New York fashion : retailer profile

Autor(en): **Feisst, Beatrice**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Textiles suisses [Édition multilingue]**

Band (Jahr): **- (1984)**

Heft 57

PDF erstellt am: **28.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-795206

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Inhalten der Zeitschriften. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern.
Die auf der Plattform e-periodica veröffentlichten Dokumente stehen für nicht-kommerzielle Zwecke in Lehre und Forschung sowie für die private Nutzung frei zur Verfügung. Einzelne Dateien oder Ausdrucke aus diesem Angebot können zusammen mit diesen Nutzungsbedingungen und den korrekten Herkunftsbezeichnungen weitergegeben werden.
Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Die systematische Speicherung von Teilen des elektronischen Angebots auf anderen Servern bedarf ebenfalls des schriftlichen Einverständnisses der Rechteinhaber.

Haftungsausschluss

Alle Angaben erfolgen ohne Gewähr für Vollständigkeit oder Richtigkeit. Es wird keine Haftung übernommen für Schäden durch die Verwendung von Informationen aus diesem Online-Angebot oder durch das Fehlen von Informationen. Dies gilt auch für Inhalte Dritter, die über dieses Angebot zugänglich sind.

Ein Dienst der *ETH-Bibliothek*
ETH Zürich, Rämistrasse 101, 8092 Zürich, Schweiz, www.library.ethz.ch

http://www.e-periodica.ch

NEW YORK FASHION

At every major designer show in New York, the scene repeats itself: A limousine draws up, two little ladies descend – blonde, bejeweled, impeccably dressed and coiffed. There is a ripple through the waiting crowd, as if royalty or a famous president of state had arrived. The name is taken up, the word is spread backstage: Martha is here, the show may begin.

Martha Phillips and her daughter, Lynn Manulis

Martha

Phillips, her last name, is superfluous in the designer showrooms on Seventh Avenue and the couture houses of Europe. She is Martha, First Lady of the haute mode, founder and Chairwoman of the Martha specialty shops of Park Avenue, Palm Beach, Bal Harbour and, as of last October, of Martha's Duplex at Trump Tower. Her record for being first to recognize the quality of world class talents is unequaled. She is the editor of international fashions, whose courage, perception and taste inspire high praise from top designers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Discoverer of talents

"I have learned a lot by working with Martha and I am proud of it." André Laug thus summarizes what many of his colleagues feel. The country's most prominent fashion retailer does not stop at discovering new talents and introducing them to America. She goes far beyond. James Galanos will tell you that "she gives the light and fuel designers need to excel and aspire". To Bill Blass "her sound fashion sense has been constantly an inspiration", whereas Valentino admires her for "her keen courage and energy in bringing the original styles of the Italian designers to the American market". Valentino, Mila Schön, André Laug, Laura Biagotti, Zandra Rhodes and the Emanuels are among the stellar fashion talents who owe a considerable part of their success in America to their introduction by Martha Phillips into the elite social circles of New York and Palm Beach. Daughter Lynn

Manulis, who does all the buying together with her mother, explains: "Designers tend to sit in an ivory tower, working with splendid models only. Yet, there isn't much challenge in dressing a perfect size 6 or 8. We, therefore, feel it is important that designers see their clothes on actual clients, that they understand why some things are accepted and others rejected." To illustrate her point, Lynn recalls Valentino's famous tunique-dress over trousers and André Laug's experimentation with bright colors, both inspired by the designers' meeting with their ultimate Palm Beach clientele.

RETAILER PROFILE

Promoter of quality

Her clothes, her stores, her customers, everything reflects utmost elegance and a philosophy that has guided Martha for her fifty years in business: "Quality first, fashion second – and I always follow my instincts." In her soft voice, carefully honed from years of work in radio and onstage, Company President Lynn Manulis confirms that her mother has the eye of an eagle and an unerring instinct which has never failed her.

The extraordinary rapport between mother and daughter extends to all fashion aspects, including fabrics. Says Lynn: "After the design, the fabric is prime importance. We have been champions of Swiss fabrics for many years. We think the quality is superb, with great attention to details. Switzerland still has people with wonderful hands. They provide a level of artistry and creativity in craftsmanship that is like a beacon of light today. Because, if we are not careful, everything tends to be too commercial, whereas at Martha's we are looking for that which is special."

Multiple store-owner

With Lynn's son Andrew now in the company, Martha is the only chain of top-of-the-line specialty stores still owned and operated by the same family for three generations. Martha opened her first shop in 1934 on the twelfth floor of a building on Madison Avenue – a logical step for a woman with parents and husband in the ready-to-wear business. Although it was the very depth of the Depression, she was confident that no matter what the price, "if it was beautiful, I could sell it". And she did. The Palm Beach store opened in 1945, the Bal Harbour shop in 1965, and in 1966 the New York salon was moved to its present Park Avenue location.

In a recent interview designer James Galanos said of Martha, "she probably sells more expensive ready-to-wear couture clothes than anyone else in the country". What is the key to Martha's outstanding success? According to Lynn, it is the personal involvement, the daily control of each operation, the personalized service provided. "We know our clients personally. We buy with the most discriminating in mind, and we never sell anything that is not suitable to the client."

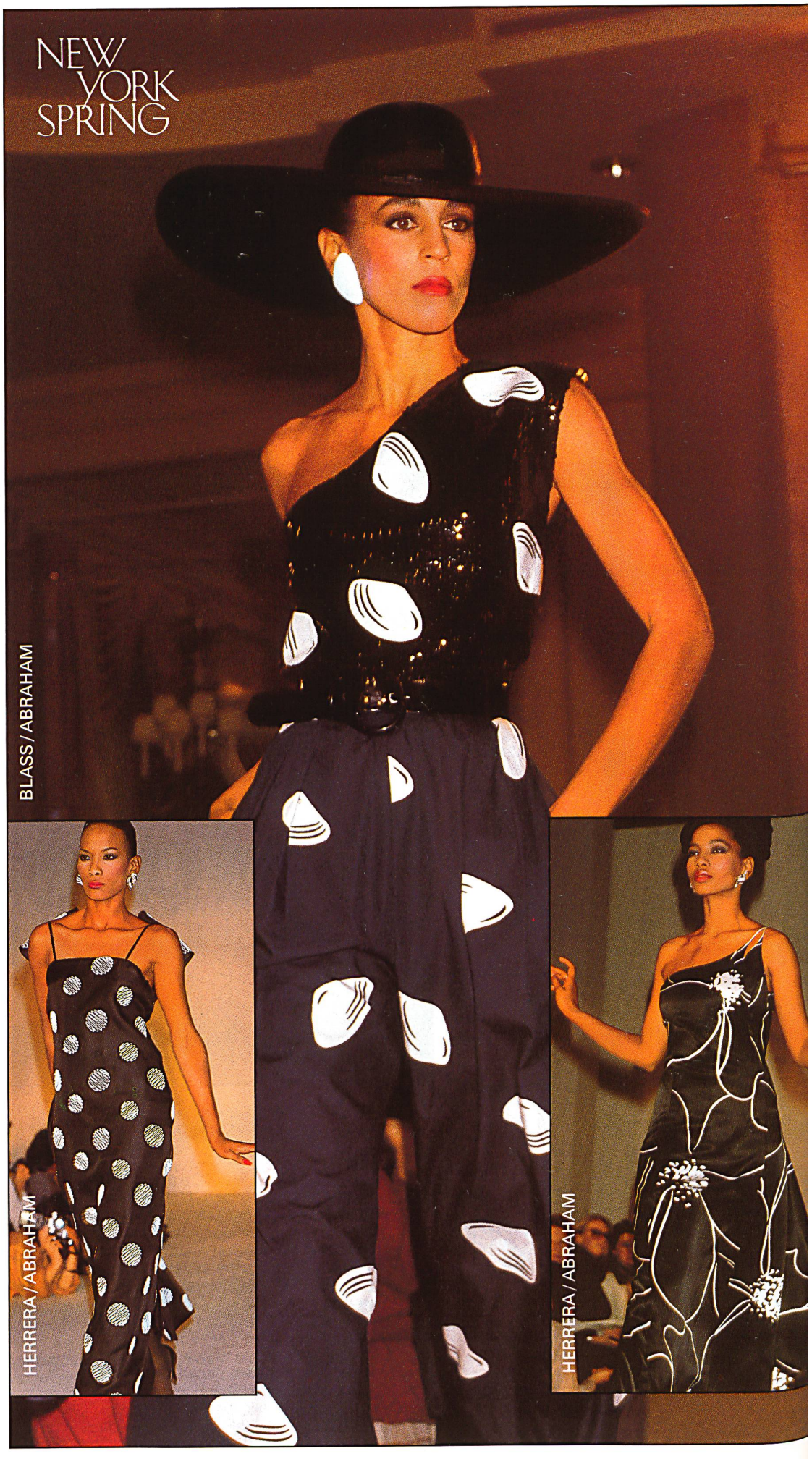
Since she opened her boutique in Palm Beach, Martha has educated two generations of American women. She has the uncanny knack of knowing what will look best on a woman, and – considering the investment they are asked to make – clients want her special stamp of approval. Marvels Lynn: "They actually call up to make an appointment, as if Mother were a doctor. She will inevitably bring you the right styles in the first three pieces. And she never asks a lady what size she wears. She never does, she just knows."

Opened in Fall 1983: Martha's Trump Tower Duplex. (Photos: Harlan Kayden)

Triumph at the Trump

When the doors opened last Fall on her new Duplex in the Trump Tower, Martha had added another pearl to her string of elegant retail stores. The Trump – Fifth Avenue's newest and most exclusive shopping temple of the pink marble lobby, the glittering water cascade and the daily piano recitals – provides an appropriate setting for the open and airy salon which Martha and Lynn created together with English architect Tony Coughley. Tout New York came to the opening party to admire the superbly appointed two levels with art deco overtones, linked by a grand staircase of black steel, brass and glass, against a background of pale pinks and taupes alight with mirrors.

While hostess Martha in a black sequin-embroidered and lace-trimmed Galanos greeted the creator of her gown, hostess Lynn introduced the Emanuels, creators of the wedding dress of H.R.H. the Princess of Wales. Examples of their work were on view, resplendent in Swiss lace and clip-dot organzas. In creating their newest environment for the cream of couturiers and the clientele who appreciate it, Martha and Lynn revealed yet another trump: The new Trump Tower boutique will also be the launching site for a collection of European and American designs exclusive to the Martha label.


NEW YORK SPRING
BLASS/ABRAHAM
HERRERA/ABRAHAM
HERRERA/ABRAHAM

THE ENTRANCE MAKERS

Naked sundresses for summer evenings. Simple lines, dramatically draped. In printed cotton poplin: Bill Blass. In straw-embroidered silk gauze and printed satin-back crêpe: Carolina Herrera.

The ruffled four-ply silk organza top pays homage to a new perfume called "Ruffles". Oscar de la Renta created both. Herrera picks up the theme in embroidered silk gauze.

All fabric designs are Abraham's.

 Photos: Christopher Moore

DE LA RENTA / ABRAHAM

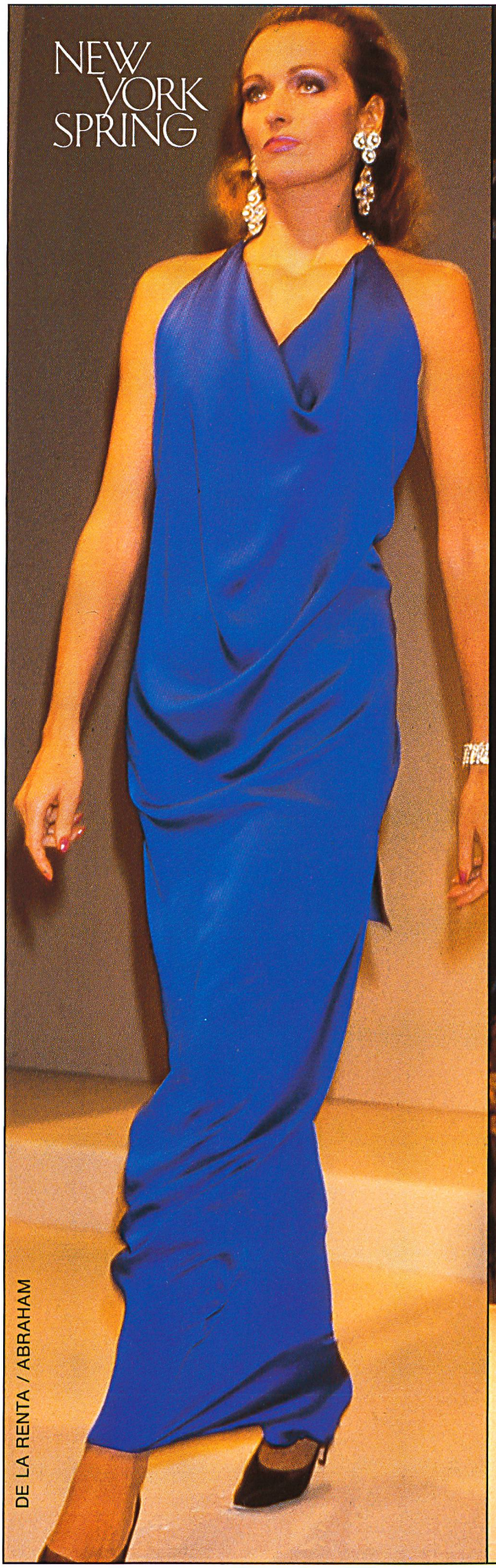
HERRERA / ABRAHAM

HERRERA / ABRAHAM

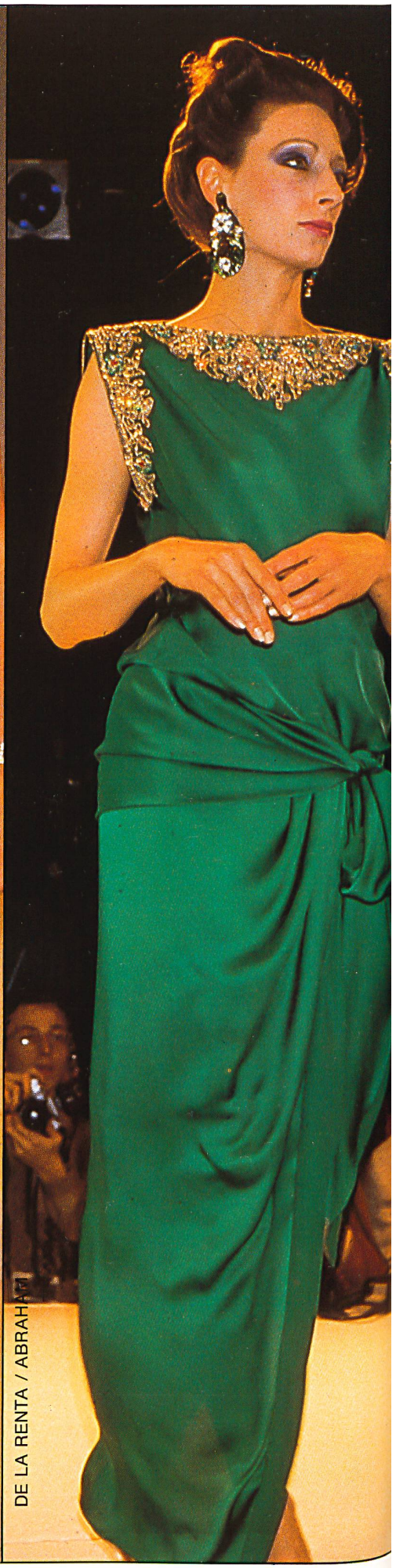
THE EVENING COLUMN

A striking look in formal dressing. Abraham's jewel-toned silk crêpe with satin backing. Loosely draped and embroidery trimmed: Oscar de la Renta. Floating from a neck-ruff or spiral-seamed with one shoulder: Bill Blass.

Stately goddess gowns and seductively sculpted shifts conquer the late evening scene.



DE LA RENTA / ABRAHAM



DE LA RENTA / ABRAHAM

 Photos: Christopher Moore

BLASS / ABRAHAM

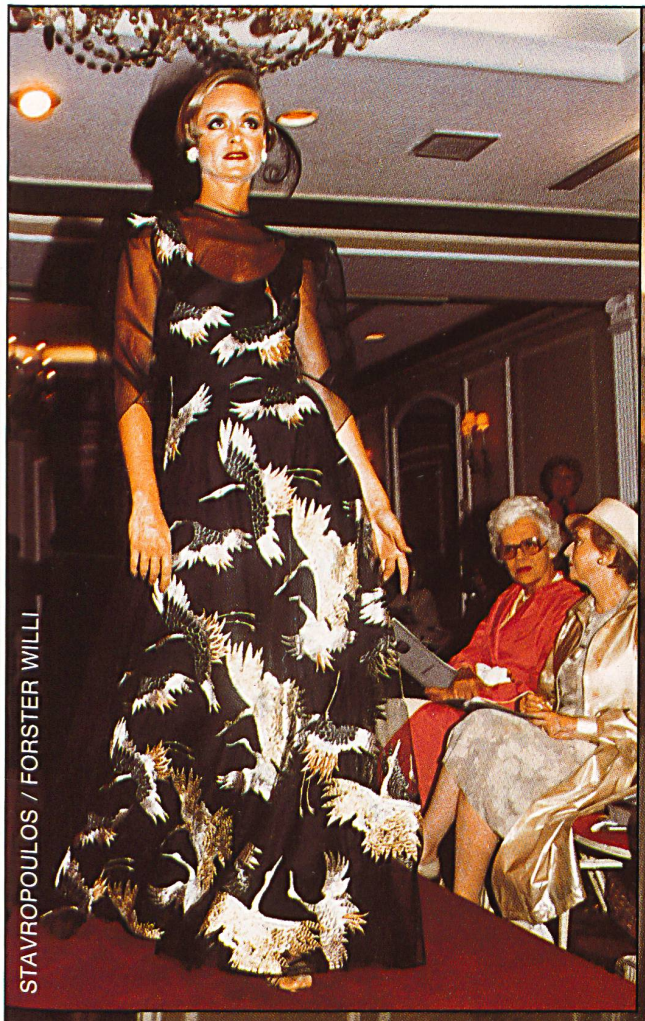
BLASS / ABRAHAM

DE LA RENTA / ABRAHAM

THE ROMANTICS

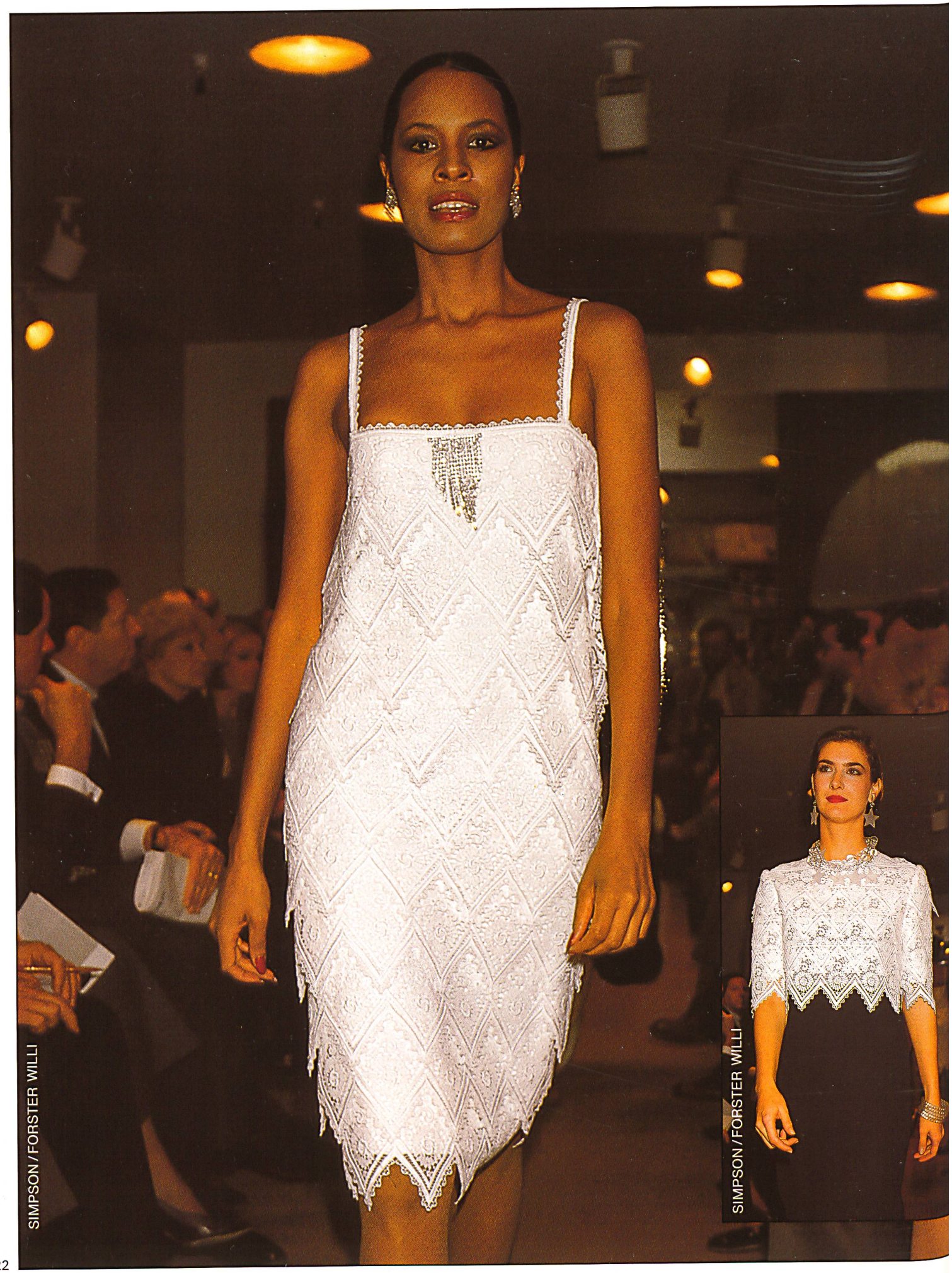
Samba or Swan Lake, disco or opera. George Stavropoulos designs a graceful "pas de deux" in black and white tulle. The silk- and lurex-embroidered swan motif is from Forster Willi.

Oscar de la Renta thrills with frills. His ruffled samba shorties use yards and yards of Abraham's patterned silk muslin print.



STAVROPOULOS / FORSTER WILLI

STAVROPOULOS / FORSTER WILLI



SIMPSON / FORSTER WILLI

SIMPSON / FORSTER WILLI

NEW YORK SPRING

HERRERA / FORSTER WILLI

BRIDAL EMBROIDERIES

The magic of a white June wedding. Carolina Herrera dresses her bride in embroidered organza with cut-out organza appliqués. A sweeping train and a cluster of cut-out flower motifs at the neck accentuate the purity of line of this elegant creation.

Adele Simpson's short, tiered flapper dress is laced with white guipure. The same guipure lace returns on a box top worn with a black velvet skirt.

All laces and embroideries by Forster Willi.