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Autor: Stewart, Rhéa Talley
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New York News Letter

A notably astute observation on fashion came from the drama critic, George Jean Nathan: « The most effective way for a woman to dress is like a poor little country girl, but expensively. »

New York women today are doing their best to follow the critic's advice by dressing as adolescent girls dress in all parts of the United States. So the masculine shirt is the foremost influence today in New York styles. It goes along with other masculine influences; the hat is a fedora or sombrero and even when it trails a chiffon scarf, it is

inspired by a man, Lawrence of Arabia. A new kind of suit combines a sleeveless waistcoat with a long-sleeved shirt and a skirt, and none of the three need to match, almost as if the wearer had filched the first two from a male relative instead of buying them from Norman Norell.

That word « expensively » that George Jean Nathan emphasized means that such simple garments must add various subtleties in the transition to haute couture. For instance, the shirt collar never clings to the neck, but seems on the brink of falling off in back.

Here is how Vincent Monte-Sano describes today's look: a little wider at the shoulders, straight in back and curved slightly inward at front, with the throat bared to the sun and the arms only just visible beneath stiffer, longer sleeves. This description applies perfectly to a dinner suit that Monte-Sano made of white alaskine from Switzerland. Only the formal fabric prevents a look of « pour le sport ».

L. ABRAHAM & CO. SILKS LTD,
ZURICH

« Doucine » printed pure silk twill / twill
de soie naturelle
Model by Karen Stark for Harbey Berin



Some fragile fabrics present a delightful paradox when tailored as precisely as men's wear flannel. Even silk gazar from Switzerland, which has swept in bouffant skirts through so many ballrooms, goes into a straight, tailored coat with enormous shirt cuffs so wide and stiff that the wearer's arms can move about without disturbing her sleeves. This falls to the floor over a slim blue evening dress, as does a similar coat by Galanos of white Swiss organdie spotted with three-dimensional flowers.

A fabric renaissance came this season to linen. Important designers generally use the heavier weights, to gain the full advantage of its stiffness and crispness. Ben Zuckerman made good use of a Swiss linen in a black-and-white print of stylized bowknots, making a fitted double-breasted coat with dropped shoulder line, shown over a matching sleeveless dress. From another black-and-white Swiss linen, this a zebra print, Zuckerman has made a dress with curved yoke and a short jacket whose set-in sleeves owe their square shoulder line to a trace of padding. Part of the masculine influence is the square shoulder; as for sleeves, there are more of them, and with fullness, cuffs or shoulder breadth they often dominate a costume.

Vivid colors and dramatic prints have fascinated designers for several seasons. Such emphasis on color and fabric will naturally produce a controversy among

designers as to whether the « little black dress » has gone forever. In his collection for Maurice Rentner, Mr. Blass showed one of these little classics in silk printed with vivid golden wheat sheaves, together with matching coat. The matching coat or jacket really has become basic. Count Fernando Sarmi thinks that the future of the basic black dress lies in intricacy of line and fabric, which will keep the wearer from ever speaking of it as « my little nothing ». A Swiss rayon from which Sarmi makes several black dresses is « mego », so heavily textured that it resembles smocking, dull on one side and lustrous on the other. He makes several black cocktail and dinner suits from another striking Swiss fabric, a ciré matelassé as shiny as patent leather. Sarmi put « mego » also into a floor-length hostess gown the colour of crushed strawberries, with a green velvet sash around its slightly higher waistline. The Empire waistline is seen on virtually every New York dress that doesn't look like a shirt. And every collection includes, along with more floor-sweeping dinner gowns, more costumes to be worn at home. The hostess gown (sometimes a flowing pajama) is replacing the toreador pants in which fashion-conscious American hostesses once greeted their guests. Women, paradoxically, in a season when they are literally taking the men's shirts off their backs, are finding their pants too masculine.

Rhêa Talley Stewart

Swiss Fabric and Embroidery Center, New York

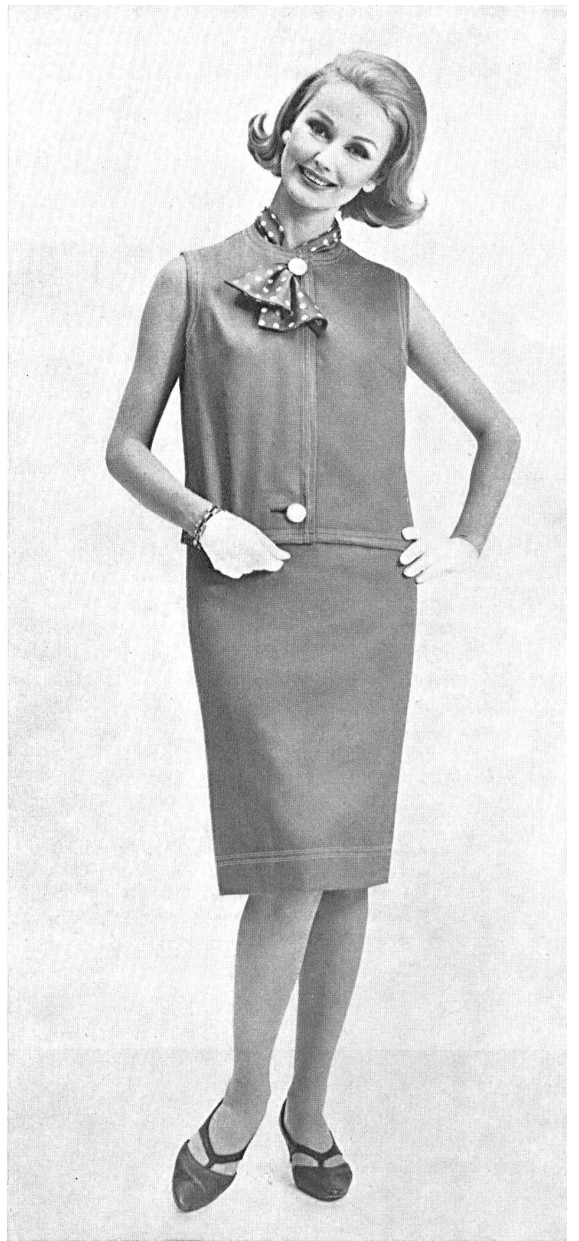
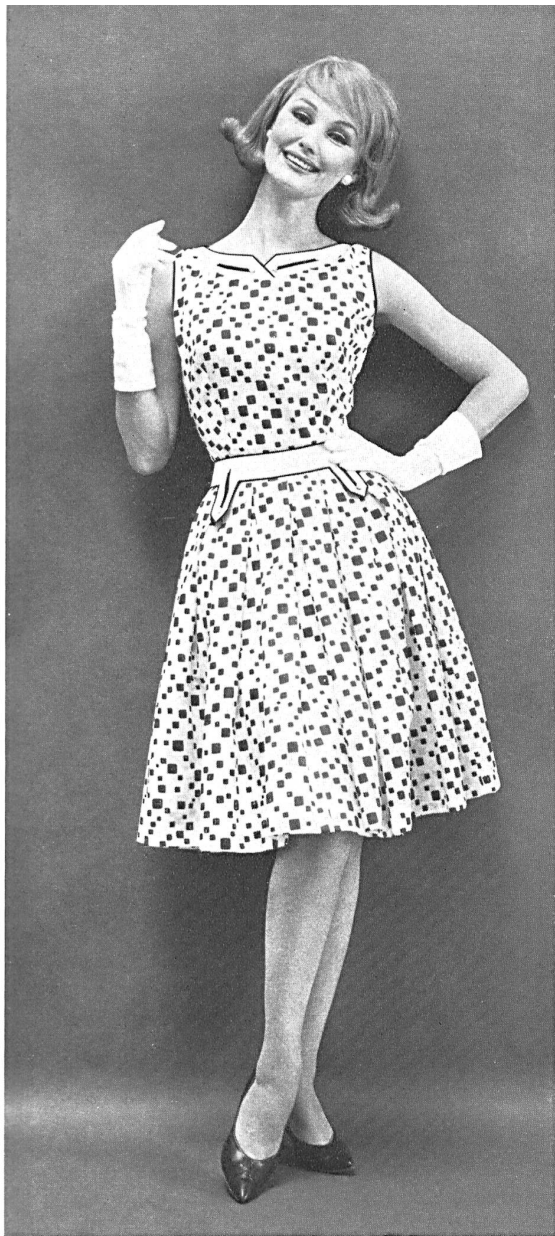
On the occasion of the Easter Fashion Show held in the Empire Room of the Waldorf Astoria, New York City, Miss Carol Channing, the outstanding stage, TV, radio and night club entertainer, wore a hat styled by Emme and made with Desco Swiss Hankerchiefs

Au défilé de mode « Easter Fashion Show » au Waldorf Astoria à New York, Miss Carol Channing, la commère bien connue de la TSF et de la TV, portait un chapeau d'Emme fait en Mouchoirs suisses Desco



« FISBA »,
 CHRISTIAN
 FISCHBACHER CO.,
 SAINT-GALL
 White cotton fabric printed
 with navy squares
 Coton blanc imprimé
 Dress by Qualitex

« RECO »,
 REICHENBACH & CO., S.A.
 SAINT-GALL
 Indigo blue cotton gabardine
 Gabardine de coton indigo
 Dress by Arbe Originals



Swiss Fabric and Embroidery Center, New York



JACOB ROHNER S. A.,
 REBSTEIN
 Embroidered Swiss organ-
 die
 Organdi brodé
 Dress by Elena of Boston

UNION S. A.,
 SAINT-GALL
 Embroidered midnight-blue
 cotton with appliquéd ripe
 red cherries
 Coton bleu de nuit brodé
 avec applications
 Dress by Florence Eiseman

*Swiss Fabric
and Embroidery Center,
New York*



A lovely display of Swiss handkerchiefs shown at B. Altman & Co., New York
Ravissant étalage de mouchoirs suisses présenté chez B. Altman & Co., New York,



« NELO », J. G. NEF & CO. S. A.,
HERISAU

Cotton ottoman
Ottoman de coton
Dresses by Miss Claire Schaffel as shown
at the fashion show at the Plaza Hotel
Photo D'Arlène Studio