



Photographs by Gemma Finlay and Marcus Stickley

# Wannabes Runway

## Stride, pose, turn and stride



No one ever accused a model of being deep. When contestants at the recent New Zealand Runway Model for a Day competition were asked why they wanted to be a model what was the answer? Money. "Everyone needs money," said competitor Anish Maharaj, 26, a women's shoe salesman. His friend and runway co-pilot Stephen Lang, 26, a restaurant manager agreed: "Yeah, money." As well as the lure of money, Rugen Dubray, 18, was attracted to the competition because she thought that modelling was "pounding". Other contestants were drawn to modelling for more simple reasons. Student Sladjana Gracan, 18, and part-

time fashion designer Danielle Williamson, 22, love clothes. They didn't even mention money. One social climber wants to model so she can "meet famous people and hot guys". She thought there were a few hot guys on the day, but hadn't met any of them yet. It is important to remember that the act of modelling doesn't require much cognition. Runway basics go something like this: Stride, pose, turn and stride. One girl had some insider knowledge and — standing in the catwalk queue — gave her breasts a warm up rub so that her nipples stood erect for the judges. The more experienced showed refinement and finesse. They could turn both ways and didn't bite their lip walking down the runway.

The job is simple. All a model has to do is look good. Judges included Caroline Barley — head of modelling agency Nova, and Jae Mills, a designer from Huffer. The competition was held to select models to take part in the NZ Runway fashion show in October. Out of 43 contestants, only eight are hitting the catwalk next month. NZ Runway has a swathe of high-profile corporate sponsors so the organisers look set to make a lot of what the contestants want.

— by Marcus Stickley



## 'Maybe I can't actually walk'

It's not until you have six judges at the end of a runway watching your every move that you think, "hey, maybe I can't actually walk ... I wonder if I'm swinging my arms too much... Did that judge just wink at me or did he have something in his eye?" It's crazy that something as simple as walking down a catwalk is a task that can be perfected. Master it and you're labelled a professional. Now I'd be lying if I said I was a first time model as I've done it twice. So thinking I was a seasoned campaigner, I didn't go through my usual mind preparation techniques. And it showed. After my walk I talked to event pro-

ducer and judge Charleen Oliver. She said my walk was fine; apparently I have a good style and pace. But then it came out, and in the back of my mind I already knew it. The lip bite. Who knows why or for what purpose I did it, but halfway down the runway I anxiously bit my lower lip. Alas, my modelling career was doomed. What a shame. No more standing around in a 40-person line subconsciously weighing up my chances against the others. No more fake smiles or scrutiny over my goofy uncoordinated walk and nervous lip bite. And no more random outings to get orange-mocha frappuccinos

with friends. But it was a serene dabble in the fanciful pool of glamour we call the modelling industry. To be honest, knowing I had blown my chances of winning the competition didn't worry me that much. My mum says I'm beautiful just the way I am. Besides, I didn't even want to do it, eh? My friends made me do it. What would the judges know anyway? I'd like to see them up there. I had chocolate on my lip. Chocolate! I was just biting it off! Oh what do I care? Modelling's for fags anyway.

— by Adam Stevenson

