

Green Party!

A new generation of eco-friendly Atlantans are whipping up sustainable (and stylish!) couture, parties, documentaries and art | *By Felicia Feaster | Portrait by Sarah Dorio* |

Admittedly, we love our cars, our mega-houses and our big-box retail. But Atlanta is also a remarkably green city with a gorgeous tree canopy announcing the local love of nature even from the air. Our city also harbors many vocal groups advocating serious sustainability, including **Trees Atlanta**, **Georgia Organics**, **Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper**, the **BeltLine** and powerhouse environ-activists like **Ted Turner** and daughter **Laura Turner Seydel**. The latter regularly hosts green trunk shows of creative designers like **Linda Loudermilk** and local jewelry artisans **Kathleen Plate** and **Mark Edge** at her LEED-certified (the Southeast's first) EcoManor home. Green is also the mantra at chic sustainability-touting shops like **Verde Home**, **Environment** and **Eco Emporium**; with local T-shirt designers like **Indie Peace**; and even green-friendly daycare for our pooches (at Castleberry Hill's **Greendog**). Forget first-gen eco images of hippies in tube socks and Birkenstocks tending their worm farms. A new generation of green guard Atlantans are expressing their environmentalism in remarkably stylish, creative ways. Here are our crib notes to some of Atlanta's new green giants.



Trash Talk

We've all borne witness to the depressing sight of plastic water bottles and fishing nets marring the view on some pristine beach. Nothing gets our hackles up like such immediate and disturbing evidence that human waste has encroached into every nook and cranny of our natural world. Not content to just observe, Atlanta artist, Georgia State professor and avid surfer **Pam Longobardi** acts. She crafts powerful artworks from the soup of plastic waste she finds floating in enormous trash islands or washed up on beaches, bringing them into the white box settings of international galleries.

Reminiscent of the work of Tony Cragg but with a definite environmental edge, Longobardi's ongoing *Drifters Project* combines photography, sculpture and installation using marine debris. Longobardi says the ocean represents "the unconscious of the world." Recently named a "Coastal Hero" by *Coastal Living* magazine, the prolific prof has shown her work in Venice, Barcelona, Finland and China, and she has a new book, *Drifters*, out this fall by Milan publisher Charta. See Longobardi's environmentally conscious artwork at Sandler Hudson Gallery, May 21-July 31, sandlerhudson.com

FASHIONABLE FLOTSAM
Artist Pam Longobardi and her eco-artwork.

Progressive Dress

A Cornell University student has just come up with the first solar-powered dress that can charge your cell phone or MP4 player. But Atlantans can now claim a new addition to their *own* green fashion ranks in sustainable couturier **Caroline Heidenreich**. Heidenreich is the 25-year-old fashion whiz kid behind **Mae Couture**, a stunning line of environmentally friendly and sustainable formal ball gowns fashioned from such utilitarian materials as military parachutes, mosquito nets and U.S. Army olive green tents. Heidenreich, whose brother served two tours in Iraq, was inspired to create her designs while cruising the military surplus shop during her senior year at the Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah. Her billowing and light-as-air parachute gowns, which sell from \$500-\$1,600, are fashioned from mid-20th-century Chinese and American chutes and have been purchased by such fearless fashionistas as Atlanta businesswoman and socialite Su Longman. Heidenreich's inventive creations recently took the prize at Jeffrey Fashion Cares 2009 and were featured in Neiman Marcus's Fashion Night Out. Look for Mae Couture Bridal this summer. maecouture.com



FLY GIRL A Mae Couture design.

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