

Fashions

For fall – economy, ecology, eccentricity

By Denise Lucas
special writer

THE BEVY of designers who "suggest" to us what we put in our closets and on our bodies each season are definitely inspired and influenced by the signs of the times.

Look back in history and notice the garments of each century or decade. The modus operandi reveals the lifestyle, attitudes and morals of each epoch. From the sophisticated Egyptians, to the baroque Renaissance period to the hippie movement of this century . . . fashion exposes all.

The en-vogue ethos of autumn 1991 is no different. This season, designers were influenced by the economy, the environment and our need for individual expression with a smattering of eccentricity.

● ECONOMY
Entering yet another season of a recession, Americans have tightened their purse strings and the runway rags reflected the crunch.

There has become a trend toward casual, wearable clothes with the emphasis away from the "Dynasty/Nancy" era to a focus on "real life."

Making the dollar stretch means stretching our wardrobe. The importance of investing in quality clothes for day focuses our attention on "suit dressing" . . . power pieces that can be changed around for greater versatility. Watch for suits in optimistic brights, lively tartans and playful plaids.

The big news in fashion was the emergence of lower-priced designer lines. Anne Klein came out with its affordable "A Line," Ellen Tracy introduced "Company" and Esenda acquainted us with "Aprori." A well-received awareness.

Washable silks, opaque tights with everything this fall (they last much

longer than sheer hosiery) and a de-emphasis on jewelry all reflect our need to conserve.

With the ornamentation of whimsical buttons (how about hot and cold faucet handles found on a spirited plaid suit at Claire Pezono, Troy), metallic studded dresses and leather jackets (at Guys N Gals, West Bloomfield) and the use of bold zippers on everything, the pounds of jewels of former seasons will be kept tucked away.

Yes, even the rich and famous are affected. "Big night out" dresses and designer ball gowns have moved away from elaborate, long, sequin numbers to short, shorter, shorter in flirty, fall dance skirts, slim slip silhouettes and bubble hemlines. A conservation of fabrics . . . with satin, taffeta chiffon and silks the front-running fabrics for evening.

● ECOLOGY
The "save the earth" consciousness explains the rugged, earthy fashion saga this season. Designers looked toward the environment or perhaps it was the Pacific Northwest woodsman from "Twin Peaks" and Kevin Costner's "Dances with Wolves" that put quilted fabrics on little slip dresses (spotted at Edward Dorion, Birmingham) and Eddie Bauer plaids and tartans on everything.

Suited western garb, over-the-knee boots and haute couture fake furs represent our reverence for world wildlife and the back-to-nature revolution.

● ECCENTRICITY
Fall's fashion rebellion reflects our desire to "break all the rules." We don't want to be told what to wear.

You may wonder what bright spring and summer's color palette is doing in the traditionally earth tones season of autumn, it's because we want them . . . hot pink, chinese yellow, fuchsia, turquoise, blue, burners orange and key lime are making the greatest color explosion since the neons.

Fashion has emerged from our fitness and athletic lifestyle. The skinny silhouettes of ski pants and biker pants have transcended into active, weekend and evening wear. Scuba dresses and Scuba jackets inspired by California wave riders have become city chic.

More rebellious renderings for fall will include aerobic-influenced body and cat suits, black leather biker jackets, harlequin prints, black patent handbags, belts and shoes (another season irreverence), modern art motif prints on classic silk blouses and blazers (discovered at Saks Fifth Avenue), Karl Lagerfeld's "nouveau rapper" (long vinyl coats over short skirts, fishnet hose, pounds of gold and funky caps), exaggerated mixing of patterns, prints, casual with glamorous, hard with soft (leathers over



Shades of stripes shout "anything goes" this fall. Short double-knit, cotton cardigan jacket in native American-inspired, four-color-pattern layers over a ribbed turtleneck tunic in a coordinated stripe over black cotton leggings. Sally's Designs, West Bloomfield.

chiffon), and an explosion of clear sequins on plaid (shown at Episodic, Troy). An absence of rules . . . the "have it your way" attitude.

● EXPRESSIONS

In brief, the voice of fashion will explode with enthusiasm and emotion . . . watch for these top 10 tempting trends for fall '91:

— Electric colors . . . vivid

brights and jewel tones from head to toe . . . hats, gloves, hose, shoes and everywhere in between.

— Zippers . . . whether functional or decorative . . . there on everything . . . bold center seams, shoes, boots, blazers, coats.

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AUTUMN EXPRESSIONS



Denise Lucas

Tracking the trends.

That's the spirit of this special fall fashion section, appearing today in all editions of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

To those who helped assemble this preview of what's perking on the fall fashion scene, we offer a hearty thank you.

Cranbrook Educational Community in Bloomfield Hills provided the setting for our one-day color show. Picture-perfect grounds and terrific summer weather teamed to turn the outing into a winner. We offer special thanks to Cranbrook representative Katie Kelly, who helped plan our day. Thanks also go out to these hair stylists and makeup artists from Salon Kenzie-Bashar in Farmington Hills for their creative talents and cooperation: Todd Skog, Holbe Nelson and Sherry Robertson.

ABOUT THE COVER

Summer brights transcend autumn. Expect the unexpected . . . yellow for fall. Long over short. Chic and influenced, double-breasted, two-piece suit. Important touches . . . cross your heart purse, black head band, yellow base, black leather pump. From Claire Pezono, Somerset Collection, Troy. Staff photographer Jim Jagfeld took the picture.

Fashion writer Denise Lucas and O&E special sections editor Bob Sklar coordinated this section. O&E graphics editor Randy Bort designed the section, including the cover.

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