Graffiti: Make Your Mark fashion show highlights women's suffrage and self-expression

Yamilca Rodriguez wasn't sure she would stage Louisville Bespoke's third fashion show in as many years, but that changed when she learned of the Women Vote 100 commemoration.

After she heard about the ambitious undertaking, the founder and creative director of Louisville Bespoke, an incubator for designers, artists and entrepreneurs, was certain then the show would and should go on. She knew there was much to say about equality and
“Graffiti: Make Your Mark” is the name and theme of what is among the first events in Louisville’s more than year-long commemoration of the 100th anniversary of woman’s suffrage in the United States, as well as the 55th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. Most women gained the right to vote in 1920 with the ratification of the 19th Amendment, but it took the 1965 passage of the Voting Rights Act to provide suffrage protection to women and men of racial minorities, too.

The commemoration is led by the Frazier Museum, the League of Women Voters of Louisville, and the Louisville Office for Women, with almost 100 partner organizations such as Louisville Bespoke as well as thousands of people participating throughout the coming months.

Rodriguez said that helping women and promoting diversity are passions of hers, and the show came about with those values in mind. All but one of the designers whose work will be featured in the show is local, and Rodriguez is proud of their and their models’ diversity.

The “Make Your Mark” aspect of “Graffiti” also was a natural fit with fashion and suffrage, as both present opportunities for self-expression, she said.

In order to honor the suffragists around the time of the fight for the 19th Amendment, Rodriguez felt it was important to have a 1920s feel to some of the pieces, and the show will begin with a vintage collection complete with versions of the sashes suffragists wore.

The program also will include a plug for voting as a way to express oneself — “We have these rights because of these women, and we need to use it,” Rodriguez said — and Frazier History Museum President and CEO Penny Peavler will speak briefly about the suffrage movement and the commemoration.

Rodriguez hopes to highlight the history of the vote for younger people, and also is pleased that portions of the proceeds will benefit Dress for Success, which promotes economic independence for women with a network of support for their work and their lives.

“Graffiti: Make Your Mark” will be from 6 to 10 p.m. April 12. Tickets of varying prices are available online now.

To learn more about Louisville Bespoke, please visit their website.

Dr. Mary Ellen Britton becomes the second suffragist honored on the National Votes for Women Trail
Louisvillians made the trip to Saint James AME Church in Danville, Ky., one of the oldest churches in Kentucky, to help unveil the second national marker in the Pomeroy Foundation National Votes for Women Trail.

Mary Ellen Britton was the first female physician in Kentucky and as such representatives of the American Medical Association took part in the celebration. Dr. Britton gave an important speech about women’s rights and suffrage in 1887 at this historic Danville church. Her marker is the second in the National Votes for Women Trail. A trailblazing pioneer in medical care and women’s rights, Dr. Britton is highly deserving of the honor.

Future monuments will be unveiled in Lexington and Richmond. The first monument in the National Trail was unveiled for Susan Look Avery in Louisville in front of the Louisville Woman’s Club, which she founded.

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**Stay in the loop!**

We're here to keep you in the loop about the Women Vote 100 commemoration.

- The above details and more are found on the [Women Vote 100 calendar](#) that
We encourage your organization to **add an event to the calendar**

To get an idea of what has been planned for 2020, please read [this overview](#) by Penny Peavler, president and CEO of the Frazier History Museum.

And, of course, please keep current with the calendar and if you would like your voice heard, fill out our [form](#)!

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**Voter registration deadline approaches**

The deadline for registration applications to vote in Kentucky’s upcoming primary election is **April 22, 2019**. The primary election date is **May 21, 2019**.

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

According to elect.ky.gov, to register to vote in Kentucky, you must:

— Be a U.S. citizen and a Kentucky resident for at least 28 days before the election.
— Be at least 18 years old by the next General Election.

Kentucky law allows qualified individuals to register at 17 years of age and be able to participate in a primary election if the individual will be 18 years old by the general election, which will be **Nov. 5, 2019**.

**To register in Kentucky:**

— Go [online](#)! You may use a current Kentucky driver license to help complete an application online.
— Mail a printed and completed [voter registration application](#) to your County Clerk’s Office.
— Go in person to your [County Clerk’s Office](#) to submit an application in person.

**Indiana voters click** [HERE](#)
“You can pray until you faint, but unless you get up and try to do something, God is not going to put it in your lap. Sometimes it seems like to tell the truth today is to run the risk of being killed. But if I fall, I'll fall five feet four inches forward in the fight for freedom.” — Fannie Lou Hamer, 1917-1977, daughter of Mississippi sharecroppers who became one of 20th Century America’s most powerful voices for civil rights and voting rights, organizer of Freedom Summer, and a founder of the National Women’s Political Caucus.

Learn more about Fannie Lou Hamer here.