Designer sends message with exotic glitter



Debbia Lim Grushong's designs send the message that creativity can't be stilled by adversity.

Fledgling designer Debbie Lim Grushong is making more than the usu-al fashion statement in bold designs she is introducing to the Detroit clothing market.

as including to the Detroit receiving market.

The property of the property of

homes.
Their stubborn determination to stay together, however, resulted in Social Services putting the two sisters together in their apartment at age 15 as part of an independent living program.

"WE'VE BEEN ON our age more or less since we were 13," sald Grushong, now 23, married and the mother of a 4-year-old son. "We had an apartment, but no furniture. We used boxes for ev-erything."

erything."

The struggle for survival meant "w
had to act tough." said Grushong.

Except for their grandmother, the only support the two sisters had came from each other, they recalled. Their Chinese ancestry made them further outcasts, they said.

"We became street people," said Grandmore.

"We became street people," said Grushong. But through it all was the strong de-termination "to make something of ourselves. We got sick and tired of al-ways being put down."

The feeling was manifested in the way they dressed. "We wanted people to notice us," said Grusong, now of Redford Township.

For Grusong, a flair for the theatri-cal coupled with a flerce resolve to suc-ceed led to a sheestring venture into the field of fashion designing with the hope that her designs will catch on.

THAT STRONG determination is shared by her sister, who has a firmer hold in the business world. She and her husband, Scott Trius, own a radiator repair firm that began in the couple's garage and has since moved into its own building and has expanded to include auto heaters and air conditioners. Both sisters are self-taught "street dancers" who learned to dance during their teen years on their own, mingling

with their peers in the "melting pet" of southwest Detroit. "It's sort of what's happened today with break dancing," they said.

Both appear regularly on the popular

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Both appear regularly on the popular
Saturday noon television show "Stars
of Tomorrow," aired on Channel 2.
Grussong's flair for the unusual often
shows up in costumes she and her sister
and other members of the cast wear on
the show.

A sample of her guisiness in trying to forge a carreer on her own came recently when she approached the owners of Jamle's on Seven, a Livonia restaurant and lounge featuring weekly fashion shows during the lunch hour.

GRUSONG SAID SHE had seen one of the shows and found the fashions "so boring — right off the rack" that could be found in any store.

After seeing some of her sketches, the restaurant owner consented, and she had her first show two weeks ago. The result was that she sold one of the outflits, and the restaurant has asked her to to do another show in the near future.

future.
Grusong works out of her home and
calls her company "Original Artistic
Creations." Custom design and fit are

her forts. While she does the desig work, she has a tailor execute the actu al transformation from paper to mate

rial.

Her designs, which are moderately priced, are not limited to the excilingly different evening and party wear fashions that have had the most promotion.

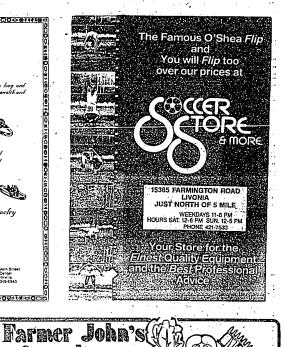
priced, are not limited to the excitingly different evening and party wear fashloss that have had the most promotion, she said. She also does a line of more conservative office and casual wear. "But my way is different," she said, with an implat smile.

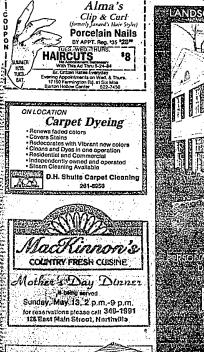
Her sister is her chief model, Grusbong said. Both considered at one time trying to crack into the highly competitive fashion modeling field. "Despite their stumingly good looks and fashion-model figures, they were turned down by several local agencies because of their Oriental hooks that included waist-length naturally curly blab ball. The could be changing too, Grusong said. A New York agent has contacted them and is interested in using them in a nationally televised commercial featuring twins. That agent happens to be Peter Bennett, who has promoted such names as Michael Jackson, John Lennon, The Rolling Stones and Nat King Cote. "He liked our looks on camera," Grusong said.



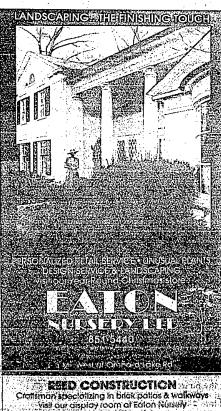
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