

ALL the world's a stage, and well dressed men about town will try not to be upstaged by their own clothes. In other words, let's see the actors, not the costumes.

Designer Bill Blass says clothes shouldn't be the first thing you notice. "You should notice the man. The clothes are part of him, tell you who he is. But it's the man himself, his personal style that interests you."

Clothier Mark Keller believes that every man should be comfortable no matter what his style.

Keller, who owns a store that bears his name in Birmingham, dresses men (and women) who "like to look good and stay healthy."

Though he carries everything from jeans to three-piece classics, Keller says his customers like to shop in a place that understands something other than three-piece suits.

"We dress customers on both ends of the spectrum from classic pleated pants to the pirate look," he says.

Customers at Capper and Capper at Somerset Mall walk a tightrope of trying to "stand out, but with a conservative look."

GENERAL manager Frank DeMare of the Troy store said: "People out here are very conscious of fashion, but leery of trendy things like belts, and epaulets that are fast gone."

He said the look of clothing this fall is decidedly on the dark side. "Even the sportswear is toned down, and this trend has been coming along for a couple of years."

Pasels come into the act mostly for resort wear. But sportswear for leisure is being

sold more than ever, DeMare said.

"Men like cotton sweaters they can wear without underwear and roll up the sleeves. For casual dress we get a run of bright colored slacks, usually in acrylics that won't wrinkle, in yellow, cream, tan, beige, even green."

"Men go crazy about things that are comfortable."

DeMare predicts that texture will be more important than color this fall with fabrics such as Harris tweed and shetlands making an impact. "There's a lot more look in texture than in color, he contends."

FOR THOSE who like the slim European look, L'uomo in Southfield carries more continental couture for men than the average boutique.

Dee Shapiro said L'uomo customers depend on sales personnel to help them pull a look together. "Men want to feel alive again," she said.

"They're looking at colors like purple and pink to help them forget the economy and other problems."

Ms. Shapiro said they've teamed up shocking pink shirts with a dark suit and pulled it together with the right tie.

Slim silhouettes, western hats and a strong resurgence of plaids are on the horizon for the well dressed male. French cuffs are expected to make a comeback, and suits will be complemented with dress shirts that have contrasting white collars.

Vests and cuffed pants will be fashion options this fall with fall '81 adding to trends already strong in menswear over the past seasons.

— Shirlee Iden

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