

An artist's body of work

Body painting competition raises money for burn fund

By Michael McQuillan

NEWSLEADER

Jennifer Caldwell went through an unusual artistic transformation. Once a nude model, the New Westminster woman became an artist.

And both pursuits are self expressions, she said.

"As an artist you're always trying to find your creativity," said Caldwell. "It's sort of like artistic psychology."

Being a model is a different experience but also gives her a chance to be individualistic.

"After it's done, you're in a whole new mood. It changes how you feel about yourself."

The boundaries between artist and model are blurred for Caldwell. That's because, as a model, she became the living artwork for body painting artists.

"Just being under the paint is how I learned some of the techniques of body painting," she said.

Caldwell first became a model when she answered a model agency ad. There she found out her first assignment would be an unusual one.

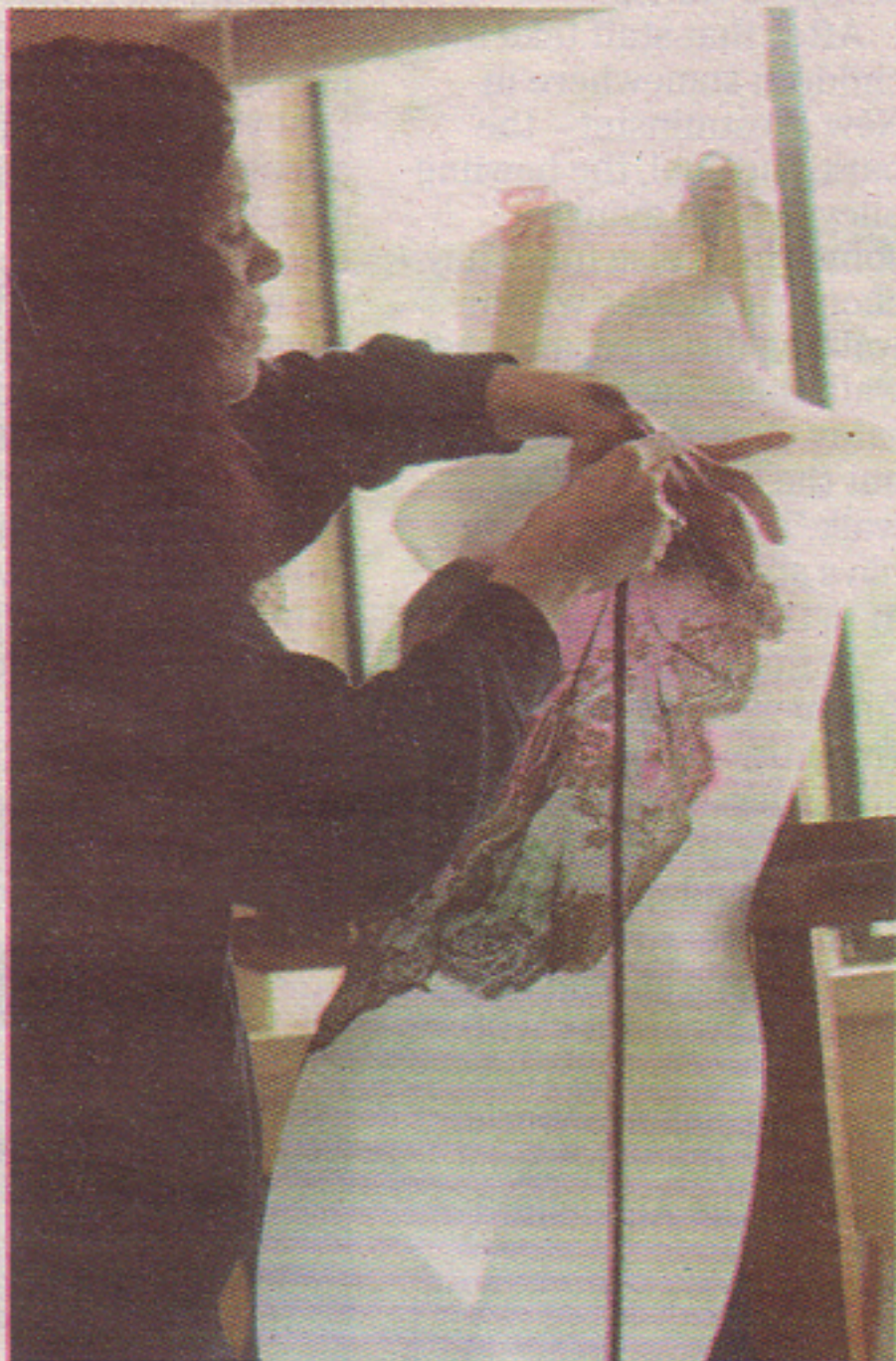
"You have to be OK with your body because someone is touching your body," said Caldwell.

Many of the assignments were promotional in nature but she began learning the techniques of body painting using an airbrush.

"The difference between other media and body painting is you're not working with a two-dimensional canvas," she said.

"You're learning to speak your mind on a living canvas."

Once she got an air brush, she began to experiment. Unfortunately she wasn't able



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Body painting artist Jennifer Caldwell practises her craft on a mannequin at her home in New Westminster.

to find many models. So she began honing her craft on two-dimensional canvases.

Then another body painter gave her the idea of using a plastic model to paint on.

After practising on her plastic models she finally got a chance to work with a real one. Last weekend she took part in the 14th annual Carnevale Body Art Competition at the Italian Cultural Centre in Vancouver. The fundraising event, sponsored by Burnaby's Dominelli International College of Esthetics, invited artists from all over the world to take part. Money raised from the event went to the B.C. Professional Firefighters' Burn Fund.