

ON SUNDAY

08.05.2011

Sunday Mail



A MODEL FRIENDSHIP

Designer Gail Elliott and supermodel Yasmin Le Bon haven't walked together on the runway for almost two decades but they were reunited at fashion week, writes **Kellie Alderman**

Yasmin Le Bon, above left, cannot be 46. Her bio clearly states that she is, but meeting her it seems impossible that the youthful woman shaking my hand could be any older than 30.

Her skin has barely a wrinkle, her chocolate-brown eyes shine with health and the mother-of-three has a figure that would be the envy of most 20-year-olds.

Le Bon has come to Sydney, staying at the Bondi apartment of good friend Gail Elliott, where *U on Sunday's* photos were taken on the eve of Elliott's fashion week show.

Elliott is a former supermodel who married Sydney businessman Joe Coffey 13 years ago and Le Bon was one of her bridesmaids. She has been designing her Little Joe label for almost nine years but this is only her second year showing at fashion week and the first time she's had a model pal come to see the collection.

"It was just good timing, Simon (Duran Duran singer Simon Le Bon) was on tour, the kids were at school and so I just invited her to come down for my show," says Elliott. "She had never been to our house before or met our dogs or seen our shops so she said yes and it has been so great having her here."

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Le Bon says she's watched Elliott's label from afar. "She often sends me Little Joe packages which I always get so excited about - now my daughter (model and It-girl, Amber Le Bon) gets excited about them too. The clothes are so wearable, they are not so trendy that you don't want to wear them again next year, they are just beautiful fabrics and they have a really cool edge.

"I'm really excited about being here and I'm so proud of Gail. We have known each other our entire adult lives, I'm just worried I'm going to get really emotional at the show but I have promised her I won't blub."

It's hard to imagine Le Bon being anything other than a seasoned professional on the runway but despite her experience, she says Amber never listens to her advice.

"I'm her mother, I'm the last person in the world she is going to listen to. I've always told her modelling chooses you, you can't choose it, it's not something you can work towards... but she is pretty switched on and she is really enjoying herself at the moment."

After Le Bon and Elliott's walk down the runway (she didn't blub, by the way) at the end of the parade of Elliott's polished collection of luxe, they will head to Queensland for a stint at the luxurious Qualia resort.

FASHION

WITH **KELLIE ALDERMAN**



THE LIST



Graphics, florals and bold, vibrant colours mixed with natural hues to create confident new looks impressing the fashion industry at its biggest annual event

QLD AT RAFW

It was a great year for Queenslanders on the RAFW runway. Valley label Sub Fusco shone in the first group show of the week with designer Josh Scacheri reporting a lot of interest from overseas buyers. Gail Sorronda showed a strong collection of her trademark black and white pieces (pictured above), proving why she has become such an international hit. And the Miss Unkon label of former Brisbane designer Courtney Meyer showed an accomplished tribal-themed range to an impressed crowd. Talulah had one of the best set-designs all week with a wall of candles at the head of the runway and a huge Moroccan iron archway for models to walk through. They also put a battery-operated candle on all the front-row seats for a serene setting to show their accomplished resort-themed collection. The swim and resort show was dominated by Queensland labels Foxton Danger, Karen Neilsen and Terri Donna while Tom Gunn did a brilliant job on the want-them-now shoes designed for the acclaimed Gary Bigeni show.

In the Westin suites Tovah made a great debut and swim label Rebecca Manning also impressed international buyers with her expanded resort wear collection. Maroon is a big colour trend for the season so hopefully this will bode well for our Queensland industry, still getting back on its feet after a shaky start to the year.

TIFFANY & CO

It was breakfast with Tiffany when Tiffany & Co launched the company's new Tiffany Locks collection at the Rosemount Botanical bar at fashion week. The jewels left the store for a morning but the team made sure there was still that certain Tiffany feeling - paper coffee cups were Tiffany blue and stamped with the company logo and the entrance carpet was also in the store's trademark hue. The Rosemount bar is where it all happens at fashion week. It's where the fash pack gather between shows to debrief and refuel, and it's where you see the editors of all the top glossies, designers, models and insiders in one spot. The room was themed around the company's new wine collection featuring infusions of healthy things like green apple, cucumber, blood orange, rosewater and elderflower. A vertical garden lined the bar entrance and fashion folk could rest assured the wine was good for them, sort of.

FASHION MOMENTS

No goose bump moments for me this year but the mood was certainly upbeat - many calling it one of the best years in a long time. Clothes we can wear, hair and make-up easy to do at home - maybe it's all the colour on the runway, but it certainly lifts the spirits. The cloud of black that's usually an industry staple seems to be lifting for brighter days ahead.

Best celeb moment Cate Blanchett at the Romance was Born show. They don't come more A-list than that and she is even more flawless in the flesh.

Best goodie bag snag Shakuhachi's silver resin rock cuff, Zimmermann's tribal T-shirt, Talulah's Triumph Shape Sensations lacy retro undies and Bianca Spender's full-size Jo Malone Vanilla & Anise bath oil.

Best RAFW perk The Redken Retreat - have your hair done, grab a coffee and pastry and use the provided laptops to check your email - much more civilised than the blogger-packed media centre.