

## **“P.O.V.” Takes Inside Look at Global Youth Modeling on NET Television**

The distance from Novosibirsk Oblast in Russian Siberia to Tokyo, Japan is about 3,000 air miles. For Ashley Arbaugh, a former model and now a scout who specializes in the young Russian models much prized by Japan’s fashion industry, it’s a regular commute. However, as shown in the “P.O.V.” documentary “Girl Model,” airing Sunday, March 24, at 9 p.m. CT on NET1 and NET-HD, for the girls recruited by Ashley it is a much longer journey.

Typically from poor villages and often as young as 12 or 13 (though passed off as 15 by their agencies), girls like Nadya Vall experience a dizzying leap from country to city, from loving families to cold business and from naive hopes to adult realities. Through Nadya and Ashley’s intertwined stories, “Girl Model” takes a rare, inside look at the insatiable global market for fashion-driven images of youth, and the legal yet poorly regulated industry that makes untold wealth from meeting that demand.

In “Girl Model,” Ashley is a link in the supply chain that provides Siberian models to the Japanese fashion market -- where a pre-adolescent, doe-eyed “Russian look” is all the rage. On behalf of Noah, Russia’s largest scouting agency, she attends makeshift rural beauty pageants, where girls, usually accompanied by anxious parents hoping for better futures for their families, compete in droves for modeling contracts.

Each of Ashley’s recruits gets a ticket to Tokyo, where she will work for one of Japan’s biggest modeling agencies, and a contract that guarantees her a minimum amount of photo shoots and money and a shot at a big-time modeling career. It’s a girl’s dream come true -- or is it?

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