

## Getting Rid of the Ghetto Trash Rap

Written by Robert ID2115

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The fashion models whose runway show was cancelled because they were Black and Hispanic are getting a second chance to strut their stuff on the catwalk on Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>.

The fashion show, which was originally scheduled for October 22, was abruptly cancelled four hours before show time by the owner of Chelsea eatery Sapa, Brian Matzkow, when the Black and Hispanic models featured in the show walked into his restaurant. Matzkow quickly phoned event coordinator Daniel Santiago to cancel the event stating that the models were “ghetto trash” and that they would generate “the wrong crowd”.

This story of racial discrimination made the headlines when it was reported on the UPN 9 evening news, was on the front page of the New York Post, and was a featured topic of discussion on the Tyra Banks show. The story gained merit when the nation’s most influential civil rights defense law firm, Sanford, Wittels and Heisler took the case. They are most noted for their class action lawsuit against family-restaurant giant Cracker Barrel, a lawsuit which brought about changes to the company’s treatment of African American customers and employees.

The show, which is appropriately titled “Getting Rid of Ghetto Trash,” will be a charitable fashion show with proceeds going towards BLISTS Information Studies Support, a Black and Latino charity group, for the development of Street CRED (Civil Rights Empowerment & Defense), a program that will educate inner-city youth about their Civil Rights and how to protect themselves against racial discrimination. “My goal is to raise awareness for an issue that affects so many today, to get people to realize that racial discrimination is not just a problem that our parents and grandparents faced but something we could all one day face,” says Santiago.

The Matzkow incident has also sparked a fashionable response. “The use of the term “Ghetto Trash” really stuck with me. I felt that it was not only an accusation of the models worth, but a slap in the face to all Blacks and Hispanics.” The need to raise awareness of modern day discrimination fueled the development of the Ghetto Trash t-shirt line. The first t-shirt in the line, designed by Annie S. Limited, was featured on the Tyra Banks Show and can be seen on FashionIndie.com. The newest t-shirt in the series will be featured and sold at the upcoming fashion show with proceeds from the sale going to BLISTS and Street CRED. “It’s our way of transforming a negative into a positive.” says Santiago.

The upcoming Fashionably Independent show will take place on November 19, 2005 at

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Riverview Restaurant and Lounge, 2-01 50th Ave, Long Island City, NY.

The event is being co-produced by Daniel Santiago and Busingye Matsiko of Fashionably Independent and BLISTS in association with Liz Ngonzi of Amazing Taste, LLC. The show will feature designs by independent labels Annie S. Limited, Miata Jones Designs and Harriet's Alter Ego.

For more information on the show visit [www.FashionIndie.com](http://www.FashionIndie.com) .