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A Lesson In Winning
Martin Dawber

Our talented young designers from Liverpool Polytechnic have found themselves in the enviable position of being selected as four of the ten finalists in a nationwide competition offering a marvellous chance for the winner to start their career in the fashion world. They are in the running for a first prize of £1000.00 plus a stand for three days at the October 1983 " Alternative Clothes Show" to be held in London.

The promotion was sparked off back in December, when designers were asked to present an original design for a woman's outfit suitable for wear during the day but able to be adapted to be worn on an evening out – the total cost not exceeding £50.00. From these entries, ten finalists were selected and have been asked to make up their designs using the John Lewis Partnership as their supplier in time for Friday's Grand Final in front of the panel of five judges including top designers Betty Jackson, Ally Capellino and Shelagh Brown, head of fashion at St. Martin's School of Art. Considering he number of budding designers who have entered, it is deserved amplification (if any were needed) of the talent emerging from the design schools in the North of England, must surely put an end to the old wives' tale that fashion design ends at Watford Gap.

Two of the finalists, Carolyn Murray and Victoria Street, are in their final year working flat out towards the College's major Degree Show at the Royal Society of Arts in London in June. Rachael Minton and Andrea Byrne, both 2nd year students have just returned from eyeing up the latest collections in Paris and Milan, to begin work on the college's entry into the Swiss Cotton Competition. I was able to beg time from their busy schedule to gain the inside story on their success in the competition so far before they take their outfits to London.

Andrea Byrne

Twenty-year old Andrea Byrne, from Blackburn, is in her second year of the fashion course, and having just returned from Italy and France her appetite has been wetted to eventually working abroad. Her outfit in dramatic red and black had interesting origins. "It started off as an idea that was based on throwing tissue-papers onto the fire and seeing the vivacious red sparks, just like rubies, against the burning paper. " She was able to match this vision with suitable fabrics selecting a black and red viscose and a solid red moselle.

Andrea describes her outfit as slightly "Olive Oil-ish", consisting of a straight skirt and a dolman sleeved top, with a large collar which sports a wide red moselle tie. Andrea prefers style to fashion, but as she explained: " Some people haven't got that much imagination. There are those who can buy clothes and put them together interestingly, but unfortunately there are also the shop window look a-likes"