



Colorful designs characterize Bessi's style.



Lavender and red meet in floral silk print

Bessi fashions color creations

By CHRISTINE WALDEN

"Color esse de muzek" and so Sicore Bessi's collection is a medley of beautiful songs.

Bessi, an Italian untouched by American ways, speaks very little and very broken English. Yet, talking to him is a delight and a challenge as he pleasantly says thank-you when asked a question.

But his designs, recently at Bonwit &eller, speak for him... at least his aesthetic values. There he combines peaches and pinks, blacks and turquoise, purple and reds into designs that convey the feminine, full-figured woman. They cling where cling looks good; they flow and they have no age or size.

Bessi, now a flourishing designer, joined the work force 44 years ago.

AFTER A stint with Pucci, the purveyor of the dramatic print, Bessi went on his own. That was 14 years

is a favorite with thousands of women.

"I like what I do," he said. "I love what I do. I don't think I'd ever be able to keep away from it."

When you translate the heavily accented English you realize his love for color—not traditional colors in traditional uses, but combinations that only go together on a Bessi gown.

"I am very happy for my colors," he said.

The cut of the gowns, dresses and pants ensembles are also important. They compliment the female figure. His version of the cocktail dress takes a sharp plunge at the neckline without being obnoxiously revealing.

GOWNS SCOOP gently at the neck and end in flowing, floor-length skirts. Tops are cut in the shape of the torso rather than just cut and stretched into position.

And every ensemble has a Bessi scarf to match.

"I make scarves in six different fabrics of different prints for all the dresses," he said.

He pulls out a scarf and goes through endless variations before draping it around the model's neck or trying it at the waist. The scarves, Bessi said, can change a look.

Bessi arrives in the United States about four times a year. Every visit increases his respect for American women (and perhaps his English).

"AMERICAN WOMEN are always feminine," he said. "And they are always full of life. Each time I come over they get better."

American designers, he said, seem to start with a flourish and end with a fizzle.

"When they start they are very strong. They are unique and good. As they go along and when they get to the top they don't work as much and they are less creative," he said. "But things are getting better now."

He said the difference between American and European designers is lack of ownership by a large company.

In his Florence, Italy, studio Bessi is his own man. No one gets a piece of the profit; no one tells him what he should or should not do. Consequently, he designs from start to finish—the colors, the fabric and the line.

The result is totally Bessi and totally appealing.



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