

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Etu Evans

PERSON

Evans, Etu , 1969-

Alternative Names: Evans, Etu , 1969-

Life Dates: February 2, 1969-

Place of Birth: Orangeburg, South Carolina

Residence: New York, NY (from ? to ?)

Occupations: Fashion Designer; Fashion Entrepreneur;

Biographical Note

Fashion designer and entrepreneur Etu Evans was born on February 2, 1969 in Orangeburg, South Carolina though he spent much of his youth with his family in Harlem and Queens, New York. His mother Rosa was an educator, who helped Evans overcome a learning disability and eventually excel in school. Evans started his first business, in flower arranging, at the age of six. By the time he was thirteen, he began showing interest in fashion and interior design. Evans attended South Carolina State University, where he graduated cum laude with a degree in social work in 1992.

Evans established the design company Etu Evans, LLC in 1993, focusing on jewelry and hats. However, he continued a career outside of fashion and in 1996, earned his M.S. degree in applied behavioral science from Columbia University, graduating with a 4.0 GPA. Evans moved to Europe, where he worked in Italy and France as a behavioral therapist. In a chance meeting on the streets of Paris, Evans met the publicist for Gucci, and decided to leave his job in order to focus on design.

The scope of Etu Evans, LLC has broadened to include accessories and, especially, shoes. Evans became known for his fashion forward footwear designs, which have been worn by celebrities including Tyra Banks, Halle Berry, Erykah Badu, Queen Latifah, Beyoncé Knowles, Danny Glover and Chris Tucker. His work has been featured at New York's Fashion Week and covered in a broad range of international fashion magazines.

In 1998, Evans founded the Solesville Foundation. This organization collects, repairs, and redistributes new and used shoes and is frequently cited for the effectiveness it demonstrated during the Hurricane Katrina disaster in New Orleans, Louisiana. Solesville also coordinates a youth AIDS walk and a shoe

repair apprenticeship program for underprivileged youth. Evans's philanthropic efforts have earned him the Burger King Everyday Heroes National Campaign Honor and the "Citizen of the Year" award from his fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and the National Association of Social Workers. Etu was also chosen by "Ebony" magazine as one of its "30 Leaders of the Future."

Etu Evans was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on August 30, 2007.

Related Entries

Evans, Rosa [CHILDOf]
Mother

Evans, Frederick [CHILDOf]
Father

Evans, Sr., Frederick D. [GRANDCHILDOf]
Paternal Grandfather

Evans, Queen Esther [GRANDCHILDOf]
Paternal Grandmother

Johnson, Willie Mae [GRANDCHILDOf]
Maternal Grandmother

Johnson, McKinley [GRANDCHILDOf]
Paternal Grandfather

Evans, Gregory L. [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Gibson, Ami R. [SIBLINGOf]
Sister

Evans, Raekwon Nesir []
Nephew

Gibson, Amia Rose []
Niece

Marshall EI [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1979]

Brookdale Elem [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1983]

Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1987]

Diploma

South Carolina State University [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1992]

B.A.

Columbia University [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1996]

M.S.

Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

[STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Columbia University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1993 to 1994]

Behavioral Therapist Supervisor

Self-employed [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1996 to 1997]

Private Behavioral Therapist

Institute of Youth Entrepreneurship [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1998 to 2000]

Assistant Director

Etu Evans, LLC. [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2000 to ?]

President and Founder

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity [MEMBEROF]
Chair

Solesville: The Etu Evans Foundation [MEMBEROF]
President

Purple Boot Initiative [MEMBEROF]
Founder

Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce [MEMBEROF]
Member

South Carolina State Museum