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Fashion Good Enough to Eat...

by Kasia Koniar

Some people have the ability to follow their dreams, to do the things that inspire and captivate them, and in their passion they'll go to great lengths in exploring, experimenting and testing that field, even morphing it with other fields.

Fortunately these revolutionaries do exist, to propel us forward into new and exciting directions. This is Michele Hester's case. While studying the decoration of cakes, she attended an international cake-decorating exhibition and discovered that the world of cake icings had been stagnant for hundreds of years; no evolution or innovation was apparent. This was a source of frustration to her imaginative ideas. She felt that something more creative could be done to revamp the brittle, flavorless royal icing and fondant, which seemed to impose far too many limitations. Her inspiration for SugarVeil came precisely at that moment, and with it she decided to trespass the boundaries of culinary art, decoration and fashion.

SugarVeil Confectionery Icing is inimitable in the culinary field because of its flexibility, which allows for intricately detailed design "off" the cake or plated dessert.

The idea to incorporate this easily malleable and fine texture into clothing designs occurred in 2004, when Michelle utilized SugarVeil for the first time in a bridal gown.

The word was out, and ever since many textile artists have used Michele's fine products to create spectacular works for the covers of magazines such as Glamour and People, and to create sets and costumes for major motion pictures including "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events" and "Constantine."

You are probably asking yourself what exactly is this product and who is the woman behind the idea.

Michele Hester's confectionary icing can be summed up as edible, wearable art.

To better demonstrate the concept she schedules presentations at establishments such as the Illinois Institute of Art-Chicago where she conducts presentations for both fashion and culinary students, and where her dexterity and decorating techniques are shown on both cakes and humans. If you wish to see an actual photo of her designs on a live model visit www.sugarveil.com.

The Illinois Institute of Art-Chicago (located at 350 North Orleans Street and 180 North Wabash) is an ideal environment for such an exhibition as it attracts a diverse mix of students from varying fields of the arts.

The Illinois Institute of Art-Chicago (312) 280-3500 or visit the college's Web site at www.ilic.aii.edu.



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