



RA'MON-LAWRENCE COLEMAN | FASHION DESIGNER

“I plan on being a shining star.”

Ra'mon-Lawrence Coleman was supposed to be a brain surgeon. At 15, he graduated from high school in Chicago and headed to the University of Iowa on a full-ride scholarship to study biology, pre-med. “I started to ask myself, ‘Is this something I would really be passionate about?’” he recalls. “I couldn’t say yes.”

It turned out Coleman’s needle and thread were meant for dresses, not brains. He enrolled in the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and studied performing arts and fashion design. Afterward, he bounced around London, Paris and Milan, designing for Gary Graham, Saga Industries and the International Fur Trade Federation. Under Graham, he created jeans and a bustier that Britney Spears wore on the cover of her *Britney* album. “I don’t really tell people about that,” he laughs.

Coleman came to Minneapolis in 2004 to be an associate designer for Target’s Mossimo label. He describes the experience as “a very long training course” that prepared him to launch his label, ra'mon-lawrence. After participating in “Voltage: Fashion Amplified” in 2007, he unveiled his Spring 2008 line in a solo show, “Eluded Love,” at Soo Visual Arts Center, a move few local designers have attempted. The show featured 52 looks with muted mauves and crèmes, sculptural shapes and safari-esque menswear.

“Wearable,” “cubist-inspired” and “art-as-clothing” are phrases Coleman throws out when describing his new line, which he plans to reveal this spring. We won’t have to wait that long, however, to see his freshest creations: In September, Coleman left Target to compete on season six of a certain reality show that may or may not air this month on Bravo or Lifetime (a lawsuit was pending at press time). In the meantime, Coleman says he could see himself staying in Minneapolis for a while, but wants to keep his options open. “My fan base is growing more and more here every day as a designer. Why run away from that?” he says. “The future is definitely bright, and I plan on being a shining star.” —Mary O’Regan