

Las Vegas

STYLE MAGAZINE

American Superstars'

Madonna girl

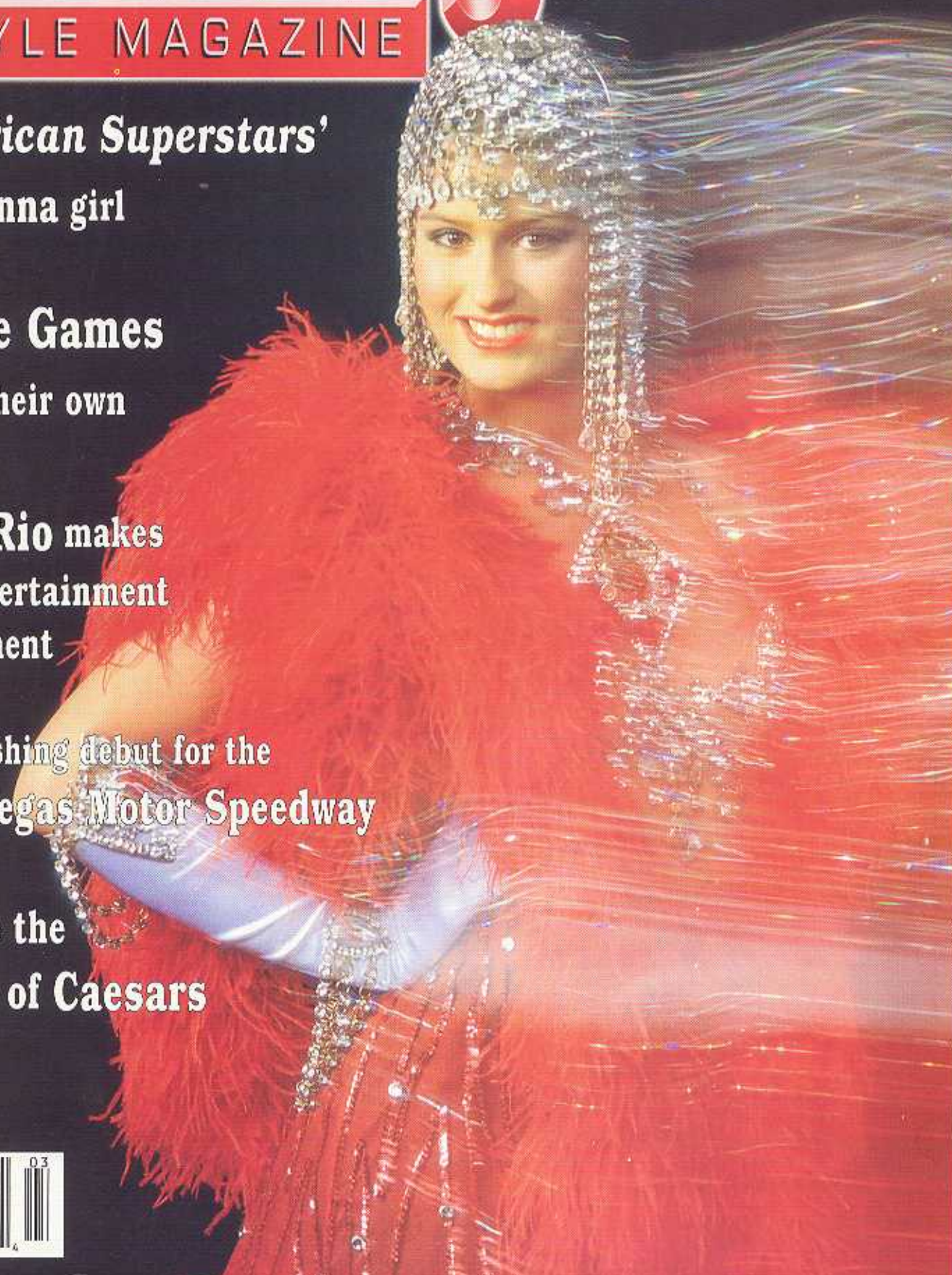
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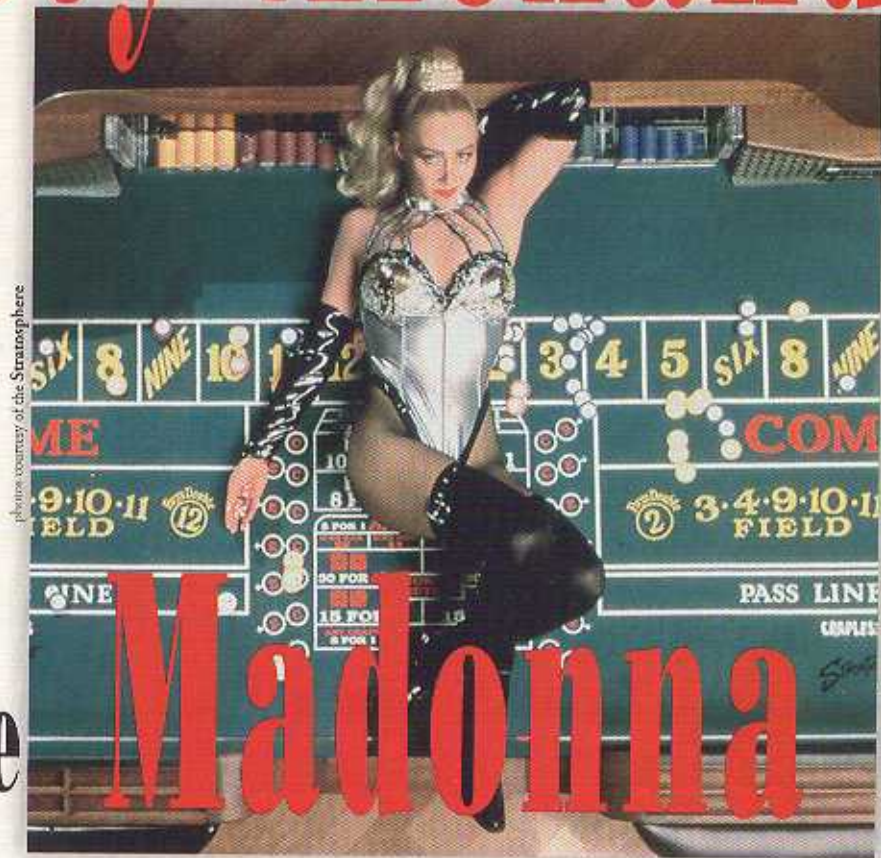
**Inside the
world of Caesars**



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Coty Alexander



and the **Madonna** look

Who is that girl?

The pictures on hundreds of cab-top signs seen around the Las Vegas area show an enticing, sexy likeness of Madonna sprawled provocatively on a craps table.

Why don't you come up and see me sometime? she might be suggesting.

It's a picture that seems to combine traditional favorite visions of Las Vegas as a place where gambling and adult entertainment opportunities say it all.

Stratosphere Tower executives carefully crafted this promotion of singer-dancer Coty Alexander to market the resort's bigger-than-ever *American Superstars* showroom production. They probably have exactly this sort of message in mind: come up and see us sometime.

Live stage performances are nothing new to Alexander, who has been singing and dancing since before she was 10. As a teenager, she had a chance to see the world singing and dancing in USO shows. But the level of the Stratosphere effort to acquaint Las Vegas showgoers with her Madonna look and the show in which she works leaves her a little awestruck.

Did she know how many of the cab-top

signs there are? an acquaintance asked. "Yes," she said, and there was a shy, very un-Madonna girlish giggle. "I think it is something like 263. I started looking for them after someone told me they were out there. I saw one, then I saw another and another. I thought, ooooh no." Another burst of laughter. She is a woman still getting accustomed to seeing her face all over town. "And there are several billboards, too."

But that's show business and these are the sudden changes that talent and the right break can bring to a young performer's life.

Alexander has been performing since about the time she was 5. She was 8 when someone persuaded her to do a Shirley Temple impersonation. It went over well. She's also done a well received Marilyn Monroe on various past occasions, although not since she has been part of the *American Superstars* show at the Stratosphere.

Her experience re-creating the look and sound of other stars gets more than the usual attention when she sits down to interviews these days because of the nature of *Superstars*, an impersonator show which, besides Madonna, offers likeness of the Supremes, Michael Jackson, Charlie Daniels and Gloria Estefan

twice a night, six days a week in the Stratosphere showroom. A smaller version was previously in the Stratosphere lounge and an earlier version was also seen at the Luxor for a number of months. All-in-all, *American Superstars* has been around — the Las Vegas area, Reno and elsewhere — for about four years, but the longterm deal with the Stratosphere represents its highest profile ever.

When former Tower headliner Danny Gans left, Stratosphere executives hit on the notion of upgrading *Superstars* with more singers and dancers and moving it into the main showroom.

This decision became the basis of Alexander's opportunity and abruptly higher level of visibility. She and her lookalike sister Ashley — the two performed together in the U.S. and Canada as a singing duo — had been in the Las Vegas area a couple of years looking for that one big break. They had been singing together for years, even doing some recording, and moved here from their home in Oklahoma after numerous visits to Las Vegas on modeling and singing assignments for private groups and conventions.

"We ran into (agent) Mark Callas. Ashley and I are not twins, but we are close. Mark said

Ashley and I should have an act and he was going to call us 'Two Hot Blondes.' We laughed at that but in the meantime, we both started doing some work for Mark's company — modeling and the like."

Coty Alexander went to Laughlin about a year ago when a show in which Callas was involved needed a dancer. A couple months later, she was back in Las Vegas waiting for the next call, whatever that might be.

"People knew by then," Alexander says, "that I could sing, dance and act. Anyway, I was approached one day and told that they (the creative minds responsible for *Superstars*) thought I could do Madonna. My reaction was something like hmmm, because I had never thought of that before."

She was given some background music tracks to help prepare for the audition. A week after going in to sing and dance her way through several Madonna songs, the word came back to her. She had the job. The songs she does in the show include *Express Yourself*, "which is real high energy." Then there is *Fever*, the old Peggy Lee hit Alexander says "is the most fun for me."

So which Madonna is she? After all, the Material Girl has re-invented her image several times in recent years. Alexander smiles at that question and takes a moment to give it a little thought. "I am the fun, energetic Madonna. There is a little sex, definitely but not the obvi-

ous raunchiness she has sometimes shown... I have the greatest respect for Madonna. She is obviously a good business woman who knows how to make things happen. I do not know Madonna, so it's hard to say, but I think I am probably totally the opposite from her. The personality she projects publicly is not the real me. I am not an exhibitionist like she appears to be, but I do like performing live."

Another moment of thought and another smile. "I don't have any truly bad habits. I'm pretty boring that way. Sort of real down home. I believe in God. I go to church. I like to keep time for myself. When you're in this business, and there is so much going on around you, there has to be something that grounds me. I can't let myself get swept away by all the wild happenings. So I spend a lot of time with myself and do my best to keep my head straight."

Alexander is also very unlike Madonna in that there are no significant relationships, at least nothing she feels inclined to talk about. She smiles, "Mel Gibson hasn't asked me to marry him. Nothing like that."

Her sister Ashley is still in Las Vegas — "It's just the two of us" — and it is Ashley who spends a good deal of time working on the music both women hope will eventually result in a record contract and perhaps other work together. But Coty says she is also very mindful of the time and energy required by her

commitment to *American Superstars*.

"I'm young, but I have been paying my dues in this business for years and I feel fortunate to have a job like this."

Alexander is in very good company with

Marva Scott, center, helps recreate sounds of The Supremes in American Superstars show at the Stratosphere



the rest of the *Superstars* cast which features performances by Marva Scott, formerly a lead in the Stardust's *Enter the Night*, as Diana Ross with the Supremes; singing and dancing talent Damian Brantley as the hyperkinetic Michael Jackson; vocalist Michelle Rohl as Gloria Estefan; 11-year Nevada State Fiddle Champion Johnny Potash as Charlie Daniels. The performances of each is complemented by the expertly executed and choreographed work of the Superstar Dancers.

In the case of Alexander's work, these dancers help her re-create the choreography that comes right off some of the best known Madonna videos. ♦♦



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