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Denise Pendleton

TBTNEWS FILM

Finding Tom Burrell

At the tender age of 15, Denise Pendleton landed her first job on Soul Train, as an assistant to the Producer. Since then, she has acquired a well-deserved reputation as a consummate professional in virtually every aspect of the entertainment business.

A Motown alumnus, Denise's ten years with that legendary company allowed her to accumulate early hands-on experience and expertise as a Film and Television Producer, Artist Management, Tour Coordinator, and Image Consultant. Denise subsequently oversaw the concert tours, for such artist as El Debarge, Jennifer Holiday, Deniece Williams, The Temptations, and Luther Vandross.
In addition to her duties at Motown, she served as a talent consultant for **Burrell Advertising Agency**. She booked and negotiated celebrity talent services and fees for television radio and campaigns. She also produced promotional events for clients at Burrell including Sprite, Vibe MC Battle, Quaker Oats, Gospel Fest, Coca-Cola, and *Soul Train 'Lady of Soul’*.

By 2007 she started her own production company **DeNice Productions, Inc.**, and currently is the president of **Baby Boomers Unite, Inc.**, a special events and media arts mentoring program in California. **BBUnite** secured a grant to produce a documentary film for PBS entitled **Burrell: Advertising Revolution**, which marks Denise’s debut as a documentary filmmaker. The show airs on June 28 on WTTW channel 11 at 9:30 p.m., with a private screening in Chicago on Tuesday, June 26.

**TBTNEWS: What inspired you to profile Mr. Thomas Burrell?**

**Denise Pendleton:** After I served as a segment producer for the **Burrell 25th Anniversary** event in 1996, I made a determination I would love to tell the Burrell story. I actually thought by the time I got the opportunity to tell (even a short story) I would be standing in a long line. About 3 years ago, I took Mr. Burrell out to lunch and I told him I was frustrated that his story was buried in black media history, specifically television... and I wanted to do something. He said ok. I simply said IF I find some money, I will let him know.......The light bulb was lit!

I believe traditional ‘Hollywood’ is missing out on an incredible story. Burrell made it possible for so many early black 70s and 80s television shows from black sitcoms, dramas to *Soul Train* to be media hits. Burrell advertising showed the world the reality of Black people through positive realism. Burrell delivered the sales and the media research based on the power of Black consumers. That data opened the doors to creators such as **Norman Lear** to sell concepts to the networks and bring advertisers to the table.

**TBTNEWS: What do you expect the millions of audience members either from PBS or those who attend the screenings to walk away with after seeing the film?**

**Denise Pendleton:** Feeling Proud. My favorite quote is "People will forget what they see or what you say, but they will never forget how you made them feel." This is a moment of pride with education and historic value for all generations. This whole globalization movement and push for diversity in advertising (in my opinion) we’re being 'merged' into this mix, where we can’t see our unique Blackness. Tom says it best.... Black People are not Dark Skinned White People.

I miss seeing a black father with his black child in a commercial. This is a very unique story of black history, black pride, black power......to learn the power we have as black consumers, from a powerful man (a genius) that recognized the need for us to see ourselves as positive proud people.

**TBTNEWS: How excited are to finally be presenting this incredible work on an amazing pioneer?**
Denise Pendleton: I'm in a state of shock, I finally did it, I fulfilled one of my dreams. I could not have done it, without .... first the blessing of Mr. Burrell. he trusted me without any pre-approvals. I hired my best friend and mentor Anna Morris, a former copywriter and COO at Burrell as my consultant. Also, I hired Sharon Kimbrough, co-producer, and Brenda Blonski, writer and also former Burrell creatives. Finally my director and editor Phil Lee and Darryl Manuel, who helped shape my vision and put the 'sauce' in the editing.

TBTNEWS: Thanks to your team consisting of Joseph Sanchez from Frontline Media Management for making this interview opportunity possible. Good luck and congratulations. See you at the premiere screening. For more details, contact Joe at 312-550-1056 or JosephSanchez@FrontlineMedia.net.

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C.E.O. EXCHANGE

Will Courage Make You a Great Leader?

Contributing Correspondent: Ted Santos

If you lack courage, does it mean you will never be a great leader? In the US, it appears that common sense says courage is a profound part of being a great leader. As a result, aspiring leaders go about their day to demonstrate their courage to the world. However, when you look at many of the most effective leaders, perhaps it is not courage that informs us of their greatness.

What is Courage? One definition says it is the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc. without fear. Bravery is often synonymous with courage. Another definition says: to have the courage of one's convictions, to act in accordance with one's beliefs, especially in spite of criticism.

On the surface, this sounds like a complete logical formula for leadership. It is possible for a person to spend their day seeking ways to face difficulty, danger, and pain in a way that others believe they are qualified to be the leader. Or they think they