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FASHION

Jacket coordinates well with pants or skirt

DEAR EUNICE FARMER: I would like to make a suit with a jacket and skirt that match. I am tall and would like a longer jacket. However, I have read about the fitted look. Help! — Dottie D.

Dear Dottie: Vogue 1411, sized 6-22, is a perfect suit to begin the new season. It has a longer jacket, the very recent return of the Peter Pan collar and top-stitch detailing.

SEW SIMPLE

This pattern can be easily adjusted to a shorter length, in which case you could eliminate the pockets. You can also wear this jacket belted, another new idea for the fall. This jacket coordinates well with matching or contrasting pants and/or skirt. It's a winner!

Dear Readers: This is the time of the year for my fall fashion forecast, as seen at the American Designer showings in New York.

There is no single style, color or fabric; if there were, it would be boring. There are only trends, and you must put yourself in this fashion picture when you plan a new wardrobe. Consider your body shape and what's flattering to you, not some young, skinny model. Think about your lifestyle, as your new clothes must be versatile and interchangeable with your current wardrobe.

Highlights for the fall include fitted jackets, often belted. Good news for the petite woman: Shorter jackets are making a strong statement, often paired with a sleeveless chemise dress (a la the '60s).

Skirts are of many lengths — mini, just above the knees, just below the knees, midcalf and long and skinny. Proportion is the secret; use your jacket as the guideline.

A long, full skirt looks best with a shorter jacket, and longer jackets are best with a slim skirt. Never hem the jacket or the skirt before you try them on together, as an inch or two can make or break a flattering picture.

Your favorite pattern can work for daytime or evening, depending on the fabric. Fall fabrics include Duchess satin, shown in tailored jackets, vest and coats; silk Matka; challis in rayon or wool; wool crepe; and wool knits.

Dear Eunice Farmer: I've begun making clothes for my children, often using bright broadcloth prints for my young girls' dresses and my boy's shorts. Excessive wear and washings tend to dull the colors. What is the best way to "set" the colors so they stay bright? — Jodie L.

Dear Jodie: The best way I know to set the colors is to make a solution of one-third white vinegar and two-thirds water. Place the garment in this solution for a few hours before washing. It really helps!

Some fabrics hold their colors longer than others. It also depends on the way you wash them. Try to use gentle action and warm water for lasting results.

Dear Eunice Farmer: There are so many sheer, full pants in ready-to-wear. I would like to make a pair out of a printed georgette or polyester or rayon. What material do I need to line this type of fabric? — Tina W.

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Dear Tina: You will be surprised when I tell you that it is usually unnecessary to line this type of pants at all. Drape the fabric on yourself, but don't hold it up to the light. The fullness alleviates the see-through quality that concerns you.

If you still want to line the pants, I suggest a solid-colored georgette that looks good under the print. Never use a heavyweight lining, because you will lose the drapey, wonderful look of the georgette.

Dear Eunice Farmer: My husband and I have just received an invitation to a party. The dress code is "dinner casual." What does this mean? — Liz M.

Dear Liz: I have heard this used lately and have checked with friends and customers. They all agree that it means casual styling in dressy fabrics. This could mean pants and a silk shirt or any sporty-type garment made in a dressy fabric.

Winner of the Sim-Flex measuring gauge, for the sewing tip of the week, is Jane Clower of Smyrna, Ga. Her tip:

"Having trouble threading your serger? I pull the serger thread through the block of beeswax I use for quilting thread. Your thread will slip right through the eye of the needle." (Beeswax can be found in all fabric stores.)

Send your sewing tips to Eunice Farmer, Box 31729, St. Louis, Mo. 63131. If she selects your idea for publication, you'll get a Sim-Flex measuring gauge.

"Clothes and the Man" by Flusser

BY CAMMY SESSA
SPECIAL TO THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

FOR YEARS, the fashion crowd has considered Alan Flusser one of the most influential forces in the menswear industry.

True, among consumers he may not have the same recognition as the giants of advertising hype, whose names or symbols are nauseatingly encrusted on millions of polo shirts, jeans and jackets. Nevertheless, among those in the know, Flusser knows.

He's not only a menswear designer, he's an educator. His books have become fashion dictionaries and reference sources for writers, buyers and men who crave the art of dressing well.

For years my No. 1. guide for men's clothing has been Flusser's "Making The Man," (Simon and Schuster) 1981. Recently, a move made it necessary for me to reduce the size of my personal library, but Flusser's book was the first one up my new office shelves. He covers everything from buttonholes to brogues, from handkerchiefs to hosiery.

"What you need now is my current book, 'Clothes and the Man,' " Flusser said when I called Carmel, N.Y., where he weekends with his wife and two daughters in a house so unusual it once was featured in "Architectural Digest."

"Clothes and the Man" has sold 85,000 copies, and Flusser justifiably admits: "It's the bible of the menswear business."

That's not enough. He's currently writing another, more updated, book. "I'm always trying to de-mythologize fashion. Dressing well is not that difficult."

You can get an insight to Flusser's knowledge and his design acumen Friday and Saturday when he shows his collection in person at The Quality Shop, Hilltop East, Virginia Beach.

His major account is Saks Fifth Avenue but, in addition, some 40 selected specialty stores throughout the country also carry his line of custom clothing. In Hampton Roads, it's the Quality Shop.

Flusser's custom suits, jackets and sportcoats are made in a facility in Canada from a selection of Italian fabrics.

"What's made this line very interesting is that it's made-to-measure clothing that will be delivered in 15 days," Flusser says. "That's fairly unique in this business."

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Flusser raved about softness of his textures and that caused me to interrupt: "But Alan, you were always into softness," reminding him of the '80s when I attended fashion collections each season. At that time, most menswear designers were hawking tight-fitting three-piece suits but not Flusser.

"I was always into softness before it was in fashion to be soft," Flusser says.

That's because early on, he admired the elegance of English tailoring and would travel to London to have his own suits made by Anderson & Sheppard, the same house on Savile Row who tailored and draped Fred Astaire's clothes. Those wonderful outfits that were loose enough for Astaire's dancing still had the dash and chic of unabashed class. No doubt. Astaire was a class act and so is Flusser.

That's why he kept comfort, class and suitability in mind when he began designing his own line of clothing. He likes his own stuff and wears all of the designs himself. "My clothes get filtered through me," he said.

When asked for a list of pointers to help men dress better, Flusser's answer was a surprise: "Philosophically, a man needs a blue suit, white shirt, blue and white tie, white handkerchief, dark socks and shoes."

Here are the things that Flusser insists make that combination work:

- The length of the jacket and sleeves must be correct. The sleeve of the jacket should extend no longer than the bottom of the wrist.
- The trousers must fit correctly.
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"The proper dress-shirt collar has nothing to do with fashion but what each face requires. Also, how much shirt collar shows above the suit jacket? It should be no more than one-half inch.

Flusser says a man should know how to tie a tie correctly and should always carry a folded handkerchief in his pocket.

"Equally important is the fit of a dress-shirt cuff," he said. That also should be a half-inch below jacket sleeves.

Flusser goes on: "A man should know how to tie a tie correctly and to fit it under his shirt collar.

"A man should have a properly folded handkerchief in his pocket.

"All these things together are important. It's like the foundation of a house."

Alan Flusser will be at The Quality Shope, Hilltop East, Virginia Beach on Friday from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Prices for Flusser's sportcoats begin at $425; suits, begin at $700. For additional information, call 428-8615.

The style of Audrey Hepburn still inspires

BY JACKIE WHITE
KANSAS CITY STAR

YOU COULD describe this year's fashion mood in terms such as ladylike, conservative and simple.

Or, like the fashion scribes, you could just say it is reminiscent of Audrey Hepburn.

Hepburn. She was the beautiful woman with a long neck, a flat chest, crooked teeth, a lean dancer's body and inordinately swell clothes mostly by the French couturier Hubert Givenchy. She wore full crinolined skirts, capri pants, ballet slippers and dressmaker suits. She was considered sexy, subtle and inevitably innocent no matter what her role. And her acting career was remarkably successful during the late 1950s and '60s.

But in 1995, more than two years after her death, she remains an icon of style — admired by fashion designers and now, more than ever, used to promote clothes. "Simplicity, Audrey Hepburn style," proclaimed a recent cover headline in trade journal Women's Wear Daily on a layout of sleeveless sheaths. Fashion editors have been invoking her name for months.

Why?

It's nothing new for designers to traipse through past decades for inspiration. So now, at a time when they desperately need to ignite new interest in clothing, some have sought a creative collaboration with the era of Hepburn and Jacqueline Kennedy, another much admired icon.

Some of today's best clothes seem reminiscent of that period. The sleeveless sheath, for example, often with a jacket, sometimes with a severe boat neckline, has been an obligatory presence in designer collections and moderate-priced dress lines this year.

In the stores, you'll find, say, a stark black sleeveless dress, caught at the waist with a bowed belt or a subdued suit. And the long straight evening gown that Hepburn wore in "Breakfast at Tiffany's" was timeless enough to endure.

Furthermore, Hepburn's 1950s' film "Sabrina" is being remade with actress Julia Ormond, and fashion magazines are promoting the "Sabrina" heel shoe, a pump with short curved heel.

As designer Bill Blass explains it, there is "a wish to have more ladylike clothes, a more refined way of dressing," that relates to that period.

Hepburn not only had considerable influence but she also was the last film star to be so copied.

The simplicity of her clothes is apparently a primary reason Hepburn's style seems so endurable. The lines were classic, the embellishment frugal. With fashion still stuck today in an 1980s backlash against excesses, the timing is apparently right.

Richard Martin, the curator of the Costume Institute at New York's Metropolitan Museum, describes her look as "unaffected, a nonchalant sense of high style."

She could carry off a stark black turtleneck sweater or a little black dress, observes Martin, but it was inevitably "unostentatious and unadorned." In today's mood of low-key, unaccessorized dressing, it seems especially appropriate.

In "Breakfast at Tiffany's," Hepburn's clothes from Givenchy were sophisticated but typically plain and unencumbering. Her rival Patricia Neal, meanwhile, was dressed by designer Pauline Trigere in clothes that were beautiful, structured, detailed and ornamented.

"It was a way in which they used clothing to make a point," Martin says. Hepburn's clothes made her seem "fresh" and elflike.

Sandy Schreier, a Michigan film historian and costume collector, says that in the beginning, Hollywood was baffled by Hepburn's long neck.

"Hollywood was big on minimizing figure flaws. They were going to fix all these things up. But they didn't know what to do with her neck. So they would put her in these big high collars and these scarfs," Schreier says.

Hepburn met Givenchy in Paris before making the film "Funny Face," in the 1950s. As he explained in a recent AMC cable television special on Hollywood fashion, he was expecting Katharine Hepburn instead when she arrived at his studio. But they quickly developed a warm friendship and collaborative relationship that lasted throughout her life.

With her angular body, she was very different from actresses of her time. As Schreier puts it: "She wasn't blond. She wasn't buxom. She wasn't overtly sexy. She had such an innocence and was the opposite of all those who proceeded her."

Valerie Steele, the fashion historian and professor at New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, says, "She was a very important influence on girls who knew they were not going to be Marilyn Monroe.

"She was glamorous in a downtown kind of way," Steele adds. "It had to do with her slender physique. Her big doe eyes. There is something so low-key about her. She comes across as looking surprisingly modern."

Tennis dresses win on and off the court

BY LISA LYTLE
ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

ANDRE AGASSI, WATCH out. The latest trend in tennis wear isn't exactly your style.

The tennis dress, obsolete since the late '70s, is back. This time, it's appearing not only on the courts but also on the streets and even in dance clubs.

Part of the credit goes to tennis uberbabe Mary Pierce, 20, and Nike, which produced her sassy, sleeveless tennis dresses. In a sport where oversize polo shirts and short skirts are the uniform, seeing Pierce in a short, white, body-skimming dress with a flippy wrap skirt is like watching Cindy Crawford appear on the runway in a red outfit amid black-clad models.

Since Pierce's tennis-dress success, Nike and sports clothing makers Adidas, Converse and Everlast have put their own topspin on the trend.

They're redesigning the tennis dress so that it will not only be a smash hit on the courts but also can look fantastic as casual clothing, said Jennifer Weede, fashion editor at Sportstyle, a New York-based trade magazine specializing in sports-oriented consumer news and trends.

"Young women are wearing tennis dresses on the streets and in dance clubs," she said. "And they're not necessarily people who play tennis."

Ian Hamilton, director of communications for the Women's Tennis Association tour, based in Stamford, Conn., has similar observations: "I've seen tennis dresses being worn as cocktail dresses to parties. They're perfectly casual eveningwear."

The new tennis dresses are flapper-inspired but short and modern. The sleeves have been lopped to show off arms. The silhouette is body-conscious but not tight, with a hem that flares ever so slightly. Skirt panels sometimes overlap for freedom of movement. The brief stretch shorts worn underneath usually are sold separately.

The tennis dress looks casual and sexy without appearing trashy, Weede said. The idea is to create a sporty look by combining the clothes with casual shoes rather than tennis sneakers, she said.

On the racks, the tennis trend appears as short, flippy white skirts, sleeveless slim-fitting tennis dresses with hoods, cropped polo tops, V-neck pullovers and cardigans. Makers range from affordable lines such as Laguna Hills-based Scarlet O to designer lines such as Ralph Lauren's Ralph and Donna Karan's DKNY.

Since the '80s, women's tennis wear has looked comfortable, but until Nike produced dresses for Pierce, it hasn't been about flattering the body.

At Anne Klein, a new designer and high stakes

BY CONSTANCE C.R. WHITE
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

IN THE FAST-MOVING game of fashion, there are few companies that, once caught off balance, can marshal the dexterity to make a comeback. Once-glorious names — from Halston to Pierre Cardin — have found themselves in has-been purgatory, recognized but no longer important.

Anne Klein has gone through a turbulent period in the past two years and now must move quickly to regain its standing as one of America's premier fashion companies.

Much is riding on its designer, Patrick Robinson, whose first collection for Anne Klein is arriving in stores now. The next two seasons may decide whether Anne Klein can again compete successfully among fashion's top names. It's a game that Robinson doesn't want to lose and that Anne Klein cannot afford to lose.

"At stake is a great name with a great following," said Kalman Ruttenstein, the senior vice president for fashion direction at Bloomingdale's. "Some of it has disappeared. We'd like to get that business back and surge ahead."

Sales of the Anne Klein Collection slipped with designs ill-suited to the times and the customer, and the general downturn in luxury markets.

The Anne Klein Collection is the flagship of an $800 million fashion giant that includes two other sportswear collections, two stores and dozens of licensed products, including shoes, hosiery, handbags and sunglasses.

Anne Klein II, the company's lower-price career collection, has held its own among the leaders in its category, which include Ellen Tracy and Donna Karan's DKNY. However, A Line Anne Klein, a casual collection, has been struggling to find its place. Licensees say consumers still gravitate toward the Anne Klein name despite the turmoil.

Clearly the company is not afraid to make changes. Frank Mori, president of Takihyo, which owns Anne Klein and half of Donna Karan, took back the reins at Anne Klein & Co. in July after the abrupt departure of its president, Andrew Rosen.

Mori had run the company until six years ago, when he hired Rosen, a son of the late Carl Rosen, a prominent sportswear manufacturer. Tomio Taki is chairman.

In January, Mori hired Robinson, then design director for Giorgio Armani Le Collezioni, to replace Richard Tyler. Tyler's appointment a year and a half earlier had shocked the industry, because he displaced Louis Dell'Olio, who had been with the company for 18 years.

"We're about blocking and tackling and executing until we win," Mori said. "We're very much an in-your-face type of company in trying to out-execute the competition."

"Patrick's mandate for the Anne Klein Collection is to have it re-emerge among American designers and international designers," Mori added. "We think the company should be and deserves to be the No.1, if not one of the top two or three pre-eminent collections. It's a difficult but eminently doable task."

Robinson, who turns 29 on Friday, has inherited a rich and weighty legacy. In the 1960s through the early 1970s, Anne Klein established a mode of dress that came to define American sportswear: easy to wear, interchangeable combinations of jackets, blouses, trousers and skirts.

Before her death from cancer in 1974, Klein threw her mantle on her young design assistant whom she had once dismissed, Donna Karan.

Karan kept the classic sportswear concept alive, hiring her old schoolmate Dell'Olio as her co-designer. When she left to start her own company in 1985, he continued the legacy — for a while with great success.

Robinson, who despite his youth has well-developed likes and dislikes, appears to be at home with Anne Klein's original philosophy. He has anchored his debut collection with roomily cut jackets in classic fabrics, with coordinating pieces.

"Once I've captured the audience, I don't think this collection has to jump drastically each season," Robinson said. "These are clothes that you buy that stay in the front of your wardrobe."

CELEBRATE FALLETTA'S 5TH WITH BEETHOVEN'S 2ND
JoAnn Falletta begins her fifth season as music director and conductor of the Virginia Symphony in a program featuring world-renowned pianist Christopher O'Riley.
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Beethoven, Piano Concerto No. 2
Sibelius, Symphony No. 2
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That's because early on, he admired the elegance of English tailoring and would travel to London to have his own suits made by Anderson & Sheppard, the same house on Savile Row who tailored and draped Fred Astaire's clothes. Those wonderful outfits that were loose enough for Astaire's dancing still had the dash and chic of unabashed class. No doubt. Astaire was a class act and so is Flusser.

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KANSAS CITY STAR

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She could carry off a stark black turtleneck sweater or a little black dress, observes Martin, but it was inevitably "unostentatious and unadorned." In today's mood of low-key, unaccessorized dressing, it seems especially appropriate.

In "Breakfast at Tiffany's," Hepburn's clothes from Givenchy were sophisticated but typically plain and unencumbering. Her rival Patricia Neal, meanwhile, was dressed by designer Pauline Trigere in clothes that were beautiful, structured, detailed and ornamented.

"It was a way in which they used clothing to make a point," Martin says. Hepburn's clothes made her seem "fresh" and elflike.

Sandy Schreier, a Michigan film historian and costume collector, says that in the beginning, Hollywood was baffled by Hepburn's long neck.

"Hollywood was big on minimizing figure flaws. They were going to fix all these things up. But they didn't know what to do with her neck. So they would put her in these big high collars and these scarfs," Schreier says.

Hepburn met Givenchy in Paris before making the film "Funny Face," in the 1950s. As he explained in a recent AMC cable television special on Hollywood fashion, he was expecting Katharine Hepburn instead when she arrived at his studio. But they quickly developed a warm friendship and collaborative relationship that lasted throughout her life.

With her angular body, she was very different from actresses of her time. As Schreier puts it: "She wasn't blond. She wasn't buxom. She wasn't overtly sexy. She had such an innocence and was the opposite of all those who proceeded her."

Valerie Steele, the fashion historian and professor at New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, says, "She was a very important influence on girls who knew they were not going to be Marilyn Monroe.

"She was glamorous in a downtown kind of way," Steele adds. "It had to do with her slender physique. Her big doe eyes. There is something so low-key about her. She comes across as looking surprisingly modern."

Tennis dresses win on and off the court

BY LISA LYTLE
ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

ANDRE AGASSI, WATCH out. The latest trend in tennis wear isn't exactly your style.

The tennis dress, obsolete since the late '70s, is back. This time, it's appearing not only on the courts but also on the streets and even in dance clubs.

Part of the credit goes to tennis uberbabe Mary Pierce, 20, and Nike, which produced her sassy, sleeveless tennis dresses. In a sport where oversize polo shirts and short skirts are the uniform, seeing Pierce in a short, white, body-skimming dress with a flippy wrap skirt is like watching Cindy Crawford appear on the runway in a red outfit amid black-clad models.

Since Pierce's tennis-dress success, Nike and sports clothing makers Adidas, Converse and Everlast have put their own topspin on the trend.

They're redesigning the tennis dress so that it will not only be a smash hit on the courts but also can look fantastic as casual clothing, said Jennifer Weede, fashion editor at Sportstyle, a New York-based trade magazine specializing in sports-oriented consumer news and trends.

"Young women are wearing tennis dresses on the streets and in dance clubs," she said. "And they're not necessarily people who play tennis."

Ian Hamilton, director of communications for the Women's Tennis Association tour, based in Stamford, Conn., has similar observations: "I've seen tennis dresses being worn as cocktail dresses to parties. They're perfectly casual eveningwear."

The new tennis dresses are flapper-inspired but short and modern. The sleeves have been lopped to show off arms. The silhouette is body-conscious but not tight, with a hem that flares ever so slightly. Skirt panels sometimes overlap for freedom of movement. The brief stretch shorts worn underneath usually are sold separately.

The tennis dress looks casual and sexy without appearing trashy, Weede said. The idea is to create a sporty look by combining the clothes with casual shoes rather than tennis sneakers, she said.

On the racks, the tennis trend appears as short, flippy white skirts, sleeveless slim-fitting tennis dresses with hoods, cropped polo tops, V-neck pullovers and cardigans. Makers range from affordable lines such as Laguna Hills-based Scarlet O to designer lines such as Ralph Lauren's Ralph and Donna Karan's DKNY.

Since the '80s, women's tennis wear has looked comfortable, but until Nike produced dresses for Pierce, it hasn't been about flattering the body.

At Anne Klein, a new designer and high stakes

BY CONSTANCE C.R. WHITE
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

IN THE FAST-MOVING game of fashion, there are few companies that, once caught off balance, can marshal the dexterity to make a comeback. Once-glorious names — from Halston to Pierre Cardin — have found themselves in has-been purgatory, recognized but no longer important.

Anne Klein has gone through a turbulent period in the past two years and now must move quickly to regain its standing as one of America's premier fashion companies.

Much is riding on its designer, Patrick Robinson, whose first collection for Anne Klein is arriving in stores now. The next two seasons may decide whether Anne Klein can again compete successfully among fashion's top names. It's a game that Robinson doesn't want to lose and that Anne Klein cannot afford to lose.

"At stake is a great name with a great following," said Kalman Ruttenstein, the senior vice president for fashion direction at Bloomingdale's. "Some of it has disappeared. We'd like to get that business back and surge ahead."

Sales of the Anne Klein Collection slipped with designs ill-suited to the times and the customer, and the general downturn in luxury markets.

The Anne Klein Collection is the flagship of an $800 million fashion giant that includes two other sportswear collections, two stores and dozens of licensed products, including shoes, hosiery, handbags and sunglasses.

Anne Klein II, the company's lower-price career collection, has held its own among the leaders in its category, which include Ellen Tracy and Donna Karan's DKNY. However, A Line Anne Klein, a casual collection, has been struggling to find its place. Licensees say consumers still gravitate toward the Anne Klein name despite the turmoil.

Clearly the company is not afraid to make changes. Frank Mori, president of Takihyo, which owns Anne Klein and half of Donna Karan, took back the reins at Anne Klein & Co. in July after the abrupt departure of its president, Andrew Rosen.

Mori had run the company until six years ago, when he hired Rosen, a son of the late Carl Rosen, a prominent sportswear manufacturer. Tomio Taki is chairman.

In January, Mori hired Robinson, then design director for Giorgio Armani Le Collezioni, to replace Richard Tyler. Tyler's appointment a year and a half earlier had shocked the industry, because he displaced Louis Dell'Olio, who had been with the company for 18 years.

"We're about blocking and tackling and executing until we win," Mori said. "We're very much an in-your-face type of company in trying to out-execute the competition."

"Patrick's mandate for the Anne Klein Collection is to have it re-emerge among American designers and international designers," Mori added. "We think the company should be and deserves to be the No.1, if not one of the top two or three pre-eminent collections. It's a difficult but eminently doable task."

Robinson, who turns 29 on Friday, has inherited a rich and weighty legacy. In the 1960s through the early 1970s, Anne Klein established a mode of dress that came to define American sportswear: easy to wear, interchangeable combinations of jackets, blouses, trousers and skirts.

Before her death from cancer in 1974, Klein threw her mantle on her young design assistant whom she had once dismissed, Donna Karan.

Karan kept the classic sportswear concept alive, hiring her old schoolmate Dell'Olio as her co-designer. When she left to start her own company in 1985, he continued the legacy — for a while with great success.

Robinson, who despite his youth has well-developed likes and dislikes, appears to be at home with Anne Klein's original philosophy. He has anchored his debut collection with roomily cut jackets in classic fabrics, with coordinating pieces.

"Once I've captured the audience, I don't think this collection has to jump drastically each season," Robinson said. "These are clothes that you buy that stay in the front of your wardrobe."

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