



TLR Brings the "Resistance" with This Year's Performance

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A-J MEDIA

TLR unites entertainment, fashion into indefinable show

If art — according to the dictionary — is the “quality, production, expression, or realm, according to aesthetic principles, of what is beautiful, appealing, or of more than ordinary significance” and a performance is a “musical, dramatic, or other entertainment presented before an audience,” then I guess it’s safe to say that Thread, Locks and Rock (TLR) is both.

Toshia Humphries, the director and producer of the show said, “TLR is performance art, but it is also a collaborative effort of local makeup artists, hair stylists, designers, jewelry artisans, musicians, dancers, fire breathers, etc., and as such, it is a platform for varying forms of self-expression. To but it simply, TLR is an experience — one which must be witnessed to truly be understood, and even then people are typically at a loss for words to describe it.”

What is truly unique about the show is every single person is allowed to bring their life experiences, their art and their “je ne sais quoi” because it is a collaborative effort.

Humphries takes inspiration from her life and applies it to every show. “I’ve received criticisms for the continued darkness of this show, as well as the fact that every theme is based, initially, on my life. But isn’t that what art is about? Self-expression? Art imitates life. TLR imitates mine. That isn’t to say my life is dark, but certainly there is darkness in everyone’s life, and to celebrate it is as important as celebrating the light.

“I’ve become comfortable sitting in my darkness and the darkness of others,” she continued. “Honestly, that is likely why the show always seems to be so emotionally impacting for performers and audience members, alike. It reaches them in places even they fear to tread.”

This year’s show is called “TLResistance” and according to Humphries, it’s a “far more politically charged show” than in past years.

The name does in fact say it all. “It is a show geared toward resistance. As such, it addresses oppression in all forms. It is very current and applicable on not only a personal, local, statewide and national level, but a global one. As such, even our charities (yes, we have two this year) are far-reaching.”

Because this year’s show is sponsored by Aveda, organizers paired with two of the charities it works with. Doubling the normal charitable percentage, 20 percent of the proceeds from this year’s show will go toward the Gulf Restoration Network and the Global GreenGrants Fund.

“Both provide clean water for both regionally and globally affected areas,” Humphries said, “but the latter also works toward prevention of and intervenes upon human trafficking.”

If Humphries is the brain of this operation, the performers and artists are definitely the beauty.

Emily Darwin has a BFA in theatre but this is her first experience with performance art and she did not know what to expect when she joined the TLR team.

“Initially, I was concerned because some of the stuff we’re doing is edgy and somewhat controversial for Lubbock. However, after discussing the purpose behind the movements and the intention behind the show, I realized, even if people misinterpret what we’re doing, we will get them talking about things that matter. Some people will be uncomfortable and that’s OK.”

Darwin describes the show as “empowerment through performance.”

Chrystal Cornell, a model in the show, joined TLR on a whim because a coworker was also modeling.

“It has exceeded all my expectations and then some. Fun doesn’t even begin to describe our group rehearsals. We all might have been timid at first, but once we got rolling, we have all become closer as a group and the energy is just amazing.

“The group in itself is so diverse but we all work together so well,” she added. “We have students, professionals, parents and even some the West Texas Roller Dollz. To see Toshia put her ideas into our performance and lead us has been wonderful.”

Cornell said the show has helped her speak out against anything and everything with “ferocity and “pride.”

“I am proud of myself for acquiring more courage to do so,” she said. “It has helped me grow as a person in more ways than one. I have met some inspiring and very nice people during all this so far, and I’m proud to perform next to them.”

Jodi Teskar, a designer for TLResistance, has designed for shows in the past. She made an outfit out of flowers one year, and she designed all the Roller Dollz outfits for last year’s show. But this year, because of the theme, she is doing something different.

“I’m using a lot of signs and props, costuming more than clothes,” she said. “I have about six pieces that I designed along with the theme of the show. If it was just a fashion show, I would just design whatever I wanted.”

As a kid growing up in the ’60s, Teskar has seen a significant amount of oppression and this show is really hitting home for her.

“I grew up on a ranch outside of Happy,” she said. “We would watch the news before dinner. They use to run like a kicker tape and pictures of Vietnam with a body count. The protests were on the news all the time. That is when print came to the forefront of the Vietnam war, that was the biggest rebellion, that whole decade. I was a kid before there were civil rights.”

Kayla Stojek, designer and owner of Zombie Peepshow, is the featured designer of TLResistance. Stojek had designed clothing and shoes for herself and friends for many years, but didn’t plan to make a career out of it.

“ZombiePeepshow was never something I sought out to create. I was Chemistry major at Texas Tech, studying to become a dentist. An elbow injury forced me to take time off from my normal 9-to-5 job. This is when I re-evaluated life and my career direction shifted,” she said. “I’ve had my head stuck in science books for most of my life and excelled academically, but I always longed for a creative outlet. With the encouragement and support of my husband and parents, I decided to switch paths and pursue this passion in full force.”

She recently added her sister, Brooke Brown, to the team.

Stojek’s designs for the show are “nothing short of extreme” and while the primary focus is shoes, she will have a few hats and garments that suggests Maria Brink of “In This Moment” as an inspiration.

TLR is not just a fashion show, it's not just art and it certainly can't be defined as one thing. It's whatever you want it to be.

Humphries hopes people will take what they need from the show, but says it's not her place to say what that might be.

Tickets — \$45 for a VIP booth, \$35 for a VIP table and \$20 for standing room — are available online at <http://tlresistance.bpt.me/>. Ralph's Records will have standing room tickets only.

Guest performers will include Kevin Hoes, Philip Coggins and the Lotharios, Christine Nicole and an intermission performance by Spoonfed Tribe.

TLResistance

■ **What:** A dark, yet whimsical avant-garde performance art production paired with a stunning, hard-hitting soundtrack.

■ **When:** 9 p.m. Saturday.

■ **Where:** Klusoz Ultra Lounge, 1822 Buddy Holly Ave.

■ **Tickets:** 45 for a VIP booth, \$35 for a VIP table and \$20 for standing room, available online at <http://tlresistance.bpt.me/>. Ralph's Records will have standing room tickets only.

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