

SIMONE BUTTERFLY

Fabulous Freelance Fashion Investigator



Featuring Simone Butterfly: DC's fabulous, freelance, fashion investigator and the uncontested star of the bi-weekly blog YOO HOO DARLING

NY Fashion Week Spring 2012

Harlem Fashion Row: Beautifully Out of Place

Fashion Pedaler

Spago is pedaling like mad because (surprise) it is 5:50PM and the pre-cocktail reception for Harlem Fashion Row (HFR) starts at 6PM. It takes a diva of a doll to apply Ruby Woo lip lacquer in a pedicab while wearing Vuitton leather opera gloves, Betsey Johnson mini with full bustle and WhatKatieDid.com vintage garters. This was no ordinary evening. Indeed, I was feeling (and scented) very Violet Blonde (thanks Tom Ford). So, when I arrived (breathless of course) at Jazz at Lincoln Center around 6:02PM (not bad) the John Berry soundtrack reverberating through my scarlet Urban Ears headphones felt very apropos (a favorite from the movie *Diamonds are Forever*). You can't take it with you so ROCK out while you can. Does it get better than this?

YES, Darling it Does.

Zip inside, take the elevator up to the 3rd floor and step onto a black fashion carpet of sorts. Air kissing ensues. Here are a few highlights: **Audrey Smaltz** (famed Ebony Fashion Fair/CBC fashion commentator and current Founder/President of the Ground Crew, NY Fashion Week's most sought after backstage wizards) literally shimmers over to my left. Later in the evening Ms. Schmaltz will introduce award recipient **Donna Williams**, Metropolitan Museum of Art Chief Audience Development Officer. **June Ambrose**, famed stylist/author/social media maven

and award recipient is glam as always. This evening she is dripping in black lace replete with camera ready train. **Bethann Hardison** (Editor at Large for *Italian Vogue* and credited with discovering fashion model **Tyson Beckford**) is also on hand. In 30 minutes she will introduce her protégé Tyson Beckford, another honoree.

Four Designers

After the award ceremony, I dip into the Rose Hall to snag a seat for the fashion presentations. HFR was created by **Brandice Henderson** to



Kebero

highlight emerging designers of color. This year, several hundred designers competed for a chance to be featured in the event. Four designers were selected.

Native Washingtonian **Kellia Rogers**, the self-proclaimed "party girl" with the tres chic boho style launched her **Kebero** line in 2009. Love, love, love, the modern and fluid feel of her ap-

parel; perfect when you have a meeting with **Rachel Zoe** (LA) and **Marc Jacobs** (NYC) 15 minutes apart on the same day.

Ingram Talley created her **Jakia Hardy** line after interning for Rachel Roy and Tracy Reese. Her portion of the show couldn't be anything but exuberant. The soundtrack started with Nina Simone and ended with Aretha Franklin's *Rock Steady*. The oatmeal fringe ensemble stole my heart. I am already plotting a way to incorporate it into my work week. Perhaps I can layer it over my eggshell Celine pantsuit?

I learn that **Onyenaucha Nwabuzor's Ana Kata** line is inspired by her mom, a native of Nigeria with a penchant for mixing 1940's Parisian couture with traditional Nigerian dress. Think loads of silk, cotton and linen, bouffant hair and regal carriage.

The only menswear line to be highlighted, **Bethune Bros.** created by Bronx native **Joseph Bethune** appeals to the boy/man who wants to exude a "Steve McQueen kinda cool." The skinny pants offered in a variety of primary color (red, blue, yellow) paired with tailored polo shirts and deconstructed vintage shirts with military accents represented a modern Prep.

The End.

Apptly named "Beautifully Out of Place," the HFR fashion event showcased the very best of emerging design talent struggling to find their spot in the saturated fashion landscape. WORK! 



Audrey Smaltz



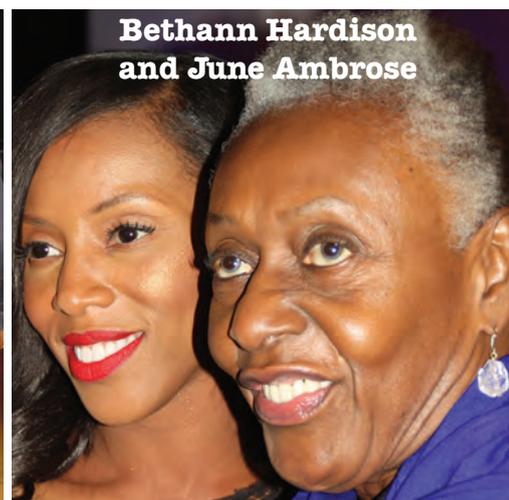
Jakia Hardy



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Bethann Hardison and June Ambrose

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