

Award-winning designer scoops CNN interview

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Award-winning designer and columnist Leah Misika has even more reason to celebrate the new year after nailing an interview on global news network CNN's 'African Voices' - an incredible addition to her ever-growing portfolio.



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"Fashion to me is a form of expression, but it is also your identity," Misika explains in the opening of her segment where she showcases some of her top designs.

The programme debuted on Friday, 8 January.

Bitten by the fashion bug at a young age, Misika has grown in leaps and bounds, from designing her sister's matric farewell dress to starting up her fashion company, LM La Mode.

Studying in the States and travelling the globe have not curbed her desire to make fashion great in Namibia. "Namibia is my home," she explained in the interview. "I love helping this industry grow."

And what better way to help the industry grow than to go on an international platform and show the world just how great fashion can be in Namibia? "Being a fashion designer is not your everyday cup of tea. You have to take on many faces," she said.

When asked what her reaction was to seeing herself on television, Misika could only emit excitement. "I was scared and nervous because you think a lot of things such as 'did I say this right? Did I do that right?' I couldn't remember anything! But when I watched it, it was a feeling I've never felt before."

The support she received was major, she said. "To be honest, I didn't expect a lot of the support I got. I received many

phone calls and love. We live in a country with a hard industry, but those kind of calls showed me that it is possible (to succeed). In terms of launching my brand, that interview was 'the one'."

The concept of LM La Mode is nothing new. Birthed from an idea she had sometime during 2008, Misika constantly spoke about her then-budding business to family, friends and peers alike.

"It's really nothing new," she said, but with a new outlook for the year, Misika has much planned for her fashion house.

"I honestly see La Mode being not just a fashion brand or a fashion line. It's a whole fashion company that is going to house all these things that I want to do as a fashion designer and fashion professional. La Mode is a fashion plug to Namibia, that is the biggest thing. We should be the number one company you should come to in terms of fashion."

"In terms of local designers, with what I'm planning to do, I want to work with everybody. You will see collaborations between me and other Namibian designers. You don't want to work alone in the industry. It's like being on a playground by yourself."

In terms of international designers she wants to work with, boutiques are the new bae. "I'm not really interested in working with big brands. There are certain brands that I would like to see in my work, but it's really going to be a lot of boutiques."

Other Namibians who have been interviewed on the show include Gwen Lister, Lady May, Stanley Mareka and fashion guru Lourens 'Loux' Gebhardt.

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