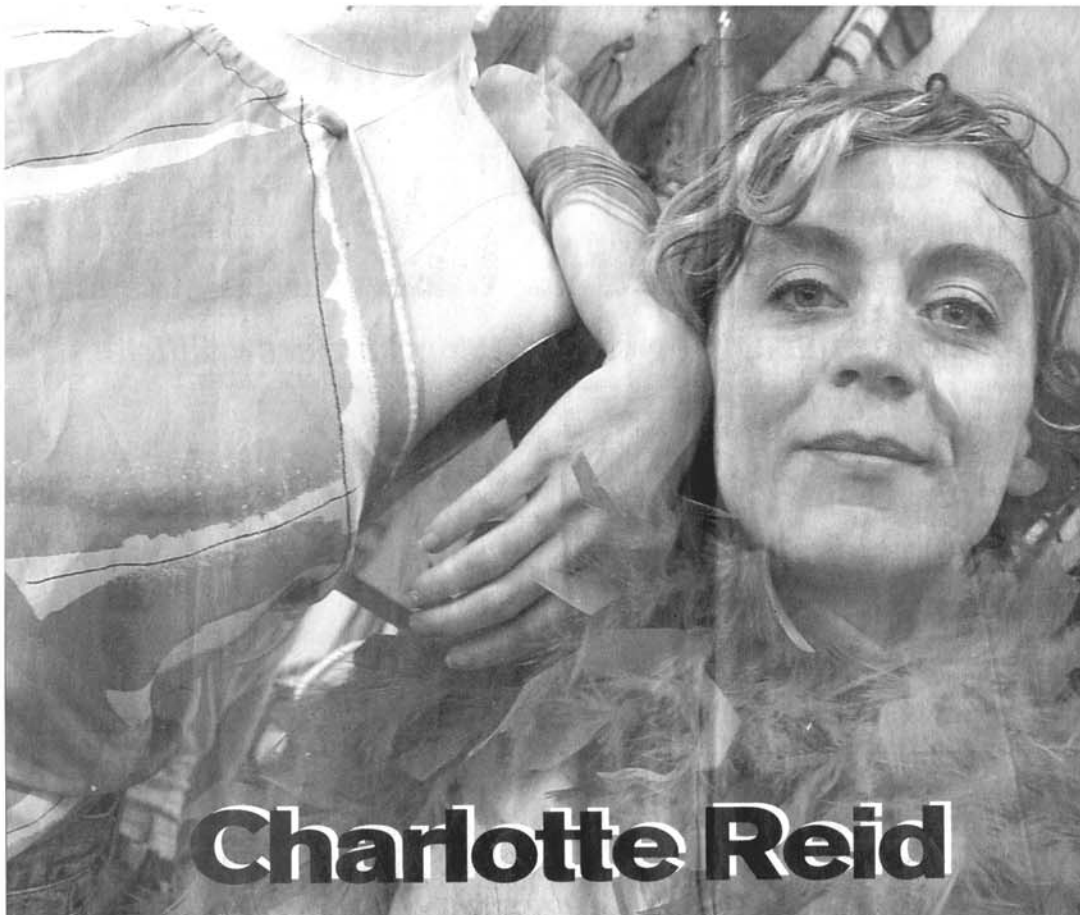


## • THE SUNDAY TELEGRAM'S 20 QUESTIONS •



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Designer Charlotte Reid hopes to take her clothing company to the next step — putting Newfoundland and Labrador on the international clothing map.

BY TARA BRADBURY BENNETT  
The Telegram

**A**s a small child, Charlotte Reid began needle-working.

A few years later, she was attempting to make her own clothes in her grandmother's basement.

Today, at 28, Reid has her own clothing line and a resume that includes wardrobe credits on productions like *Random Passage*, the *Trailer Park Boys*, and the Kate Hudson/Matthew McConaughey comedy *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*.

Reid's career in the clothing industry started seven years ago, while she was living in Halifax and landed a job as an assistant seamstress at Indeco Clothing Company. After working with the shop's designer on a number of period theatre projects, costuming became a passion for Reid and she enrolled in Dalhousie University's costume studies program. Shortly after graduating, she began earning jobs in television and film, and was hired as wardrobe key on the *Showcase* series *Trailer Park Boys*.

"It was a lot of fun," she says of the experience. "I was the only wardrobe person in charge of all the cast and background (cast members).

"For that show, the characters' look was pretty well

established, but I had to help them pick out their clothes, keep the continuity and maintain their wardrobe. It was a lot for one person."

Next, Reid moved to Toronto where she found herself working on bigger shoots with Hollywood stars, including handling the wardrobe of the background cast for *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*. Although she enjoyed the experience, she admits it wasn't always easy.

"Sometimes I get on these types of shows and it's a really big set, and things get kind of flustered," she explains. "I worked on one show one time with Mira Sorvino, and I ended up having to fix her hem in the middle of a crazy, packed bar. She came in and she was like, 'are you wardrobe? My skirt is crazy!' and her skirt hem was riding up her back. Sometimes you're put on the spot like that."

In the spring of last year, Reid decided to move back to the East Coast, and found herself drawn back home to St. John's. With assistance from the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador, the federal government, and the support of her family and friends, Reid found a location on Duckworth Street and moved in.

She spent the summer working on a spring/summer clothing line before opening the doors to the studio, Charlotte Street, to the public earlier this year.

Since then, she's been selling her clothes out of her

studio, but earning most of her money on private contracts. She's working on plays and small films, and is planning a fashion show for November, in collaboration with other local designers. She's also developing new ideas.

"Lately I've been working a lot with recycling clothes, like doing stuff with denim, and I've just come up with the idea of making pants out of old sports jackets," she says. "I'm doing stuff with sweatshirts and pretty much everything I can get my hands on at this point."

For Reid, inspiration comes from everywhere, including nature, period costumes, and Hollywood designers. She describes her style as reminiscent of the 1950s and 1980s.

"I love looking at old magazines. I unconsciously take in a lot of stuff," she says.

As for the future, Reid hopes to expand Charlotte Street clothing so that it is manufactured on a bigger scale, and plans to set up her website ([www.charlottestreet.ca](http://www.charlottestreet.ca)) so she can take orders online. She has already started working on her fall/winter line, which she says will feature shrunken tweed and houndstooth jackets, moccasins and recycled furs.

No matter what the future holds, however, Reid says she is planning to stay in St. John's.

"I want to work towards helping to get Newfoundland on the fashion map," she says.

**What is your full name?**  
Charlotte Ann Reid.

**Where and when were you born?**  
In St. John's, I think at St. Clare's hospital, July 29, 1976.

**Where's home today?**  
Home is and always will be St. John's.

**What are you reading at the moment?**  
I'm reading a book called Invisible Monsters by Chuck Palahniuk. It's fiction about this woman who was a career model who, through some drama, gets part of her face blown off. The story goes into what she does after she gets out of the hospital, and it just gets twisted.

**What is your greatest indulgence?**  
I'm going to have to say at the moment it's the colour pink.

**Who would play you in a movie about your life?**  
I was thinking about this, and I think maybe the only person who could pull it off would be Pee Wee Herman in drag, because he's so fun and wacky, and I'm like that, too.

**What was your favourite year?**  
Every year seems to get better and better, but I'd say that 2003 has been the best so far, because I moved back home and started my studio and everything sort of came together.

**What is your greatest regret?**  
I try not to regret anything because I think life is kind of like a path, and one thing leads to another. There are some decisions that I made that were probably not the right ones, but they lead me into doing other things.

**What do you do to relieve stress?**  
Actually, I find I'm the most productive when I'm stressful, kind of like a constructive procrastinator. Sometimes I need stress to go and get everything done.

**Who do you admire most?**  
There's a designer, Betsey Johnson, who I admire a lot. She's in New York. She's been around since the '60s and she's still going strong. She's in her 60s and she does a cartwheel after every one of her runway shows.

**What is your most embarrassing moment?**  
I don't get embarrassed easily, I think,

because I'm so good at laughing at myself. I'm going to say that this interview is probably my most embarrassing moment!

**What is your most treasured possession?**  
My dog, Buddy. He's the cutest dog in the world. He's part Pekingese, part Pomeranian - a Peka-Pom. He's tiny, like five pounds.

**What is your personal motto?**  
Ask and you shall receive. That's what I've been doing - asking for things, and usually I get them.

**What is your favourite piece of music?**  
I like pretty much all genres of music, although there's a time and a place for some types. I'm constantly blown away by the local talent - every weekend I see bands that completely blow me away. I think Colleen Power and Neil Conway are both really amazing.

**What event in your life has affected you the most?**  
Probably coming back home to St. John's. It's like the sky has opened up

again.  
**What is your hidden talent?**  
I'm going to say singing and dancing. I think my mom probably wanted me to be a musical theatre star.

**Who would you least like to be stuck in an elevator with?**  
Probably (U.S. President) George Bush. I think that would be very uncomfortable.

**If you were premier, what's one thing you'd try to do?**  
If I were premier, I would put a licensing system on spandex. It's a privilege, not a right! And I'd open The Rooms.

**What is your theme song?**  
The theme song from Flashdance. I went out as a Flashdance character for Halloween last year, and I'm still getting comments.

**How would you want history to remember you?**  
I would want history to remember me as a fabulous designer ... who had a prehensile tail. Imagine how handy that would be.

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