



Ideas in Action

Caribbean 'Solopreneur'

Keneea Linton-George is an accomplished fashion designer, TV producer and entrepreneur, recognised internationally for both her own fashion collection and her TV show 'Mission Catwalk'.



Keneea Linton-George

Made in Jamaica, and now in its third series, the TV show is broadcast in several Caribbean countries. I interviewed Keneea in Kingston during the shooting of Mission Catwalk, where she told me: "The first two series provided a platform for young fashion designers from Jamaica and then from other Caribbean Islands. The opportunity helped to launch the careers of the winners, Shenna Carby and Gregory Williams, who went on to study at the London College of Fashion and show at London Fashion Week."

Keneea was passionate about fashion design from an early age, creating costumes for cheerleaders at high school, then organising fashion events at the University of the West Indies. She said:

"At university I was studying philosophy, heading for a career in law, but found fashion 'infectious'. I was in my element organising fashion events - and I was making money too!"

Later, she showed her own fashion collection at Caribbean Fashion Week and worked for a time in New York before returning to Jamaica.

Reflecting on her business ventures, Keneea said: "I started my first two businesses with associates, but the partnerships didn't work out. It's more difficult than

it might seem to build a successful business around a partnership, especially if the business side of things, such as contracts and agreements about control and reward, are not resolved at an early stage."

Keneea is now quite deliberately a solo entrepreneur - a 'solopreneur' - retaining full ownership and control of her two ventures. She finds that this allows her to make key decisions quickly in a very fast-moving business environment. However, being a solopreneur doesn't mean working alone. The TV production needs a large team of more than 50 people, both employees and freelancers, including models, production crew, make-up artists and designers. It's a complex business and a significant contributor to the creative economy of Jamaica.

Another key decision she made was to separate her business affairs into two separate legal entities. "As well as being a serious entrepreneur, I want to help others in the fashion industry, and so I am involved in various not-for-profit projects. But I found that the commercial and non-commercial 'modes of operation' didn't always work together in harmony, so I decided to separate them. KTL Group Ltd is my company for TV production and fashion design. The Designers Guild



Jamaica Ltd is a not-for-profit organisation to benefit the fashion industry and help young designers," she said.

Keneea is clearly going far - as both a designer and a TV Producer. Moreover, she is taking a generation of young fashion designers with her on the exciting journey of combining creativity and business.

Links

www.keneealinton.com
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