

Celebrities strut their stuff for heart health

By DIANA HUBERT
Epoch Times Staff

TORONTO—The 2009 Heart Truth Fashion show, bringing together as it did some of Canada's top celebrities and designers, was a big success all around.

Put on by the Heart and Stroke Foundation as part of Toronto's LG Fashion Week, the fashion show sought to raise awareness about the growing risk of heart disease and stroke among women.

Marilyn Denis, host of CityLine on Citytv, and R&B sensation Kreesha Turner, were just two of over twenty of the country's most celebrated women who walked the runway in original red dress designs by top Canadian fashion designers.

Denis, the last model of the show, disco-danced down the runway sporting a red pant suit designed by Toronto's Farley Chatto. Elaine 'Lainey' Lui, one of Canada's favorite gossip bloggers and eTalk reporters, emerged full of enthusiasm wearing an off the shoulder Evan Biddell dress.

"I love the dress so much; it's something that I feel is really me. I don't think it's a dress 10 out of 10 people that you poll are going to love, but it's

me. Evan Biddell—he is a genius, he's great. I love it!" said Lui.

Cameras flashed as high-energy celebrities strutted down the runway, successfully combining fashion and a great cause.

"You saw how much fun it was coming down the runway and the reason why is because we all bonded during rehearsal. There are gold medal winners, there are legends in Canadian broadcasting, artists...and we all fed off each other. It was such an honor to be part of it and also obviously to have women learn and become more aware of heart disease and stroke," said Lui.

In its second year, the Heart Truth Fashion show is just one of the initiatives the Heart and Stroke foundation uses to raise awareness about the dangers of heart disease and stroke in women. The campaign hopes to encourage women to take preventative actions against heart disease and states that women can reduce their risk by 80 percent with lifestyle changes alone.

Dr. Beth Abramson, cardiologist and spokesperson for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, was delighted by the success of the show, but most importantly she urged women to get informed.

"Behind the glamour and the beau-



Tara Spencer-Nairn from *Corner Gas* in a *Damzels in this Dress* dress. EVAN NING/EPOCHTIMES

tiful gowns, there's a really important message and I'm glad we're all out here tonight to discuss it. Women need to be aware of the risk factors of heart

disease which include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, a family history of heart disease, etc."

According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, heart disease is the leading cause of death in Canadian women.

Ever since the 2003 New York Fashion Week, the red dress became the symbol that recognized heart disease awareness in women.

"I think there's no doubt that the symbol of the red dress symbolizes heart and stroke and we want to teach people about the heart truth—the heart truth about heart disease," said Dr. Abramson.

The Heart Truth campaign began in 2002 south of the border in the U.S. and after just three years, women's awareness about heart disease increased by an estimated 23 percent, bringing hope and optimism to its Canadian model.

The message of the importance of awareness was highly emphasized.

"Women tend to have type 'E' personalities—they're everything to everyone except themselves, and women need to take care of their own health and be aware of the risk factors," said Dr. Abramson.



One of Canada's favourite gossip bloggers and eTalk reporter Elaine 'Lainey' Lui wearing an Evan Biddell dress. EVAN NING/EPOCHTIMES



Cassie Campbell, former Captain of Canada's National Women's Hockey Team, wears a long gown with an elaborate back by Fashion Crimes. EVAN NING/EPOCHTIMES



Model and actress Monika Schnarre in a Mark Belford dress. EVAN NING/EPOCHTIMES



Sitara Hewitt from *Little Mosque on the Prairie* wearing a Lucian Matis dress. EVAN NING/EPOCHTIMES



EMI Recording artist Amy Sky danced down the runway in a Freda red dress. EVAN NING/EPOCHTIMES

L.A. Fashion Week: An interview with runway model Brit Tranckino

By MASHA SAVITZ
Epoch Times Staff



Fashion Week hits L.A. on March 13-20 full of related events, shows, and parties to take place all over the city. Among the designers presenting their new collections are David Alexander, Petra Zillia, Maxine Dillon, and Sonia Vera Swimwear. But not everyone in the industry is celebrating.

I spoke with runway model Brit Tranckino about her experiences in the high fashion modeling world this week in a very candid conversation.

"I love doing runway" says Tranckino, "it's fun." But her enthusiasm for working has waned as pressure to lose weight has increased from the industry's relentless demand for unnaturally thin models.

Tranckino, who has worked in Paris and New York during the sacrosanct Fashion Weeks, hit up against the rigid standard, when after partaking in French pastries prior to the show, she was sent back home for gaining weight.

This constant pressure has left Tranckino a bit insecure, "I don't feel like a runway girl anymore," says the 22 year old beauty who has been working since she was 14, I am just a regular girl."

It is not until the conversation continues that I understand what

Ford Model's Supermodel of the World first runner-up in 2004, Brit Tranckino, encourages a healthy attitude toward weight in runway models.

she means by this. Later it is clear that by 'regular', she means that she is not anorexic. She explains that all the girls struggle as she watches another girl, that Tranckino refers to as 'skinny', being berated for her extra pounds.

So now Tranckino is taking acting classes and happy to participate in fashion shows for worthy causes, having just participated in a cancer awareness Show. Perhaps Tranckino understands what still alludes the industry, that beauty is not defined or expressed by pounds or ounces.

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