

Dream fashions cruise the Nordstrom runway

By SUSAN DEMAGGIO
EDITOR

Maybe Woodward Avenue was the place to see fashionable cars last Saturday, but Nordstrom's was definitely the place to view fabulous fashions.

At their first birthday party Aug. 16, which doubled as a breakfast benefit for The Detroit Chapter of The Links, Nordstrom treated the early morning crowd to a high-on-style 30-minute trend show. The action followed a presentation by Barbara Smith, Afro-American model, restaurateur and author, who spoke about her career and new nationally-syndicated show *B. Smith With Style*. (Promoting Sunday, Sept. 21 at 7:30 a.m. on WDIV/Channel 4.)

According to store manager Chris Younker, the morning pro-

duced \$11,000 for The Links, a volunteer service organization. Among the crowd such Detroit boosters as Trudy Archer, Celeste Stokes McDermott, Martha Vincent, Betty Anne Price and Dr. Velma Mobley.

Smith, 47, was the first black model to make the cover of *Mademoiselle* magazine in 1976. She retired from modeling at 29, and went on to open two very successful restaurants in New York City and Washington D.C.

She told the audience that the way they treat people along the way "is so important."

"Fashion, style, friends and fun - those are my keys to life," she said with a wide grin. "It's also essential in this time and age to help out in the community."

She ended her speech by singing a few bars of "With A

Child's Heart," and remained at the store to meet patrons and sign copies of her book on entertaining.

Nordstrom played on the Dream Cruise theme, sending pairs and couples down the runway behind steering wheels and license plates reading "I brake for Nordstrom." The message of the day was "layering" in unique and colorful ways - like a slip dress topped by a mini skirt.

Charcoal-gray chalk stripe and pinstripe men's suits were brought to life by rich-hued shirts and bold-colored ties in shades of orange, royal and green.

Knitwear was mixed with velvets, tweeds, and wools. Suits sported both strong and soft shoulders. The silhouette of the season calls for longer jackets,

shorter skirts and higher heels.

Freelance fashion stylist M.J. Burns, said she was glad to see a fuller trouser this season.

"These slacks are definitely forgiving to women's figure," she said. "And I'm glad to see the higher heels are back. They make a woman's gait more sensual and feminine."

Jill Veneable of Orion Township called the collection "diverse" and "wonderful."

"I'm partial to St. John knits, but I may check out a few of the other departments this year," she said.

Nordstrom featured fashions from Vivienne Tam, Ellen Tracy, BCBG, Dana Buchman, Andrew Marc, Jones New York, Tommy Hilfiger, Escada, Sigrid Ilson, DKNY, Thierry Mugler, Richard Tyler, Valentino and their own exclusive lines, Great Garbo,

Brass Plum and Faconnable.

Wardrobe updates: colorful neckerchiefs and the multi-functional knee-length jacket.

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Drive my car: Fashion layering becomes fun and funky when patterns, length and colors are mixed.



Glamour gal: Ex-model Barbara Smith of New York, said she learned her catering skills from mom's kitchen in western Pennsylvania.



Trend alert: Lace hosiery and faux fur trim turn these outfits into something extraordinary.



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Thursday, September 4
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