



Nancy Tuttleman is a picture of concentration as she watches an informal showing of Everywear fashions.

STEVE CANTRELL/staff photographer

## Everywear for armchair shoppers

By Carol Rugenstein  
special writer

Admit it. Shopping can be a chore. . . . Not fun shopping, where you join a friend for lunch and "do" the stores, indulging in a little impulse buying here and there. (That's a bonus for good behavior.)

No, it's serious shopping that hurts. The din of rock music is distracting, sales personnel often look about 12 years old, and if you're over 25 years of age, they treat you with the condescension that youth has traditionally accorded the elderly.

All you want is a comfortable, basic suit; all they have are prefabricated denim minis and bubble skirts. Catalogs are a convenient alternative, as evidenced by their success. But at best, they're a pig in a poke.

If you can get beyond the coy lighting to the real length and color, and if you can remember not to identify with the 112-pound, 29-year-old, 5-foot, 8-inch model with burnished hair and perfect teeth, you stand a pretty good chance of finding something decent.

And when all the buttons and one shoulder pad fall off a designer blouse the first time you wash it, you can just sew them back on rather than rewrap it and send it back. (Some people just rip out the other shoulder pad and wear the blouse under the sweater.) Enter Everywear, "spontaneous fashion for the real woman."

Started just about a year ago by partners Lauren Johnson and Karen Starke, Everywear comes to you, either by private appointment in your home, or home trunk showings for you and a group of your friends.

"WE MET two years ago," said Johnson, "and we both had the same idea about selling classic, comfortable clothing to the professional woman in an informal atmosphere at a time and place determined by the client."

Both Johnson and Starke have backgrounds in the rag trade.

Johnson was manager of a women's clothing store, a job she loved and kept until recently, leaving only when Everywear got off and running.

Starke had worked for local designers and did custom designs and sewing for private clients.

As partners, they divide the chores along the lines of their experience. Johnson, bubbling with enthusiasm, is in charge of sales and marketing. Starke is in charge of production and training their crew of seamstresses. They collaborate on the designs.

A typical trunk show goes like this:

A hostess invites several of her friends over, usually in the early evening. Johnson and "right arm" Shelly Coats, who models, does measuring, helps people dress and takes orders, are there when the guests arrive.

They have samples of the Everywear line in representative fabrics and colors and swatches with other colors and fabrics available.

Both Johnson and Coats act as models, showing how the pieces can be mixed, what options are available and even offering suggestions on how to accessorize the outfits for different occasions.

For example, Coats at one point was wearing almost the whole line, each piece in a taupe wool jersey — a long swing skirt, a short, lean classic skirt underneath, a cap sleeve tunic, a waist wrap and a duster.

FIRST, SHE removed the duster, then the long skirt to show the shorter skirt. Then she and Johnson showed the different ways the shawl could be used as a day or evening accessory.

Next, she removed the short skirt and showed how the duster could be used as a dress with the wide waist wrap folded narrowly and used as a belt.

Any of the pieces could be made in matte jersey, cotton jersey,

cotton knit, crepe back satin, charmeuse or several other fabrics. Colors include ivory, teal, navy, wine and rose.

"We have every fabric in black," said Johnson. "It's our most popular color. We don't care much for pastels and neither do our clients, although we do offer a few in the summertime."

A rayon-linen blend with interwoven metallic silver thread is very popular for evening separates, even though no samples have been made up yet, Johnson said.

Not only does the client have a choice of colors and fabrics, but she can decide what skirt length she wants, what sleeve (cap, raglan or drop) and what shoulder pads, if any.

All jackets come in three lengths — long (the duster), medium and mini. A new jacket design, with leg o' mutton sleeves, is very successful as are a new pleated skirt and pants.

After the clothes are modeled, the hostess and her guests can look at the sample swatches, examine the clothes for details and try them on, if they fit. Then their measurements are taken. The clothes are made to order, and delivery time is about four weeks.

"We keep a record of every client's measurements, what she ordered and a swatch of material each garment was made in," Johnson said. "That way, if a client wishes to add to an outfit in the same or a matching fabric, she can just call up and order it."

EVERYWEAR samples range from sizes 4 to 22, and Johnson frequently calls upon members of the audience to act as models. "It livens up the party, and people can see how the clothes look on their friends."

There is an assortment of "experienced" costume jewelry and sequined appliques have been introduced on an experimental basis.

Everywear just opened a new office in the Holiday Park Office Building, 5623 N. Wayne Road, Westland, opening the door for dressing rooms for clients and a workshop for seamstresses.

The partners are in the process of training sales reps and their first, Glenda Sinn, is due to "graduate" this month.

You can reach Starke or Johnson at 422-2630. Everywear prices range from \$19 to \$189, and yes, they do take credit cards. (Note to the hostess: Forget the Black Forest torte! One look at Johnson's svelte size 4 figure, and guests opt for ice water and crackers.



Lauren Johnson layered on the clothing to show off Everywear's versatility during a recent in-home trunk show.

STEVE CANTRELL/staff photographer



ART EMANUELL/staff photographer

While Lauren Johnson handles the trunk showings, partner Karen Starke (right) lends a hand in creating Everywear fashions.

## Series brings best of Broadway to The Fox in 1989

It's the best of Broadway and it's coming to The Fox in 1989.

Four award-winning Broadway productions will be star attractions at the downtown Detroit theater as part of a subscription series, the Best of Broadway.

The series kicks off Feb. 3-9 with Rodgers and Hammerstein's classic Broadway musical "South Pacific." Both a Tony and Grammy award

winning production, based on James A. Michener's best-selling novel, this legendary musical also won two Pulitzer prizes and had a record-setting five-year run on Broadway.

Robert Goulet will star in The Fox production, directed by Ron Field.

America's favorite funny man Tim Conway and "Newhart" television star Tom Poston will appear as the dynamic, but mismatched, duo in

Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple" April 25-30.

The winner of four Tony awards, the play revolves around the perils of middle-aged men having to resume a bachelor lifestyle while learning to get used to having each other as roommates.

THIS YEAR'S Tony Award winner for best musical, "Into the Woods,"

with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, will play The Fox May 16-21. Starring Cibo Laine, the musical recounts some of the world's best-loved fairy tales and then creates new endings.

Spectacular Topol re-creates his movie role on stage in the Tony Award winner "Fiddler on the Roof" Sept. 11-24. The story of Tevye, the

father of five daughters who struggles with the forces of Czarist repression in Russia, 1906, it was one of the longest running and most popular shows in theater history.

Tickets for the four-series subscription are on sale now. Ticket prices range from \$115 for main floor/mezzanine and \$95 for Gallery C on Friday and Saturday nights to \$95 for main floor/mezzanine and

\$65 for Gallery C for Saturday and Sunday matinees.

Tickets can be purchased by mail — send a stamped, self-addressed envelope, first and second performance day choices, seat selection, number of seats and check made payable to Olympia Avenue Inc., to Fox Theater Series, Fox Theater, 600 Civic Center Dr., Detroit 48226 — or by calling 547-0000.