry point for people to meet, erode stereotypes and broaden visions," emphasised Bos. Lastly, event organiser Karen Green addressed the audience and

thanked the many partners that made the show possible.

Following a long round of applause, to the audience's surprise, a 4x4 vehicle, accompanied by music from DJ Capital F made its way to the catwalk with a group of dancers. The dance choreographed by Tanja Rosner kicked off the show in style. After a high-octane performance, the mood suddenly shifted and the music softened, cueing the entrance of one of the show's models, Alicia Bos, descending from above the catwalk, ethereally dressed as an angel. As she and the remaining nine models paraded tirelessly up and down the catwalk in outfits by Mango, Sara's Design Studio, Monsoon and Fatma Noor, they received warm approval from the audience.

In addition, to tie-in with the spirit of the show, there was strong Omani participation with the launch of new designer, Haifa al Busaidy's range of Arabic clothing adding a touch of local flavour. Also, Omani poetess, Nasra al Adawi provided an artistic interlude with a reading of one of her works, accompanied by ballerina, Wave Baldwin.

To conclude the impassioned show, each participant was welcomed onto the catwalk to hold hands and unite together. As the audience were implored to follow suit and those on stage took their final bows, a flock of doves were released, as representatives of peace.

For more pictures, go to page 24

FOR CHARITY'S SAKE

In order to maximise the funds raised, a draw was held wherein raffle tickets, costing R01 each, were sold and dozens of prizes were awarded to lucky ticket holders. Prizes included an Omega watch, a Damas diamond pendant, beauty treatment vouchers and GSM handsets. Following the show, an auction was also held, where prizes were awarded to the highest bidder. Prizes included a golf cap signed by Greg Norman, a painting by Sarah White titled The Art of Barr al Jissah, a painting by Patricia Millins, two VIP invitations to an art show in Dubai and a week's Gulf Cruise for two on a Costa Cruise luxury liner. Over R012,000 was raised for charity through the event.