# **SEPTEMBER 12, 2023**



Thank you for attending the Emerge! Fashion Runway Show! I created EMERGE! 12 years ago to provide a national and global runway for talented designers everywhere. It's my mission for EMERGE! to be a catalyst and resource for designers nationally and globally.

I am always grateful to watch Emerge! Show grow into a large production with a staff and volunteers of 30 people, 80 models, 50 hair and make-up backstage team, production team, creatives and so many others who work for the show to give the best for these talented designers to use this runway for the purpose of creativity and vivid expression.

It is very important for us to honor legendary pioneers and icons in the fashion industry who have blazed a trail or paved the way for upcoming designers and creatives. I am in awe of our honorees this year - we decided to honor 3 of the industry's finest! Dapper Dan, April Walker & Sergio Hudson.

We can not do any of this without the support of our sponsors: our presenting sponsor Thank God It's Natural haircare (TGIN), OTR On The Rocks, Bennett Career Institute, AMBI Skincare, Port Authority of New York & New Jersey & Models Inc. Your commitment to supporting Emerge! Mission is to be commended.

Thank you again for attending and enjoy the show!

Continue to spread the word regarding Emerge! By using hashtag #EmergeFashionShow #Emerge lionne / lilliams El/ERCE

Best,

DIONNE WILLIAMS Creator, Emerge! President, D. Williams Public Relations Group



Emerge! Fashion Show is one of the leading emerging designer runway shows established to be a catalyst and provide a platform for designers.

For over 12 years Emerge! has consistently championed and provided support for an array of multicultural designers from around the globe to the frontline of fashion.

The Emerge! Fashion committee has selected talented designers to present this evening.

In addition to the fashion show each season, EMERGE! presents the coveted 'Fashion Innovator Award'. An honor to those who

have received the award recognizing them for their worldwide fashion influence. Past honorees have included: **Andre' Leon Talley**, contributing editor of Vogue (presented to him by Diane Von Furstenberg); **Fern Mallis**, creator of New York Fashion Week (presented to her by Bibu Mohapatra); **Constance C.R. White**, Editor in Chief of Essence Magazine (presented to her by designer Tracy Reese); legendary model **Patricia Cleveland** (presented to her by legendary fashion designer, Stephen Burrows); celebrity stylist **Law Roach** (presented to him by Claire Sulmers), legendary model **Beverly Johnson** (presented to her by J. Alexander), legendary designer **Karl Kani**, **Misa Hylton** (presented to her by Bevy Smith) and many other icons in fashion.

# FASHION INNOVATOR



#### APRIL WALKER

is a fashion game-changer and culture creator that inspired a lane helping to create a multibillion industry coined as streetwear today through her brand, Walker Wear. As the first woman in this lane, she's also one of the first to dominate in urban menswear, securing celebrity endorsements from the likes of

legends, like Tupac, and Notorious B.I.G. Her brand was one of the first to open distribution doors and command millions in sales, and the Walker Wear lifestyle brand still thrives today. Walker's consulted for various brands, penned her first five-star book available on Amazon called "Walkergems, Get Your A\$% Off The Couch". Also, she's featured in the films "Fresh Dressed" and the award winning documentary, The Remix: Hip Hop x Fashion (2019). Also, Walker is sharing with other veterans in a "Streetwear Essentials" Parsons online course via Yellowbrick Learning. Walker is a fashion designer, author, disruptor, creator, wellness advocate, educator, filmmaker & gamechanger and Walker Wear is exhibited worldwide.



#### SERGIO HUDSON

Born in the mid 80's, Sergio Hudson quickly grew a great love and respect for fashion idols of the age like Azzedine Alaïa, Gianni Versace and Grace Jones. It was evident at a young age that Sergio was destined for a career in fashion, so it was no surprise when he went on to study design at Bauder College. In 2014,

Hudson launched his namesake ready-to-wear collection, establishing an aesthetic defined by immaculate tailoring and infusions of androgyny paired with sexy silhouettes. Hudson quickly gained a loyal following from Hollywood's biggest names including Beyonce, Blake Lively, Keke Palmer, Jennifer Lopez and Tracee Ellis Ross. He recently had the pleasure of dressing both the former first lady Michelle Obama and the current Vice President for Inauguration and gracing the cover of Essence September issue. His vision is to bring back the joy of dressing which he is doing - one collection at a time.



#### DAPPER DAN

The story of a legendary designer who pioneered high-end streetwear, from a storefront in Harlem to the red carpet in Hollywood, dressing everyone from Salt-N-Pepa and Eric B. & Rakim to Beyoncé and JAY Z along the way.

With his now-legendary store on 125th Street

in Harlem, Dapper Dan pioneered high-end streetwear in the early 1980s, remixing classic luxury-brand logos into his own flamboyant designs. But before reinventing fashion, he was a hungry boy with holes in his shoes, a teen who daringly gambled drug dealers out of their money, a young man in a prison cell who found nourishment in books, and, finally, a designer who broke barriers to outfit a whos-who of music, sport, and crime world celebrities in looks that went on to define an era.



## KÉRAYE LONDON

Originally from Milwaukee, WI; Kevon Raye received her Bachelors of Arts from Marquette University where she studied Broadcast Communication and Marketing. Throughout college, Kevon used her love for fashion as inspiration to resell lightly worn clothing and shoes to locals through Facebook, eBay, and Poshmark. Kevon knew that she was on to something by the response she received and officially started off her entrepreneurial journey with a clothing boutique in 2014. Kevon always had visions of unique styles, but could never find specific designs available on the ready to wear market. This is when she branched out and learned to design her own custom pieces.

Kevon tapped into the design industry in 2017 by taking a class in New York City where she learned the basics of sewing. From there, she taught herself everything she needed to know about designing. She focused on perfecting her craft and traveled between New York's Garment District and Los Angeles' Fashion District to learn about and source fabric. She would also visit Goldhawk Road in London, UK often, where she would bring back exclusive fabrics that she could not find in the United States. This is how Kéraye London was born.

As Kéraye London continues to grow, the brand specializes in looks for the bold, daring, sexy yet classy. Kevon Raye makes pieces for "special occasions" because everyday is a special occasion. Kéraye London's exclusive, quality pieces will surely have heads turning and gives the ultimate feeling of confidence.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION



## NUOVI BY NAJAH

Najah, a Newark, New Jersey native, defies the odds with her unyielding resilience. Fueled by innate artistic talent and a fervent passion for fashion, she's discovered her purpose in the industry.

From a young age, Najah's grandmother and late mother kindled her love for fashion and sewing, passing down expertise. At twelve, her first sewing machine set her creative journey ablaze, immersing her in the fashion world.

Venturing beyond her passion for fashion, Najah earned a bachelor's degree, landing a career in technology. Following her mother's 2014 passing, Najah's fashion passion grew stronger. Fueled by her deep connection to her mother's memory, she turned her pain into transformative art. In 2016, she founded "Nuovi by Najah," a sustainable luxury brand, dedicated to creating elegant garments to carve her niche in the evolving fashion scene.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



Nuovi







### MALCOLM STAPLES

**Malcolm Staples** of Malcolm's Custom Made To Fit is one of the premier custom clothiers in the Washington DC metropolitan area. This highly acclaimed fashion designer believes in leaving no stone unturned and providing ultra luxury services as the norm not the exception.

In 2009, Staples launched Malcolm's Custom Made To Fit with his first paying job was to dress his nephew LaMarr Woodley of the NFLs Pittsburgh Steelers.

Heavily influenced by his grandfather, a man of style, his fashion vision has been inspired by the 1950s era attributing his distinctive appeal and vintage flavor as a connection to this time period. Known for his perfectly tailored suits for both men and women, he has dressed clients globally. His work graced the covers of more than 80 national and international publications and editorials in over 140 magazines.

He was the winner of the Fashion and Beauty Olympics Designer Showcase sponsored by Fashion Avenue News Magazine, named named Designer of the Year by LH Luxe and SITA (Success In The Arts) organization.

Malcolm is a graduate of Eastern Michigan University and the International Academy of Design and Technology. He is a postgraduate of the Harvard University's Business School in Cambridge, MA.

## ROBERT HANSEN & CEDI JOHNSON

**Robert Hansen** was born in Harlem, New York, raised on the shores of Jersey and currently lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. He attended the School of Visual Arts on the Lower East Side in New York where he studied Graphic Design. His love for visual art led him to a 16-year career in retail as a Regional Visual Merchandiser for Nordstrom, Senior Men's Stylist at Macy's Herald Square and Visual Window Designer for Hickey Freeman Suits on Fifth Avenue. Having won several awards for Visual Presentation, he set his sights on another design-heavy industry, special events. Robert worked production on high profile events such as Nike World Basketball Festival with mentor Damon Haley and weddings for clients like Usher with mentor Diann Valentine. He also served as Art Director for several regional television commercials; as well as an award-winning Production Designer for the short film STUCK.

A Detroit native, **Cedi Johnson** was unwavering in his talent and passion as a clothing designer. Years later the world begins to recognize the couture prodigy in all his resplendence, and the dream he had as a child is now, not only a reality, but a legacy and a lifestyle. Intentional with his zeal and astuteness for fashion, Cedi Designs are a paean to the prosperity and esteem that was once just an aspiration. They say that clothes are not the one who makes the man, but the man is the one who makes the clothes, and this statement rings particularly true for the splendour that his most recent collections have to offer. Unmistakably ornate, Cedi Johnson's diligence in all he does allows his work to push the boundaries of the sartorial realm and soak up the individuality of each of his clients; enabling them to feel grandiose throughout the Cedi experience.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION



FOR MORE



#### REUBEN SHAW THE OXBLOOD ZEBRA

The Oxblood Zebra is a creative tailoring brand. We make bespoke level tailored garments while giving a nod to Streetwear and High Fashion design. We are not your bankers custom clothier, we make garments for creative people, storytellers, and people who simply love to wear cool clothes.

The Brand was started by **Reuben Shaw**, born and raised in the small town of Chesapeake, VA. Reuben was heavily influenced growing up in the 80's and 90's, not to mention his love for hip hop music, soul music, Blaxploitation films, anime, Saturday morning cartoons, basketball, James Bond and most importantly his super stylish family.

Reuben has spent over 20 years in the mens retail space with the last 15 years working in Bespoke and Made to measure tailoring. It was in this space that Reuben found his passion for tailoring and custom made clothing. Under the mentorship of his dear friend Mr. V, Reuben not only learned about the intricacies of bespoke tailoring but also the importance of building a real connection with people.

Custom clothing has opened many doors for Reuben not only in the tailoring business but also in the fashion industry. While being an expert and master of his craft in the tailoring space, Reuben has always had a love for all things style, not just suiting. Reuben is equally comfortable in a fresh pair of sneakers, oversized shirt and Japanese denim as he is in a hand made suit made from Loro Piana fabric. I don't see clothing just as an outfit but as a character in a movie. So the it's not a question of what I'm going to wear today, but "WHO" am I going to be today?

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION



#### TERRI STEVENS FUNKINBEAUTIFUL

My mom said I am a visionary born into it. my friends say I drip in it. and everyone else thinks I live in a fantastically funkinbeautiful fashion universe where designers rule in gorgeous garbs and the streets are endless runways. I believe in the possible dream, discovering what's on the other side, wearing white after labor day, taking big risks, and turning maybe's, and no's into yes, all with a joyful smile wrapped up in kindness and love. -**Terri Stevens, Funkinbeautiful** 

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION



# GLOBAL PARTNER

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The Wearable Art Collective consists of a rich pool of talented artisans emerging from the African continent and around the world. Through fashion design, jewelry, sculpture and textiles the Wearable Arts Collective challenges conventional notions of a singular African aesthetic and identity, and reflects the integration of African art and design without making the usual distinctions between "professional" and "artisan."

The Wearable Art Collective mission is to promote, strengthen, empower African artisans. TWAC strives to serve as good global citizens and provide foundation to these African artisans, empowering the designers and artists giving them the exposure and resources to use the tools in the community. With this primary purpose we hope to bridge the economic and cultural gaps between Africa and America.

Each piece worn is contributing and making financial and social impact in the lives of families and young women in developing nations.

Lola Owolabi, FRSA, FinstLM, MA, a lover of all things Africa is the Curator for Wearable Art Collective and the creative force behind the brand. Lola has created this brand of African Collectives that she believes can bring her vision of African influenced beauty and design to the forefront.

# FASHION INNOVATOR

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Honoring those who paved the way in the fashion industry







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Hair Design & Stylists Provided By Chet Bennett Lead: Angel Brown Bennett Career Institute www.bennettcareerinstitute.org

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Whether it's an international fashion house or a local designer, the PANYNJ plays a vital role in supporting the fashion industry. NYC is the epicenter of fashion, beauty, and creativity.

The PANYNJ celebrates diversity and believes in the importance of representation in all industries. Through our partnership with Emerge Fashion, we stand proud in celebrating minority designers.



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Mr. Ches A. Bennett is the founder, Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of BCI. Mr. Bennett is a graduate of Morehouse College with a BA in Religion, he also holds a Masters Degree III Educational Administration and Supervision from Howard University. He has over 23 years of work experience in the cosmetology and barbening industry.

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