

ENTERTAINMENT

Boyz II Men unveil clothing line at Motown bash

By Brenda Kirkpatrick
Sentinel-Voice

The smell of baby powder scented the air, as partygoers horded into a crowded room at the Motown Cafe for the star-studded world premier fashion party launching the Boyz II Men clothing collection.

Partnering with songstress Paula Abdul and her husband, Brad Beckerman, president of the Groove Company, the Philadelphia-based singing group — Nathan Morris, Michael McCary, Shawn Stockman and Wanya Morris — opened the “party of the decade” with a VIP reception.

Inside the New York New York Hotel, the colorful, natural fabric line of clothing, manufactured by The Groove Company, debuted to a cadre of famous faces — Kim Fields, Jermaine Jackson, Robert Gordy, Gale Baker — and well-dressed locals.

To highlight the apparel line’s emphasis on youth, models traipsed down the runway during a fashion show, with an unusually large lollipop in hand. This contemporary sportswear collection is designed for males (Groove Track Productions) and females (Groove Girl) with svelte proportions.

Shucking the loose-fitting clothing craze, the Boyz II Men spring/summer designer wear is long and lean, made of stretch moleskin, jaquard double knits and racer twill fabrics.

Said Beckerman about the girl’s clothing line: “Groove Girl will include updated retro styles with a modern twist. The vintage look will continue to be strong, but we wanted to use updated fabrics.”

After lacing the crowd with an Abdul-choreographed routine, the Grammy Award-winning R & B quartet, strode the runway, modeling their new line. Young ladies ogled.

In between changes of scenes, rap artist, “The Rock” entertained the crowd. The Motown Cafe “in house” entertainers, “The Motown Moments” belted out satisfactory renditions of hit tunes by the Supremes and the Marvelettes. Wearing tight-fitting red sequined gowns, Bernadette Miller, France Neil, Tracey Plunkett and Edwidge Binque tapped 50s and 60s funk and sent the thirtysomethings, fortysomethings and baby boomers on a nostalgic ride “back down memory lane.”

When the entertainment didn’t steal your attention, the food did. Food servers meandered through the throng of people with savory delights — catfish, chicken and jalapeno fingers, steamed



Sentinel-Voice photos by John Broussard

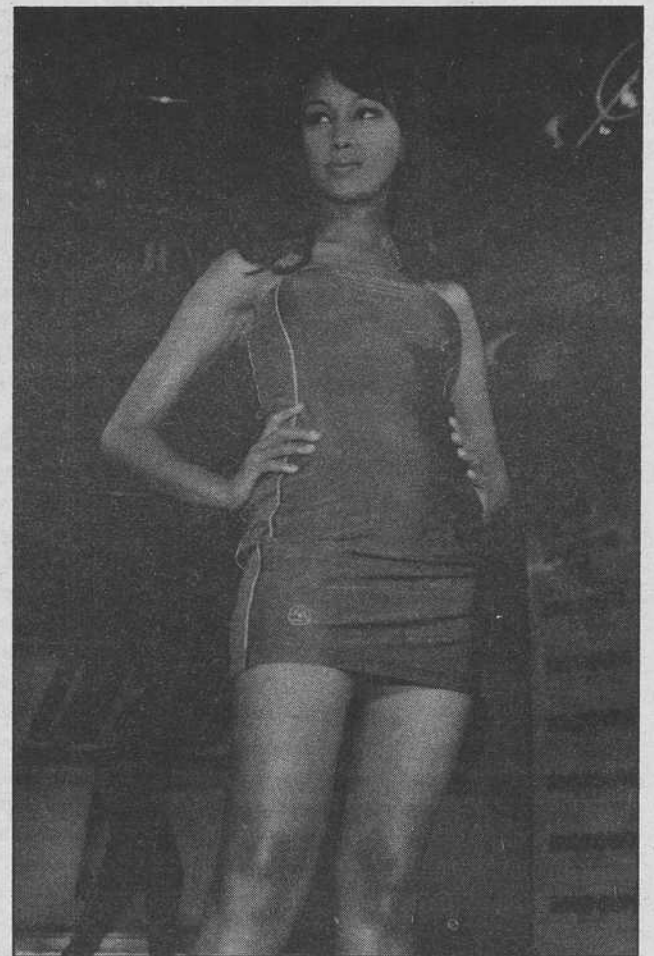
A model (right) showcases the new hip-hop clothing line by Motown recording artists Boyz II Men (above). The apparel, emblazoned with the logo of the Philadelphia singing group’s clothing line, Groove, for men and women, was a big hit at a special VIP party last Thursday at the Motown Cafe. Joining the celebration were Brad Beckerman and his wife Paula Abdul, (below) both partners in the clothing venture.

shrimp, meat balls, egg rolls caps with Groove Partygoers and Motown Cafe’s famous were also treated to gifts: golf barbequed pork ribs. Baseball kangos and Tangueray martini



Adding to the event’s success was the “Magic Show” — a conference for wholesalers and retailers clothiers. Many of the show’s attendants trooped to the Motown Cafe.

A Las Vegas local, “Jack the Rapper,” the first Black



radio personality in the United States, tried to make sense of it all.

“I’ve been going to press parties for years and this is the first time that I realized that

I’m really old. Not only did I know no one here, but I took a photograph with Boyz II Men and acknowledged to them that they’d now have to change their name to “Boyz II Grandpa.”

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