

Designer uses prayer to fashion unique clothing

By Tanya Flanagan
Special to Sentinel-Voice
Deconstructed fashion, huh?

Describing something as "deconstructed" when referring to fashion sounds like clothing that's been assembled piecemeal with no real logic or order in mind, but that couldn't be further from the truth if you are talking about the sought after, one-of-a-kind designs by Epperson.

The name Epperson not ringing a bell with you? Well, you've seen his work. Erykah Badu, Cassandra Wilson, Lauryn Hill and Yolanda Adams all have worn Epperson designs. This month (November) Essence is featuring a write up on him and for those who want to know more, log onto www.eppersonstudio.com and see how this African-American male is turning the fashion world upside down.

Major runways and photo spreads in top magazines are usually where works by designers with his credentials are seen, but on October 31, a select group of Las Vegas will have the unmatched experience of viewing and pur-

chasing Epperson's unique creations in an invitational Trunk Show at the Four Seasons Hotel.

Nancy Justice of the dynamic husband and wife team that includes Dr. Owen Justice, DDS, is bringing the show to the valley partly because she is a fan of his work, secondly because she considers him a friend and lastly because she plans to open a specialty boutique in Pahrump in 2006 that will carry his and other top designers' creations.

"I liked what I saw in Essence, so I called him up," said Justice of how the two began their relationship after the first time she spotted his work on the pages of the magazine. This was several months ago. She discovered that he didn't just cater to stars, but was for hire and could make what she wanted at a price she could afford. She commissioned him to create a dress for her birthday, she said, unwilling to divulge her age. She sent her measurements and the dress came two days before her big party in a rich vibrant red and fit perfectly.

Epperson said his secret

to making dynamic clothing for clients he often never sees is prayer. "I do a lot of praying and prayer answers everything. When I'm working, if God is at the center, I can't go wrong."

His strategy seems to work as evidenced by the demand for his talent. He was commissioned to create costumes for the world premiere of Alvin Ailey's "Apex" and has designed costumes for the Julliard Dance Ensemble. The late John F. Kennedy Jr.

liked to wear his hats. His designs range from \$90 for a top to \$1,200 for a gown.

Epperson was excited Monday about coming to Las Vegas later this month and is confident everyone Justice has invited to the Trunk Show will appreciate his style of design that is built around the concept of "taking apart and recreating," Epperson said. He uses rich, earthy or delicate fabrics and incorporates a dash of southern femininity to create sophisticated

pieces that swathe the body as simple wraps and ties. He will combine fur, wool and knit remnants to "create a museum quality wrap skirt," according to reviews about the designer's style. He has become famous for his skirts described by him and business partner, Lisha, who also is his wife, as "patchwork skirts."

Epperson features something for children to adults in varying sizes. Noted is his bridal collection for women

seeking gowns that aren't laden with lots of pearls and diamonds. Fabrics for the dresses are natural and organic catering to femininity rather than rigid tradition. His trip to Las Vegas will bring the style that he is noted for, but will also be where he unveils signature pieces in his latest line for full-size women. For those seeking that special piece to set-off an outfit, he has a line of custom crafted beaded jewelry. (See Epperson, Page 4)

Urban League names Mosley interim chief

Newly chartered affiliate signs lease at Nucleus Plaza

By Albert C. Jones
Sentinel-Voice

The Las Vegas-Clark County Urban League has selected a retired business development executive from IBM World Wide this week to lead the recently chartered affiliate on an interim basis.

Larry J. Mosley, who retired in August after 30 years with IBM, will lead the agency as interim executive director through December, said Jackie Shropshire, board chair of the Las Vegas-Clark County Urban League.

Mosley's duties at IBM were chiefly in marketing.

"We needed someone right now to help us who has the time and foresight," Shropshire said. "I was doing a lot of the work and needed some help. I can't do it all by myself. Larry was available and free to do it."

Mosley, who holds degrees from the University of California, Davis and Occidental College in Los Angeles, made a big impact in the area of reaching out to minorities while with IBM. He

established the Advocated IBM Governments Diversity and Mentor Protégé programs. He helped to develop and was an advocate for "IBM Global Governments Diversity."

"I have a track record of leading corporate and community-based programs," said Mosley, who will end his second two-year term as president of the Las Vegas Chapter of 100 Black Men in December. He is a charter member of the local chapter. Under his leadership, the lo-

cal chapter has grown from a handful of members in 2000 to about 80.

Mosley will be an applicant when the search for a permanent executive director begins in January. John W. Mack, who has served as president of the Los Angeles Urban League since August 1969, will lead that search. Until then, Mosley expects to give the Las Vegas affiliate of the NUL a head start in implementing a strategic plan, start up of programs, (See Mosley, Page 3)

Dinner

(Continued from Page 1)

cently stripped of the right to vote by groups that allegedly destroyed select voter registration forms.

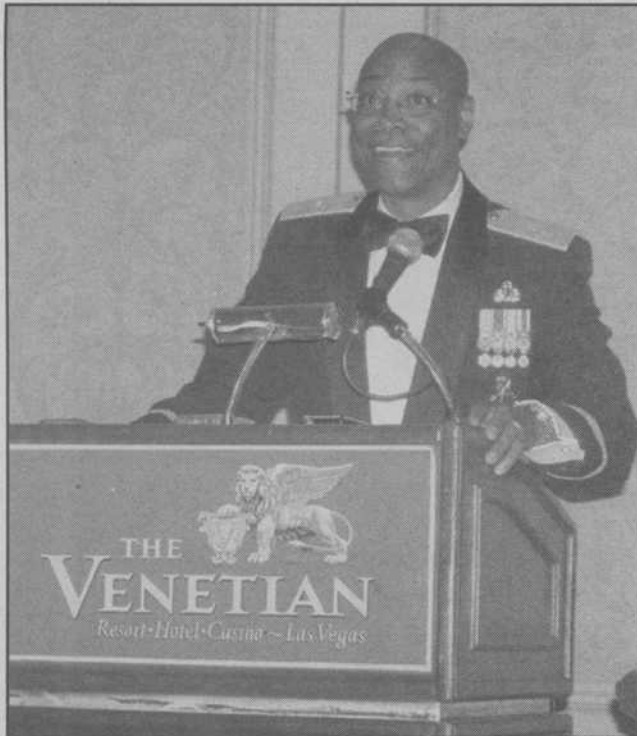
"We must make sure that no one is disenfranchised from participating in this upcoming election. Too many people have spilled blood for [too] many years to ensure others the right to vote. Voting is a fundamental right. For African-Americans, it allows us to participate, to elect leaders who demonstrate that they respect our communities, and we have to make sure that this right is not abused by others."

The event featured U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Select Roosevelt Mercer as the keynote speaker.

Mercer said America was dealing with a leadership crisis, particularly in its corporations, citing Boeing and Disney whose top executives allegedly ran the companies with little regard for their employees.

Mercer said that today children must be taught that what they do defines who they are and will become.

He talked about Mary McLeod Bethune as an example of what you can achieve when you don't let



Sentinel-Voice photo by Les Pierres Streater


United States Air Force Major General Select Roosevelt Mercer urged everyone to count their blessings.

your environment determine your circumstances. She was born in the late 1800s the daughter of a slave yet she secured an education and later established Bethune-Cookman College in Florida.

"We must teach our young people today to count their blessings and not their problems. We should also tell them to make smart decisions. Life is about choices, life is about decisions, and the de-

isions that they make and the consequences of their choices will affect their families, friends, and co-workers. They can't make excuses about their choices because they have to live with the decisions that they make. They need to know that now and we need to be teaching that to them now because the path they choose will make all the difference in what their future will be," Mercer said.

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