

HARLEM'S TREASURE CHEST, THE BROWNSTONE HOSTS SPRING FASHION SHOW *By Erin Lewenauer*

Harlem is known for embracing change, innovation, and unique style. The neighborhood's Lifestyle apparel shop, The Brownstone, hosted an enormously successful Designers Spring Fashion Show and Shopping Spree on April 4th from noon until seven. Taking place in the upstairs ballroom of The Brownstone (24 E. 125th St.), the event drew a capacity crowd. Hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, and gift certificates were offered for a mere \$35 per ticket.

Princess Jenkins (owner of Harlem's Lifestyle Shop) organized the show and presented the following designers: Sandy Baker, Denise Goring, Imani Jewelry, Adrienne Lockett, Harriet Rosebud, and Vera Moore Cosmetics. This was the first time the in-house designers have shown together; "We came together collectively to leave a fashion footprint," says Princess. "This incredible day worked to promote The Brownstone, and sisterhood."

The spring fashion extravaganza included a designer museum collection, runway show, and artist "meet and greet," followed by power shopping. The participating African American women designers possess a combined experience of over 150 years in the business of dressing, styling, and enhancing modern women. The event also included endless and immaculately presented wine and food, provided by J Rose Catering. It was agreed that "the cupcakes were glorious."

Princess Jenkins made the bold decision to enter the fashion industry at age 16. "It started when I saw Diana Ross in the 1975 film Mahogany," she says. In the movie Ross rises to the top of the high fashion world in Rome. Opening her first boutique in Brooklyn "Jazz It Up" in her early twenties, Princess left retail seven years later to pursue motivational speaking and entrepreneurial training.

In 1998 she returned to her vision of fashion and co-founded The Brownstone. "I lived in Harlem for many years but there were no interesting places I could shop," Princess says. "I suddenly realized that Harlem would be an incredible place to start a retail business."

The Brownstone is known as "Harlem's First Fashion Enclave." Princess's Lifestyle Shop focuses primarily on ethnically inspired products for women ages 35 to 65, but there is a small collection of men's wear, which may expand. Her lovely boutique is illuminated by a chandelier and accented with textured, hand-painted walls. A 20-foot mural of Princess stands gloriously on a brick wall in the shop.

Over the years The Brownstone has been featured in O Magazine, Essence Magazine, Black Elegance, New York Magazine, The New York Times, NY Daily News, Amsterdam News as well as Good Morning America, Metro Television and "Living It Up" with Patti Labelle.

Princess says, "We're giving our clients what they want: contemporary fashion and unique styles in a warm, friendly environment." The beauty, creativity, and success of these award-winning women in business is unparalleled.

Visit The Brownstone Wed. through Sat. from 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. or Sun. from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. For more information call 212-996-7980, or visit www.thebrownstonewoman.com.



(left)
At end of show
Designers walk the runway with Princess Jenkin



Princess Jenkins

About Designers and Princess Jenkins

Sandy Baker presents elegant and modern jewelry. An award-winning designer, she has created timeless pieces for more than 30 years. The radiance of an outfit relies on the strength of its accessories; With a high quality of artistic technique, Baker adds a glimmer to the modern woman's life. She molds shell and stone into the most innovative designs. Her work can be found in the design archives of art museums and has been exhibited around the world. Recently, Sandy was named one of the top 100 jewelry designers by National Jewelry Magazine.

Denise Goring creates one-of-a-kind clothing. A native New Yorker, she hand-paints her pieces with extreme care and creativity. Goring studied printmaking and art history for years; She incorporates Afro-Centric Expressionism with traditional patterns. Her work is the epitome of wearable art and reflects inspiration. The skillful use of color and materials such as African kuba cloth, mud cloth, and tie-dye gives the clothes a memorable look and texture. Goring specializes in linen clothing for men and women in larger sizes, and her work is available at boutiques across the country.

Imani Jewelry breaks out the lime, yellow, and tangerine pieces this spring to fight the rain. The handcrafted art of Norma and Traci, a mother/daughter team, will not be forgotten. Their motto is: "Our earrings don't match." Their leather neckpieces, asymmetrical earrings, pendants, bracelets, and hair charms are a delight and a necessity. The designs include mother of pearl, crystals, abalone, and hematite among other gems. Imani Jewelry has been featured in numerous fashion magazines and on TV.

Adrienne Lockett, a native of Newark, began crafting fascinating jewelry in the early 90's on a card table in her bedroom. What started as a hobby grew into a passion. The ancient style of her beaded jewelry is opulent and remarkable. The original sterling and brass pieces dress up any outfit, and her new beaded work shines. Adrienne has sold her jewelry on The Home Shopping Network and QVC as well as through museums and boutiques across the country.

Princess Jenkins runs the Lifestyle Shop in Harlem's The Brownstone. She focuses on ethnically inspired fashion, featuring a unique collection of clothing, accessories, cosmetics, and gifts. The Brownstone is known for its private shopping experience, and for catering to clients seeking "quality, value, and most of all customer service."

Harriet Rosebud, of Rosebud NY, brings new and fabulous spring hats. A graduate of F.I.T., with a focus on Millinery, she currently sells to over 200 boutiques and department stores. Faux suede, buckles, and bows: these hats have it all. There is even one named after Harlem; The Harlem Hat is a flapper hat made of faux suede with a leather bib. All hats have playful names such as The Show Stopper, which is made of striking orange fleece and feathers. The hats are fun as well as practical; the material is warm enough for winter. In 2004 Harriet began to craft miniature hats, honoring historic women's hats. They may be found at bookstores and art galleries nation-wide.