A Night of High Class Global Fashion!



Prince Gbaba and Princess Ariminta Gbaba at B.W. Harris program.

Do you know what Liberian man says about why we should eat and dress well: "The one you eat and wear, dat your own because when God calls you or me tomorrow we will not go with anything else but ourselves and clothes used to cover our bodies as we exit the world!" Thus, apart from the serious nature of the B.W. Harris event, there was also the "bluffing" side of it. Hence, I want to use the Liberian expression called "wearing" to capture the bluffing aspect of the program.

When Liberian man says: "<u>Pekin wearing</u>"! It means the "Pekin" and his "chickos" may be wearing something fashionable like the way my wife and I killed the "formay" that night. Let me give you a break down of fashion details of what my wife and I wore during the B.W. Harris honoring program.

Above, I am wearing a jet black tuxedo suit from Wilke-Rodriguez made in Colombia and purchased at the Gentleman Warehouse in Philadelphia. Note the shining silky waist band to add the "tuxedo twist" and swag to my <u>wearing</u>! I am also wearing a black and white pair of Bottino Umo-TM shoes and a tuxedo pleaded shirt from Gentleman Warehouse in Philadelphia. The body of Princess Ariminta's dress is made up of 95% rayon and 5% spandex; the lining is 100% nylon; and embroidery (98% polyester and 2% metallic), purchased from Macy's in Philadelphia. She is also wearing a black pair of Calvin Klein shoes and black stockings to match.



Evelyne Padmore, current President of the Tri-State Chapter (NY, NJ, CT). Check out her outfit. What do you think? She's taking this "wearing" thing to the next level! Pure Liberian lady, gentle and beautiful!



Part of my ancestry as a Klao person is from the Grebo ethnic group of Liberia. On this photo you may call me "Baby VAT" or Liberia's "Bluffer Joe"! I am in my pure "Style-Nyenneh" form!



Sharing a moment with my family. Above you get to see "Aunty" Ann's colorful stripped African lappa outfit as well as Princess Ariminta's entire outfit with embroidery in the neck, front and hem of dress.



Hendel K. C. Diggs sharing a joke with a friend. Check the three guys' outfits! I ain't mad at them. They got "Klass" spelled with the letter "K"! And check this other pekin's "sabu hay" on the far right shining like the sunlight! I ain't mad at you, pekin!



Husband and wife team, Patrick and Lenda Thompson dance the night away in top class African fashion. Check out the beautiful blue African male and female lace attire. Patrick has on a beautiful pair of black shoes to go with his suit and Lenda has on a pair of shiny silver color slippers and the necklace and ear-rings to get the grove going for the night! So, Patrick and Lenda, "It equal, no parting"!



Bishop George Browne Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Counselor Mohamedu Jones and partner killing the form colonial style. Look at the cut of the lady's purple silk dress, the black sandals, beads, necklace and red lipstick to go with color of dress. The papay is dressed conservatively (1800 style). Check out his gray and well trimmed beard. You go, guys!



1st Vice President Louisa Merchant and her boys. These two Liberian pekins not fool to wear pants and shirts without belt or to sag with their pants down and underwear showing because the old ma will put 'peh-peh' in their eyes! Good example, Louisa. Happy Mother's Day to you!



Gentleman of the night. Check out the stripped red and white shirt and that nasty colorful greenish-brow tie to go with the handkerchief. Good choice brother and thanks for keeping the night heated up with the "MC" ing.



My childhood friend, the great Awobo Wariebi himself! Well, check out my pekin's nasty suit with that yellow in the background, along with the horizontally stripped gray and brow tie and handkerchief and of course the goggles or glasses to give that **"school boy" look!** Nice seeing you at the honoring ceremony, brother. Your dance was off the hook!



Rev. Thomas "Ringo" Barnard was there in full swing! Check out his conservative dress style and the outreach smile on his face. Rev. thanks for showing up. Please extend our love to your family.



Louisa Merchant, First Vice President driving a point across to the audience during the B.W. Harris honoring program in Staten Island. You see what I was telling you earlier about Liberian beauty and fashion. Look at that troublesome dress the lady has on. Look at the confident look in her face and the smile and tell me you don't feel joy in your heart!



Just a touch of class from another angle. Check my girl Val in her see-through nylon evening dress. She really dressed to kill and when I greeted her later I also cut my lips trying to get a hug because she was sharply dressed as a razor blade! You can make her! You "aba with pawah"! Look at the shoes, and jewelries (rings, necklace, and ear-rings) and man! What about the hair style and lipstick! Opposite Val is

another lady dressed in a colorful African attire. Check out her necklace, and fashionably shaped upper cut design of her African dress. The ear-rings and necklace are fantastic!



Let's take a closer look here. Check out the bright tie-dye dress the lady is wearing, the necklace, brown bracelet that appears to be made from the shell of a coconut and the lipstick that matches her complexion and outfit. Match her appearance against the background of the pekin's advant garde "formay": a silky gray vest, light green shirt and stripped green, gray tie, with the shirt not tucked in but that looks classy and backed by a Mohawk haircut to give that outgoing modern fashionable look. "Pekin, you got swag!



Hello! You ain't see nothing yet. Check out my beautiful cousin Gudrun Harris! What a beautiful dress coz! You really rocked the night. You are a true Liberian beauty not only with the looks but the good and respectful ways that inspire all of us to give back to our communities. Thanks for inviting me to the B.W. Harris honoring program.



Most women during the occasion wore dresses but the lady on the left chose to present a plain contrast of white jacket, with mini sleeves, and "V" neck cut along with a black pair of soft cotton pants. Check out her hair dude as well as the lady opposite her with her long drag-lock pony tail colorfully dyed brown and black to match the black dress that added a soft touch of class to the event.



Dehkontee proudly presents: "His Excellency" Mr. William Scott! Fear the pekin's suit and the poise. I guess the only thing the lady next to him could do was just smile for the camera since William was more serious than "Dog killer"! Beautiful suit, Cathedral Boy! The lady is dressed in what I would term mixed outfits: she is wearing a blue silky dress underneath the lady's court as her top gear and she crowns her fashion expression with a black head tie. This reflects the cross-cultural nature of the Liberian people and should I say: Bill I am very proud of you! Nice seeing you at the event!



Look at Ma Eva's daughter, my little sister, Ciata. The child is still looking good. Nice seeing you and K. C. at the honoring program, ma. Love you and the rest of the Diggs-Kiazolu gang!



George D. Browne Achievement Award in Law recipient Robert McCreanor and Judy Bernard at the B.W. Harris honoring ceremony in Staten Island. The evening was marked by diversity and human rights themes! Robert has on a stripped brownish looking coat suit, with red, white, and blue stripped tie and a white shirt in the background. Of course you get to see the stylish head gear Judy has on along with her colorful gold and red dress and a scarf. By the way, Judy Bernard is a graduate of the famous all girls school, St. Teresa's Convent run by the Franciscan Sisters.



A well attended event of great Liberian culture and history: nice Liberian foods and drinks and the good conversations to go along with the occasion. After so many years of war and bloodshed, it is high time Liberians had some fun and lived in a peaceful environment. Part of my prayer is that Liberians will restore rule of law soon and live by the law in order to rebuild a peaceful and prosperous post-war Liberia. Amen.



The beauty of a Liberian lady is beyond description: Liberian ladies are not only pretty but they have good taste and style and they can rock your world before you know it! Check this lady out: purple wrap, black silky dress with a yellow carnation to add that romantic juice to her wearing, and the dangling gold ear-rings that hang like a chandelier. Liberian women are very good supporters of their husbands. They have good looks, good manners, and they are very productive. No wonder why Liberia was among one of the first nations of the world to spearhead Women's Suffrage in the mid 1940s. Consequently, Liberia was first to elect a female president on the continent of Africa as well. Hey, mommie, what's on your lovely mind?



Liberian men are outstanding and courageous and responsible. They are well cultured and responsible. The brother above listens attentively to the words of wisdom that were being provided by honorees during the B.W. Harris event in Staten Island. He is a shining example of people who listen when they attend public functions instead of keeping separate conversations when speakers of the occasion are trying to deliver a message to the entire audience.



African lady: check out the hair dude, the curls, necklace, and the upper cut of the lady's dress, as well as the texture of the African dress. Observe her glossy lipstick and gold color ear-ring.



Okay, let me give you a more gorgeous and modern African look: low gold color hair cut, well shaped eye brows, appropriate color eye shadow make-up and lipstick to match lady's complexion, and of course the bird feather ear-rings! A great artistic and fashionable expression, sis! You got a number? Shuu! Just wrapping!



Mrs. Ann Cooper-Wilson, a great lady of quiet beauty and a professional health care practitioner. She served as President of the Grand Gedeh Chapter in New York and she is one of my strong promoters among the Grand Gedehians. We love you "Aunty Ann"!

So You Think You Can Dance!



Liberians love to party and dance. They love to bluff and enjoy themselves. Look how K. C. is killing the "MO" while Lady "Gee" does her thing. Look at her sandal shoes and her polished red toe nails! Of course on the left directly behind K.C. is Thomas Bernard. The Reverend with his Tubman poise!



Partay! Derek Moore stepping up to the plate with his partner while my oldest son, His Royal Highness and Handsomeness, Prince Julian Yonkpaoh Gbaba in pink sweater vest in the background, with white shirt collar neatly covered over the sweater vest, does his cool dance. After all that book stuff, we all got down to the nitty-gritty my dears! "All work without play makes Jack a dull boy"!



"Sweet Papa Charlie" Rev. Charles Levy Martin was at the honoring ceremony to make it grand. Check out the pekin's outfit. The lady's African outfit and the texture are off the hook. Her brownish gold hair color and the necklace and matching ear-rings and bracelets are fantastic. Check Charlie's tie and the way he tied it uniquely the "Old Boys" style!



Mr. & Mrs. Robert McCreanor, on the red carpet. Good looking couple. Beautiful dress, shoes, and pocketbook, and beautiful blond flowing hair.



Rabbi Gbaba poses with Manjah Hendel K. C. Diggs during the B.W. Harris honoring program on April 28, 2012 in Staten Island. It was an evening of celebration and brotherhood. K.C. and I were classmates at the University of Liberia where I served as President of the Silver Jubilee Freshman Class and K.C. as one of my supporters and advisors. His mother, Ma Eva Digss came to minister unto us during the early morning hours in the University of Liberia auditorium under the banner of the Varsity Christian Fellow (VCF) from 7-8 a.m. during the school week. So, we are long time friends and brothers!



Joe" Style-Nyenneh" "Baby VAT" Gbaba: "I did not steal my looks; I was born with them, so "prease do not jeruss me!" (smile)



Rabbi Gbaba takes the microphone to make a few remarks after receiving his award. Here is a gist of the honoree's remarks and prayer:

Gbaba: Will everyone in the hall please stand (after audience stands): The Lord be with you.

Audience: And also with you.

Gbaba: Let us pray: Father God we are gathered here in your name to give you the praise and to celebrate the contributions of your stalwart sons and daughters in various fields of discipline. Bless Bishop George D. Browne wherever he is and may light perpetual shine upon him. Bless his work to continue on earth and bless members of the B.W. Harris Alumni Association for their love, respect, and support, and recognition of the contributions of honorees to their various communities. I ask Lord that you grant all Liberians the love and peace we yearn for and may you inspire us to work together to rebuild our war ravished country. We pray

for all our leaders to reconcile with the citizens of Liberia in order to restore rule of law and respect for the sanctity of human life. And I ask this in the blessed name of the Lord. Amen. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Audience: Amen.

Conclusion: Developing Lasting Friendships and Trust among All Liberians and Friends of Liberia



Rabbi Gbaba poses with Reverend Charles Levy Martin, Jr. during the ceremony. In the background is my strong boy, Hendel K. C. Diggs.



Prince Gbaba and Princess Ariminta in their chilling mood at "Aunty Ann"s residence in Staten Island.

Well, every good thing must come to an end! I enjoyed affiliating with you and I pray we will be able to meet again by God's grace. I also pray that Liberians will learn to

appreciate their own talents and that all Liberians will work together to build a culture of peace, diversity, and tolerance in post-war Liberia. Please do not use your resources and potentials to destroy others but use them to build others and the make life better for others. What I mean is for each of us to take up the challenge to develop lasting friendships and trust among all Liberians and friends of Liberia. For what God has blessed no man can put asunder because "When chicken white, it white!"

Rabbi Prince Joseph Tomoonh-Garlodeyh Gbaba, Sr., Ed. D. 2012 Bishop George Browne Achievement Award in Education May 10, 2012