

Young, Jewish fashionista has designs on Miami

Esther Nash, Miami's newest fashionable transplant is still quite young and already an accomplished fashion designer, model and successful boutique owner/operator. I recently attended her first Miami Beach fashion show at Liquid night-



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club and caught up with the busy young woman for coffee to find out how she got where she is today and what the future holds for the charming, yet determined child prodigy.

CF: Where were you brought up?

EN: I was born and raised in New York, in Brooklyn. My mom owned the Landmark Pub in Park Slope and I attended the Art and Design High School (Calvin Klein's alma mater) for gifted students. After high school I was accepted to PITT (Fashion Institute of Technology) for fashion design, which I attend part-time.

CF: How did you know you wanted to be a fashion designer?

EN: I decided at a very young age that I wanted to dedicate my life to making everyone else look beautiful. It's a lot of work (she laughs) but it's worth it. It's really great to see people in your creation. They are like walking artwork.

CF: How would you describe your fashions? Who do you design for?

EN: I design resort, swim, club and rock star gear for girls like me. The petite, athletic, millennial socialite divas and fashionistas of today and tomorrow. My motto is, be seen and be remembered, sparkle and shine like the superstar that you are. I look at clothes as jewels that adorn your body. Also, I design for girls on the go, all the clothing unsnaps or unzips on the side. It's fast and easy.

CF: Who have been your influences?

EN: My mom has a real flair for style. She's an artist and she

has amazing taste.

CF: What about other designers?

EN: No. But when I was younger I used to shop at Pat Fields and Betsy Johnson because their clothes are really fun and out of the box.

CF: Your designs are bit risqué. How does your mother feel about you wearing your own fashions?

EN: My mom is my biggest supporter. Ever since I was little, I could always wear whatever I wanted.

CF: Where would you like this to lead you?

EN: I would like to be known as a world-famous resort wear designer. When you're on vacation — Esther Nash; when you're on the beach — Esther Nash. When you're going clubbing — Esther Nash.

CF: You opened your first boutique at the age of 18. That's amazing. How did you do it?

EN: Yeah! (Esther laughs) I did all the carpentry, painting and design of the store myself. I had no budget. I funded the store by selling jewelry outside my mother's pub and waitressing. Also, I got an acting job on Sesame Street and I did some hair commercials. So I saved up all that money to open Baby-Doll, which offers vintage/retro wear.

CF: You've achieved quite a bit by the tender age of 22.

EN: I don't want to be lazy. I don't want to look back and regret anything. I want to try for everything. I try to shoot for the stars and above and keep on running.

CF: Have you been working on any projects recently?

EN: I have some editorial coming out in Seventeen and Maxim magazines, and are you ready? This could be a little shocking (I'm ready, I nod) — I recently designed a few pieces for Playboy T.V.

CF: That's fabulous! What about locally? Any thoughts about opening a store in Miami?

EN: I'm not sure yet. I've only been in Miami since January, so I want to check things out first, but two local stores carry my designs, The Mosh Pitt at 1417 Washington Ave., and Joey Rolone at 1360 Wash-



FASHIONABLY EARLY: Designer Esteban Cortazar, 17, debuted CORTAZAR, a collection of flirty and feminine evening wear designs, at the Shore Club hotel on March 30.

ington Ave., both in Miami Beach.

CF: What would surprise people about you?

EN: I'm dyslexic. I'm ambidextrous. I don't smoke. I don't drink or do drugs. And I'm a virgin. People assume that because of the way I dress, I must be pretty wild. But I'm picky. It's my body, it's my life. Why do I have to rush?

CF: Are you currently seeing someone special?

EN: No, I'm single and



YOUNG & RESTLESS: Designer Esther Nash wears her "Egyptian Dream" dress. The Jewish fashionista recently held her first Miami Beach fashion show at Liquid night club.

looking for my knight in shining armor — but he has to be Jewish.

These days, the young and the fabulous seem to be getting younger and younger. On March 30, 17-year old Esteban Cortazar debuted CORTAZAR, a collection of flirty and feminine evening wear designs, at the Shore Club hotel. The couture and ready-to-wear satin

dresses were embellished with Swarovsky crystal and ostrich feathers, and displayed on mannequins encased in Plexiglas boxes suspended over the lily ponds in the hotel's orchard. The star-studded crowd of 1,000 included recording artist Janet Jackson, artist Romero Britto, photographer Iran Issa-Khan and socialite Christina Getty.

