

REAL JOBS



CATWALK CONFIDENTIAL

Behind the Scenes at a Fashion Show

Nancy Honovich

Grab a
front-row
seat at
**Fashion
Week**

**WALK THE
RUNWAY**
with America's
top models



**GO
BACKSTAGE**

to see hair and
makeup artists
in action

CLIMB
into the control
booth with
legendary
producer Lynne
Hanzawa O'Neill

Supermodel
Alek Wek
struts her
stuff on the
runway.



SCHOLASTIC

THE PLANNING BEGINS

Producers organize fashion shows and make sure the shows run smoothly.

Producers such as Lynne Hanzawa O'Neill make fashion shows come together.



6 weeks before showtime

Producing a fashion show can take weeks or months. “One show ends. Right away, the designer starts thinking about the next one,” says Lynne Hanzawa O’Neill.

Lynne is a fashion event producer. She is the first person a designer calls when it’s time to put together a show. The producer **assembles** the rest of the crew. She makes sure all parts of the show run smoothly.

The Planning Begins

The Ports 1961 job began about six weeks before the show took place. Lynne’s first task was to meet with Tia Cibani. Tia is the head designer for Ports 1961.

At the studio, Tia showed Lynne sketches of designs in progress. Lynne also saw finished garments. Lynne discovered that the collection would include beautiful silk and satin dresses. Pink and white would be the main colors. Many **garments** would have flowery trim.

The look and feel of a show needs to suit the style of the clothes. Tia’s clothes are feminine and romantic. So Lynne began planning a show to **reflect** those qualities.

PROFILE

Fashion World Legend

WHO: Lynne Hanzawa O’Neill

WHAT: Event Producer

WHERE: New York, NY



From Volunteer to Pro Lynne Hanzawa O’Neill is a famous fashion event producer. She began her career volunteering at a museum in San Francisco, CA. There, Lynne helped plan concerts and parties. “I realized I had a knack for special events,” she says.

Later, Lynne landed a job at Macy’s department store. She planned cooking events and fashion shows. “I spent so much time in fashion that I became an expert,” she says.

Solo Success Lynne’s hard work and talent earned the respect of fashion industry insiders. When she left Macy’s to work on her own as an event producer, she had no trouble finding fashion jobs.

Today, Lynne does shows for major designers like Tommy Hilfiger. She also consults on TV shows like *Gossip Girl*. Lynne loves her work. She never has a minute to get bored!



Each bundle of garments and accessories is labeled with the name of the model who will wear it.

Nearby, stylists choose just the right shoes, jewelry, and accessories for each garment.

When an outfit is complete, the stylists put everything together in a bundle. They add a photo of the model wearing the garment. Then they hang the whole bundle from a rack. Later, the bundle will help the stylists dress the models quickly and correctly.

Walk This Way

Showtime is fast approaching. The models' hair and makeup is nearly complete. The garments are bundled and hanging on racks. The light and sound equipment is ready to go.

One more thing must happen—before guests begin to arrive in the tent. The models must hit the runway for a test walk.

Most jobs don't require you to practice walking. But modeling is an exception!

Models must walk in a way that makes clothes look good. As producer, Lynne Hanzawa O'Neill is responsible for making sure the Ports 1961 models do the job right.

Lynne has a tarp placed over the runway. It will protect the runway from scratches during the practice walk.

Then Lynne gathers the models and explains how she wants them to walk. They need to walk naturally. They cannot stomp their feet. Their facial expressions must be neutral. **Dramatic** walks and funny faces would draw attention away from the clothes.

In addition, some models will be walking in pairs. They need to practice walking together.

Lynne directs all the models to practice walking up and down the runway. She has them go back and forth until she is satisfied. Then she sends them back to the hair and makeup stations for some finishing touches.

In just minutes, the show will begin.



FAST FACTS

Fashion Stylist

Education/Training: Two- or four-year degree in art or fashion

Skills: Knowledge of fashion; eye for style; networking; collaborating

Hours: Vary widely

Average Salary: Anywhere from \$150 to \$5000 a day, depending on experience.

Duties: Assembling props and accessories; dressing models; helping celebrities dress for special events

Next Step: Starting a business

Biggest Perk: Discounted fashion merchandise!



Lynne hits the runway to direct the models in a practice walk.

It's just minutes before show time. The sound and light crews run one last test of their equipment. From the control booth, Lynne contacts the crew backstage. She breathes a sigh of relief when she learns that models are almost ready to walk.

Getting the Story

Most crews in the tent are wrapping up their work. But for some pros, the day's work has just begun.

Dozens of fashion reporters have just entered the backstage area. They have been sent by news programs, magazines, and blogs. It's the reporters' job to tell fashion fans—and fashion buyers—all about the collection.

Every reporter wants to talk to the head designer. One by one, the reporters take turns interviewing Tia Cibani. They ask

questions such as: "What inspired this collection?" and "What is your favorite garment in the collection?"

Tia patiently answers. She hopes the reporters will write good things about her show.

Shooting the Show

Of course, fashion fans don't just want to read about the collection. They want to see the clothes! That's where fashion photographers come in. As showtime draws near, they gather around the runway. They ready their equipment. It's their jobs to get great shots of every model and every garment. The photos will appear in newspapers and fashion magazines.

GET READY: Take Classes

Want to be a pro photographer? Start by taking a photography class. Your school's art department may offer one.

Fashion photographers use telephoto lenses to zoom in on the garments.



On the List

Soon, hundreds of guests file in and take seats. At a fashion show, even the guests may be working!

Staffers from fashion magazines are there to work. They will showcase new looks.

Buyers and fashion stylists are also there to work. Buyers work for clothing stores. They attend fashion shows to find new looks for their stores to sell.

Fashion stylists put together wardrobes for clients. If a stylist sees something she likes, she

may hire the designer to make clothes just for her client.

Lights, Music, Action

From the control booth, Lynne looks down at the crowded tent. At last, word comes from backstage. The models are dressed and ready to walk!

Lynne signals the lighting producer. Seconds later, all the lights in the tent go dim—all but one bright light that lights up the runway. The sound technician pumps up the volume of Javier's soundtrack. The crowd grows

Guests can include editors and celebrities. Left to right: André Leon Talley, *Vogue* magazine; Venus Williams; Serena Williams; Anna Wintour, *Vogue* magazine.





Tia and her team designed a fan-shaped invitation for the show.

quiet. Finally, Lynne mouths the word “Go!” into her headset.

One after another, the models walk the runway. The crowd looks on while photographers snap photos. In just 15 minutes, 50 looks are shown!

Star of the Show

After the last model walks the runway, Tia Cibani takes the stage. The crowd breaks into a thunderous **applause**. Tia takes a bow. At a successful show, the designer is the real star.

In the control booth, Lynne is smiling. She knows this show was a big success.

Now it's all over. But there's no time to rest. Tomorrow, the Ports 1961 team will take orders from shops around the country. And Lynne will get right back to work, planning the next big show.

FAST FACTS

Fashion Designer

Education/Training: a bachelor's or associate's degree in fashion design; on-the-job training

Skills: sketching; sewing; patternmaking; an eye for detail; strong sales and presentation skills

Typical Hours: 40 hours per week; more for freelancers who must meet clients' schedules

Average Salary: \$60,000; varies for designers who own their own firms

Next Step: launching your own line or company

Don't take this job unless ... you can handle criticism from clients.

Tia Cibani greets the crowd after a successful show.





- Meet a producer who makes fashion shows happen.
- Step inside a studio to see designers at work.
- Find out what goes on backstage at Bryant Park.
- Grab a seat beside the runway as the models begin to walk!

A fashion show is all about glamour, excitement—and hard work! Follow a famous event producer as she helps a designer get ready to show her spring collection. Meet the pros who bring lights and music to the Bryant Park tents. Discover how models get booked for a show. Go backstage and watch stylists in action. Then hang out with reporters and photographers as they capture the latest looks for the press!

Is a job in fashion right for you? Find out when you read this book.



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