



*Agenda Magazine*  
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**Danielle Kelly - A Custom Fashion Designer Prepares an Outfit for Agenda Bride on the Spot!**



Whip me up an outfit, Danielle. I think I need to shoot a cover! Don't laugh, but that is exactly what happened recently at photographer Ash Gupta's loft in Los Angeles. I had scheduled a meeting with him and coincidentally met Danielle Kelly, a custom fashion designer who'd just had her designs shot by Ash.

*"When I designed the outfit for Agenda Bride's cover, it was kind of spur of the moment. She said she needed it the next day. Luckily, that's the type of designer I am, as well as the jobs I am looking for. And I want to make specifically what they are looking for on the spot and in a small amount of time. It took me about 1/2 hour out of a t-shirt and some tulle."*

—Danielle Kelly—

**How long have you been designing?**

Five years for a living, but I have been making clothes since I cut up dresses for my Barbie dolls. But I have always done some kind of reconstruction to my own clothes—cutting them off into jean shorts, cutting tops ... and the next thing I knew I was doing skirts. My favorite things to [create] were dresses.

**What made you decide that you wanted to get into this?**

Fate. I was making clothes for myself, and Von Dutch (before they were big) discovered me. I was cutting their t-shirts and I learned a lot about patterns. Then I got a job cutting patterns for another clothing company. I realized that I could really do this. So I transitioned from being a stylist to a designer. I enjoy it, but there are other things out there that I want to do as well.

**You said you were also a singer and wanted to be a recording artist, and what else?**

I enjoy helping people, so I would like to possibly record some music because I like to write poetry. I feel that the biggest way to inspire people is through music—you can lift them up and encourage them. Music has really gotten me through some really tough times. I enjoy designing for that very same reason. I'm able to make a woman feel good about herself, cover up those things she is insecure about, and enhance the things that she thinks are her best features. But it's also a little on the surface. I want



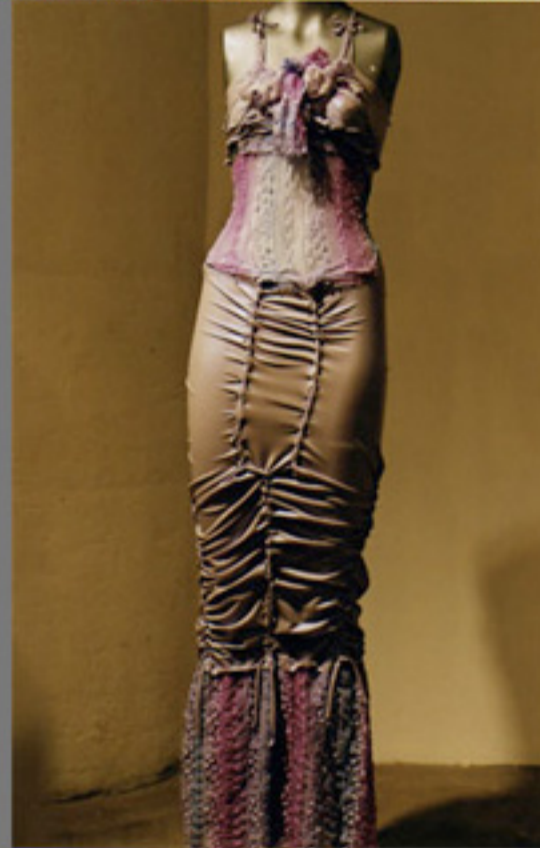
to work more with people's hearts and really change their lives. I am a teacher, and I want to share the knowledge that I've gained through my life—just see if I can help them.

**We had an impromptu photo shoot with photographer Ash Gupta, and this is really why I am interviewing you. I was very impressed by how you just whipped out a swimsuit for my bridal issue within 1/2 hour. How do you get inspired to make the designs that you create?**



I get inspired to design these creations mainly through the shape of the person,

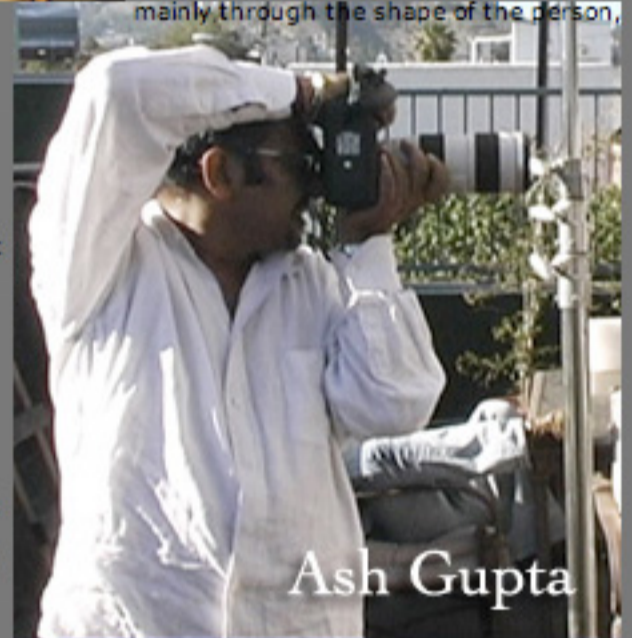
the fabric I am working with—those are my limitations. Then possibly the background, the energy, everyone who's involved, whatever they can tell me, "It's not going to be that, so it's going to be this." I can work with any fabric, but some fabrics take me longer to work with. The t-shirt fabric is very easy



because it gives, and I can poke holes and weave it together in a small amount of time.

**I saw some of your earlier fashions. I guess we determined that you were an atelier, and that you like to design specifically for the person. So tell me a little bit about that.**

Well, I started designing for myself because I wanted to represent the individual that I am. And I'm feeling different on different days. So with my first impression that allows me to really express to someone [my style] before they even get to have a word with me—how I'm feeling. So, that's what I like to do for people, as well as design for special events and occasions, and their special needs. For instance, if they have something that they are insecure about, I can find ways to camouflage it. I would speak with the client and ask what's the favorite part of her body. After I do that, I can really bring that part out. I'm not designing especially for someone else ... more so than for myself. I think about what I'd actually like to wear.



Ash Gupta

My tastes always change. I just find ways to make it work.

**We shot for Agenda Bride. Can you briefly tell me how you created that swimsuit? You just went to work. I was so blown away. How did you do it so quickly?**



My limitations were how much fabric I had. First, they gave me tulle, and I thought, well, that's not going to make a dress. This is [not opaque enough]. I wanted to cater to all types of crowds and not offend anyone ... and she is supposed to be representing a bride. So I asked him if he had a t-shirt handy. Then, I just mainly wanted to cover the areas of the body that might offend someone and leave everything else out. By the skin of my teeth, I was able to whip up those pants—There just wasn't any more fabric left. The first thing I did was cut strings. Because I would definitely need those strings to sew it up later on. Then I started with the bigger patterns first. Because I know I needed a certain amount to cover up the stomach, and I needed a triangle to cover another part of the body, and then I just pieced it all together.

**Where can people find you?**

I prefer to make custom designs. You can google my name Danielle Kelly. I have a website [www.dk75raw.com](http://www.dk75raw.com) and I do a lot of publicity on Myspace because a lot of musicians, dancers, and people that I sponsor send me pictures thanking me at their events. I am exclusively carried at Mint Collection, which is at Martel and Melrose in Los Angeles.

Interviewed by Kavlene Peoples