

Letter of Los Angeles : no "mad hatter" : he combines good taste with good looks

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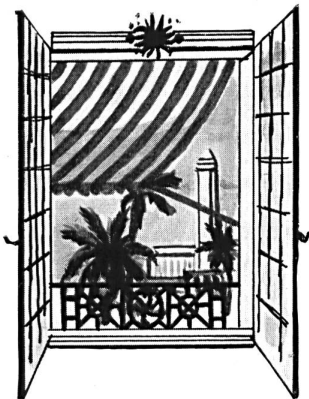
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LETTER OF LOS ANGELES

*No "Mad Hatter",
he combines good taste with good looks*

«I'm not interested in making gag hats... I'll make extreme hats to get attention but no mad headlines to get headlines», says Rex, the West Coast's greatest high fashion milliner as well as the world's most prolific movie milliner. Nevertheless, Rex gets headlines in spite of his modesty. How does he do it? Merely by making women look more beautiful, by making women look more lady-like, by making women feel more self-confident.

In his career, Rex has done none of the off-the-beaten-track things that led others into fashion. Instead he prepared for it with as much purpose and system as one would for any profession. He learned merchandising in one of the country's largest department stores. He learned materials while working with various importing firms. He learned the techniques of manufacture and management while employed with one of the most famous high fashion millinery firms. And then, when he was ready, he opened his own Beverly Hills establishment with his long time friend and indispensable aide, Wally Twinting. They became an immediate success and the firm of «Rex» soon became internationally known.

The success of this house stemmed not from sensationalism but from great good taste and Rex's personal ability to turn practically any customer into a lady of fashion. For Rex is not only milliner but also father confessor to his large and glittering clientele. They come to him for advice... and he gives it. He says most women are too self-conscious about small defects whereas the great beauties are often less attractive women who worked hard on themselves, who purchased clothes with caution and developed their poise and self-confidence.

Rex advises, above all, be natural. He feels that many of his most beautiful customers are white-haired women who have arrived at an age and stage of genuine glamour. They have learned to be themselves and enjoy it. They have given up the terrible and obvious struggle to be someone else... someone younger, perhaps.

You may remember Rex as the innovator of the be-pearled and be-jeweled sweater. When that fad reached tremendous proportions, Rex went on to the



Swiss straw lace

Photo : William Murphy

Hat by :
Rex, Beverly Hills



Swiss white organdy

Hat by :
Rex, Beverly Hills

Photo : William Murphy



STOFFEL & Co., SAINT-GALL

Center panel of white tucked organdy
Model by: Don Loper, Beverly Hills

mink-collared cashmere sweater and then on up to the barely reachable stages such as the crown sable collared sweater for a great lady who shall be nameless. Today he does sweaters in his boutique with Forster-Willi guipure lace which is shaped to fit the body. He also makes odd stoles, wimples and other bibelots that fetch fantastic prices because they are the first of their kind... anywhere and are always enchanting to his constantly world-roaming clientele. Some of these customers and clients are eccentric... such as the one who frequently likes to wear her hats backwards and insists that the labels be sewn in that way.

Rex feels that no woman is really difficult to fit if a study is made of her individual characteristics. For example, one movie star looks well with a nunlike draping around her face. Another, who has long been famous as a great beauty must never wear hats going down in front. Another can wear only small and young hats. And now television poses new problems since

great care must be taken not to widen a person, or, on the other hand, to give too much height. Rex is now doing a series of hats for Rosalind Russel's new television series now in preparation. He has also done the hats for Grace Kelly's latest picture which has not yet been released.

Almost every picture produced in Hollywood for more than a decade has had its millinery designed by Rex. Many of our readers will remember «Gone with the Wind». This was his first picture. And what a memorable one with which to begin a distinguished career! He says he never remembers the names of pictures but he does feel that movies offer the greatest possible challenge to a milliner because a hat must be not merely a brim and a flower but a whole characterisation. Hats must tell who the characters are, what they are doing, where they are going. Because of this vast experience, Rex's clientele includes such luminaries as Gloria Swanson, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Joan Crawford, June Allyson, Ann

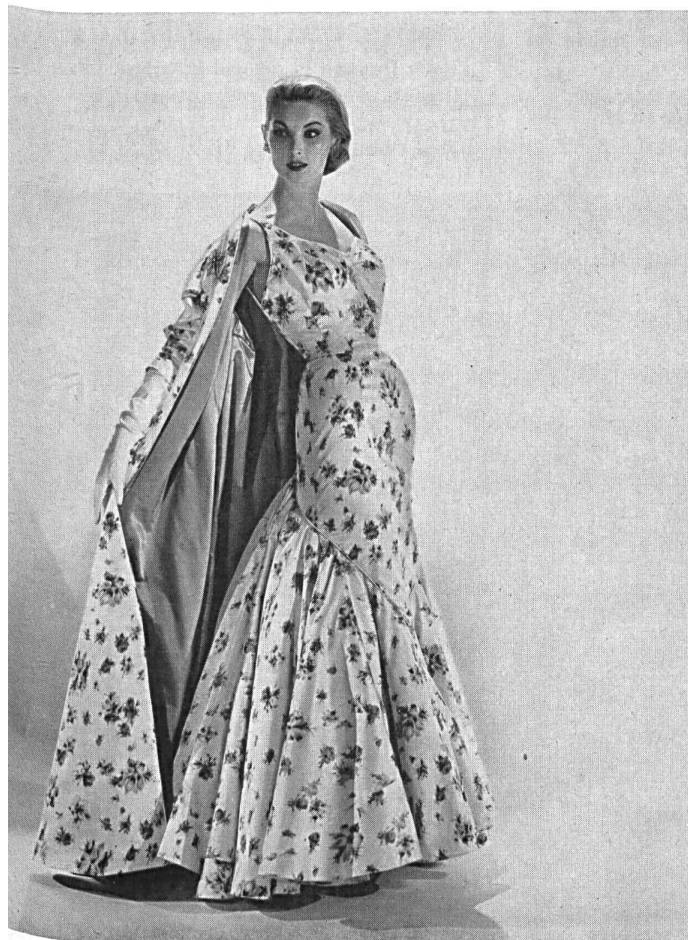
**ROBT. SCHWARZENBACH & Co.,
THALWIL**
Schwarzenbach Huber Co., New York
Beige printed silk and eagle blue alpaca
Model by: Don Loper, Beverly Hills

Sothorn and hundreds more. No wonder the non-movie crowd flock to him too for face-flattering magic!

Part of his magic is made with Swiss organdies, silk organzas, straw braids, laces, cut velvets, chenille veilings and narrow ribbons. Rex says that today more than ever, Swiss fabrics and trims are «made» for millinery, for this is the year when hats once again establish the Fashion Look. This means that the milliner must have an exact knowledge of how to manipulate these delicate materials in order to give not just «more» hat but a more becoming hat.

In his present collection Rex shows much Swiss guipure lace studded with tiny rhinestones, several hats with the combination of lace and lilies of the valley or organdy and lilies of the valley, or wired chenille veiling over white leghorn sailors. A hat which drew applause was a large flat butterfly shape covered with row upon row of narrow white lace, another was of horsehair and handmade petals of organdy.

Rex commented at his showing that this season it takes more than a piece of satin or velvet or a scarf



to be a well turned-out woman... it takes a well-defined hat to display the milliner's art at its best with imaginative technique, fine workmanship and skillful choosing of materials. He points out that trims are extremely important as every hat must carry out the new romantic mood. And he says he cannot emphasize too strongly that the beautiful hat must also be a becoming hat for the goal, after all, is to make a woman pretty. Rex's almost fanatic following proves that there must be real magic in this simple philosophy.

Helene Miller

**ROBT. SCHWARZENBACH & Co.,
THALWIL**
Schwarzenbach Huber Co., New York
Floral warp-printed silk satin and moss
green satin (lining)
Model by: Don Loper, Beverly Hills