

Kealeboga (Lebo) Merafhe, a young Motswana Designer who recently continued to follow her dream of becoming a well known designer in the international scene, has given us a sneak peak of what fashion means to her. Aged 25 and a recent graduate with a Chemical Engineering degree from the United States of America, she has shown us how she gives power to women through her unique and bold designs.

Lebo, as most people call her, started designing in her teenage years, entering design competitions and fashion shows at her high school in 2001. Even while pursuing her Engineering degree, her love for fashion was always evident through her winning of “Best Dressed Female of the Year” award in her freshmen year. Fashion for Lebo is exciting. She loves the idea of combining professionalism and fashion. Her designs tend to favour the professional women, in all aspects of their lives, whether at work or leisure. They exude sophistication while remaining trendy and relevant. She designs a lot of business suits but also casual wear that is suitable for events and weekend wear.

In December 2011, Lebo launched her own label, Di-Monde Reign Designs that prides itself for its meticulous and sophisticated use of print fabrics. She uses fabrics from all over Africa, supporting textile markets in Kenya, Zambia, Malawi, Nigeria and Uganda. Her daring colour combinations and prints are what make her work exceptionally eye catching and unique. She fell in love with print fabrics due to their ability to make two identical designs look completely different. Lebo is able to match a design with a personality so that it tells a story, and allows ones individuality to be complimented. Her creative use of prints instantly made her the go-to person for wedding and traditional attires. She enjoys seeing her clothes come to life, being embodied by confident women who are not afraid to starred at and admired. Her brand has gained popularity in the city of Gaborone as well as sparked interest as far as The United Kingdom and Australia.

Since the launch of her brand, her work has been featured in Botswana’s lifestyle magazines February issue of, “Lapologa” and the well-known fashion and trend magazine “Canoe” from Ghana. Her design knowledge was put to the test when she was asked to design airhostess uniforms for Blue Sky Airlines, an upcoming airline in Botswana in 2012, becoming their official design and supply house. Lebo was given the opportunity to feature her work in the September issue of the “Italian Vogue,” magazine. Gaborone Fashion Weekend was her first showcase which formally introduced her to the fashion industry. Since her showcase, she have received invites to Africa Fashion Week in Johannesburg (South Africa), SolAfrik Fashion Week in New York, Africa Fashion Week in Los Angeles, and Arise Magazine Fashion Week 2013 in Lagos, Nigeria .



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LEBO MERAFHE

With the recent success of my Di-Monde Reign Brand, Lebo has decided to launch the “Lebo Merafhe Brand” which will be the name and brand that people associate her with. Lebo wants to give her brand a face and a personality as people will immediately know who they are talking about when they hear about “Lebo Merafhe” designs.

Lebo currently has a boutique located in Block 3 which serves as both a store for her ready made items as well as a consulting space for projects such as weddings and occasions that require custom made garments. Lebo looks forward to launching her winter collection which does not include print as we know it. She puts a twist in this new collection in the sense that the print aspect is brought to life in the form of texture. There will be many bold, sexy and daring winter looks for both men and women and she looks forward to sharing her designs with everyone.

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