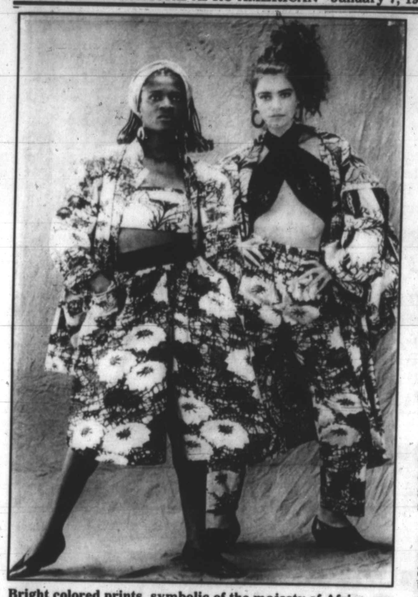
# Designing woman



Bright colored prints, symbolic of the majesty of Africa, are a trademark of Madikiza's designs.

By Olive Vassell
AFRO Staff Writer

WASHINGTON

What is the well-dressed fashion-conscious black woman in Europe wearing these days? Fashions by Nandipa would be a good guess.

South-African born Nandipa Madikiza is quietly making her mark on her adopted country of England. Her elegant designs are worn by the likes of Miriam Makeba and Hugh Maskela — designs which she says create a classic look for someone "proud to be black."

"I make allowances for all types of people, for people with fuller figures, so you don't have to worry about the shape or size of clothes," she said.

The elegance and originality of Nandipa's work have their roots in her childhood in Soweto. She remembers that the creative instinct was always present in her young life.

"I used to sell traditional dresses with my mother. She was very talented but the racial situation kept her back."

Although surrounded by such talent, Nandipa turned to sciences, studying Zoology and psychology at home, in West Germany and in Switzerland before going to Britain.

Then Nandipa says "the call came." No longer able to avoid the pull of the fashion world, she abandoned her studies, enrolled in a BA course in Fashion and Design at Manchester Polytechnic in the north of England and found a series of jobs to support herself.

There followed a string of prestigious apprenticeships, with designers like, David and Elizabeth Emmanuel, makers of Lady Diana's wedding dress, and a stint in fashion mecca, Italy.

And finally in 1986, Nandipa set up her own company turning out her designs — including a traditional African wedding dress—that retails for around $150 a suit.

These days many of Nandipa's designs are sold in Camden Market, a trend-setting outdoor market in London and she plans to open an outlet on the city's famous Oxford St., one of the busiest shopping areas in the world.

Meanwhile, Nandipa is continuing to increase her clientele across the seas and across the races, staging events like the recent New Year's Eve fashion show at the African Cultural Foundation in northwest DC.

For more information on how to obtain Nandipa fashions in the US contact Kwesi Nuby, 202-328-6911.

South African born designer Nandipa Madikiza (foreground) is shown with one of her award winning designs. Now based in London, she plans to begin importing to the U.S. in the near future.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## Black elected officials increase after '88 vote

Fifty-four persons elected to positions never held by blacks before are the reason for the 2.2 percent increase in the total number of black elected officials in 1987, according to a report by the Joint Center for Political Studies (JCPS).

Among the famous firsts were Kurt Schmoke, who became Baltimore, Md.'s first elected black mayor, Nadine Allen, a judge on the Hamilton County Municipal Court, who is the first black elected to countywide office in Ohio, and Freddie Pitcher, Jr., a district court judge, and the first black elected to a Louisiana parishwide office in this century.

The report indicated the total number of elected black officials swelled by 148 from 6,681 to 6,829.

Ironically, the south — which traditionally has been the most hesitant to racial change — had the largest number of black officials including Mississippi (578), Louisiana (524), Georgia (458), Alabama (442), North Carolina (428), South Carolina (352) and Arkansas (326).

Women have made great gains in obtaining elected office since 1975 when the JCPS first began compiling information on elected black women.

Since that time, their number has more than tripled from 530 in 1975 to 1,625 last year.

Of that number, over half of all elected black women serve here in the District and nine states — again with southern states swelling the ranks.

Illinois leads the list with 122, followed by the District of Columbia (105), Mississippi (103), California (94), Michigan (93), Alabama (88), New York (88), Georgia (84), South Carolina (80) and Louisiana (73).

Black officials, according to the report, made gains in each government level from the grassroots city council seats to Congress.

Congress boasts 23 black members of the House of Representatives — 22 voting members and one non-voting member (DC's Walter Fauntroy). Nearly 61 percent of that number were elected from majority-black congressional districts.

Only Ronald Dellums (D-CA) and Alan Wheat (D-MO) are from majority-white voting districts. The remaining congressmen were elected to office by districts comprised mainly of Hispanic and black voters.

Blacks have not held a seat in the Senate since 1978 when Edward Brooke (R-MA) vacated the office.

The report indicated the number of blacks holding county offices increased by 18 in number or 25 percent over 1987's total, now holding at 742. The South boasts 83 percent of this total.

Black municipal officials rose from 3,219 to 3,341 with councilmembers comprising the largest of the group with a total of 2,621 followed by 301 mayors.

Blacks also gained in the law enforcement arena with 689 black elected judicial officials and 49 law enforcement electees.

### KING CELEBRATION

In the Kennedy Center Concert Hall, the Choral Arts Society of Washington and the Howard University Choir and other choirs will perform Monday, Jan. 9 at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at the Kennedy Center Box Office.

### UPPER MARLBORO

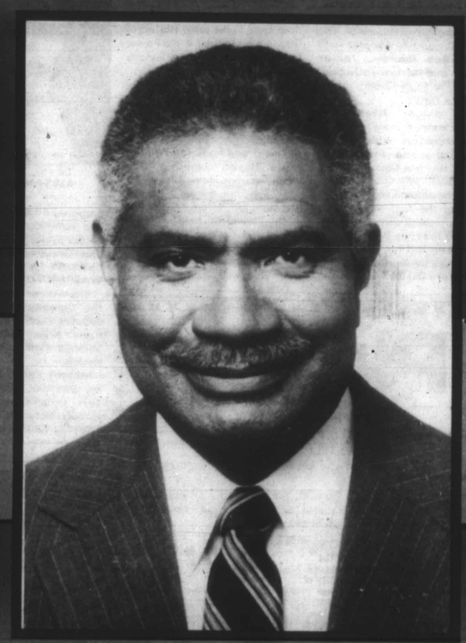
A Martin Luther King Film Festival for ages 7 and up will be held at the Upper Marlboro Community Center,5400 Marlboro Race Track Road 6 to 8 p .m. Jan. 12. For information call 627-2828

# Friday Plus

THE ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE FOR THE BALTIMORE AND WASHINGTON AFRO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

January 6, 1989

ROBERTA FLACK



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