

Free form: the spring look

By SHELLEY EICHENHORN

Fashion plates will be under the "big top" in a romantic carnival of fashion from Paris and London come spring and summer.

The free-form look introduced for fall and winter of '74 is being carried over and translated into new loosely-sleeved blouses, many with an oriental look to be worn with almost everything.

The newest in spring and summer wear from London and Paris was previewed by Hudson's this week while thoughts in Detroit area were on snow. **THE TOP** will be seen over slacks or snugly tucked into sashed skirts of all lengths—from just below the knee to the floor.

Even the mini, newly christened the "skimp" by Women's Wear Daily, is making a spring comeback in the Halston collection.

"The emphasis is on proportion and the mood is gay. There's nothing stuffy or serious," said Madeline Coe, Hudson's fashion director, of the new designs.

Ms. Coe just returned from a hectic two week buying trip in London and Paris where she selected from the ready-to-wear collections of MichMac, Kenzo, Philip Sauve, Vicadam and Mary Faran. The fashions are due to arrive in Detroit late in January.

IN THE NEW collections, the waistline is accentuated by the cinched, wrap-around look of tiered, flounced and flowing skirts. "The tops are so big and the skirts are so full, that the waist naturally looks small," said Ms. Coe. Pockets, buttons and matching trim for skirts and tops tie the separates together.

Skirts and dresses take the limelight away from slacks. But pant lovers need not panic. What Ms. Coe calls American contemporary classicism is reflected in St. Laurent's waisted pant.

"They're well tailored and the way Detroit likes to dress," she said.

LAYERING, especially with the "big top" (dresses by Tattarachi, was seen in Paris. "They wear the dress with a sweater one day or a blouse the next. For evening, the dress goes out alone with beads that pick up the colors," Ms. Coe said.

"The French women are collecting tons of jewelry," she said. "They're wearing bracelets by the armload and the jeweler's hoop is back for earrings."

The romantic, sexy, feminine look is dressed up in bright stripes and tiny flowering prints on peasant tops. Kenzo, MichMac and St. Laurent paint bold strokes in shades of shocking pink, brilliant turquoise, bright green, orange and gold.

The new "Paris Neutrals" are shaded in olive drab, banana beige and camel tan, a combination often used together.

PALE COLORS like lilac and violet are big as well as rose pink, sky blue and pale green.

For daytime, colors are striped on natural fabrics, mostly cotton gabardine, poplin, chambray and broadcloth. Some of the prettiest dresses are jacketed with bare-shouldered, barely-strapped sun dresses underneath.

Wedges and little-girl flats with Mary Jane and T-straps are shown for day.

Evenings are dressed up in the same flowing skirts and tops reappearing in raw silk and crepe de chene, sheer, lustrous hose cling in neutral colors. "The legs look like they've been dripped in cool water," Ms. Coe said.

"Evening shoes are sandals with high, thin heels that leave the foot practically nude."

CURLS, CURLS and more curls top off the spring-summer look in coiffures.

Straw hats dyed to match, summer berets, scarf hats and coolie hats go over the curls.

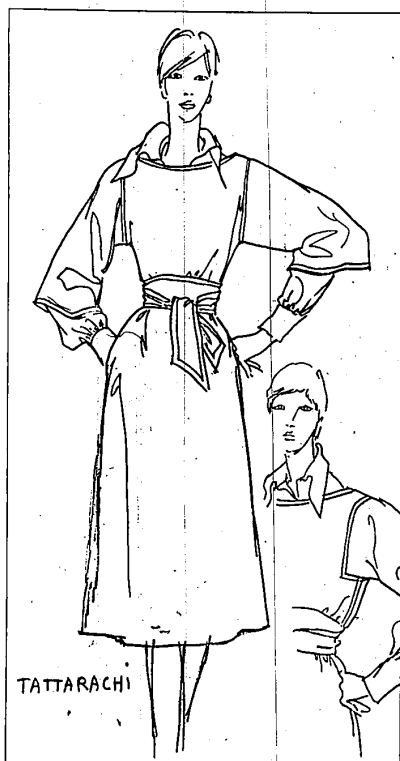
WHAT ABOUT PRICES? "Boots in Paris are selling for \$150 a pair," Ms. Coe reports. "Natural fibers, like silk and cotton bring the price up."

Better buys are to be found in clothes from the Far East where prices are reported to be lower.



MIC MAC

The 'big top' will be the 'in' top for spring and summer. Shown above by MicMac, it's free-form and comfortable. Loose fitting continues in Tattarachi's blouse under dress (left) with sashed waistline. The look is also carried through in Bercher's raincoat (bottom left), Arvel's 'American classicism' blouse and pant (bottom center) and oriental ensemble by Costas (bottom right).



TATTARACHI



BERCHER

ARVEL

COSTAS