

Myrna White
Flies Into Retirement

PUSH
Forward, Always

Tiffanie Barriere
The Drinking Coach

SAMM

SOUTH ATLANTA MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2023

FOOD, FUN, & FESTIVALS

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Michelle Sneed's Bold, New Venture

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Publisher's Note



Welcome, South Atlanta Magazine Family, to our delightful summertime edition! Within these pages, you'll discover a plethora of captivating stories that will undoubtedly keep you engrossed in the latest installment of *SAM*.

Firstly, we are thrilled to introduce Michelle Sneed, a former executive of Tyler Perry Studios, who has embarked on an exciting new venture. Her brainchild, *A Few Good Women*, is a production studio dedicated to revolutionizing Hollywood, particularly for women and women of color. Prepare to be inspired by her remarkable journey towards success.

Next, we have the charismatic internet sensation known as PUSH, the silver fox who has taken the digital realm by storm. This professional roller skater exudes unparalleled swag, and his rise to fame will leave you spellbound.

Additionally, we present the remarkable story of K'la Inman, who defied the odds and triumphed over adversity, transforming her life from rags to riches. Her inspiring tale will undoubtedly resonate with readers from all walks of life.

As summer beckons, we take you on an exploration of Georgia, unveil-

“

Grab a cold beverage, find a cozy spot, and immerse yourself in the captivating stories and irresistible flavors that await you in this summertime edition of *South Atlanta Magazine*.

”

ing hidden gems and offering invaluable tips for outdoor enthusiasts. Discover picturesque hiking trails and indulge in the joy of outdoor activities that will make your summer truly memorable.

And let's not forget our Soul of SAM section, brimming with mouthwatering recipes for delectable barbecue sauces. Delve into the heart and soul of Southern cuisine as we share these culinary delights that will tantalize your taste buds.

So, grab a cold beverage, find a cozy spot, and immerse yourself in the captivating stories and irresistible flavors that await you in this summertime edition of *South Atlanta Magazine*. Enjoy every turn of the page! 🌸

With Gratitude,

Gerrian Hawes,
South Atlanta Magazine
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

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StoryTellers



Michael Booth ✂

EDITOR AT LARGE

Michael Booth is a writer and video producer from Atlanta, Georgia. After a number of years as a newspaper reporter and editor, he became a Writer/Producer/Director for several companies, including The Coca-Cola Company. He formed his own communications company, Face Communications, and proceeded to produce video programs for a number of leading companies, among them Delta Air Lines, Habitat for Humanity, Optum, the CDC, and the Southern Company.

In 2005 he was presented with an EMMY for Best Documentary Scriptwriting from the Southeastern NATAS for a documentary he wrote and co-produced called *Briars in the Cotton Patch*.

He has written numerous articles for this publication over the past 10 years.



SeQuoya Robinson ✂

PHOTOGRAPHER

Sequoya Robinson is an Atlanta native. She graduated from the illustrious North Carolina A&T University with a BS in Finance and later received my MBA from Southern Wesleyan University in South Carolina. She has been married to her husband Maurice for 10 years and have two beautiful boys McCoy and Macklin. Her love for capturing life is her passion.



LeVonn 'Lyfe' Brown ✂

Le'Vonn Brown, also known as Lyfe, is a young and dynamic photographer and videographer whose talent has taken the photography world by storm. He is an energetic individual who is passionate about capturing all kinds of people and has a unique way of bringing out the best in his subjects. His photography is dramatic, creative, and leaves a lasting impression on the viewer.

Addison Simmons

✂ JR. WRITER

Addison Simmons is a full-time student at Georgia State University, pursuing a bachelor's degree in English with a concentration in Writing. She plans to enter the world of publishing after earning her degree. In her free time, she enjoys writing poetry, reading (mostly nonfiction), and traveling. Addison lives in Atlanta, GA. Her favorite color is ocean blue.



Bianca Crawley ✂

WRITER

Crawley is a freelance writer whose passion lies in exploring and celebrating African American culture. With a keen eye for detail and a deep understanding of historical contexts, Maya's work delves into the rich tapestry of African American experiences, capturing the nuances of identity, resilience, and triumph.



Seyoum Mensuphu-Bey ✂

WRITER

Seyoum Mensuphu-Bey is a disciplined writer who takes pride in his work ethic and writing process. With versatility in his style, he effortlessly adapts to different genres and formats. Drawing upon a rich imagination, Seyoum constantly challenges himself creatively, pushing boundaries with innovative approaches to storytelling. He places a high value on originality, always striving to create work that stands out.



Miranda Malone ✂

PHOTOGRAPHER

Miranda Malone, an Atlanta native, has a deep connection to her hometown. She graduated from D.M. Therrell High School and obtained a digital photography certificate from CSU. With 24 years of marriage and three children, she has a loving family. Miranda has been passionately capturing precious memories for five years, cherishing the joy of preserving special moments.

Open the door to summer

Fashion

- Aeropostale Factory Store
- American Eagle
- Express
- FOREVER 21/F21 RED
- H&M
- Helzberg Diamonds
- Hot Topic
- Macy's
- New York & Company
- rue21 etc!
- Things Remembered
- Victoria's Secret
- Zales



SOUTHLAKE MALL

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“ I loved seeing Victoria Eady-Butler on the cover of the latest issue. I can't remember where I first learned of Uncle Nearest Whiskey, but I can tell you where I first read about Nearest Greene's descendant, *South Atlanta Magazine*. ”

I didn't even The article on Simone Parker brought tears to my eyes. I am in awe of her tremendous knowledge of what healing can look like. I know that I just read about this and I am hoping that I can find her book somewhere. I would like to acrokimize my life. Congrats on a well article written.

B. Codwell

I was pleasantly surprised to read about Victoria Eady-Butler. This whole time I thought the whiskey was a family owned member of Nearest Greene. Looks like the owner's of the brand are doing right by the sister. God knows any kind of acknowledgement of the truth is all the proof we will ever need to PROVE our goodness and greatness. Kudos to the entire Uncle Nearest crew.

Langston S.

As far back as I can remember, I don't believe that I have ever read a magazine the upheld a positive outlook with every turn of each page. I read the entire publication last Sunday afternoon. Thank you staff and owners of such a fine publication. Even though people have been saying that print is dead, South Atlanta Magazine is living in print and on the internet. Please keep up the good work.

Margaret Daniels

I can't thank you all enough for the story on the new CEO of Southern Regional Medical Center. She seems like the right person for the job. I remember when the hospital was Clayton General and how all the colored people had to go to Grady because they weren't allowed. Thank goodness times have changed. I hope to read more about the hospital and the people who work there.

Kathy Wells

Jonesboro got its first black mayor. I thought I would never see the day! What a glorious day it is. I have lived in this small city my entire life and can remember all of the racism. I even remember when the water fountains were separate and the KKK would march up Tara Blvd (19 41). I was sad to see Mr. Clark go but happy to read all that he did for our little city. May God bless both he and Mayor Sartor.

Rather not leave my name

Most people didn't know that Cynia Elise was from the south side of Atlanta. Thank you for reshaping her story. I was pleasantly surprised to see that she is still working on her craft. I'd hoped to see her on a stage in a play. From the article, it looks like she has matured and is doing well. Cheers to her.

S. Willis

Who on earth would have ever believed that Dan Mason would grace the pages of *South Atlanta Magazine*. I remember going to a concert and seeing him. It was so long ago but reading that story on him brought all those good old feelings back. Thank you for sharing what he's up to. I can't wait to get the book.

Catherine Cross

I would have never believed that you all could come back so strong. Gerrian and team, thank you for proving them wrong. Your stand for what is right for community inspired me. I never counted you out. I knew that you'd come back stronger. Congratulations, dear friend.

Monica Scott

Acronology, wow! I am a veteran educator with a love for language. The stroy about Ms. G. Simone Parker and how she has created a healing cirriculum is astounding. If only we could get this in all elementary schools in underserved communities, our children's futures would have an amazing outlook. Thank you team SAM for sharing this gem with us.

Zackery Hines



Send us your thoughts about *South Atlanta Magazine* to:

Email: editoria@southatlantamagazine.com

Mailing address: PO Box 1606, Jonesboro, GA 30237

Letters and emails should contain contact information. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and brevity.

Social Notes

Notes and comments you left for us to read on the website and on social media posts.



G. Simone Parker

What a read! This was a feel real good article. Keep it going SAM.

[executive.yp](#)

I really enjoyed reading this article. I never would have considered using an acronym in the way in which Mrs. Parker shares. Thank you for a great read.

[Kara Ellington](#)

Love everything about G. Simone Parker. I remember meeting her in New York, she is a class act.

[Ron Craigmire](#)

Uncle Nearest

What an amazing piece on Vickie. I am happy to see that she is doing well.

[toutlaw88](#)

You all did not disappoint with this article. I felt pride reading about how well the company has done in such a short time.

I was especially delighted to learn that the business is run in most part, by women. Kudos to Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey. I said bye-bye to Jack when I met Uncle Nearest.

[-tjacson4589](#)

What an amazing story. I felt pride learning more about the Nearest Green legacy. Just incredible, now I have to go see what the whiskey tastes like.

[Cynthia Rawls](#)

That whiskey is the best I have ever had. When I heard the story, I never imagined you all would share it as well. Lucky woman, she certainly hit the jackpot!

[Kelvin Lawson](#)

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PUBLISHER/EDITOR IN CHIEF

Gerrian Hawes

SVP | Executive Managing Editor

Teleah Greene

Senior Writers

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MAKING A MARK

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MEET TELESH GREENE,
South Atlanta Magazine's new SVP/Managing Editor, **the King Maker**

By Bianca Crawley
Photos By Rich Greene

Making A Mark



other ideas.”

This initial venture not only demonstrated Teleah’s resourcefulness and initiative but also ignited her entrepreneurial spirit. It served as a pivotal moment, empowering her to delve further into her creative endeavors and embrace new opportunities.

Fueled by hope, curiosity and an entrepreneurial mindset, Mrs. Greene founded a nonprofit organization called The Genesis, a mentorship program that served over 25 girls.

She also founded Blue Diamond Entertainment where she managed artist bookings, and organized various productions that showcased A’Maric, Dorrough, Karl Kani, Girbaud Jeans, and Baby Boy the Prince.

“I organized tours, facilitated radio and TV press, managed transportation and lodging, and secured national brand sponsorships. Additionally, I obtained contracts and bookings for concerts featuring platinum-selling artists.”

Greene continued her path to success when she relocated to Atlanta, GA for work with Delta Airlines.

Although Teleah has a love/hate relationship with Atlanta, she couldn’t imagine calling any other place her home base. Atlanta provides her with the best opportunities to pursue her creative passion and make significant contributions to event planning and execution.

In late 2022, Mrs. Teleah Greene’s hard work, passion, and accomplishments garnered her enticing offers from two esteemed organizations, Live Nation Entertainment and the NBA. However, driven by her unwavering dedication to her passion, she made the decision to embrace the role of Executive Managing Editor at *South Atlanta Magazine*. This position provided her with the freedom to create her own schedule and draw upon her entrepreneurial background, effectively working for herself.

“

From early on, I learned the art of personal branding. Little did I know that this skill would accompany me throughout my life, and, if I may say so myself, I’ve become rather adept at it.

”

Her exceptional contributions to a significant project involving Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey, a Black-owned distillery spanning over 430 acres of land in Tennessee, swiftly propelled her to the position of Senior Vice President, a role she currently holds dear.

We are thrilled to present Mrs. Teleah Greene, an exceptional, determined, and outgoing individual, to our esteemed readers. Since her well-deserved promotion, Mrs. Greene has remained a tremendous source of inspiration within our company, forging successful partnerships with prestigious clients. Reflecting on her journey, she shares, “From early on, I learned the art of personal branding. Little did I know that this skill would accompany me throughout my life, and, if I may say so myself, I’ve become rather adept at it.”

With a deep-rooted understanding of the power of connections and an innate ability to identify opportunities, Mrs. Greene’s arrival at *SAM* promises an exciting chapter for the magazine and its readers. Her expertise and leadership will undoubtedly shape a bright future for *South Atlanta Magazine*. ✨

S

South Atlanta Magazine (SAM) is thrilled to introduce Mrs. Teleah Greene as the newly appointed Senior Vice President and Executive Managing Editor. With her exceptional entrepreneurial prowess, she brings a fresh perspective and a vision to propel the publication to new heights.

Born in Park Hill in Denver, Colorado, Greene discovered her natural talent for creativity and networking at an early age. Reflecting on her journey, she shares, “I never realized that what I was doing was a talent or skill until I grew older. I have a genuine passion for making connections and nurturing positive relationships.”

However, it was during her formative years in high school when she truly realized her knack for placing individuals in positions that would lead to their success. “It was at East High where I discovered my talent for strategically positioning people for achievement,” she recalls fondly.

Upon graduating from high school in 2000, Teleah faced uncertainty in translating her skillset into a marketable career. However, driven by her determination, she decided to test the waters and came up with a brilliant idea—an innovative basketball tournament for children. Reflecting on that time, she shares, “I had no idea what steps to take or how it would come together. I simply knew that I wanted to make it happen! So, I conducted thorough research, reached out to relevant parties, and, astonishingly, at the age of 19, I secured the deal! It was a surprise even to myself, and it instilled in me the confidence to explore



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The Last Local Journalist

Robin Kemp created the *Clayton Crescent* to make the powerful accountable.

By Michael Booth

Photos By Sequoya Robinson



ROBIN KEMP slumped in a chair at the Fig Tree Café on a rainy afternoon, an untouched latte getting cool on the table.

“I’m overworked and I’m tired,” she said. “I don’t take the time to shower sometimes. I’ve got to learn to pace myself.”

As the reporter/editor/photographer/videographer/video editor/web master/fundraiser for the three-year old digital newspaper, Kemp is committed to covering the “news desert” that she calls Clayton County, where six cities exist within a sizeable unincorporated area governed by a county commission that heads a large number of agencies whose policies affect citizens on a daily basis.

Many news deserts have swept into being across the country as print newspapers, especially in small communities, have shrunk or gone out of business. News deserts get little attention from the larger news organizations, such as the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and Atlanta TV stations, and rarely have more than one reporter covering the local angles.

“Corporate raiders come in and strip out the assets and lay off the newsroom. It becomes a zombie paper,” she said of the struggling small community newspapers. “No matter what the medium is, there is always going to be a need for people who get the unvarnished truth down for the record.”

Kemp bemoans the death of these local newspapers but flatly refuses for her publication to be called “the future of local journalism.” She believes there may be a more sinister future for local news as the media giants continue to devour smaller publications and ignore local issues.

“We are the present of local news,” she said, pointing to her on-line newspaper as one of around 500 local newspapers in the nation-wide Institute for Non-Profit News. Yet, as the revenue streams dry up, she believes even these may be in danger of folding. She

said that in Cuba, with its tightly restricted media, western news and programs not cleared by the state are passed around surreptitiously with a flash drive that is called “El Paquete.”

“Honestly, looking at the political situation in the United States and the way things seem to be heading, I wouldn’t be surprised if get El Paquetes here, and that is not a good thing.”

Journalism is baked into her DNA. Her father, Jim Kemp, was a TV anchor in New Orleans, where Kemp was born on Mardi Gras. Rather than comic books, the young Kemp devoured the *Columbia Journalism Review*. Her father later joined CNN where he was senior assignment editor at the national desk.

In New Orleans, Kemp worked for the alternative weekly *Gambit*, covering everything from City Hall to historic preservation. In the first of her many honors, she was presented with the Brown Pelican award for covering coastal erosion in Louisiana. Little did she suspect that some three decades later the lessons learned from this experience would be put to use at her own digital newspaper.

She eventually wound up at CNN herself for nine years. While there she founded TurnOut, the LGBTQ group of Turner Broadcasting employees, that advocated for health benefits coverage for non-traditional partners. She was a producer of the in-house diversity training video called *Through the Lens*. After a short stint at the Weather Channel, where she created a system that would estimate power outages in storm areas, Kemp quit to pursue poetry.

After obtaining degrees in English and creative writing from Georgia State, and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of New Orleans, Kemp was named the “Best Poet in New Orleans,” with poems printed in several magazines

and anthologies. She published a book of poetry, *This Pagan Heaven*.

But Kemp soon discovered that poetry pays even less than journalism. Her return to journalism came when the Clayton News Daily offered her the position of covering Clayton and Henry counties, by herself. The pandemic changed that.

When she was let go from the *Clayton News Daily* via phone call in April 2020, Kemp immediately went to her home office and began building the website that would become Claytoncrescent.org.

“What is lost is real coverage of what is happening in this community,” she said of the traditional paper’s decision to cut their reporting staff. “I didn’t want that to happen. Clayton County is uniquely situated in the Atlanta metro area. It is a huge economic engine with all the warehouses and the airport.”

Her first journalistic success came in the fall of 2020 that changed the way the city of Forest Park was holding its virtual Mayor and City Council meetings. Along with the First Amendment Clinic at the University of Georgia, Kemp challenged the city’s exclusion of her attending the meetings in person without providing adequate remote access as mandated by the state’s sunshine laws. The city relented and improved its live streaming of its meetings.

Kemp and her little digital paper garnered huge national and international news with her coverage of the 2020 election results. Her curiosity had led her to cover the actual process of vot-

“
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It is a huge
economic
engine
with all the
warehouses
and the
airport.”



ing, which in her long career she had never done, in Clayton County. Her live Tweets about the election drew interest from many national news organizations as well as international outlets.

“I went to lunch with a Norwegian crew and we had a really nice time,” she said.

But as the day wore on, she found the ballot area was getting crazier and crazier. “There were platoons of people who came in who had been issued statewide credentials. They were young people from one particular party. They seemed to be directed by some older people. One man said he had witnessed some ballot mingling. When I talked with him it was obvious that he didn’t know what ballot mingling was.”

The coverage blew up her donations over the next few days, a welcome relief after paying for everything “literally out of my back pocket.” For her efforts, Kemp received the 2021 Media Changemaker Award from the Mercer University Center for Sustainable Journalism.

The mission of the *Clayton Crescent* is, according to Kemp, to cover issues of broad interest that will allow citizens to become participants in their local government’s decision-making process rather than just being passive spectators. The way to do this, she said, is to cover the news from the average person’s perspective, no matter what their political leanings or their economic status.

“I have Democrats who are mad at me. I have Republicans who are mad at me. I have Libertarians who are mad at me. I have Socialists who are mad at me. All of them are mad at me because I don’t say what they want me to say,” she said, sipping the last of her latte. “We are going to be as apolitical as possible.” 🌸

Making A Mark



Catching Up with K'La Inman, Social Media Influencer & Queen of Content

By Gerrian Hawes
Photo By Rich Greene

Upon meeting K'la Inman, I realized just how much I'd been oblivious to the world of social media influencers. It seemed like I'd been living in seclusion on Mars. Nevertheless, I was absolutely delighted to discover the invaluable insights and techniques K'La shared with me regarding the realm of social media influence.

"YOU ARE NOT PRETTY enough to become a model," are words Inman will never forget hearing her mother say. Those nine words have played a significant role in K'la Inman's journey. They have served as a catalyst, enabling her to realize the transformative power of pain.

At the age of 16, Inman held aspirations of becoming a model or actress. She dreamt of walking runways and gracing the big screen.

Despite her mother's comment, K'la Inman has successfully broken into the entertainment industry, but NOT as a model or actor. She has gained significant recognition as a social media influencer by powering her pain into purposeful passion.



Making A Mark

GETTING TO THE DREAM

Even though the memory of Inman's mother's comment about pursuing modeling was indelicate and harsh, Inman holds other memories, cherished ones, from her childhood. Particularly those memories from the trips she and her family took to the South.

Originally from Buffalo, New York, K'la, along with her siblings and parents, would travel to Alabama for family visits. "I remember those trips when I was a little girl. I always enjoyed going down south".

It was the unfortunate event of K'la's father being struck and tragically killed by a drunk driver, that compelled the family to permanently relocate to Birmingham.

Once she reached 18, her point of independence, K'la wasted no time in venturing out on her own. Remarkably, she'd already met her future husband at the age of 17, and they have remained inseparable ever since.

BUMPS IN THE ROAD

"In 2018, a significant turning point occurred in my life when my oldest daughter was selected as an extra in the movie, *The Black Panther*. Birmingham couldn't believe it," she reflects.

"During that period, we were suffering significant financial difficulties," she recalls. It would have been unimaginable for people to grasp the extent of the Inman family's struggle. She had to walk to McDonald's in order to access the internet and for a while the family ate oatmeal for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Not only that, the Inman's experienced multiple car repossessions, so when one day, during her lunch break, K'la went outside to find the family car missing, she remained unfazed. Without finching, she simply returned to the department store and had her lunch in the break room, choosing not to let the absence of the car affect her.

CREATING CONTENT THAT INFLUENCES

In an effort to keep the fire from the success of the *Black Panther* movie casting, aflame, Inman kicked into gear with an idea that would change the trajectory of her families fortune, hopefully, forever.

K'la credits her faith for her success, "It is only God that I am here. My husband and I knew that one day we would live in the house of our dreams, drive the cars and live in the neighborhood we desired so that our children would be afforded the

opportunity to go to the best schools offered".

They stood on their faith and everyday K'la tried a new promotional idea. Then it happened, two people paid \$35 each for K'la Inman to teach them how to get their children into the entertainment industry. The rest is history.

When she came up with the idea she says, "I recall feeling fearful of others' opinions and the potential backlash". However, she'd been in the same place for too long. "I decided to block anyone who[m] I anticipated would express negativity. I blocked them all." With this strategy in place, she began building her Facebook friends list by requesting connections with friends of friends, steadily working towards reaching 5000 followers. Concurrently, K'la continued promoting her classes. In 2020, K'la achieved her initial six-figure milestone by earning a six-figure income within a year. Shortly thereafter,

she surpassed her second six-figure objective by generating a six-figure income in a single month.

Originally, Inman had established her company with the intention of assisting individuals in learning the necessary steps to enter the entertainment industry. This endeavor stemmed from her own experience of not receiving the support she needed during her early ventures in the industry. Now, with her daughter's newfound fame, K'la found herself equipped with a sense of purpose, not only to aid other families but also to propel her own family towards financial success in the entertainment industry. ✨

“I recall feeling fearful of others’ opinions and the potential backlash.”

Keys to influencing “I always tell people to harness the power of word of mouth”. If potential social media influencers want to attract as many friends, followers or fans as possible, they must realize that content is king”, she emphasizes.

Below are a few of K'la's tips:
1. Clean your page
2. Collaborate with other social media influencers
3. Remember that people want to be entertained
4. Utilize Everything

HANDMADE BY JOEY ONE AT A TIME ONE-OF-A-KIND



DISTRESSED PATCHWORK SLOUCH



BIG TOTE



CUBED TOTE



STRIPED SLOUCH



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Embrace the Sun in Style: Discover the Top Resort Wear Trends for Summer

PHOTOS BY DINAH MUHAMMAD & LOURDES ARAZIA

As the summer heat intensifies and the promise of vacations lingers in the air, it's time to revamp your wardrobe with the hottest resort wear trends. Whether you're planning a beach getaway or simply want to infuse your everyday style with a touch of vacation flair, staying on top of the latest fashion trends is essential. From vibrant tropical prints that transport you to far-off destinations to breezy maxi dresses that effortlessly capture the carefree spirit of summer, this article unveils the must-have resort wear trends that will have you looking and feeling your best under the sun. So, get ready to explore the world of fashion as we dive into the top resort wear trends for this summer season, curated by the expert insights of Christine Willson of Khira Fashions.

Q: What are the top resort wear trends for summer this year?

A: This summer, the top resort wear trends include vibrant tropical prints, breezy maxi dresses, wide-leg pants, straw accessories, and retro-inspired swimwear.

Q: How can one incorporate vibrant tropical prints into their resort wear wardrobe?

A: To incorporate vibrant tropical prints, opt for statement pieces like a flowy maxi dress or a printed jumpsuit. Alternatively, you can start with accessories such as a printed scarf or a colorful tote bag to add a pop of the tropics to your outfit.

Q: Are there any specific materials that work well for resort wear during the summer season?

A: Absolutely! Lightweight and breathable fabrics like linen, cotton, and chiffon are perfect for resort wear during the summer. These materials allow for better airflow and keep you cool in the warm weather.

Q: Could you provide some tips on styling wide-leg pants for a resort wear look?

A: Wide-leg pants are a versatile piece for resort wear. Pair them with a cropped top or a tucked-in blouse to create a balanced silhouette. For a more relaxed vibe, consider a flowy off-the-shoulder top. Complete the look with some strappy sandals and statement earrings for an effortlessly chic resort wear ensemble.

Q: What are the key elements to consider when choosing straw accessories for a resort wear look?

A: When selecting straw accessories for resort wear, consider the size and shape of the accessory. Larger straw hats or beach totes make a statement and provide practicality. Straw clutches or crossbody bags are great for a more casual look. Additionally, pay attention to the details like colorful trims or embellishments to add a playful touch to your resort outfit. 🌸

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Exploring Mental Health in the Black Community with **Dr. Spirit:** A Conversation of Healing and Empowerment

By Seyoum Bey
Photos By Rich Greene

Note Worthy



Mental health holds a significant place in our overall well-being, encompassing social, psychological, and emotional aspects of our lives. For the Black community, addressing mental health has become an increasingly vital topic. While the Black experience in America is diverse, there are shared cultural factors that contribute to mental well-being.

Familial connections, community bonds, expressions through spirituality and music, and religious networks are integral parts of the shared cultural experience that empower African-Americans and enhance their mental wellness. When practiced in a healthy way, these cultural institutions offer tremendous benefits.

However, systemic barriers such as racism, mass incarceration, miseducation, discrimination, and social inequities persist for Black individuals, creating immense stress and trauma. Accessing appropriate care and treatment for mental health challenges is often hindered within the Black community.

Recent years have brought forth a series of significant events - a global pandemic, racial trauma, and ongoing fights for social justice - thrusting mental health to the forefront of conversations. Black individuals nationwide have gained a deeper understanding of their mental and emotional well-

being, leading to a collective effort towards healing.

At the forefront of this mental health revolution stands psychotherapist Dr. Spirit, who combines her vibrant and charismatic personality with informative and engaging methods of healing. With almost 20 years of experience, Dr. Spirit has been providing answers to life's toughest questions, shifting the narrative around love, life, and relationships.

Dr. Spirit's down-to-earth approach promotes empathy, understanding, and breaks down the stigma often associated with mental and emotional wellness. Her insightful conversations offer building blocks for her audience to incorporate into their lives, empowering them on their journey towards healing.

South Atlanta Magazine had the privilege of engaging in an enlightening conversation with Dr. Spirit, delving deep into her commitment and gift of healing others. She emphasizes the importance of understanding and articulating one's feelings, enabling individuals to express themselves with clarity and purpose.

Through her work, Dr. Spirit is creating a transformative space where mental health is prioritized, discussed, and embraced within the Black community. Her mission to empower individuals to address their mental well-being is bringing hope and healing to countless lives. Join us as we embark on a journey of self-discovery and empowerment with Dr. Spirit, as she guides us towards a path of emotional wellness and resilience.

" Oftentimes we are very disconnected from our feelings and we do so as a function for survival. So when I ask people how are you feeling, they will say 'Oh I'm good, I'm fine' - good is not a feeling, fine is not a feeling. So I encourage them to answer more intentionally when I ask, 'What are you feeling and why are you feeling it?'"

Spirit also spoke of the stigmatization of mental wellness advocacy within the Black community and why the Black community should be more open to seeking psychiatric

help. "The socialization and the retelling of the Black experience has been revised, rewritten, and outright lied about," she said. "My responsibility is to bring awareness and to help connect the dots on why certain things happen and where they stem from."

SAM: What led you into becoming a professional in the mental health space?

Spirit: I think this profession chose me, early on in life I never looked at being a therapist as a career. In ways my mother helped point it out to me as I was matriculating through college. The irony is when I told her I wanted to become a therapist, my mother said 'Of course, you have been doing this your whole life.'

SAM: What advice and insight do you have for Black women who across all socioeconomic realms suffer from burnout?

Spirit: "There is a lack of balance amongst Black women where we try to do it all and make it look effortless. The challenging part is deciding what is most important and not overwhelming ourselves for taking on more than what we have capacity for.

Whether it be with our scheduling or spending, we are burning the candle on both ends, thrusting all of the things we need and want into a small space of time. The Black

superwoman syndrome is a very real thing, where we think we always have to be on go, all of the time, for all people. More times than not we are not showing up for ourselves in the ways that we need."

SAM: How would you address the stigma that Black men carry of not

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Only 4% of mental health clinicians are Black and Black women outnumber Black male therapists 6:1.
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wanting to seek therapy?

Spirit: There are several reasons why Black men are hesitant to seek therapy. Only 4% of mental health clinicians are Black and Black women outnumber Black male therapists 6:1. So when you talk about the absence of Black men in this space, I can connect with a Black male client via our melanin, but there are gender dynamics that a Black male client may feel more comfortable talking to another man about.

Black Men and Therapy

Black men have long been conditioned to be the pillars of society and civilization. Their identity often revolves around their manhood, making it uncomfortable for them to discuss vulnerability, heartbreak, or victimization. Seeking professional psychiatric help can be challenging, especially when it involves reaching out to someone who may not look like them or fully understand their perspective.

However, the conversation around mental health is evolving. The focus has shifted from pathology to awareness and self-care. People are embracing the importance of mental and emotional wellness, openly discussing their personal narratives, and breaking down the stigma associated with seeking help.

In the Black community, prioritizing mental health is not a sign of weakness but an act of strength. The rich history of social change within the community highlights the importance of taking care of one's mental well-being. Recognizing that mental health is crucial to overall health, more individuals are taking the necessary steps to achieve wholeness.

At the forefront of this mental health movement stands Dr. Spirit. With her unwavering commitment to the cause, she is empowering Black men to prioritize their mental well-being. Dr. Spirit understands the unique challenges faced by Black men and is leading the way in providing the support and guidance they need.

Through her work, Dr. Spirit is breaking barriers and reshaping the narrative around mental health in the Black community. By creating a safe space for discussion and healing, she is equipping Black men with the tools to navigate their mental health journeys.

Join Dr. Spirit on the frontlines of the mental health movement as she inspires and empowers Black men to embrace their mental well-being. Together, we can foster a community that values and supports the holistic health of every individual. 🌸

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The Wonder in a Little Girl's Eyes

Rhonda Burnough creates a museum celebrating African-American families and pioneers in Clayton County

By Michael Booth
Photos Courtesy of Rhonda Burnough

It was the sparkling light that Rhonda Burnough saw in a young seven-year-old girl's eyes that sparked an idea to honor the African-American experience in Clayton County. The young girl, her step-granddaughter named McKenzie Palmer, had just seen Burnough's collection of African-American Santa dolls.

"That look in her eyes. I wanted to share that with others," she said. "That little girl's eyes told me that there are artifacts in many families that are significant."

The result is the R&M African-American Museum, a local museum dedicated to showcasing pioneering African-Americans such as elected officials, schoolteachers and administrators, and other trail blazing figures that have shaped the history of the county. The R in the museum name is for Rhonda and the M is

for Mary, her mother.

On a personal level, Burnough plans to display her extensive African-American doll collection that includes historical Barbie dolls of Rosa Parks, Alvin Alley, Maya Angelou, Kathryn Johnson, and the original African-American Barbie doll. One of the most interesting dolls is the first African-American Chatty Cathy, which Burnough collected alongside the Caucasian Chatty Cathy she had played with for years.

"The voice was the same in both dolls," she said.

Burnough is very particular when it comes to her doll collecting. She recently bought a Kamala Harris doll on the internet. But it was made with cheap plastic. "I sent it right back," she said.

Her One American Girl Doll Melody Ellison, listed on the American Girl website as an African-American singer in 1964 from Detroit, is to honor Burnough's hometown and the famous Hitsville of the Motown era.

Among the collection is a Birthday Barbie sporting a classic Afro, an African-American male and female Nutcracker, 20 miniature Hallmark African-American Barbies, an Olympic Gold Medalist Gabby Douglas doll wearing her signature Nike workout suit, and an African-American Marine. Beyond the 31 Barbie dolls and 45 regular dolls, doll houses, and a doll hospital, Burnough encourages family members to showcase their own African-American collections, whatever they may be. According to Burnough, the museum's purpose is to create an environment where families and individuals can display their family heirlooms and tell their personal stories.

"There is something about bringing your family together where stories are told. It helps you understand who you are," Burnough said. "I want it to be a place where people talk and reminisce. I don't want a stoic place. I want a magical place, a happy place."

Burnough is putting her entire doll collection on display, including the Princess Tiana and Prince Naveen dolls from the 2009 Disney film *The Princess and the Frog*. These dolls are symbolic of the entire museum. According to a Disney website on the princess, "Tiana knew that a dream is a little bit of magic and a lot of hard work."

The African-American dolls are just a part of the proposed museum, which at this writing was still looking for a permanent location, preferably a house rather than an industrial place, said Burnough. The other part of the museum is to honor African-Americans in Clayton County who were the firsts in their field.

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The museum will observe the tremendous changes in the Clayton County School system, beginning with the William Alfred Fountain school created in 1952 as part of the Rosenwald Schools.
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The museum will pay tribute to elected officials, such as Congressman David Scott and Congresswoman Nikema Williams, County Commission Eldrin Bell, Police Chief Jeffrey Turner, Clayton police officers Sharkley Buford and Dana Scott, District Attorney Jewel Scott, and others who created the career path for others to follow.

Burnough has not forgotten the officials in the county's seven cities. She plans to have exhibits with African-American firsts in city government, including College Park Mayor Bianca Motley Broom, Riverdale Mayor Phaedra Graham, and Forest Park Mayor Angeline Butler. Several council members, police and fire chiefs, and police officers will be memorialized as well.

Not all the officials will come from the ranks of elected politicians. Prominent African-Americans not elected consist of Chamber of Commerce Board Chair Pastor Wesley Greene and CEO Yulonda Dardin Beauford, head of the water authority Bernard Franks, library director Rosiland Lett, among others.

The museum will observe the tremendous changes in the Clayton County School system, beginning with the William Alfred Fountain school created in 1952 as part of the Rosenwald Schools. This series of schools was conceived by Booker T. Washington of the Tuskegee Institute and Julius Rosenwald, the Jewish philanthropist and president of Sears Roebuck, to build state-of-the-art schools for African-American children across the South. Some historians call this effort the most important initiative to advance black education in the segregated America of the early 20th century.

The story of the Rosenwald schools can be found in a book Burnough wants to include in the museum's research material. *A Better Life for Their Children* by Andrew Feiler details the tremendous influence that students from these schools have had on this country. Many took the lessons learned at a Rosenwald school to become leaders of civil rights movement.

In Clayton County today there are nine schools named after African-Americans who greatly influenced the direction of the county's educational system. One of these is named for a man with more than half a century of service to Clayton schools: Eddie White.

White was twice recognized as the Star Teacher at the high school and would twice be named Clayton County Teacher of the Year in 1972 and 1977, one of only two teachers to be so honored. His picture is the first in line at the teacher Hall

of Fame display at the Clayton County School Administrative office in Jonesboro. And in 2010, the Eddie J. White Middle School Academy was established to honor the long-time teacher and administrator.

"Never in my wildest dreams would I think that a school would be named after me," White told this publication a few years ago. "I'm very thankful and very honored. I feel I'm somewhat ministerial, which is what I set out to do, because kids and teachers came to me for advice. The bottom line is, I've done what I wanted to do originally."

From the whimsy of dolls to the seriousness of politics, the M&R Museum will span the African-American experience on a purely local level. Burnough wants visitors to both learn and be enchanted.

"The museum is something that is evolving. It may not be perfect but it is a start," Burnough said. "I want that warmth and excitement I saw in McKenzie's eyes. I want to share that with others." 🌸

Note Worthy



Commissioner Linda Pritchett: Leading South Fulton's District Seven Towards Transformation

By Bianca Crawley
Photo By SeQuoya Robinson

Linda Pritchett, South Fulton's District Seven Commissioner, has emerged as a prominent figure, not only as the district's commissioner but also as a dedicated wife, mother, friend, and community leader. Her leadership qualities and commitment to the community have garnered immense support, with over 48% of the district's voters choosing Pritchett, more than doubling the votes received by her closest contender.

With a growing population of over 108,000 residents in South Fulton, where over 90% are Black, there is a pressing need for proactive and effective

community work. Commissioner Pritchett has taken it upon herself to personally engage in community initiatives, organizing and participating in various activities that aim to bring positive advancements to the city she holds dear. From organizing neighborhood cleanups to implementing infrastructure improvements and addressing traffic issues through the installation of much-needed lights in high-accident areas, she remains dedicated to the ongoing development and growth of the city.

During the interview with South Atlanta Magazine, Commissioner Pritchett shared her vision for District Seven and elaborated on her involvement in recent positive changes within the district. "My goal is to see a lot of infrastructure projects, road repairs, and development projects in this district."

Traffic congestion, dangerous potholes, and the need for updated traffic lights and signs were among the critical issues she addressed, demonstrating her keen understanding of the daily challenges faced by residents throughout the Atlanta Metropolitan area.

Commissioner Pritchett's strategic planning and organizational skills have already yielded numerous positive results. One notable achievement is the successful execution of community trash cleanup initiatives, which not only contribute to a cleaner environment but also make the city more attractive to potential residents and businesses. Additionally, the acquisition of a new street sweeper has significantly improved the cleanliness of Old National Highway, making it evident that her efforts are transforming the city's streetscape for the better.

Safety on the roads has been a top priority for Commissioner Pritchett. She has been instrumental in the installation of traffic lights, including the much-needed light at the intersection of Highway 138 and Bethsaida Rd, an area notorious for frequent accidents. "It's going to save lives and the community has wanted it for over ten years now."

Commissioner Pritchett's tireless efforts to maintain and enhance District Seven have not gone unnoticed. The residents are well-informed and actively participate in the development of their district, taking advantage of the accessible resources provided within the community.

Looking ahead, Commissioner Pritchett envisions hosting an international farmers market as the next step towards building a stronger community. This event would bring vendors and shoppers together, supporting local companies and stimulating economic growth within the district. By encouraging residents to patronize small local businesses, the aim is to create a unique shopping experience that will attract visitors from other districts as well.

When asked how the residents of District Seven could contribute to the betterment of their community, Commissioner Pritchett stressed the importance of communication. She welcomes residents to make her aware of any issues or concerns they may have, as their feedback allows her to swiftly address municipal services and other related matters, ensuring their needs are met promptly and effectively.

As Commissioner Pritchett continues to fulfill her duties, she remains committed to representing the interests of District Seven, both at a district level and on a personal level, advocating for the well-being and progress of the people within the community. With a multitude of upcoming goals and long-term plans, District Seven can anticipate positive changes under her leadership. South Atlanta Magazine eagerly anticipates the transformative developments that Commissioner Pritchett will bring to the district. ✨

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town feel while offering all
the amenities of a major
metropolitan area.

Four major interstates – I-75, I-85, I-285, and I-675 – pass through Clayton County and provide 19 interstate exits, making Clayton County the preeminent location for high-tech logistics and distribution companies. Additionally, I-20 is just a few miles beyond the county border. Clayton County is also home of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and is the hub for many airport-related enterprises and support businesses. Clearly our location is unbeatable for businesses that need access to global markets.

Industries here also enjoy access to a young and diverse workforce. Clayton County has one of the most diverse populations of any county in metro Atlanta. This multi-national population brings a global, sophisticated perspective to the county. The relative youth of our residents is attractive to businesses looking for a variety of skilled and experienced

personnel prospects. Additionally, about one-third of the Clayton County workforce has some college background, indicating a labor force that is educated, diverse and plentiful.

Other business-friendly amenities in Clayton County include having Clayton State University and its world-renowned Spivey Hall concert space within the county, and the innovative Clayton County Water Authority that has captured national and international attention.

Residents of Clayton County enjoy an attractive lifestyle featuring economical housing options, competitive cost of living, excellent parks and recreation amenities, exceptional healthcare facilities, an enriching public educational system, and abundant community events. It's clear that Clayton County is an appealing place to live, work, and play.

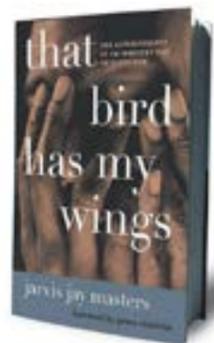
Touch down and experience the world of opportunities in Clayton County for yourself!



Note Worthy

Good Books that Give You Something to Think About

Escape into the world of captivating stories with our handpicked selection of summer reads that will transport you to far-off places, engage your imagination, and warm your heart.



In the memoir “That Bird Has My Wings” written by Jarvis Jay Masters, readers are invited into the extraordinary and harrowing journey of a man striving to find meaning and redemption within the confines of a death row prison. With his powerful and introspective narrative, Masters sheds light on the human capacity for change, growth, and the pursuit of inner freedom.

The book begins with Masters recounting the tragic events that led him to San Quentin State Prison’s death row. He paints a vivid picture of his troubled upbringing, marked by poverty, abuse, and neglect, which set the stage for his descent into a life of crime. However, what sets “That Bird Has My Wings” apart is Masters’ unyielding determination to transform himself despite his bleak circumstances.

Masters’ prose is strikingly honest and raw, reflecting the depths of his emotions and the stark realities of life in prison. He narrates his experiences with a mix of vulnerability and strength, allowing readers to see the transformational power that introspection and self-reflection can bring. Through his writing, he offers a unique per-

spective on the inherent worth of every individual, regardless of their past mistakes.

One of the book’s most powerful aspects is Masters’ exploration of spirituality and the role it plays in his personal growth. He delves into his journey of self-discovery and the profound impact that Buddhism and meditation have had on his life. This spiritual awakening becomes a guiding force that helps him confront his own demons, find inner peace, and ultimately reach out to others who are also on the path of self-redemption.

Throughout the book, Masters introduces readers to the complex and diverse characters he encounters in prison. He weaves their stories into his own, emphasizing the shared humanity that exists within the walls of San Quentin. By highlighting the relationships he forges and the compassion he witnesses, Masters challenges societal perceptions of prisoners and forces readers to confront their own biases.

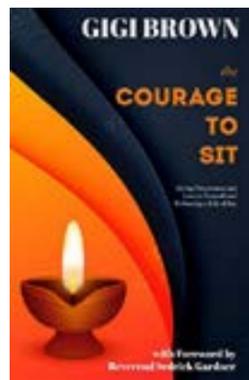
“That Bird Has My Wings” is not a book that provides easy answers or neatly tied endings. It is a poignant and thought-provoking memoir that compels readers to question their own notions of justice, punishment, and human

potential. Through his personal journey, Masters raises important questions about the flaws of the criminal justice system and the urgent need for rehabilitation rather than solely focusing on retribution.

In terms of the writing style, the narrative can be somewhat fragmented and nonlinear at times, mirroring the disjointed nature of Masters’ experiences. While this may pose a challenge for some readers, it ultimately enhances the authenticity of the story, allowing us to glimpse into the mind of a man grappling with his past and striving for a better future.

Finally, “That Bird Has My Wings” is a remarkable and deeply affecting memoir that sheds light on the capacity of the human spirit to endure, transform, and find hope even in the darkest of circumstances. Jarvis Jay Masters’ story is a testament to the power of self-reflection, compassion, and the pursuit of redemption. By sharing his journey, he offers readers a powerful message of resilience, forgiveness, and the possibility of change. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in the complexities of the criminal justice system and the potential for personal transformation against all odds.

In her debut book, *The Courage to Sit*, author Gigi Brown acquaints herself with the truth of who she is with the help of her inner child, Marla. During 40 days and nights of meditating, Gigi meets up with not only Marla, but other ancestors and guides who come forth to bring her messages. Each guide brings a special message that assists the author with healing. This is a book that shares the beauty of coming into acknowledgment of one’s power. Perhaps this is what makes this book such a gift – it gives from the spirit of the author to encourage others that peace, unconditional love, and joy are all possible if we have the courage to sit in silence with our thoughts. Gigi Brown’s reflections on her experience writing *The Courage to Sit*. “I gained 22



pounds writing this book as I fought the resistance from myself to bring this book to fruition. This isn’t the book that I set out to write, but it is the book that came forth from my soul. I’m happy to have relinquished my feelings of unworthiness, self-doubt, guilt, self-loathing, and fear. It is certainly a book of personal healing and provides insight on what I call superpowers, that helped me move me into a state of wellbeing. To you, the reader, I pray steady and unblocked enlightenment. And so it is!” *The Courage to Sit* is the first book in the trilogy of Courage books. Books two and three, *The Courage to Rise*, *The Courage to Be* are forthcoming.



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MYRNA WHITE

A JOURNEY OF DEDICATION AND GROWTH AT HARTSFIELD JACKSON ATLANTA AIRPORT

BY GERRIAN HAWES
PHOTOS BY Le'VONN 'LYFE' BROWN

IN THE BUSTLING CORRIDORS OF HARTSFIELD JACKSON Atlanta Airport, there exists a story of resilience, dedication, and growth embodied by Myrna White. Starting as a temporary employee back in 1991, Myrna's journey was set in motion. Little did she know that this airport would become the center stage for her extraordinary career and life's work. As an information specialist, her role extended far beyond the confines of her job title. She was tasked with gaining public approval for the ambitious fifth runway project, a monumental responsibility that would shape the airport's future and solidify her place in history.

Building Success Through Challenges

Myrna's journey at the airport was not without its hurdles. She recalls the challenges faced during the construction of the fifth runway. Flight pattern issues and other obstacles delayed the project, but Myrna's unwavering commitment and problem-solving skills played a pivotal role in overcoming these setbacks. Her ability to navigate through difficulties with grace and persistence endeared her to her colleagues and superiors alike.

A Special Connection to the Fifth Runway

It may seem unusual to develop a personal connection to an inanimate object

like a runway, but for Myrna, the fifth runway was more than just a piece of pavement. It represented her journey and growth throughout her time at the airport. The runway's opening in 2006 marked a significant milestone in her career, symbolizing the culmination of years of hard work and dedication. Myrna's strong sense of attachment to the fifth runway showcased her passion for her work and the airport's success.

White played an intricate role in Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta Airport's rise to becoming the busiest airport in the world. Serving under six mayors and eleven airport general managers was no small feat, especially considering the political landscape that often accompanies such positions. Her ability to stay focused on the airport's growth while avoiding political entanglements was instrumental in Myrna's longevity and success. Her approach to leadership and unwavering faith in God and her

abilities earned her the respect and trust of those she worked with.

A Growth Philosophy That Transcends Time

One of the keys to Myrna's success was her growth philosophy, which she adhered to throughout her career. Being prepared and constantly learning about the organization's needs allowed her to adapt to the visions of different general managers seamlessly. Myrna's ability to persuade others was balanced with knowing when to step back, a skill that proved invaluable in her interactions with stakeholders and the public.

Throughout her decades of service, Myrna White's faith remained a constant source of strength. Her Bible served as a guiding light during challenging times, reminding her of her purpose and the values she held dear. Alongside her faith, her circle of friends provided unwavering support, acting as a safety net during moments of uncertainty and doubt. "When you have a circle of friends to help out, you have all you need. I have been married, divorced, raised a child who just graduated from my amateur, Georgia State University. I am proud and blessed."

The combination of faith and friendship fortified her resolve and enabled her to withstand the pressures of her role.

Traveling the World and Embracing Diversity

Myrna's adventurous spirit and coveted airport position, led her to explore diverse cultures and countries worldwide. Having visited almost every corner of the globe, her experiences exposed her to the beauty and richness of humanity's diversity. She vividly recalls her time in South Africa, where she immersed herself in Nelson Mandela's history, an encounter that left a profound impact on her. "Being in the place that Nelson Mandela lived and visiting where he was imprisoned was such an historic moment for me. It was very impactful", she remembers. And a brief but enchanting visit to Paris left an indelible memory of a city characterized by beauty, romance, and culinary delights.

Leadership and Mentorship: Nurturing Future Leaders

Myrna's leadership style was defined by her father's advice to treat others better than she wanted to be treated. This principle, the "platinum touch," allowed her to foster an environment of respect and fairness, ensuring that her colleagues, superiors, and subordinates felt valued and appreciated. As a mentor, she took pride in guiding individuals through their careers, helping them climb the ranks and assume higher positions. Her commitment to honesty and constructive feedback inspired growth in those she mentored, reflecting her genuine desire

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Being in the place that Nelson Mandela lived and visiting where he was imprisoned was such an historic moment for me. It was very impactful.
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to see others succeed.

Feedback played a significant role in Myrna's professional growth. She actively sought guidance from her general managers to identify areas for improvement and embraced constructive criticism wholeheartedly. Rather than viewing feedback as a judgment of her abilities, she regarded it as an opportunity for growth. Her open-mindedness and willingness to adapt led to continuous personal and professional development, fostering a sense of humility and self-awareness.

The Future for Myrna White: A Legacy of Knowledge and Expertise

As Myrna prepares for retirement, she embarks on a new chapter, venturing into the private sector as a public relations powerhouse. Her vision for Everest Global Engagement reflects her desire to share her wealth of knowledge and expertise with organizations seeking her services. Like the towering peak of Mount Everest, her standards of excellence and dedication will remain unmatched, continuing her legacy of impactful contributions.

The tale of Myrna White at Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta Airport is one of perseverance, dedication, and growth. From her humble beginnings as a temporary employee to becoming an instrumental figure in the airport's success, her journey is a testament to the power of unwavering commitment and a growth mindset. Myrna's faith, adaptability, and leadership philosophy have served as the driving force behind her remarkable achievements. As she prepares to step into a new phase of life, Myrna White leaves behind an indelible mark on the airport and its people, inspiring future generations to embrace challenges, cultivate resilience, and soar to great heights.



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SOMETHING HAPPENS

Kyle 'Push' Dutcher: Skating, Family, Tourette, and Tree-Climbing

BY GERRIAN HAWES
PHOTO BY MANDEL HUFF OF CROSSCLIPS

IN THE VAST AND EVER-EVOLVING REALM OF social media, the phenomenon of going viral has given birth to numerous internet sensations. One such sensation is the enigmatic skater known as "Push." With his mesmerizing roller-skating moves and charismatic presence, Push has captured the hearts of millions worldwide. However, beyond the glitz and glamour of internet fame lies a story of passion, family, and an unexpected profession that has shaped the life of this Atlanta native.

The journey of Push began around three to four years ago when a video of him roller-skating effortlessly at Cascade Skate Rink in Atlanta exploded on Twitter. Within a couple of hours, the video amassed a staggering 2 million views, and in just a few weeks, it skyrocketed to 29 million. The video featured a group of women from Memphis,

cousins and best friends, who happened to record Push's performance, unknowingly igniting his path to internet stardom.

Born and raised in Atlanta, Push, whose real name is Kyle Dutcher, had been skating since childhood. It all started during his summer daycare days when he would visit the skating rink for field trips. However, it wasn't until he faced a personal struggle, divorce, and the responsibility of being a single father to his young daughter that he rediscovered his passion for skating. With a newfound determination, Push delved into the world of adult skating, immersing himself in the diverse styles that Atlanta's melting pot offered. "At first all I did was watch other people skate and then the last 30 to 40 minutes of the night, I'd skate." He reflects.

He likens Tourette to having an itch that cannot be satisfied with a scratch.

Across the nation, different regions showcase their unique skating styles. “ Different parts of the region skate differently. Chicago’s JB style [characterized by skating to stepping music], Ohio’s soulful moves, and Detroit’s wheel-sliding and big stoppers, each city has its own distinct style”. Push considers his style a culmination of these influences, making Atlanta a mecca for diverse skaters.

Despite being one of the few white skaters in the predominantly African-American skating community, Push faced few issues. The skating culture embraced everyone who shared a passion for the art, creating a close-knit family where people supported and encouraged each other. Push cherishes the camaraderie and refers to his fellow skaters as his “skate fam.” “I Love running into my skating family. We see each other in the store or at a light and scream, ‘Yell, hey skate fam’”. It is this sense of community that strengthens his bond with skating and inspires him to keep pushing new boundaries.

However, beyond the glimmering lights of skating stardom, Push (Kyle) has another surprising passion - tree-climbing which happens to be his ‘9-to-5’ job. In an entirely different realm, Push works in the tree service industry. He co-owns SCS Tree Services based in Woodstock, GA. He has been a profession for 15 years. With expertise in diagnosing and cutting trees, he treats tree surgery as an art form, akin to Mr. Miyagi’s meticulous pruning of bonsai trees in the movie *Karate Kid*

Tourette Syndrome and Push

Behind the dazzling moves and magnetic charm of Push lies a personal battle with severe anxiety caused by acute Tourette syndrome. Push’s journey to success has not been without challenges, and his triumph over this condition is a testament to his resilience and determination.

Tourette syndrome is a neurological disorder characterized by involuntary movements and vocalizations called tics. These tics can be sudden, repetitive, and difficult to control, often causing significant distress and discomfort. Push was diagnosed with the condition at the tender age of 14, which added an extra layer of complexity to his life.

Even amid the spotlight of his rising internet fame, Push faces the constant struggle of managing his anxiety. His Tourette can cause tics to worsen, especially during moments of nervousness or heightened stress. He shared an incident on his way to an interview where his nerves kicked in, triggering a series of tics, some of which affected his breathing. “Today on the way over here, I felt my anxiety and breathing get short. I am good now but I did feel the tics”. It is a reminder that behind the confident persona lies a person facing his own internal battles.

Push has encountered others with more severe cases of Tourette, including the wife of one of his employees. This firsthand experience with different levels of the condition allows him to empathize with those who share similar struggles. It is this empathy that strengthens his connection with others, both on and off the skating rink.

He likens Tourette to having an itch that cannot be satisfied with a scratch. It’s an apt analogy that captures the relentless nature of the condition, its unpredictability, and its ability to influence various aspects of his life. Despite this constant challenge, Push’s commitment to his passions, including skating and tree-climbing, remains unwavering.

Push’s story is a reminder that each individual carries their unique battles, and it is through perseverance, empathy, and passion that we can rise above adversities.

Push’s profound connection with nature and the earth has instilled in him a belief in grounding oneself by walking barefoot outside. This outdoorsman’s approach to life guides him not only in his tree-climbing endeavors but also in his skating. Both activities require a deep understanding of one’s surroundings and the ability to harmonize with nature’s rhythm.





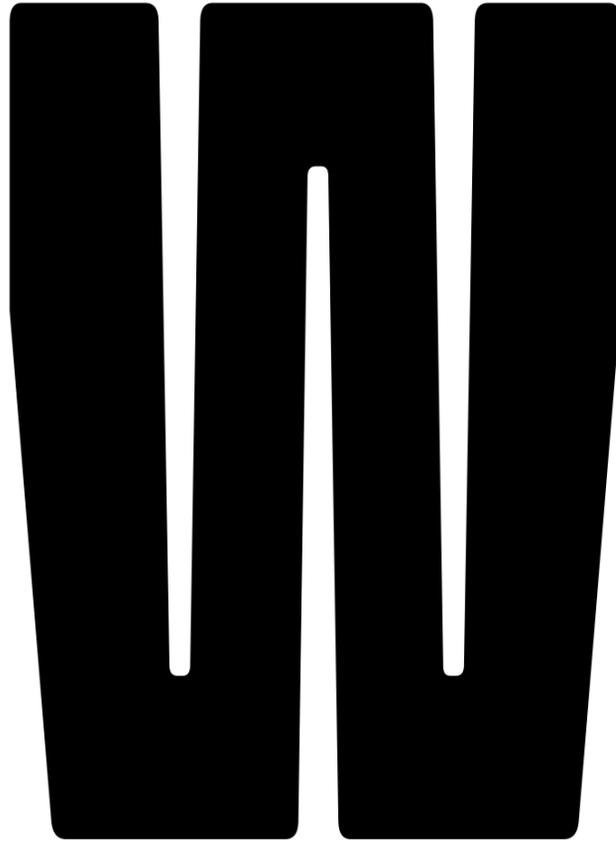
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A seasoned producer in the film industry, shares her inspiring path from a production assistant to President of Production and Development for Tyler Perry Studios to Founder & CEO of her very own production company, A Few Good Women Productions, Inc.

S

Michelle Sneed's Great New Venture: A Few Good Women Productions

BY GERRIAN HAWES
PHOTOS BY MARCUS OWENS & DREA NICOLE PHOTOGRAPHY



While she never dreamed of having her own company, she had an innate curiosity about the behind-the-scenes professionals who brought big film productions to life.

Hailing from the small town of Inkster, Michigan, Sneed had questions about the inner workings of the film industry and what it took to become a producer. An embarkment of answers to those questions would start her journey into the film industry when she was accepted into Michigan State University's language arts program.

A program that offered a comprehensive curriculum encompassing various communication arts, including film production which later proved to be transformative, opening doors she never anticipated.

And that also afforded her an internship at Vibe Magazine under the leadership of Editor-in-Chief MiMi Valdez. This experience in New York City exposed her to the world of magazine production, honing her skills and igniting her passion for the behind-the-scenes work.

While this opportunity offered a career as a Hip-Hop journalist, Sneed found herself captivated by the production aspect of magazines. She quickly realized the pivotal role of a production assistant in every production. In fact, most executive producers' first request is often, "Do you know a good production assistant?"

Following her time at *Vibe Magazine*, Sneed pursued an opportunity that led her to Los Angeles. There, she became connected with Streetlights, a program designed for marginalized individuals seeking entry into the film industry. This program offered comprehensive training in all aspects of being a production assistant. To this day, Sneed remains affiliated with Streetlights, recognizing the transformative impact it had on her life at just 21 years old.

Infected By the Production Bug

The production bug had bitten her, as she discovered fulfillment in the creative, business, and service aspects of the industry. It was a perfect blend of her passions and talents, driving her to pursue a career in film production. "A competent PA knows that it is all of the above; getting coffee, answering calls, understanding that you must be able to recover quickly. Yes, you are gonna mess up, but can you recover quickly?", Sneed gleefully asserts. A production assistant is gaged by knowing that you must accomplish many simple tasks, at one time. Knowing that you can handle all of those said tasks at once is what makes or breaks you. "So if you can get the coffee order right, now maybe I can give you a ask task sheet", she says. Sneed can make these requirements because as she says, "I have definitely fulfilled all of these requirements to make it to where I am today!" Michelle believes that this knowledge has made her a good producer because she understands what it takes to be a production assistant.

"Most people don't understand the value of being a PA. Being a production assistant affords the opportunity to actually decide what you want to be in the industry because you get to see everyone else's role, whether it is director, writer or actor. You get a clear perspective as a PA."

Sneed's journey is a testament to the power of curiosity, hard work, and seizing opportunities. From her humble beginnings, she worked her way up from a production assistant to assume leadership roles in the industry.

Her story is an inspiration for aspiring professionals in the film industry. It serves as a reminder that with dedication, determination, and a willingness to learn, one can transform their dreams into reality. From working behind the scenes as a production assistant to leading major productions, Sneed has carved out a remarkable path, proving that big dreams are achievable with perseverance and unwavering commitment.





From PA to President: Michelle Sneed's Journey in the Film Industry

Before her tenure at Tyler Perry Studios (TPS), Michelle Sneed gained valuable experience as a production assistant (PA) in Los Angeles. Working as a PA for five to six years, she explored various roles in writing and development, discovering her true passion. While she occasionally ventured into different areas, Sneed always found her way back to development.

TPS became the pivotal point in Sneed's career, propelling her to new heights. Over her 14-year tenure, she witnessed the studio's astronomical growth, despite its smaller scale compared to major studios like Disney. It was at TPS where she caught the bug to establish her own production company, driven by the experiences and opportunities she encountered.

Sneed fondly recalls the remarkable embrace TPS received from the state of Georgia, particularly in regards to tax credits. As the studio led the way in productions, Georgia sought guidance from TPS on conducting business and maximizing the benefits of tax credits. The state listened and implemented the suggestions, contributing to Georgia's success in the film industry today. Sneed takes pride in being part of the influential team that helped shape Georgia's thriving film landscape.

As an industry veteran, Sneed also takes credit for training and nurturing a new generation of production assistants in Atlanta. Many professionals currently in the industry, who relocated from Los Angeles or New York, received their training and opportunities through TPS. Sneed recognizes the significance of providing access to the marginalized Black community in the film industry, empowering individuals and contributing to Georgia's economy.

Being an outlier is a source of great pride for Sneed. At TPS, she experienced a wide range of responsibilities, including production, marketing, cataloging,

music management, and collaborating with music labels. The studio provided her with invaluable experiences on multiple levels, including live stage plays and grand events, offering a unique perspective.

After 14 years at TPS, and serving as President of Production in her final four years, Sneed accumulated the necessary expertise to embark on her own production company. Embracing her outlier status, she recognizes that it affords her the best of all worlds, combining diverse experiences and perspectives.

Reaching New Heights: A Few Good Women Productions

With the success of Tyler Perry Studios (TPS) and her role in its creation and development, Michelle Sneed found herself contemplating how she could expand opportunities for others aspiring to pursue diverse careers in the film industry. She wanted to create a space that reflected her vision and provided marginalized communities with a platform for their talents. Inspired by the Marine Corps slogan, "A Few Good Men," she decided to name her production studio A Few Good Women Productions.

When Sneed googled the name, she discovered it was available, cementing her decision. As one of the few women executives at Tyler Perry Studios, she recognized the stark gender disparity in leadership roles, a reflection of the broader film industry's lack of female representation. Being the only woman in the room brought about unique challenges, with men often conveying their thoughts differently in her presence. Sneed navigated these situations, consciously balancing her femininity and professionalism while ensuring she was seen and respected as an executive.

Raising capital for her production company, A Few Good Women Productions, Sneed candidly acknowledges the awareness of her identity as a woman and, more specifically, as a Black woman. The perception of her being a woman and a woman of color influences how others view her efforts to raise substantial funds, even to the extent of daring to raise \$100 million. While she recognizes the support she has received, she also acknowledges the unique challenges she faces due to societal biases and stereotypes. "I have never been so aware that I am a woman and a black woman on top of that".

Sneed's vision for A Few Good Women Productions breaks new ground in the industry. She strives to challenge the notion that women of color primarily serve as talent rather than creators and decision-makers. The uniqueness of her company's mission and objectives sets it apart, making it a pioneering endeavor that even industry powerhouses like Oprah and Shonda Rhimes have yet to undertake.

As Sneed forges ahead in her journey, she remains undeterred by the obstacles she encounters. A Few Good Women Productions represents a groundbreaking venture that aims to shatter barriers, elevate underrepresented voices, and reshape the industry's perception of women of color. By leading with determination and tenacity, Sneed is setting a powerful example and opening doors for future generations of diverse filmmakers and storytellers.





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SOUL OF SAM



Sweet and Juicy Delights: Embrace the Essence of Summer with Peach Pie

BY KRISTEN CALLOWAY
PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARIASAP7

As the warm summer sun blankets the earth, it brings forth a bountiful harvest of one of nature's most delicious gifts – peaches. Bursting with flavor and brimming with sweetness, peaches are the quintessential fruit of the season. And what better way to celebrate their juicy splendor than by indulging in a homemade peach pie? Join us as we embark on a delightful journey through the summer with the irresistible allure of peach pie.

Captivating the Essence of Summer

There's something undeniably enchanting about peach pie during the summer months. The aroma of fresh peaches wafting through the kitchen, the golden crust glistening in the sun's rays, and the moment when you take that first bite and experience the explosion of sweet and tangy flavors – it all embodies the essence of this vibrant season.

The Perfect Peach

To create a truly unforgettable peach pie, it all begins with selecting the perfect peaches. Look for peaches that yield gently to your touch, with a heavenly fragrance and vibrant color. Their delicate flesh should be juicy, with a perfect balance of sweetness and tartness. Whether you choose classic yellow peaches or opt for the delightful blush of white peaches, let their natural juiciness be the star of your pie.

The magic of peach pie lies in the harmonious blend of flavors that dances on your taste buds. The sweetness of the peaches mingles with a hint of tartness, enhanced by a touch of cinnamon and a splash of lemon juice. A sprinkling of sugar adds a caramelized crunch to the crust, while a dash of nutmeg or almond extract can elevate the flavor profile even further. It's a symphony of tastes that captures the essence of summer's bounty.

The Cradle of Comfort

No peach pie would be complete without a flaky, buttery crust that cradles the luscious filling. Whether you opt for a traditional double crust or prefer the rustic charm of a lattice design, the crust serves as the vessel for all the glorious peachy goodness. Its golden hue and delicate texture provide the perfect contrast to the soft, tender peaches, creating a truly satisfying dessert.

While a classic peach pie is undoubtedly delightful, the versatility of this fruit allows for endless creative possibilities. Add a twist to your pie by incorporating other seasonal fruits like berries or even a hint of fresh herbs like basil or thyme to bring out the natural flavors. Consider a crumble or streusel topping for added texture and depth. The possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

Sharing the Joy

Peach pie not only delights the senses but also brings people together. Gather friends and family to revel in the summer spirit as you savor each bite of this delectable treat. Whether enjoyed on a lazy afternoon picnic, at a backyard barbecue, or as the grand finale to a summertime feast, the joy and satisfaction that peach pie brings are meant to be shared.

As summer rolls in, embrace the abundance of fresh peaches and let the essence of the season inspire you to create a peach pie masterpiece. Allow the sweet, juicy flavors to transport you to sunny orchards and lazy summer afternoons. Soak in the warmth of the sun, savor the taste of summer, and relish every moment as you indulge in the glorious delight that is peach pie.

THE RECIPE

Preparation Time: 30 minutes
Cooking Time: 45-50 minutes
Total Time: 1 hour 15 minutes
Yields: 1 9-inch pie (8 servings)



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Ingredients:

For the Crust:

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup unsalted butter, cold and cut into small cubes
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup ice water

For the Filling:

- 6 cups fresh peaches, peeled, pitted, and sliced
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

For Assembly:

- 1 egg, beaten (for egg wash)
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar (for sprinkling)

Instructions:

1. Preparing the Crust:

- In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, and salt. Add the cold cubed butter and use a pastry cutter or your fingertips to cut the butter into the flour mixture until it resembles coarse crumbs.
- Gradually add the ice water, a tablespoon at a time, and mix with a fork until the dough comes together. Be careful not to overwork the dough. Divide it into two equal parts, form each into a disc, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

2. Preparing the Filling:

- In a large bowl, combine the sliced peaches, sugar, flour, cornstarch, lemon juice, cinnamon, and salt. Toss gently until the peaches are coated evenly. Let the mixture sit for about 10 minutes to allow the flavors to meld together.

3. Preparing the Pie:

- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
- On a lightly floured surface, roll out one disc of chilled dough to fit a 9-inch pie dish. Place the rolled-out dough into the pie dish, gently pressing it against the bottom and sides.
- Pour the peach filling into the prepared pie crust, spreading it evenly. Dot the top of the filling with small pieces of butter.
- Roll out the second disc of dough and cover the pie. You can either place the whole sheet on top, cut slits for venting, and crimp the edges, or create a lattice pattern with strips of dough. Trim any excess dough and crimp the edges to seal.

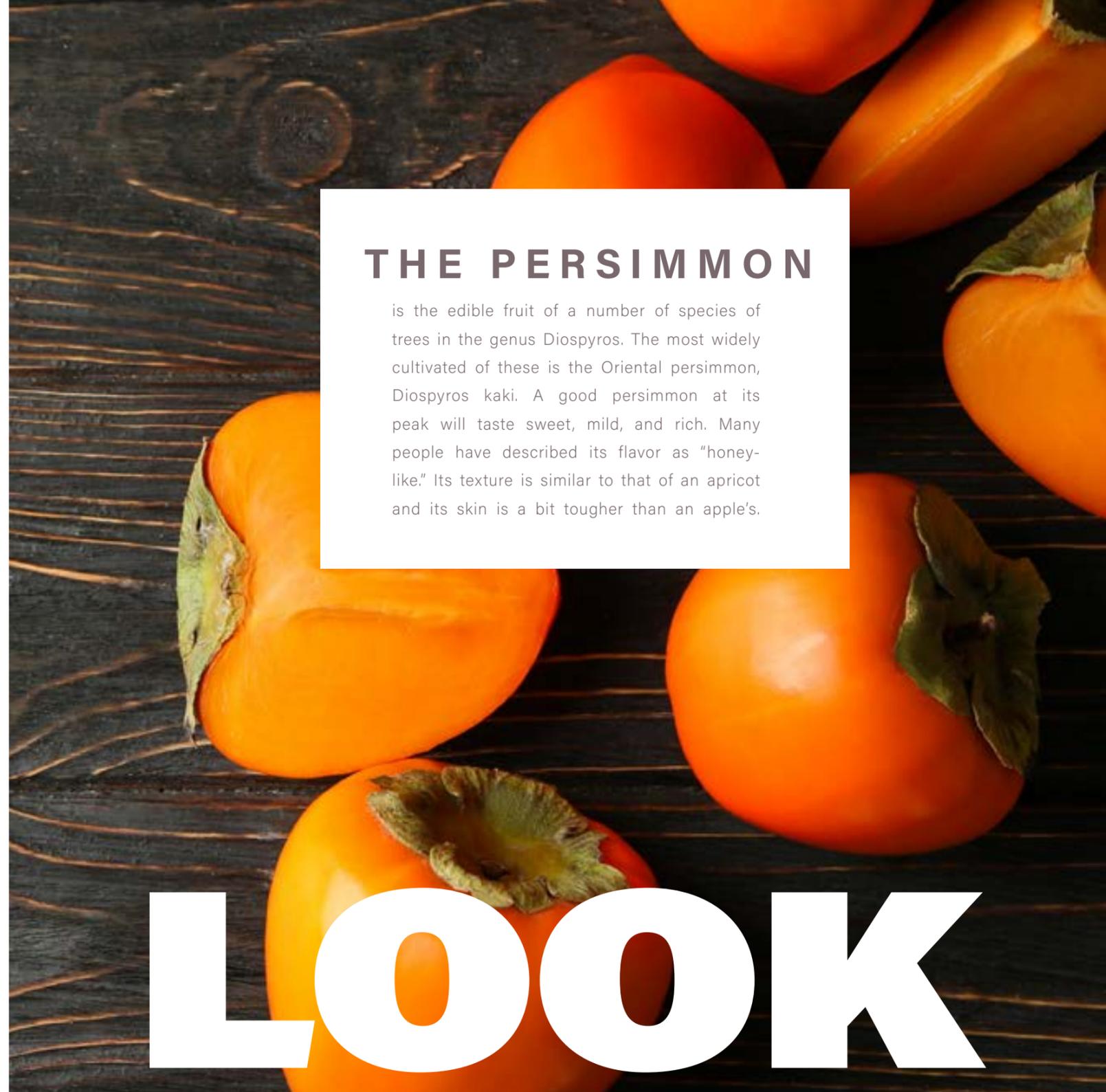
4. Baking the Pie:

- Brush the top crust with beaten egg to give it a shiny finish. Sprinkle granulated sugar over the crust.
- Place the pie on a baking sheet to catch any drips, and bake in the preheated oven for 45 to 50 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown and the filling is bubbly.
- If the edges of the crust start to darken too quickly, cover them with foil or a pie crust shield to prevent burning.
- Once baked, remove the pie from the oven and let it cool on a wire rack for at least 2 hours to allow the filling to set before serving.

5. Serving the Pie:

- Slice the peach pie into wedges and serve it as is or with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or whipped cream for an extra indulgence.
- Leftover pie can be stored at room temperature for up to 2 days or refrigerated for up to 4 days.

Enjoy the delightful flavors of this classic peach pie, where the sweet and juicy peaches shine in every bite. The buttery crust, coupled with the warm spiced filling, creates a heavenly combination that captures the essence of summer. Share this homemade treat with loved ones, and savor the joy and nostalgia that comes with each slice.



THE PERSIMMON

is the edible fruit of a number of species of trees in the genus Diospyros. The most widely cultivated of these is the Oriental persimmon, Diospyros kaki. A good persimmon at its peak will taste sweet, mild, and rich. Many people have described its flavor as "honey-like." Its texture is similar to that of an apricot and its skin is a bit tougher than an apple's.

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Unleashing the Flavors: Exploring the World of BBQ Sauces

Barbecue sauce, the beloved condiment that adds a burst of flavor to grilled meats and tantalizes our taste buds, comes in a variety of forms and styles. From the classic tomato-based varieties to the creamy and tangy white barbecue sauces, there is a world of flavors to explore and savor. Let's delve into the origins, unique characteristics, and recommended options of BBQ sauces, both traditional and unconventional.

Let's start with the classic barbecue sauce. Generally, it is a simple blend of tomatoes, sugar, and vinegar. The choice of tomatoes can range from tomato sauce, paste, puree, to even ketchup, each contributing its own nuances to the sauce. Sugar, in the form of corn syrup, honey, or molasses, adds a touch of sweetness, while vinegar, whether it's beer, white or flavored vinegar, wine, or citrus juices, imparts a delightful sour note. This versatile sauce can be used at every stage of the barbecue process, from marinating and basting to serving as a dipping sauce.

Now, let's venture into the realm of white barbecue sauce, also known as Bechamel sauce. With a rich history rooted in French cuisine since

1651, white sauce has earned its place as one of the mother sauces of French cooking. Traditionally, it is made by gradually whisking scalded milk into a white flour-butter roux. Alternatively, it can be made by whisking a kneaded flour-butter *beurre maniÉ* into scalded milk. The thickness of the final sauce depends on the ratio of milk to flour. White barbecue sauce brings a delicate flavor profile to meat dishes, elevating them to new heights of culinary delight.

In Alabama, the birthplace of unique barbecue traditions, the White Barbecue Sauces stand out from their tomato-based counterparts. These sauces take a different approach by predominantly using mayonnaise as their base. Whether it's chicken, turkey, or pork, these white sauces are known to enhance flavors beyond imagination. Coming in shades ranging from porcelain to putty, with varying consistencies from flowing like fat-free milk to creamy dressings, these sauces add a distinct touch to any dish. Purists, like Myra Grissom, the owner of Miss Myra's Pit Bar-B-Q in Birmingham, emphasize the four essential ingredients: mayonnaise, vinegar, salt, and coarsely ground pepper. Whether used to perk up salads or top pulled pork sandwiches or grilled fish, these sauces are a true delight.

For those seeking exceptional white barbecue sauces, Smuggler's Run White Grilling Sauce and Big Bob Gibson White BBQ sauce come highly recommended. Smuggler's Run boasts a blend of mayonnaise, egg yolks, water, corn syrup, vinegar, salt, spices, calcium disodium, cider vinegar, onion, garlic, white pepper, salt, and xanthium gum, resulting in a flavor explosion. Big Bob Gibson White BBQ sauce, another fantastic choice, combines distilled vinegar, sugar, salt, spices, egg yolks, mustard flour, paprika, and garlic, complementing poultry, pork, seafood, and even wild game.

In the vast world of barbecue sauces, exploring different styles is an adventure for the palate. From the timeless tomato-based varieties to the unique and creamy white barbecue sauces, each offers a distinct flavor profile that can elevate your grilling experience. So, the next time you fire up the grill, consider trying a new sauce and savor the delectable possibilities that await.

Indulge in the diversity of barbecue sauces and let your taste buds revel in the world of flavors they have to offer.

THE RECIPE

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 20 minutes

Yields: Approximately 2 cups

Ingredients:

- 1 cup ketchup
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)

Instructions:

In a medium-sized saucepan, combine the ketchup, brown sugar, molasses, apple cider vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, Dijon mustard, smoked paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, black pepper, salt, and cayenne pepper (if using). Stir well to ensure all the ingredients are evenly mixed.

Place the saucepan over medium heat and bring the mixture to a gentle simmer. Reduce the heat to low, cover the saucepan, and let the sauce cook for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. This will allow the flavors to meld together and the sauce to thicken slightly.

After 15 minutes, remove the lid and taste the sauce. Adjust the seasoning according to your preference. If you like it sweeter, add a little more brown sugar or molasses. If you prefer it tangier, increase the amount of apple cider vinegar or Worcestershire sauce.

If you prefer a smoother consistency, use an immersion blender or transfer the sauce to a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Be cautious while blending hot liquids, and allow the sauce to cool slightly before blending.

Once the sauce reaches your desired taste and consistency, remove it from



the heat and let it cool completely. As the sauce cools, it will continue to thicken slightly.

Transfer the cooled barbecue sauce to a clean glass jar or airtight container. It can be stored in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

Use the traditional barbecue sauce as a glaze or marinade for your favorite grilled meats, such as chicken, ribs, or pork. Brush the sauce onto the meat during the last few minutes of grilling or use it as a dipping sauce on the side.

Enjoy the rich and tangy flavors of this traditional barbecue sauce, perfectly suited for enhancing the taste of your grilled dishes. Whether you're hosting a backyard barbecue or simply craving a summer feast, this sauce will add a delicious touch to your meals. Happy cooking and happy grilling!



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Great Places To Explore This Summer

By Gerrian Hawes
Photos Envato



CUMBERLAND ISLAND

A Place Of Wonder, Where Nature Reigns Supreme

Nestled along the East Coast, Cumberland Island stands as an exquisite haven, accessible exclusively by ferry or boat. Spanning over 9,800 acres of Congressionally designated wilderness, this island boasts awe-inspiring landscapes that enchant visitors. While public docking may be temporarily prohibited, the island's allure lies in its untamed beauty and tranquil atmosphere.

Cumberland Island is a place of wonder, where nature reigns supreme. The island's diverse ecosystems captivate the imagination, offering a glimpse into the raw power and serene harmony of the natural world. As you traverse its enchanting trails, you'll encounter a myriad of treasures, from wild horses gracefully galloping through the coastal plains to historic ruins that whisper tales of a bygone era.

One of the island's most captivating features is its long stretches of untouched beaches. Picture miles of pristine shoreline, where the rhythmic lull of the waves serves as a soothing soundtrack. Here, you can relish in moments of solitude or embark on invigorating beach walks, letting the soft sand massage your feet and the ocean breeze invigorate your senses.

Beyond the coastline, Cumberland Island unfolds with mesmerizing marshes and maritime forests. These delicate ecosystems teem with life, offering a sanctuary for countless species of birds, plants, and wildlife. As you wander through the island's verdant trails, you'll feel a deep sense of connection to the natural world, enveloped by towering trees and embraced by the serenity of the surroundings.

Cumberland Island's allure stretches beyond its natural splendor. It also holds a place in history as the chosen locale for the wedding of John F. Kennedy, Jr. and Carolyn Besette Kennedy in 1996. The island's remoteness and sheer beauty undoubtedly played a role in their decision, as they sought a setting that echoed their love for each other and the majesty of the world around them.

To explore Cumberland Island is to embark on a journey of discov-

ery and reflection. The absence of bustling crowds and the temporary prohibition of public docking add to its allure, ensuring an experience that feels both intimate and exclusive. Whether you choose to immerse yourself in the island's rich history, witness the untamed beauty of its landscapes, or simply find solace in its peaceful ambiance, Cumberland Island promises a visit that will linger in your heart long after you depart.

In a world where untouched wilderness is a rarity, Cumberland Island stands as a testament to the unyielding power of nature. It invites you to disconnect from the modern chaos and reconnect with the essence of life itself. As you leave the island behind, its whispers of wild horses, historic ruins, pristine beaches, marshes, and maritime forests will remain etched in your memory, calling you back to this majestic sanctuary on the East Coast.



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The Most Beautiful Hike You Will Take This Summer

The Yonah Mountains offer a hike that is both challenging and rewarding, with a relentless uphill climb to the summit and some boulder scrambles along the way. However, the breathtaking views from the top make it all worthwhile.

This round-trip hike spans just over four miles, taking you from the base of the mountain to the summit on a meandering trail and gravel roadbed. As you traverse the path, you'll explore a forest adorned with rocky outcrops, moss-covered terrain, and boulders, which burst with colorful wildflowers during the spring season. Along the route, you'll also come across several campsites, offering opportunities for rest and relaxation.

Reaching the summit, you'll be rewarded with expansive vistas that stretch as far as the eye can see. The panoramic views from the rocky and steep outcrops are truly awe-inspiring, offering a visual feast that extends to the horizon. Whether you embark on this hike in the spring to spot blooming wildflowers, in the autumn to admire the vibrant fall foliage, or in the winter to enjoy the beauty of the snow-capped landscape, the experience is bound to be equally breathtaking.

To begin the Yonah Mountain Trail, you'll find a trailhead off Chambers Mountain Road, located south of Helen. After a short stretch of gravel road, the trailhead awaits, beckoning you into a grove of young hardwoods and twisted mountain laurel. From the very start, the trail begins its ascent, leading you higher and higher toward the summit.

At 0.3 miles, you'll cross a small bridge over a peaceful stream, adding to the serenity of the hike. The trail continues its southbound journey, navigating a series of switchbacks at 0.5 miles. Around 0.6 miles, you'll encounter a small campsite nestled beside a massive and intriguingly fissured boulder.

As you press forward, the trail relentlessly climbs, guiding you up two sets of stone stairs at 0.8 miles. At the 1-mile mark, you'll traverse a small, angular boulder field, adding an element of adventure to your journey. It's worth noting that the main Yonah Mountain Trail is typically the wider path, distinguishable by its bright green trail blazes at confusing intersections. Although there are side paths that lead to climbing routes, sticking to the main trail ensures a smooth and enjoyable hiking experience.

During the spring season, the landscape along the trail comes alive with vibrant wildflowers, turning the boulder-filled terrain into a vivid tapestry of colors. The enchanting beauty of the surroundings enhances the joy of the hike, making it a memorable experience for nature lovers and adventurers alike.



BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS

There's No Place Like These Mountains

Located in the picturesque region of northern Georgia, the Blue Ridge Mountains beckon with their timeless beauty and captivating allure. These ancient peaks, part of the larger Appalachian Mountain Range, offer a breathtaking escape into nature's embrace.

The Blue Ridge Mountains are a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, boasting a plethora of activities that cater to all interests and skill levels. Hiking trails weave through dense forests, leading adventurers to mesmerizing overlooks and hidden waterfalls. Whether you're embarking on a leisurely stroll or seeking a more challenging ascent, the diverse trail network ensures a memorable experience for everyone.

For those who prefer a more relaxed pace, the scenic drives along the Blue Ridge Parkway and the winding roads that trace the mountains' contours provide stunning vistas at every turn. Fall transforms the landscape into a kaleidoscope of fiery reds, oranges, and yellows, drawing visitors from far and wide to witness nature's breathtaking display.

The Blue Ridge Mountains are also known for their vibrant arts and culture scene. Charming mountain towns such as Blue Ridge, Helen, and Dahlonega are home to art galleries, craft shops, and local festivals that showcase the region's rich heritage. Visitors can immerse themselves in the warm hospitality of these communities, savoring farm-to-table cuisine, browsing unique boutiques, or simply taking in the friendly ambiance.

Nature lovers will find solace in the Blue Ridge Mountains' abundant wildlife and pristine landscapes. From birdwatching to fishing in crystal-clear mountain streams, the possibilities for outdoor exploration are endless. In the warmer months, kayaking, paddleboarding, and tubing on the rivers offer refreshing escapes from the summer heat.

As twilight paints the sky with hues of pink and purple, witnessing a breathtaking sunset from a mountaintop becomes a cherished memory. Camping under a star-studded sky or renting a cozy cabin envelops visitors in a sense of tranquility, allowing them to disconnect from the chaos of everyday life and reconnect with the peaceful rhythms of nature.

Whether you seek adventure, scenic beauty, cultural experiences, or moments of serenity, the Blue Ridge Mountains of Georgia offer a captivating escape that will leave an indelible mark on your soul. With its majestic peaks, vibrant forests, and warm mountain communities, this enchanting region invites you to explore, discover, and forge lasting memories amidst its timeless grandeur.



TALLULAH GORGE STATE PARK

The Views Are Worth the Hike

Tallahula Gorge State Park offers a plethora of exhilarating activities, with one of its main attractions being the two-mile hike along the stunning Tallulah Gorge. This hike promises breathtaking views and heart-pumping adventures for outdoor enthusiasts. One of the park's most beloved trails takes you on a staircase descent, leading to an impressive 80-foot suspension bridge that spans the majestic Tallulah River.

As you venture along the trail, the captivating beauty of the surroundings

will leave you in awe. If you visit during the autumn season, you'll be treated to a mesmerizing display of nature's palette, as the vibrant foliage blankets the region. The colorful leaves provide a striking contrast to the powerful river and the cascading waterfalls, creating a visual spectacle that is truly unforgettable.

The Tallulah Gorge State Park is a haven for nature lovers and thrill-seekers alike. Whether you're an avid hiker or simply looking to immerse yourself in the beauty of the great outdoors, this park offers an array of activities that cater to all interests and skill levels. From hiking trails that wind through the gorge to breathtaking overlooks that provide panoramic views, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

The suspension bridge itself is a highlight of the hike, allowing you to traverse the Tallulah River and soak in the awe-inspiring scenery from a unique vantage point. The sound of rushing water and the sheer power of the river below serve as a reminder of nature's grandeur and its ability to captivate our senses.

No matter the season, a visit to Tallulah Gorge State Park promises a memorable experience. Whether you find yourself surrounded by the vibrant hues of autumn or exploring the park's other attractions, you'll be immersed in the natural beauty that makes this place truly special. Prepare to be enthralled by the rugged landscapes, the breathtaking views, and the invigorating activities that await you in this remarkable state park.

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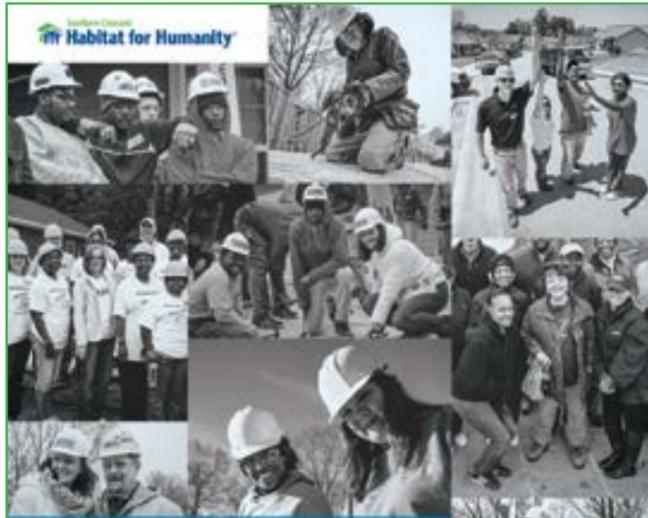
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SPECIAL PROMOTION



Hot Air Balloons:
Soaring Above the Sky

BY ADDISON SIMMONS
PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARIASAP7

HOT AIR BALLOONS HAVE CAPTIVATED the human imagination for centuries. These majestic flying vessels, suspended in the sky by nothing more than hot air and a sense of adventure, have provided a unique and awe-inspiring experience for both spectators and participants alike.

The history of hot air balloons dates back to the late 18th century when the Montgolfier brothers, Joseph-Michel and Jacques-Étienne, launched the first manned balloon flight in 1783. The pioneering flight marked the beginning of a new era in aviation, with hot air balloons paving the way for human flight.

It's simple, hot air balloons operate on a single principle: warm air rises.

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Soul of SAM

SPECIAL PROMOTION

es. The basic structure consists of a large fabric envelope, known as the envelope or the balloon, filled with heated air. A burner positioned beneath the envelope generates heat by burning propane, filling the balloon with hot air. As the air inside the balloon becomes lighter than the surrounding cool air, it creates buoyancy, allowing the balloon to ascend into the sky.

The experience of flying in a hot air balloon is truly magical. Gentle and serene, it offers a unique perspective on the world below. Drifting silently through the air, passengers are treated to breathtaking panoramic views of the landscape, unobstructed by walls or windows. From rolling hills and picturesque countryside to bustling cities and tranquil lakes, the beauty of the Earth unfolds before their eyes.

Floating with the wind, passengers surrender to the whims of nature, embracing the feeling of weightlessness and freedom. The silence of the skies, interrupted only by occasional bursts of the burner, allows for reflection and a connection with the elements.

While hot air ballooning is undoubtedly a remarkable experience, it requires careful planning and adherence to safety protocols. Pilots undergo extensive training and hold licenses to ensure the safe operation of balloon flights. Weather conditions play a crucial role in determining the feasibility of a flight, with wind speed and direction being key factors. Expert meteorological analysis is essential to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all involved.

These fascinating flying machines have also inspired artists, writers, and dreamers. Their graceful forms and ethereal presence have been captured in paintings, photographs, and literature, sym-



bolizing freedom, adventure, and the boundless human spirit. From Jules Verne's iconic novel "Around the World in Eighty Days" to vivid depictions in impressionist paintings, hot air balloons continue to inspire creativity and imagination.

Balloon festivals bring together enthusiasts and spectators alike, showcasing a vibrant display of colorful balloons filling the sky. The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta in New Mexico and the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta in the United Kingdom are among the most renowned and eagerly anticipated events of their kind.

Hot air balloons have a timeless allure that has fascinated people throughout history. They offer a unique perspective on the world, combining a sense of adventure, serenity, and connection with nature. Whether it's for leisurely flights, breathtaking festivals, or artistic inspiration, hot air balloons continue to capture the hearts and minds of those who dare to dream and reach for the sky.



Soar to new heights with the enchanting experience of hot air ballooning at **Calloway Gardens, Labor Day weekend**. Light up your Labor Day with a three-day celebration at Calloway Resort & Gardens! Stay and play all day with garden and beach access, waterfront activities like putt putt, and endless entertainment including the beloved Birds of Prey show. After a day full of fun, stay after sundown to watch the beach transform with the light of gigantic, glowing Hot Air Balloons! Friday, September 1, 2023.

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Art of Living

Tiffanie Barriere:

'The Drinking Coach' Offers a Refreshing Perspective On Bartending





Growing up in a nurturing family environment where social drinking brought joy and connection, Tiffanie's journey into mixology was influenced by fond memories of laughter-filled family gatherings. She learned the craft behind the bar and discovered her talent for connecting with people. As a bartender, she continued the tradition of bringing loved ones closer through well-crafted drinks, recreating the sense of joy and togetherness she experienced in her childhood.

Crafting Drinks with Heart

When it comes to creating new drinks, Barriere's approach is deeply rooted in her personal experiences and the world around her. She draws inspiration from the changing seasons, her own mood, and the events and emotions that shape our lives. Tiffanie's creations pay homage to the simple pleasures of life, often harkening back to her roots. Whether it's a refreshing lemonade or a nostalgic punch, she understands the power of beverages to transport us to cherished moments and connect us with our past.

Despite her expertise and creativity, The Drinking Coach always finds herself returning to the basics, emphasizing the importance of tradition and simplicity. In a world of complex mixology, she remains grounded in the fundamentals of drink-making, incorporating timeless elements that resonate with people from all walks of life. By infusing her drinks with a touch of nostalgia and familiar flavors, Tiffanie ensures that every sip is an invitation to reconnect with one's own roots and experiences.

Exploring New Frontiers and Embracing Inclusivity

Tiffanie's love for all spirits knows no bounds, as she delights in the versatility of different drinks and their ability to complement her mood. Currently, her favorite libation is agave tequila, which perfectly matches her vibrant and adventurous spirit. However, she also holds a special place in her heart for gin, appreciating its unique botanical flavors.

When asked about the sexiest drink, Tiffanie unequivocally names Cognac. "Cognac's embodying sensuality and sophistication, captures the essence of romance, from the captivating countryside of Cognac, France to the allure of its grapes. "Cognac, is an experience that speaks directly to the soul" she asserts.

From Barriere's view, tequila is the ultimate celebration drink, capable of infusing any occasion with joy and exuberance. "I see it as a spirit that can enhance

both good and bad days, providing a sense of upliftment. Vodka will take you on a run, while gin offers a hint of attitude" she playfully adds. "On the other hand, Cognac encourages a slower pace, allowing one to savor the moment".

Moments and the Spirit of Hospitality

Reflecting on her experiences as a bartender, Tiffanie fondly recalls her time at Atlanta Hartsfield Jackson's [airport] acclaimed bar "One Flew South." One memorable incident involved two customers engaging in a friendly drinking competition, which eventually led to one of them being passed out near the gate. Tiffanie's compassionate nature led her to provide

assistance by bringing food, water, and a heartfelt note, expressing her concern and offering any further help.

Her help also illustrates the responsibility bartenders hold to ensure the well-being of their patrons. While Tiffanie has never had to cut anyone off from drinking, she has learned to pull back when necessary, maintaining a delicate balance between serving and safeguarding.

For the Next Generation of Bartenders

When asked, "What advice would you give aspiring bartenders?", Tiffanie advises that aspiring bartenders must have a genuine interest in creating memorable experiences for others. She believes that a good bartender possesses several key attributes: versatility, creativity, a personable nature, and the desire to ensure customers have a fantastic time. She compares bartending to being a cook in the kitchen, with the satisfaction derived from observing customers' reactions to their drinks. The Drinking Coach cherishes the moment when customers say, "I trust you," as it allows her to showcase her expertise and creativity.

She further stresses, "Bartenders need to develop a deep understanding of all spirits, not just their personal favorites". Honing one's palate and being able to describe flavors are essential skills, highlighting the significance of certification and training, such as her own achievement of the highest level certification from Bar 5.

With an impressive list of accomplishments, Tiffanie has made her mark in the industry. She proudly mentions being part of the very first group of black women to receive the prestigious James Beard House award, her involvement in notable television shows and publications, and her contributions to the culinary world.

“
**Bartenders
need to
develop a deep
understanding
of all spirits,
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The Journey of Dan Stone and His Impact within the Atlanta Creative Scene

By Seyoum Bey | Photos Courtesy of Dan Stone

Like many things we experience in life, art is a quest. It is a continuous exploration of inspiration, celebration, and style. Art exemplifies the human experience. Art encompasses all of our hardships, excitement, grace, decisions, love, fear, and any emotion that you can think of. In essence every aspect of humanity can be expressed through art.



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Dan Stone is an acclaimed artist in South Atlanta who has created vibrant compositions that compel you to stop and have a deep intellectual thought of what you're witnessing. His paintings are a visual journey of the everyday experience in Atlanta which can be a compilation of euphoria, self-examination, and vulnerability throughout.

Born and raised in Pittsfield, Massachusetts Dan went to school at Montserrat College of Art where he received a degree in interdisciplinary studies. In college he learned various styles of art and creative work. His repertoire ranges from graphic design, expressionism, abstract, and has had murals commissioned throughout the city of Atlanta.

Dan believes that the importance of his work should extend beyond

his individual art pieces. Instead he wants to leverage his talents to bring together all artists throughout Atlanta to cultivate a safe space for collaboration and creation. He believes that the importance of his work "to not pigeonhole artists but to allow artists to fully express themselves which will bring about a therapeutic and liberating experience for them."

With so many intersecting ideas to his grand vision, Dan has a plethora of innovative plans to put into motion and is a positive force here in Atlanta. It is illuminative seeing Dan's attempts to bring his vision together, as he manifests his thoughts and emotions into reality. The beauty of it all is that he is doing this not for himself, but for the larger community of Atlanta.

South Atlanta Magazine spoke to Dan about his perspective of art, the world and how they coincide with one another and how he hopes to inspire a sense of awe and wonder for artists.

Q: What was the catalyst or sparking point where you realized that you wanted to dedicate your life to art and bring other artists along your journey?

Early in high school I began to realize how gratifying it was to create and make my own things. During that time of my life I would disassociate often, and that is when I began to learn that I can communicate and connect with people through my art.

As I began branching out and getting to know other artists, I saw that their life experience was very similar to mine. That's what led me to want to bring artists together, because I enjoy seeing people grow around me, and more importantly seeing us create our own realities through our artistic expression.



Q: Before you decided to dedicate your life to your artistry did you have any other job aspirations as a child, or was art always your main focus?

Truthfully, art has always been my main thing. I have always enjoyed building and creating things, at the age of seven I was building small forts in the woods and I have been drawing since four. The most magnificent part is that art runs in my family and my dad showed me a lot of support. My uncle Bob is also an artist and as I grew into my craft I would lean on him for guidance and then realizing that this can be a lifestyle for me.

Although I had support from my family, society and the world I lived in was not so supportive. There were times in highschool where I would face continuous pushback because of my passion for art, but my art made me happy and it benefitted me and for that there was no way I would stop.



Q: You have a great eye for art and you're exceptionally talented at what you do. What is a dream project that you would want to put together and if you could work on that dream project with 3 other artists dead or alive who would be on your team?

Wow that is an amazing question no one has asked me that before. Right now I am currently obsessed with the idea of writing and directing a comedy series. Something that is unorthodox and weird, and for it to be loosely based on and inspired by my life's journey. The three artists that I would love to work with in this project are Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Will Arnett, and Atlanta's very own Donald Glover.



Q: Any inspiring words for readers, fans, or creatives?

Don't tell people how awesome you are, show them how awesome you are. As the slogan for my business goes, say less and create more.



Art for Everyone

Atlanta's High Museum has moved from exclusivity to inclusivity under Director Randall Suffolk

By Michael Booth Photos By Cat Max Photography

Seven years ago, Randall Suffolk came to Atlanta's High Museum of Art with the goal of opening the museum's doors to the city's expanding and diverse population. Alongside the "old friends," as he calls the pieces that have long been on display, he revitalized the museum with new art installations, new artists, and new visions that reflected the city's inhabitants.

"We want every walk of life, every color of the rainbow, coming to experience their museum," he said recently in a room just off the museum's courtyard where artisans and workers were constructing a sphere for the Joylanta exhibition. "Art encourages people to think critically about oneself and about the world around them. At the end of the day, they are

all things that are going to make us better citizens and, hopefully, to strengthen society at large."

The High's visitor profiles have drastically changed in the past seven years. Prior to 2015 the non-white visitors accounted for just fifteen percent of the total. Last year that figured topped fifty-seven percent. At the same time, exhibitions featuring women artists, artists of color and LGBTQ+ artists rose to over fifty percent of the total presentations.

"We've doubled down to engage the next two generations," Suffolk said. "We've had great success in changing our end users, for lack of a better word."

Figures put out by the High show that nearly seven out of ten visitors are under the age of 55 and an astonishing fifty-five percent are under the age of 35. Memberships in the museum have increased by twenty-seven percent, even with the pandemic, to 33,000 households.

Suffolk immediately reduced the admission price to an affordable \$18.50 and implemented the Second Sunday program, which provides free admission all day. Before the advent of this popular program, High visitors numbered an average of 1,650 on Sundays. Second Sunday now averages around 4,300 visitors.

And that doesn't count the 50,000 school kids that come on tours with their schools.

Many schools in the Southern Crescent take advantage of the High's Art Access program that pays for all the kids' and teachers'

admission, and even kicks in for transportation costs.

Flashay Benford is a Media Specialist at Stockbridge High School who took her art studies students on a visit to the High during Black History Month.

"Some of the students had never left Henry County. So, this was an opportunity for them to have a cultural experience. They could learn about the world outside their world," she said. "We went specifically for Black History Month so our students could see some of the black artists on display."

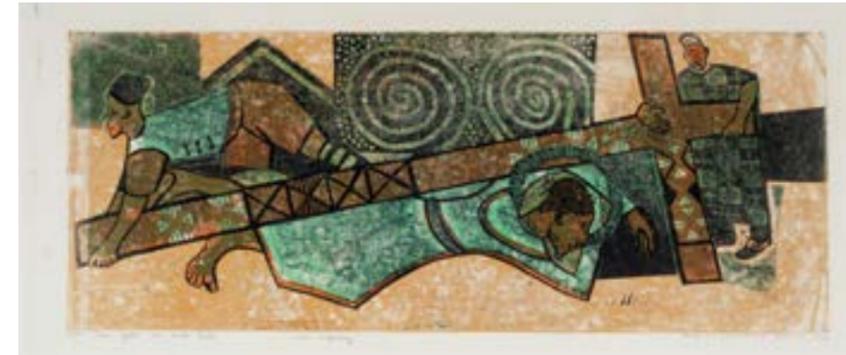
Latiefia Hairston echoed the same experience for her eighth grade students from ASAP Gender Academy at Bear Creek Elementary School.

"It exposed them to artists who look like people they ride MARTA with," she said. Her students were fascinated by El Anatsui, a Ghana artist who creates objects with things such as aluminum cans and pull tabs.

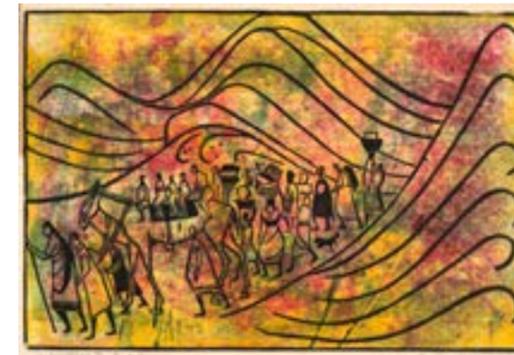
Another artist that grabbed her kids' attention was Vik Muniz, a Brazilian artist who produced images of the Mona Lisa in peanut butter and jelly. "They were fascinated by some of the art, especially the Brazilian artist. One student told me he didn't know there were black people in Brazil," said Hairston.

"We think it is really important to give these children an opportunity to come into contact with not only experiences but conversations that are bigger than themselves," said Suffolk.

"I teach the classics, but I want



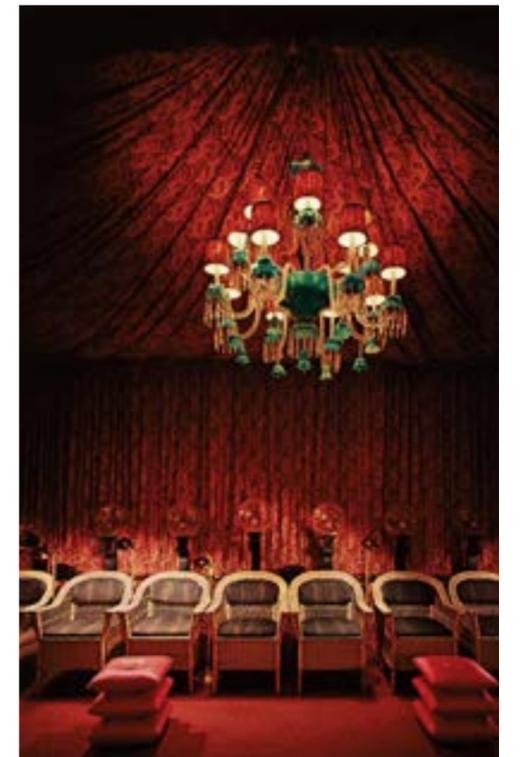
Bruce Onobrakpeya (Nigerian, born 1932), Station IX: Jesus falls the third time, 1969, linoleum block print on rice paper.



Bruce Onobrakpeya (Nigerian, born 1932), Station XI: They nail Jesus to the cross, 1969, linoleum block print on rice paper



Premiering at the High Museum of Art and organized in collaboration with The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, "Evelyn Hofer: Eyes on the City" is the first major museum exhibition in the United States in over 50 years dedicated to Hofer, a highly innovative photographer whose pioneering work spanned five decades but remained underrecognized in her lifetime.



Bruce Onobrakpeya (Nigerian, born 1932), Station X: They strip Jesus of his garments

Art of Living



The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.
"Evelyn Hofer: Eyes on the City"

the kids to see modern artists. These are artists the kids can relate to," said Elise Gomez, the k-5 Visual Arts Lead at Arnold Elementary School.

Some of her students came up and hugged Gomez as they were heading home. "They said, 'Thank you for bringing us!' It was one of those feel-good moments that makes being a teacher worth it."

But art for art's sake is not the only driving force for teachers to expose their students to the High.

"Art teaches a lot of skills that can be applied to many areas of life. It teaches patience and perseverance. It helps them to look at the world around them," said Ayaana Thompson, the 5th grade teacher at Lake Ridge Elementary School. "It is one thing to show them art in the classroom but when they leave the four walls of the school and see art in the museum, it is an entirely different experience."

"Art builds a foundation for creative thinking. Jobs are asking for people who think outside the

box, and having art in elementary school helps with this thinking," said Gomez.

Art classes are one of the first victims of budget cuts, said Suffolk, who noted that the students host all kinds of kids, toddlers to seniors in high school. "Art is being more and more lost," noted Hairston. "Often, they see no purpose in it."

The new artists and exhibitions have changed the perception of the High as it has changed the audience of the museum. Where once it was thought that only the wealthy elite or highly educated people went to the High, recent studies reveal a dramatic shift in visitors. Today, some forty-four percent have less than a bachelor's degree and about forty-two percent make less than \$70,000 a year.

"People really drive these institutions. Without people, these are just fancy storage units with a retail component," said Suffolk. "That is not what we want to be. That is not our mission."

The mission of the High will continue to showcase new visions from emerging artists that will spark different conversations about who and what we are as a civilization. One recent exhibition was from Deana Lawson, whose photographs "challenges the conventional representations of Black identities and bodies," according to the High's description of her work.

Proving that a great artist does not have to go to art school or study the classical artists, George

Voronovsky is a Ukrainian refugee who settled in Florida, where he taught himself to make paintings executed on cardboard and figures in Styrofoam. He even made a film of constructing a rocket ship to the sun. The High displayed many of his works four decades after his death.

Suffolk said the museum strives to show a wide variety of art. The High is the first museum in the Southeast to offer "one of the most important collections of samurai armor outside of Japan." Running through September, the exhibit features more than one hundred fifty helmets, swords, and other objects, including complete sets of armor, that span almost nine centuries.

The generations to come in Atlanta will naturally influence the conversations art generates and contribute to the innovative looks and artists that mirror the community at large.

"We believe there is something ultimately very powerful and super generative about being a place where the richest of the rich can come together with the poorest of the poor, where every color and range of the LGBTQ+ rainbow can come together with every color of the ethnicity rainbow," said Suffolk. "We want the High to be a place where all of Atlanta can come together." 🌸



SYNDICATED RADIO HOST

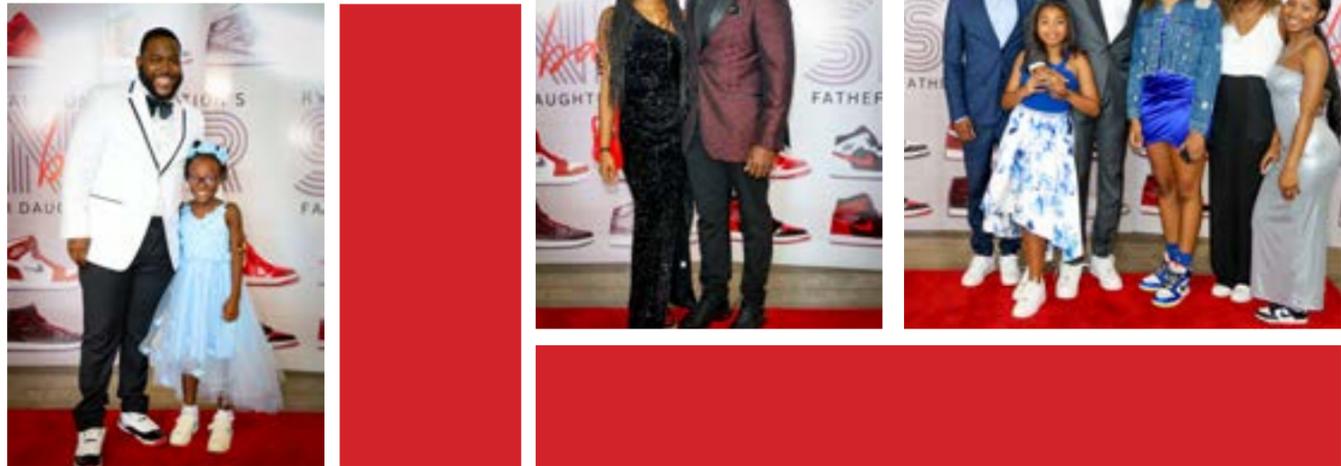
RYAN CAMERON

ANNUAL FATHER/DAUGHTER SNEAKER BALL DANCE

On June 18th, the Delta Flight Museum in Hapeville, GA, was transformed into a captivating venue for the Annual 2023 Ryan Cameron Foundation Father/Daughter Sneaker Ball Dance. The night was filled with excitement, as families and friends gathered to celebrate and support the foundation's mission. *South Atlanta Magazine's* Miranda Malone captured the night.







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