

PAPER CITY

Houston's Most Handsome Men Strut the Runway For a Vital Women's Cause

The 20th Anniversary of H-Town's Wildest Fundraiser Does Not Disappoint

BY [Shelby Hodge](#) // 11.06.18

Photography Emile C. Browne, Quy Tran

When uber philanthropist [Margaret Alkek Williams](#) bestows her stamp of approval on your fundraiser, you know you have arrived. So it was that on the 20th anniversary of “*Una Notte in Italia*,” the petite figure in diamonds and emeralds was among the sellout throng that packed the ballroom of the Royal Sonesta Hotel.

With black-tie balls more to her taste, Williams had surely never experienced anything like this. Part New Year's Eve, part Mardi Gras and part Fourth of July, the rollicking evening was flush with bursts of confetti and streamers, tossed roses, and sprays of glitter as fans cheered on the gents walking, strutting and even dancing down the catwalk.

Through its two decades of spotlighting sports stars, business heavyweights and darling young men, *Una Notte* has seen J.J. Watt, Roger Clemens and Mike Chabala among the gents donning *au courant* threads in a most unusual fashion presentation from [Festari for Men](#). This year's blockbuster featured Houston Texans **Kareem Jackson**, Tyrann “**Honey Badger**” **Mathieu**, **Andre Hal**, **Jonathan Joseph**, **Christian Covington**, and **Greg Mancz**.

Headliners on the runway included Harris County Sheriff **Ed Gonzalez** (looking très chic out of uniform), Baker Botts' **Ali Dhanani**, **Antonio Merlo**, Carmelo chef **Daniel Berg** and **Michael Stack**. In a playful mood, *PaperCity* selected its faves to stride through the fashion spotlight.

Best dressed: Man about town [Marc Nguyen](#) in a pink velvet dinner jacket and evening slacks

Biggest shout out: Blue Mountain Midstream CEO **Greg Harper**, who received acres of confetti, streamers and kisses from fans and his glam wife, **Lisa Foronda Harper**

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Best sport: Ameriapex Corp. founder and CEO [Bashar Kalai](#), a beautifully-mannered businessman, whose wife co-chaired the event

Best footwork: That would be a tie between rocking attorney **Travis Torrence** and Briarwood School teacher **Ed Finger** (yes, of those Fingers), both of whom tore up the runway with their moves

Best bootie moves: 2018 Miss Texas **Lester Logan**, who shimmied (in a silver fringed dress) along the runway carrying placards for the live auction

Applause, applause for chairs **Brigitte Kalai** and **Melissa Mithoff**, honorary chair **Debbie Festari**, and auction chairs **Ghada Ali** and **Christine Johnson** for the evening that raised more than \$400,000 for the [Houston Area Women's Center](#). Also in the spotlight was the ever-glamorous **Dominique Sachse**, KPRC news anchor, who shared emcee duties with Festari. And, of course, behind it all, **Rudy Festari** who has been dressing the city's top athletes and leading businessmen for decades.

As Rudy Festari posited, "This was our best one ever, right?" And, indeed, it was.

Festari fans: Houston Area Women's Center's **Chau Nguyen, Rachel** and **Jeff Bagwell, Nick Florescu, Hilary** and **BenBerg, Elizabeth Petersen, Hallie Vanderhider, Dr. Roland Maldonado, Sippi** and **Ajay Khurana, Neil Hamil, Diane Lokey Farb, Jessica Rossman** and **Gordon Bethune, Margaret Alkek Williams, Michael Mandola, Carmen** and **Kiki Dikman, Tony Bradfield, Lindsey Love, Melissa Juneau, and Jessica and Michael Bertuccio.**