

Daryl helps Aussies make a splash

Peter Mitchell

AUSTRALIA'S elite fashion designers should have an interesting time in Los Angeles next week.

Sitting among the influential group of Hollywood stylists, buyers and US fashion editors at the Australian Designer Showcase — part of the G'day LA festival — will be actors Daryl Hannah and Dita Von Teese.

Hannah, the former love of John F. Kennedy Jr and star of *Steel Magnolias* and *Splash*, and Von Teese, the self-described

"International Queen of Burlesque" whose famous strip-tease act involves submerging herself in an oversized martini or champagne glass, have replied to attend the January 18 fashion show on Sunset Boulevard.

Von Teese could also bring along her new husband, goth rocker Marilyn Manson.

Word has it Hannah and Von Teese are big fans of Australian designers, especially Sydney

fashion house Wheels & Doll Baby.

Other Australian designers at the showcase include Toni Maticovski and White Suede from Victoria, Aurelio Costarella from Western Australia, Gail Sorronda and Dogstar from Queensland and South Australia's It Girl.

The extravaganza will be held at the Hollywood Palladium, a holy site in Tinseltown since it opened in 1940 with a concert by Frank Sinatra.

In another Australian fashion event in Los Angeles, new Australian-owned Melrose Avenue boutique We of the Never Never, which stocks Australia's top designers, has opened its doors.

The store is the third Australian fashion boutique to open in Los

Angeles in recent times, following another Melrose Avenue store, Sheila, and Leona Edminston's store in Santa Monica.

"It's easy to see how the image of Australian fashion has been boosted in the US in recent years by the style and elegance of Australian actors such as Nicole Kid-

man, Naomi Watts and Cate Blanchett," the Australian Trade Commission's Los Angeles-based senior trade commissioner, Kylie Hargreaves, said.

Australia Week aimed to build on the success of established designers and introduce new talent to the US market, she said.



FRIEND of fashion . . . Daryl Hannah is to attend the Australian Designer Showcase in Los Angeles next week.