

Funklectic's Mistress Redefines Creative Style

By Meika Yates

In a day and age fueled by change, synergy is unavoidable. By combining two separate agents, a product can be something even more fantastic than it could ever be as two independent variables.

Take the Funklectic fashion line. *Funky* is defined as modern and stylish in an unconventional or striking way. *Eclectic* is defined as a derivation of ideas, style or taste from a broad and diverse range of sources.

By integrating the two definitions of style, Funklectic Mistress Heidi B has not only turned synergy into a fashionable art form, she has utilized synergy itself as a career form as well.

"My dream is coming true – my hobby is starting to pay some of my bills," she said. "It's great! When I'm not at my full-time job, I'm designing my own products from home and people are buying them!"

Heidi B describes Funklectic as "being made of combined elements from varying sources, characterized by unconventional modishness and originality."

"Funklectic incorporates my own style into the products I create," she said. "I aim to make stuff that no one else is making – I really like to think outside of the box."

While in college at the University of Denver where she currently resides, she initially developed her clothing and accessory line for her senior thesis. As a requirement in attaining her bachelor degree in Electronic Media Arts with a minor in Marketing, Heidi B had to put together a business and marketing plan. Rather than just going through the motions of completing another monotonous college project, she centered the majority of

the business on her real passion and interest – *fashion*.

Thus, GREEN Clothing, the first of Funklectic's four fashion lines, was created.

"I have always been an Earth-friendly person, so I decided that a line that only used recycled materials, including vintage clothing, would be best," she said.

"I pushed this idea far, even down to my busi-

ness cards that were printed on brown paper grocery bags, and my hand tags were made from laminate samples from Home Depot."

She completed her business and marketing plan, with the logo, business card and website design encompassing her EMAD degree. She also made twelve clothing samples for her line and built her own website. After a hectic senior year consisting of working two jobs, going to school full-time and working on her thesis, Heidi B was burnt out.

She dabbled in sewing a bit, making more products here and there during the months after graduation, but had a hard time getting inspired.

"The fashion industry is brutal. The first fashion show I did was awful and I really went through a time of discouragement, thinking that I wouldn't be able to go through with it," she said.

Believing in her talent and seeing her potential for success, Heidi B's boyfriend Marc encouraged her to continue using her creativity. He suggested that they establish a new, renovated studio for her in the house that they share.

Moving her workspace from the extra bedroom, where she shared an office with Marc, to the basement was exactly what Heidi B needed to get rejuvenated.

"I needed a space that was all my own – private so I could make a big mess if I needed to and it was ok. I finally have my own studio and it makes such a big difference," she said.

Stocked with bins full of various zippers, buttons, trims, countless fabric scraps and an endless collection of ties, the studio exemplifies what Heidi B calls the "collected chaos" that stokes her.

"I love it. My two dogs Barak and Kavi hang out in there with me, I listen to music and get so involved in my work that I forget to change the CD for days. I find myself daydreaming at my day job, engrossed in planning what I'm going to do in my studio when I get home."

Funklectic's current lines, Earpicks, Pursegasm, My Punk Rock Store and GREEN Clothing, are all reflections of Heidi B's innovative fashion vision.

GREEN Clothing still features recycled products. Heidi B modifies men's western shirts into stylish and comfortable skirts. Men's ties are transformed into headbands, bracelets, scarves, wallets and zipper pouches.



Heidi B



Scrabble Purse

"I'm always looking for unique patterns and interesting fabrics in the shirts and ties I use," she said.

"I can always find interesting patterns and textures at thrift shops. It's all stuff that you just can't find at the local fabric store."

Thriving in a studio armed with three sewing machines, including her grandmother's old Viking Husquvarna, she is also getting use of her growing power tool collection by mixing them into the creative process.

Grandmother's sewing machine and *Tool Time*: synergy at its finest.

"My tools are my new best friends. I think I enjoy it on one level because it is such a nice contrast to sewing," Heidi B said.

"On another level I feel *tough* and I get to get dirty. It's fun. Plus, all my guy friends get kind of jealous when I talk about working with my tools - and it's always fun to make the guys jealous."

Her new power tools help old vinyl records find new life as decorated or solid colored record cuff bracelets.

Earpicks, her best selling products, are made with carefully selected guitar picks and ornate accents such as beads and silver or gold chains - products that would make Fender and Dunlop proud.

Two years after a completed thesis and several successful fashion shows, Heidi B is in the process of expanding her clothing line and allowing herself more time to create new products.

"A lot of time, research and experimentation have to be invested when you are coming up with designs," she said.

"I'm slowly integrating new items and I want to give my booth fresh products for future shows."

Now a 3-time participant of Fashion Denver, and more recently a show in Chicago, Heidi B hopes to make her business more of her full-time job. Funklectic is growing so fast that she is moving her studio yet again, this time taking over the garage so that her power tools have plenty of room to get comfortable.

"The do-it-yourself culture in general is growing and expanding so quickly," she said. "It's seeping into more and more cities. The fashion market is competitive but huge. When you fall down you really have to get back up and be persistent. There are enough shoppers for everyone to share."

Heidi B says that what she enjoys the most about making her products is that she is bringing in income doing what she loves to do the most.

"I have to be excited about what I am making - I'm not interested in producing just for the sake of making a buck," she said.

"My priority isn't the money, it's being happy with what I'm doing with my time. Money doesn't equal happiness if you don't enjoy what you do, and I think it's so important to enjoy how you spend your time." Δ

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