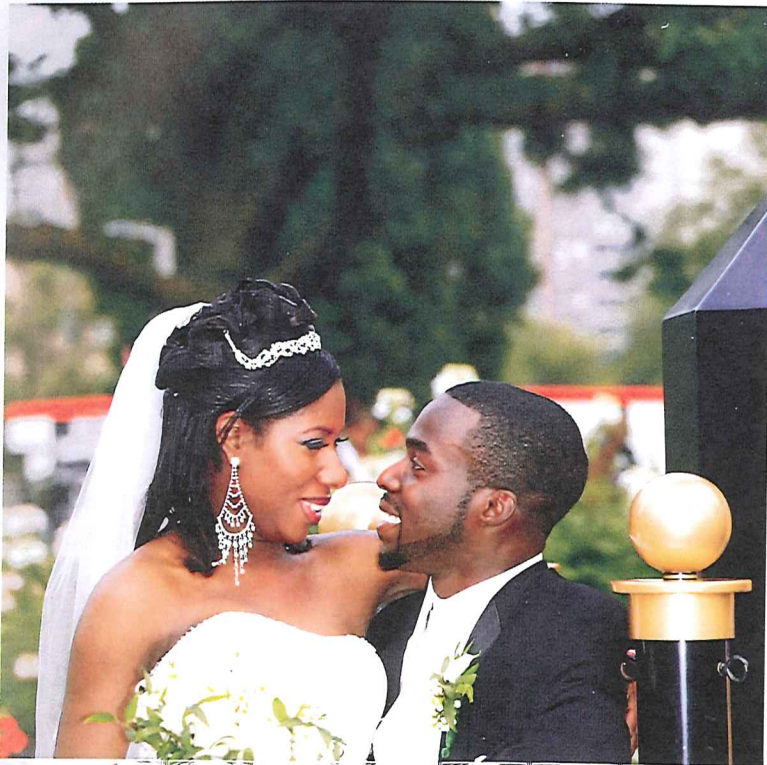


# CHERRITON & RYAN



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CEREMONY:  
CHRIST CHURCH  
RECEPTION:  
PEARSON CONVENTION CENTRE  
PHOTOGRAPHER:  
BEN HO – CRYSTAL IMAGE  
WEDDING PLANNER:  
MAUREEN A. ALLEN  
MEMORABLE OCCASIONS UNLIMITED  
HONEYMOON:  
OCHO RIOS, JAMAICA

"I still envision Jumping Over the Broom and the symbolism for us as African Canadians"

From frantic financing to designer décor, every couple has their very own wedding woes. Although Cherriton and Ryan

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faced the challenge of pulling together a unique wedding on a budget, the unfortunate death of Michael Jackson inspired this creative duo to turn their wedding into a tribute to the Prince of Pop.

Cherriton Thomas and Ryan Knight, both from Brampton, Ontario, met through a mutual friend while they were both in school (post secondary). Ryan was immediately wowed by Cherriton, although she jokes that she wasn't that impressed due to Ryan's lack of punctuality.

Because they were both students, Cherriton and Ryan

thought it would be more pragmatic to finish school and save some money before thinking about marriage, so they went out for eight years before getting engaged.

Ryan proposed to Cherriton during his birthday bash at a banquet hall. Everyone was having a great time and he suddenly popped the question. "It was so unexpected!" says Cherriton. "It brought tears to my eyes because it was so amazing!"

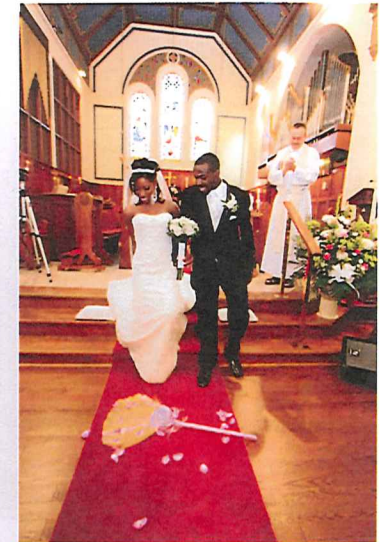
As a classicist, Cherriton already knew she'd opt for the traditional white dress (Ryan chose a black suit). With the wed-

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ding date set for Aug 15/09, the duo rolled up their sleeves and plunged into the wedding prep. After lots of research, they invested in a resourceful, experienced wedding planner who they relied upon to source reliable suppliers. Maureen Allen - a certified wedding planner of Memorable Occasions Unlimited had the experience and skills to make Cherriton and Ryan's dream wedding a reality. Maureen was also in charge of keeping them within budget and executing the wedding in a timely and unforgettable fashion—their biggest concerns!

As the date drew closer, the



parties got underway including a stagette, ladies party, bridal shower, and bachelor party. For the wedding venues, the couple had decided on the Christ Church for the ceremony and the Pearson Convention Centre for the reception—after much research and debate among the families! It turned out to be even better than they anticipated.

Although deciding on a theme had been tricky, Michael Jackson's untimely death inspired Cherriton with a unique idea. Besides the dancers performing traditional African and Caribbean dances, she could distinguish her wedding through

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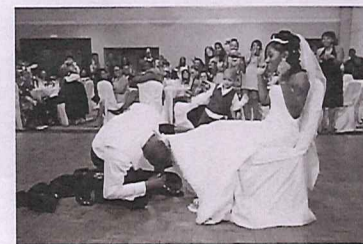


small tributes to Michael Jackson. To accomplish this tastefully, Cherriton was subtle. For example, she identified tables with Michael Jackson songs instead of numbered place cards. White and purple décor accented with classic calla lilies and roses filled the room. Ryan and Cherriton had also infused a bit of their culture into the ceremony with a tradition known as jumping the broom (Slaves were not able to get married on the plantations, so they used jumping the broom as a symbol of marriage) a ceremony of special significance to people with African heritage.

Although Ryan and Cherriton

stressed a bit during their wedding and wished everyone involved could have been a bit more cooperative, it was a fabulous and memorable day for them and all 200 guests! "Nothing will be perfect!" Cherriton advises. "Things will go wrong, but for the most part they will be things that only the bride and groom (and those who attended rehearsals and helped to plan the day), will notice. It may be hard when things don't run smoothly, but it's important to smile! Smile from the moment you wake up until your face hits the pillow at night because there will be cameras snapping more than the paparazzi!"

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After the wedding, Cherriton and Ryan departed for beautiful Ocho Rios. Both their families come from Jamaica but Cherriton had never visited before. Part of the excitement of marriage is the ability to learn more about each other everyday, Ryan and Cherriton agree. They also emphasize the

importance of good communication in a successful marriage. "Don't keep things bottled up. Let your feelings and concerns be known and addressed," says Cherriton. "This can also be achieved by being an active listener and sometimes reading between the lines."