

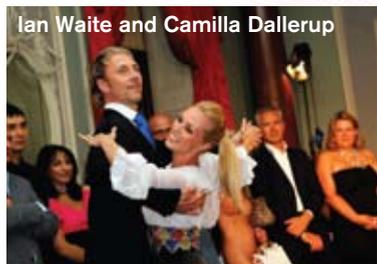
Chrisanne's Strictly Fabulous

by Marianka Swain

The glittering confections of Chrisanne found a perfect partner in London's Home House, with its Robert Adam interior boasting chandeliers, pilasters and wall paintings, forming a spectacular backdrop to the leading dancewear brand's rather unusual fashion show on July 21.

As well as unveiling the stars of its new range, Chrisanne hinted at a slight change of ethos. "We're not just focusing on escapism, but also on creating something real," explained David Wilson, the company's marketing director. "We love creating amazing costumes for ballroom pros, but our clothing is also versatile and accessible. The dresses are so well constructed – they really support and enhance a woman's body, no matter what her shape or size. It's still dress to impress, but it's for everyone."

As well as grounding its fashion in reality, Chrisanne has engaged with a very real cause in Kids Company, its new charity partner. Founder Camilla Batmanghelidjh spoke passionately about the remarkable work that Kids Company does in supporting 14,000 vulnerable children a



Ian Waite and Camilla Dallerup



George Tzoulas and Zahra Mansouri

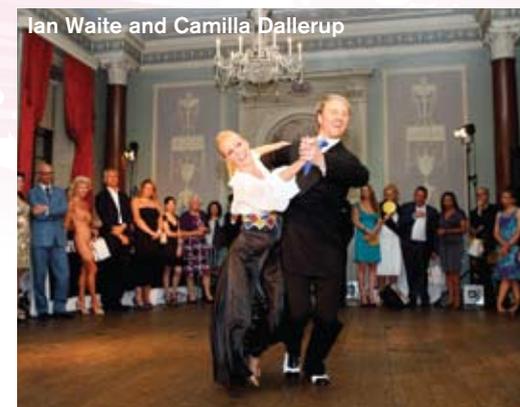
Strictly Fabulous at London's Home House (far right)



Clare Faulkner models Alesha Dixon's dress



Chrisanne's models strut their stuff



Ian Waite and Camilla Dallerup

year, providing them with meals, running activities and arranging medical care. Camilla thanked the assembled guests for attending: "That ticket money is

going to change lives." Some of the children who've benefited from the charity's care showed their gratitude with a spirited *Footloose* performance, a riotous opening to the fashion show.

Reinforcing David's point that Chrisanne's clothes are suitable for anyone were the models, who ranged from a doctor to a gemologist. Malene van Hauen and Joanna Irvine, Chrisanne's MD and top designer respectively, introduced the eye-catching

outfits. Some of the stand-outs were a floral ballroom gown, which could be worn at a garden party; a plunging jade hourglass number; a white, fringed flapper dress; and a nude-and-black lace mini prom dress, which exemplifies the recent trend for underwear as outerwear.

We also glimpsed some of the "Strictly" sensations, now for sale, including Jo Wood's rock chick-meets-princess plunging tulle-over-organza waltz dress; Jade

Johnson's corseted black-and-white Viennese waltz gown; Katya Virshilas' feathered samba dress; Lisa Snowdon's blue number, evoking Cha Cha from *Grease*; and Alesha Dixon's enchanting white-tulle waltz dress. You can buy a slice of this "Strictly" magic, but it's going to cost you, with Alesha's dress estimated at £2,500.

Len Goodman's son, James, drew the raffle with typical Goodman aplomb, and lucky guests took home prizes such

as a Swarovski necklace and Chrisanne clothing. Finally, we were treated to a dance showcase. George Tzoulas and Zahra Mansouri performed a high-octane showdance and a hip hop-style samba. They were followed by "Strictly" favourites Ian Waite and Camilla Dallerup, who epitomised ballroom elegance in their American Smooth and waltz – a beautiful ending to a memorable night. www.chrisanne.com

“The dresses are so well constructed – they really support and enhance a woman's body”

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