

## Stars at Oscars make good and bad style choices

### BEAUTY AND THE BEST



JEFFREY BRUCE

Let's take a look at this year's Oscars, or the Good, the Bad and the What Were They Thinking? And, let's just free-associate.

Of course there are some right-wingers out there, but Whoopi Goldberg was hysterical. However, Whoopi was not as funny as her dress designer.

The evening's ceremony began with Whoopi in Queen Elizabeth garb and from there went aviary. Yes, aviary, as in birds. In fact, by midnight, Whoopi had, obviously, eaten and thrown an emu around her neck.

By show's end, she was wearing Trigger's horseshoe around her shoulders. Good to know that Val Kilmer's idiotic appearance with that horse was not for naught! But let's get to the heart of the matter: The gowns and the rags, the do's and the don'ts, the winners and the losers.

By far, the best makeup, hair and dress — the whole shebang — came from Geena Davis.

What can one say about Sophia Loren, except that she is the most spectacular woman on earth.

Then there was Gwyneth Paltrow. Phenomenal. Everything — the makeup, the gown, the crying acceptance speech — worked for me. What did not work was the side part in the hair (very Alfred E. Newman). She should have slicked it back straight.

Another stand-out was Judi Dench. Newly blonde, she looked, as the Brits would say, "smashing." Her makeup was beautiful and subtle — perfect for a middle-aged woman. She had great attitude, too. Bravo, Dame Judi!

Looking adorable was Anne Heche. But, then again, adorable works on someone as slight as she. Her hair, which is very thin, was layered and feathered properly, and she looked happy and lovely (pity about the dress, though).

As for who I thought was absolutely perfect, there is no contest. Jennifer Lopez made everyone on stage look like mince meat. Her makeup and hair were flawless. And, thank you, Jennifer, for not enshrining your derrière for the masses. The ball gown was magnificent!

Now for the fun part.

No one could surpass Celine Dion as the host of the evening. Not only was her jacket on backwards — the lapels were in the back — but she wore a hat upon arrival that was reminiscent of the headdress of a Northwest flight "stewardess." Oy. Then she sang with Andrea Bocelli (double oops). To me, Celine has always looked like a Bette Midler female impersonator. ... out of drag!

Liv Tyler: She has taken over the Princess Di visage, slumping, gazing through heavy eyelids at the camera. Perhaps the rubber band was too tight on her idiotic pig tail. But what a relief to see that her father has miraculously become Nancy Sinatra.

Drew Barrymore: Drew, Drew, cover the arms, doll. She has gone from baby fat to adult fat. Bad idea to do the sleeveless number. She's as adorable as can be, but there is just a touch of "Baby Jane" creeping in there.

So what have we learned dear students about style? I think the most important one has to do with hair. There really is no such thing as a day hair style or an evening hair style. Hair that falls below the shoulders with a strapless gown looks silly. "Up do's" look 100 years old.

How many of you noticed Steven Spielberg's (very lucky) wife, Kato Capshaw, in the audience. That's how a woman should look (hair-wise) in an evening gown.

As for makeup, the only real offender was Helen Hunt. She was doing a cross between Morticia Addams and Cher, circa 1965. You all saw how tired and awful she looked.

Compare her to the loveliness of Gwyneth, the excitement of Sophia, the excitement of Jennifer, and you'll get the idea.

Years ago, everyone wanted to look like a movie star. Still feel that way? Just be careful what you wish for and which star you have in mind when casting your wish.

Jeffrey Bruce will be conducting private makeovers at the Hotel Baronette in Novi during the next several months. For information, call 1-800-944-6588 or visit [jeffreybrucecosmetics.com](http://jeffreybrucecosmetics.com).

## A time for grandeur



**Majestic in taffeta:** Neiman Marcus couture designer Michael Casey designed this pale aqua taffeta ball gown, \$4,950 at Neiman Marcus, Somerset Collection in Troy.

**Grand form:** From Michael Casey's couture collection, this colorful gown, \$3,990 at Neiman Marcus, Somerset Collection in Troy, bares the shoulders, is composed of multiple layers of fabric, including tulle, and employs a variety of pastel colors to create a feminine but grand look for evening this spring.



**Flowing and full:** Strapless in metallic gray taffeta, this ball gown is priced at \$385 at Cache in the Somerset Collection in Troy.

## Almost forgotten, the ball gown returns to close the century

BY NICOLE STAFFORD  
SPECIAL EDITOR

Rich taffeta, full gathered skirts, strapless bodices, layers of fabric and flowing trains — these elegant, almost forgotten elements proclaimed their importance at the Oscar ceremony.

But Hollywood's display of style and this spring's collection of women's evening wear are merely a prelude to the force driving such grandeur.

"This whole kind of race to the finish line, to the millennium ... it's kind of a race to grandeur," said Neiman Marcus couture designer Michael Casey of this spring's evening attire for women.

Styled with majestic trains and voluminous skirts in fabrics like organza, taffeta and chiffon, these special occasion pieces — not merely dresses for evening galas — have soared to the level of the bygone ball gown.

Jane Bassett, special events director for Parisian at Laurel Park Place in Livonia, agreed. Indicative of the trend is a lavender gown — pastels and silver grays are in abundance — with multiple fabric layers and flowing sheer ties that fall to the ankles (\$155 at Parisian), said Bassett, adding, "We haven't seen trains for centuries, or, at least, decades."

But, even greater grandeur awaits.

"This is just a prelude," said Beverly Rice, senior vice president of fashion and merchandising strategy for Jacobson's. "If you saw the Academy Awards, what Gwyneth Paltrow wore was typical of the look ... but there will probably be an elaboration that is even more glamorous for millennium gowns."

News of special events for shoppers is included in this calendar. Send information to Malls & Mainstreets, c/o Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 605 East Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009; or fax (248) 644-1314. Deadline: Wednesday 6 p.m. for publication on Sunday.

SUNDAY, MARCH 28

### GET SUITED UP

Neiman Marcus, Somerset Collection in Troy, presents Swim Week through April 3. Leisure Sportswear, second floor.

### ORCHIDS AND ORCHIDS

The annual Palm Sunday Orchid Show at Laurel Park Place in Livonia runs noon-6 p.m. The show features 800-square-feet of orchids.

TUESDAY, MARCH 30

### GIORGIO ARMANI

View the spring and summer collection of Giorgio

## ADDED ATTRACTIONS

Armani at Neiman Marcus, Somerset Collection in Troy. Informal modeling 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Designer Sportswear, third floor.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

### MATILDA DODGE WILSON EXHIBIT

Neiman Marcus, Somerset Collection in Troy, presents Meadow Brook Hall Director Lisa Bayla Ashby and rarely viewed pieces from the Matilda Dodge Wilson collection, 2:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 1

### STUART WEITZMAN

View Stuart Weitzman's collection of shoes at Jacobson's in Birmingham, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Women's Shoe

Salon.

### BALLY SHOES

Saks Fifth Avenue, Somerset Collection in Troy, introduces the spring 1999 Bally special order footwear collection for men, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. through April 10. Men's Shoes, first floor.

SATURDAY, APRIL 3

### SING TO THE SUN

Borders Books & Music in Birmingham presents singer and songwriter Lisa Hunter in a children's program featuring interactive stories, songs and an ecological craft project for kids, 11 a.m.

### BEARS AND STORIES

Jesse Bear, Nancy Carlstrom's cuddly bear will appear for children's story time about the character at Borders Books & Music in Farmington Hills, 11 a.m.