

FASHION SHOOT

TAKING OFF

Fashion photographer Nikka Lorak is making a name for herself right now, and one of her most recent shoots saw her head for a quiet little airstrip in Cambridgeshire where vintage planes became the backdrop

The most successful fashion pictures often have an element of storytelling, and for Nikka Lorak the opportunity to undertake a shoot at Little Gransden Airfield near St Neots in Cambridgeshire was too good to miss. We asked Nikka to tell us more about her career and how this particular shoot came about.

Hi Nikka, tell us a bit about yourself please.

I've got quite an unusual background for a photographer. After graduating from Cambridge with a degree in business administration I worked as a creative director for Club Med, a role that incorporated both production and creative directing. From there I made a move to the film industry by enrolling on an MA film and TV directing program at Westminster University. I directed and produced a few short films, one of which, *The Outsider* (2012), won awards and was screened in Cannes 2012, and I also produced a few music videos for various artists.

How did you move into photography?

After a while I found myself a bit disappointed in independent filmmaking. I strongly believe that quality in a media product only becomes possible when there's a decent budget and a professional team behind it. Unfortunately, the modern market is full of projects that are not even aiming for high quality, which is why I decided to launch my own production company. While I was producing projects for other filmmakers and photographers I had the

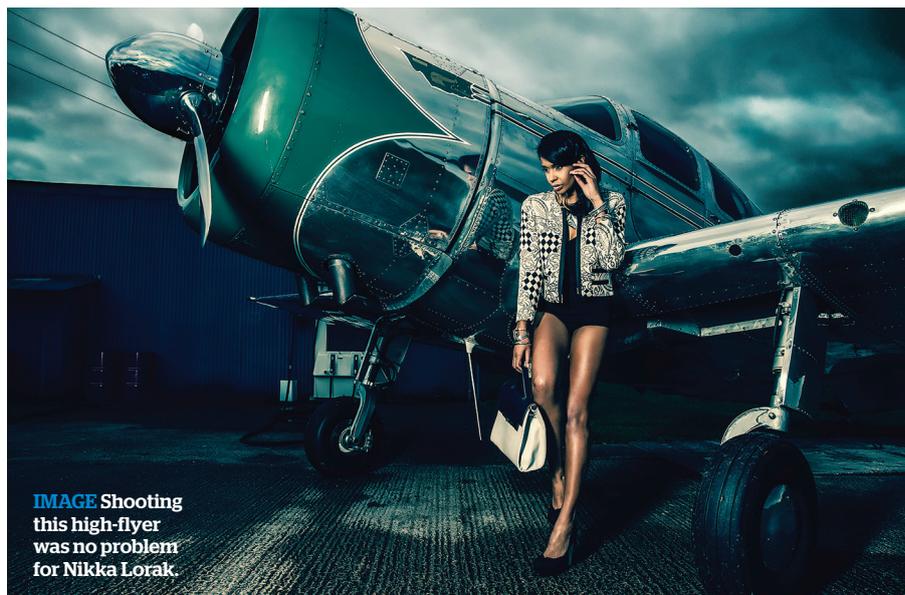


IMAGE Shooting this high-flyer was no problem for Nikka Lorak.

opportunity to take a closer look at the fashion industry and it captivated me.

How do you approach fashion photography?

In my fashion stories I always bring an element of storytelling, which I consider to be a part of human nature. I direct my models as actors, creating a character and their background story, which works particularly well when you're shooting editorial.

Tell us more about the shoot at Little Gransden Airfield.

The airfield shoot was the result of a collaboration with fashion model Margarita Lievano. It's the perfect example of great teamwork: I had access to the location and Margarita invited the wardrobe stylist, Aisha Paparella, and the hairdresser, Regina Meessen to be part of it. As the production got bigger, fashion models Alexander Hey and Josephine McGrail joined the team.

What was the theme you were aiming for?

The visual inspiration for this shoot came from one of my favourite photographers Mario Testino (*Vogue Brazil*, June 2013 with Joan Smalls). I was charmed by Testino's deep colours and unusual post-production style. The storyline came from movies such as *The English Patient*, *Lawrence of Arabia* and *The Talented Mr*

Ripley, and I tried to bring a modern twist. I'm telling the story of a high society couple that fly private jets and enjoy luxury and adventure. My characters are confident and aware of both their appearance and social status.

What lighting were you using?

Profoto D1 Air 1000 heads, which are very powerful and lightweight.

Was it difficult to arrange access?

Thanks to an arrangement we made with the Little Gransden Airfield manager and head instructor of the British Aerobatic Academy, Adrian Willis, we had complimentary access to the airfield and the hangar, and the fact that there were privately owned vintage planes on site was a bonus. The shoot itself cost around £500 to set up, mostly for transportation costs and catering. Other expenses were equipment rental (mainly light diffusers) and my assistant, but it was still a very cost-effective project.

MORE INFORMATION

www.nikkalorak.com

See a behind the scenes video shot by Beppe Blasi here: <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=CvAg10004Fo>

Special thanks to Adrian Willis and the British Aerobatic Academy.

www.britishaerobaticacademy.com



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