

Models prepare for pageant

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Type in Tracey Mansell, also known as Teresia Tau'aga, images in Google and results show numerous pictures of her face and pose that will be a feature at the 2011 Supermodel Competition that will take place in Fiji later this month.

The World Supermodel Pageant is an international competition for models aged between 20 and 30.

It was created to find out who the leading world supermodels are regardless of their marital status.

It will take place this month at Amanuca Island Resort and Spa, Fiji.

But what makes Miss Mansell more interesting is her age. While some ordinary kids are still sheltered, trying to make sense of their teen years, preoccupied playing neighbourhood games, this towering beauty has caught the national spotlight when she will compete in the event at 19 years of age.

Miss Mansell is set to represent Fiji in the teen category of the contest this month and hopes to win in the prestigious contest to place Fiji on the modelling arena.

Don't be appalled at her young age, as supermodels start young. Kate Moss took the modelling path when she was 14 years old, on a chance encounter with an agent at JFK Airport.

Gisele Bundchen was discovered while she was eating in a fast food outlet, and she was only 14 then.

Adriana Lima was only 15 when she joined Ford's Supermodel Brazil, and the following year landed second place in Supermodel of the World. Who knows, this humble girl with maternal roots from Mualevu, Vanuabalavu, Lau might soon join the ranks of these star models.

As it turns out Miss Mansell may have been inspired by the reality TV show America's Next Top Model, and has been a staunch fan since the show's debut.

I was still young then, four to six years old. I was fascinated with the runway and the photos.

I know that I am very privileged to be given the opportunity to participate in such a prestige event and even more so, that I have been chosen to represent Fiji - my country of birth on a world stage.

I believe that this is a great chance to set an example for Fijian youths, to show them that they are capable of achieving great goals, as I was also born and raised in Fiji, like most of them.

I'm so excited to share my country and the many great things we have to offer, with my fellow contestants, especially our culture and many traditions.

I'm positive that I will perform well, will uplift my beloved country's name and will do my country proud.

Miss Mansell is preparing herself for the modeling stint and when you are young (as she describes herself), the possibilities can be endless. We might very well start watching this talented teen.

Local Naziah Ali, 29, will be among the 24 other hopefuls contesting in the World Supermodel Pageant later this month.

Miss Ali has held the title of Miss India Fiji 2009. She represented Fiji at the Miss India Worldwide Pageant in Durban, in February 2009.

She is the first Indo- Fijian from Fiji to represent Fiji at the pageant. Miss Ali is of both Indian and Fijian origin. Her father is a third generation Indian and her mum an i-taukei from the province of Ba.

Having only found out late last month about her participation in the show, Miss Ali said she is now faced with only two weeks to prepare for the huge event.

It is exciting and I only got to find out a week ago and have now just taken time off to hit the fitness centre.

It is humbling to think about the scale of the competition and the public profile it boasts.

I believe it is one of those rare opportunities and I believe this competition is a good opportunity and platform for me to promote Fiji as a tourism destination with the current economic climate.

This event will showcase Fiji's most investor friendly environment and also use this opportunity to promote Fiji to other participating countries.

Miss Ali was not pressured and said she would do her best for her country.

I'm looking forward to model against 24 other contestants.

I was selected mainly because of my international exposure in a pageant and personally would like to comment that I am a huge fan of the competition as it accepts the women from ages 20-30 which is a huge indication of equal opportunities and fair opportunities for women all over the world.

For me this opportunity is an honour because of my multiracial background and will be interesting to also take advantage of the platform for national achievement and international recognition for Fiji's rich culture and heritage.

So I am looking forward to the humbling experience and also mindful about the scale of the competition and the public profile it boasts.

This choreographed show reveals the world's latest fashions and leading designers while showcasing and promoting their country's culture and lifestyle to the rest of the world in an honest and fair competition.

The winner of the World Supermodel Pageant will have the opportunity to promote the healthy lifestyle she lives, the clothes she wears, the beauty products and make-up she chooses as well as her sporting and career interests.

The show will run from September 25, to Saturday, October 1, 2011.

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