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Brian Heath: The Visionary Behind Detroit Fashion Week

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DFP was able to catch up with Brian Heath...

You've traveled around the world shooting video and working on creative projects. What is your favorite destination?

Paris and Jamaica are my favorites. Paris is always exciting. There are so many things to do anytime day or night. Fashion, art, music, it's like being in New York but there's something about it I can't explain. Jamaica, because it's the one place that pops in my head when I need to turn everything off and relax.

Tell me about Brian Heath's ideal job. Of all the projects you work on, what do you find the most rewarding?

I love shooting fashion of course. Working with the designers and models is



Photography: Rich Rice of Detroit by Design Tshirt: Spectacles in Detroit Jeans: Chaud Jeans in Royal Oak Photographed on location: Bankle Building in Detroit

always fun. Taking a clients ideas and dreams and making them come to life is always a challenge. Producing, directing film and video is equally rewarding. The ability to read a script and take a writers vision from paper to screen is something very few get the opportunity to do.

How did you get into Photography/Video?

I started taking pictures when I was a kid. I never stopped shooting. When I was in my 20's I worked for a major copier company in an admin position. In my off hours, I would hang out at a local photo store learning shooting and lighting techniques, shooting model and designer comps, portfolios and fashion shows. One day I got fed up with the whole corporate thing and made some calls to Paris, got my passport, booked a hotel, left my job, packed my cameras and left for Europe. I shot for some model agencies, designers and local ad books. From there I never turned back. I can not think of anything I would rather do, it's my life. Film was a natural progression from shooting stills. Directing the look and feel of a scene was happening everyday in the photo studio. Composition, lighting adding sound and movement was the next step in the process. I love it all.

Do you think the city of Detroit has had an impact on your style and interests?

I think Detroit makes an impact on every artists life, yes I see what I do as an art and it is my passion. Every artist says Detroit can make you or break you when it comes to knowing if you truly love your art. Some of us stay, some leave but Detroit will make you know if you truly possess an artists' spirit or not. Detroit helped me to venture into many areas of what I do as an artist. I'm a photographer, filmmaker and artist (mostly painting in oils) I love painting large figurative pieces. Right now I'm painting a 5 x 160 foot mural. I work with Hubert Massey on most of his projects as well as document everything he does for his archives. I work for NBA Entertainment, NBC Sports, the Detroit Public Library where I've filmed oral histories for the Hackley Collection. There is footage of Ron Milner, Maggie Allesee, Marcus Belgrave and Balthazar Korab and others telling the stories of their career histories. I am blessed with the opportunity to be there and learn from their experiences. That's what being in Detroit has done for me.

If you were showing a friend from out of town Detroit, where would you take them?

I would take them on a public art tour. There are so many public art pieces

creates by local artists and the places they are located would show them the whole city, downtown, new center, cultural district, east, west and south sides.

What projects can we look forward to seeing from you in the future?

I'm already working on Detroit Fashion Week 2008, I am preparing artwork and photography for another show of my works, I'm working with writers and producers on a few film projects in the capacity of producer, producer/director, director. I am seeking more commissioned art projects which will be interior or exterior walls, mosaic tile or a fresco.

Tell us about Detroit Fashion Week...How did it get started? What should we expect?

I have been in the fashion industry for a long time as a photographer, hosting shows, working with new models and designers. I began to work more in the commercial product area for a while and then I had a show at my gallery which was for a local designer, Michael Delon. The energy from being back in that environment made me realize where I really wanted to be. I decided I wanted to do fashion events but on a large scale which would be inclusive of all designers in the area. The name Detroit Fashion Week was born. We have had great support from the fashion community as well as from local press and this year we had a turning point. I wanted to make the show this year more appealing to potential sponsors and advertisers. We went into talks with the St. Regis Hotel and now the hotel is a partner and official host for all of Detroit Fashion Week 2007 events. We have had tremendous response from our designers about the venue. We are Michigan's Official Fashion Week recognized by the World Fashion Channel [http://worldfashion.tv/fashion-web/list.php?SECTION_ID=1216] and we are listed along with New York, Paris and other official Fashion Weeks. DFW has more growing to do and we are open to those who want to help us. DFW is more than a week of shows. We are an online marketplace for designers and models, stylists, makeup artists and others in the industry. We want to help Michigan designers come together at least online to share information and put us on the map of the fashion industry.

Sponsors and advertisers for our events and program book are calling to find out if they can join in on the fun. To participate in this year's event we can be reached at 313.516.6774, 213.804.6208 or through the website at www.detroitfashionweek.com , brian@detroitfashionweek.com

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