

NINIMOMO CREATIONS

NIK MORONESE

MARIE LEBRETON

We started NiniMomo Creations in late summer of 1996 as co-owners and designers who specialize in these one-of-a-kind BARBIE® doll designs (not in any way affiliated with Mattel). Our unusual and eclectic collections reflect our strongly held belief in originality, quality and creativity. Representing culture and regionally-inspired dress from across the United States and around the world, we believe that our dolls are unlike any other designer BARBIE® dolls. Each of our dolls features carefully hand-crafted details, which are not limited to exquisitely beaded bodices, painstakingly hand-sewn gowns, luxuriously appointed evening caps, and elegant wraps.

I'm Nik Moronese and my formal education consists of a BFA from Hofstra University (Long Island, NY) with a concentration in photography. For years I worked as a photographer in the New York fashion industry. Some of my fashion photography has been published nationwide, and I have freelanced for such agencies as Wilhelmina, Elite, Click and Storm. My initial interest and idea for NiniMomo Creations probably started as a combination of my fashion photography, my work with pageants, and my mother's avid interest in BARBIE® doll collecting. While working as a photographer, I also coached young women for the Miss New York and Miss New Jersey pageants, both subsidiaries of Miss Universe, Inc. now owned by Donald Trump. With experience in the fashion and pageant industries, I feel I bring a special talent to the company I founded with Marie LeBreton, a longtime friend. Initially Marie and I came together when I coached her for the 1992 Miss New York Pageant Marie wore a gown of her own handiwork.

I'm Marie LeBreton and unlike Nik my interest and route to doll design was less direct; you could call Nik's background a bit more traditional. I earned both a BA and MA from Hofstra in biology and health care administration, but I had a love of sewing which I always cultivated as a hobby one encouraged by my mother. At a very young age my mother instructed me on the sewing machine and taught me how to work from patterns we designed together. I quickly became involved in making clothing for myself, family, and friends. As a result I think my greatest contribution to the company is my sewing talents and skills with fabrics. Before collaborating with Nik on NiniMomo

Creations, my professional career focused on nonprofit work for a New York AIDS organization where I coordinated client services. Desiring more time to exercise my creative skills, I joined with Nik to pursue doll craft and design full time.



Creations by Nik Moronese & Marie LeBreton



1997 Miss Sierra Leone

In our Long Island doll studio, the original Mattel BARBIE® doll undergoes a "toe-to-crown" transformation characterized by dramatically rooting eyelashes, complete facial makeover, and various hair styles which include elegant upsweeps, pileups, braids, and heat perms. In addition to full clothing and facial revision, each doll is accompanied by carefully crafted headpieces, earrings, necklaces, and bracelets.

1997 Miss Sierra Leone.

See front cover for 1997 Hispanic Candi® as Miss Dominican Republic



1997 Miss Burma/1997 Miss Brazil

which accentuate each doll's unique evening ensemble. We pride ourselves on creating gowns that are not only elegant and sophisticated, but are practical in the sense that it would be no surprise to see some of these designs on Milan's runways or parading across the pageant stage. Many people ask us if these dolls are replicas of current or past Miss USA and Universe titleholders. The truth is sometimes we get our ideas from some of the more extravagant gowns, as well as their national costumes, however we never exactly replicate the gowns. Of course, NiniMomo has begun a new tradition. Last February we presented our very first look alike doll to Brook Lee, the 1997 Miss USA. We designed the

gown and the doll as Brook had looked at the National Pageant. She was absolutely floored, to say the least. As she said, "I can't believe you have immortalized me in plastic!" She was so excited it gave us the green light to continue to present each Miss USA and Miss Universe a look-alike doll!

Currently we offer two collections for each calendar year: the National Pageant Collection and the International Pageant Collection. The 1997 International Pageant Collection, our second international collection, features over 150 pageant dolls from around the globe. From the Middle East to South America, from Asia to Africa, these dolls are one-of-a-kind creations made only once a year. The 1996 and 1997 limited-edition collections, along with subsequent pageant collections, will never repeat the same gown or overall design concept. Dolls purchased from NiniMomo will never be repeated and no two dolls look alike. We feel this is a very special opportunity for serious collectors to acquire dolls knowing they have invested in something that absolutely no one else can possess.

For us, 1997 was a special year because it marked the debut of a new series the 1997 National Pageant Collection. These American pageant contestants hail from the fifty states and the District of Columbia. It was an exciting year for other reasons as well. From Maine to Washington, from Hawaii to Florida, our national dolls are one-of-a-kind creations produced in a limited number each year. Just like our international dolls, the national collection will never repeat the same gown or overall design concept twice.

NiniMomo has a special commitment to using only the finest in natural and synthetic materials for the doll wardrobes. Luckily we are only a tunnel away from the best shopping on the planet, NYC! Fabric choices range from metallic brocades, velvet lamés, Italian satins, Japanese silks, charmeuse, crystalline chiffon, vintage and imported textiles. We pride ourselves on searching out some of Manhattan's highest quality fabric importers and manufacturers to place these dolls on the cutting edge of gown design. In addition to unusual fabric choices, authentic and faux furs selectively complement some of our dolls, otherwise accompanied by tulle petticoats, marabou boas, mesh bodysuits, capes and coats. Many of these beauties don full-length dress gloves, coordinated to accent their evening ensembles.

Our gown styles range from graceful ball gowns to form-fitting mermaid-style dresses to two-piece evening ensembles custom cut to various styles which may include strapless, sweetheart, halter, sleeveless or off-the-shoulder designs. Some gowns include long flowing trains or full haute-couture bustles. Many of the dolls are outfitted in coordinated panty hose. Dresses are fully lined and ball gowns are complete with matching tulle petticoats. Along with NiniMomo's signature gowns are designs inspired by some of the world's most celebrated designers. Many times we will start with a piece of fabric, building the design from discussions about its possibilities. Sometimes the fabric itself will inspire us to create a fashion revolving around the richness of a fabric's color or texture. Other times, gowns are crafted from a design sketch and modifications are made as work progresses. Although some dolls may share the same cut or style, each individual form is always unique due to the many finishing steps that NiniMomo demands.

Genuine Swarovski rhinestone crystal rondelles, balls and sequins, Czech crystal beads, metallic filigree, multicolor glass, and synthetic beads typify the hand-fashioned jewel work which adorns each doll. These materials work in concert to make button and drop earrings, elegant chokers,

NiniMomo Creations
Nik Moronese/Marie
LeBreton
5 Williams Blvd.
Suite 2G
Lake Grove, NY 11755
ninimomo@msn.com
www.ninimomo.com

pendants and drop necklaces, as well as simple beaded bracelets. Some dolls are crowned with matching headpieces accented with sequins, bugle beads, and rhinestones.

Dolls' hair, of various lengths and some with highlights and tints, is styled and shaped through multi-step processes which include heat permanents, braiding and weaving. Styles may include tightly pulled back hair enmeshed in a snood, braided or twisted, pile-ups, and sometimes just long, curly and natural, depending on what best suits a particular evening ensemble.

Each NiniMomo doll comes complete with its own sash, designating its country or state, a signature pageant stand labeled with country/state, national/state flag and NiniMomo logo. Each unit is packaged in a paperboard, window-view box containing the doll, stand, rough fashion illustration, and swatches of the fabric chosen to execute the final design.

NiniMomo's ads may be found in issues of *Miller's* and many other trade publications. Customers will find the most up-to-date information on our collections in the latest issues of these magazines and publications. Also, if you have access, we can be reached on the Web. For a modest charge we are also happy to provide customers will full-color brochures cataloguing our most recent releases.

Here's a helpful hint from us. Avoid cheapening your work by using a glue gun instead of a needle and thread. Our first few dolls at the very, very beginning were, sad to say, victims of the glue gun! We wised up fast and realized there are not shortcuts to class, elegance and creativity.



1997 Nationals, Miss Connecticut and Miss New Mexico.



1997 International Pageant Collection Miss Lebanon, Qatar and Russia.

See front cover (top right) for Hispanic Candi® as Miss Dominican Republic 1997.