

The Raw Insight: A Fashion Collaboration Between Danielle Kelly and Miss Liberia

The Raw Insight: A Fashion Collaboration Between Danielle Kelly and Miss Liberia Pageants also serve as an international stage for new and old designers alike to get exposure. The fashion industry and the pageant world collide.

May 23, 2008 - [PRLog](#) -- Glamour. Lights. Cameras. Beautiful Girls. One Winner. These are all integral parts of what makes the international pageants so exciting. Liberian model Telena Cassell represented Liberia in the Miss Tourism Queen International in ZhengZhou, China. The spectacular pageant ushered in China's International Tourism Expo. At any pageant one has to wonder at the layers of preparation made by the contestants that participate. Pageant gowns and national costumes can range from anywhere in the hundreds to even costing thousands of dollars. Pageants also serve as an international stage for new and old designers alike to get exposure. These partnerships serve as a cross section for the fashion industry and the pageant world collide. Telena worked alongside designer Danielle Kelly to create her national costume, an elegant creation, that took hours of hand beading and embroidering to finish.

Telena Cassell's national costume was a stunning, two-piece outfit, designed by Danielle Kelly and was also co-designed by Telena, herself. Danielle described her inspiration for the design as having stemmed from the historical past of Liberia's roots. The outfit's heavy skirt and train symbolized the burden of freedom, while the mosaic of embroidery highlights the meshing of cultures between the indigenous tribes, and descendents of slaves from the US and the Caribbean. Strategically placed yellow feathers on the skirt area are reminiscent of the feathered gaiety commonly seen in the national costumes from the islands. The top, which is brown and hand embroidered, invokes a vision of grace and creates the illusion of barely being there. Threads of white embroidery and appliqué made her attempt to depict the natural beauty of Liberian women successful. This is not the first time Telena has worked with the fashion industry to create a costume for an international pageant. In 2005, Sterling Capricio designed a stunning champagne and mint green lace evening gown, which was used for her national costume in the Miss Africa International 2005 pageant.

We asked Telena about how she made her preparations for the international pageant:

How did you choose which pieces of wardrobe to take with you to China?

“I packed dresses that reflected my personal style and would show me at my best advantage. For casual and dressy attire I also brought many runway pieces from talented designer Danielle Kelly.

National Costume is considered one of the most important reflections of a contestant's country in an International pageant. How did you choose what to wear?

“I had a general idea but I still needed inspiration. I worked alongside designer Danielle Kelly, and explained to her that I wanted an outfit that would be on par with other countries but still reflect my countries uniqueness. We decided on a skirt with a trail that wrapped around the waist, a technique that is very popular in Liberia and other parts of West Africa. I wanted the top to be reflect nature and at the same time incorporate the popularity of lace which is often used in outfits for important events. Danielle updated both of these aspects of Liberian fashion into a high fashion and alluring costume. The designing process was really interesting and exciting.”

Telena's jeans were sponsored by Smooch Inc. Smooch Inc, is the newest jean company known for their innovative slant hip skinny jeans and their positive . Her competition bikini, talent outfit, national costume,

and several other wardrobe pieces were designed by Danielle Kelly. Designer Danielle Kelly has created pieces for celebrities like Kiesha Cole, the Pussy Cat Dolls, and Ciara. Her work has been featured in publications like GQ, Honey, Dapper, Esquire as well as numerous other magazines.

The Miss Tourism Queen International 2008 took place from the 20th of March to the 10th of April. The final competition was held in ZhengZhou City, Henan Province, China. In April 2008, Miss Tourism Queen International set the record for the most participants in an international beauty contest; with 113 women competed, not just from participating countries and territories, but also contestants from provinces known as tourist destinations like Bali and Fernando de Noronha, and regions of special interest like Borneo, Siberia, and Hawaii. It is being heralded as one of the most entertaining pageant spectacles because of its entertainment based format. Big names entertainers from all over the world performed:

The Emcees were American-Chinese Star David Wu and China's Liu Fang Fei
From France - International pianist – Richard Clayderman
From Bollywood India - Zabina Khan & the Mumbai Dance Company (Miss Tourism Queen International 2004 and her troupe of 22 dancers flown in)
From Taiwan – International singing super stars Jay Chou, Coco Lee, Fei Ye Qing. Coco lee will sing the Olympic Theme Song with Soon Nah
From Henen China - The World Famous Shaolin Boxers from the Shaolin Temple
From Denmark – International Singer Jackson Rock
From Russia – International Singer – Westas.

Miss Tourism Queen International Beauty Pageant www.mtqi.com
www.mtqiliberia.com
www.dk75raw.com
www.smoochinc.com
Liberian United Women In Progress (Co-sponsor of Liberian queens sent to International Pageants)
www.luwip.org
(Co-sponsor Beauties of Africa)

The Miss Tourism Queen International pageant was founded by Mr. Charlie See and is now owned by Exclusive Resources Marketing Pte Ltd or ERM, based in Singapore.

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