

Name of Business: Afrodelik Designs
 How long you've been in business: 3 years
 Business Philosophy: SPIRIT of SOUL... FUNKIFYing the world, and to bring STRUTTIN' back
 I want people to feel good in their skin, and smile while wearing AFRODELIK brand, whether YOU ARE green, black white orange...it's a brand for everyone
 Your Name: Desiree Marshall
 City/State: Toronto, Ontario CANADA
 Website: www.afrodelik.com
 Email: desiree@afrodelik.com

UM: What got you started in the business?

AD: I've always loved drawing. I started drawing when I was about 6. I am most at peace when I am creating. About 3 years ago, I lost my job and my chance to start my own business had come into fruition and it felt right.

UM: What are your motivations to succeed?

AD: Life. Starting this business is one of my dreams on my life list. I promised myself that I would have no more regrets and that it was important for me to be courageous and pursue the things in my life that are important to me and that I am passionate about Balance and Happiness. It's important for me to be have a career and be successful in what I enjoy.

UM: What industry examples do you look up to as role models?

AD: I mostly look up to visual artists as role models...local Canadian artists. Roxane Tracey from Toronto, Gabrielle Lasporte, Justin Bua from the U.S, and Alvin Kofi from the UK are role models.

My other role models are businesspeople such as Lisa Price, owner of Carol's Daughter, Martha Stewart for their tenacity, confidence and smarts. My ancestors for keeping me going, and for their bravery and courage.

UM: What are some of your greatest challenges?

AD: Finding time to draw...
 Because I am running a business on my own, most of my time is spent doing so, and I am having to schedule time to draw. There is a consistent long "to do list. As a sole entrepreneur, I am wearing all hats at all times, and it can get overwhelming.

UM: Where do you see yourself in 2 years?

AD: In 2 years, I see myself producing new AFRODELIK designs for clothing other than t-shirts. I can't expand right now, but I am very excited. I see AFRODELIK selling all over the world and becoming a household name like other big brands.

UM: How do you seek to improve your craft?

AD: I am improving my craft everyday... I see what others are doing and try to do something different, something unique and genuine to AFRODELIK and to myself. I keep up with the fashion trends, colours, shoes, what are people wearing, how do they feel, what sexy out there etc..... I keep my drawing skills up to par by challenging myself in working on project that I may find difficult to do...I



grow as an artist this way. I go to art shows, fashion shows, talk to other artist. As a businessperson, I read books on successful people that I admire and would like to be like.

UM: What is an important factor in designing fashionable wear?

AD: I see myself as an artist, not a fashionista... yet.

UM: How did

you go about marketing your brand?

AD: There are many ways, here are a few: Facebook, my website www.afrodelik.com, word of mouth, and networking. I only wear the AFRODELIK brand, whether it be an AFRODELIK t-shirt, button. AFRODELIK is always on me. I sell my products at Trade shows and outdoor events in North America. If there is a way of talking about my business in a casual conversation, I find that way. AFRODELIK is featured in magazines, blogs and newspapers in different parts of the world.

Our t-shirts are seen in TV shows, recently in Canada's first primetime TV show, "da kink in my hair". I give away t-shirts to organizations and charities that we believe in. I share my t-shirts with celebrities that I like or admire.

UM: What are some of the biggest "dont's" for a fashion designer during the recession?

AD: One of the biggest dont's for me is not to allow the recession to be a main focus or thought in your mind.

UM: Why did you agree to be featured in Urban Mainstream magazine?

AD: I agreed to be featured in your magazine, because it was an opportunity for me to share AFRODELIK's art with others, and I am grateful for that. Honestly, I want the world to know and recognize AFRODELIK's look as they would Warhol or any other famous artist.

I feel that your magazine reaches the black community, and other communities, and I want to show that I am doing something positive. I want people to feel proud of their own communities as I am, by creating art that enriches our culture and shows us in a positive light.....I'm just doing my thang!! Plus your magazine is dope...I love what you stand for, what you're all about. It feels like a good fit.