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C.O.B.S.

CIRCLE OF
Boss SISTERS
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KING'S COURT

JEROMIE "KAKE KING" JONES

CEO/Founder of Sprinkle
Me by Kake King

QUEEN'S COURT

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON

CEO of Genesys Fitness

ARTIST CORNER

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS

WOMEN'S WERK

PAMELA CONE

CEO/Founder of Curated
Spaces

FASHION CORNER

**THE HOTTEST
DESIGNERS OF 2023**

WOMEN INNOVATORS

TIFFANY FERGUSON

CEO/Founder of Simply
Essential by Tiffany

NNETE MATIMA

CEO/Founder of Blue Lapis™

DR. TREVI BOOKER-PERSHAY

CEO/PUBLISHER OF CIRCLE OF BOSS SISTERS (C.O.B.S) MAGAZINE
AND TREVI PERSHAY ENTERPRISES

FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR

STANDING STRONG IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY:
EMBRACING RESILIENCE AND GROWTH

DR. TREVI BOOKER PERSHAY



Life is a journey filled with both joyous moments and challenging trials. Adversity is an inevitable part of the human experience, and how we respond to it defines our character and shapes our future. My mother taught me how to put an H on my back and handle it. Don't faint in it. Stand from it. These were just a few motivational quotes passed down to the generation of women in my family to give us strength when we have to Stand in the face of adversity. Some people always think that I can handle anything, and the truth is that I can't. I hurt, felt disappointed, resentful, angry, depression, and all that comes at me while I navigate my becoming.

MY DAILY PEACE ROUTINE IS TO GET ON MY KNEES
EVERY MORNING AND ASK GOD FOR STRENGTH, DIRECTION, AND
WISDOM AS HE SETS MY GOALS AND DESIGNS MY TRAILS.

1. ACKNOWLEDGE AND ACCEPT:

When adversity strikes, the first step towards standing strong is acknowledging and accepting the reality of the situation. Denial and avoidance only prolong the pain and prevent healing. By facing adversity head-on and accepting its presence, we begin to gain the clarity and strength needed to navigate through the storm.

2. SEEK SUPPORT AND CONNECTION:

No one has to face adversity alone. Seeking support from friends, family, or professional counselors can provide valuable perspectives, encouragement, and empathy. Sharing our burdens and emotions with others not only lessens the weight on our shoulders but also helps us understand that we are not alone in our struggles.

3. ADOPT A GROWTH MINDSET:

Adopting a growth mindset is crucial when confronting adversity. Instead of viewing challenges as insurmountable obstacles, consider them opportunities for growth and learning. Understand that setbacks are a natural part of life, and they present us with valuable lessons that can propel us forward in our personal and professional journeys.

4. STAY POSITIVE AND PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION:

Maintaining a positive outlook during difficult times can be incredibly challenging, but it is essential for standing firm in the face of adversity. Cultivate self-compassion and kindness towards yourself, recognizing that feeling vulnerable or overwhelmed is okay. Treating yourself with the compassion and understanding you would offer a friend can foster inner strength and resilience.

5. FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL:

Adversity often brings a sense of powerlessness, as circumstances may be beyond our control. Instead of dwelling on what you cannot change, focus on what you can control. Taking proactive steps, no matter how small, can instill a sense of agency and empowerment.

6. SET REALISTIC GOALS:

Setting realistic goals and taking incremental steps toward progress is essential in adversity. Break down your challenges into smaller, manageable tasks, and celebrate each milestone. This approach allows for a sense of accomplishment and fuels the motivation to keep moving forward.

7. PRACTICE MINDFULNESS AND GRATITUDE:

Mindfulness and gratitude can serve as powerful tools to navigate adversity. Engage in activities that promote mindfulness, such as meditation or yoga, to help cultivate a sense of inner calm and clarity. Additionally, practicing gratitude can shift our focus from what we lack to what we have, fostering a positive mindset even during challenging times.

8. LEARN FROM RESILIENT ROLE MODELS:

Take inspiration from individuals who have overcome adversity and emerged stronger. Read stories of resilience, listen to motivational speakers, or engage with mentors who can share their experiences and wisdom. Learning from others who have faced and conquered adversity can provide valuable insights and guidance.

9. PERSEVERE WITH PATIENCE:

Standing strong in the face of adversity often requires patience and perseverance. Healing and growth take time, and it's essential to be patient with yourself during the process. Acknowledge that progress may be gradual, but you can overcome even the most challenging circumstances with dedication and perseverance.

10. CONCLUSION:

Adversity is an inescapable part of life, but how we respond to it determines our journey's trajectory. We can endure difficult times with strength and resilience by acknowledging and accepting reality, seeking support, adopting a growth mindset, and practicing self-compassion. Remember that adversity can be an opportunity for growth, and by standing strong in its face, we can emerge wiser, stronger, and more empowered than ever before.

Dr. Trevi Pershay

Dr. Trevi Booker Pershay

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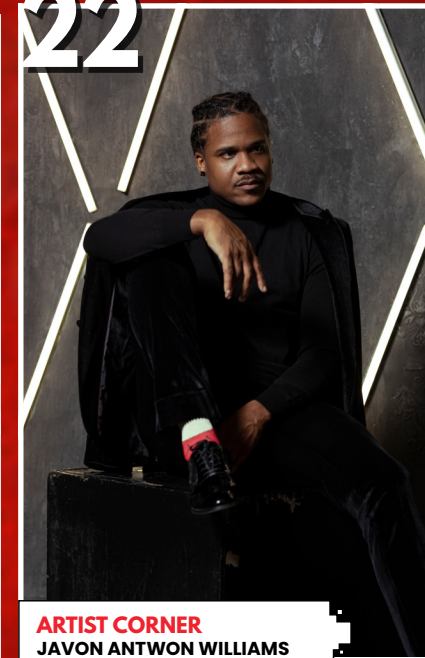
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MEET THE C.O.B.S. TEAM



Trevi Booker Pershay - Editor-N-Chief

Trevi Booker Pershay is Editor-N- Chief and Founder of C.O.B.S. – Circle of Boss Sisters. Trevi wears many hats she is CEO & Founder of PDM Performing Arts Corp., Trevi Pershay Productions Inc, PDM Productions LLC and she is author of the book "A Different Type of Church Girl – The Battle of the Calling on Amazon. Trevi is also Senior Pastor of Restoration, Hope and Deliverance Center, mentor, dance teacher and she is known as Tyler Perry of the Hood and the Purpose Pusher.

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Tinika Thomas Co-Editor-N-Chief/Beauty Editor

Tinika Thomas is CEO & Founder of Shay Beauty Consultants, she currently is Vice President on the Board of Directors for Trevi Pershay Productions, PDM Performing Arts as well as business advisor/manager to Trevi Booker Pershay. Tinika juggles many hats, she is a mom, soon to be wife, make-up designer and enjoys being with her 3-year-old grandson Cam.

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Adonis Richards is a writer, author, and poet from Schenectady New York. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Master of Arts In Education technology from SUNY Potsdam. After graduating from Potsdam in 2019, Adonis has dedicated his life and career work to education, community, and writing.

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Rodnisha "Nisha" Pershay - Hair Editor

Nisha Pershay specializes in taking care of weaves; therefore, you will have them for a long time. She is CEO & Founder of The Traveling Salon 2. Nisha holds down a full-time job with an investment company as well as she is Sound & Stage Manager for Trevi Pershay Productions Inc.

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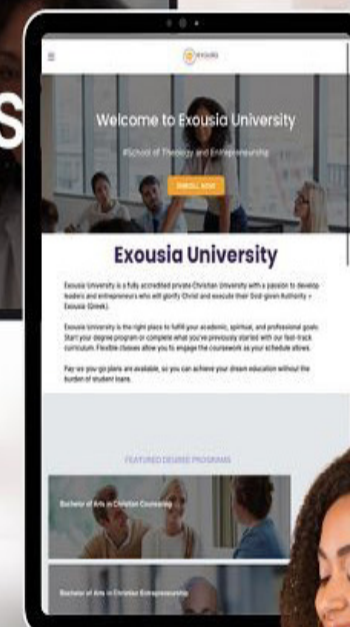
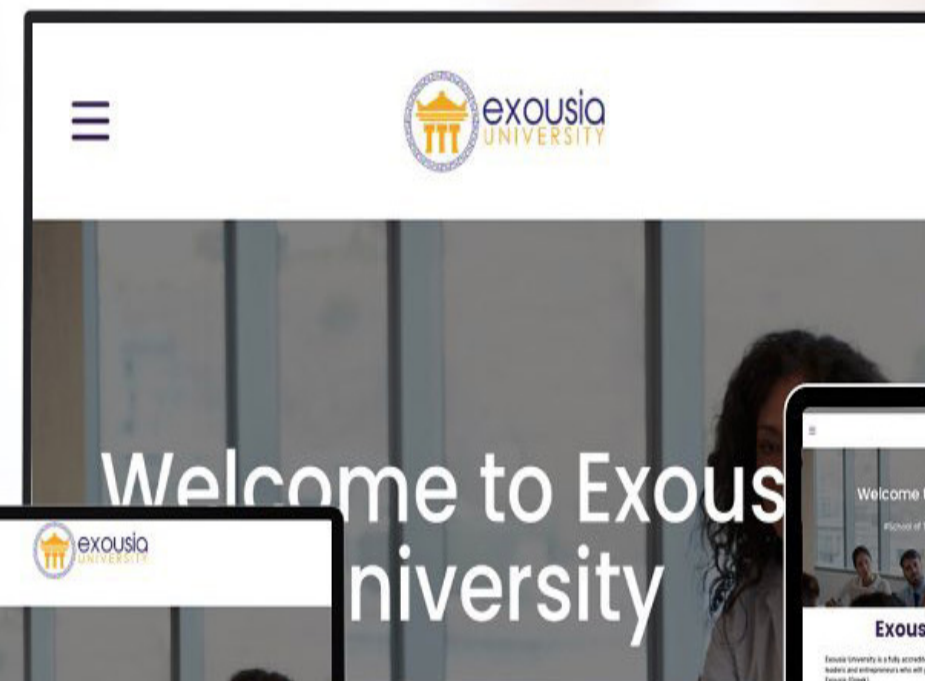
Abdullah Khan is Computer Engineer, Adobe Certified Graphics Designer, TOP-RATED Freelancer, Designing and Magazine Layout Director of C.O.B.S. – Circle of Boss Sisters, Founder and CEO of Software House, worked with Multinational Companies i.e. Adobe, McDonalds, Forbes and now Providing Services all over the world.

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DR. TREVI BOOKER-PERSHAY

CEO/FOUNDER OF C.O.B.S MAGAZINE, PDM PRODUCTIONS, PDM PERFORMING ARTS CORP, & TREVI PERSHAY PRODUCTIONS

to Jump Start A Business. One day, God gave me a vision of a magazine that would inspire, uplift, and motivate black women. I knew nothing about starting a magazine or running it. I swear it was all God who gave me the blueprint to get it done. I was learning while it was in production. The future for C.O.B.S Magazine is to ensure it's on every newsstand worldwide.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

We understand that you are not just a Publisher but also wear many other hats. Can you elaborate for our readers on the other things you do in your life? Also, how do you manage all the extra activities in your life?

DR. TREVI BOOKER-PERSHAY:

Yes, of course. I am a woman of God and a born-again believer. I am a mother of 2 grown adults and a wife of 38 years. I also have a full-time job and am currently in school for my second bachelor's degree. Meet my other hats (L.O.L.). I have a production company called Trevi Pershay Productions – I've written over 15 Off-Broadways



plays music videos, and I wrote my first movie, The Curse Within – What Goes On In This House (coming soon). I am a first-time author of "A Different Type of Church Girl," and I'm working on book 2. I have an independent record label called PDM Productions, where most of the music I write is registered. I have a performing arts company for youth, PDM Performing Arts Corporation – I've just retired after 23 years of empowering youth through dance.

God has this timeless ability to give me the strength to do all he's placed inside me. I use God's timing wisely and don't waste his time or mine. God has given me the gift of Administration. Administration – the process of or activity of run-



8 SPOTLIGHT

Trevi Pershay Where the Movement Begins

Meet the CEO, Founder, Writer, Director, Producer, Author, Motivational Speaker, Mentor and Youth Pastor behind it all.....

Trevi Marie Booker Pershay (aka to friends and colleagues as Trevi) grew up in Brooklyn East New York Housing Projects (Louis H. Pink Houses) where she was reared by a single strong black woman. Trevi grew up in a household that was filled with love, church and humanitarian. The women in her family were pioneers for community. Trevi a survivor of rape, molestation and getting high all the time. The suffering shame and the pain of what goes on in this house stays in here pushed Trevi to suicidal attempts. With no positive outlets in her community the only things that were popular was getting pregnant or having multiple sex partners. Trevi used dance and theater as a way to save her life. At 16 Trevi became a role model for girls living within the housing projects. Trevi realized that there were other young girls who were molested just like her and created a dance program as a safe haven to help the hurt. As Trevi grew into her adulthood, her goal was to constantly develop program in her community to save the youth. Trevi has served the community for over 20 years by partnering with political leaders, community center directors and afterschool programs to empower the youth and transform the community she grew up in. Trevi is also author of "A Different Type of Church Girl: The Battle of the Calling" which is on Amazon. It's her first novel she is current working on part. Abijah gangly speaks with Trevi.



What triggered the PDM Dance Program?

PDM dance was created to provide an positive outlook for inner city youth. The goal was to provide ways to get this kids to see other cities they've never visited before by participating in the dance program. I wanted to create a platform of love, unity and leadership amongst the youth.

What has been the most rewarding part of your journey so far?
My most rewarding part of what I do is changing the lives

of the young people and empowering them.

Is there anyone in particular that you admire most or consider a mentor/role model?

My grandmother was a mentor to me growing up. She was a missionary in the church but she was an advocate for her community. My grandmother used her home to feed the hungry and the homeless. When men would return from war my grandmother would provide food for the family. She was known as Momma Carter. She made me give up my bed for someone who didn't have a bed.



UPWORDS

FEBRUARY 2020

She would do this so I can understand what someone else was going through.

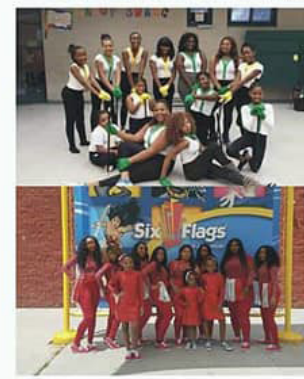
What can be done to help prevent domestic violence, to help those who are in abusive situations, or to help build a culture of peace?

Domestic violence is to empower women that they are the real ownership of their destiny. I grew up in a household where my mother was being beaten by her boyfriend. I think it took a near death experience to make her get out. I create platforms to help others help themselves. Also to provide the community with resources to help them get out.

What are your thoughts about the importance of emotional and spiritual support to sexual assault survivors?

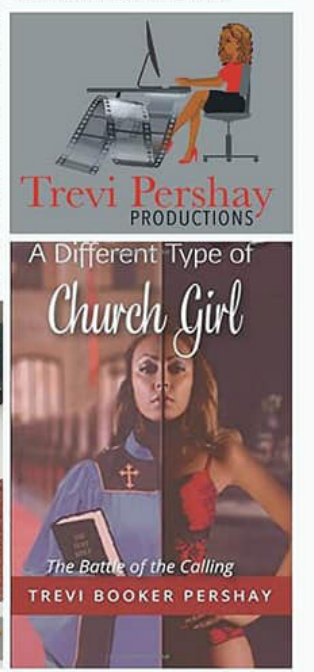
As a survivor of molestation and rape, what I've learn through my relationship with Christ is that I learned how to love myself. On this spiritual voyage I've discovered so many gifts, talents and energy that flows through me is to help others. I no longer say why me God. Why did you let me be raped or touched when I was a kid? Now my reply is thank you for allowing me to experience the pain so that I may help other get out.

What advice would you give to other women to help



UPWORDS

them feel more empowered?
My advice in empowering women is to always help them:
1. Pick up their crown
2. Adjust their crown
3. Walk in self-worth of owning their crown



FEBRUARY 2020

ning a business or organization. With this gift that God has blessed me with, I make sure that it inspires, uplifts, teaches, or helps others. I don't binge-watch movies; I spend hours creating my own.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Can you share your passion for birthing all these projects? What is the significance behind all these projects?

DR. TREVI BOOKER-PERSHAY:

I always wanted to be a teacher as a little girl. I wanted my students to be excited about education, and I was the cousin who made everyone play school. Guess who the teacher was? God had other plans for me, and teaching was still in the program, only it wasn't in the classroom. It was on the stage. I started writing because I needed to heal from pain and being broken. Writing helped me cope with what happened when I was a little girl. Dancing was the escape I needed to help me develop

confidence in myself. I used these two elements to inspire, uplift, and motivate others in their healing process. My plays, books, and movies are relevant to the issues we don't like discussing. You know that famous saying what goes on in this house stays in this house. I decided to expose secrets to help free us from the bond-

age of lies or cover-ups. When my readers or audience thank me for something I've written, they are blessed by the message from my writing. It lets me know that I must continue writing to inspire others.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

As a staff member of C.O.B.S., you sent an email letting us

VISIONARY • WRITER • DIRECTOR • PASTOR • MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER

Trevi Pershay

THE WOMAN
BEHIND THE
BRAND

AN INSIDE LOOK OF THE
WOMAN RECOGNIZED AS
THE FEMALE
TYLER PERRY

TREVIPERSHAYPRODUCTIONS.COM



know there will be changes to C.O.B.S. Magazine. Can you share that with our readers?

DR. TREVI BOOKER-PERSHAY:

Yes, of course! This September issue will be the last publication for 2023. We are working on re-inventing the magazine to get new clients, newsstand sales, and back-order requests. We are hiring a Public Relations team to help our brand reach new audiences and subscribers. My schedule is growing, and it's time to delegate responsibility to professionals equipped for the role. We will be back in 2024.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

We always ask our readers what daily affirmations keep them going. What are your daily affirmations, Dr. Pershay?

DR. TREVI BOOKER-PERSHAY:

Morning prayer is the start of my daily affirmations. I have what I call My Up Affirmations Prayer: Father, I thank you for the wake-up, the get-up, the come-up, the line-up, the hook-up, the pick-up, the make-up, the growing-up, the follow-up, the check-up, the change-up, the shut-up, the shake-up and the setback for the set-up. It motivates me.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

You have been coined the Tyler Perry of the Hood regarding your Off-Broadway plays. What is your response to that statement?

DR. TREVI BOOKER-PERSHAY:

I love Tyler Perry and am grateful for his life, ministry, movies, and plays. However, there is a cost attached to every assignment we are called to do. I am honored that people see me on that level, but God only gave me shoes that fit my size. As much as I admire him, I am not him, nor am I trying to be Mr. Perry. We do have the same initials, though, T.P. (L.O.L.). God uses Tyler Perry to show us that anything is possible if you don't give up on your dreams.

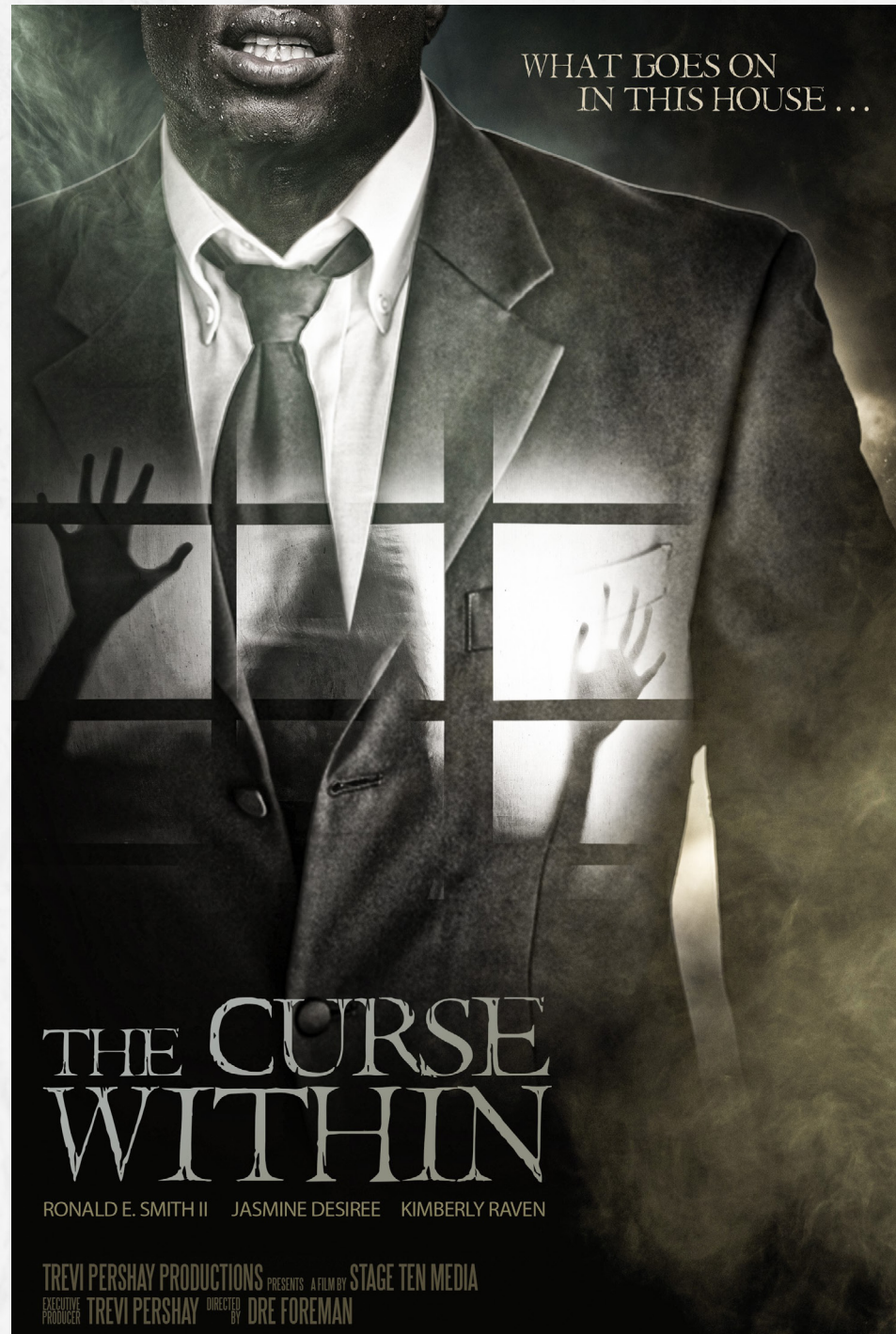
C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

You mentioned that one of your movies will be coming out in 2024. Can you share what the movie is about and how we can follow you on social media platforms?

DR. TREVI BOOKER-PERSHAY:

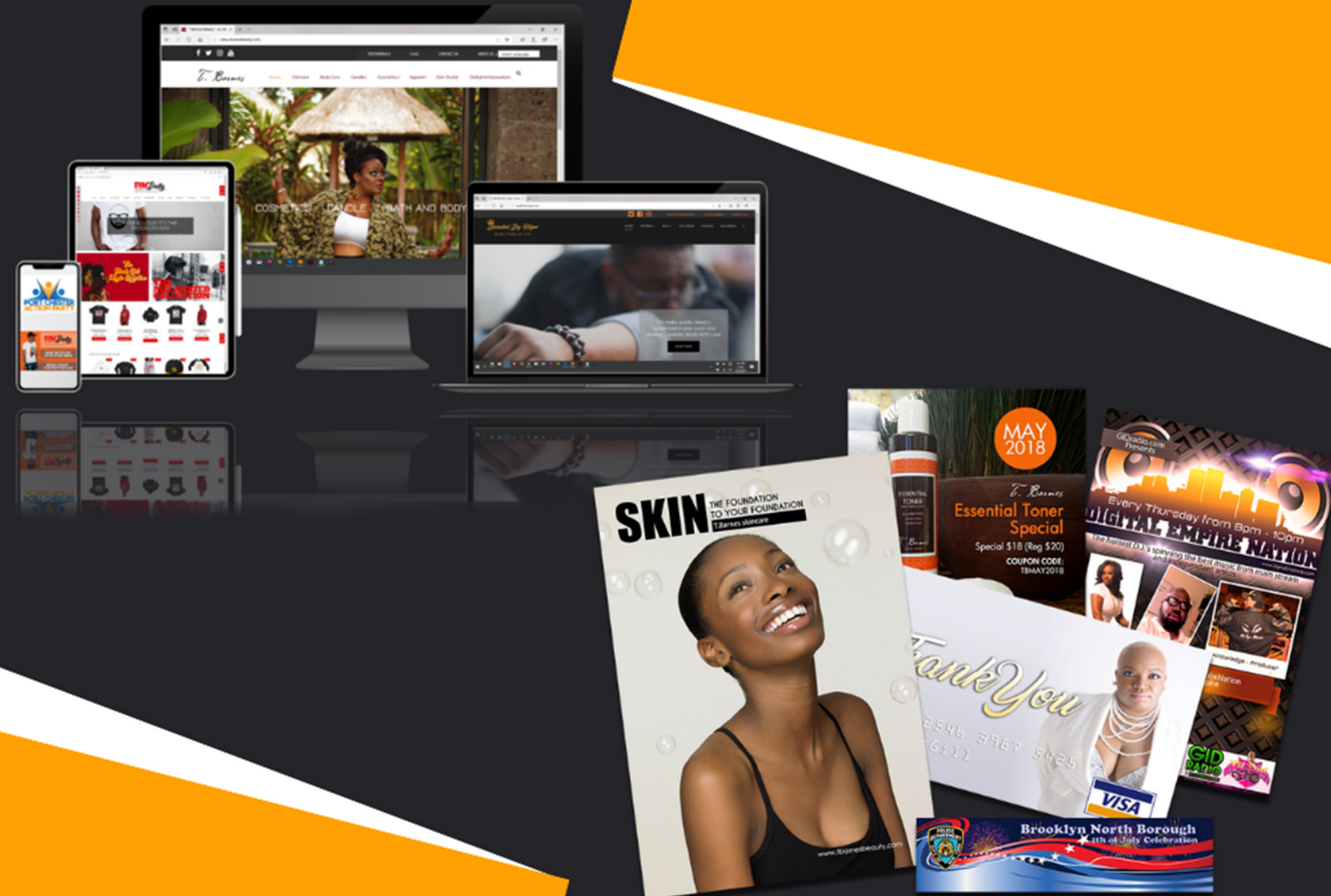
The movie is about a wealthy lawyer who only dates women with a family, preferably teenage daughters. The goal is to have a premiere by November 2023. Readers

can follow me at I.G.: trevipershayproductions, c.o.b.s_official-page, pdmproductionsllc and on F.B.: trevipershayproductions, trevibooker-pershay, cobsmagazine and to be added to our casting call list email me at trevipershayproductions@gmail.com



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JEROMIE “KAKE KING” JONES

CEO/FOUNDER OF SPRINKLE ME BY KAKE KING

COBS MAGAZINE:

Welcome to COBS Magazine King's Court. We are delighted to be interviewing Jeromie “Kake King” Jones. Jeromie is an innovative creator, an inspiring speaker and writer, a strategic advisor, and a change agent. Before diving into who becomes an entrepreneur, can you give us some background about your upbringing?

JEROMIE JONES:

First, I would like to say thank you for the opportunity. Growing up with my grandparents in Winona, Mississippi, I have never been a stranger to the kitchen. Early on, developing a love for cooking and baking led me to transform the joy I felt in the kitchen from a hobby to an expansive career in the baking and business industry. I have always had a strong passion for baking. I studied at Mississippi University for Women and am a proud Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. member and served as the Chapter President.

COBS MAGAZINE:

Can you tell us about your journey as a cake artist and how you got started in the industry? What inspired you to create your own bakery company, Sprinkle Me By Kake King?

JEROMIE JONES:

I started making cakes 16 years ago after a friend purchased me a cake decorating kit while I was in college. I remember I began selling desserts from my apartment. The goal was to save up to develop my own bakery business debt-free, which I succeeded in at 26. This meant everything to me because I had accomplished what I wanted to do: to be the youngest and first-ever openly gay black bakery owner in Mississippi to be featured on CNN.

COBS MAGAZINE:

How do you stay innovative and stay ahead of the competition in the cake industry?

JEROMIE JONES:

I genuinely don't see other artists as competition. So many people and things always inspire me. My only competition is myself, and I try to be better than I was the day before.

COBS MAGAZINE:

Can you share any memorable or challenging experiences as a cake artist?

JEROMIE JONES:

Being a business owner in itself is a challenge!! It definitely was not smooth. Early in my career,

I experienced discrimination against my race. Being the only gay black baker in the state of Mississippi comes with many challenges. I've been doing this consistently for 16 years, and each year brings a new set of challenges, but I wouldn't trade it for anything. The freedom to do what you love and never feel like it's work.

COBS MAGAZINE:

What sets Sprinkle Me By Kake King apart from other bakeries in the market?

JEROMIE JONES:

I don't just create cakes; that sets me apart. I have a baking product line, over 30 online cake classes, and a subscription group for artists in the industry. My dedication and work have certainly not gone unnoticed. After four years of working as a Food Service Manag-



er and being promoted to Operations Manager, I have cultivated formal skills in residential, banquet, and catering services, which has landed me several awards. I have been labeled to date the Entrepreneur of the Year by two local organizations in Jackson, Mississippi. I believe these collective experiences have molded me into who I am today.

COBS MAGAZINE:

How do you balance your role as a cake artist and business owner?

JEROMIE JONES:

They go hand in hand. I can do what I love in business because everything ties together. The cake orders become a learning tool for my classes, and so on! I try to offer it all; whether you seek brand consulting, baking education, or cake services in general, you are in the best possible hands to achieve greatness. I am always seeking ways to advance myself personally and professionally, too.

COBS MAGAZINE:

What advice would you give aspiring cake artists looking to start their own businesses?

JEROMIE JONES:

Be your authentic self!!! Social media will make you feel like you're not doing enough or not good enough. Your only competition is YOU! Transparency and honesty with individuals allow them to see the real you and that you are relatable.

COBS MAGAZINE:

Could you highlight some

of the most significant achievements or milestones you've reached in your career?

JEROMIE JONES:

I've had the pleasure of competing on Food Network Twice, Cake Wars & The Food Network Challenge, and currently, I have five branded products in cake supply stores. I have received The Gentleman's Award and earned the VIP Award for Vision, Inspiration, and Purpose. Nothing makes me happier than being a valuable resource to others looking to reach their full baking potential.

COBS MAGAZINE:

How do you approach designing custom cakes for your clients? Could you share any unique or exciting requests you've received?

JEROMIE JONES:

Most clients come to me with no vision and truly allow me to create from my own design space. The most exciting order I've had was for an Indian-themed wedding. I had made an enormous cake that required a lot of



detail. It took days to pipe the details in buttercream.

COBS MAGAZINE:

How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your cakes at Sprinkle Me By Kake King?

JEROMIE JONES:

By providing quality ingredients, creating designs that I feel fit my design aesthetics, and providing clear communication to every client.

COBS MAGAZINE:

What are your plans and goals for both your career as a cake artist and for Sprinkle Me By Kake King?

JEROMIE JONES:

I learned long ago that If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans! I'm enjoying the ride right now! Some fascinating things, including the 3 Kings Tour with Darius Cooks, are coming down. Even though I have relocated to Orlando, FL, I am never too far from my hometown of Winona, where I continue to pay homage. I will continue to offer online classes and business support through my many platforms.

COBS MAGAZINE:

Thank you for taking the time to do this interview. Please share your company's website and social media platforms with our readers. We wish you nothing but continuous success.

JEROMIE JONES:

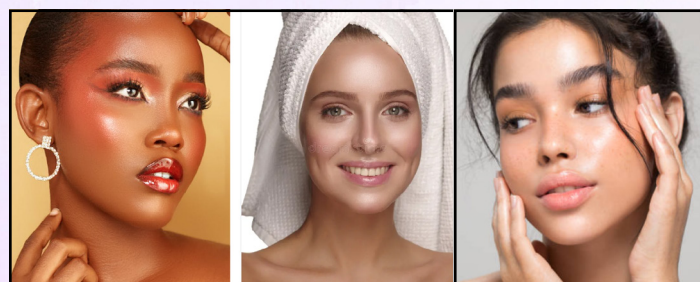
Thank you for having me. My business website is www.kakeking.com, and @iamkakeking is on all platforms.

TINIKA THOMAS

INSIDE TIPS FOR EVERYDAY MAKE-UP ROUTINE – REGARDLESS IF YOU ARE A NEWBIE OR EXPERIENCED IN THE MAKE-UP WORLD.

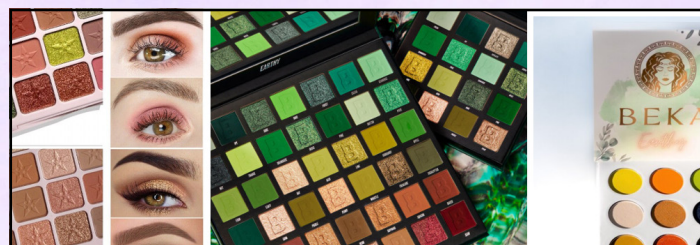
EMBRACE THE AUTUMN GLOW: 2023 FALL MAKE-UP TRENDS

As the leaves change colors and the crisp air welcomes us into a new season, it's time to refresh our make-up routine and embrace the latest fall trends. This year, the beauty industry is about embracing natural radiance and enhancing our features with warm, earthy tones. Let's dive into the exciting make-up trends defining fall 2023, from glowing skin to statement lips.

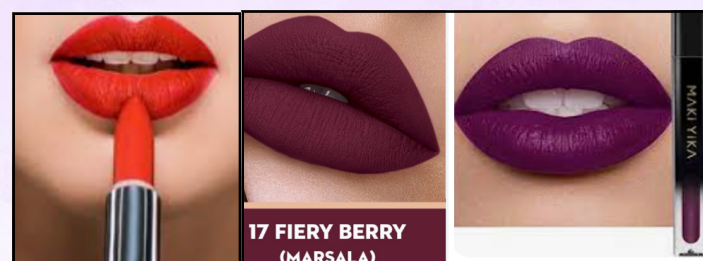


First and foremost, luminous skin is the base of every great make-up look this season. The dewy, flawless complexion is back in style, so it's time to put away your matte foundations and embrace lightweight formulas that allow your skin to breathe. Pair it with a soft, golden highlighter applied to the high points of your face, and you'll achieve that coveted autumn glow.

When it comes to eyeshadows, the fall runways were filled with warm, earthy tones that complemented the changing foliage. Emphasize your eyes with rich copper, burnt orange, and deep brown shades. Consider experimenting with glossy lids or adding a touch of shimmer to create dimension. Don't be afraid to play around with textures and finishes to capture that cozy, fall-inspired look.



Lastly, let's talk about lips! Bold and statement-making lips are making a comeback this fall. Deep berry shades, fiery reds, and even dark purples are the go-to choices for those who want to make an impact. Opt for long-lasting formulas with a satin finish to keep your pout fresh all day. Remember, confidence is critical when rocking these intense colors.



Fall 2023 is all about embracing the natural beauty of the season. From luminous skin to warm eyeshadows and bold lips, these trends will help you transition seamlessly into autumn. So, grab your make-up brushes, experiment with different looks, and let the beauty of fall inspire your creativity. Embrace the changing seasons and allow your inner glow to shine through.

Beauty Tip:

You want a flawless look with your foundation; add your primer to the foundation before applying.

TRAVEL AND LEISURE DOMESTIC

No matter our season, it's the perfect time to plan a domestic getaway. With so many unique destinations across the United States, it can be hard to choose where to go. But don't worry. We've got you covered!

HERE ARE THE TOP 5 DOMESTIC TRAVEL DESTINATIONS FOR THE FALL OF 2023.

1) NEW YORK CITY:

The city that never sleeps is always an excellent choice for a vacation. With plenty of rooftop bars, outdoor concerts, and festivals, there's always something to do in the Big Apple. Visit Central Park, the Statue of Liberty, and the Empire State Building for an unforgettable experience.



2) YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK:

For those who love the great outdoors, Yellowstone is a must-visit destination. With its stunning natural beauty and abundant wildlife, this national park is perfect for a summer adventure. Hike through the forests, swim in the rivers, and marvel at the geysers and hot springs.

3) SAN DIEGO:

With its sunny weather, beautiful beaches, and vibrant culture, San Diego is a top choice for a getaway. Visit the famous San Diego Zoo, explore the Gaslamp Quarter, or relax on the beach and soak up the sun.



4) CHICAGO:

The Windy City is another excellent option for a vacation. With its iconic skyline, deep-dish pizza, and world-class museums, there's plenty to see and do in Chicago. Take a boat tour along the Chicago River, visit Millennium Park, or catch a Cubs game at Wrigley Field.



5) HAWAII:

For a truly exotic getaway, consider visiting the beautiful islands of Hawaii. With its white sand beaches, crystal clear waters, and lush tropical landscapes, Hawaii is the perfect place to relax, unwind, and soak up some sun.

So there you have it - the top 5 domestic travel destinations for the fall of 2023. No matter your destination, you will have an unforgettable adventure and create memories that will last a lifetime.



COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON

CEO OF GENESYS FITNESS

class, my students would ask fitness-related questions. Those questions and the trust in me motivated me to earn my personal training certification; the rest is history. Those moments they have led me to create Genesys Fitness in 2015.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Can you tell us about your journey in the fitness industry and how you became the CEO of Genesys Fitness?

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

My journey into the fitness industry started with wandering into a Zumba Fitness class. I was recovering from surgery and had to take a break from my usual workout. I walked by the group fitness room and heard some music blaring. I figured why not and walked in. Fifteen minutes into the class, I was hooked. A year later, I went on to earn my license to teach. As my passion for health and wellness grew, it motivated me to learn more. I went on to earn various certifications. I felt confident I could provide a valuable service, so I created Genesys Fitness (GenFit) in 2015. Seeing my idea grow from teaching group fitness classes to speaking and writing on national and international platforms has been amazing.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How do you envision the future of fitness, and how is Genesys Fitness adapting to upcoming trends?

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

I've noticed that time is at a premium for many people. With the demands of family and work life, people don't have hours to devote to working out. People are looking for effective programs that can work the entire body and possibly be completed online. To respond to the changes, Genesys Fitness provides customized programs that focus on the needs of individuals. Our workouts are designed to take about an hour and create results. We've also created an app. As a client, you can complete your workouts in person or virtually. The online platform has allowed Genesys Fitness to expand its impact and provide services nationwide.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What strategies have you implemented to ensure a positive and inclusive environment for all members at Genesys Fitness?



COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

I believe that the environment starts with me. Inclusion is a top priority for me. Before any group coaching sessions, I discuss the group's expectations. No bullying of any kind will be tolerated. If a client can't respect others, that person will be removed from the activity.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How do you prioritize and promote overall well-being and mental health alongside physical fitness at Genesys Fitness?

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

For me, mental and physical health work hand in hand. For too long, we've placed a priority on aesthetics without addressing the need for healing from our traumas.



Unhealed wounds impact the physical aspect and how we address triggers. We've often been told that if "we look good, we feel good," and that's not the case. When we are emotionally and mentally healthy, we have the strength and courage to face our challenges. My consultations all begin with developing clarity and creating realistic goals. My goal for each client is to become mentally, emotionally, and physically well-rounded. The chances of success are low when we fail to address the mental roadblock. We can't move forward until you address what's holding you back.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Can you share any success stories of members who have achieved their fitness goals through the programs at Genesys Fitness?

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

One of my current clients started working with me in 2021. She entered through the door and exclaimed, "I'm big and tired of feeling this way! You see these rolls; each represents my children, and they gotta go!" Following our conversation, I asked, "Are you ready to work?" She said, "Let's go!" I stood there in shock because it's rare to have someone be so forthcoming about their journey. She owned her narrative and was ready to take control of her future.

Since she's been working with me, she's gone down three dress sizes, completed her first 5k, and started going hiking. She's still using the tools I've given her and remains part of the program.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How does Genesys Fitness engage with its local community and give back through corporate social responsibility initiatives?

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

Absolutely! I consider it an honor to serve the community that has supported me over the years. GenFit is always looking for opportunities to partner with various organizations in the community. It's important to find organizations whose values align with GenFit. Our community efforts have included donating gift cards to families who need to purchase groceries, participating in back-to-school supply drives, and sponsoring a child in foster care who needed clothes and gifts for Christmas. I look forward to seeing our philanthropic efforts continue growing and impacting more community members.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What advice would you give to individuals looking to start their own fitness journey or pursue a career in the fitness industry?

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

There are so many facets of health and wellness that it's easy to get overwhelmed. I would suggest that you find a mentor and ask questions. No question is a silly question. Take your time to discover which areas interest you and what types of education you need. Don't forget to educate yourself on the business side. The last thing you want to do is start a new business and not understand how to succeed financially. More than anything, don't forget to have fun! As health professionals, we have the influence and education to impact people daily. It's a privilege to be a part of someone's wellness journey. Don't forget to enjoy yourself and have fun.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How do you ensure that Genesys Fitness stays updated with the latest fitness technology and equipment?

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

Engaging with the latest technology is essential to GenFit. We're always seeking ways to produce challenging, results-driven programs for our clients. Every year, I'm required to maintain my continuing education credentials. My education allows me to remain abreast of the current technology. Along with formal education, there are several coaches/trainers' communities that we are affiliated with. We're always seeking new information that will enhance the value we add to our clients.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Genesys Fitness, and what actions did you take to navigate these challenging times?

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

GenFit suffered a significant impact. We have built relationships with several local fitness centers in the community and provided services to each center. When the directive to quarantine was given, all our contracts were severed. It was the first time since its



inception that I had no classes. Nothing! For about 60 days, GenFit was at a standstill.

I had to decide whether to continue or close the doors. I decided to pivot into the virtual space and reinvent GenFit as a viable online option. I used this moment to market GenFit as a source of group fitness classes and a health and wellness coaching team. Making that decision was a game-changer! We positioned ourselves as a health and wellness team that could provide strategies on how to maintain your wellness during the quarantine.

Becoming virtual allowed me to expand our footprint nationwide. In addition to providing virtual group training services, GenFit has an app that offers online personal training services. I also became a contributor to several magazines and created a weekly segment on Instagram called "Talk About It Tuesday." We used that time to partner with other professionals who were also quarantined. Those partnerships are still in place, and we continue to grow.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Where do you see Genesys Fitness in the next five years, and what are your goals for the company's future growth? Can you please share your social media platforms with our readers? We wish you continuous success.

COACH BEVERLY K. JOHNSON:

Last year, we created a new extension of GenFit called the EPIC Academy. The EPIC Academy was created to provide sustainable solutions for those seeking 1-on-1 coaching. The EPIC Academy is a 6-step process designed to provide a customized fitness and weight loss program that offers specialized solutions for your lifestyle, goals, body type, and age. In the next few years, I envision GenFit expanding our EPIC Academy offerings, publishing books, and hosting wellness seminars and retreats. GenFit provides an incredible service, and we want more people to experience it.

Here are my social media handles. I'd love for everyone to remain connected with GenFit. Thank you so much for taking the time to chat with me.

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/imbeverlyjohnson/>
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/beverlyjohnson/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/coachbeverlyjohnson>

NISHA PERSHAY

"NISHA'S TOP PRODUCTS CHOICES FOR HAIR MASK"

Many people don't know much about hair masks and the importance of using one. We are routine with wash and go or cold washes when necessary. We don't consider the in-between treatments before or after styling, but I will get into the importance because a hair mask should now be considered part of your process.

First, what is a hair mask, and why should you consider using it? A hair mask is an intensely nourishing treatment to help strengthen, hydrate, de-frizz, and restore dry, damaged, processed, or curly hair to healthy bounce and shine. What is the difference between a hair conditioner and a hair mask? Hair masks are deep hydration treatments used infrequently for intensive restorative hair care, while hair conditioners are lighter moisturizers you can use every time you shampoo.

Many people use a daily conditioner and an occasional hair mask to keep their hair healthy and strong! Think of a hair mask as another protective layer of moisturizer that your hair can genuinely benefit from, and I'd rather have leave-in and rinse-out versions of conditioners and hair masks. The difference is that conditioners are more surface level on the hair, while masks deeply condition the shaft to provide nutrients.



TYPES OF HAIR HYDRATION TREATMENTS: LEAVE-IN AND RINSE-OUT MASKS

Hair masks are sold in tub containers that you reach into or squeeze tubes to dispense the cream into your hands. Traditional masks are massaged into damp hair from about midway through the ends, left in the hair for 2-10 minutes, and then rinsed out. Some hair masks, such as Strengthen, Repair, and Smooth formulas, are applied directly to damp or dry hair and left in to continue hydrating, sealing, and smoothing.

1 - MIELLE ORGANICS ROSEMARY MINT STRENGTHENING HAIR MASQUE:

Essential Oil & Biotin Deep Treatment, Miracle Repair for Dry, Damaged, & Frizzy Hair



2 - SHEAMOISTURE RAW SHEA BUTTER MOISTURIZING HAIR MASK:

SheaMoisture's Moisture Recovery Treatment Masque deeply moisturizes and repairs dry, damaged, or over-processed hair. An all-natural intensive treatment perfect for transitioning chemically treated hair to healthy natural hair.



3- TGIN HONEY MIRACLE HAIR MASK PACKET:

Honey Miracle Hair Mask is like an instant makeover for dry, damaged, or colored treated hair. This luxurious deep conditioner contains raw honey for softer, shinier tresses, jojoba, and olive oils, which nourish and heal strands that need repair!



4- CAROL'S DAUGHTER GODDESS STRENGTH REPAIRING COCOON HYDRATING MASK FOR CURLY HAIR:

The Goddess Strength Cocoon Hair Mask from Carol's Daughter is blended with ingredients like Castor Oil, Ginger, and Wheat Protein. Our non-sticky formula has a unique creamy fiber texture that effortlessly wraps around curly hair like a cocoon to help lock in moisture, repair damage, and protect dry-damaged hair from future breakage for goddess-like strength and growth.



5- CURL DYNASTY PUMPKIN MINT DEEP TREATMENT DEEP CONDITIONING MASQUE:

Repair dry, damaged curls with Pumpkin Mint Deep Treatment Masque. This restorative deep conditioner is designed to penetrate the hair shaft, delivering natural vitamins, nutrients, and antioxidants for strong, healthy hair.



6 - EDEN BODYWORKS COCONUT SHEA HAIR MASQUE:

Coconut Shea Hair Masque penetrates the hair shaft to transform dry, brittle hair through an intensely moisturizing botanical blend of Coconut Oil and Shea Butter to deliver softer, stronger hair. Penetrates hair shaft to transform dry, brittle hair through an intensely moisturizing botanical blend of Coconut Oil and Shea Butter to have smoother, stronger hair.



TRAVEL AND LEISURE INTERNATIONAL

Embark on a journey to some of the world's most fascinating destinations and immerse yourself in their undeniable charm. From the bustling streets of Tokyo to the romantic canals of Venice, these top 5 travel destinations offer an unforgettable mix of cultural wonders, breathtaking landscapes, and awe-inspiring experiences. Whether you seek adventure, relaxation, or a taste of different cultures, these destinations will leave you with memories that will last a lifetime.

HERE ARE THE TOP 5 INTERNATIONAL PLACES TO TRAVEL THIS FALL SEASON:

1. KYOTO, JAPAN:

With its stunning autumn foliage, ancient temples, and traditional culture, Kyoto is a must-visit destination during the fall season.



2. CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA:

Fall marks the beginning of spring in Cape Town, making it a great time to visit. Enjoy beautiful landscapes, stunning beaches, and diverse wildlife.



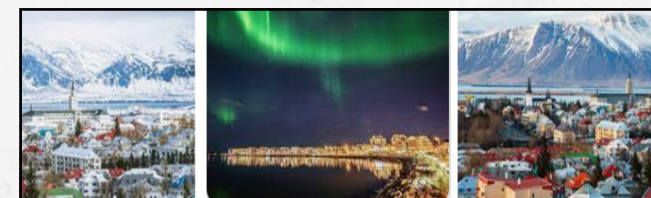
3. SANTORINI, GREECE:

Experience the magical charm of Santorini in the fall when the crowds are smaller. Enjoy breathtaking sunsets, whitewashed buildings, and delicious Greek cuisine.



4. VANCOUVER, CANADA:

The fall foliage in Vancouver is absolutely spectacular. Visit Stanley Park, take a stroll along the seawall, and explore the vibrant city.



5. REYKJAVIK, ICELAND:

Witness the stunning Northern Lights in the fall as you explore Iceland's beautiful landscapes, hot springs, and unique geothermal pools.

These destinations offer a mix of natural beauty, cultural experiences, and unique attractions. Safe travels.



TIFFANY FERGUSON

MEET CEO OF SIMPLY ESSENTIAL BY TIFFANY

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Welcome to Women Innovators. We have the pleasure of interviewing Queens native Tiffany Ferguson. Tiffany is changing the game in the skincare industry by creating organic products with all-natural ingredients. Can you share a little background about your upbringing?

TIFFANY FERGUSON:

To start, I would like to thank you again for this opportunity. I am honored to be featured in your magazine and appreciate your interest in my business. I am Tiffany, born and raised in Queens, New York. I grew up in a loving home with my mother and sisters and was raised with the importance of family and taking care of yourself by any means. These are things they don't teach you in school. Luckily for me, my family kept me grounded, and with that said, I always put my best foot forward in all that I do.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What inspired you to get into the skincare business?

TIFFANY FERGUSON:

Skincare was always my personal addiction at a very young age. Before I knew how necessary it was, I was most interested in how it made me feel. I felt so clean, and while growing up, my mother stressed the importance of being clean and keeping yourself groomed and together at all times. I started by making my own homemade face scrubs with items in my cabinets and refrigerator. When I determined how simple it was and how creative you could get, it became so enjoyable to me. I control how I want the items to look, smell, feel, and more. As an adult, you can do anything if you have some money to invest. I started small and gradually added new items to my shop. At this time, I have a little over 40 items available!

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What keeps you motivated to keep going?

TIFFANY FERGUSON:

Whenever I question my purpose, I reflect on my impact on people's lives. They come to me with self-esteem issues, and my goal is to reassure them by providing good quality products that'll make a difference in their lives. This industry is very rewarding. In my opinion, I love

"a job well done" or improvement in areas that may have been damaged or temporarily altered in some way. My products are safe enough for babies to use and on different skin types and ethnicities. I try to remain different because this is a saturated industry, but keeping my products authentic and consistent keeps my customers returning year after year. I am so thankful for that.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What differentiates Simply Essential by Tiffany from other skincare businesses?

TIFFANY FERGUSON:

Over here at S.E.B.T., we provide a personal experience. There is nothing systematic over what we have you won't find in stores. All of our products are handmade with love!

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Can you tell us how you came up with the various products you offer?

TIFFANY FERGUSON:

Many of my products are customer-requested. Either I will get an inquiry on product availability, and if not current-



ly available, I may incorporate it as a new product in my offerings.

In other cases, I find interests on my own and decide to add new products, which are often based on the season, holiday, or time of year.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What are some of your biggest struggles with running your business?

TIFFANY FERGUSON:

Sometimes, I notice that I struggle with consistency. At times, it can be hard to remain focused. I am sure this is a common hurdle that many business owners suffer from because aside from being in business, we are mothers, sisters, and friends all while working a full-time job so it can be a lot. Still, once you find a balance, you can juggle doing many things simultaneously and succeed!

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How do you stay connected with your customers, and what role do social media platforms play in your marketing strategy?

TIFFANY FERGUSON:

In this day and age, social media runs the world. It is

nearly impossible to network any business without it. Whether you have a large following or now, the plan is to get as many intrigued customers as possible and keep them entertained. This includes sending out email campaigns, having promos, and advertising them via social media. I honestly feel like it is so much easier than it has ever been to network right now. The platforms available are so resourceful and life-changing.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How do you see the skincare industry evolving, and how can you keep up with those changes?

TIFFANY FERGUSON:

Skincare is an industry that will always be appealing because of all the creatives in the world today. We all want to be different somehow; however, we still want to give people what they want and need. The plan is to continue researching and staying informed on the latest on everything skincare/self-care related with hopes to prosper.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What is next for Simply Es-

sential by Tiffany? Are there any upcoming events or launches that you are excited about? Please share website and social media information to continue following your journey. We wish you continuous success.

TIFFANY FERGUSON:

We are finalizing the company's rebranding, so offering a new modern look and new products to our lineup is exciting. We also plan to participate in more local events and expos. By the end of the year, the goal is to increase our customer base, expand worldwide, and get the brand circulating everywhere! I am patient during the process, and with the love and support of those around me, I firmly believe this can happen.

Website:

<https://simplyessentialbytiffany.com>

Instagram:

[simply_essentialbytiffany](https://www.instagram.com/simply_essentialbytiffany)

Facebook:

[Simply Essential by Tiffany](https://www.facebook.com/SimplyEssentialbyTiffany)





JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

Welcome to COBS Magazine. We are delighted to be interviewing Brooklyn native artist Javon Antwon Williams. Javon is committed to developing and finding ways to take the entertainment industry by storm. Before discussing your musical journey, please give us a little backstory about your upbringing.

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

Thank you for having me; it's a pleasure. A little about me: I was born in Crown Heights but raised in East New York. I attended public schools in Brooklyn from Kindergarten to 12th grade. I am the third of four children, and let's say I'm the one who caused the most havoc. My parents have been together since 1983 and have been married since 1995, and my family is very supportive of everything I do. I have an M.B.A. and am currently in school for my D.B.A.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

Can you tell us about your journey as a multi-talented artist in the music industry? How did you discover your passion for singing, choreography, and writing lyrics?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

I've been singing since I was about 5. As a kid, my dad would have company over on weekends, and I'd be asleep because it was past my bedtime. The next thing I know, my dad is waking me

up to go into the living room to sing and perform for him and his friends. I have always loved to sing but didn't develop my passion for the arts until middle school. I went to a predominantly Arabic and Indian middle school. At least, I think those were the ethnicities, lol. Besides my sister and I, there was only a handful of colored students. I say this to say that I was different from the majority, and though I didn't speak their primary language when I attended the music class and sang, everyone stopped and listened. That is when I realized I had a voice, naturally and musically. I used to mimic artists I loved and cover their songs, and it felt good to be able to please someone or have someone want to know who you are because of your talent. It gave me a purpose because I realized how universal it was.

I originally started as a dance teacher for a local nonprofit, where I would lead the talent for their annual benefit dinners. With a group of about 40 – 50 dancers performing for the likes of the N.F.L. Foundation, former President Bill Clinton, Cicely Tyson, Gov Andrew Cuomo, and the list goes on. Once it was known that I could dance and sing as an artist naturally connected with me, I began to create choreography for them and teach them how to sing and dance simultaneously. Writing came to me naturally because I was always a great storyteller, whether it be through dance or music. I also wanted to be true to the music I was putting out, so I vowed to write everything I sang from firsthand experience. It all felt good, and when I saw how it made others feel, I never wanted to stop.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

How do you balance your artistic roles as a singer, choreographer, and lyrics writer? Do you find one to be more challenging than the others?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

Umm, balance lol, what is that lol. Seriously, I get into a zone where I feel it

all, and I begin to visually see what I want to be done, what I want to hear, and how I want it to be presented to the world and begin to strategize on how to bring it to fruition but my way. The lyrics were the most challenging part for me if I had to choose. I do not want to be too vulnerable or share too much at times. However, I still ensure that everything delivered is authentic and relatable to the individuals supporting my movement.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

How does your creative process differ when you're working on composing music, choreographing dance routines, and writing lyrics? Which aspect of your artistry do you enjoy the most?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

I absolutely love love live performances. I'm often told that my live performances are second to none, and that's because I leave it all on the stage, no matter the size or location of the stage. When I write music, I automatically think of how it would be performed. I think of the steps that could be done and how it would be received. I feel like they all go together; you cannot do one without considering how it connects to the other.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

Could you share a specific moment or experience where your skills as a singer, choreographer, and lyrics writer came together perfectly, resulting in a memorable performance or song?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

My newest single, "Elevate" (Out on all platforms), was a mistake. Once again, I did not want to be too vulnerable



but wanted to be true to myself. I wrote the entire song as a rap, but my slogan is "King of HipHop Soul," I wanted to add some tone and harmony to it, so I went into the booth and just recorded. I was talking about some of it, singing, and rapping about some of it. I was initially skeptical because it is much slower than past singles I have put out, but the timing was great—I'm not used to performing slow songs. When I was gearing up for my first performance of the single, I intentionally ensured the lighting and fog machines erupted at the right time, and the yellow dimmers were in place. I was nervous, but the first time I performed it, the audience flooded me knowing the entire chorus; it was the perfect scene.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

How do you approach the collaborative process when working with other artists or musicians? How do you ensure your vision is effectively translated across different artistic disciplines?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

I approach it the way I approach life. I look for a connection and love for the music, and we take it from there. In complete transparency, I am a bit of a control freak and always know what I want, so I am very expressive. I love the creative process and love creating a space where individuals can be vulnerable and authentic to the culture.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

As an artist who wears multiple hats, what challenges do you face in managing your time and energy? How do you stay motivated and inspired to continue pushing boundaries in your work?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

At times, staying motivated is hard; you know the industry is based on numbers and fame, not so much talent anymore. I have seen many individuals blow up or go viral with no talent. Managing my time is very hard. Working full-time, going to school, and making time for oneself are all jobs, but you make time for the things you love. My inspiration is built within, and it gets stronger. I promised my

late brother and aunt, who was my manager that I'd never stop, and I plan to do just that and keep going.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

Do you have any rituals or practices that help you maintain a creative mindset and overcome creative blocks when working on new music, choreography, or lyrics?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

I like to stay in my own zone when studio sessions and performances are approaching. I remain to myself and love being alone. I stay very quiet, which is hard for me to do.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

How has your artistry evolved, and what do you hope to achieve with your music, choreography, and lyrics?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

I evolve as an artist daily. I find ways to improve my performance sets and style myself. I hope to achieve a hit record, go on a tour to perform in different states, and get some festival performances going.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

Do you aim to address specific themes or messages through your artistry? How do you use your platform as a singer, choreographer, and lyrics writer to communicate these messages to your audience?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

Yes, the message I address is accurate. Be in love with being yourself, loving yourself, and most of all, be faithful to the message you share with the world. I use my platform on a plethora of levels. I have performed for AIDS prevention, suicide awareness, and LGBTQIA conferences, which affect our world. I always do a tribute in my set and pay homage to who was there before, and believe it or not, I always do a gospel song because that's where it began.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

What advice would you give aspiring artists interested in pursuing a music, dance, and writing career? How can they develop their skills in these different areas and excel in

each discipline?

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

My advice is simple: DO YOU, BE YOU, BE TRUE AND CONSISTENT. Perfect your craft, and know that you can do anything you put your mind to. You're already a star; the world hasn't seen your name in lights yet.

C.O.B.S MAGAZINE:

What upcoming projects or collaborations can your fans look forward to? Are there any new directions or artistic endeavors you are excited about exploring in the future? Can you please share your social media platforms with our readers? Wishing you continuous success.

JAVON ANTWON WILLIAMS:

I am currently working on completing my album; no release date as of yet, but I am also working on premiering my YouTube show "Kickin it with JavonAntwon" and seeking management to have the ability to do bigger shows and gain exposure around the world. My Instagram is @JavonAntwon-Music. My TikTok is JavonAntwon. You can find me on youtube by searching JavonAntwon or www.YouTube.com/JavonAntwon.

Thank you again for the opportunity to COBS





NNETE MATIMA

MEET CEO/FOUNDER OF BLUE LAPIS™

Welcome to Women Innovators. We have the pleasure of interviewing Nnete Matima, a woman who has created a platform to showcase South African fashion to the world. Can you tell us about your journey from being an actress to starting your own boutique?

I've always been a creative lover of the arts. I also was very studious since childhood and had set very firm educational goals for myself (graduate from college and law school). After working in corporate for years, I dedicated my time (and savings) to pursue my acting career. I had auditioned for and got a same-day call-back when I auditioned for The Lion King on Broadway many years back. That's when I admittedly caught the "showbiz bug." I knew this was my time to go for it, finally! I would take the train into NYC from upstate New York almost every day of the week. It was roughly six hours round trip. I researched all the upcoming Broadway auditions and would hit at least two daily. I learned what to wear by watching others, how to cut my music, where

to go, how to line up outside the audition room, etc. These were all things that would have been second nature had I attended a performing arts school. It was winter, so I had to keep changing out of my warm clothes and changing into my audition outfit over and over as I arrived at the next audition spot. I got lost many times until I finally started to get my bearings. These were super long, grueling days. But I was determined. I eventually booked a Broadway show. I also booked several roles in Feature Films, TV shows, and commercials. I became a member of SAG-AFTRA and did all of this without an agent. I am my own agent to this day. I founded Blue Lapis just before the Pandemic because I have always loved fashion and jewelry. I also wanted to give back, which is why I work with Artisans in the rural townships of South Africa. I built everything from scratch, entirely on my own.

COBS MAGAZINE: What inspired you to create Blue Lapis™ as a platform for South African fashion?

NNETE MATIMA: I always wanted to start my own business, but I had so many ideas and did not know which direction to go for a while. I came very close to going into the Hair and Beauty Industry. I'd always worn my traditional South African jewelry pieces and would often get stopped in the street by people admiring them and wanting to know where they were from. One day, it finally clicked.

COBS MAGAZINE:

How do you select the designers and brands featured in your boutique?

NNETE MATIMA:

It was a long process. I lost money- and paid for shipments that never arrived. It took a lot of trial and error until I could find dependable people to work with.

COBS MAGAZINE:

Can you describe the impact that Blue Lapis™ has had on the South African fashion industry?

NNETE MATIMA:

I am still working on that. However, my goal is to showcase South African fashion to the world.

COBS MAGAZINE:

What challenges did you face when establishing and growing Blue Lapis™?

NNETE MATIMA:

Because I built everything from the ground up, I had to first take care of all the legal stuff, like establishing the corporation. Then, I sought out suppliers all the way to South Africa. I also built my own website and got to dabble in photography. There were a lot of moving parts, as you can



imagine. There were a lot of sleepless nights and working around the clock for days at a time.

COBS MAGAZINE:

How do you balance your acting career with managing the boutique?

NNETE MATIMA:

I've always been what I call a skilled multi-tasker. I've always been into a lot of different things at the same time! This is my norm. I think it comes down to good time management.

COBS MAGAZINE:

Could you share any enjoyable or memorable stories from working with South African designers?

NNETE MATIMA:

There was a time early on when I got scammed and lost a lot of money on a shipment that never arrived. It was, in fact, my last bit of money. I felt angry and discouraged. I decided to take a walk around the city (NYC). On my walk, I passed by a restaurant and saw a lady inside waving frantically at me and motioning me to enter. Being a New Yorker, I was hesitant, and it took me a minute, but I eventually obliged. When I walked up to her table, I realized she was my first customer! She

was also wearing a pair of earrings from my boutique! She introduced herself, told me how much she loved the earrings, and said she immediately recognized me from my website. I was floored because here I was, feeling like all was lost. I took that moment of serendipity as a sign from the universe that I was on the right track. I mean, what are the odds of that happening? I pushed on with renewed faith.

COBS MAGAZINE:

What sets Blue Lapis™ apart from other fashion boutiques?

NNETE MATIMA:

Blue Lapis is a fashion boutique with a cause. We offer beautiful, unique pieces and empower the Artisans who create them by putting them in a position to make money. I feel that is one of the most powerful things one can do for another- put them in a place to make money.

COBS MAGAZINE:

How do you envision the future of South African fashion and the role of Blue Lapis™ in it?

NNETE MATIMA:

I not only seek to showcase South African fashion to the world, but I'd also like to ex-

pand beyond jewelry.

COBS MAGAZINE:

What advice would you give to aspiring actors who also have an interest in entrepreneurship?

NNETE MATIMA:

The universe is abundant. Go for it! Educate and plan as much as possible. Come up with a strategy and execute it. You may or may not be blessed with a mentor or two to show you the ropes. If not, don't let that discourage you. Learn from your mistakes and keep going!

COBS MAGAZINE:

What message or legacy do you hope to leave through your work with Blue Lapis™? Can you please share your website and social media platforms with our readers? Thank you, and we wish you continuous success.

NNETE MATIMA:

I hope to inspire others to dream and execute their dreams. Our time on Earth is relatively short. So, we must maximize our experience.

Website: www.Shopblue lapis.com
Instagram/Facebook: Shop-luelapis





C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Welcome to C.O.B.S. Women's Werk. We are delighted to be interviewing Pamela Cone, who is actively engaged in her community and women's ministry. What inspired you to start Curated Spaces?

PAMELA CONE:

What inspired me to start Curated Spaces is my desire to use all the gifts and talents God has given me. You can do as many things as you have means and opportunities. This philosophy came from my parents, who were also entrepreneurs. They always encouraged me, and my mother still does. My father would always tell me I would own my own business one day. My mother told me I would be an author. It's in my blood, and they never told me what I couldn't do; they told me who I was destined to be!

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Can you explain the concept behind Curated Spaces and how the company operates?

PAMELA CONE:

Curated Spaces, LLC. is the fusion of the art of communication, the principles, and elements of design to provide content, style, and décor, products, and services with purposeful intention. Our mission is to intentionally design euphonious and aesthet-

ically pleasing structured functional spaces that evoke inspiration.

Curated Spaces is me! I believe your brand is who you are and what you do. Under the umbrella of Curated are content, style, and décor. The content is spiritually based, as I am a minister. I have been in ministry for over 30 years. Curated Christian Journals house the content. The journals are designed to facilitate spiritual growth and development. I currently have two journals published.

Curated Spiritual Content is a Christian journal designed to create structured spiritual content. This tool will assist content creators in providing spiritual content for listeners to identify better and retain received knowledge.

Curated Spiritual Growth is for those seeking to gauge their spiritual growth. The journal is designed to measure spiritual growth from spiritual instruction received and from individual personal study.

Destiny Chaser is a Christian self-help book and guide for those seeking alignment in their life and direction to move more purposefully. I also offer a 2-part cohort for readers. The next cohort will be in the first quarter of 2024.

I have a virtual platform, Wisdom & Grace, a virtual community for spiritual, interpersonal, and professional growth. I offer a bi-annual ten-week virtual cohort. Our next cohort convenes this September through November. We previously hosted an in-person conference in 2022.

Scheduled for January, my new podcast, Sunday Mornings with Pamela Cone, will air. My previous podcast, Curated Conversations with Pamela Cone, has archived episodes that can be found on Amazon. We are set to publish six more publications by the end of 2024! The next two phases,

style, and décor are in the process of being added, and hopefully, some will be available online by the time this article is published. Pamela's Curated Coffee & Gift Shop, 3 - Curated Fashion Boutiques, a Curated Furniture Gallery, and the Wisdom & Grace Christian Book Store. All of these will be online. I am also developing two products under style - skincare and fragrance.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What sets Curated Spaces apart from similar businesses in the market?

PAMELA CONE:

What sets me apart from other businesses is that I refuse to allow myself to be placed in a box or forced to choose one interest. Curated Spaces is a fusion! I want to master using all of my gifts and talents to the fullest and the glory of God. Additionally, I believe my content is unique. I haven't found a journal that charts spiritual growth as a focus. I haven't found a journal where I can organize a year's sermon content. The thoughts explored in Destiny Chaser may not be unique, but they are organized in such a thought-provoking way that the reader is guided through their own search for their destiny and journey.

My future publications are mainly from what I've learned and have been inclined to share from my three-year-long study of the Book of Proverbs and now coupled with my study of the Book of Psalms. These will also be devotional guides and tools as opposed to daily motivational words as provided in most journals. The reader/



student, as with the other journals, will be prompted to commit and act according to what they have learned. The objective is for them to realize a sense of growth.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How do you approach business development, and what strategies have been successful for you?

PAMELA CONE:

1. I look and listen for the need for a product or service.
2. I built my brand based on who I am!
3. Marketing myself and conjunction with my products.
4. I have an understanding of who my customer is.
5. I look to see how my customer is visibly seen and provided for in the marketplace.
6. I have learned how to be patient when launching a new product.
7. I have support! I check in with individuals I asked to be a part of my board, staff - of 1, and a team.
8. I have those who believe in and support me and my vision.
9. I don't despise humble beginnings!
10. What I don't know, I'm not afraid to ask.
11. I am doing my best to lay a good foundation.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Can you share examples of successful partnerships or collaborations you facilitated through Curated Spaces?

PAMELA CONE:

My customers are primarily women. I have great relationships with women's organizations in my community. I seek out like-minded people and spaces. I have served on many boards within my community. I support small businesses.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What advice would you give aspiring entrepreneurs and business development professionals?

PAMELA CONE:

Seek out organizations that will assist you in starting your small

business. There are resources available that will help you understand the process to get started. Be careful with your finances. Network with individuals offering what you need for your business, i.e., business advisors, accountants, strategists, etc. Understand that you may not be profitable overnight. Therefore, be able to wait for a financial return on your investment.

Get a Copy of Pamela's Coffee Table Books
Unapologetically Phenomenal Is a curated coffee table book featuring prose poetry by Pamela Cone. Pamela loves creative writing and has coupled this love with her background in African-American Studies and her lived experiences. The prose is rich, colorful, and rooted in her faith. The book will encourage readers to embrace themselves and realize that God has curated them wholeheartedly.

Latter Rain -Is a curated coffee table book featuring prose poetry by Pamela Cone. Pamela loves creative writing and has coupled this love for the Word of God and her lived experiences. The prose is rich, colorful, and rooted in her faith. The book will encourage readers to embrace their faith in God and commit a time to prayer and reflection to curate spiritual growth.

C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What are your plans and goals for Curated Spaces? Please can you share one of your favorite daily affirmations? Can you share any websites and social media platforms for our readers to follow you? We wish you continued success.

PAMELA CONE:

I'm excited about all the new things I shared! The online stores and my upcoming podcast. I invite your readers to the Wisdom & Grace Fall Cohort 2023 from September to November. And to stay tuned for Sunday Mornings with Pamela Cone in January 2024. I'm scheduling special guests now and accepting advertisers and sponsors.

Curated Christian Journals
• Website

Curated Christian Journals
• Facebook
• Instagram

Follow Pamela Cone on

• Facebook
• Instagram
• LinkedIn

Wisdom & Grace

• Facebook
• Eventbrite - Wisdom & Grace 2023 Fall Cohort

Coming Soon:

• Sunday Mornings with Pamela Cone
• Facebook
• Instagram

Archived Podcast

• Curated Conversations with Pamela Cone

Online Shops

• Website
Pamela's Curated Coffee & Gift Shop Facebook

• Website
• www.curatedspacesllc.com



DIVERSE VOICES IN LITERATURE: 5 YOUNG BLACK AUTHORS REDEFINING THE NARRATIVE

Literature has always been a powerful medium for storytelling, providing a platform for voices to be heard and stories to be shared. In recent years, the literary world has seen an exciting surge of young black authors redefining the narrative and enriching the literary landscape with their unique perspectives and powerful storytelling. Let's explore the work of five young black authors who significantly impact literature.

1. **ANGIE THOMAS**

Angie Thomas burst onto the literary scene with her debut novel "The Hate U Give," a powerful and timely story that addresses themes of race, police brutality, and activism. The book follows the life of Starr Carter, a young black girl who witnesses the fatal shooting of her unarmed best friend by a police officer. "The Hate U Give" became an instant bestseller and was adapted into a critically acclaimed film. Angie Thomas's authentic portrayal of contemporary social issues has resonated with readers worldwide, making her a trailblazing voice in young adult literature.

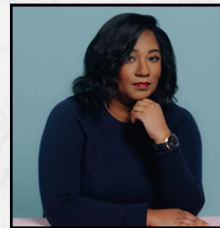


2. **TOMI ADEYEMI**

Tomi Adeyemi is an award-winning Nigerian-American author known for her young adult fantasy trilogy "Legacy of Orisha." The series, which includes "Children of Blood and Bone" and "Children of Virtue and Vengeance," is set in a richly imagined world inspired by West African mythology. Tomi's novels showcase strong black characters navigating themes of power, identity, and societal injustice. Her work has received widespread acclaim for its lush world-building and compelling storytelling, earning her a dedicated fanbase and multiple literary awards.

3. **BRIT BENNETT**

Brit Bennett is a brilliant contemporary fiction writer whose novels explore complex themes of race, identity, and family dynamics. Her debut novel, "The Mothers," gained critical acclaim for its exploration of secrets and choices that shape the lives of three young characters in a tight-knit African American community. Her second novel, "The Vanishing Half," became a bestseller and a National Book Award finalist. Brit Bennett has become a prominent voice in contemporary literature through her poignant storytelling and multidimensional characters.



4. **AKWAEKE EMEZI**

Akwaeke Emezi is a non-binary Nigerian-American author known for their genre-defying and thought-provoking work. Their debut novel, "Freshwater," blends elements of mythology, spirituality, and mental health to tell the story of a young Nigerian woman with multiple selves. Their novel "Pet" received critical acclaim for its exploration of justice, identity, and the courage to stand against oppression. Akwaeke Emezi's fearless approach to storytelling challenges societal norms and expands the boundaries of traditional literature.

5. **N.K. JEMISIN**

N.K. Jemisin is a groundbreaking author in the speculative fiction genre, mainly known for her captivating fantasy series "The Broken Earth Trilogy." The trilogy, which includes "The Fifth Season," "The Obelisk Gate," and "The Stone Sky," garnered critical acclaim and made Jemisin the first author to win three consecutive Hugo Awards for Best Novel. Her works explore oppression, power, and resilience, centering on black characters in a richly imagined world. N.K. Jemisin's masterful storytelling has reshaped the fantasy genre and cemented her place as one of the most influential voices in speculative fiction.



Conclusion

The emergence of these young black authors in the literary world marks a pivotal moment in literature. Through their powerful storytelling and insightful exploration of social issues, they reshape narratives and offer diverse perspectives that resonate with readers of all backgrounds. As these authors continue to pave the way, it is evident that the future of literature will be enriched by the voices of young black authors who are unapologetically sharing their truths and experiences with the world.

ARIELLE PERSHAY

TIPS & TRICKS TO STAY FIT

Hey, Beautiful people. I am back with other tips and tricks to stay fit. Now that fall is approaching, and soon we will eat some yummy foods for the holidays, I think it's time to detox. Yes. I said it, DETOX! Keep reading to see what benefits you will get from detoxing.

Are you to get rid of the negativity? I know I am. Let's go!

Detoxing, or detoxification, can be beneficial for several reasons. Our bodies are exposed to environmental toxins, food, and even stress. Detoxing helps to eliminate these toxins and promote overall well-being. Here are a few specific benefits of detoxing:



1. **Enhances energy levels:**

By eliminating toxins, detoxing allows our body's organs, such as the liver and kidneys, to function optimally. This can result in increased energy levels and improved vitality.

2. **Boosts the immune system:**

When toxins accumulate in our bodies, they can strain our immune system, making us more susceptible to illnesses. Detoxing supports the immune system by reducing the toxic load, allowing it to focus on fighting off potential threats.



3. **Improves digestion:**

Detoxing often involves consuming whole, unprocessed foods rich in fiber and essential nutrients. This can aid digestion, promote regular bowel movements, and improve nutrient absorption.



4. **Promotes weight loss:**

Toxins can sometimes interfere with our metabolism, making it harder to maintain a healthy weight. Detoxing can help reset our metabolism, making weight loss efforts more effective.

5. **Enhances mental clarity:**

Detoxing not only focuses on cleansing the body but also the mind. We can experience improved mental clarity, concentration, and enhanced cognitive function by eliminating toxins.

It's important to note that detoxing should be approached in a mindful and balanced manner. It's always a good idea to consult with a health-care professional before embarking on any detox program to ensure it aligns with your needs and health goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to leave you with this: You are already beautiful, you are already talented, you have a purpose, you are needed in this world, and lastly, you are more than enough.



BLACK FASHION BRANDS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN 2023 GET READY! GET READY! GET READY

This generation of Fashion designers is breaking new ground with the direction of brand forwarding. These groups of Fashion designers are the most stylish people in the industry, and their creative style is unique. The black community has consistently influenced the fashion industry with our unique hairstyles, jewelry, acrylic nails, and our flair for color. What inspires me the most is when a celebrity or political figure wears an unknown black designer clothing, it sends sales off the roof. Meet a group of upcoming pioneers who are going to change the world through the eyes of fashion.



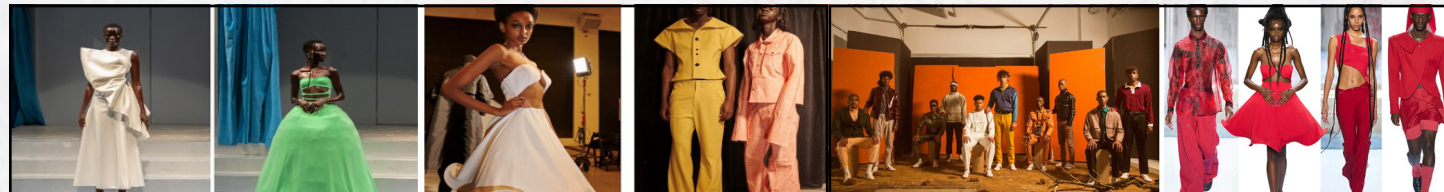
BRAND: THEOPHILIO FOUNDER – EDVIN THOMPSON

Edvin Thompson, the Jamaican-American designer behind Theophilio, a contemporary clothing brand based in Brooklyn, New York. He developed his label as admission to the stories the world often fails to comprehend for people who look like himself—fusing nostalgia from his juhttps://www.instagram.com/headofstate_/venile years in Jamaica meeting New York City's progressive culture. Cultural identity has been essential in implementing the brand's ideology. At the root of his designs, there's a focus on the celebrations of life after overcoming obstacles and triumphs along the way. Believing we all should look and feel good facing our adversaries. As an immigrant himself, Edvin Thompson is here to champion the voices of those alike, making Theophilio a wearable biography. INSTAGRAM theophilio, EMAIL: tph@theophilionyc.com



BRAND: HEAD OF STATE – FOUNDER - TAOFEK ABIJAKO

Nigerian-born Tafeek Abijako is a multidisciplinary artist recognized for his ability to express social and political commentary through the marriage of personal narratives, material study, and historical contexts. From an early age, Abijako was introduced to fashion by tagging with his father to his studio in Lagos, Nigeria. This led to Abijako's fascination with the intersection between art and everyday social relationships in marginalized spaces. In 2018, Abijako presented his S/S '19 collection for HOS at NYFW: Men's, making him the youngest designer to show at the event. Recognized by the Forbes 30 Under 30 list for the class of 2019, Abijako has received renowned accolades such as CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund, Brooklyn Museum/Instagram Design Visionary Grant, and FGI RisingStar Award Finalist. https://www.instagram.com/headofstate_/



BRAND: PHEMUS – FOUNDER - JAMES FLEMONS

Founded by James Flemons in 2013, Phlemuns is a Black-owned fashion label based in Los Angeles. Born out of a desire to bridge the gap between elevated fashion and everyday communities, the unisex brand adopts an inclusive 'slow-fashion' approach, meticulously crafting each collection with intentional design and accessibility in mind. Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/phlemuns/



BRAND: AGBOBLY – FOUNDER JACQUES AGBOBLY

Brooklyn native Agboby attended Parsons School of Design, developing a sartorial world in homage to their homeland, Togo, Africa, and their intersecting Black and queer identities. It's imperative for designers today to know the story they will tell, and Agboby tells one with nostalgia, longing, and love through their burgeoning knitwear label, Black Boy Knits.



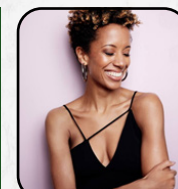
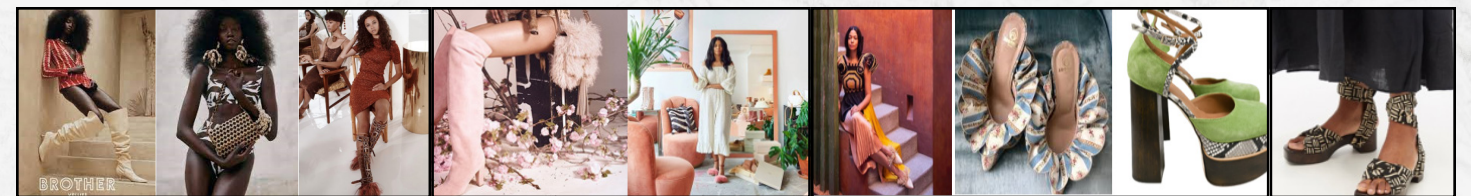
BRAND: PRÝER MOSS FOUNDER – KERBY JEAN-RAYMOND

Founded in 2013, the Haitian designer started with menswear before expanding into womenswear, and he's only gotten more buzz. Stars like Lil Nas X, Issa Rae, and Tracee Ellis Ross have worn his creations, and he was also named one of Time Magazine's 100 most influential people in 2019.



BRAND: BROTHER VELLIES FOUNDER – AURORA JAMES

Toronto native and New York City transplant Aurora James is the Creative Director and Founder of the luxury accessories brand Brother Vellies. Founded in 2013 to keep traditional African design practices and techniques alive while also creating and sustaining artisanal jobs, Brother Vellies is now handmade across the globe. Before founding Brother Vellies, James amassed an impressive resume of industry experience. Her background in fashion, journalism, art, photography, and horticulture joins a forever passion for artisanship, design, and humanitarianism to create truly one-of-a-kind pieces you will have in your wardrobe forever. Dedicated followers wear Brother Vellies regularly, including Beyonce, Meghan Markle, Zendaya, Rihanna, Serena Williams, Lady Gaga, Katy Perry, Chrissy Teigen, and Solange.



BRAND: CUSHNIE FOUNDER – CARLY CUSHNIE

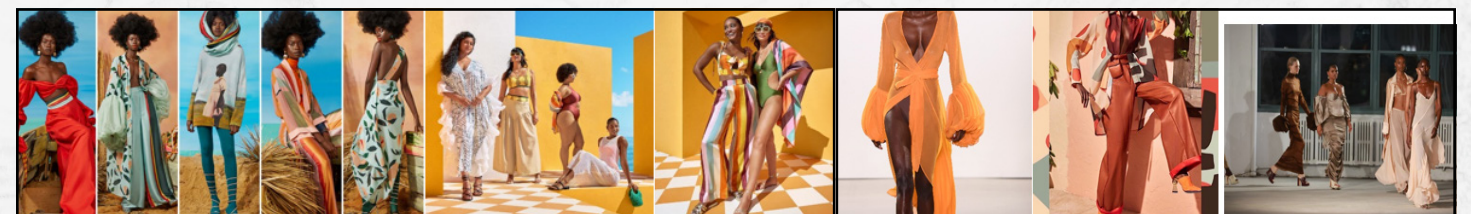
Designer Carly Cushnie's sleek styles have been worn by many prominent names, including Jennifer Lopez, Halle Berry, Selena Gomez, Ashley Graham, Lupita Nyong'o, and Michelle Obama. Dubbed "one of the most prominent Black-owned brands in American fashion" by the New York Times, Cushnie paved the way for Black women in fashion. Her streamlined silhouettes and luxe fabrics were total "wow" masterpieces, so the world was v shocked when Cushnie was forced to close due to financial burdens spurred by the pandemic. Thankfully, the designer is still creating in a new—and pint-sized—way. Her most recent work includes designing a collab for the iconic American Girl dolls. It was perfectly timed, too, seeing how she's been killin' it taking care of her kids at home! (reference Cosmopolitan Magazine 25 Black Fashion Designers)



BRAND: NOEL FOUNDER – FELISHA NOEL

Fe Noel is a womenswear designer from Brooklyn, NY, who is passionate about travel, loves vibrant colors and has a penchant for bold prints. She entered the industry at 19, opening a brick-and-mortar boutique for vintage lovers and trendsetters in Brooklyn. That boutique catalyzed today's namesake clothing and lifestyle womenswear brand 'Fe Noel' and further stimulated her desire to help women embrace their femininity.

Fe is heavily influenced by her Caribbean heritage and large, close-knit family. She especially holds her mother and grandmother in high regard, crediting them for showing what drive, determination, and humble hearts will earn you. Aside from designing, she enjoys helping other young women start their own businesses, which she can accomplish through the Fe Noel Foundation, a program for young girls passionate about entrepreneurship.



EMPOWERING THE FUTURE: BLACK YOUTH LEADING THE WAY IN TECHNOLOGY CAREERS

Introduction:

In recent years, there has been a growing movement to diversify the technology industry, aiming to break down the barriers that have historically excluded underrepresented groups, particularly Black youth. Despite facing systemic challenges and inequalities, black youth are making significant strides in technology careers, revolutionizing the industry and inspiring a new generation to embrace the world of coding, innovation, and digital transformation. This article will explore the inspiring stories of black youth carving a path in technology, highlighting their accomplishments, challenges, and the importance of fostering an inclusive tech ecosystem.

Rising Against the Odds:

Historically, black youth have faced numerous obstacles in pursuing careers in technology. Limited access to quality education, lack of role models, and implicit biases have hindered their progress. However, today's generation is fiercely determined to change the narrative. Armed with passion, resilience, and an unwavering belief in their capabilities, black youth leverage their unique experiences to drive innovation and make a lasting impact in the tech world.

SUCCESS STORIES

Across the globe, black youth have risen to prominence in technology careers, proving that talent knows no boundaries. One example is Kimberly Bryant, the founder of Black Girls CODE, a non-profit organization that empowers young black girls to become tech leaders. Through innovative coding programs and mentorship, Bryant breaks down barriers and nurtures the next generation of tech superstars.



Young black visionaries like Iddris Sandu and Jewel Burks Solomon have demonstrated their brilliance in the entrepreneurial space. Iddris Sandu, a computer programmer, and entrepreneur, has collaborated with giants like Google, Instagram, and Snapchat to develop cutting-edge technology.

Jewel Burks Solomon co-founded Partpic, an augmented reality-based startup later acquired by Amazon, showcasing how black entrepreneurs are revolutionizing the industry.



Importance of Representation

The impact of representation in the tech industry cannot be overstated. When young black individuals see successful professionals who look like them, they become more inspired and confident in their own abilities. Representation helps break the stereotype that tech is exclusively for specific demographics and encourages black youth to pursue their passions fearlessly.

Mentorship and Support

While black youth have shown remarkable potential in technology careers, providing them with support and mentorship is crucial. Technology companies, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations can play a pivotal role in creating inclusive environments where black youth can thrive. By establishing mentorship programs and offering scholarships, we can ensure that no talented mind is left behind.

Closing the Diversity Gap:

The lack of diversity in the technology industry is a well-documented issue. Employers now recognize the benefits of diverse teams, including increased innovation, creativity, and problem-solving capabilities. To close the diversity gap, companies must prioritize hiring practices that actively seek out and support black youth in technology.

Investing in Education:

Education is the foundation for a successful career in technology. Investing in underserved communities by providing access to quality STEM education is essential. Schools, governments, and tech companies must collaborate to create programs and initiatives that give black youth the tools and knowledge they need to thrive in the digital age.

Conclusion:

The future of technology lies in the hands of those who dare to dream and strive for excellence. Black youth are proving they possess the talent, determination, and ingenuity to lead the way in the tech industry. Their accomplishments, driven by passion and resilience, inspire us to foster a more inclusive tech ecosystem. By providing mentorship, support, and access to education, we can empower black youth to become the tech leaders of tomorrow and ensure that the technology landscape reflects the diversity of our world. Together, we can create a brighter and more equitable future for all.

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JEROMIE "KAKE KING" JONES

CEO/FOUNDER OF SPRINKLE ME BY KAKE KING