

Perfectly petite Campaign for real fashion models





Scottish model group 'Perfectly Petite' stepped in front of the camera this week to promote a healthier body image within the fashion industry.

The Dreghorn photography studio in Glasgow was a hive of activity as 9 petite models from across Scotland posed and pouted their way through the initiative's latest glamorous fashion shoot. Campaigning for a more realistic body image in modelling, 'Perfectly petite' raises awareness of the challenges petite models face due to the arbitrary height standards the fashion world imposes.

Shot by well-known local fashion photographer Duncan Holmes, the photo-call saw the girls decked out in variety of creations by prominent Scottish designers Psychomoda, Velvet Elvis, C. Watson, Eleanor's riot and Karen Reid. Speaking about the campaign, Karen Reid stressed the importance of promoting real women with real bodies in fashion; "Perfectly petite is a great idea, why shouldn't we have normal girls from the high street modelling clothes for normal women. The campaign can make a real difference in showing people, young girls in particular, that they should be happy with the way that they are."

'Perfectly Petite' was created by successful Scottish model Nicole Abott in October 2010. Experiencing first-hand the challenges faced by shorter girls in the industry, Nicole set up the campaign to dispel the often unrealistic and illusionary 'norms' of the catwalk which favours models that are 5'10 despite the average height of women in the UK being 5'4. "I aim to demonstrate that nobody should have to change their appearance, especially using drastically unhealthy

measures in order to become a successful model.”

The models taking part in the campaign, including Nicole, know too well of the pressures and prejudices the fashion industry can impose. Having experienced problems securing work due to her height Nicole admits that her self-esteem suffered in the past; “I for one have found myself upset due to set backs regarding my height. I was told I would never make it as a fashion model. Many people in the industry think that glamour modelling is the only option for those under 5’ 7 but it doesn’t have to be.” ‘Perfectly petite’ seeks to rectify the bias of ‘heightism’ in the modelling world by showing that petite models can do just as good a job as their Amazonian counterparts.

As the campaign grew in support, the group branched into tackling other concerns within the industry, namely the problems associated with unhealthy body image and issues such as anorexia and bulimia which are perpetuated by what the group believes to be irresponsible and dangerous advertising within the media. Nicole, who studies nursing in conjunction with her modelling career, has worked closely with patients suffering from eating disorders and is calling for an end to the glorification of the ‘size zero’ image splashed across the covers of the weekly glossies. Campaigners believe that the unrealistic, airbrushed images portraying the ‘ideal’ of beauty can have harrowing effects on those who are exposed to this unattainable idea of perfection. “We need to stop promoting these unhealthy ideals, we have reached the stage now where women feel worthless if they don’t fit into the sample size. Everyone is beautiful in their own way; you don’t have to be 6 ft. and a size zero to be beautiful.”

‘Perfectly petite’ recognises the importance of publicising a healthy body image and has gained the support of Scottish MPs Pete Wishart and Jo Swinson for its work. Believing that the solution resides in education, ‘Perfectly petite’ have set their sights on ultimately helping the establishment of a

national support network within schools that teaches children from a young age about the importance of having a positive body image. Realising that there is a real want and need for change within the fashion industry, the group hope to incite a revolution among the younger generation through their tireless campaigning for diversity in the fashion world. For more information on the 'Perfectly petite' campaign visit their website on www.perfectlypetite.wordpress.com