

# No smiling please — it's Monday

HAUTE couture doesn't come our way in SWA/Namibia very often, and on Monday evening about 400 women and a sprinkling of men watched in amazement as unsmiling models moving with robot-like precision, displayed lavishly exotic creations by the talented young designer from Cape Town, Errol Arendz.

This was exactly the way Errol wanted it. "No smiling", he told them firmly. Models trained to within an inch of their well-groomed lives coped extremely well with the particular demands of showing high fashion.

Impassive, with heavily made-up eyes and dark red lipstick they all walked as if leaning backwards against a very strong wind, and at a very brisk pace which set Errol's fabulous fabrics fluttering.

Errol says that this method of fashion presentation is now the big image in Cape Town.

## JEWELLED FABRICS AND FEATHERS

Hemlines swirled just below the knee, bandoliers of beads were strung across bare-shouldered bodies, and feathers plucked from some unknown bird decorated the chignon hairstyles.

But in a country where some people are still wearing sturdy tropical helmets to guard their heads against the scorching sun, it was Errol's hats that put the cherry on the cake.

Straw hats, consisting only of the rim, drooped provocatively, tiny circles of sequins perched on drawn-back hair, and as Errol kindly explained to me, the hat resembling a record, is known in the trade as a "platter".

Prices for Errol's creations ranged from R100 to R1 000, and were accented by jewellery especially created for the occasion by Adrian.

## EXPLOSION IN PINK

The show opened with a bang with Heidi and Inge stepping it out in vivid pink cotton trousers and tunics leaving the

shoulders completely bare, and beaded bandoliers.

Trousers and tunics came in every imaginable fabric from fresh cotton with contrast piping to lavish floating chiffons, to be worn on every conceivable occasion.

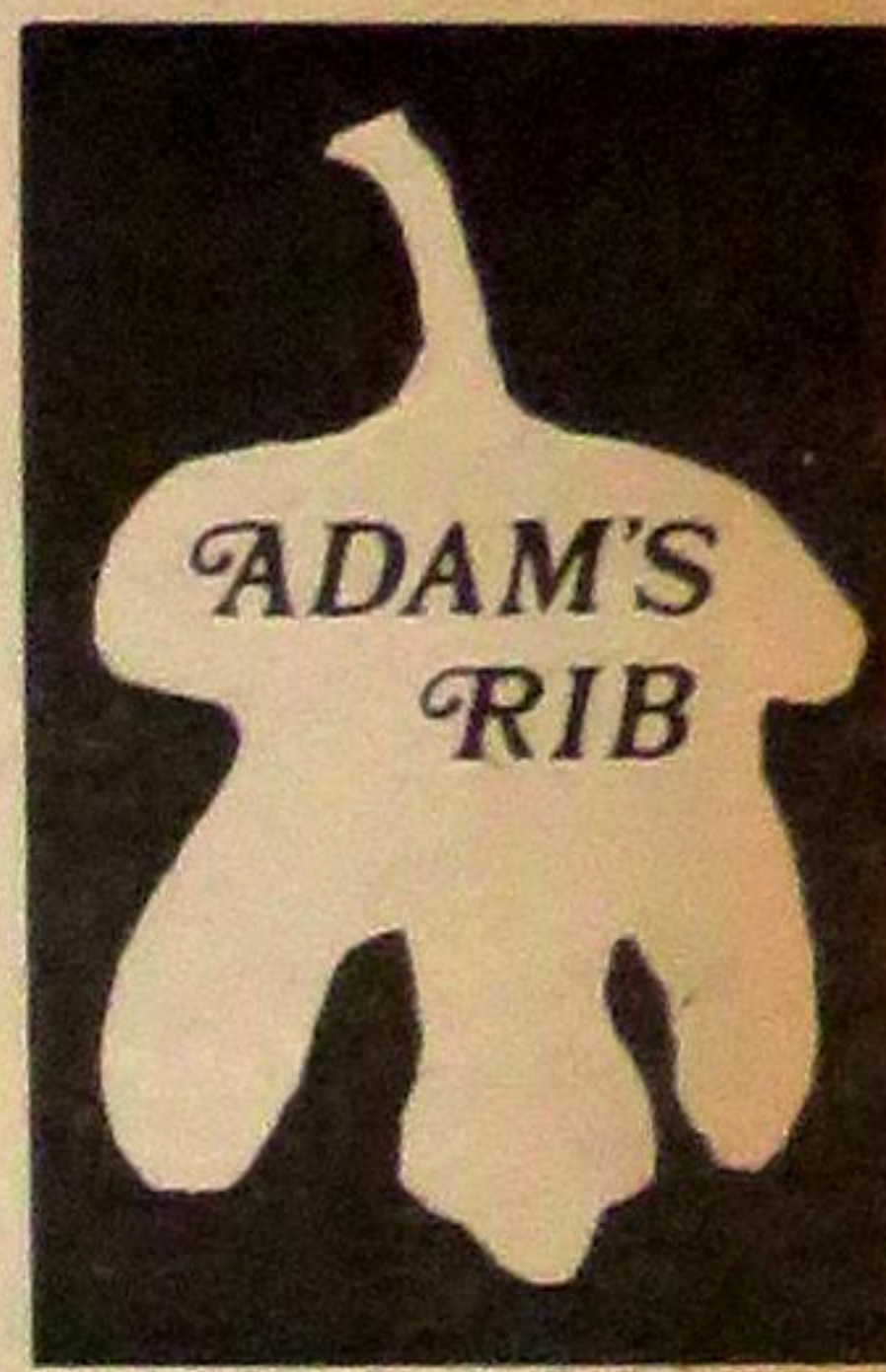
Necklines varied from the bare-shouldered chemise to the camisole top with tiny straps, best worn bra-less for those who can get away with it. Skirts were either full and swirling or figure-hugging and slit to mid-thigh and in some cases even higher. Tube dresses heavily encrusted with

embroidery were slit up the back, and richly jewelled blazers were worn with footless tights for maximum effect.

Outfits reminiscent of Star Wars consisted of swirling tunics with glittering shoulder detail. The fabrics Errol uses for his designs range from crisp cotton to silk jersey, crepe-de-chine, chiffon, and even guipure lace. Dresses were scattered with rhinestones and sequins and a number of models had matching chiffon scarves. Belts cinching the tiny waists of the models were beautifully simple and often in the same fabric as the dress, or in stark contrast.

Errol's sister, Gloria, modelled in Windhoek for the first time, and the petite beauty with her waist-length dark hair received wild applause from the audience. There was an additional reason for this as well — Gloria was allowed to smile slightly because as Errol explains — "she is a newcomer to Windhoek and has to establish a rapport with the audience. The other girls have often modelled here before, are known to the audience, and that is why they had to conform strictly to the unsmiling, remote look."

Gloria modelled one of the most superb ensembles of the evening, when she appeared in a simple dress of rich cinnamon chiffon with a beaded jacket in the same material.



## Jean Fischer

"That's a true Errol Arendz model", said several people in the audience when Anita appeared in cloud-like, swirling powder blue chiffon with a tiny top, and slim straps, artfully scattered with sequins.

For real dramatic impact, there was Cynthia in bold gold trousers and a billowing black tunic coin-spotted in gold, and a black and gold platter hat.

Every aspect of the spring and summer collection revealed the touch of the true artist, presented in a highly sophisticated way.

The finale came in the form of eight models in elaborate wedding dresses I found to be a trifle overpowering with all its flounces, ribbons and laces, but — judging by the applause there were large numbers of dewy-eyed romantics in the audience.

One could practically smell the orange blossoms!

Fashion-conscious women can already make a note in their diaries — the date for Errol's next visit to Windhoek to present a collection has already been set. It is scheduled to take place on the last Monday in October 1980.



Ellen, bare-shouldered, also in tunic and trousers, moving at a breakneck speed.

Presented by Inge's Boutique and Anita's Charm School, everything was carefully orchestrated to allow maximum exposure to Errol's sumptuous clothes. Rough hessian decor, simple hairstyles consisting of small, gleaming chignons and the deliberate lack of animation on the part of the models, brought the focus clearly onto the clothes.



Helga and Marina in exotic tunics and trousers, wearing sexy hat "rims".