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Front Row at New York Fashion Week

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Wyeno, a senior in advertising, attended nearly 45 shows and presentations as part of her internship with fashion retail consultant Tobe Report. Groesch, a junior in Apparel Merchandising, Design & Production, is currently interning at fashion bible WWD. And me? Well, let's just say I know a few people in the right places.

“New York Fashion Week is special because it celebrates the emerging and standing American talent of fashion designers; the week is a nod to the time, energy, funding, dedication and heart that goes into creating a collection,” Wyeno says.

Groesch, who had previously attended several shows during Milan’s and Paris’ Fashion Weeks, echoes Wyeno’s sentiments.

“My first New York Fashion Week was an absolute whirlwind,” Groesch says. “It was extremely well organized, thanks to The Fashion Calendar, but also due to the communication of everyone involved. With so many different venues, designers, and audience members, it’s quite a well-done production.”

The shows themselves were quite a spectacle. In some cases, we sat next to celebrities like Russell Simmons, stylist Rachel Zoe, 90210 star AnnaLynne McCord, Martha Stewart, Kim Kardashian, The City’s Olivia Palermo, Samantha Ronson and Vanessa Williams. But the celebrity-packed seats were nothing compared to the runway shows from designers such as Isaac Mizrahi, ThreeASFOUR and Diane von Furstenberg.

“I loved the theatrics of Isaac Mizrahi—he had a live jazz band and the runway was set up like an obstacle course with a staircase, a large fan, rain and a golf cart,” Wyeno says. “Being able to see the work of the last American courtier,
Ralph Rucci was also phenomenal, because his workmanship was exquisite.”

Wyeno even managed to get some camera time when she attended the Genetic Denim presentation. “I had to sign a release because they were filming Kelly Cutrone’s new reality TV show, so there is a possibility I might be on it,” Wyeno says. “The following day, Kelly said hi to another intern and I at another fashion show—I’m surprised she knew who I was!”

Sometimes, though, it became increasingly challenging to get into the Bryant Park tents. After a few fibs and some quick thinking, the three of us were able to attend high-profile shows like Charlotte Ronson, Lacoste, DKNY, Alice + Olivia, Cynthia Rowley, Carolina Herrera, Bagdley Mischka, Anna Sui, Alexander Wang and Y-3. Even more tricky, however, was getting into the after-parties—not that it stopped us! “I pulled off talking my way into the Alexander Wang after-party,” Groesch says. The fast-talker is known for being able to convince almost anyone she’s important to be at any party or fashion show. “The Alexander Wang after-party was absolutely one of the best parties I’ve ever witnessed. They had they insane idea of hosting it at the Mobil gas station next door to Milk & Mac Studios where Alex’s show was held. They surrounded the gas station in plastic sheeting, so as to keep the on-lookers outside, but jealous of the party inside. Courtney Love and Santogold performed for an ecstatic audience, while anyone with the munchies could raid the gas station quick mart—for free! Alexander Wang even jumped on stage a few times to dance it out with his favorite artists performing.”

Groesch wasn’t always so lucky. Through more fast-talking and newly-formed friendships, her name was put on the list for the uber—exclusive Marc Jacobs after-party at Hiro Ballroom.

“It was the party of the season to be at. Unfortunately, I arrived a half-hour after it started, and couldn’t get in because it was already at capacity!” She even witnessed supermodel Lily Donaldson throw a hissy fit after being rejected at the door (though she was later let in). But after the after-party comes more runway shows. That is, in essence, what New York Fashion Week is all about: running to and from shows, living it up at parties and doing it all over again the next day. Throughout the non-stop cycle, Wyeno finally encountered another Fashion Week staple: fur protestors. “I know it is a controversial issue, but I personally thought it was hilarious to watch the protestors—they were all decked out in fake blood, and some were dressed as lambs,” she says. By the time it ended, the three of us were understandably exhausted. It may sound alluring, but fashion never sleeps, we weren’t allowed to either.

“At the end of the week, I was more selective about which shows I wanted to attend because it was tiring to schlep around the city all day to see everything. I also was drawn to the shows I knew I would like,” Wyeno says. “It will be disappointing, however, when New York Fashion Week moves to Lincoln Center next fall—Bryant Park was a perfect, idealistic fit.”