

# Fashionista is in our midst

>> North Coast fashion student's designs are ready to hit the streets

## SHANNON HOPKINS

A talented young lady in her own right, Julia Cronje - daughter of well-known architect Llewellyn Cronje - has just qualified as a fashion designer and is now open for business.

Cronje completed her Btech diploma in fashion at Durban University of Technology (DUT) and is already lecturing first-year students a few times a week at this institution.

Keeping it in the family, Cronje plans to take on private clothing-design work (in partnership with her mom) and for the duo to

eventually have their own studio.

"I am in the transition phase between student and working woman and we are planning to open a proper studio in Ballito soon. I am just starting out and it's really exciting," she said.

The young designer said she pushed herself to achieve as much as possible and was always looking for the next challenge. This attitude has already taken her quite far in life.

She has taken part in many design competitions including the Durban July, at which she took home first and second-best hat last year. Her designs for the DUT end-of-year showcase in 2012 were

highly commended, and will soon appear in Grazia magazine.

Staying in fashion, Cronje also used to model for Models International, but decided to focus on her design work instead.

She is now concentrating on making wearable, classic items of clothing for real women.

"It's about interpreting fashion trends to suit the everyday woman. My clothing will be reasonably-priced, of the best quality and value for money," she said.

She would mostly create dresses for that special occasion - evening and wedding gowns - as classy, timeless, simple and chic designs were her true inspiration.

"Don't over-think style," is this young designer's fashion tip.

"You don't even need to have that many clothes in your cupboard. I personally have a very small but carefully picked wardrobe," she said.

>> Cronje will have a small collection of dresses at local boutiques, but will do mostly one on one work.

