



FAREED ZAKARIA ON THE END OF A CONSERVATIVE AGE

Newsweek

He Calls Her His 'Rock.'
The Real Michelle Obama.

Michelle Obama is seen in a Maria Pinto dress on this Newsweek cover.

Pinto

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ested in art, and fashion and design are an extension of that. I'm not blurring the line with 'art-to-wear,' but it's about respecting the creative process," she said.

Pinto grew up in a household of seven kids with her and her twin brother the youngest. She got her first sewing machine in the eighth grade after admiring an older, style-savvy sibling.

Yet they had very different styles. Pinto now recalls with a laugh.

"I remember an outfit that I put orange and pink together. My sister - who always hit the trend just right - gave me hell for that, but as the 7th child, I have some rebel in me."

Pinto attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and launched her own label in 1991 after a stint working with the late draping master Geoffrey Beene. She has since made such easy, flattering cuts her own signature.

"She's been consistent in terms of her sensibility - her clothes are beautiful and she captures a sense of quality and high style," said Andrea Reynders, chair of the Art Institute's fashion department and a former instructor to Pinto.

Fundraiser

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the life of four-year-old Alexis, Cash's daughter, and rendering her son, Clyde, 16, to the hospital with critical injuries.

In the weeks leading up to the Christmas holiday, the members of the Fitness Center reached into their hearts and pocketbooks, producing more than \$2200 in in cash and gift cards for the Cash family, in addition to satisfying the McCrimmon children's every Christmas wish, including supplying a PSP game system.

"They gave them an amazing Christmas. Everything they asked for, they got," declared McCrimmon. "I just can't even put into words how God moves. It has restored my faith in people."

Adopting a family for Christmas is a long standing tradition at the center, and has always been well received, according to staff member Linda Rich.

"The members are amazing here," she remarked. "Every year, no matter what the demand is, I've put the call out and they fulfill."

Fitness Center Owner Helen Naples said such an outpouring of concern is not unusual for her clients.

"I'm proud (of their efforts) but I must admit that I'm not surprised. This is just a really special group of women," she declared. "They're well connected and they're not shy about asking (for support) ... We had gifts



Pastor Parrish

asked if Pinto will make her an evening ensemble to wear for the school's spring awards ceremony - during which the designer will be honored.

After selling her garments and accessories to upscale stores such as Bergdorf Goodman, Barneys New York and Takashimaya, Pinto opened her own atelier and boutique on Chicago's West Loop last summer and she has no plans to uproot to the nation's capital or to New York, the capital of style.

"Chicago seems to be working for me at the moment," she said.

There's also a hint of Midwestern practicality when Pinto talks about her mantra to mix luxury with low maintenance. Her new spring collection emphasizes the fluid curves of Rococo art, which Pinto says give the appearance of movement and enhances a woman's shape.

Pinto, as a 51-year-old professional, knows her customer inside and out, almost always wearing her own designs.

"I think I need to be able to put things on my body. When you put something on yourself and feel, you get a sense of being inside the garment - you get a sense of the shoulder, sleeve or volume of the skirt. It informs where you go next."

and donations coming in from all over the state and from outside the state."

The Fitness Center drummed up even more support for the family with a marathon, two-hour Zumba event Saturday, requiring the donation of a nonperishable food item as admission. More than 50 women turned out for the program.

Rev. Beatrice Murray, associate pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, learned of the families' plight from a friend. She mobilized her parishioners, who donated furniture, linens and dishes to the displaced Cash clan.

"We were able to provide items to help them to have a better life," said Murray, who has been at the church for more than two decades. "That's what we're supposed to do as Christians."

Murray in turn reached out to Nathan Parrish, pastor of Peace Haven Baptist Church and a fellow member of the Minister's Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity. Parrish's wife, Lisa, serves as director of operations for the local Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club.

The organization donated Wal-Mart gift cards, to the effort, Lisa Parrish says the Salvation Army was happy to lend a hand.

"In a situation like that, there was for us, no question - help that family," she declared. "We're very grateful that the Salvation Army was able to help."

Magnet School Fair is Saturday

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The enrollment period for Winston-Salem/Forsyth County magnet schools opened on Jan. 1. Parents can apply online at wsfcmagnets.net, or pick up paper applications at any school. The enrollment period will end at 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 30. Applications that are received after that date will be placed on a waiting list.

Parents can also fill out magnet school applications for their children at

the Magnet School Enrollment Fair, which will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 10 at the North Main Hall of Benton Convention Center in downtown Winston-Salem. Representatives from each school will be on hand to explain their programs and answer questions. The fair will feature performances by current magnet school students.

Magnet schools offer high-quality programs for every grade level and just about every area of interest. Students ben-

efit from greater access to technology, personalized instruction and programs that nurture their talents or interests.

Hanes Magnet School, Philo Magnet Academy and Reynolds High School are the school system's newest magnets and are halfway through the first year of delivering their programs.

For more information about Winston-Salem/Forsyth County magnet schools, call 727-2519 or go to www.wsfcmagnets.net.

Awards

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"Years of efforts have culminated in the election of our first African American president... we can't let this moment pass without a huge celebration and jubilation."

More than 1,400 are expected to attend the the glitzy gala, produced by Pernessa C. Seele. Proceeds from the event will go to Seele's agency, The Balm in Gilead, a not-for-profit organization that works to enhance the capacity of faith communities to address life-threatening diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS.

Themed, "We Have Come This Far by Faith" the ball is chaired by Rev. Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson, pastor of Mount Vernon, N.Y. megachurch Grace Baptist, who called the anticipation of the Inauguration, "a pregnant moment."

"It's such an important moment in history, for the nation and for African Americans and for the African American church," he said, adding that the black church has long served as "an advocate and an incubator of the hopes and dreams of African American people."



Richardson

Richardson spoke highly of the North Carolina nominees, praising them for their varied contributions to the African American experience.

Of cultural historian Dr. John Hope Franklin, he said, "His capturing of and telling of the small steps in African American history has been tremendously impactful."

Dr. Cole has caused a ripple that will continue for generations to come, Richardson believes.

"She's continued to be the person who's shaped the lives of young people who have gone on to represent key positions in American society," he declared.

Dr. Angelou "is in a class all by herself," Richardson remarked. "Her great life has



John Hope Franklin

been a place of celebration, a source of inspiration for countless African Americans. She has impacted the arrival of this day."

Robert Brown, former special Assistant to President Richard Nixon, said he is honored to be in the number of Flame Keepers, and even more so because the event was hosted by black churches.

"They are the ones who have gotten us to this point in our lives."

"We've all been lifted up in the backs of the black church," he said. "For me, that's very important."

The inauguration of a black man to the highest office of the land will be a poignant moment for Brown - who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and suffered beatings and even jail for his activism - one that he admits he never thought he'd live to see.

"I'm still trying to get used to it. It's a wonderful thing," he commented. "It's an incredible achievement, and thank God for all of those people who had a part in it... it hasn't been one or two or even 25 people, it's been literally thousands of people that have given their lives to make sure that this day would come, and thank God, in two or three weeks, we'll be there."

For more information about the African American Church Inaugural Ball, or to purchase tickets, visit www.africanamericanchurchinauguralball.com or call 1-888-225-6243. For more information about The Balm in Gilead, visit www.balmingilead.org.

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