



Lewisham News

Lewisham fashion designer Caoimhe's clothes take centre stage

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BY CALUM FRASER

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Caoimhe Lempriere watched with quiet pride as one of the biggest models in the world wore clothes she had designed at London Fashion Week.

The Lewisham girl worked for months at weekly design classes, run by Fashion Awareness Direct (FAD), before presenting a final piece to judges who would decide whether it would be displayed at London Fashion Week.

The 17-year-old was sitting on the computer, frantically refreshing the screen on the day the results were due.

Then the message came through. Caoimhe, of Adelaide Avenue, said: "When it loaded, I was first shocked and then I told my friends and we all started screaming.

"It was amazing. To be so young and have your work in London Fashion week is unbelievable."

Weeks later, on September 17, she was standing in Freemasons Hall in Covent Garden and model Madeleine Stuart was walking down the catwalk wearing clothes the Prendergast School girl had designed.

Madeleine has gained global fame as the first professional model with down syndrome. Caoimhe's garment was chosen by a group of judges at the catwalk for the Award for Technical Innovation.

She said: "It felt somewhat surreal. I was in this beautiful marble hall, surrounded by beautiful people.

"There were industry professionals all around me. The fashion world is known to be tough and intimidating but people were actually really nice."

Caoimhe has an interest in pursuing a career in fashion. But she wants to promote a more positive image.

She said: "At the FAD course, everyone had to pick an influencer who they admired. I chose Adoa Aboah.

I admire what she stands for. She's been a really big advocate for diversity in industry and body positivity.

The media often shows just one body type, that's not how the world is and it should not be teaching young people that it is.

Beauty is subjective." Caoimhe's garment was made out of a mixture of fused plastic and sheer fabric. She said: "It was punk influence. It's supposed to resemble a suit of armour and exude a sense of strength."

FAD is a design school which looks to give young people a chance to break into the fashion industry.

Maria Alvarez, founder and chief executive of FAD, said: "She is one of the youngest designers to ever show at London Fashion Week.

We are giving real opportunities to people so they can progress into the fashion industry."

<https://www.londonnewsonline.co.uk/lewisham-fashion-designer-caoimhes-clothes-take-centre-stage/>