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BY Rea McNamara February 27, 2008 14:02

West-end vintage shopping has become an endangered activity. Queen West gentrification has taken the shops upscale and Kensington Market is often picked over. Those in the know are venturing out to the east end's untouched playground, and we've scouted out the best that Cabbagetown and Leslieville have to offer.

SHOP: **Eclectisaurus** (249 Gerrard E., 416-934-9009, www.eclectisaurus.com).

HOURS: Wed-Sat, noon-7pm.

WHAT: Known for its interior decor items, there's a back corner stocked with fashion-related antiques and brocante. Owner Leslie Zysman knows her wares, and often previews incoming obscurities like walking canes from Halifax.

WHERE: Cabbagetown.

HOW LONG: Three years.

LOOK FOR: Bug-eyed Sly Stone sunglasses (\$50), damask Chinese dress (\$60), 1960s African thin-hammered brass belt buckle (\$40).

BEST DEAL: 1920s sterling silver earrings inset with matching compasses (\$75). They're Zysman's favourite, and perfect "for someone who is constantly lost."

SHOP: **Foxy Boutique** (251 Gerrard E., 416-925-3252).

HOURS: Tue-Fri, noon-7pm; Sat noon-6pm; Sun by appointment.

WHAT: Imbued with the spirit of a 1960s Yorkville head shop, the store is decorated with Indian fabrics and a psychedelic mural of a starry-eyed pin-up. It's popular for an impressive array of footwear and a not-too-shabby \$5 rack.

WHERE: Cabbagetown.

HOW LONG: Four years.

LOOK FOR: Yves Saint Laurent patent leather heels (\$50), chunky wool Emanuel Ungaro plaid sweater (\$50), late-1800s brown velvet renaissance faire costume tunic (\$60).

BEST DEAL: Everything. Owner Michelle Bickle (pictured) is throwing a half-price sale for all items until mid-March so she can make room for new stock waiting in storage. "If people buy several items, [I'll give them] a better deal."

SHOP: **Gadabout** (1300 Queen E., 416-463-1254, www.gadabout.ca).

HOURS: Mon-Sun, 11:30am-6:30pm.

WHAT: The best-kept secret among costume designers and set decorators within the local film industry. We love the "Manly Man Corner" for old sport cards and Boy Scout paraphernalia.

WHERE: Leslieville. Long-time resident/owner Victoria Dinnick is one of the many locals supporting the "No Big Box in Leslieville" movement.

HOW LONG: Nine years.

LOOK FOR: Charles Jourdan pumps (\$80), 1900s beaded miser purse (\$275), Bakelite cigarette holder (\$275).

BEST DEAL: Dinnick confides that old cashmere is better than new — "it's a thicker cashmere, so it's more bang for your buck" — so a 1950s soft pink ribbed sweater cardigan (\$85) is a find.

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