



The BLACK
THEATRE
TROUPE Inc.



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RETRO MODERN GALLERY
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THE EBONY CACTUS magazine

Vol. 2. No. 7

April 20, 2003

A New Perspective on Business



The Business of Art
Cover Story: Retro Modern Gallery
The Black Theatre Troupe
Rock, Stick, Squirrel, Ball Films

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Making it Happen!

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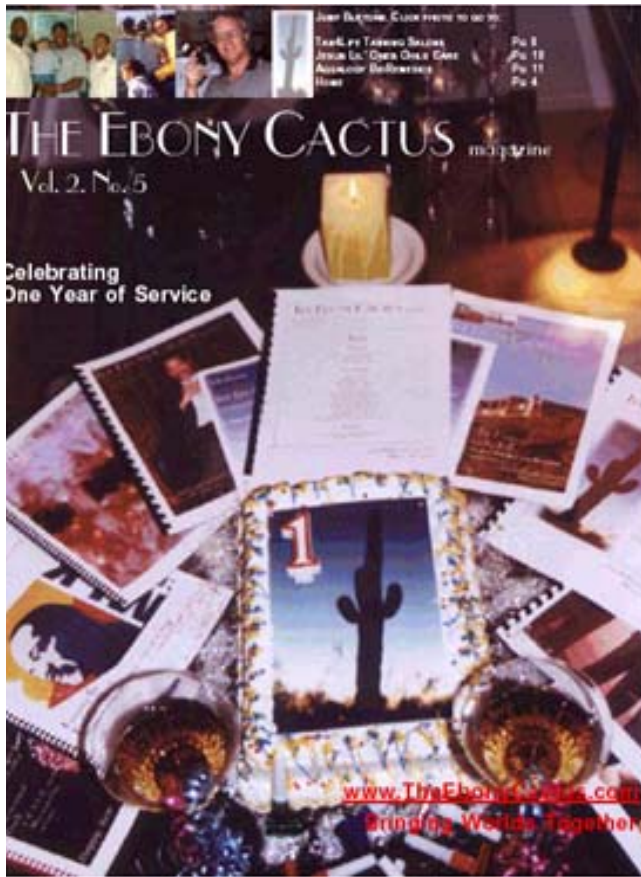
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- 99% use the internet
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- 42% hold a bachelors degree or greater (www.census.gov)

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cover: George Mack
Retro Modern Gallery

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He who does not cultivate his field will die of hunger- Guinea Epigram

Once again, it's after midnight and I find myself plunking away on my trusty iMac. During this time my senses are acute. Because you inspire me with a need to know, with your gracious inquiries and inquisitive dialogue; tonight I am nearer the zenith of my inspiration. Feverishly writing, toiling and anguishing over the next points of interest that shall be brought before you. These actions and emotions have become the raw ingredients of the desert feast I plan for you twice a month.

Let there be no doubt as to what I suggest in mixing business with pleasure. We've been told for an eternity that business comes first before pleasure. But, what if your business is your pleasure? That is the case with TEC for us. It's also the case for the three profiled businesses/ organizations in this issue.

Indulging in the arts is something we've all done to some extent. Many of you enjoy the cinema while others of you enjoy the stage. Furthermore, there are still countless others who delight in the mystique of the physical arts. If you love either of the previously mentioned forms of art or even another type, why not invest in the art you love? Why not find ways to enjoy it while reaping immeasurable benefits from it along the way.

As a business person, it may be wise to find different ways of enhancing your tangible base value or your intangible value as seen by clients. Here are some suggestions: have business meeting in an art museum. Buy art now as the economy is slowing toward an upswing after the Iraq-American war(be sure to discerningly collect rather than merely accumulate- there is a difference). Invest in a non- profit arts organization by becoming a patron; you may be able to write it off on your taxes. Search the web for up and comers in the film industry; invest in small projects with an agreement to be in on the deal should the project go into production with a major film company. Or, you could begin right here in Phoenix by sponsoring George Mack's Traveling African American History Museum, by patronizing the Black Theatre troupe or by allocating funds to a small movie production. As RSBS Film has shown, small companies hunger differently from large ones. There passion has a profound affect on film development.

There are many more areas of the arts that one can patron in some manner or form. Pick one,preferably one you enjoy, and find interesting ways to indulge and pay it with proper adoration. Dream Big!

Welcome to the April 20th 2003 edition of The Ebony Cactus magazine. Most of us enjoy art (I think). When we look at a painting, sculpture, motion picture, powerful emotions are invoked. Since prehistoric times, man has needed art. It expresses our deepest being. Through it we can see God or the Devil. We can imagine other worlds or the bottom of the ocean. In music we can hear angels or let it express feelings that words can not. Not all of us are blessed with the ability to write a song, or paint a picture. However those of us with talent are valued, as is their work. In our capitalistic society, that value is reflected in dollars. Thus our theme, "The Business of Art."

In this issue we get a glimpse behind the scenes of three sectors of the arts industry. To begin, long ago in a neighborhood not so far away, lived an incredible woman named Helen K. Mason. While her son and I were building tree houses in her back yard (and falling out of that tree from time to time), she was creating the Black Theatre Troupe. Helen went home to glory recently, but the institution she created lives on under the direction of David Hemphill. The BTT has grown to be an institution and a unique cultural treasure for the Arizona Community. We invite you to expand your knowledge about the BTT. [Jump to Black Theatre Troupe](#)

George and Valerie Mack live in a beautiful custom home near South Mountain in Phoenix Arizona. This home is a wonder. A unique combination of the old and the new, of modern art and African antiquity. It is a living art gallery, Retro Modern Gallery to be precise. [Jump to Retro Modern Gallery](#)

Imagine you were a Black man lost on a back road. Some how you made a wrong turn and just wanted to get back to the interstate. You are lost and your cell phone is not working. You stop to ask for help but, don't notice the small sign on the door of the store "no coloreds allowed." No, this is not an episode of the Twilight Zone though quite frankly it could be. Instead it is the theme of the award winning short film "Dreaming in Black and White" starring Malik Yoba (New York Undercover) and produced by Rock, Stick, Ball Squirrel Films. If you enjoy film, and wonder how they come about, you will find this profile enlightening. [Jump to RSBS](#)

Enough for now, on with the show (if you will excuse the pun).

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Ebony Cactus publisher named to the State Occupational Safety and Health Review Board



Angela Miller-Brooks, the publisher of The Ebony Cactus magazine, was appointed to the Arizona Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) Review Board by Governor Janet Napolitano. Filling the seat vacated by Herschella Horton, Angela will serve on the board for 4 years. She is a H.R. professional, the principal of Life Strategies Consulting, and is a public speaker. She is the wife of George B. Brooks, Jr., Ph.D and mother of 4 daughters.

Networking meeting for Sky Harbor International Airport Consolidated Rental Car Center project

On Wednesday, May 7, 2003 from 4:00 p.m., to 6:00 p.m. a networking meeting will be held for the City of Phoenix Aviation Department - Sky Harbor International Airport Consolidated Rental Car Center project. The Construction Manager for this \$150 million project is Austin/Layton and the program manager is Abacus.

The City of Phoenix, Austin/Layton, and Abacus want to ensure a diverse pool of sub-contractors are awarded portions of the project. For this reason, an outreach meeting will be held to assist in facilitating networking amongst the prime, sub, and M/W/SBE businesses.



The networking meeting will be held at the Phoenix Airport Marriott Hotel, 1101 N. 44th St, Phoenix 85008. Please RSVP by May 5, 2003 with Cheryl Baron at 602-324-7760 or cherylbaron@phoenix-abacus.com. It is important to RSVP because a "who's here" list of businesses will be distributed at the meeting.

Governor's Office Seeks Youth Advisors

The Governor's Youth Commission is currently accepting applications from high school students who will be sophomores or juniors during the 2003-2004 school year. The primary purpose of the Governor's Youth Commission is to advise the Governor and the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families on issues affecting youth in Arizona. Youth Commissioners must attend quarterly meetings, participate in committees, be aware of and involved with community and youth organizations in his/her community and serve as a role model.

Applications must be postmarked by Friday, May 16, 2003 and faxed applications must be received by 5:00 pm on May 16, 2003.

For more information regarding the Governor's Youth Commission or to request an application, please contact, Jeff Ranby, in the Governor's Division for Community and Youth Development at 602-542-3422.

The Governor's Youth Commission is a function of the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families-Division of Community and Youth Development. The Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families serves the mission of the Governor by assisting Arizona families in attaining effective and enduring solutions to their problems, and works with communities and other governmental entities to secure resources for those who need them in ways that positively impact their lives.

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Phoenix Arizona

by Angela Miller-Brooks

Business: Black Theatre Troupe, Inc. (BTT)
Type: Stage Production
Founder: Helen K. Mason
Address: 333 East Portland
Location: Phoenix, Arizona
Telephone: 602-258-8128
Fax: 602 253-3690
Box Office: 602 258-8129
E-mail: boxoffice@blacktheatretroupe.org
Info@blacktheatretroupe.org
www.blacktheatretroupe.org
Web:
Established: 1970
Employees: 2 (Regular Staff)
Board
Members: 5
2003 Budget: \$400,000 (Projected)



Executive Director: David J. Hemphill

Background: Conceptualized by visionary and founder, Mrs. Helen K. Mason and now in its 33rd season, the Black Theatre troupe is a premier Arizona theatre company.

Description: The Black Theatre Troupe (BTT) is a company which produces a minimum of five and a maximum of six presentations a season. The season runs from October to June. Specifically, the initial mission was to serve as an outlet for under served artists and technicians to explore their art.

Location: Our chief location is our Downtown Phoenix Helen K. Mason Center for the Performing Arts, but we've out grown that facility. This season as well as next season we're presenting at the John Paul Theatre on the Phoenix College campus. We'll do two productions there as well as three productions at the Herberger Theatre.

Marketing: In terms of our marketing, we're a lot more community oriented than other organizations. As far as our ticket prices, we're fairly comparable. We're not an elitist organization. We'd like everyone to experience the Black Theatre Troupe. The BTT is currently making plans to be connected with the West Valley Fine Arts Council. They are a group who supports and brings in national groups and productions to the Valley.

Community Service: As the BTT group has expanded, we've begun to do more educational outreach services. The Troupe develops presentations for local schools and specific community groups. This allows us to give local youth and other state community residents the ability to view quality productions that for various reasons they might not otherwise have the opportunity to see. To aid BTT in doing this we've also received a grant from the Arizona Commission on the Arts (Arts in Culture Build Communities). This grant was specifically designed to allow us to present in outlying areas such as: Yuma, Prescott, Sierra Vista, and etc.

Funding: We recently received a \$100,000 grant from the Piper Charitable Trust which is specifically ear marked for marketing.

Strategic Planning: We developed a very strong strategic plan three seasons ago. It was specifically grounded in growth activities. One of the main initiatives of increasing the growth and more opportunities for an organization such as ours is in increasing its production values. Those values include better costumes, better lights and a better venue, one with comfortable space. Through our focus next season we'll become a resident company of the Herberger Theater.

Growth is inevitable. Although we have an effective staff it, is a small one. A great part of the resources that our organization receives are allocated to BTT production values. Once production values are filled to sustainable levels, ticket sales will then bring in funding that will allow the organization to employ more staff and extend its other production endeavors such as its children's program.

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Through the Piper Charitable Trust we've incorporated a marketing consultant to assist with sales. Later, and at the Board of Director's discretion, BTT will employ additional staff which will allow us to continue to produce quality, fun and thought provoking theatre presentations.

(**Note:** *The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust is committed to honor Virginia Piper's legacy. The Trust affords grants to nonprofit organizations to enhance the lives of Arizonans. In Maricopa County. Maricopa County's is more than 3,000,000 residents including the city of Phoenix, the sixth largest city in the nation.*)

Audience: Our audience is the public at large and specifically those who enjoy seeing, hearing and feeling the Black experience via a theatre production such as ours. The BTT's cast is mainly African American and although we primarily develop shows from an African American perspective they are not meant for one specific group to view. Theatre is for all who love the essence of a good show. Our productions are distinctive, professionally developed and have earned great reviews for a number of years.

Board members: We have 5 very active board members. Each one brings to the organization an expertise in a specific area that can and has helped our company grow.

Organizational Development: As with most Arts organizations, particularly ones like ours, the key is in maintaining positive organizational development in the area of growth. Basically, this means successfully securing funding which is the bottom line. Our biggest and most difficult struggle over the years has been to raise funds for our Portland Street facility.

Competitors: We're fortunate in that we are the only professional African American theatre company in the four corners region of the United States. There's pretty much no other company like us here. However, there are a number of theaters (non-African American) in the Phoenix who present African American productions. They too vie for the same dollars as our company does.

Competitive Edge: We can and do a very good job in presenting to the African American culture and all cultures, for that matter, and the African American experience. More importantly the BTT holds that experience up as a mirror and a service to the community. It's very important for African Americans in our community to have forms of outlets. Still today, the African American community in 2003 (in particular our youth), needs to see itself on television, in the movies and on stage.

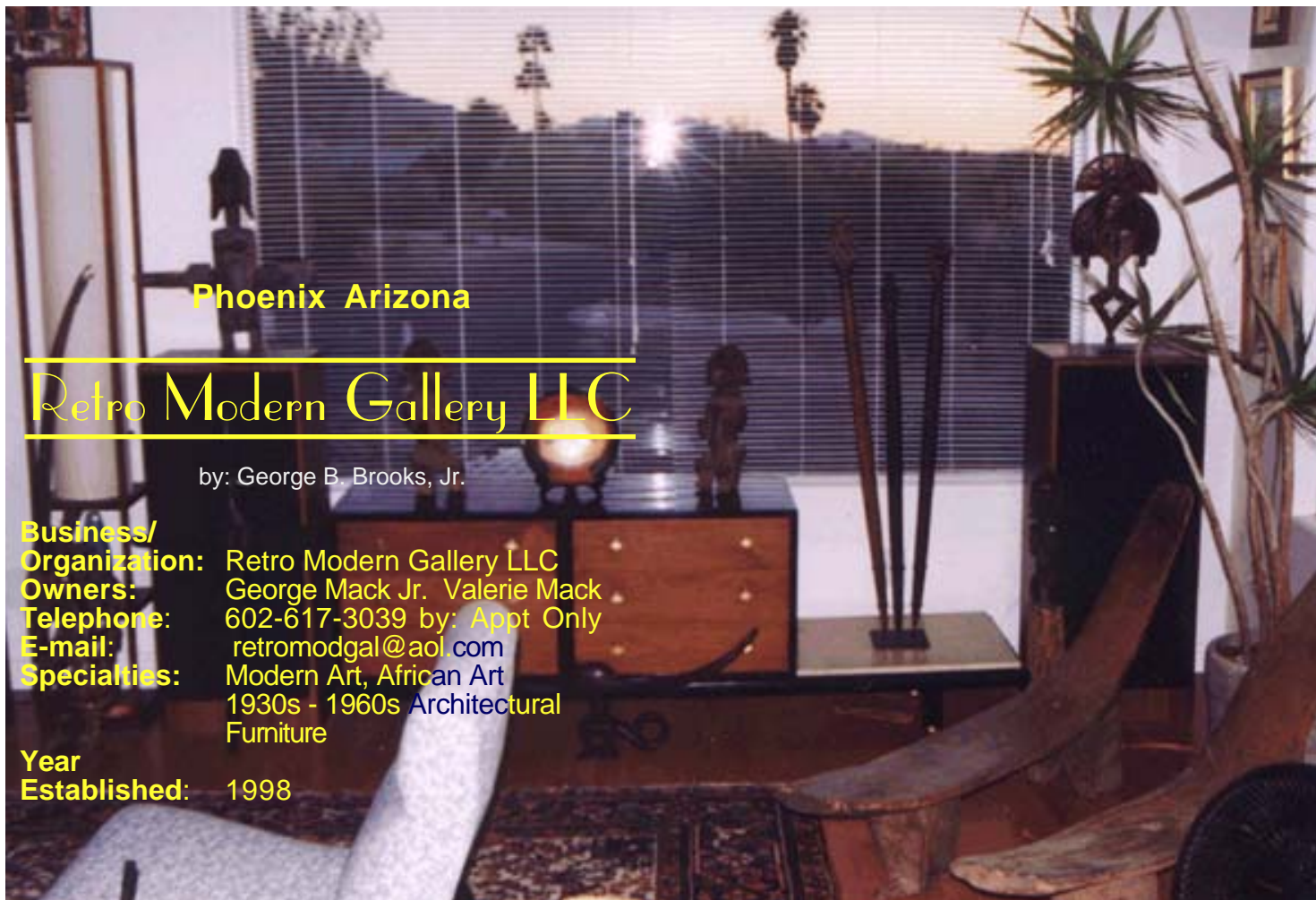
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Conceived & Originally Directed by Sheldon Epps
Directed & Choreographed by Reggie Kelly
Musical Direction by Auggie Mendoza
May 15-June 1
Thursday, Friday & Saturday 8:00 pm
Sunday 3:00 pm
Featuring:
Evelyn Brown-Gray
Erahm Patton-Stinson
Nancy Taylor
and Reggie Kelly
Set in the Chicago of the late 1930's, this sepia-toned honey of a show examines the lives of three lonely women and a saloon singer down on his luck. Watch through the night and journey with them through the pain of lost loves and shattered dreams as they overcome and triumph in the embrace and the power of the blues.
Tickets at the Herberger Theater
Box Office 602-252-8497 or
Ticketmaster 602-784-4444
For Group Sales call 602-258-8128 ext. 1
The Black Theatre Troupe
333 E. Portland • Phoenix, AZ 85004
David J. Hemphill
Executive Director



The Herberger

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Phoenix Arizona

Retro Modern Gallery LLC

by: George B. Brooks, Jr.

Business/

Organization: Retro Modern Gallery LLC
Owners: George Mack Jr. Valerie Mack
Telephone: 602-617-3039 by: Appt Only
E-mail: retromodgal@aol.com
Specialties: Modern Art, African Art
1930s - 1960s Architectural
Furniture

Year

Established: 1998

Description: We specialize in architectural furniture. The furniture that we sell, ranges from in age from the 1930s to approximately the 1960s. In those days, there were many architects that we not only designing buildings, but were also designing furniture. We find the architectural furniture bends it self to very fines lines as does modern art. The art that we sell, abstract painting, modern sculpture lends its self to the furniture as well.

Retro Modern Gallery is the commercial end of what we do. The nuts and bolts as far as generating income and buying and selling. We have been doing the Arizona African Art Museum here in the Valley now for 10 years. For a number of years we tried to secure permanent space. However since 911, we have relinquished that effort. We are going to stay with doing mobile shows. What that means is that we will go out into some of the school systems and senior centers and show the art. We partnered last year with the Phoenix Art Museum and did a show with one of the local artists. We are also going to continue to do partnerships with some of the other galleries. The museum is our effort to give something back to the community.

Motivation: My family was involved in the arts. My mother and father were both collectors of the arts. We do a lot of shows here in the Valley for the school system and for some of the senior centers in regards to showing the art. So for us it has always been something that we have loved and been around. Here in the Valley, we have had the pleasure of doing the interior decorating for people who have visited our home and enjoyed what they saw. They asked us if we would find some pieces for them. We truly enjoyed it and this is what started Retro Modern Gallery.

Arizona is beginning to catch up with the rest of the country as far as architectural furniture. This type of furniture shows up in architectural digest, and has been around for along time. I know a number of local people that have been involved in arts and crafts furniture that are now looking for 1950s modern design.

Demographics: The people who gravitate towards this furniture tend to be related to the arts including architects, artists, engineers, musicians and collectors.

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George and Valerie Mack in their home near South Mountain.

Before someone would purchase furniture from us, we want to know something about them. It is not just a matter of getting them a piece of furniture, we want to make a purchase that is conducive to the spirit and mentality of the person. There is a uniqueness to the individual and that is part of the beauty of decorating for them, understanding who they are. There is no shortage of buyers. The shortage is the art.

What is a Collector? If you have more than three pieces of the same type of work, you are either a beginning collector or you are a full fledged collector. For example, we have over 15 African door locks. You start off collecting one piece, then you end up getting another one and another one. Collecting is a passion. Once you open your self up, the more you become acquainted with an area, the broader your collecting. This is the beauty of collecting, this is the beauty of art.

Pricing: There are certain products for which the system itself has set a price. For example, for a Frank Lloyd Wright table there are certain auctions

that have established a price and market. Galleries here and on the east coast where the market is established by the galleries have established a pricing structure. There are other things you can look for depending on what it is. For example how rare the piece is and what distinguishes a particular piece compared from another? All those factors contribute to the cost of any art.

Competition: We don't view it as a competition. We like the idea of our clients being able to acquire pieces they can live with, that they can feel comfortable with in their home. I say that because if we don't have something that fits our client's needs, we are not opposed to going out to other people that we know, other resources that we have to make the pieces available to our clients.

Professional Associations: I don't know if you would define it as an association. There are groups of people that share the same passion for collection. Some are dealers, but we don't see them as competition, we see them as peers.



Market: Arizona is starting to develop, but the largest market is California and New York. We sell to both.

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In the Know

Los Angeles California

Rock, Stick, Ball, Squirrel Films

by: Angela Miller Brooks.

Business: Rock, Stick, Ball, Squirrel Films

Type: Movie Production Company

Screen Production: Dreaming in Black and White

Title: Joseph G. Eckardt, Director/ Producer
Cecily Gambrell, Principal Writer/ Producer

Location: Los Angeles, California

Telephone: 818-708-7166

E-mail: rsbsfilms@aol.com

Web Address: www.rsbsfilms.com

Year Established: 2001

Employees: Professional Volunteer Staff

Awards/ Selections/ Showings: Tibruon International Film Festival, San Diego Latino Film Festival, Kansas Filmmakers Jubilee, Newport beach Film Festival, Denver Pan African Film Festival, Phoenix Film Festival (April 2003 Winner)



Background: Prior to this project Cecily was (and still is) employed by legendary actor Gregory Peck. Joseph, a former New York Undercover production assistant, was a producer/ director of the movie " Boy Meets Girl". Joseph was also employed by Academy Award Winning Actor Cuba Gooding, Jr. and has traveled with him during the production of "Snow Dogs" and most recently "Boat Trip." We started Rock, Stick Ball, Squirrel Films two years ago. Cecily wrote the screen play for our film "Dreaming in Black and White." It took all of 2001 to get everything in place like the cast, props, equipment, crew and funding. We began production and shot the film in 3 days during January of 2002.

Location: Oddly, some of the film was shot in our own home in Los Angeles. The majority was shot from a jail cell which we built. We created the set ourselves from a sound stage. The set was actually from the movie "The Panic Room". It was going to be thrown away so, we asked if we could retrieve it. We did, took it home, repainted it and made it our own.

Description: We're new as a couple and company. We've been together for three years and we both share a love and passion for making films. RSBS Films is not interested in making films like "Dude Where's My Car." Those are fun films but, that's not what we're all about. We want to make films that are meaningful and make a statement. Dreaming in Black and White is a seventeen minute short film starring Malik Yoba (New York Undercover, Bull, Copland, TV's Kingpin) that deals with racism in a very scary but, straight forward way. Its edgy, provocative and lends to all sorts of twists and turns much like an old Twilight Zone television episode. When people see the film it kind of leads them to make up their own minds about what we mean by the film.

Service: RSBS makes quality, thought- provoking films for the viewing community. Our aim was to make a film that had social content, meaning and a message. We want to relay that we are products of our environment and our decisions can perpetuate any line of thinking, both good and bad.

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Industry Reference: Joseph worked for no pay as a PA (Production Assistant) for 1 week in New York. He then got to work for 2 years on New York Undercover which is where he originally met Malik. Cecily began working in the industry as an office PA and for Gregory Peck which extended her knowledge of how to make a film from a business aspect, i.e., making the deals, understanding cost and lead time for equipment. As for the lead male role-Malik Yoba said, "I love being able to tell stories. I've been in the game 11 years and I've played all sorts of roles, from a priest to an ex-cop. Having experience and not allowing myself to be boxed in any one type of role has afforded him many opportunities. For example, Malik will be appearing in an upcoming twilight zone episode, and will soon be playing a role in South Africa."

Funding: We basically financed it all out of our own pockets. We have received donations (Cuba Gooding, Jr. personally donated money) from numerous friends and colleagues in the business who wanted to help us succeed. Even with their help, theirs totaled only a few thousand dollars, the rest of the film was funded out of our own paychecks and day jobs.

Equipment is a much needed accessory to the art of making a film. Good equipment is terribly expensive. We were very lucky in that a producer who works on Disney films is very well connected and was capable of basically getting all of our equipment; a \$10,000 a day camera package, a \$5,000 a day grip and electric truck. The electric truck is so important because it holds all the lights and other equipment. We got it all for free. The only thing that we had to pay for (and we still are) is the insurance.

Project Development: Getting a project like this one off the ground depends on what format it's going to be shot in. We shot ours on super 16mm which cost us between \$20, 000 to 30,000 from start to completion. Doing a film such as this in digital video would have cut the cost in half. Our second film, Victor and Eddie (starring Freddie Rodriguez and Shawn Michael Howard, which has the same cinematic quality cost less than \$5,000 to produce. One key difference in the two is that the latter was a 5 page script as opposed to a 17 page script for Dreaming in Black and White. Also, Victor and Eddie required only about ten people and one day to produce while the film with Malik called for twenty to thirty people and three days of production. There are many factors that determine the making of any film no matter if it's a short or feature film.

Networking: Networking is so very important in this industry. Actually, the lead for "Dreaming in Black and White" was set for another well known actor. Malik and Joseph met by accident in New York and began to

reacquaint themselves. As they did, it was very evident that Malik would be great for the role. Having worked with him before on the New York Undercover series, and knowing his style and work ethic, Joe asked him to take on the lead role instead. He did and it's worked out great.

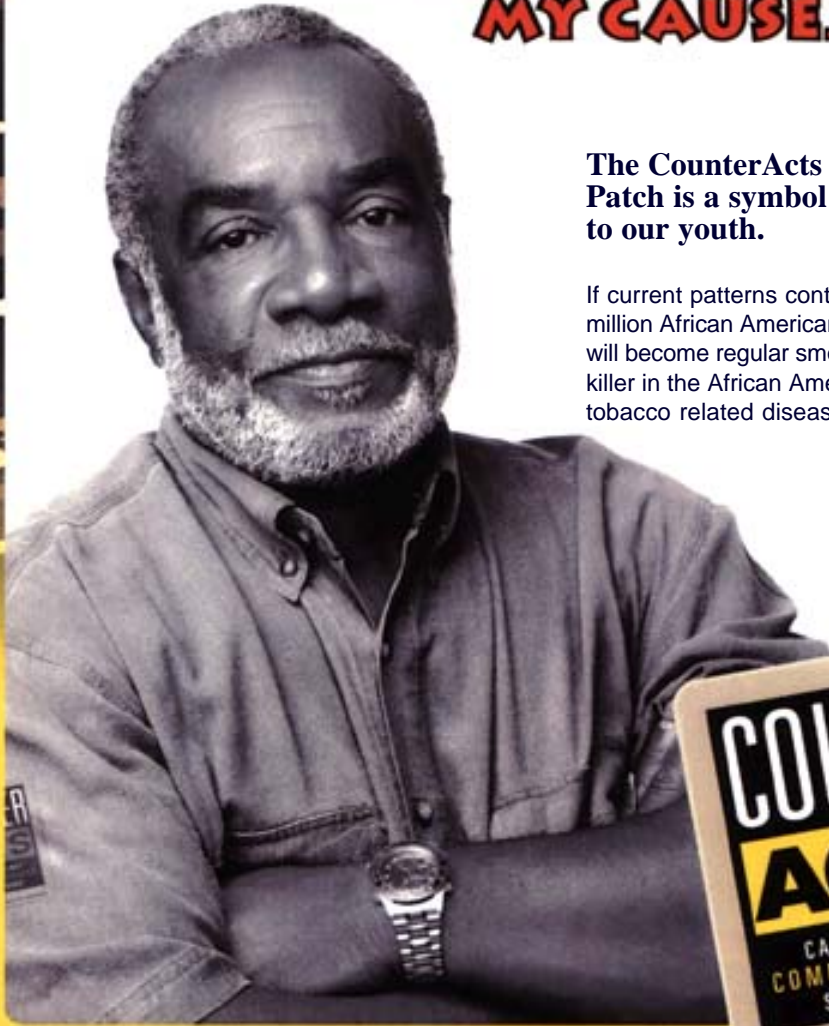
Audience: Dreaming in Black and White is a film for anyone. It should be seen by everyone. One way the film is gaining steam is that some school systems have incorporated it into their lesson plans and the 100 Black Men in California are using it in the mentoring program.



Making the Movie: Photos by Joe Eckardt and Ross Richardson

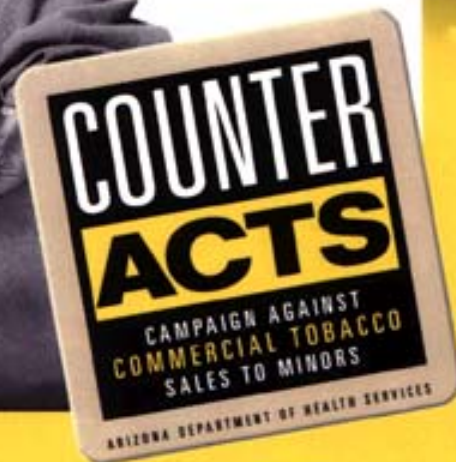
Staffing: Many of our friends helped us with the film's production. Many of them worked for no pay at all. That's when you know those are the one's who really love what they're doing. We have a lot of friends in the business that we've met along the way. We've both worked on feature films before and helping out a friend; it's just something you do. So, it wasn't hard to get the help.

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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
Tobacco Prevention & Education Program



Alexis Rhone

(affectionately known as "Ms. Alexis") is a full-time writer, devoted to candidly exploring teen issues through fiction. She has worked extensively with various youth organizations as a mentor and is frequently sought out for youth-oriented speaking engagements around the nation.

Alexis' debut novel, "Premature Pleasures", is the first of a four-part novel series. Since its release, "Premature Pleasures" was selected as a spotlight novel at the 2001 Essence Music Festival attended by more than 100,000 people from around the country. The follow-up novel, "Secret Shame", is set for a Spring 2003 release.

Alexis holds a Bachelor of Journalism/Public Relations degree from the University of Texas at Austin. She currently serves as Director of Journalism and Creative Writing for two charter schools in central Phoenix, AZ, where she resides with her husband, Lewis. To contact Alexis, please visit www.unshackledpublishing.com, or email her at lex@unshackledpublishing.com.

If only I'd practiced the wisdom shared in "The Richest Man in Babylon" by George Clouson five years ago when I first read it, my balance sheet would reflect fewer liabilities. Now that I suffocate under reckless debt, my eyes and ears are open to learn and master the keys to attaining wealth.

"The Richest Man In Babylon" is a financial parable that illustrates principles of wealth through the personal stories told by none other than the richest man in Babylon. He is addressing a group of men from his community who look a lot like many of us – outrageous debt; little, if any savings; no investments. Remembering him when he was as poor and as in debt as they were, they came to him for advice on how they, too, could acquire wealth. His recommendations are timeless.

- Live on less than you earn.
- Pay yourself first – no less than 10% of what you earn.
- Seek advice from those who are competent through their own experiences.
- Make money work for you. "Opportunity is a haughty goddess who wastes no time with those who are unprepared."
- Master the spirit of procrastination.
- Don't look for luck on a gamble. "Men of action are favored by the goddess of good luck."
- Remember the five laws of gold:
 1. Gold comes gladly and in increasing quantity to any man who will put aside at least 10% of earnings to create an estate for his future.
 2. Gold labors diligently and contentedly for the wise owner who finds for it profitable employment.
 3. Gold clings to the protection of the cautious owner who invests it under the advice of men wise in its handling.
 4. Gold slips away from the man who invests it in businesses or purposes with which he is not familiar or which are not approved by those skilled in its keep.
 5. Gold flees the man who would force it to impossible earnings or who follows the alluring advice of tricksters and schemers or who trusts it to his own inexperience and romantic desires in investment.

Clouson's writing style was easy to read. Better still, it was chocked full of wit, humor and real-life anecdotes faced by those who have a desire for wealth, stammer under mile-high debt, possess marketable skills and common sense, but have no idea how to put it all together for their financial well-being. I strongly recommend reading "The Richest Man in Babylon" for the inspirational message and practical wisdom.

[Home](#)

The Phoenix New Markets Tax Credit Program will help....

1. Create new jobs
2. Enhance commercial, retail & industrial development.
3. Help finance small and start-up businesses

....in under-served areas of Phoenix.

HISTORY...In December 2000, Congress passed legislation creating the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program as part of the community Renewal Tax relief Act to encourage private investment in low-income communities.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury, Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (Fund) administers the NMTC Program, which will release \$15 billion from 2002 through 2007. After a highly competitive process, the Fund made its first allocation in March 2003 to 66 agencies that will receive 2.5 billion. In order to be considered for the program, Phoenix created an independent non-profit corporation, Phoenix Community Development and Investment Corporation. Phoenix has been awarded 170 million in NMTC allocation or \$66.3 million in tax credits.

HOW IT WORKS...In exchange for tax credits, the NMTC Program can help raise equity, provide low interest loans, or provide gap financing for business in under-served areas of Phoenix. Under the NMTC Program, individual or corporate investors will receive a 39% tax credit over 7 years: 5% each year for the first 3 years and 6% each year for the next 4 years. Phoenix's \$170 million allocation allows us to issue tax credits to eligible investors totaling \$660.3 million (\$170 million X 39%).

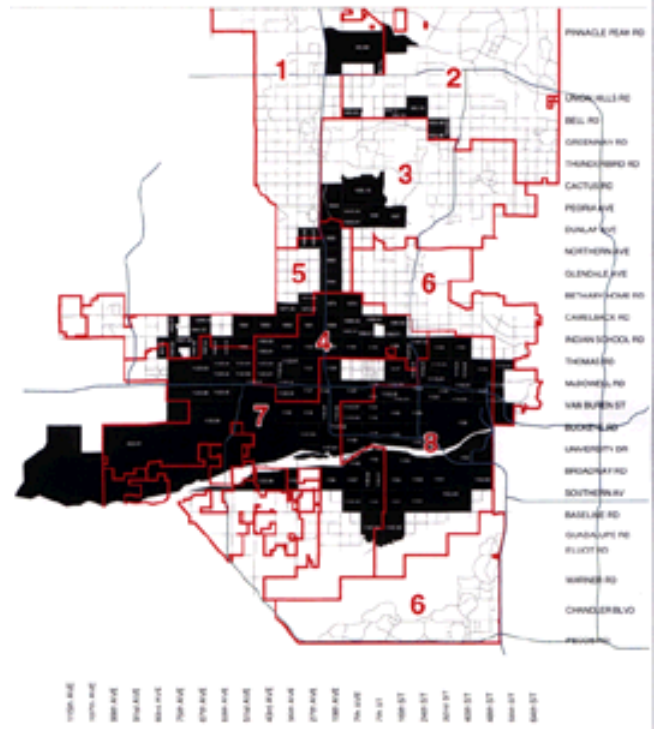
QUALIFYING CRITERIA...Investment must be made in census tracts that show poverty rates greater than 20% of median family income less than 80% of the metropolitan population: and meet business tests for the type of business operation, gross income, employee services and tangible property use.

Home

3 CORE AREAS OF FOCUS

1. **Business Development and Revitalization:** Loans and investments for the construction and/or rehabilitation of commercial, retail and industrial projects, including businesses in the life sciences.
- 2.) **Venture Capital:** Equity funding to new biotechnology and technology start-ups and expansions.
- 3.) **Small Business Finance Programs:** Loans and equity investments to small businesses.

City of Phoenix 2000 Census Tracts
Low-Income Communities



HOW PROJECTS ARE EVALUATED... The NMTC Program inherently relies upon local knowledge to determine which businesses can be funded by the NMTC Program and be market viable. Ultimately however, a 5 member Board of Directors made up of predominantly community representatives (Greater Phoenix Urban League, Chicanos Por la Causa and Phoenix Community Alliance) will evaluate projects to determine whether it meets the guidelines of the NMTC program by improving an under-served community.

For additional information, please contact Bobby Franco at 602-262-5040.

BTT Continued from page 9

Differential: Out of their six or seven productions a season other theaters in the city can only do a production once a season or every other season that reflect the African American experience. All of our productions reflect the African American experience.

Sponsorship: Being able to secure sponsorship is a science. It is so with us as it is with any and all other organizations across the country. As with our organization here in Phoenix we recognize that a strong development plan is needed if sponsorships are to be secured and maintained. We have an very good Director of Development who is a succinct and accurate writer. For many years we've been able to experience a tradition of sponsors who have stuck with us through the years and for the long haul. They include: Boeing, Arizona Public Service, Wells Fargo, Salt River Project, American Express and others.

Sponsor Benefits: Sponsors have preferred seating and obtain tickets at discounted rates. Prior to shows our subscribers/ sponsors are given a catered party and a pre-show presentation. Also, when the BTT's corporate sponsors are displayed in our advertising materials the public sees their connection to organizations such as ours. This is a great way for us to show the community that these corporations and individuals are connected, supportive and diverse in serving community arts initiatives.

Retro Modern continued from page 11

Marketing: Because it is such a specialty item, word of mouth. It is done specifically by appointment because we prefer to get to know our clients first. There are also collectors who know what they want and they know who we are.

Credentials: It pays in any field for the individual to do his or her own research. You should go out and look for what is available in your own area of interest. I was fortunate where I've always been around the arts, my mother and father were both collectors in Los Angeles and so were their parents. So I am third generation.

You can take courses in school, they call that the "academics." But if you are going to start investing you capitol, I would suggest you pursue it more than just the academics. You need know what makes this lot more valuable than that lot. To do this is not something you pick up in school, but only through experience such as visiting museums across the nation.

Location: We are in Arizona for this is where we live. Our

business we are blessed in that what we do, we actually live. The art we sell is our actual furniture. We live this.

Famous Designers:

- **Paul Laszlo** was a Jewish architect that came to New York in the 30's and went to California where he got a contract with one of major department stores. I believe he also did work with the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. His work was also well known in Europe. His work has recently been re-discovered over the last three or four years and is highly sought after. He worked through the 1980s.
- **Paul McCobb** was actually a salesman for furniture and believed that he could design it as well and did. They are extremely collectible now and there are several books published on his work. He was designing from the 1950s through he 60s.
- **Isamu Noguchi** was a half Japanese artist and a well known sculpture in his own right, who designed furniture as well. He designed chairs. He designed sofas. Just and incredible man. He elected to go into the Japanese interment camps during World War II acknowledging his heritage.

Anthropomorphism: With art as with furniture like what we live with that we consider art, it has a very anthropomorphic look to it, as if it is going to move. It is the movement that gives it the sculptural quality. It is the movement that lends the furniture to sculpture as well as to painting.

African Art is the foundation of art itself. You can not name a form of art from where there is not an African influence. Many of the designers of the architectural furniture collected African art so there is a connection.

The Meaning of Color

- **Red: Confidence, energy and aggressiveness**
- **Blue: Spirituality, water, life giving forces**
- **Yellow: Cautious**
- **Green: Youth, Growth**
- **Purple: Royalty**

Vegetation and Paintings: I believe in foliage, real plants. It also works well when you have paintings that have energy, that are alive. Painting that though static works, one can continue to find things in it.

Continued on next page

Home

Business Philosophy: Your home should be an extension of who or what you are. Nothing alive should be static. Your home can be evolving as you are evolving. Furniture in your home should not be clinical. When you walk into a persons home, you should see an extension of who and what that person is, or what they are striving to be. So when you purchase furniture, that furniture should lend it self to art. Make any acquisition, be it a lamp, a radio, a sofa, or a cabinet, with the idea in mind that inanimate object is going to personify who or what we are. That is how you should purchase furniture, not just according to color.

Color however should be factor for colors effect emotions. One room may have red in it and that red gives you a sense of power and accomplishment. One room may have blue in it for a sense of liquidity and spirit. Another room green for a sense of growth. Form in conjunction with color define who or what you are. Some of us may have to re-invent how we see ourselves and re-invent how we purchase our wares. There is nothing worse than to be in an environment that is sterile. You build a home with the idea that you should create an environment that will allow you to be at peace with yourself.

RSBS continued from page 13

In addition to Malik and Cecily, our crew consisted of well over 30 people including: Barry Waldmen, Executive Producer who has executively produced Batman and Robin, The Rock, Armageddon, Gone in 60 Seconds and Pearl Harbor. And, Anthony Claverie- Writer/ Co-Producer who has written and directed for "Urban Ghost Story", has worked with video guru F. Gary Gray and has worked on all aspects of the MTV Best Hip Hop Video " Ms. Jackson" performed by urban hip hop group Outkast.

Competitors: We don't worry about the competition because if we did we'd never get anything done. We simply focus on what were doing and learn as we go. Mistakes are going to be made but, the trick is to learn and move on.

Competitive Edge: We love what we do. Our edge is our passion and drive. We live and breath film production. When you love what you do you'll eventually become expert in your craft, that holds true for anything in life. Passion for the business is what keeps us going and competitive. That's our edge. Also, we've had help from so many supportive and well positioned people throughout our lives which in essence says a lot about how and where we got to where we are today.

Benefits: The sky's the limit. Films have no limits. If you

have an imagination you can make a film. With Dreaming in Black and White, it has been awesome to see some of the reactions of the audience. When the audience reacts, and no matter how, you know the film got to them. It made them think. For that reason we were granted the opportunity of the benefit in seeing the audience show emotion toward our work.

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The Ebony Cactus is seeking additional writers

Over the past year, our outstanding faculty of writers have brought you a wide variety of subjects ranging from how to find a job to how to write a business plan. Along with continuing this series of seminars, you have told us you want more. So be it! Currently seminars are being developed on environmental compliance and on Black business in South Africa. If you have information you feel would be of interest, we invite you to contact us. The following are a few of the criteria:

Authors/Sources: Articles are written by journalists, business people, academics, technical professionals and consultants. Prospective writers are encouraged to read past issues to get an understanding of content, direction and style.

Viewpoint/Style: Our readers are interested in business tips and information that is directly useful to them and that is provided by their peers. Our writing style is academic with journalistic overtones. We desire to present valuable and concise information in a way that is not dry or dull.

Mission: Our mission is to connect the disconnected by creating a document with a combination of features that interact synergistically to provide high value to our readers and advertisers. To accomplish this task, The Ebony Cactus magazine must be: Useful, High Quality, Ground Breaking, Exciting, Consistent, In Depth, Accessible, Insightful, Readable, Clear, Innovative and Timely.

Subjects Covered: Entrepreneur and established business profiles, business management, accounting, job hunting, success tips, new development updates etc. We use by-lined articles, interviews and reports.

Article Length/Scheduling: News articles generally run approximately 200 words. Business profiles, Spotlight profiles and feature articles run between 400 and 800 words. Requests to guest lecture (write) should be received 2 months in advance. Completed articles must be timely at receipt and transmitted a minimum of 3 weeks in advance of publication.

Editorial Calendar: Requests to guest lecture should be received 3 months in advance. Completed articles must be timely at receipt and transmitted a minimum of 2 weeks in advance of publication dates on the 6th and 20th of the month. The Ebony Cactus reserves the right to accept/reject and edit manuscripts and set publication dates.

The 2003 editorial themes will focus on various industries or business types including, beauty and fashion, health care, travel, technology, banking, finance, and the arts. The magazine will continue its lecture series on business management and success tips. Finally, the geographic focus will be expanded to nationwide but with emphasis on businesses in San Diego, Los Angeles metro and Las Vegas.

Contacts

Publisher: Angela Miller-Brooks (602)821-8191
publisher@theebonycactus.com.

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EVENTS

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THEME Salute Valley Non-Profits @ 1st Fridays Phoenix!

Our next event will be catered to those work diligently to make our community a better place. Many non-profit organizations often get little or no recognition. If you are interested in supporting and/or recruiting, please attend our next event. Your soul will thank you later!

Sat, May 10th – FFP Classic Film Series @ Farrelli's Cinema Supper Club
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TIME 1pm (please arrive by 12:30pm)

COST \$10 per person (includes food & beverage)

We have teamed up with Farrelli's to bring you some of the best Black films ever! What's unique about the FFP Classic Film Series is that ALL of the movies are selected by YOU! After each movie, we have a lively discussion session that's well worth the price of admission.

If you are interested in booth rentals and/or on-screen advertising, please email info@1stfridaysphoenix.com.

To VOTE and/or purchase film series tickets online, please visit www.1stfridaysphoenix.com/film.html.