

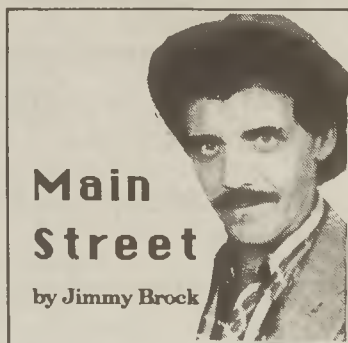
Are Blacks Getting A Fair Share In Fashion Designing Business?

Flipping through the fashion tabloid in The Charlotte Post last week, I was impressed by the number of black models. Then The Question popped into my mind. Where are the black designers? Ask anyone to name a fashion designer. They'll probably say Liz Claiborne, Ralph Lauren--or maybe Alexander Julian. All white. Where are the black designers? Why is nobody naming their names?

The fashion tabloid I was looking through was a fine piece of work. One of the best-looking tabs the Post has ever turned out. Aside from the models, three of my professional colleagues played key roles in putting it together. Editor Jalyne Strong, Chief Photographer Calvin Ferguson and Lifestyles Editor Lora Vanderhall worked above and beyond to get the lovely booklet into print.

This column is partly to sing Lora's praises a little bit. It was she who did much of the legwork of coordinating with the Vogue/Ivey's/American Heart Association folks on the tab's center-spread. And she wrote the center feature story to go along with it. The story is a fine piece of fashion reporting and commentary. Not the usual fluff expected in these things.

Lora did all this extra work on the tab in addition to ramrodding her Lifestyles department. Actually, every Post staffer who worked on the tab did the same



Main Street

by Jimmy Brock

-doing the tab with the left hand while keeping up a regular responsibility with the right. As old people say, Satan never sleeps--it's always something cropping up. So, a tip of my Main Street hat to Lora. As ink-stained wretches go, she's top-flight and a nice person to work with.

The same to all of the others who worked into the night and behind the scenes. These folks work hard week after week to produce a fine newspaper. And I'm right proud to be associated with the likes of them.

But what about the black designers? And who cares about fashion besides the women who wear those flossy clothes? Well, fashion is a Big Bucks industry in America. And it's big business in Charlotte. It was not too long back that the Carolinas-Virginia Fashion Exhibitors drove City Council to its knees

by threatening to leave town. The politicians caved in and agreed to help CVFE build a new complex costing millions. Fashion has heap plenty clout in this country.

Problem is, blacks are left out of the mix. Except for the retailers who sell clothes. At the top, the game is dominated by whites. This is because blacks were not in key economic positions when Edna Woolman Chase, then Editor of Vogue, began the trend toward New York becoming the Mecca of world fashion during World War I. Combine that with ordinary nine-to-five racial bias and it's easy to see blacks were frozen out of the top end.

But the same was true in almost all industries--auto sales, banking, corporate et al--until blacks began to demand their fair share. It's past time to demand a fair share of the rich fashion pie. Kevin Patterson, Omar Leatherman, Gerald Johnson--are you listening? How about Jean Webber, Paula Newcome and Phyllis Lynch? You folks are among the black leadership. You wanted to be the leaders. You, and others like you, want us to look up to you as our role models and mentors. O.K.--but leadership works from the top down.

We're waiting. We'll follow good leadership.

Black Merchandise Showcase At Javits Convention Center

New York, NY - An array of merchandise produced, manufactured and detailed by Black entrepreneurs will come alive on stage when Black Visions Foundation presents a 2 hour continual advertisement at the Jacob Javits Center on Sunday, May 8, from 3:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Manhattan.

In an effort to assist Blacks with merchandise, gain a product entrance into retail, establishments, Black Visions Foundation, a not-for-profit organization will feature merchandise by Blacks from Main Street U.S.A. to Hollywood, and from Paris to the Caribbean. Among the many products produced by Black manufacturers and designers to be featured in this showcase are: clothes, cosmetics, perfumes, toys, luggage, gourmet specialties, flowers, inventions, health aids, etc.. Many celebrities and sports personalities have been invited to represent their own product lines.

The primary purpose of this activity is to promote business for Blacks. This promotional benefit has the support and involvement of chain store buyers, bank executives, government authorities, manufacturers, wholesalers, Emmy Award winners as well as Tony award winners. Thousands of store buyers, wholesalers, manufacturers and consumers have been invited.

We Err'd

In a story printed last week, Mildred Mosley was omitted from the list of candidates running for one of five seats on the Mecklenburg County School Board.

All participants in the Showcase will be listed in a national directory. The directory will be distributed throughout the country to major retail mass merchandisers, major retail department stores, retail grocery stores, drug stores, etc.

Persons who design and market any products for release are invited to enter their merchandise. You need not be present to participate. Registration forms may be obtained by writing to:

Black Visions Foundation, 116 Lawrence Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, or by calling (718) 797-0295. In addition, all registration forms are required to be submitted by March 31 with a participating fee check of \$100. Participants are requested to attach color swatches to all apparel submitted and three different snapshots of the product. All merchandise must be submitted by April 12, 1988 to Black Visions Foundation.

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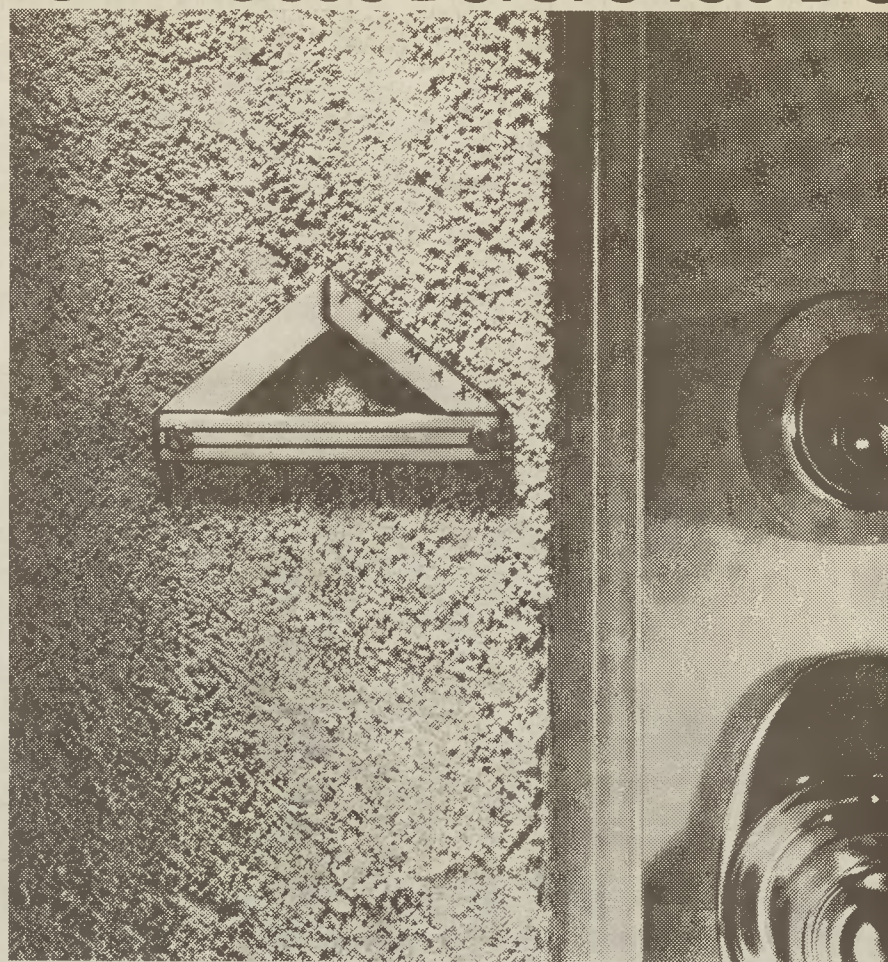
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Second Public Hearing Scheduled On Community Development Program

The Community Development Department will hold the second public hearing on Charlotte's Community Development Program. This hearing is a follow up of one held on March 14. The second public hearing will inform citizens of the projected use of Community Development Block Grant funds for FY89 and a review of program performance during FY88.

All residents and agencies concerned with the Community Development Program are encouraged to attend.

If you wish to speak at the hearing, notify the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall, telephone 336-2247, by noon the day of the hearing. Put your comments in writing so that they will be carefully considered. If you cannot make the hearing, send your comments to the Director, Community Development Department, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, 600 E. Fourth Street, Charlotte, North Carolina 28202-2859.

HEARING DATE: Wednesday, April 20
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: City Council Chambers, City Hall, 600 E. Fourth Street

A copy of the Preliminary Proposed Statement of Community Development Objectives and Projected Use of Funds is available for review at the following locations.

Community Development Department
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
600 East Fourth Street
Office of the City Clerk
City Hall
600 East Trade Street
Department of Public Service and Information
City Hall
600 East Trade Street