



MODELS, MAKEUP & MASKS

This November, our business development manager, Rob Meagher braved the icy elements of Mongolia's capital to represent us at the biannual Fashion Week, known as Goyol, Nina Griffie Interviews.

So tell us Rob, what exactly is "Goyol"?

Goyol is the name for the National Mongolian Fashion Week which is a bi-annual event and draws fashion designers from all around Mongolia to show their collections on the catwalk. It's held in Ulaanbaatar (the local expats refer to as UB), and the most recent one I took part in was on November 29th, 2017.

What brought you and the Cambridge Mask Co to chilly Ulaanbaatar then?

It's little known that UB has its fair share of pollution,

especially in the winter with coal burning for fires and such. In September we got a phone call from the British Embassy of UB requesting us to take part in an awareness campaign they wanted to create. Naturally we were pretty excited about this and within about a week we had worked out the details, which was to be a nationally televised catwalk of mask designs that were to be created by local fashion designers. We had over 100 entries that were whittled down to 15 of the best to put on the catwalk, and luckily MongolTV was going to cover it. The Cambridge Mask Co was to co-sponsor the first prize, which is going to be a Hong Kong Fashion Week collection show for the winning designer in 2018.



Ok neat, so what was the event like?

There were two parts that I was involved in, firstly was the rehearsal, which turned out to be somewhat of a preliminary stage for the fashion show. This was a good opportunity for a couple of reasons, first the models had to do a fitting for garments and masks, and secondly it was actually part of the competition and filmed by MongolTV. At this point we did the judging for the contest so that the actual catwalk on the 29th ran a bit smoother.

The main runway event was a couple of days later in a much larger location, and had more of a VIP feel with about 500-1000 in the audience. It was somewhat of a large glitzy affair with pop stars, well dressed guests and awesome choreography on stage. I was unknowingly sat with the local VIP fashion designers, and they kept nudging me and telling when a particularly famous celebrity would come on stage.

How did the judging work?

There were two parts; Marking from judges which we did at the rehearsal counted for 50% and the second 50% was a public vote from Mongol TV's Facebook page, which had over 5000 voters. We were really keen to get the general public engaged with the campaign so it was good to see such a great response.





Tell me about the designs.

The brief for the designers was to try and incorporate pieces of Mongolian heritage into the artworks, which is why we had such an eclectic mix of drawings. From elements of Mongolian buildings and doors, to traditional yurts, and even animals like camels and wolves. In fact the purple and blue wolf design was a massive hit. I think it was super eye-catching and from a creative perspective it had drama, impact and putting a wild animal on anyones face is always going to look pretty powerful. Another favourite design was the grey yurt door, which when not worn is a little hard to understand, but on the models it just looked great. The winning design was really beautiful as well, and harnessed a lot of Mongolian traditions.

Now lastly, and in all seriousness, just how cold was it?

On average, I'd say during the daytime it was about -28 degrees celsius, and at night time it got down to -35 degrees celsius. It was pretty crisp, the sort of cold that freezes your nostrils and eyeballs. I mean if you are wearing enough you can be good outside for a couple of hours - but I wasn't really prepared for it so 30 minutes was about my maximum. I lived in that sort of cold before, and you really respect mother nature in that environment. But never mind the weather, this was a super fun event and I had a great time, Mongolia was really cool, and everyone was super friendly.

By [Nina Griffiee](#)

