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Los Angeles Letter

News of the California Collections

Fashion showings in California are less regulated than they are in Europe. This is due to the diversity of the climate in the United States and to the individualism exhibited by the ready-to-wear manufacturers of California. These, in fact, hold their showings just when they please, and together with the seasonal collections there is also a cruise collection comprising models ranging from purely functional sportswear to the most wondrous vacation clothes of all kinds, which will be seen on the beaches of Bermuda, the cruise ships around South America and under the swaying palms of Hawaii. In addition to this, many designers will preview their collections at exclusive Palm Springs.

This lack of unity in the dates of showings creates a sort of uncertainty and dispersion of trends. Thus in California the new collections show no definite trend or direction, as is the case in European or New York fashions. The main characteristics of fashions in California, and particularly in the south where feminine beauty has a marketable value in the movie industry, are the trend towards greater individualism among designers who are determined to create the most flattering clothes of the finest, most exclusive fabrics obtainable, and the deep and fundamental understanding of what brings out a woman's charm as opposed to the blind following of a « line », mass standardisation or copies from the French.

We cannot mention here all the new and interesting models of the recent collections; we shall limit ourselves therefore to some of the creations in which Swiss textiles have featured particularly.

In his suits, daytime dresses for fall and cruise wear, and short evening gowns, Greer shows a marked tendency toward using heavy Swiss braids and passe-

menterie to form sharp contrasts on soft fabrics, and also makes lavish use of broderie anglaise for bodices.

Angovar, who has specialised in the « ladylike » look which is so popular with many movie and theater people in their private lives, appreciates very exclusive fabrics. Let us mention an evening gown with embroidered organdy leaves applied on a net bodice, continuing down on to a full and billowing faille skirt — the same edging of leaves following the outline of a sleeved capelet; a three-tiered evening gown of Saint-Gall « winter » organza; daytime wool dresses worked with passementerie and a theater ensemble with Swiss silk appliqued plumes on the dress.

Eric Bass, a newcomer, has adopted fabrics which seem completely different to those seen in other collections with the exception of Swiss moucheté which is exceedingly popular here just now.

Another newcomer is Werlé, whose show piece is a short exotically embroidered evening gown in Swiss faille.

Cahill specialises in the finest bridal gowns, made either for wholesale collections or for the couture trade. Almost his entire collection is made of Swiss fabrics — new satins, handkerchief linens with woven-in tucks, organdies and organzas and rare flower and butterfly appliqués. Cahill, who keeps in close touch with his suppliers to whom he even submits at times his own designs, has made a radical departure from the traditional white or ivory bridal gown by adding palest pastel Swiss organdy appliqués. He recently designed gowns of tiered Saint-Gall organdy for a bride and her ten bridesmaids, the bride in white with organdy rose appliqués, her bridesmaids in coral organdy with the same organdy trim.

H.-F. Miller.



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1. Cocktail suit by ERIC BASS of pink mouchete trimmed with heavy Swiss braid in black (photo John Engstead).
2. ANGOVAR. Black and flesh net appliquéd with black *Forster Willi & Cie St-Gall* velvet daisies to a deep V waistline (photo John Engstead).
3. Bridal gown by CAHILL, white net appliquéd in white velvet leaves and flowers by *Forster Willi & Cie, St-Gall*. The entire bonnet is of the same velvet leaves (photo Binford).