

Designing like folding paper



DOMINIC ROMPOLLO

By MARY CONNELLY

If you're not good at working jigsaw puzzles, you could have trouble learning to design and sew fashions under the guidance of Dominic Rompollo.

The New York designer creates romantic looks of swirling chiffon and draping jersey with the cool mathematical calculation of fitting puzzle pieces together.

In a sewing classroom at Wayne State University (WSU) last week, the Detroit-based designer taught a rare course in fashion designing. The five-day session was a first for both Rompollo and Wayne State.

Rompollo, who designed for both Geoffrey Beene and Telt Traips before striking out on his own, likens his designing to the Japanese paper folding technique of Origami.

"Cocoon" dresses styled with full sleeves and ample sleeves are cut from one piece of fabric. Devoid of side seams, shoulder seams and sleeve seams, the fabric is folded into a dress through the use of a seamed front yoke.

"I WORK in odd, strange shapes," said the designer, "not just two side seams and a set-in sleeve."

"I approach designing very mathematically."

Illustrating, he unfolded a paper pattern divided into squares. When cut on the bias of fabric and properly matched, the right angles of the squares fold into a circular tube dress. The seaming on the design is reminiscent of the revolving stripes of a barbershop pole.

Geometric shapes are important to Rompollo, although the final result of his designing is anything but angular and sharp.

He describes his cape-coat design in terms of two triangles atop one another. By the visual impact of the short-caped shoulder and full skirt is fluid and rounded.

His designs also incorporate fabric-conservation techniques.

study of fabric grains are essential to achieving the look of soft folds and draped lines, he explained.

But once mastered, the shapes can be interpreted in multiple fabrics and moods.

"Purity of design lends itself to innumerable interpretations," Rompollo said. "Good shape is limitless."

Working with five basic designs, the 31 students enrolled in the WSU course created numerous style variations.

LAURINE WAYMAN of Bloomfield Hills cut Rompollo's "barber-shop pole" bias tube into a hood. Others styled it into a top or short and evening length dresses.

The designer's "cocoon" design, cut from one piece of fabric, was worked into a daytime-length wool dress by Marie Stuart of Birmingham. Others shortened the style into a sashed sportswear top.

"I just wanted to stimulate their creative thinking as far as working with patterns," said Rompollo, who in one design styled a sleeve which is a raglan in front and set-in in back.

The offering of designer-instructed courses to qualified seamstresses in the Detroit area may be continued at WSU under the tutelage of various designers.

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**Delp-Houghton**

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Delp, 23425 Barfield, Farmington Hills, announce the engagement of their daughter Susan Carol to Peter Floyd Houghton, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Houghton, 28825 Wilmarth, Farmington.

The bride-elect and her fiancé are both graduates of Farmington High School. She is employed by Michigan Roofing and Sheet Metal, Inc., and he by Ace Control.

The couple plans to be wed in August.



**Mr. and Mrs. Michael Pease**

Janet Suzanne Jaster and Michael Pease were married in ceremonies officiated by the Rev. Eric Hammer in United Orchard Methodist Church.

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Jaster, 32478 Dunford, Farmington Hills, and he is the son of Mr. and Mrs. J.J. Pease Jr., 33555 Quaker Valley, Farmington Hills.

The bride wore a gown of off-white jersey with pearl bead trim, fashioned with an empire waistline. She carried a bouquet of white roses and peach stephanotis and wore matching flowers in her hair.

The couple received guests at the German-American Cultural Center before leaving on a wedding trip to Cape Cod, Mass.

They will make their new home in Plymouth.

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