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Los Angeles Letter

Spring... when the spirit moves US

As the sun moves in its course and Spring and Summer arrive most women are thinking of clothes and vacations. Most designers are struggling with collections three months hence. Thus we present today clothes that were long ago thought over to titillate women in this balmy season.

Again, Don Loper has hit the high water mark of success with a collection that is often nostalgic and always flattering. He has his own, inimitable way of avoiding fads and yet remaining in fashion. He creates his timeless, dateless clothes that are to be worn over and over again, each time making their strong bid for attention and yet never submitting to vulgarity. This is a difficult balance to achieve and yet Loper manages this by his continued high quality fabrics which he knows how to manipulate to shape the body to their beauty.

A combination of the romanticism and reserve which are Loper's own heritage, his Ready now "wholesale" group include silks trimmed with imported eyelet collars, overall eyelet sheaths, cummerbunds and high-waisted bows. Details

include wing-collars, the "smock" look that is decidedly not peasant, elastic-waisted backs, cowl collar ties, low-belted Chesterfield coats. The custom collection has a wrap or jacket with every dress, many of them caped to the elbow and attached to the back in many ingenious ways. Peg-top skirts, gently full at top, wear short costume jackets, interestingly cut. Longer suit jackets are walking length or tunic length, stopping just above the knees. Colors: in combinations of navy and cocoa, brown and coral floral print, bark and turquoise, much navy used alone, rich dark royal blues, several black, mustard yellows, kelly greens and celadon greens. Many long, evening gowns for the opera with matching trailing caped great-coats to make grand entrances.

Paul Whitney, another designer in the grand manner expresses his talent in magnificent fabrics in a manner no less distinctive but definitely different. His clothes look young, unworldly, somehow exotic and decidedly rich. His fabrics are fine but always embellished with an added touch that is a surprise one hadn't expected. He has unexpected ways with net, takes chiffon flannels to cocktails, be-ribbons delicate organdies and dotted organdies. He puts new softening touches on the slimmer look that has now been done almost to death, but with his talents it achieves a new prestige. He has no molded bodices but shapes his clothes with ease. A novelty semi-formal costume of white organdy in a long torso line, wears long brown linen sleeves. Brown and black silk suiting has a fresh touch of organdy in a tiered peplum on a collarless jacket. He makes a long white organdy coat with a white organdy rose at the throat, its armholes bound in black and deep folds at shoulder and back.

Bud Kilpatrick places his unique stamp on clothes that often follow trends but never become monotonous. He uses the presently popular slim and shapely look; however he does the middy (which is used variously in many collections), the overblouse (which is a "must") and the shift with Kilpatrick sewing and seaming that has a secret all its own.

Kilpatrick loves plaids... of all kinds, as well as magnified floral prints and some abstract designs. Ruffled peplums and ruffled hemlines give a new femininity to otherwise severe gowns. Standout of the collection was a white evening gown, banded with grosgrain ribbon in a large plaid pattern... the now famous trade mark of Kilpatrick, charmingly done over again in a new, refreshing manner.

Helene Miller



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Modèle Bud Kilpatrick, Los Angeles