A RENAISSANCE IN FASHION

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BY DESIGNER INESSA STEWART

e all know the spellbinding designs of Dolce & Gabbana, famous for reinterpreting classical styles and boldly pushing the boundaries of fashion with Italian finesse and sophistication. So, you can imagine our excitement when this iconic Milanese fashion house called our Dallas showroom on Dragon and Oak Lawn from their New York office to ask us to help them get ready for a private fashion show event in conjunction with Nieman Marcus. The location selected for the venue was a trendy Downtown Dallas loft. Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana are famous for deriving inspiration from their Italian heritage, which is something to which I can really relate, since I lived in Rome and traveled throughout Italy as a young woman. Those heady days spent in Rome, Venice and Florence forever shaped my design focus, as they have done for many designers and artists in the past.

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PHOTOS Inessa Stewart Antiques FASHION PHOTOS Dolce & Gabbana

The new fall line unveiled by Dolce and Gabbana is distinctly devoted to the Renaissance style - with luxurious brocades and velvets with gold embroidery - truly capturing a resurgence of romance in fashion. The rich nature of their line is captivating, and our mission was to bring the glamor and beauty of Renaissance antiques and accessories to embellish a completely unadorned loft setting. After a number of phone conferences between our store and D&G's New York office, we were all able to look at our website together, allowing us to coordinate the precise array of antiques needed for the affair.

The lush textures of the Dolce and Gabbana fall line dictated the antique selections we provided. Within just a few days we began gathering opulent bronze jardinières with Greco-Roman styling, crystal centerpieces encased in gilded bronze and handblown vases with glimmering lace overlay for use in fabulous floral arrangements to adorn the center of the dining tables. Brilliant bronze antique chandeliers were selected and installed by our staff to illuminate the glamorous event inspired by the style of the Italian Renaissance. The results were an amazing combination of classic modern fashion sense with inspirational and timeless antiquities.

The true Renaissance began in Italy during the late 13th century and fully transformed the country over the next 300 years. The term Renaissance literally translates as rebirth, and for Italians emerging from the Dark Ages it was a miraculous time of advancement in consciousness of art, science, architecture and medicine. Amazing cultural inventions rapidly became vital and Italy suddenly remembered and embraced its greatness founded in the ancient culture of Rome. By the 14th century it began to spread throughout France, then gradually through the rest of Europe. No other age in history left such an amazing sense of yearning for magnificence, achievement and an unrestrained desire for luxury and beauty.

A revival of this remarkable period occurred throughout the world during the 19th century. Once again the phenomena of the Renaissance were infused with elements of the modern spirit, and mankind began creating new works of art in furniture, painting, sculpture and architecture. This everlasting style has been embraced and enjoyed fully by many even today, such as the masters of fashion, Dolce and Gabbana, who continue to be inspired by the rich and luxurious heritage that is - The Renaissance.

