



Darcy Dittmer shows the leopard tunic look in a chocolate brown and gold knit suit from Jacobson's while two of her

classmates affect a famous Russian dance pose. (Staff photos by Tracy Baker).

Fashion takes a lesson

Little girls grow up. Some become ballerinas others just look like them. Fashion designers are making the dreams of thousands of grown up little girls materialize with the ballet look.

It is a reasonable facsimile of the faces and clothes dancers wear in rehearsal and on stage.

Without hours of grueling work the look, if not the rewards, can be achieved through contemporary fashion.

But clothes don't make the dancer any

more than the man. They may dress the part, but they'll never be Rudolf Nureyev's partner.

Since dance has practically become the national passion in the past few years dancers are very visible.

Their look is unique, athletically fit, yet ultra-feminine. Their pale appearance is a fashion thing, so is the close pulled-back hairstyle complete with head hugging chignon.

The ballet look runs from head to foot.

THE WRAP LOOK had its beginnings in the ballet studio. There, like dancers wrap their torsos with skinny tops and wrap tunics over leotards to affect a short skirt for rehearsal.

San Antonio Barbara Dulcan and others have incorporated the leotard look in their lines for spring.

Dancers keep their legs warm in drafty rehearsal halls with hand-knit leg warmers. Then, when the leotard was done for them by the legwear manufacturers who marketed brilliantly patterned leg warmers for the cross-country ski set.

Shoes have taken on the dancer look with ballet slipper wedges, and lace up footwear resembles the elegant satin toe shoes with which dancers make their magic.

The result of combining the stage and the street, is a young, yet sophisticated fashion look which makes clothes part of the body rather than a separate entity.

OF COURSE IT helps if the body fits the part being played. Hours of hard physical work is done every day by aspiring dancers like those who are part of The Community House's Dance Department in Birmingham.

Under the instruction of teacher Rose Marie Greer, classes are taught every day in all levels of dance from beginner to professional. She teaches the Cecchetti method.

As a result of her teaching, she has had several of her 48 scholarship students attend top professional dance schools and companies. They got experience in her classes and in the Performing Arts Dance Group of Birmingham which she formed in 1974.

THE GROL has performed the classical ballets "Giselle," "Les Sylphides," and "Pavle de Quatre," among others.

Among the alumni of her classes is Lisa Powell, who at age 17 is with the Cleveland Ballet. Suzanne Shearer is now with the National Ballet of Canada. Cindy Ortes is a sophomore dance major at Western Michigan University and Peggy Benson will soon go to Butler University in Indiana to study dance.

Though the look belongs to artists such as Lisa, Suzanne and others in their creative company it is fast becoming accepted by women of all mediums.



Stephanie Kramer laces up her toe shoes in a pair of leg warmers from Jacobson's and a lacy shawl from Himelthoch's.



Darcy Dittmer (right) talks over the newest of dance looks with two of her classmates in a silk

wrap blouse from Jacobson's Designer Salon.



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