



July 17, 2008

That's her style

Greenville's own Bo Griffin hopes her 'Skinny Dress' will help women embrace their curves, look their best

By Cheryl P. Allen
STAFF WRITER

Bo Griffin is confident, charismatic, stylish — and very, very busy.

During an interview, she says she's exhausted. But that's OK. Her exhaustion simply stems from a passion for fashion.

Griffin is the owner of Goddess, a clothing boutique on Laurens Road in Greenville.

She is also an actress and an award-winning radio and television personality, currently serving as host of HGTV's "The Big Reveal."

This summer, Griffin added to that list the title of fashion designer. The Greenville native has come out with her first apparel line, which stars The Skinny Dress. The dress is sleeveless and its top layer is made of stretch Charmeuse satin. There's a built-in stretch nylon undergarment with Lycra that acts as a body shaper.

"This is so you don't have to do the double duty of wearing a girdle or whatever your other undergarment is that will smooth out those lumps and bumps," Griffin said.

"You just slip right into the dress, zip it up and done deal. But I always tell women, it's not a miracle." At the same time, the dress doesn't "bind or confine," she said. "It feels very sleek and very comfortable."

The dress is available for women of virtually all sizes — from small to plus size. "It wasn't even intended to be necessarily a line more than a necessity for me and other women," said Griffin, recalling how the idea began.

"I was getting dressed, going on a date, and you know, you want to look your best," Griffin said. "And I was pulling up my undergarment and I was putting the dress on and I was like, 'This is just NOT hot!' I just hated it. I had so many layers on, and I just felt so stuffed.

"I said, 'I wish someone would just make a dress with the undergarment already inside it so I wouldn't have to go through this. And then it hit me. And that's how I came up with the idea. It was just like that.'"

As with any idea and evolving product, there have been challenges along the way.

But overall, Griffin says, it has been worth any hoops she's had to jump through.

"It has not been easy. I've working on this for about 2 1/2 years or so on the design and the concept," she said. "I would like to keep them made in the U.S.A. Maybe I can be somewhat of a light for other

people to start manufacturing in the States again.”

The dress, which currently sells for \$109, is available in seven sizes from small to 4X and in seven colors: black, mango, jade, turquoise, hot pink, scarlet, and lime. It also comes with a wrap.

Griffin is excited about its potential to help other women look and feel good.

“I am also a little bit nervous,” she said. “I’m hoping that women embrace and love it. Every woman wants a dress that, no matter when she puts it on, she is going to look her figure-flattering best.”

Customers can currently purchase the dress at her store or order on her Web site: skinnydress.com.

“It’s also going to be put in showrooms around the country in Los Angeles, New York, Atlanta, Dallas and Miami so that other retailers will be able to buy it as well,” she said.

Passion for fashion

Griffin was born with a passion for fashion. “I started out as a child, sketching designs. I love design so I started out wanting to be a fashion designer. So I’ve come 360 degrees, and this is something I’m absolutely committed to. It’s something that I absolutely love.”

She left Greenville for the Big Apple in the 1980s, with dreams of becoming a fashion designer. Instead, she was bitten by the acting bug and performed in a number of off-Broadway productions. She later attended a two-year institute in New York, to study engineering and communications. She got her first radio gig at a station in Durham, N.C., where she quickly climbed the ranks to become program director.

She later moved to Miami and became a popular radio personality for Hot 105 and Power 96 stations. Then it was on to Los Angeles to co-host the Fox morning TV show, “That’s Life” and was an entertainment reporter for “Extra”. She was also host of “Blue Ribbon,” a show that aired on Turner South Network and highlighted Southern culture.

Goddess has been in business for six years. During that time, Griffin has traveled back and forth to and from bigger cities, balancing her television career and hometown life as a boutique owner.

“I came back in 2002 and started my very first store . . . But projects would just come and they would be great projects, so I’d go and do my assignment and come back home,” she said. “I always look at my showbiz life as a great assignment. I do it and I come home. I love it.”

Currently, her top priorities are her store and her new line of dresses. “This is a 100 percent commitment on my part.”