

Legislation Text

File #: 220815, Version: 0

Recognizing and honoring MISKEEN ORIGINALS® and its co-founders for over 20 years of producing wearable works of art during Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week 2022.

WHEREAS, MISKEEN ORIGINALS® was officially founded on October 24, 1999, by Ibn Anderson, Bariq Cobbs, Mark Allen, and Kenya Abdul-Hadi; and

WHEREAS, Ibn "The Artrepreneur" Anderson's art and design career has been realized thru entrepreneurship intently influenced by art culture. Throughout the 90's Ibn cofounded 3 art-based apparel brands, with each one of them having an impact on Hip-Hop culture. Ibn went on to work for Sean "P Diddy" Combs at Sean John where he assisted in the design of its most highly received collections and their televised runway show for New York Fashion Week, which included original art-based denim and t-shirts; and

WHEREAS, Ibn left Sean John and co-founded MISKEEN ORIGINALS®, a national clothing brand whose claim to fame was "one of one" wearable art t-shirts. After establishing wearable art for the masses from the U.S. to Japan, in 2005 he then moved on to create Meezan:artcouture which he design directed until 2010. Meezan:artcouture encompassed fashion, design, abstract art, and had its own art gallery, a flagship store and design studio in his hometown, Philadelphia. During that time, he opened two retail stores in Philadelphia under the brand name Kamouflage where he ran a semi-vertical design-based concept store that embraced his love and passion for art, design, and fashion; and

WHEREAS, Today he is known as "The Artrepreneur" because of his unique journey in the art and fashion worlds. He is currently the President and owner of Artistic Industries LLC, an art and design firm that operates his latest "wearable art" brand, Artifak, while offering art, design, and branding services for a myriad of clients from Pyramid Studios in the Brewerytown section of Philadelphia. For over a decade, Ibn has given back to the community through his collaborations with Peace + Love Worldwide, a non-profit organization that markets and raises awareness for non-violence. In 2016, Ibn completed his first solo show for a global art exhibit to raise awareness for peace and non-violence entitled "The Art Of Peace+Love World Tour" in Philadelphia with the intent of visiting cities around the world to spread the message of Peace and Love via his artwork; and

WHEREAS, In 2020, Ibn and his business partners reacquired their trademark for MISKEEN ORIGINALS®, and as of 2022, have soft launched Miskeen once again in their hometown of Philadelphia. Ibn plans to take Miskeen worldwide once again, along with his partners, making their lifelong mission of making art and fashion synonymous, a reality for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Bariq Cobbs is Co-Founder of multiple apparel and design companies, including Tribe Vibe, Funky Roots, MISKEEN ORIGINALS®, and Meezan:Artcouture, all of which collectively span over 30 years of fusing art and fashion. As a child, Bariq knew art would be central to his life. Some of his earliest memories are of drawing, painting, and competing with his siblings to make the best sketches. He drew inspiration from comics, graffiti, and modern art, and later studied Animation and Film at the University of the Arts. His paintings have appeared in feature films and have been exhibited at the African American Museum in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Mark Allen, a graduate of Kutztown University with a Bachelor's degree in Accounting, has over 20 years of experience in the field of accounting and finance. Mark began working for the City of Philadelphia as an auditor for the Office of the City Controller. After this, Mark began working as a business manager for Universal Companies, and within the span of three years, he went from Business Manager to the Vice President of Finance. After working in the private sector, Mark's desire to serve the community led him to join Southwest Leadership Academy Charter School as its Chief Financial Officer; and

WHEREAS, Kenya Abdul-Hadi grew up in the Germantown section of Philadelphia, and after earning a degree from Howard University, he conceptualized and launched several Philadelphia based brands, including Tribe Vibe, Enduro, MISKEEN ORIGINALS®, Meezan:Artcouture, and Kamouflage. While operating Kamouflage, Kenya ventured into the beginnings of an integral part of his business future by co-founding Search+Rescue. He would develop his already sharp eye for beautifully designed furniture, bespoke items of art, and home accessories at this time. This would eventually culminate in his latest co-creation, The Modern Republic, a full-service design showroom providing Mid-Century Modern, Art Deco, Bauhaus, and Post-Modern Furniture, lighting, rugs, accessories, and artwork for residential and commercial use; and

WHEREAS, In its first few years, MISKEEN ORIGINALS® was sold locally, direct to customers around Philadelphia, and in the tri-state area. Three years later, MISKEEN® would make its way into one of the most popular retail stores in Philadelphia, and the first order of 24 tees sold out immediately. A second, then third order was placed, each one doubling in size, and they sold down to the piece each time! This was without celebrity endorsements, magazine ads, or product placements, only pure artistic talent creating a quality product, which connected with the customers; and

WHEREAS, Other local retailers quickly started to bring MISKEEN ORIGINALS® into their stores, as Philadelphians fell in love with their unique "One of One" wearable art t-shirts, which had crowds clamoring for more. MISKEEN ORIGINALS® started to become so popular it began to spread beyond the tri-state area, going up and down the eastern seaboard all the way to the west coast and everywhere in between; and

WHEREAS, As the brand rapidly grew, more artists wanted to be part of the creative energy MISKEEN ORIGINALS® was putting into the streets. They began to hire and train young, talented artists from the City in the MISKEEN ORIGINALS® style and art culture. Some of these artists are still actively pursuing successful careers in art, design, apparel, and other creative industries and having their own cultural impact from their training at MISKEEN ORIGINALS®; and

WHEREAS, MISKEEN ORIGINALS® is true to its name, "Originals", and its slogan "WHERE ART MEETS FASHION." They take pride in designing ever changing works of wearable art, which are "ONE OF ONE," for no two garments are alike. They have also coined a term describing their movement - "HIP-POP-ART™." Having collectively lived and participated in every facet of Hip-Hop since its foundation, from B-boy dancing to rapping to graffiti art, all of these elements, combined with popular culture and art as they see it, are what embodies the MISKEEN ORIGINALS® movement; and

WHEREAS, Sought after by athletes, movie stars, and Hip-Hop superstars alike, the unique shirts of MISKEEN ORIGINALS® have been worn by Jay-Z, LeBron James, Diddy, Kevin Hart, 50 Cent, Swizz Beats, Bernard Hopkins, Chris Brown, and so many more; and

WHEREAS, In 2020, "TEAM MISKEEN" - which now consists of Ibn Anderson (President & Creative Director), Kenya Abdul-Hadi (Vice President & Strategic Manager Of Design), and Bariq Cobbs (Art Director)

- reacquired the MISKEEN ORIGINALS® trademark after having to sell it over 15 years ago. While co-founder Mark Allen does not have an official capacity with MISKEEN ORIGINALS®, he is still an integral part of what they do as an advisor; and

WHEREAS, Since the spring of 2021, they have strategically planned the relaunch of MISKEEN ORIGINALS® in this new, but familiar, environment, with a new breed of customers raised totally in the digital age. They believe in the intersection of the old and new, so they seek to balance the two in the reintroduction of MISKEEN ORIGINALS®; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we recognize and honor MISKEEN ORIGINALS® and its co-founders for over 20 years of contribution to art and fashion in Philadelphia during Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week 2022.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to MISKEEN ORIGINALS® representatives as evidence of the sincere sentiments and support of this legislative body.