

## Artist Statement

**Soreyda Begley**

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Art, for me, represents not only a creative outlet but also a social act, an act of empowerment, for me and for others. Clothing, appearance and certainly standards of beauty and fashion are not neutral and trivial, and I design clothing as an attempt to take control of these standards. I want my clothing to serve as one more way to empower women and create agency and choice. By rejecting some ways of presenting ourselves and embracing others, I hope to create pieces that make women feel powerful, and by extension, be powerful.

My clothing is influenced by classic designs. I like working within the confines of ‘classic,’ demonstrating that change can come even when you are limited in some way, as we all are. I also insist that my clothing is produced in a fair and sustainable way, as I know firsthand the conditions in which most of the clothing in the world is produced from my time working in sweatshops in Honduras.

I want to eliminate ‘fashion victims’ in every sense of that term, from the aesthetically-challenged consumer to the producers of the clothing. And fashion does matter. My clothing, like all clothing, is a first impression but also a first line of defense. That which becomes popular fashion is a collective decision, made by unconscious consensus and in the absence of serious critique. I try to assess that consensus, and critique it from within.

## **Soreyda Bedit Begley**

Fashion Designer/Community Organizer

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**Bio (short):** Soreyda Bedit Begley is a Lexington, Kentucky based designer and community activist. She is originally from Honduras and has lived in the United States for over 18 years. Soreyda is a public speaker and avid advocate for women's rights, diversity and inclusion and Fair Trade. She founded the Lexington Fashion Collaborative, is active on the boards of several art and social justice organizations. She is the mother of three children, Isabella, William, and Aaron.

**Artistic Talents:** Fashion Designer/ Tailor, garment pattern maker, gallery curator, dancer and event planner.

### **Education:**

Franklin Delano Roosevelt –High School 1996

Stibys Sewing Academy- Vocational School. sewing and Tailoring training-1990

### **Languages:**

Spanish, English, and Garifuna

### **Job History:**

University of Kentucky Program for Archeological research, Field Technician -2000-2001

Joan Fabrics and Crafts, sales representative-2004-2005

Lexington Fashion Collaborative, Co-Founder Director-2009-2014

Images Modeling Agency, Instructor-2013-2017

Ingenia Club, Program Director-2016-2017

Lexington East/West end Afro-Fusion Dance Group, costume designer-2016-2017

Self Employed, dress maker: 1991-2017

### **Current Boards, memberships and organizations:**

National Association of Latino Arts and Culture Member

Eastern Kentucky University Merchandise and Apparel Program Advisory Board

Ingenia Club Program Director

Lexington Community Radio, talk show host

### **Gallery Exhibits and Runway Shows:**

903 Manchester Street Art Show, Lexington KY- 2007

Firebird Gallery, Lexington KY- 2008

Going Green for Fashion, Atlanta GA-2009

Gallery in Main Exhibit, Richmond KY-2009

Until the Violence Stops Kentucky Fashion Show, Lexington KY-2009

Future of Fashion Show, Lexington KY-2009, 2010, 2011, 2012

Virginia Fashion Week Fashion show-2009

Latin Fever Fashion Show, New York City NY-2009

Images Modeling Agency Annual Fashion show, Lexington KY 2010

Red Ribbon Ball Gala, Lexington KY-2010-2011

Holiday Design Show, Louisville KY-2010

The Orient Express Fashion Show-Louisville KY-2011

The Neighborhood Series Recycled Exhibit-Lexington KY-2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

Fur Free Fashion Show, Hollywood CA-2011

Hangar Bash Fashion Show, Lexington KY-2011

Latino Arts Blend Exhibit, Lexington KY-2011-2012  
It gets Better Project Fashion Show, Cincinnati OH-2011  
Fashion's Night Out-Lexington KY-2011  
Beautiful Minds Dyslexia benefit fashion show-Danville KY-2011  
Girls Night out –Lexington KY- 2011  
Future of Fashion Honduras-Tela Honduras-2012  
West-End benefit fashion show-Lexington KY-2012  
The Pasion of The Latin Art Exhibit-Lexington KY-2013, 2015  
KMAC Couture Recycled Show-Louisville KY-2013  
Cleveland Fashion Week-Cleveland OH-2013  
Carnegie Classic's The Great Gatsby-Lexington KY-2014  
Day of the Dead Exhibit-Lexington KY-2014  
Stitching Art Exhibit-Lexington KY-2014  
A night In Paris Fashion Show-Paris KY-2014  
4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade-Lexington KY-2014  
Holliday Fashion Installation-Lexington KY-2014  
Heart Full of Fun Living Arts and Science Center Fundraiser Gala-Lexington KY-2015  
Gallery Hop Fashion Affair-Lexington KY-2015  
LFC Sustainable Art Exhibit-Lexington KY-2015  
Les McCann School for the Arts Fundraiser-Lexington KY-2015  
Community Development Society Annual Conference –Lexington KY-2015  
Lexington Latino Film Festival Gallery Exhibit-Lexington KY-2015 & 2016  
Lexington Latino Festival-Lexington KY-2001 to 2016  
1950's Fashion Extravaganza-Lexington KY-2016  
Birds of Paradise Exhibit-Lexington KY-2016  
Soccer: The Universal Game Exhibit- Lexington KY, 2016  
HerSteria Exhibit-Lexington KY-2016  
The Passion of the Latin Art, Lyric Theatre, Lexington KY, 2017  
Latino Arts Blend, Lexington Central Library, Lexington KY, 2017  
Blossom 2018, Lexington KY, 2017

### **Awards and Recognitions:**

Latina Business Women of the year by the Latin Woman Day Organization 2005  
Scassi Inspired Design award by the Headley Whitney museum. 2008  
Going Green for Fashion Competition 3<sup>rd</sup> place 2009  
Design for Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin Competition 1<sup>st</sup> place -2009  
Louisville Fashion Network Holiday Design Challenge 1<sup>st</sup> place- 2010  
Kentucky Foundation for Women Grant Recipient 2011  
Fur free Fashion by Born free USA 3<sup>rd</sup> place-2011  
Women Leading Kentucky by Biz Lex Magazine 2011  
Coretta Scott King Young Entrepreneur of the year award 2013  
“She is Noble” International Award nominee 2015.

### **Community Work:**

Volunteer coordinator of the V-Day Latina Fashion Show 2008  
Former Board Director of the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice (Fair Trade Education)2007-2010  
Volunteer Instructor for the Bluegrass Literacy Sewing Project 2009  
Founder Coordinator of the Future of Fashion Show (2009, 2010, 2011and 2013)  
Founder of the Bluegrass Fashion House [www.bluegrassfashionhouse.com](http://www.bluegrassfashionhouse.com)  
Committee member of the Make Lexington a Fair Trade Town committee [www.fairtradelex.org](http://www.fairtradelex.org)  
Member of Mayor Jim Gray's Transition Team ( Quality of life Committee) 2011

Founder Director of the Lexington Fashion Collaborative [www.lexingtonfashion.org](http://www.lexingtonfashion.org)  
Lexington East end Kids Cafe benefit event.  
Transylvania University Fair Trade Week panelist 2008, 2009 and 2010.  
Eastern Kentucky University Fair Trade Colleges Conference Keynote Speaker  
Volunteer at Latitude Arts 2011-2013  
Georgetown College Jo Shoop Lecture in Honor of International Women's Day Keynote Speaker 2011  
Kentucky Summit on Diversity and Inclusion panelist 2011  
Cal State Poly University Speaker Series Keynote Speaker 2011  
Fair Trade Towns International Conference participant-Malmo Sweden 2011.  
Future of Fashion Honduras Organizer 2012  
Be Bold 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 speaker and fashion show coordinator.  
Coordinator of the Lexington Sustainable Education and Workforce Solutions, LEXSEWS.  
Keynote Speaker at the Bluegrass Community and Technical College Peace Talks series 2013, 2014 and 2015.  
Martin Luther King Jr. Kentucky State Commission  
Foundation for Latin@ American Culture and Arts Board Member  
Regular speaker at several classes at University of Kentucky on topics of Fair Trade, gender inequality, minority issues and local fashion movement.  
Governor's School for Entrepreneurs "What to wear" workshop coordinator (2015-2016)  
Birds of Paradise Gallery Exhibit Co-Curator, 2016.  
East-End North-End Afro-Latin Dance Group wardrobe designer.  
Attended Alternate Roots Reunion 2011-2016  
Les McCann School for the Arts Instructor  
Sisohpromatem Art Foundation, Inc. Instructor  
NERD SKUAD Mentor  
Lexington Community Radio-El Pulso Latino Radio host  
Casa de la Cultura Hispana de Lexington costume assistant and dancer, 2017

**References:**

**Tanya Torp**- Executive Director Step by Step, Inc.  
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