

Debenhams First With Disabled High Street Model

DEBENHAMS

Released on: February 26, 2010, 9:06 am

Author: [Debenhams](#)

Industry: [Retail](#)

Debenhams is the first high street retailer to break the taboo of using disabled models in campaign photography.

Following an approach by Nikki Fox and Natasha Wood, both disability campaigners and presenters of the hit TV show 'How to Look Good Naked', Shannon Murray will appear in photography in the stores windows and online. Shannon, 32, has been confined to a wheelchair since breaking her neck in her teens

Shannon will join three other models appearing in imagery to promote the recently launched Principles by Ben de Lisi range which prides itself on its inclusivity. Joining Shannon will be Kate Fullman, a size 16 model, Tess Montgomery, a petite 5'4" model and Tokumbo Daniel, a size 10 model. The [Principles clothing](#) range starts at size 8 and goes up to size 20 with a specific [petite clothing](#) offering.

Unlike other high street stores, Debenhams is showing an increasing willingness to inject some variety into the people modelling its clothes. The campaign follows hot on the heels of the retailer using size 16 mannequins in its windows.

Michael Sharp, Debenhams' Deputy Chief Executive said: "We cater for women of all shapes and sizes, young and old, non-disabled and disabled so we wanted our windows to reflect this choice.

"When Nikki and Natasha approached us with the idea, we didn't have to think twice. We are proud to be the first high street retailer to deliver this. We only wished we had done it sooner," concluded Sharp.

Nikki Fox praised the store for using Shannon in its campaign: "I am so happy and proud that Debenhams has used our disabled model for such a massive campaign." she said. "It's a really big deal. If seeing Shannon helps another disabled person, then we've done well."

Ben de Lisi added: "Every woman deserves to look good and feel special which is why there are styles to suit, fit and flatter every body shape in the new Principles range. I think that Shannon looks amazing."

Shannon Murray complemented the retailer for supporting disabled models: "I think this is a fabulous step forward by Debenhams and I'm proud to be part of such a big move towards positive representation of disability in high street fashion."

Gok Wan added: "We in the UK have the best high street in the world. It's a multi million pound industry that needs to recognise all shapes, sizes and disabilities. Filming 'How to Look Good Naked' has been a life changing experience for me, because I have learnt so much about a community I knew existed but have never been involved with.

"Debenhams is pushing the boundaries by producing the first ever disabled fashion campaign in conjunction with 'How to Look Good Naked', and I hope that one day disabilities will be recognised by every chain in the high street." Wan concluded.

The imagery won't be a one off. Debenhams says that it is committed to using disabled models in other photography. Already a second photo shoot is being organised and the retailer has also approached Premier Models to see if they could be the booking agent for disabled models for future campaigns.

Initially the images will be used in Debenhams' Glasgow, Guildford, Oxford Street and Nottingham branches with the intention of rolling out across all stores.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:
The Debenhams Press Office can be contacted on 0207 529 0236

About

Debenhams is a leading department stores group, and has a strong presence in key product categories including women's wear, such as [dresses](#), [trench coats](#) and [maxi dresses](#), men's wear, home wares, make-up including the benefit makeup range, health and beauty, accessories, perfume, lingerie and children's wear.

Debenhams:

PR Contact:

Ruth Attridge
Debenhams PR Manager - Menswear, Lingerie & Beauty
33 Wigmore Street
London
W1U 1QX
0207 529 0172 Ext 66172
www.debenhams.com

~~~~~

Press release distributed via EPR Network (<http://express-press-release.net/submit-press-release.php>)