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SECTION F



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VooDoo Babies hit the market



IAN LINDSAY/VANCOUVER SUN

The VooDoo Palace in Richmond's Aberdeen Mall cast its spell over Cerise Lau with the latest trend for Vancouver teens — dolls like Samurai (from left), Demon Guard and Heart Stealer.

100-square-foot store has sold 500 dolls and has a waiting list

From B1

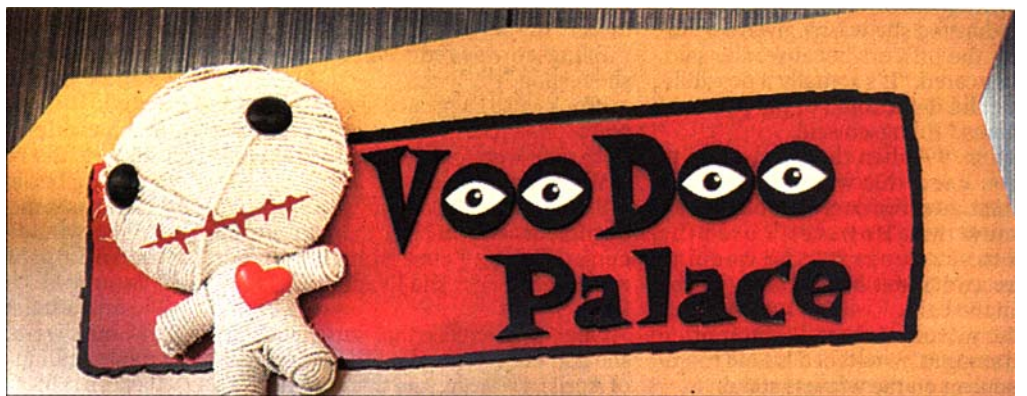
On Tuesday, the VooDoo Palace in Richmond's Aberdeen Centre was packed with teenagers and parents trying to buy the latest collectible toy in the first Canadian store to exclusively stock VooDoo Babies.

"It's definitely been more successful than we could imagine," Ian Chan of VooDoo Palace said Tuesday. "It's completely out of proportion, too, because the store is only 100 square feet and we've sold at least 500 dolls so far. A lot of people are even on a waiting list."

The store has been open for only two weeks, joining more than 200 locations worldwide including animé and comic book shops in Toronto, New York and Hawaii that sell the dolls.

VooDoo Palace stocks 70 types of dolls including CasaNova for blundering fools in love, Boxer to fight off other people's spells and Stuck On You — two beige-and-brown intertwined dolls to make lovers inseparable.

The dolls are so popular that



IAN LINDSAY/VANCOUVER SUN

The dolls' magic is working for Richmond's VooDoo Palace, which has a waiting list.

there's even a disclaimer on the official VooDoo Babies website saying they do not possess any cursing powers.

Chan said children and teenagers, including boys, love the dolls because they're a quirky yet-cryptic fashion statement.

"It's more of an ornament and a fashion accessory," he said. "When you think of voodoo, you think of a curse but this is just something to boost your internal power and strength."

Chan said they're also a big hit with Asian celebrities and

movie stars. "A lot of celebrities like [Chinese actress] Maggie Cheung were wearing VooDoo so we felt like this is something that should and will hit Vancouver very, very soon," he said.

Rebecca Ho, 16, from Vancouver made the trip to Richmond just to visit the store.

"I read about them in a magazine and how they had magic. They just look so cute, so I was really curious about them," she said.

Cerise Lau, 19, was a little more skeptical as she browsed the love spell dolls, the most

popular type in the store.

"I don't believe in their magic. To me they're just a key-chain," the second-year accounting student said. "But I've already been here once already since they opened and they are going to get big."

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