

# North Loop window display wins

Martin Patrick 3's "Nutcracker" beats out retailers on Rodeo Drive.

By JOHN EWOLDT [jewoldt@startribune.com](mailto:jewoldt@startribune.com)

Martin Patrick 3 in Minneapolis' North Loop won the judges' choice award in a national contest rating holiday window displays, beating out retailers on Beverly Hills' Rodeo Drive and other big names such as RRL Ralph Lauren.

The luxury apparel store — which decks its windows each year — partnered with Minnesota Dance Theatre to bring its "Loyce Houlton's Nutcracker Fantasy" production to life given that there was no production this year because of the pandemic.

Martin Patrick 3, at 212 N. 3rd Av., competed against national retailers and brands with much deeper pockets, bigger budgets and staffing in the Winning Windows of North America contest. It was the first time that the organization added a new category for retailers outside New York City.

"We wanted to show that the award can go to a one-of-a-kind store where you really see the creative process at work," said judge Judy Bell. "Rodeo Drive budgeted more than \$300,000 for their entry. Martin Patrick had to buy kids' mannequins for the display since they don't sell children's clothing."

Cory Johnson, executive director of the dance company, approached Martin Patrick co-founder Greg Walsh in October, asking him if the store would feature the "Nutcracker" costumes.

Martin Patrick's visual merchandiser, Jody Meyer, who worked in visual presentation at Dayton's and then Neiman Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman, recruited three of her former Dayton's co-workers and got to work.

"The windows remind people of more traditional times as they head into the holiday season," Meyer said.



Spacecrafting Luxury apparel store Martin Patrick 3 partnered with the Minnesota Dance Theatre to feature its costumes.



The windows depict “Nutcracker” scenes featuring red-cheeked toy soldiers, the Rat Queen surrendering her crown, snowflake ballerinas dancing under the moon, and the Sugarplum Fairy’s enchanted palace.

Notably absent is the store’s merchandise, seen only in one window. It’s all a nod to nostalgic times when people flocked to downtown Minneapolis and other cities to see big department store displays.

“Supporting the arts is more important this year than in the past,” said Walsh, who said the award is recognition for the Minnesota Dance Theater and Meyer, “who poured her heart and soul into designing the windows.”

The award, he said, is also “good for the city, which gets overlooked on the fashion front.”

Some downtown area retailers still have windows boarded up after they were damaged during rioting following the police killing of George Floyd.

Martin Patrick decided to go the other direction, repairing damaged windows and holding a show featuring art by local Black artists after reopening.

“The owners aren’t pushing for PR. They’re simply good, caring people,” said Bell of the Winning Windows contest.

The award was announced Wednesday during a Zoom presentation. Entries were judged on originality and creativity, spirit of the season and professionalism.

The window displays will be up until the end of the year.

Jane Cacich of St. Paul and her 3-year-old granddaughter saw the windows Tuesday and returned in the evening to see them lit under the night sky.

“We came down earlier today and had to see them at night all lit up,” she said. “They did a beautiful job. If a 3-year-old can be enchanted by them, there’s your proof in the pudding.”

John Ewoldt • 612-673-7633

