



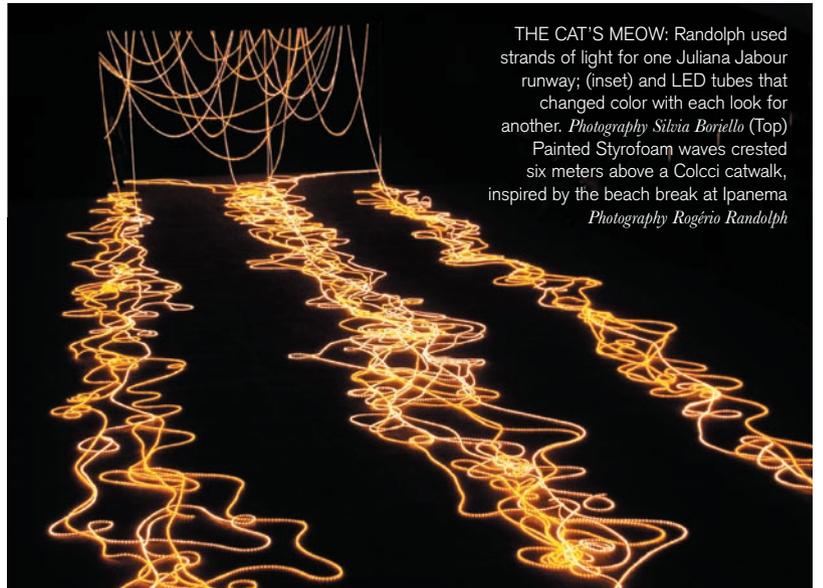
Walk This Way

What do Dan Flavin and Vegas have to do with Brazilian models strutting their stuff? Designer Muti Randolph sheds light and color on the subject

Writer SHONQUIS MORENO

"Catwalk design is blitzkrieg architecture," says Brazilian Muti Randolph. "Runways take four hours to build, 12 minutes to use and one hour to destroy." Trained in graphic and industrial design, Randolph is best known for his work on the elastically fantastical flagship for jelly shoe retailer Galeria Melissa, and for constructing event installations for São Paulo Fashion Week and Diesel that appeared to radically alter interior architecture using little more than projected light. Indeed, light is the dominant tool in Randolph's kit. One Colcci set consisted of colored neon cylinders reflected in the facets of a catwalk sheathed entirely in mirror. For Juliana Jabour, he lined sets with coiling strands of LEDs, so that at moments models were illuminated by nothing else. Another show made use of LED cylinders that changed color with each look, an effect he dubs "Dan Flavin goes to Vegas."

Surprisingly, based on the diversity of his sets, Randolph laments that "catwalk design is everything but freedom." His work is limited by the character of the collections and by the multiple sight lines of the spectators – those seated in the rear as much as secondary viewers who will see it in magazines and on television. A hastily assembled structure of the cheapest but most handsome materials, the runway must frame the collection while receding from view – and every angle counts. "The catwalks I design are democratic," Randolph says. "The front row is not necessarily the most interesting place to sit." **SQ**



THE CAT'S MEOW: Randolph used strands of light for one Juliana Jabour runway; (inset) and LED tubes that changed color with each look for another. *Photography Silvia Boriello (Top)*
Painted Styrofoam waves created six meters above a Colcci catwalk, inspired by the beach break at Ipanema
Photography Rogério Randolph