Focus on Fashion

By Paula Brooks

Spring always heralds new hope and optimism for the future. On a personal level, many women feel a surge of self-confidence, as well as a renewal of energy. The celebration of Easter, is of course, the highlight of the season, and reinforces the feeling of rebirth that prevails.

Our spring clothing will echo and magnify this mood with lots of sunny yellows, brilliant tourqoise, and a rainbow of other electric colors. This range of brights are a perfect compliment for the powerful prints that pervade the spring collections.

Interesting prints of all descriptions will be popular—watch out for luscious and refreshing ripe fruit on casual dresses and playwear. Another prevalent print will be fantasy florals that look like they should be framed and hung in some museum.

Those of you who are into ethnic looks will be pleased to see that primitive African designs and Etyptian hieroglypics will also be abundant.

Imperial fashions entrance making three piece silk suit. The jacket is canary yellow trimmed in black with padded dolman sleeves and two buttons at waist. The skirt is breezy accordion pleats.

Tric-Trac's bold striped top and dusty mauve and white is wedge shaped. Huge shoulders tapered down below the hip and is worn over a long skinny knit skirt in mauve.

Polka dots are hot again and here is one of the season's best — from silk master Flora King comes this white on black beauty with fanny warp. Note the new shorter length.

Spring is perfect suit weather, and this year many are sleekly smooth and body conscious. Whether the jacket is short with a fitted waist, and exaggerated shoulders—form fitting with a sassy peplum over the hip, or hip length with a nipped in waist—the emphasis is on the contours of the body, and many celebrate the "hourglass figure."

Of course this look is not for everyone. If your waistline is underfined, a loose style would be far more complimentary.

Ultra-suede is always a favorite fabrication, because of its easy wash and wearability, as well as that fact that it packs well, and always looks rich.

If you think you can't afford ultra-suede—think again! This is the best kind of investment dressing—you'll save hundreds in cleaners bills, and look the pciture of style and elegance for years!

Favorite colors this spring are soft tea rose, oceana blue, oyster grey, and country cream. On the brighter side are hibiscus red, jade smoke, and ultra-marine.

Sensational silks can also make a lovely addition to your spring wardrobe. Hot colors and bold geometric or floral prints combine with the softness of silk to create wearable artwork.

Knits continue to be a strong trend and many are cotton, or cotton and acrylic in keeping with the warmer weather. An important new look is the two-piece dress with big oversized top aired with a long, skinny skirt.

Whichever of the new styles you decide on this year, make sure they highlight your body's good points. If you have nice shoulders and a long, slender neck, buy an off the shoulder

Guilliana's floral print silk dress in soft tones of cream, blue and aqua is so lovely you'll look like a walking work of art.

The red hot suit says I mean business. New short jacket emphasizes slender torso and waist. It is teamed with banker's pin stripe shirt in black and white.

look or something with a low neckline.

If your legs are your strong point—try one of the new knee-length or above styles. Also use your clothing to de-emphasize your weak points.

Heavy thighs and hips—stay away from pants and straight skirts. Rounded stomach—try a chemise or dress without a waistline—i promise you will not look pregnant.

To help you decide on the right look for you—patronize a store that will give you personal attention, and take along a true friend (without any underlying feelings or jealousy or competition).

This should be a great help, as it is hard to see oneself objectively.

— roundup

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CAPITAL SCENES —After signing a Fair Share agreement for equal job opportunity in the Democratic National Committee, NAACP president is now negotiating with the Republican Committee.

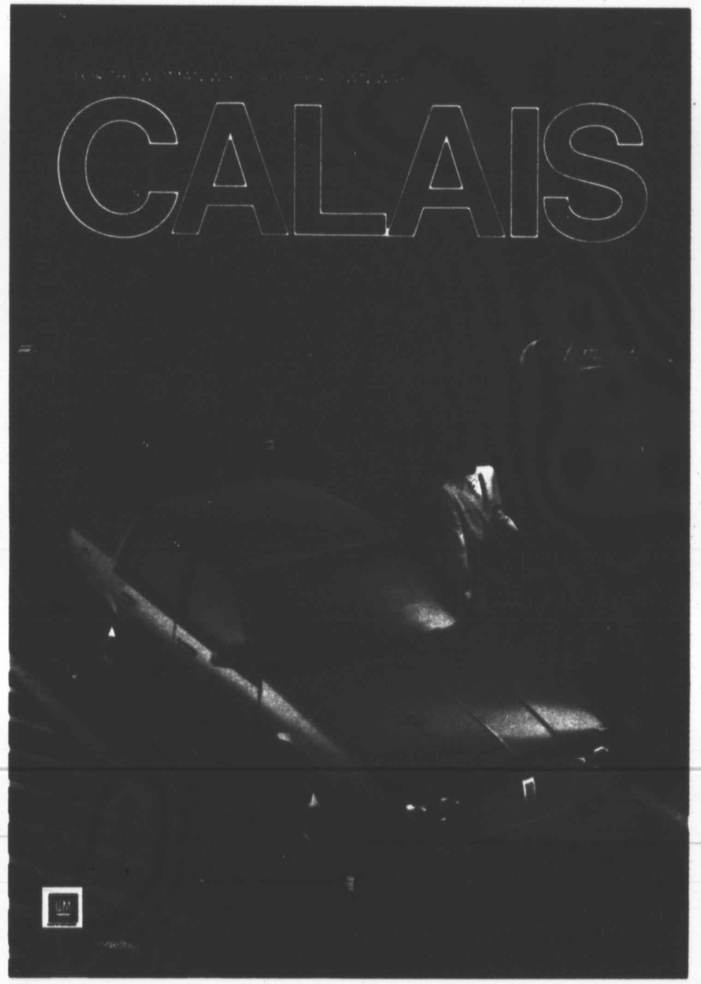
The canvas works of Baltimore artist Keiffer Mitchell were displayed in the Cannon House Office Building rotunda on Capitol Hill as Rep. Parren Mitchell (D-Md.) hosted the collection for his cousin during his last term in congress.

Legendary musician Lionel Hampton was honorary chairman of the Red Dress Ball of the National Association of Black Women Attorney at the Hyatt Regency here.

Howard University President, Dr. James Cheek, shopping in a neighborhood supermarket, assisted by his chauffeur.

Witnesses testifying before Rep. Mickey Leland's (D-Texas) Select Committee on Hunger, told members Tony Hill (D-Ohio) and Stan Lundire (D-NY), subcommittee chairman, that America's grassroots poor should develop more "micro-enterprizes" involving family members.

Mini-businesses, such as street vendors, basket makers and other artisians offer an effective cure for the sickness of the "third world" said Beatriz Harrechte, a director of the Inter-American Development Bank. The landless poor in many countries receive small loans of $200 or more at 16 percent to go into business with a repayment rate of 98 percent, Harrechte, emphasized.

The Department of Commerce announced that 75% of young blacks (18-24) have been graduating from high school since 1984, with the number of black youth enrolled in college increasing from 300.000 to 800,000 since 1967, for a 27 percent rate, four points higher in the 17 years. For whites, the proportion of high school graduation rose from 78 percent in 1967 to 83 percent in 1984, with the proportion of college graduates remained at one-third, slightly higher then the current percentage of black college students.

We hope all of you read Ethel Payne's recent expose on behind the scene operations with black businessmen and college leaders in a recent issue of the AFRO-AMERICAN Newspapers as the South African government reportedly prepares for black African leadership roles. It is must reading if you are liberation minded.