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SMOOCHES WOMAN MAGAZINE

Snatching Power
& Crowns

**ROBYN ELAINE
REEDER**

**SHOE
PORN**

**ELEGANT
AND
URBAN**
ENWU FASHION

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SUMMER 2022

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SMOOCHES WOMAN MAGAZINE

THE LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FOR THE CURVY WOMAN

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A Beat Above Average

Special Thanks

First and foremost, we would like to give thanks to our heavenly father for his continued FAVOR, GRACE, AND MERCY and for his guidance on our journey to empower the lives of women. We thank him for allowing us the strength and endurance to complete this issue. Special thanks to our entire team; Contributing Writers, Directors, Editors, Managers, Brand Ambassadors, Smooches Women, and the women who support this magazine & movement.

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A NOTE FROM THE **EDITOR**

FIGHTING TO LIVE



CHANTE M. BRADLEY
(Founder & Editor-in-Chief)

My life completely changed when I heard the words: “You have Leukemia.”

We don’t notice how we take living for granted until we are faced with a life-threatening event or illness. After months of battling this cancer, I have had the opportunity to re-evaluate life and what’s important.

What I’ve come to realize is that although I was following my dreams and working hard to accomplish them, it became clear in my moments of stillness that I wasn’t taking the time to sit back and smell the flowers.

It took being diagnosed with cancer for me to really want to live!

To live each day to the fullest, by taking the time to enjoy those special moments with family and friends and smell life’s beautiful flowers.

The saying “you only get one life” never resonated as much as it does now. I want to LIVE!

Sincerely,

Chante M. Bradley
Editor-in-Chief



Photographer for Photos:
IG: @shooterz_photoz
Designer: Anisah Bright

Elegant and Urban?

Yes, You Can be Both

By Emma Medeiros

Photographer for Photos:
IG: @shooterz_photoz
Model: @shelsy_t.t

Many people have specific visions in their heads of what “elegant” and “urban” fashions are. “Elegant” can evoke the essence of Coco Chanel, red carpet galas, and sipping champagne in art galleries. It’s different from “urban,” which inspires thoughts of edgy individuality always looking to rebel against traditional fashion rules, often with hip-hop or punk influence. Still, many people have personalities that yearn to be both elegant and urban. So, how to choose?

Now, there’s no need. Enwu Fashions is a brand new size-inclusive line created by Anisah Bright which effortlessly blends elegance with urban street style to indulge all aspects of our personality. *Smooches* sat down with Bright to discuss why the world needs Enwu.

WHAT DOES THE NAME “ENWU” MEAN?

AB: Enwu is Nigerian-Igbo for “shine” or “to shine.” I love it because my last name is Bright, but it represents the glow a woman gets when she’s dressed in her best. That is the purpose of Enwu.

IS ENWU THE FIRST FASHION LINE YOU’VE DESIGNED?

AB: Actually, no. I began designing clothes professionally in 2011 with YummyCute Cloth-



ing Line for kids, which started as a stay-at-home mom's hobby (I'm a divorced mother of three boys who all have special needs), and eventually bloomed into its own success. It was featured in several fashion shows and a spread in *Fashion GXD Magazine*. The line even provided celebrity stylists with outfits for photo shoots. After years of pressure from friends and family to start a line for adults, I finally debuted Enwu Fashions this past September at Season 22 of Small Boutique Fashion Week during New York Fashion Week.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT ENWU FASHIONS' DEBUT COLLECTION?

AB: I've named this collection "Luxury" and I played with tons of gold, embroidered applique, and feathers. I'm also including "the little black dress" as an ode to the classics. My inspiration came from recently attending an indie film premiere which I had the honor of my children's line being a part of. It was one of those magical nights, the kind we all look back and remember fondly.

The next collection will be more urban but still with a feeling of timeless elegance. "Elegantly urban" is a mix of sophistication and hood. It's the ability to "dress up" a simple design, and all the while giving luxury vibes.

Every single future collection will radiate the message of high status, clothes that are durable and of great quality and designs that are original to my imagination.

MANY DESIGNERS HAVE SAID THAT THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC HAS DISRUPTED THEIR SUPPLY CHAINS AND MADE IT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO GET THE MATERIALS THEY NEED. HAS THIS AFFECTED YOU AT ALL?



Photographer for Photos:
IG: @shooterz_photoz
Model: @shelsy_t.t

AB: I never worry too much about supply chain disruption. After all, fashion has survived through both world wars and the Great Depression. True talent is creating beauty with what you have. It's an art, really, and artists are naturally very driven.

Fashion is so much more than just picking out pretty fabric. You really want to appreciate the movement, the silhouette, how the textiles feed off of each other, and what feeling you want to project with the pieces.

A designer always adjusts and adapts to the times and current events; you'll notice that all through history. That's the beauty of art; somewhere out in the world, there are always people who share the same taste as you. So you use what you've got, along with sheer determination and creativity, to bring beauty to the world.

BESIDES GROWING THIS COLLECTION AND EVENTUALLY PUTTING OUT YOUR NEXT ONE, WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR GOALS GOING FORWARD?

AB: I'd like to get to the point of designing and have my own seamstresses. While I love the fun of designing, sewing is not fun for me. I'm very able, but it's very tedious. I do it because I really want to see my designs come to life. I have so many beautiful designs just waiting to happen and I just can't get them out fast enough.

I'm also planning for Paris Fashion Week next year so Enwu will be known as an international brand.

No matter what the future brings, I want to make women feel beautiful and valuable because we all are. It's a magical feeling and I want to be part of that.

WHERE CAN PEOPLE FIND OUT MORE ABOUT YOU AND ENWU FASHIONS?

AB: On Instagram at www.instagram.com/enwufashion/ or email me at anisahbright@yahoo.com.



Enwu is Nigerian-Igbo for "shine" or "to shine."

Photographer for Photos:
IG: @shooterz_photoz
Model: **@shelsy_t.t**

Lorie Sainvil



PHOTOGRAPHY BY:
ACEREEL STUDIO

OUTFIT:
JONESY'S ACCESSORIES

MAKE-UP:
**A BEAT ABOVE AVERAGE
(DEVONDA DUNN)**

COVER GIRL:
LORIE SAINVIL

EXCLUSIVE

AN EDITOR'S EXCLUSIVE

SMOOCHES COVER GIRL: LORIE SAINVIL



Lorie Sainvil is a true boss. And just like in true boss fashion, she rose to the top of our competition to be our Cover Girl.

Not only is she beautiful inside and out but she is an owner of a few successful businesses.

We sat down to learn more about our cover girl to learn about her experiences being an entrepreneur, how she manages running multiple businesses while being a mother and what she's looking forward to in the future.

SWM: Who is Lorie Sainvil?

Sainvil: First and foremost a child of God, the highest is the foremost of everything; mother of two; daughter, 18, and son, 12. I'm proud that's my identity and I stick to doing those two things.

SWM: You are the successful owner of a few businesses, so we are going to dive in and discuss each business. Tell us about Adorned By Her Enterprise.

Sainvil: Adorned By Her Enterprise is a one-of-a-kind gifting boutique, where I changed the game regarding customization. So, if you have a vision, I can put your gift idea together so you can give it to your family or friend. I also have contracts with companies to create kits for their businesses. For example, if you are an artist and want to put together an artist kit, I will bring your idea to life and put the kit together for you.

SWM: Tell us about the Adorned By Her IT Academy.

Sainvil: By day, I'm an engineer and I also teach on the weekends. Anyone can be a student at the academy if you are interested in changing your career. I work in IT (information technology), so I teach individuals not only how to land a job but also secure the role. I teach the ins and outs of how to interview for the role. In IT it's not like a reg-

ular interview. You have about four to eight stages that may occur and I teach them how to navigate them.

SWM: Tell us about Love Jones Wines LLC

Sainvil: I am the developer of Love Jones Wines LLC, it's an organic wine cocktail, the only one on the market. I'm excited about it because I know it's going to take me to different places and do many things. It's 50% alcohol, 100 proof and it's made with all organic products. It's created with two things in mind. First, to be health conscious; I wanted to see if it was an alternative to a healthier approach. I also want people to be able to enjoy our cocktail and rest their mind knowing that because it's organic, they are getting natural sugars when drinking it.

SWM: How do you balance being a mother and being an entrepreneur? What are some of your challenges?

Sainvil: I don't let the challenges affect my work, children, or businesses; but most importantly, I don't let it affect me. I work hard to make sure I find time. Every Wednesday, I have TV time and go for a walk between 6pm and 9pm, not to become complacent. I must make sure I find pockets for me time.

SWM: Since you mentioned TV time, what is it that Lorie like to watch?

Sainvil: I love Married At First Sight. Love Jones Wines, LLC was featured on the show with Miles & Karen and the appearance on the show increased sales. It was



I love Married At First Sight. Love Jones Wines, LLC was featured on the show with Miles & Karen and the appearance on the show increased sales.

very heartwarming to have it featured on the show because it is my favorite show. And I love watching the news to get caught up on what's going on.

SWM: We are also aware that you are an author. Tell us about your book?

Sainvil: I have also written two books. The first book I wrote four years ago. The title is "A Passionate Heart in a Sadistic World." It's a motivational piece to let women know that no matter what's going on, no matter what hardship you come across you got to pray your way, fast your way and find a way out of it. There is light at the end of the tunnel. Anyone interested in checking it out can find it on Amazon.

SWM: What was your best life lesson you took away from this COVID epidemic?

Sainvil: Being able to sit still and automating my businesses the best way I could to create and generate revenue. I was able to put things in practice, updating

my website so it could be easier to navigate and make money in my sleep. Covid taught me to be more forward thinking.

SWM: What advice would you give women that are struggling to find themselves or being confident?

Sainvil: I struggled with that for a very long time and it is a process, and you must continuously build yourself up. I found that the one thing that was helpful was affirmations. I have post-it notes everywhere - on my mirror, in my bathroom and everywhere. It starts with loving you first. You can't love anyone else or be a good mother until you love yourself first. It's work, it's not something that's going to be done in one day. The other thing is fasting and finding structure and implementing discipline, which will allow you to continue to structure.

SWM: What advice would you give women that are afraid to step outside of the box or those that allow fear to stop them from pursuing their dreams?



I don't let the challenges affect my work, children, or businesses; but most importantly, I don't let it affect me. I work hard to make sure I find time.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY:
ACEREEL STUDIO

OUTFIT:
JONESY'S ACCESSORIES

MAKE-UP:
**A BEAT ABOVE AVERAGE
(DEVONDA DUNN)**

COVER GIRL:
LORIE SAINVIL

Sainvil: I would say two things; change your words because fear allows us to use certain terms. So instead of saying I'm scared, say I'm excited because sometimes we confuse the two. Also, if we gear more to being excited, you are looking forward to it more than fear. To me fear is the devil so if you let him in, he'll come in and get comfortable. The other thing is, there is enough room for everyone out here to do what your calling is.

SWM: Why did you decide to enter the Cover Girl contest?

Sainvil: I decided to take a chance. However, I didn't know that voting was involved. I said, "they are making we work for this!" It was an opportunity that presented itself and I took a chance. In college I implemented that every 90 days I would do something different, and your contest was day ninety.

SWM: So how excited were you when you found out that you had won?

Sainvil: I was very excited. I didn't even know I had won at first because I had gotten busy. People were calling and texting me and I was like, "what is happening?" That's how I found out that I won.

SWM: What would you consider to be your greatest accomplishment as a woman and as an entrepreneur?

Sainvil: As a woman, I brought my first house at the age of twenty-five, so this was a huge accomplishment for me. I saved every dime and penny and



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day.*

brought my home in six months, and I cherish that. As an entrepreneur, just being able to take that leap of faith in 2017. I said, "I'm going to do everything I want to." That was the pivotal moment. Because before that, I really didn't want to be a business owner, I just wanted to work a 9 to 5 and live a good simple life.

SWM: What can we expect next from Lorie?

Sainvil: Getting a brick and mortar for the academy and offer in person sessions instead of just virtually and continue to brand and learn to master the marketing portion.

SWM: What are your long-term goals?

Sainvil: To retire at age 45. I'm age 36 now. When I say retire that doesn't mean not working at all. I want to walk in my calling which is being a motivational speaker. I want to go back to school to learn the art of speaking and learn the art of capturing an audience.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY:
ACEREEL STUDIO

OUTFIT:
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OUTFIT: **ZADÉCAH EMPORIUM**
MODEL: **LATANYA WASHINGTON**



**POOL SIDE WITH DESIGNER
ZADÉCAH EMPORIUM**



PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **ZADECAH EMPORIUM**
MODEL: **REMEIKCA MUNROE**



PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **ZADCAH EMPORIUM**
MODEL: **NALEMA ROSS**

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OUTFIT: **ZADECAH EMPORIUM**
MODEL: **ANGELA WILLIAMS-HELTON**



PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **ZADCAH EMPORIUM**
MODEL: **SALATHIEL WISE**





PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **ZADCAH EMPORIUM**
MODEL: **JAZMINE JAMES**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **ZADECAH EMPORIUM**
MODEL: **JIMILLE FIGARO**



PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **ZADCAH EMPORIUM**
MODEL: **JOSHLYN JAMISON**



SHOE PORN ANYONE?

SHOE STYLE AND COMFORT

MARLA FOWLKES

After 18 months embracing comfort more than anything else, I was curious about the upcoming shoe? fashion? trends. The trends seem to be a mix of statement and comfort this season. Chunky and lug soles, walking boots, knee-high boots and platform heels all have the green light this season. People want to celebrate life. With that being said, many of us won't want to sacrifice comfort for style. What will you wear to balance the two?

If you're like me and worked from home during the pandemic, you find it hard to completely ditch the "work from home" wardrobe that got you through. There will be lots of slipper-like shoes helping us slide comfortably into the colder months. For example, loafers are in this winter. They still trend at the top of the fashion charts after several seasons. Now's the time to up your style game by incorporating bold colors, chunkier soles, and unique stand-out details like tassels, embellishments and metallics.

Shoes were questioned, avoided or completely cut for many of us who built new at-home working rituals in the pandemic. The ones that were borderline uncomfortable or unworn for months, such as xx yy zz, were left in the closet or donated in favor of house shoes and comfy slides for the times we left the house. But while many of us have embraced a life free of high heels, it doesn't mean they are gone for good. Designers recognized the trend and cleverly offered onsum-



ers strong go-to options in response, such as lower-heel slouchy boots, platform boots, and lug-soled oxfords for those who long for a little height boost. Designers also considered the at-home lifestyle many are now living, and dressing for — creating styles for fuzzy slippers that work indoors or outdoor.

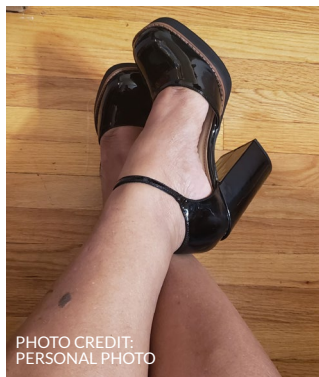


PHOTO CREDIT:
PERSONAL PHOTO

PLATFORMS

Platforms were once used to add height to Greek thespians performing onstage in 220 B.C.; a taller heel height equaled higher seniority. Today, the stacked heel options can be worn with far less drama. The styles are endless with platforms so you won't be disappointed.



PHOTO CREDIT:
NEIMAN MARCUS

FLATS

Flats are the catch-all shoe for comfy cute styles. They're both comfortable and practical and look great paired with everything from pants and skirts, to dresses and shorts. Consider styles such as classic ballet flats, pointed mules, loafers, combat boots, and tennis shoes. Updates to these designs include square toes, Mary-Jane style straps, and natural materials.



PHOTO CREDIT:
DSW

ANKLE BOOTS

Ankle boots are always in style as a concept; however, it's the details that change with the season. This season look for combat ankle boots with chunky soles and a whole lot of attitude. Square toes and laces are also in for a more detailed look. For colors, remember: the brighter the better. White is also on-trend. From clogs to thick-soled loafers, there are so many stylish shoes you can expect to see this winter.



PHOTO CREDIT:
PERSONAL PHOTO

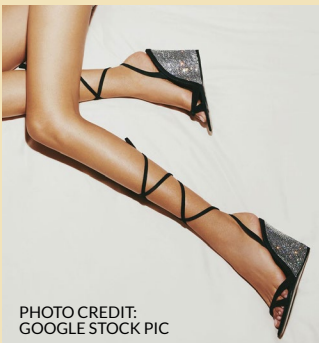


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GOOGLE STOCK PIC

STRAPPY SANDALS

For our readers in warmer climates, strappy sandals will also be in style. Wrap them as far up as you can go for an even more dramatic look. Pair them with Look for these trendy details in a strappy sandal... You'll have everyone asking where you got your shoes from. When I recently purchased a pair of red strappy platform sandals, I later realized I was on trend and didn't even know it. I also bought chunky heel Mary Jane shoes and black suede



PHOTO CREDIT:
ACEREEL STUDIO

knee high flat-heeled boots. Comfort played a larger role in my choices than I realized. While many options were stylish, I was careful with my selection. I was weighing comfort. I looked at the placement of buckles and straps, and leaned for a wider width shoe with round toes, which beat out pointier counterparts. As a result, nothing cramped my toes, blistered my heel or squeezed too tight. I was still winning the shoe game without needing an embellished stiletto that killed my feet after 5 minutes. I realized something had changed. I can be cute and comfortable!

If one fashion category served as an indicator of the current mood about getting dressed, it would be footwear. So, whether you need a refresh of one of the above-mentioned reliable trends or want to double down on flats in lieu of stilettos, remember you can be both comfortable and stylish this season.

SNATCHING BACK POWER AND CROWNS

ONE WOMAN'S JOURNEY BEING CONFIDENT, CURVY AND TRANS



A story about Robyn Elaine Reeder as told to TyLisa C. Johnson

When the crown was placed on my head in January 2020, signifying my first pageant win, it was not just the achievement of a childhood dream (to become a beauty queen) that brought me to tears, but also knowing I reached the pinnacle of a long-fought journey to bring my truest self to life. As a 55-year-old plus-size trans woman, I was crowned as a beauty queen. All at once, so many metaphorical glass ceilings were shattered. I nearly lost count.

After living 51 years in the wrong body, I decided in 2017 it was time to be true to myself and be my true self. On July 16, I told my now ex-wife and the world that I was a transgender woman. I never looked back. It was the start of a beautiful life.

In just a few years, I've walked in fashion showcases, I've given speeches at pride festivals and institutions including Columbia University in New York City and I've won multiple pageants. I published a book in November 2020 titled: "It's a Boy, It's a Girl: A Transgender Story."

I have made it my mission to show the world that beauty and sexiness aren't about size. It's about feeling comfortable in your own skin. I believe it's time for plus-size women to be celebrated.

In 2017, I changed my name and had my top surgery, a gender-affirming surgery to alter the appearance of the chest. In 2018, I had my bottom surgery (or Vaginoplasty).

I have decided it's not in my DNA to hide who I am. I have become an advocate for other transgender individuals. I have made it my mission to make sure that transgender men, women and children are given the same rights as any other human, especially at a time when there are proposed legislative attacks on the right for transgender people to be their true selves across multiple states.

After I won, I visited my hometown of Kokomo, Indiana and met with the Mayor. I swelled with pride when I learned I was the first woman from Kokomo to win a national crown.





I donated one of my books to the Kokomo Public Library. I was interviewed by both hometown newspapers. I also gave back to a charity for children that helped my family so many years ago.

2021 WAS ONE OF MY GREATEST YEARS YET.

In February 2021, I walked for two designers at New York Fashion Week. I signed with a modeling group in June 2021 and returned to New York for fall fashion week in September 2021. But before I knew it, I had to leave early. I was whisked away after being cast in the forthcoming reality television show Orlando Housewives, which began filming in October 2021.



I have made it my mission to show the world that beauty and sexiness aren't about size. It's about feeling comfortable in your own skin. I believe it's time for plus-size women to be celebrated.

.....

This is an exciting time for the visibility of the transgender community. With 3 trans people on the show, this will be the first housewives series of its kind.

My second book is in the works, called "Wrestling with Gender: The epic battle of gender identity."

The book, just like this story, will be filled with lessons of my journey, in hopes that my story will help someone else to have the courage to be a fuller version of themselves.

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OUTFIT: **BESS DRESS BOUTIQUE**
MODEL: **STEPHANIE ALSTON**



FASHION WITH BESS DRESS BOUTIQUE



PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **BESS DRESS BOUTIQUE**
MODEL: **MARY RICE**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **BESS DRESS BOUTIQUE**
MODEL: **MARLA FOWLKES**



PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **BESS DRESS BOUTIQUE**
MODEL: **ANNALEE SMITH**





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OUTFIT: **BESS DRESS BOUTIQUE**
MODEL: **WANDA BROWN**



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OUTFIT: **BESS DRESS BOUTIQUE**
MODEL: **BRITTANY GRAY**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **BESS DRESS BOUTIQUE**
MODEL: **TASHA FREEMAN**



PHOTOGRAPHY BY: **ACEREEL STUDIO**
OUTFIT: **BESS DRESS BOUTIQUE**
MODEL: **SHAHITA WINFREY**



FALL
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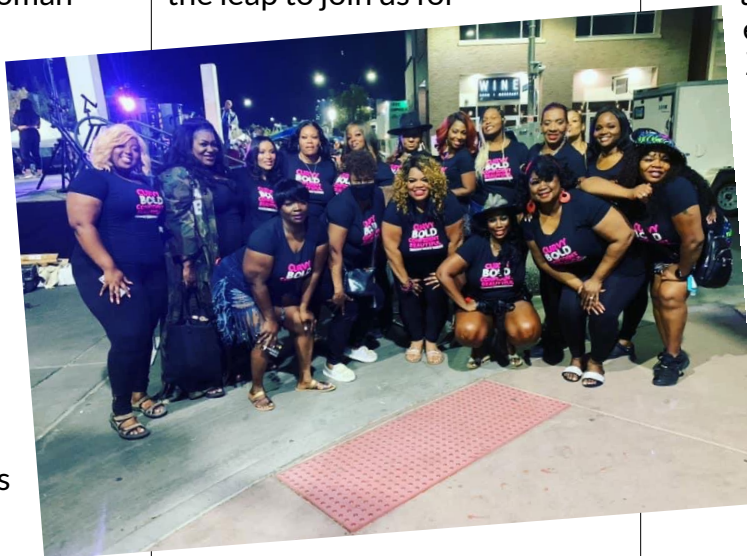
Viva Smooches!

SMOOCHES WOMAN MAGAZINE TAKES **LAS VEGAS:**
INSIDE THE **SWM LAS VEGAS** TOUR

Smooches Woman Magazine put out an alert for curvy models to join us for our magazine tour in Las Vegas and dozens answered the call. The huge response came from models across the United States who submitted their head and body shots for the chance to be selected as a tour model.

In the end, 17 curvy runway and editorial models, ranging from sizes 10 to 22, took

the leap to join us for



fashion events and photo-shoots alongside two designers

and a musical performer — Dokimos Apparel, Zadecah Emporium and Rap Artist Zone Lacito — for the opportunity of a lifetime. The Black women who came to Las Vegas represented beautiful hues and shades of all colors.

For the Las Vegas stint of the our magazine tour, SWM collaborated with Yolanda Bess of Bess Dress Boutique for a performance at the fourth Annual Black Las Vegas Food Festival. This was the magazine's third Las Vegas Magazine

Tour. Each time, it's bigger and better. There was an SWM Model meet and greet, an editorial photoshoot, a runway showcase and musical performance by Lacito.

The editorial shoot started poolside on Friday afternoon. Models rocked the camera wearing Zadecah Emporium fashions by Designer Joshlyn Jamison. The lounge and swimwear looks were funky, fly, and colorful. At part two of the photoshoot on Sunday afternoon, we captured the scenic water locations of the resort near the resort's spa and pool as models wore the classy and vibrant fashions of Bess Dress Boutique.

Our SWM Tour Models brought the heat to the runway alongside Lacito who performed songs at the food festival. The models ripped the runway wearing Zadecah Emporium, Dokimos Apparel and closed out the show with fashions from Bess Dress Boutique.

Lacito tore up the stage with his performance of Big Girl Bounce. His delivery changed the atmosphere of the entire event, elevating the energy of the audience and making viewers' heads and bodies bounce. Alongside him was Smooches Model Shondel Smith. She hyped up the musical performance with her energetic dance moves. The Big Girl Bounce single is a part of the Smooches Woman Music Project and was produced by Grammy Nominated Producer Herb Middleton.

Most people go to Las Vegas to see the lights, hear the ringing of slot machines, and to be in the city that never sleeps but SWM came to Las Vegas to slay! And we did just that!

Las Vegas owes us nothing!



You're CANCELLED



BY DEJA BRADLEY

The dating scene for Millennials is a riches-to-rags story. It was fun once upon a time. Dare to say exciting, even. Meeting new people in bars or on Tinder, exploring fresh connections on Bumble. But at some point in recent years, whether it be because of shifting social dynamics in our country or the changing dating scene amid COVID, dating as a millennial went from a fairy tale to a frightening task. Many have turned to shows that allow them to cut out dating tragedies altogether by pairing them with their algorithmically-de-

cided “perfect match,” shows such as “Married at First Sight” or “Love is Blind.” In “Married at First Sight” and shows like it, couples completely skip through the dating phase and meet each other at the end of the aisle to say “I Do.”

Dating for Millennials is a complex undertaking. For many, it can be confusing to navigate. Hundreds of influencers across social media now specialize in “dating” and providing advice to help people on the dating scene. But with all of these influencers and all of these dating apps, the real question is: what makes dating in this era so hard?

Millennials may look to their elders and question what made their youthful dating era different than now? While this may romanticize the past a bit, the dating scene before the internet was a completely different landscape. Some Millennials will say that they wish they had a “’90s kind of love” or a love like their parents or their grandparents. But at the same time, they often don't understand what all that love entails.

Here, we are going to dive deeper into some reasons why dating may be so hard for Millennials.

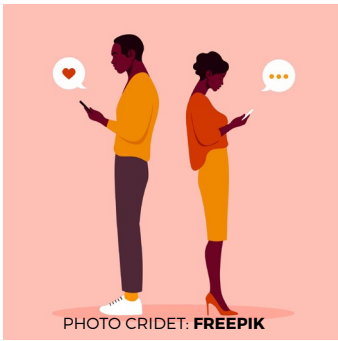


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GHOSTING

Ghosting is when a person vanishes from your life out of nowhere, with no conversation, clear reason or goodbye. It's a term that many Millennials know and have experienced, whether by ghosting or being ghosted. Millennials will find that ghosting is a big factor in dating nowadays and that is one reason why it is very hard to date. Though everyone is entitled to their own feelings, ghosting allows an individual to completely dismantle a relationship without any explanation. This tactic is seen all throughout social media and it has become a phenomenon. Millennials' struggle to communicate is another reason why many would say that it's hard to date in this era. If Millennials could get over this ghosting phenomenon, then maybe communication would be better and people would communicate their emotions and feelings in situations.



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SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media platforms are a blessing and a curse when it comes to relationships. The blessing is that you have the opportunity to meet and connect with people that you may not have otherwise crossed paths with. It's a curse for the same reason. Access to social media has presented an abundance of options. Having options is not necessarily a bad thing, but the plethora of options can create a false reality, foster comparisons and fog your vision, making it seem like what you have in front of you is not enough. Social media can create a facade or false narrative about what relationships should be. Many favorite celebrities and influencers post their relationships in ways that look amazing, but all relationships have problems. There is so much stress to impress social media followers when it comes to relationships that ultimately it might damage a relationship before it begins. Many look at social media as being a focal point for a relationship when in reality social media is not reality. Social media has been known to ruin relationships because people become insecure about what their partner is commenting or liking, or who they're messaging. Social media has become a platform of comparison instead of its original purpose to share life events.

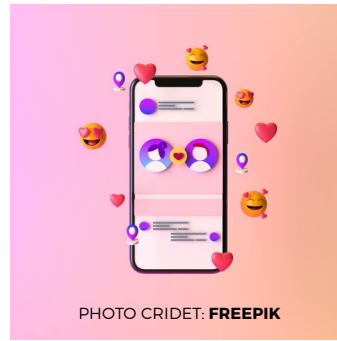


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DATING APPS

Everyone has heard of apps such as Tinder, Hinge, and even Christian Mingle. The sites were created for individuals to meet, date and hopefully blossom into a couple. Dating apps have helped many, while some look at dating apps as a waste of time. These apps allow an individual to swipe left to show disinterest, or swipe right if interested. From there, a conversation begins. Having the ability to swipe left on a person based solely on their looks presents a problem. Of course, attraction is important, but the ability and this mindset of swiping left leaves a lot of people left out of a possible connection due to their outward appearance. Many people have traits they look for in a partner, or a "type," but is our type getting us the results we're looking for? Dating apps don't challenge you to step beyond your comfort zone. But that's where love is.

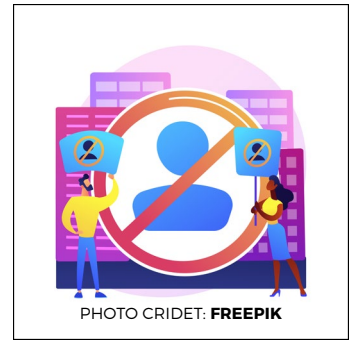


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CANCEL CULTURE

Cancel culture happens when a person is shunned or eliminated from cultural relevance after an action deemed problematic, whether small or big. Cancel culture plays a big part in Millennial dating. Cancel culture allows individuals to engage in discussion without being challenged, because if a feeling or belief is questioned, they ultimately just cut it off because they disagree, rather than to work to empathize or understand. Because cancel culture is so prevalent, and some people have built a habit of erasing people from their lives who don't align with all their beliefs, many believe that they just do not have to express their thoughts on situations and instead would much rather just end it without conversation. But, is cancel culture actually hurting Millennial dating? Cancel culture as a phenomenon can be a bandwagon ordeal. If someone on social media says a celebrity is canceled, many people will just follow up even if they don't have their own personal reason for it. Cancel culture and dating are relevant because many will let their friends, family, and peers tell them why they should cancel a person when it's not their situation at hand; these opinions don't allow a person to formulate their own reasons why they might not want to be in a relationship or friends with that individual. Cancel culture is the quick way out of a situation and the quick way of not digging deep into emotion and conversation.

These are just a few reasons why Millennial dating is hard. Things like social media are not going away, so when we ask and speak to our elders about their dating experiences we have to understand that we are just in a different time. But when you do speak to your elders and you ask them about their dating experiences there are still some very concrete things that are important no matter what era for relationships, with friendships and romance. Like, communication. Communication can save any relationship simply because it's the act of expressing how you feel to whomever you are with and trying to come to a resolution. New age phenomena including ghosting and cancel culture completely diminish communication. Even though dating is different nowadays there are so many awesome ways to still be able to date and potentially marry. Shows like "Married at First Sight" show that relationships can evolve unconventionally and still be great.

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