

Designer scours world for fabrics

BY CORINNE ABATT

The one thing you regret when you run into the likes of designer Sheila Devlin who recently showed her collection at Jacobson's is that you didn't think of it first.

Ms. Devlin, a Boston expatriate who now makes her home in the Cajun country of Opelousas, La., has created a going business from a rather ordinary idea. So going, in fact, that while she was at Jacobson's, buyers literally bought the clothes off her back.

Longtime traveler and compulsive fabric buyer, Ms. Devlin's husband one day yelled a loud "Enough!" She started the business to appease him and make use of some luxurious, antique fabric bolts.

Close at hand was a marvelous resource—excellent seamstresses anxious to make a buck or two. Cajun women are trained to sew as children by their grandmothers, and Opelousas had, until Ms. Devlin came along, few work opportunities for the women.

A cottage industry was formed quickly. Her first venture was to take a half dozen or so dresses to Market Week in Dallas in 1976—the acceptance was instantaneous. Before she got back home, she was on the phone with her seamstresses arranging for a stock of orders to be filled.

BUT, CLOTHES, flowing tunic tops and cocktail dresses from elegant silks from China, India or Burma, are only part of the Devlin endeavor. Every scrap of lovely fabric is used—the smallest for coin purses and notebook covers, the largest to line a bed comfort in flowered, gold embroidered damask.

Ms. Devlin, a former model, does all the designing, and this year's loose styles are ideal for they require less cutting. For instance, she frequently toams a wrap kimono jacket in a rare, exotic print with white pants of new silk. Or an Oriental style, narrow sheath of antique fabric may go over contrasting pants of new silk.

In her book, if she uses new fabric to go with her treasured, silk goes with silk with no substitutes on quality.

Everything is hand made, something the seamstresses do beautifully, just like the fine clothes of 100 years ago when the inside was almost as pretty as the outside.

Since Ms. Devlin's clothes and accessories are something of a financial investment, although below many other designer collections, she suggests her material be saved and reused for other items, just as she does right now.

She covers the world on her shop-

ping tours many times a year, often walking the narrow back streets in search of the old and the beautiful. But it has paid off handsomely. For, plus the satisfaction of a successful

business in two years time and a well-earned mat in many of the world's fine stores, there is the knowledge that her industry is supporting many women and young people in Opelousas.



Cover for a book in which to keep very special notes is made of embroidered silk from one of the far corners of the earth. Designer Sheila Devlin uses her small scraps to make ordinary functional articles things of beauty. (Staff photos by Dick Kelley)

Thursday, August 3, 1978

(S.F.7C)

SEMI ANNUAL Sale

20% off Everything in the studio!
including all accessories in our Boutique.

50% off on select items

10% or 15% off all special orders!

Sherwood Studios
FINE FURNITURE TO LIVE WITH
Tel-Twelve Mall, 12 Mile / Telegraph • 10-9 Mon-Sat. • 354-9060

\$1995

- ★ 20 year limited warranty
- ★ One day installation
- ★ Won't rot or rust

Imagine! An in-ground pool for less than half the price you would normally pay! Advanced, simplified construction makes it a snap to install... even if you've never lifted a hammer before. Once you have the excavation, your pool can be operating in less than a day (if you like, we'll dig the hole too for only \$200). Kit includes non-corrosive polymer walls with built-in coping, life border liner, filter, pump, motor and skimmer. And if you choose, we'll include a classy 8-foot stairway for an additional charge. Only from Aqua Star Michigan's pool people.

FREE SEMINAR! PUBLIC WELCOMED.
Come in for a free demonstration on how easy it is to install this pool. Call us for more information.

Convenient Bank Financing Available

28875 Joy Road
(bet. Middlebelt & Inkster)
Westland 425-8830

Open Mon-Sat, 10-9 Sunday 12-5

Mesita Volcanic Stone
Red or Black \$98.00
4.25 1.8 cubic feet bag
Boulders 12" to 15" pound \$12.95
Black Diamond Edging \$12.95
Crushed Sponge Rock
Boulders 8" pound \$6.50
DELIVERY AVAILABLE

BUSHY STOP
1512 S. Newburgh
Westland
721-1733

Ford Rd.
Michigan Ave.

PUBLIC ART AUCTION
ONLY ORIGINAL GRAPHICS, POSTERS, and OIL PAINTINGS WILL BE SOLD

**TONIGHT/THURSDAY
AUGUST 3**
PREVIEW 6:30 pm
AUCTION 7:30 pm

SOMERSET INN
BIG BEAVER ROAD, east of COOLIDGE
TROY, MICHIGAN

ALL WORK
CUSTOM FRAMED
AND READY TO HANG

FREE ADMISSION
BOTH AMERICAN
MASTERCARD
AMERICAN EXPRESS

Smiley Brothers
"A TRUSTED NAME IN MUSIC"

**Baldwin
Hammond
Allen**

Birmingham • Detroit • Dearborn

SAGGING CANE chairs can be made to look like new again. Simply wet the cane thoroughly, then let dry naturally. The cane will shrink and tighten. Apply a coat or two of varnish for lasting life. Enjoy exciting results when you sell something with an Observer & Eccentric Classified Ad.

**BUDGET ROOM SPECIALS
MON., TUES., and WED.**

- Shampoo, Set, and Towel \$4.50 up
- Hair Cut \$4.00 up
- Permanent Complete \$12.00 up
- Tints Complete \$12.00 up

Betty Hansen
Hairstylist
CALL 534-8821 • 7 Mile and Grand River
Appointments Not Always Necessary

Rite CARPET
America's Finest Carpet Mills.
Largest Selection in the Area.

Featuring
LEE'S & KARASTAN CARPETS
at lowest prices

7 Mile at Middlebelt across from Livonia Mall 476-8360
8497 W. Grand River Outside Brighton Mall 1-227-1314

**Dennis E. Moffett, P.C.
Attorney Fee Schedule**

DIVORCE

Maximum	\$200
Minimum	\$125

Bankruptcy \$200
D.U.I.L. \$100
(drunk driving)
Wills \$25
(Husband & Wife)
Hourly Rate \$20

254 S. Telegraph, Pontiac
682-5500

Sealy Limited Edition Hotel Mattress

Now you can sleep on the mattress designed by Sealy for Detroit's leading hotels

Sealy

The same tough, extra quality of the mattress specially designed by Sealy for the DETROIT PLAZA HOTEL

The same durable quality core of the mattress specially designed by Sealy for the HOTEL PONTCHARTRAIN

Another reason why No. 1 in sales

If your taste runs to the contemporary, every piece of furniture on our floor will please you at our - **Totally Contemporary Stores**

hillside furniture

NEW LIVONIA LOCATION:
Six Mile and Newburgh Rd.
Newburgh Plaza • 2 miles W. of Farmington Rd.
(or east 1/2 mile) Phone 454-4253
Open Mon., Tues., Thurs. and Fri. 10-9; Wed. and Sat. 10-5:30; Sun. 12-5

Original Bloomfield Hills Location:
Corner Woodward and Square Lake Road
Phone 334-4745 or 358-3399

You Would Normally Pay up to \$89.95 per sq. ft., twin size

Special Offer for ONE WEEK ONLY!

\$68

39"x75" twin size, ea. pc.

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!

54"x75" full size, ea. pc. \$88
60"x80" queen size, ea. pc. \$118
76"x80" king size, 3-pc. set \$318

Now you can buy the quality bedding bought by the best hotels

O'BRIEN'S
MAN'S WORLD

INVENTORY REDUCTION SALE LAST 2 WEEKS
SAVE UP TO 50%

We must move hundreds of suits and sport coats out of our inventory to make room for our new fall and winter fashions. Save up to 50% on hundreds of brand name suits and sport coats, now!

Featuring such names as:

- Nino Cerruti
- Rubin Bros.
- Louis Roth
- Phoenix
- Lorwin
- LeBaron
- Johnny Carson
- Damon

O'BRIEN'S
MAN'S WORLD
DISTINCTIVE APPAREL

3 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS:
GRAND AND (Fork at Grand River)
835-4424
• MIDDLEBELT (LOT E) 569-5885
• LIVONIA (7 Mile of Farmington Rd.) 450-0000
All Stores Open Sunday 12 to 5 pm
Sales Ends August 14, 1978

CHARGE IT! Apply for an O'Brien's personal charge card and make shopping easy anywhere in the area.