

# HALLOWEEN & PARTY EXPO

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### **Cabrera to Show New Collection of Feathered Finery at Expo**

By Amy Francisco

His handiwork has appeared in the 2011 Miss Universe pageant, such box office hits as “The Birdcage,” and on extravagantly dressed Carnival-goers in Rio de Janeiro and around the world.

Designer Juan Pablo Cabrera makes elaborate, usually colorful creations ranging from masks to headpieces to human-sized angel wings – and he does it all with feathers. “Everything's with feathers,” he says. “I don't do anything without feathers.”

Yet there was a time when his interest was not feathers, but music. Trained in Spain to play classical guitar, Cabrera even did some studio recording. He entered the family feather business full time after the death of his grandfather, who started the company in the 1920s, supplying feathers for such uses as men's hats. In the '50s, the company started producing feather boas.

Cabrera took over in the 1980s, after the business had moved to Miami, Fla. Since then, [Boa Novelty Feather Corp.](#) has broadened its offerings from bulk feathers and boas to a menu of festive feathered creations including masks and headpieces. Customers include Halloween stores, lingerie stores, theatrical and event production companies, and cruise lines.

Cabrera says his company imports feathers from around the world, including Australia, China, several countries in South America, and India. His company dyes the feathers, then sells them – loose, by the dozen or pound, and in little bags for crafts – or turns them into ready-to-wear pieces.

The [Juan Pablo Collection](#) represents Cabrera's expansion from masks and headpieces to full costumes, and it's where Cabrera really gets to showcase his design skills. The line of costumes includes everything from subtly-feathered witch,

nurse and pirate hats to dramatically plumed (and even fruited) Copacabana girl headpieces. Accessories run the gamut from fluffy, feathered wristlets to feather-edged, see-through boleros.

Cabrera's feathered finery, often seen in Las Vegas shows, was most recently worn by contestants in the 2011 Miss Universe pageant, held in September in Sao Paulo, Brazil. However, the collection may be best known for its angel wings.

"People say we do the best angel wings in the United States," Cabrera says with a laugh. "I don't know if that's true, but that's what the letters we receive say." The angel wings, which are full-person-sized feathered constructions, range from the original fluffy, white heavenly "angel" to the "wild angel," an edgier version made with spiky pheasant feathers in shades of brown, with an animal print accent.

Cabrera will introduce 10 new wing styles at the 2012 Halloween & Party Expo. "We're working on a special wing to try to accommodate a lower price range." He says his booths at the Expo will feature a total of 40 different styles of wings, headpieces, masks and more. In fact, he plans to double his Expo space to four booths in 2012.

"We love [the Expo]. We love the way everything's set up," says Cabrera. "Everything's correct . . . the people treat you incredible ... trying to help you, and that's important."

An exhibitor at the Expo since the event began, Cabrera says the experience has always been positive. "We do a lot of stuff with Carnival," Cabrera says. "Most of the people we met from there we met at the Expo – people from Brazil, Italy, Spain. Right now we're producing a lot of stuff for clients from Spain we met at the Expo."

The European market is big for Cabrera, who says the feather business is doing well despite the economy. He's seen a boom in the Halloween market overseas. "People are doing Halloween in Russia, Holland and even Israel," he says. "It's incredible ... very exciting."

Cabrera attributes part of his company's continued success stateside to a thriving entertainment scene, especially in Miami. "We work with a lot of carnivals, and we see these groups growing more than before," he says. But, more important to his company's success, Cabrera says, are quality products and customer service. "We've always focused on

customer service – on people – and that's important," he says. "When we promise, we're there."

Buyers will be able to view Cabrera's new products at the 2012 Halloween & Party Expo scheduled for Houston, Tex., from January 28-31. To register to attend the show, go to [www.halloweenpartyexpo.com](http://www.halloweenpartyexpo.com)

**The Halloween & Party Expo is endorsed by the National Costumers Association, the Halloween Industry Association and the International Balloon Association as well as Party Club of America and Paper First Affiliates, who conduct their annual meetings in conjunction with the show. The Expo is also home to the Halloween Costume Style Show, Industry Wide Celebration hosted by Party and Paper Retailer and Rubie's Annual Halloween Bash. For more information about the Halloween & Party Expo, call 877.347.3976 or visit [www.HalloweenPartyExpo.com](http://www.HalloweenPartyExpo.com).**

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