

Flair TV: New Media Mavens

By Cicely Teal

Their moniker is the Toffee Twins. Born and reared in Chicago, Chundria, 27, and Nekia Nichelle, 27, have subsequently created and produced Chicago-based Flair TV to be the definitive platform for anyone who wants to showcase their artistic faculty. They met in 2007 through a mutual friend, had a meeting in Starbucks, and discovered an instant chemistry. Flair TV is centered on covering premier events, places and things around Chicago.

Their moniker would suggest that they're biological sisters, although they are not, they have a shared passion, friendship and bond that parallels. "We have a natural chemistry. We love to laugh and have fun. We balance each other," Nekia Nichelle says. Collectively, they realized that their dreams could be fulfilled.

Recently, the ladies covered the "My Black Is Beautiful" event at the UIC forum in Chicago on May 30. As a testament to Flair TV's rising success, they were the only media outlet at the event to parlay an interview with Queen Latifah. They also interviewed Food Network stars Patrick and Gina Neely at their book signing at Borders in downtown Chicago. The ladies of Flair TV took time out of their busy schedule to talk to GlossMagazineOnline about the obstacles, successes and their unwavering determination to take Flair TV to the next level.

GlossMagazineOnline: What was the spark behind creating a platform for local artists? Often times as companies grow and expand, local talent kind of shifts to the backburner. How does Flair TV intend to maintain that connection to local artists throughout the company's growth?

Chundria: Chicago (like other cities) is sardine-packed with talented people. Unfortunately, there are minimal TV programs that give those acts a voice to express themselves. Nearly all entertainment shows cater to commercial talent only. Still, there are local programs that target local artists only. Where is the happy medium? The last thing we want to do is to push the local talent to the back burner. Instead, we plan to motivate local artists to be their very best. Flair TV was created for the talented elite, which is the best of the best. However, being the best requires hard work and dedication to your craft. We target local artists working diligently toward success.

GMO: What strides have you guys made within the company?

Nekia Nichelle: We have developed a better business sense. We have figured out effective strategies to turn a great show idea into an innovative business. While we've always been a resource for local talent to showcase their skills, we've extended that opportunity to celebrity clients as well. We have been very successful at branding the Flair TV name, creating a positive rapport among Chicago's entertainment scene. It's even better, that we've crossed the map spreading the name amongst major cities including New York and L.A.

GMO: With new media being the way in which people are networking and acquiring information, how is Flair TV taking advantage of new media, and how do you think it will help build the company?

Chundria: Flair TV takes pride in keeping up with the Joneses'. We aggressively take advantage of any options in media to network and acquire information. The Social Scene has given birth to portals like Twitter, Facebook, Myspace and Blogger. We use these methods to communicate with our viewers, expand our contact list, and research talent. The viral approach to communication allows us to reach people across the nation, thus branding our name and show in a larger market.

GMO: What do you guys think of the state of the entertainment industry right now? How can Flair TV contribute to the entertainment platform?

Nekia Nichelle: (Laughing) We agree with Barack: It's time for change! And that applies to the entertainment industry as well. The scene habitually features contagious trends in ridiculous media. Yes, we said it...cat fights, reality show sequels, airing the dirty laundry of celebrities, and an overfeeding of news and gossip that's already out. Bottom line, the entertainment scene "entertains" us with a lot of negativity. With the state of the economy and the continual jargon found

when flipping through the channels, it's safe to say there's a need for a change of scenery. That leaves us with a small percentage of entertainment that doesn't cause a substantial amount of embarrassment for the subject or the viewer (laughing). Here's where we come in to give the average viewer a brighter side to their favorite people and places and those that one day will be.

Chundria and Nekia Nichelle both have a scholastic background in the arts and vast experience in the entertainment arena. Chundria has a bachelor's degree in television and directing from Columbia College. Nekia Michelle scouted talent for two Chicago agencies and worked with Nikki Woods, author and former WGCI radio personality. Nichelle managed some musicians and Chundria produced the shows. Their ultimate goal would be to transition their business nationally, but they want to never forget where they came from. "We want Flair TV to be an instrumental medium for local Chicagoans who have artistic aptitude," Nichelle said.

What makes Chundria and Nekia Nichelle stand out from their counterparts is that they created a "duo-style" of interviewing which has become their niche. "We feed off of each other's chemistry," Chundria said.

GMO: What was the concept of "duo" hosting?

Chundria: In the history of traditional broadcasting, you've seen one host and its subject during an interview. In the coming of ages, we've seen multiple hosts on shows much like "The View." Our concept is deeper than two people interviewing the subject. Instead, the combination of Chundria and Nekia Nichelle is fun and energetic. The duo, known as The Toffee Twins, create an environment for its guests to smile and its viewers to feel closer to them than ever.

GMO: Who have been some important contacts for you?

Nekia Nichelle: Every one of our guests has been a pleasure to work with. Local artists are always encouraging to meet, because we understand the challenges as entrepreneurs introducing a product and a name to the world. The entertainment business is in love with commercial talent, while remaining more critical of local talent. However, the privilege to give them a spotlight to the world is a fantastic.

GMO: Advice for future new media entrepreneurs?

Chundria: We will forever encourage media entrepreneurs to never take no for an answer. They must remember that there are always possibilities in dreaming big. Hard work and dedication make those dreams turn into realities. One should always remain confident that doors will be closed and locked, but there are ALWAYS ways to get that key. Allow your passion for the industry to motivate and encourage you to press forward.

Their hard work and dedication is earning them respect and credibility in the industry. They've interviewed actress Tasha Smith, the phenomenal Angela Basset, comedian Sheryl Underwood, R & B crooner Tank, actress Tia Mowry of "Sister, Sister" and "The Game," Mr. "Green Mile" Michael Clark Duncan and a slew of others. They are not slowing down amidst their growing reputation. Their motto is "Don't discredit your dreams" and after being told "no" more times than many, Chundria and Nekia Nichelle continue to press forward with this venture.

Flair TV airs bi-weekly on South Suburban channel 19 at 6:30 p.m. and Chicago's channel 25 at 9 p.m.

Chundria and Nekia Nichelle want to know: "What's your flair?"

For more information on Chundria and Nekia Nichelle, visit:

- www.whatsyourflair.com
- www.flairtv.blogspot.com
- www.twitter.com/flairtv

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