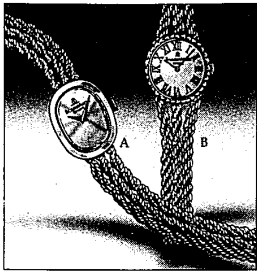


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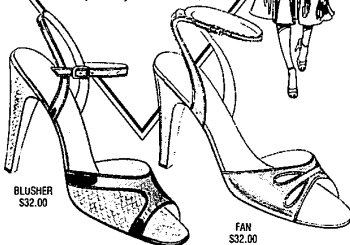
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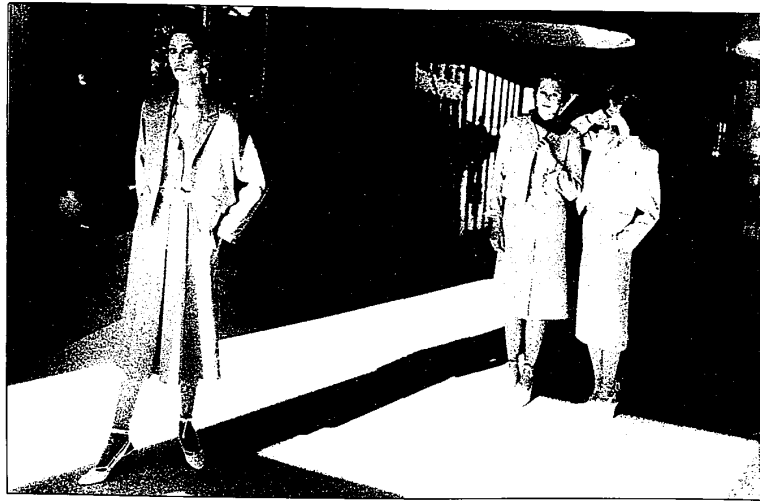
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Andre Laug's suits for spring feature the Spencer jacket. An outspoken advocate of the feminine woman, Laug deplores the term "retro," and the return of the seamed stocking. Saks Fifth Avenue. (Photos by Stephen Cantrell)

Ins and Outs

Graceful's 'in,' Hats, seams are 'out'

"Drop dead chic is out this spring. Soft, slim and sexy clothes are in."

So announced Andre Laug, the celebrated Italian couturier during a visit to Saks Fifth Avenue's Troy store.

"Women will have to diet back down to a size 6 or 8 again," he emphasized. "The new clothes will not hide an inflated waistline nor will they obscure lumps and bumps in all the wrong places."

A charming, handsome man, who dedicates his work to dressing beautiful women, Laug had many firm statements to make about the "retro" look.

"Fashion," he said, "is taking a new turn to very flattering clothes. Since I have always done this kind of clothes, I am very pleased with the turn of events and very excited about my spring line."

Laug's clothes show a lot of the body contour through emphasized hiplines topped by very small waists. His uneven hemlines show as much leg as possible.

"These are feminine clothes that help a woman to be at her best, not at her worst," he said. "These clothes will please the man and a woman must dress to please the man who spends the money."

LAUG believes you must design for the spirit of today's woman, not look back at the costume of another time or country.

"Exaggeration with accessories is stupid," he said. "Women will not wear hats. All that junk with the hats is silly. Women will never wear hats again."

"There is no 'retro' here," he emphasized. "Women want to be comfortable in clothes — they move, they travel. The contemporary woman is not a movie star of the '40s."

Laug approves of the return of the sleeveless dress. But, he said, "I do a soft ruffle sleeve that covers the arm so the underarm does not show."

He also believes in the return of strong color this season, particularly when teamed with white.

"They must not be too show-off, not too blatant," he said of coloring. "Show-off clothes are for people who have no culture or self-confidence. A woman must be very feminine and charming in her dress."

Laug's woman should not involve

herself in anything that is ugly in the world. "She must keep herself more graceful than that," he said.

He also has definite thought on the ubiquitous fashion phrase "classic dressing."

"To me," he said, "classic means something that has class. Just because a style has been around for years does not necessarily mean it had class to begin with."

Black is back for spring, added Laug, as is more constructed clothing done in very light fabrics.

"That's because a woman does not want to wear something stiff and heavy weight. The weight of her clothes should be no more than that of a feather."

SILKS, wools and linens are Laug's favorite fabrics for spring. "Linen is very chic this season," he added.

Accessories should be limited to a small constructed bag or small pouch bag over the shoulder, he said. He also favors choker necklaces and lapel pins.

This year he has designed a shoe collection to accompany his spring line. Closed-toe cork wedge heels with ankle straps are for daytime. For evening, he advises a very bare, strappy sandal with ankle wraps.

"I think the leg is beautiful and should be as sexy as possible. It is ridiculous to go back to a seam in the stocking," he said.

"Crooked seams were not pretty when they were a necessity. They aren't any prettier this time around."

Laug's pant lengths cover the heel. None are ankle length. "Pants are vulgar when they are too short," he said.

His extended shoulder look is frequently achieved through a pleated shoulder in the sleeve. He approves of the exaggerated shoulder, because "the hipline looks smaller and the figure is then elongated."

Laug's daytime suit lengths are two inches shorter than they were a year ago, now falling to three inches below the knee.

He also believes in the beige leg. "A too dark leg makes a woman look like an English Nanny, and that's not sexy at all," he said.

By Rustle Sand



Andre Laug achieves an extended shoulder by pleating shoulders of his jackets and blouses. He sees return of the flattering dress as a compliment to his own concepts over past few years.

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