

He belts out high fashion looks



By RUSTLE SHAND

Carlos Falchi has become a veritable charmer in the short time his fabulous snakeskin accessories have been on the market.

When he brought his one-of-a-kind designs to Claire Pearson's Somerset Mall shop recently, he featured a new tobacco collection. Made of quilted shades, the crushable, soft bags are designed to act as a wardrobe accent as well as a carry-all.

Falchi colors go from cream and pastels into tans, dark browns and grays. He designs his combinations so that, in addition to being interesting artistically, a woman need not change handbags when she changes the color of her clothing.

Falchi became a designer at age 16 when he began to design stamps for the government post office in Rio de Janeiro. When he came to the United States, he came without money, friends or knowledge of the English language. But, he noted, he came well supplied with dreams and a good measure of ambition.

The road that led Carlos Falchi to a successful career in fashion was marked with many detours. Once, he did a three-month stint as busboy in Miami, then went a similar route in upstate New York hotels.

His entry into the sophisticated world of fashion was more accidental than planned, he said.

"I worked for a film company and earned very little. One day my wife, Mary, went out and came back with a belt that she wasn't really happy with, but it was the best she could find. I made her return it and we went out together and bought some leather and I made a belt."

She loved the belt, he said, and as luck would have it so did his boss, who just happened to also own a boutique. "He asked me to do some belts for him," Falchi said. "After filling his order, I made five more belts with the remaining leather and I sold them within the week. And that's where it all started."

AT THIS POINT Falchi got the inspiration for his first handbag. "It was absolutely beautiful and I became so

enthusiastic that I decided to try a skirt for Mary. I really felt an affinity with leather and I was inspired to explore the possibilities of working with various skins."

Falchi's efforts with silk kaftans caught the eye of a musician friend, Airtio Moreira, a percussionist with jazz impressionist Miles Davis, who hired Falchi to design his stage wardrobe.

"Miles Davis was a unique experience. We became friends and I learned a lot from him, as I have from every one who has crossed my path over these years," said the fashion star.

Through Davis, Falchi began making costumes for Tina Turner, Mick Jagger, The Grateful Dead, Flora Purim and Maria Lucien of Bow-Bow Productions in New York.

As Falchi's horizons expanded, he decided to concentrate on the creation of new leather designs. His style is based on an Art-Deco motif that can be multiplied into many patterns by combining the natural colors of the skins and their unique shapes within the space of a given format.

"I took six address books to Henri Bendel and by the time I arrived home, the buyer had already telephoned an order for another dozen. Mary and I made forty-two books in a day."

Next came wallets, then clutch bags. His most recent project is the tobacco collection of carry-alls. The collection and his belts, which are made in 17 different color combinations, are exclusive here to Claire Pearson.

In January, Falchi promises to introduce a line of snakeskin shoes, "with no two pair alike," he said.



Carlos Falchi has designed for such legendary figures as jazz impressionist Miles Davis. Now he is devoting his considerable talents to creating elegant collectable accessories for a growing number of area women. (Staff photos by Stephen Cantrell)

fashion calendar

Monday, Dec. 18

Alfred's Restaurant — Fashions from various shops in the Somerset Mall will be modeled from 12:30-2:30 p.m. daily in Alfred's Restaurant in the mall. Following is the schedule for the week. Monday, fashions from Bonwit Teller; Tuesday, Lingerique; Wednesday, Don Thomas Sporthaus; Thursday, Bonwit Teller; Friday, Rodier; and Saturday, Tennis Lady and Robert Furs.

Sak's Fifth Avenue — Art Jacoby will be at the Troy store today and tomorrow with his jewelry collection. Adrian Arpel invites you to make an appointment with her for a personal beauty consultation today or tomorrow in the beauty salon. She represents Arpel Cosmetics. Anne Klein separates for spring '80 will be informally modeled in Sportswear on the first floor.

Hudson's — Chef Miles Chelka of the Golden Mushroom Restaurant will prepare Duck Cuisse, tender duck roasted in sherry brown sauce with cherries, in this display of holiday cooking from 12:30-2:30 p.m. at the Oakland Mall store.

Tuesday, Dec. 19

Sak's Fifth Avenue — The Calvin Klein collection of resorting sportswear will be informally modeled today in Designer Sportswear on the first floor.

Cooper's Arms — Designer fashions from Janet Varner of Rochester are modeled informally from noon to 1:30 p.m. every Tuesday through May in the Cooper's Arms Restaurant, 306 Main St. in downtown Rochester.

Hudson's — Chef Sture Anderson of Jacques Restaurant will include his prize winning recipes in a demonstration of holiday cooking from 12:30-2:30 p.m. in the Oakland Mall store.

Wednesday, Dec. 20

Sak's Fifth Avenue — Jeanne-Marc soars towards spring with the colorful new terry "Bird Togs" in Designer Sportswear on the first floor. Adolfo will introduce his signature-style knits today and tomorrow in the Regency Room on the third floor.

Hudson's — Joanne Goodfriend of Healthy Jones Restaurant will suggest good-tasting food that is also good for you in her demonstration from 12:30-2:30 p.m. in the Oakland Mall store.

Thursday, Dec. 21

Hudson's — The Juvenile Diabetes Foundation invites you to attend a premiere showing of Universal

Studios' "The Jerk" starring Steve Martin and Bernadette Peters. Hudson's will sponsor this benefit with proceeds going to the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation for research on the cause and cure of diabetes. Tickets are tax deductible and are available from the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation by calling 357-2343. The showing is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. tonight at the Northland Theater.

Sak's Fifth Avenue — Gutter swim and beachwear will be shown in Active Sportswear on the first floor.

Hudson's — Learn how to create delicious puff pastries in this tempting demonstration from noon to 2 p.m. at the Oakland Mall store.

Friday, Dec. 22

Sak's Fifth Avenue — Representative Ellen Harp brings Blassport colorful new ideas for the 80's to Designer Sportswear on the first floor.

Saturday, Dec. 23

Hudson's — Good old-fashioned bread like mom used to make will be featured in a demonstration by home economist Linda Giuliani from noon to 2 p.m. in the Oakland Mall store. Tickets for the SS Happiness Santa Breakfast are \$2.95 and are available at Hudson's Ticket Service. Tickets must be purchased in advance at the store where you will attend. Breakfasts are scheduled at 9 a.m. today at the Northland, Westland, Oakland, and downtown stores.

Sak's Fifth Avenue — Evan Picone fashions, traditionally a favorite for the classic collector, will be modeled informally in Designer Sportswear from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. today.

Sunday, Dec. 24

Chudik's of Birmingham — Chudik will open its doors from 1-5 p.m. today and next Sunday to accommodate holiday shoppers.

Oscar's — Ted Dallas of Wind and Iron Hair Salon in Novi will present a hair and fashion show at 8 p.m. tonight at Oscar's, 28625 Northwestern Highway in Southfield. All the models will display new hair styles designed in Italy.

Ceresia & Office — The store will be open every Sunday until Christmas from noon to 5 p.m. **Sak's Fifth Avenue** — A brunch featuring food from the Magic Pan Creperie will be held from 11 a.m. to noon in the Somerset Mall at the entrance to Sak's. A mini-show of holiday dressing will also be held.



Falchi's crushable quilted leather handbags are on one-of-a-kind collector's items that can be worn with a variety of outfits because of their unusual coloration and designs.

Where It's At

By JUDY SOLOMON

Executive treats

If you're already too busy holiday shopping for your family, baking, decorating, carpooling, volunteering at part-timing, and your husband asks you to select gifts for his business associates, don't panic. Let your fingers do the talking and Jean Sucher, manager of Saks Corporate Gifts Department, will be delighted to do the walking. Jean knows Sak's merchandise backwards and forwards and will select the gifts for in addition to arranging for wrapping, enclosures and delivery. There is no charge for her services and the price of gifts can range from \$6 each to "way up to the sky." Jean Sucher, Saks Fifth Avenue, Troy, 643-9000, ext. 228.

It's a Corker

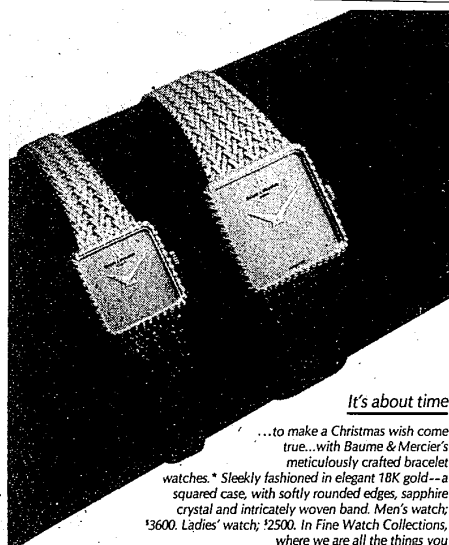
It's the definitive gift for the chocoholics in your life. Sydney Bogg molds hand-dipped chocolate into the actual shape of a champagne bottle, cork and all (\$9.75). The neck and top of the bottle are solid chocolate. The hollow bottom is filled with foil-wrapped liquid center cherry cordials. Better yet, the shop will fill the hollow (at no extra charge) with any item that will fit such as a ring, earrings, cufflinks or whatever. One week's advance notice is requested for custom orders. Sydney Bogg Chocolates: Great Oaks Mall, Rochester, 651-0707; 3600 W. Maple, Birmingham, 646-0344 and in The Holiday Market Center, 1205 S. Main, Royal Oak, 398-0344.

Jam Sessions

Scrooge would not approve, but your office staff should be thrilled. Sunday's Croissants will package special breakfast boxes (\$4.25 each) and deliver them anywhere in the greater Detroit area. Each box includes two fresh croissants, a jar of imported jam, a container of orange juice, a plastic knife and a colorful paper napkin and cup. Orders must be placed four days in advance and the minimum order is for 20 people. Sunday's Croissants, 355-3778.

Presenting

When you use only one pattern of paper and only one color of ribbon to wrap your holiday gifts, it becomes boring to do and boring to look at. Keeping that in mind, you should know about Oogie where you'll find the best selection of gift wrapping supplies in town. They stock ribbons in various colors, tartan plaids, checks, stripes, polka dots, prints and solids. Some are made of acetate satin, others are velvet and there are also old-fashioned tinsel metallic ribbons and tinsel cords. The store also has over 40 patterns of Christmas wrapping papers plus gift bags in many sizes. Oogie, Village Knoll Shopping Center, Maple at Lahser, Birmingham 647-0740.



It's about time

...to make a Christmas wish come true...with Baume & Mercier's meticulously crafted bracelet watches. * Sleekly fashioned in elegant 18K gold--a squared case, with softly rounded edges, sapphire crystal and intricately woven band. Men's watch; \$3600. Ladies' watch; \$2500. In Fine Watch Collections, where we are all the things you are...gifts just right for you.

*Warranty available without charge upon written request to Saks Fifth Avenue.

Saks Fifth Avenue

Saks Fifth Avenue, Troy, Somerset Mall, Big Beaver at Coolidge open Monday through Friday, 10:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M., Saturdays, 10:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. Sundays, Noon to 5:00 P.M.