

A collection so bright you'll wonder who dunnit

By RUSTLE SHAND

Claire Pearone gave us a sneak preview of the new decade when she unveiled the Whodunnit design group's resort fashions at her Troy store before New Year's Day.

The young American designers are adventurous, moving into the '80s with confident clothes that combine wit with femininity. They are fabricated in a myriad of fresh shapes cut from an invigorating range of light-hearted prints and clear colors.

Pant designs reflect far-reaching moods, traveling from brief shorts and full-length jump suits to ankle toppers. Dresses and suits debut in clear-cut, angular shapes in bicolored and tricolored geometric patterns.

Prints are witty, bright and thematic or softly handpainted onto pure silk. Colors are pale pastels, clear brights and there is an emphasis on black and white.

Claire Pearone is known for launching new innovative fashion designers who go on to become internationally known household names. Among her finds are such well known designers as Geoffrey Beene, Oscar de la Renta and Mary McFadden.

Sidney Carvin Milliken of the Whodunnit group made a solo Midwest personal appearance at Ms. Pearone's store last year. She is one of a group of American designers who have gathered under the auspices of the Whodunnit showroom in New York's Plaza Hotel.

FASHION merchandisers can appraise new seasonal offerings from a widely divergent group of designers whose names may be tomorrow's fashion headlines.

Ms. Pearone's decision to bring the best of the Whodunnit resort offerings into her store met with widespread approval. Bored with fall-winter clothing, looking forward to the promise of sunny climates while looking ahead to spring, her southbound customers flocked into the Troy store to try on the latest designer fashion offerings.

Bryna Frank was just one who dreamed of palm fronds and in fact, seemed transplanted, when she tried on



the Tamala silk creation. Others placed orders for early February delivery, in time for the exodus to the south.

Some of the Whodunnit designer names you'll be hearing this Spring include Tamala, Jeff Kint, Yeohlee, Auntie Macassar and Milliken.

TAMARA MELCHER, whose designs bear the Tamala label, began her

career as an expressionist painter. But what started as an avocation, making special clothes for her friends, grew into a vocation five years ago. Her specialty is handpainted silk and cottons in quilted jackets as well as futuristic sportswear, priced from \$19 to \$250.

Jeff Kint focuses his design talents on pure silk which he hand-dyes in sea-washed colors and then drapes into seamless, timeless gowns, in the \$300

price range.

Auntie Macassar, as you may have guessed from the name, is a design group that zeros in on Victorian touches featuring lace, or ottoman failles with leg-o-mutton sleeves.

Yeohlee, whom Ms. Pearone predicts will be a future star, is a petite Malaysian woman whose sewing ability is reminiscent of the French couture houses. Her beautifully detailed clothes are created in a loft in the Chelsea area where she cuts them herself from fabrics she buys in Europe.

Pinpointing the mood of resort into spring fashion, Ms. Pearone described it as "soft and graphic" — spelling out a mood that is clean and modern, yet pretty and feminine. It is the way women want to dress today," she said.



Bryna Frank of Farmington Hills was among the first of Claire Pearone's clients to recognize the collection's importance to forthcoming holidays in the sun. She selected Tamala's silk handpainted quilted jacket with matching handpainted silk dress in shades of fuchsia, blues, oranges and pinks.

fashion calendar

Monday, Jan. 7

Alfred's Restaurant — Fashions from local shops are modeled daily in the restaurant from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. The following is the weekly schedule. Fashions from Bonwit Teller are featured on Monday; Tuesday, Lingerique; Wednesday, Don Thomas Sporthaus; Thursday, Bonwit Teller; Friday, Rodier; and Saturday, Tennis

Lady and Robert Furs.

Tuesday, Jan. 8

Cooper's Arms — Designer fashions from Janet Varner of Rochester are modeled informally from noon to 1:30 p.m. every Tuesday through May in the Cooper's Arms restaurant, 306 Main St. in downtown Rochester.

Where It's At

By JUDY SOLOMON

Slim Chance

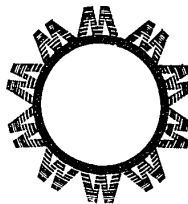
If you overindulged yourself on lots of goodies during the holidays and now your clothes are a wee bit snug, don't panic. Take a tip from the models in town and get yourself some Givenchy Body Smoothers. Designed by Givenchy for Round-The-Clock, the sheer support pantyhose are made to flatten your legs, thighs, tummy and derriere. One model I know swears they take five pounds off; another claims they make you look about an inch smaller in all the critical areas. Available in a wide range of colors at many stores in the area. Control Top Body Smoothers costs \$5.95 each.



Grand tours

So what if the chairman of the board is arriving from London with his wife and kids. You don't have to worry about a thing. Michigan-Merry-Go-Round will set up and take them on an unforgettable deluxe tour of the Detroit metropolitan area. The company will also co-ordinate events such as conventions and corporate functions right down to the last detail including transportation, tours, gourmet dining, music, gifts, flowers, decorations, evening parties, fashion shows and children's activities. Every tour or program is custom designed to meet your specific requirements and to take the responsibility off your shoulders.

Michigan Merry-Go-Round, 855-1393.



Antique know-how

Whether you collect antiques for purely aesthetic reasons or as a hedge against inflation, it's important to be knowledgeable about them. The Oakland University Division of Continuing Education is offering two non-degree courses on "Collectibles" this winter. Birmingham architect William Lyman will discuss reproductions and fakes in a six-week evening course to be held on campus beginning Jan. 24. Marilyn B. Ross, art history teacher and private collector, will present a historical survey of important ceramic pieces from various times and places up to the present, including Islamic and Oriental ceramics. Oakland University Division of Continuing Education, 377-3120.



Bowling

Just ask any cook worth her salt, food processors are an invaluable timesaver except for the fact that you have to keep cleaning out the work bowl in between ingredients. Insert-A-Bowl (\$12) can help you solve the problem. Packaged two to a box, the bowls fit into your processor work bowl and can be used with both the slicing and grating disks. After using, remove the Insert-A-Bowl and your processor is ready for the next operation. The bowls include tight-fitting covers for convenient storage in your refrigerator.

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