Cosmic Revolution: Two sisters’ trip down the infamous runway

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Thanks to the recent fashion show, first-time models Annie and Katie know how to walk the walk – even if it’s in flats.

Annie and Katie Retzinger, sisters studying at UNI, found themselves transformed into models for the textiles and apparels annual fashion show, Cosmic Revolution. Their journey from anything but girlie-girls to Grade A fashion models not only speaks of their own dedication, but also to the long hours put in by everyone involved with the performance.

Here’s the behind the scenes shot on what it took to make an unforgettable night under the stars:

The Beginning: noon
Well, not really the beginning since the first rehearsal took place the night before – and lasted at least five hours. Nonetheless, the girls’ Saturday began midday. After a lot of wandering around, trying to find out where they needed to be in Lang Hall, the sisters established themselves in the basement and found out about the first problem of the day: while they were scheduled to have the auditorium at noon, it wasn’t slated to be ready for them until 12:30. However, after a brief wait, Katie and Annie – wearing their casual clothes and two layers of foundation that seemed to be the uniform of the day – hustled into the auditorium with an entire barrage of directors, designers, other models and various other crew.

Rehearsal #1: 12:30 p.m.

Another problem: a sick model. Anybody wear a size 4? Fortunately, a member of the crew stepped in before anyone could begin to panic, and throughout the day, her performance mirrored the pros. Annie and Katie, still in their casual clothes but now donning the necessary shoes, are ready to go backstage for the first rehearsal. Katie, a senior, wears black heels to match her party dress, but Annie, a sophomore, is in brown flats.

“Yeah, since I don’t wear heels they just had me wear flats so I wouldn’t fall,” Annie said.

Rehearsal #1 takes awhile, as girls are still trying to figure out when it’s their turn to be on stage. Annie is one of the first girls to go out since she’s wearing a design by one of the UNI alum, whose designs are part of the show’s introduction.

Prior to rehearsal, Annie has said she will wear a smile on stage, because otherwise she looks angry.
Katie feels the same way about herself, but still plans to go out straight-faced.

“I think I look mad though,” she says.

“You just look confused,” Annie tells her.

Despite this conversation, on round one Annie decides to go without a smile, and indeed, she does look mad. She hurries a bit across the stage, not sure how long to pause. Later, after some guidance, Annie will slow down her moves and show some attitude that this self-confessed tomboy wasn’t aware she had.

A highlight of the show that’s obvious (even with the girls in sweats) is that there are a variety of body shapes and sizes – from a size zero to 14, tall and short, the show is a fantastic display of the various forms a beautiful woman can take. It’s a shame regular runways can’t show this variety.

Rehearsal #2: 2 p.m.

After their first rehearsal, where Katie actually does smile a bit in spite of herself, the girls put on their outfits, ready for their next round on stage. Katie, wearing a gorgeous black party skirt and top by designer Kristen Sass, is having trouble with a loose top that gaps in the back. She hopes the tape she uses will keep her bra hidden during the show. Annie, wearing a dress for the first time in at least a year, is trying to feel comfortable in the rust-colored outfit, intermittently sitting and standing, not knowing if she’ll wrinkle the delicate fabric.
Eating... and Waiting:

It’s 4 p.m. now, and it’s time for the models to get some food after four hours on their feet. Unfortunately, the latest problem arises – the famished models quickly eat everything prepared, so directors and crew members have to hurry to pick up extra food. Annie and Katie, still hungry themselves, have bagels brought to them now that they are out of their outfits and able to eat with no worries. Once eating however, the girls have to wait for their turn with having their makeup and hair done, which won’t happen until at least 6 p.m. While they wait, Annie decides to get a bit more prepared by putting mascara on. However, despite owning the mascara, Annie doesn’t know how to put it on so she turns to her older sister for help.

“Stop blinking so much!” Katie says to a flustered Annie as she tries to help her sister out.

“I can’t help it!” Annie insists, likely wondering what will happen when one of the makeup artists gets hold of her.

Makeup and Hair:

It’s past 6 o’clock now, and the girls are in line with countless others, waiting for their turn to be made over. The sisters are in good hands however, as a friend of Katie’s gives them gorgeous makeup to match their outfits. Katie, however, has issues with her red lipstick.

“I hate wearing red lipstick!” she says in disgust as she tries for the third time to remove it from her teeth. Although more aware of makeup and hair
products than her sister, red lipstick and serious makeup is hardly a part of Katie’s daily ritual.

Now it’s time for Annie, with her ultra-short crop, to have her turn with the stylist. As the man takes at least 15 minutes to take Annie’s short mane and make it stand out all over, Annie’s smile starts to resemble a grimace as she chokes on the overabundance of hairspray around her.

Showtime: 8 p.m.

After 8 hours of preparation for Annie and Katie, and over three months of work for everyone else involved, the girls are ready for their debut. Hardly recognizable from just earlier in the day, the girls consider their experience overwhelmingly positive, and Katie is sad she’ll be graduating and won’t be able to return to the catwalk.

“I’d definitely do it again next year if they need more models,” Annie said.