

Movie premier and pageant title among crowning achievements for Kendall's Paez

BY BILL KRESS

Eleven-year-old Georgina Paez doesn't even realize she's the embodiment of the saying that goes, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." That's because, even in the aftermath of serious back surgery, she's too busy being queen of the lemonade stand.

Last fall, when corrective spinal surgery forced Paez to step away from her passion for dance, she instead focused on her second love – acting and modeling.

And it's paying off. As soon as the doctors gave Paez the ok to get up and start her recovery with low-impact activities, she got right into the limelight. During December alone, Paez not only attended the red-carpet premier of local independent film "Stillborn" along with fellow cast members, but she was crowned Ms. South Florida Pre-teen.

"This is like, wow, it's really happening," said Paez outside the Coral Gables Art Cinema, at the premiere showing of "Stillborn."

"I've never been part of a red carpet, and it's so exciting." Paez played the role of a crazy child in an asylum in the film produced and directed by local film maker Michael Leon

Also in December, she was cast in another independent film, "Clean up on Aisle 9," which required late night filming on location in a sordid spot in downtown Miami. "It was a little scary, but my mom was with me and everyone was there, and the crew was very professional. We actually did the scene in a few takes and I just loved it."

Still in production, this film is set for release in April 2018. Previously, Paez landed a key role in yet another independent film by the same producer, Derrick Johnson, called, "Vow: No Way Out," which also is now in production. This film is one of a seven part series of "Vow" films being produced by Excelsior Entertainment. So there are potentially many more opportunities to be cast in the future.

"It's gratifying to see my daughter moving forward with her acting, especially after that painful surgery back in August," says Barbara Munoz, Georgina's mother.

"But what's more important is that even though her dance training is on hold, she is truly happy and following her dreams of becoming a star. That's all she's ever wanted from the earliest age. And even though I'm her biggest fan and I love her so dearly, Georgina is clearly showing everyone she that has what it takes to make it in the acting and modeling world."

Munoz will be the first to admit that has been a lot of work on both their parts, attending weekend shows, training classes, and balancing school work and other extracurricular activities. But seeing the joy on her daughter's face is everything a mother could want.

"This has been a very exciting time for Georgina – and honestly for me, too," she says. "This has truly been a case of suddenly realizing you of reap what you sow."

Add to her list of recent achievements Paez's performance at the Dama Fashion Show. At this annual program here in Miami, she not only won Dama's Modeling School Magazine Cover Girl Award, but nabbed the Ms. Popularity title, as well.

And immediately following that show on Dec. 3, Paez went on to be crowned Ms. South Florida Pre-teen in a pageant hosted by Miss USA National Miss. Her first pageant ever, she was selected from among 100 young ladies.

"This was something new and exciting for me and perhaps the first of many wonderful moments for me to experience," said a beaming Paez. At that same event she was also received the following awards: Miss Role Model, Miss Super Model, Miss Cover Girl, Miss Modeling Portfolio, and Miss Academics.

"I just never expected to be crowned, but this experience was magical," says Paez. "This has all given me chance to start a new chapter in my life."

With more confidence and passionate than ever before, Paez now moves on to compete in Melbourne, Fla., for Miss Florida in late January. If she were to win here, the next major challenge for this young powerhouse of talent would be to go on to the Nationals in June, to compete for Miss USA National Pre-teen – with some challenging physical therapy scheduled in between it all.

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CAPTIONS:

PAEZ_MOVIE-010918-Photo-1

Georgina Paez at the premiere of "Stillborn" at the Coral Gables Art Cinema.

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Georgina Paez fashions her crown on Dama Show runway alongside her mom, Barbara Munoz.