

Headgear turning heads

by CHRISTINE WALDEN

Frank Olive says men have been stealing the fashion spotlight for years. He also says women are countering by dressing up.

The result is softer, feminine clothing and hats to match.

Olive, the hat designer par excellence and the man who topped Lucille Ball for "Mame," was recently in at Jacobson's matching new hats to familiar heads.

And there was a lot of matching to do.

"The hat is probably the most personal and the most rewarding item," said Olive. "Clothes are more expensive so the accessory becomes important. Instead of buying different clothes, women are accessorizing."

THE REVIVED status of headgear also means that hats are changing heads.

No longer do they belong to the tea and crumpet set or the flamboyant avant garde. Everyone, especially the

young, are donning them.

"A lot of the younger customers are buying now," said Olive. "They seem to be more playful with their choices."

Also, all shapes and sized heads are fitting into hats, dispelling the old adage that some people just can't wear them.

There are very few women I can't help. But the hat has to fit, no matter how beautiful it is. If it doesn't fit it won't look right. Even pin heads can wear a hat that's balanced."

Olive said he creates hats in line with designer styles and some styles require different types of hats.

FOR EXAMPLE, a hat designed for the Anne Klein collection will differ from a hat designed for the John Anthony collection. The collections have two different looks and women must change hats to match.

However, Olive also said women should use individuality and imagination with their wardrobes.

The customer who wears a total, straight-out-of-the-package ensemble is olive's idea of "a boring customer. She doesn't want to make any faux pas. But I'd rather see a person with bad taste than no taste at all."

He also prefers women who aren't overly conscious of their clothes or the quantity of them.

"A WOMAN who is not a clothes horse is my favorite customer. She's fashionable and secure."

She knows her style and sticks with an aspect Olive likes.

Olive travels extensively with his new collections. His recent tour indicated that there is a new awareness among women. A move toward femininity, looking good or getting the scene back from men, or perhaps, a move toward rewarding the man.

"Men enjoy women who look very feminine. If a guy takes you out and spends some money on you, you better reward him by looking rather smashing."



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