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## DUBAI FASHION WEEK

April 5 - 9, 2009

### A PASSION FOR FASHION

Emerging talent competition winners gear up for Dubai's couture showcase

By Manjusha Radhakrishnan  
 Staff Reporter

It's a do or die scenario for all those designers who made the cut in the recent Dubai Fashion Week (DFW) Emerging Talent Competition. These winners will now have the chance to showcase their collections during DFW next month and if all goes well, latch on to some buyers or get picked up by snazzy stores. In the run-up to the big day, *tabloid!* caught up with them at their makeshift ateliers. As they geared up for their first sartorial outing, not one was leaving anything to chance as they went about sewing, snipping and stocking up their creations.

Debi Simcox.



Who is she: Debi Simcox

Her inspiration: Jean Paul Gaultier

Her philosophy: Non-conformist funky evening wear for 25-35-year-olds

To her fashion is all about: Freedom of movement and expression. Working on a moulage (sculpting of fabric on a mannequin) and then duplicating it in paper patterns is not easy, says Simcox. But no matter how difficult it is, this aspiring British designer, who has finished three of her 12 outfits, is not willing to give up on it. According to her, the corsets and the fan effects that dominate her evening wear collections sit better after they go through the moulage-paper pattern-rack cycle. Naturally, her work station is the picture of organised chaos and is studded with a rather malleable mannequin and busy bulletin board featuring Madonna in a JPG corset. "Even if it takes more time, I want to get everything right. My collection is avant-garde and attempts to revolutionise the evening wear concept with some fun, funky and daring pieces," says Simcox. Shuttling between Sharjah (the textile printers), Salwa (fabrics) and her home, Simcox has been constantly on the move. "It has been crazy hectic, but I am enjoying every minute of it. Winning the talent competition will surely help me get started on my dream of launching my own label," says Simcox. Prior to launching her own label, Simcox designed beachwear for Bambubeach.

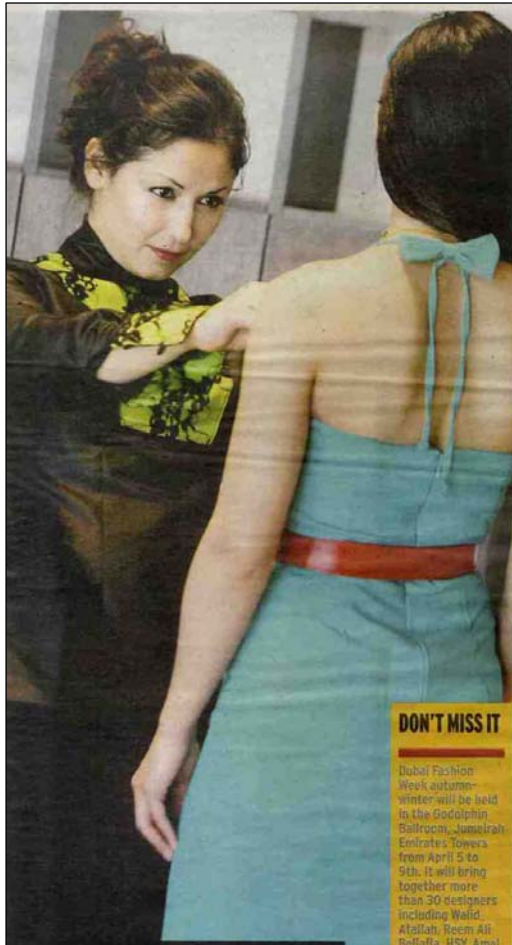


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**Who is she:** Ladan Yadollahvand

**Her philosophy:** If it doesn't feel right, then it's just not right.

**Her inspirations:** Chanel

It's been less than a year since Yadollahvand relocated to Dubai, but fortunately she was introduced to Dubai's quirky designer Buffi Jashanmal who acquainted her with DFW and its Emerging Talent Competition. "The moment I heard about it, I knew it was too good an opportunity to miss. And after I enrolled, I was confident I would win," says Yadollahvand glancing down at the sketches strewn before her. Ensnared in her work place at her plush penthouse, Yadollahvand quickly plucked a curve-hugging green halter neck cocktail dress to drive home her point. "I call it the Date Winner. With this one, any woman will feel special. It's simple, sleek and I feel you can never go wrong with it. Even the fabric has been chosen with great care," says Yadollahvand. Partial to silks and chiffons, Yadollahvand has brutally snipped coarse fabrics from her radar. She has also made generous use of cotton ghutra fabrics and transformed them into cute dresses. "I would never use fabrics or cuts which are constricting or rough. I want the women to feel good in my designs and I have even posted small messages like 'you are beautiful' on the inner side," says Yadollahvand.

### DON'T MISS IT

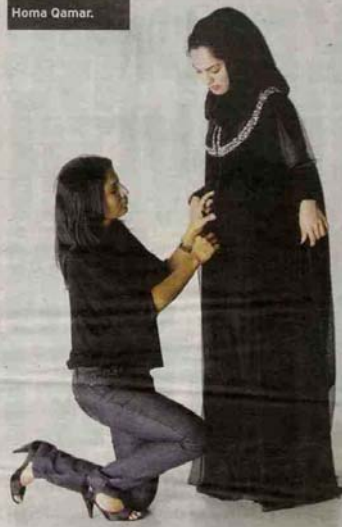
Dubai Fashion Week autumn-winter will be held in the Goldolphin Ballroom, Jumeirah Emirates Towers from April 5 to 9th. It will bring together more than 30 designers including Walid Atallah, Reem Ali Baffaja, HSY, Amal Murad, Salma Khan and Mariam Al Mazro. Collections will range from couture to prêt à porter.

Ladan Yadollahvand.



PHOTOS BY VAZHSOJAN/GULF NEWS

Homa Qamar.



**Who is she:** Homa Qamar

**Her inspirations:** Vintage/Greek drapes

**Her philosophy:** It's all about draping artfully

**To her fashion is all about:** Being sensual without excessive skin show. Pakistani designer Qamar has lined up a dozen of free flowing, Swarovski-encrusted abayas and hopes her collection will be a hit with fashion-forward Emiratis. "I love designing abayas because you get to play with volumes, silhouettes and draping. I have tried to incorporate a bit of the Grecian and Roman drapery into it," says Qamar.

An alumna from Pakistan School of Fashion Design and Central Saint Martins College Arts & Design, Qamar adds the best part about playing with drapes was to make it look slimming. "The problem with all those layers is sometimes it adds to your bulk. But I want my abayas to be slimming and flattering, even with all those drapes," says Qamar. On a high after winning the DFW Emerging Talent Competition for the second time around, Qamar feels being a part of DFW has opened new avenues for her. "The talent competition helps aspiring designers like me to set up a strong base here. After winning it the first time, it feels great to return."



Noelle Adam.

**Who is she:** Noelle Adam

**Her philosophy:** Develop your own style

**Her inspiration:** Eile Saab and Valentino

Adam wears her recession on her sleeve. Clad in a purple maxi bubble dress with a smocked red top, Adam is quick to point out it's made from lining fabric. "They are cheap, they are comfortable and they look great," explains Adam. But the rest of her collection is not as fashionably frugal. A mix of hour-glass and A-line shapes in silk, satia, chiffon with bursts of tulle, lace and raw silk is part of her sartorial stock. "I have never attended Dubai Fashion Week before and it feels good knowing I am more than just a spectator. I am working round the clock to get it right," says Adam. Not a stranger to designing, Adam has previously experimented with fashion designing when she was working as a lawyer in her native Netherlands. "I used to design my own three-piece pencil skirts. That was incredibly rewarding and now I have more creative freedom to design all kinds of dresses. A matching necklace is a part of the get up," says Adam. All set to launch her own website, Adam hopes DFW will put her on the right footing.

