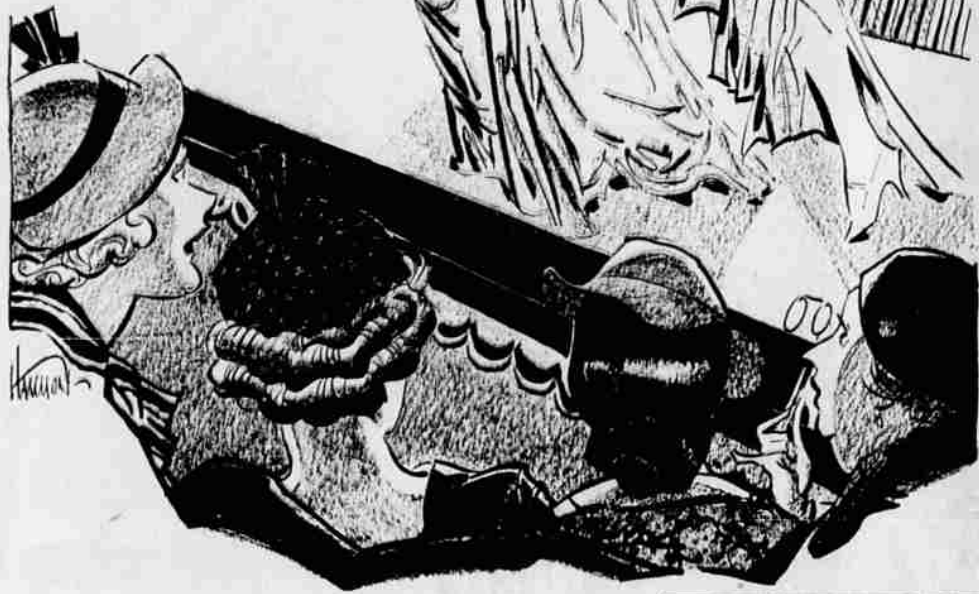


The Woman Who Makes a "Stage Entrance" at a Party Has a Hard Time Living Up to It, Says America's Prize Model



By Carol Bird

"BE NONCHALANT! Forget your little self." When a girl arrives at a party, makes a dramatic pause in the doorway to be certain that all eyes are focused in her direction, and then stages what she thinks is a queenly and breath-taking entrance, she spells her own social doom. The chances are that she has ruined the evening for herself by her supreme egotism, her absurd self-consciousness, her ridiculous gesture. People see through her cheap device to grab the center of the stage.

It is the girl who forgets self, who is at ease anywhere, in any outfit, under any circumstances, who will be the social success, whether she is wearing velvet and emeralds or plain tub silk and a string of pearl beads. She is who will cause admiring eyes to turn toward her, impel people to seek her out. And she can achieve this pose only by realizing that she is not the only goldfish in the bowl; that other women have their points, too.

This is one of the shrewd observations made by Helen Bobbye Holms, known as "Bobby" to her friends. She is the tall, willowy blonde professional model of Inwood-on-the-Hudson, who won a money prize and first place as "the woman who has most effectively mastered the art of wearing clothes well." She was judged "New York's best" from among seventeen professional models who wore advanced Spring styles at a fashion show held recently in a New York hotel. The judges who picked her as the most chic model of them all included Russell Patterson, Carl Muller, Bradshaw Crandall, artists, and Walter Plunkett and Murray Mayer, Hollywood designers.

WHEN Miss Holms, a slim and elegant beauty, was handed the purse and picked as the one who best knew how to wear clothes effectively she was surprised and naive about the honor.

"Why did you pick me?" she promptly asked the judges, surprise and curiosity in her voice. She was told that it was because she wore her clothes with ease, had so much poise and because she lacked any trace of self-consciousness. And Miss Holms herself believes that if a woman desires to achieve distinction in dress she must "be nonchalant" about the way she wears her clothes. She must have "poise, nonchalance, a careless forgetfulness of self."

"If I have those qualities it is because I'm so accustomed to wearing all kinds of clothes, to modeling them," she said modestly. "A model knows that when keen-eyed buyers look her over with appraising eyes that they are not seeing her at all, but only what she has upon her back. Perhaps that takes some of the conceit out of us and makes us act more natural."

"Bobby" Holms is 23 years of age. She is 5 feet 9½ inches tall (in high heels) and weighs 122 pounds. She wears size 12 dresses. She has been called an "ash blonde," but she is really a dark blonde, with hair almost

a light brown. Her skin is pale and clear. Some fiction writers might describe her as "a girl with a gardenia complexion and a heart-shaped face."

She wore a black and white lace evening gown, cut with a Spanish flare, and a stunning cape of silver fox when she captured the style honor.

Miss Holms was asked for some of the "secrets" so that we could pass them on to other women who would like to excel in the same art. This means about all the women in the world, for to have "style" and "distinction" in dress is the dream of most women from 16 to 60.

"A woman, in order to wear clothes well—that is, effectively with style—must first of all feel 'at home' in them," said Miss Holms. She elaborated: "By this I mean that she must know they suit her type; that they are well made, and that they are correctly fitted to her figure. If a woman is conscious that her skirt is too long or too short; that her hemline sags; that her shoulder straps are too loose, she will reveal by her manner that she is uncomfortable."

"If she keeps tugging at a sleeve or pulling at her belt she spoils an effect that otherwise might be perfect. Most women are not exact fourteens, sixteens, eighteens. They may wear those sizes, but their individual proportions may vary; may not be the standardized ones. So that if a woman has a too short or too long waistline or is too wide across the hips she must have her gown altered so that it will fit well before she wears it."

Gowns, coats, dresses are often ruined simply because they do not fit the figures wearing them. I go around the streets finding myself wanting to give a tug to the shoulders of a coat I see or pinch in a waistline or lower the hem of a dress.

"Well, then, it is important for women to remember to wear clothes that fit them well; that are cut to their own proportions. If they do not, they will act self-conscious."

"A woman must wear suitable clothes for her age, stature, coloring and for the occasions at which she plans to don them. A tall woman, for instance, can wear more extreme kinds of clothes than a shorter woman can. Her figure will carry well the flowing panels, the dashing capes, the extravagant, dramatic, sensational costume. Shorter women must be a little more conservative, wear clothes of simpler cut."

"On the other hand, there are certain clothes which the tall woman should refrain from wearing: bouffant taffetas, for instance. Perhaps I am merely prejudiced in this, however. I personally do not care for taffeta or stiff, crisp materials like that. I think a petite woman looks very well in them, also the young, girlish type. Taffeta gowns make her look demure."

That women should stick to the kind of costume which is most becoming to them individually, instead of merely following the mode or copying a friend's style of dress, is another bit of advice offered by the clothes-wise Miss Holms.

Feel "At Home" in Your Clothes

A woman, in order to wear clothes well, effectively and with style, must first of all feel "at home" in them. She must know they suit her type, that they are well made and that they are correctly fitted to her figure.

TALL WOMEN — Can wear extreme clothes, the flowing panels, the dashing capes, the extravagant, dramatic, sensational costume.

SHORT WOMEN — Must be conservative, wear clothes of a simple cut. If they are young and small they look well in bouffant taffetas.

OLDER WOMEN — Should beware of coy styles. They should never try to wear too youthful, too demure frocks. They will accentuate their age. Better to look your age elegantly than dowdily younger than your actual years.

YOUNG WOMEN — Can wear their hair combed away from the face, in severe fashion, but the fluffy hairdress which frames the face is better for the woman who has passed her first youth.

BLONDES — White is a very flattering color for evening wear for the extreme blonde. She will look frail and romantic in it, provided it isn't "bridey" in style. If she affects red she must tone down her cosmetics, use a lipstick to match the gown.

BRUNETTES — Oftentimes look ravishing with a white flower in their hair. White for evening wear is good for them, too, for they look exotic in it.

"If a woman has all her life worn clothes of simple cut and then suddenly blossoms out in huge, puffed sleeves or wide, bristling sash bows behind, she is almost certain to be ill at ease. Her thoughts are riveted on that huge bow in back. Will it crush if she sits on it? Will it look lumpy? She twists her puffed sleeves, tries to flatten them down a bit so they'll look less like butterfly wings. The result?

"The party is a total loss to her. She feels miserable. She knows she is nobody's fashion plate. And all because of those eccentric new touches to her gown. She hasn't been adaptable enough to grow accustomed to the changed style quickly enough."

"And also women, no matter what their build, must forget about figures when they are out for an evening's entertainment, particularly if they want to make a favorable impression, cause people to admire their clothes."

"Some people think that only slender, tall girls can carry clothes well. That's

You're Not the ONLY GOLDFISH in the Bowl



appear ridiculous. It is better to look your age elegantly than dowdily younger than one's actual years.

"Carriage and the important part it plays in the stylish woman's schedule has been stressed so often that I hate to touch on it now. But correct carriage is so highly important that it cannot be overlooked."

"Whenever I pass a group of models in our fitting rooms I poke a slightly protruding tummy here, slap a pair of shoulders, try to make the girls remember to hold their shoulders back and their 'tummies' in. Of course, if women practice correct carriage only occasionally, say when they cross a ballroom floor or enter an opera box, they are going to look new at the trick, self-conscious. It is very important that women hold themselves well all the time, standing, walking and sitting, so that it becomes second nature to them to do so."

SPEAKING of the "stage entrance" made by some vain women, Miss Holms said, smiling a little cynically:

"I am always amused when, at a party, I see the old trick of a girl arriving late, standing in the doorway until every one looks her way and then making what she thinks is a stupendous entrance."

"It is really frightfully bad technique. This poor girl is wearing, perhaps, a dream of a new frock and wants her little social world to get a good eyeful of it. But what is the result?"

"After setting that tempo, after that dramatic onslaught, she must act all over the place all evening to keep in character, and it's hard work. Most women fall after a few minutes. It is an awful letdown for her audience."

"Besides, if a girl makes such an entrance, too much is expected of her in the way of looks, style, personality. Me? I never rise to the occasion like that. I am languid by nature. It requires so much effort to try to make a whole roomful of people do nothing but watch you."

"I like to relax and be comfortable, and be myself. I don't want to over-exert myself. If I look well in a new gown I like people to find that out for themselves. I don't want to keep preening, spreading my feathers, begging the assemblage to look me over."

"I like to feel at ease, and I won't if I am self-conscious; if I am constantly wondering about the way I appear to other people. It is this same disinterested, indifferent quality which made me wonder why I won the prize and was given first place at the fashion show the other day. 'You looked so at ease in what you wore,' said the judges. As a matter of fact, I never felt less at ease in my life, although, evidently, I gave the impression of feeling poised and all right."

"Speaking of ease, I think it is a good idea for a woman who is planning to wear an evening gown for the first time to have a sort of advance 'dress rehearsal' at home. She ought to wear it around the house, sit down in it, stand up in it, and then when she finally wears it out in public she will be thoroughly familiar with the 'feel' of it, with the hang of it, the train, the sleeves, all its new features. Professional models wear so many different kinds of clothes all the time that they acquire this familiarity with different styles, so that they wear them with ease."

Copyrights

Forget your little self and you'll get along in the world, says Helen Bobbye Holms, shown above.

not so. I've seen big women and short, plump ones wearing size 40 and over, who have looked extremely well; very smart, in fact, simply because they knew how to select clothes suitable for them and because they wore them easily and with grace.

"An older woman should never try to wear too youthful, too demure frocks. They will accentuate her age, make her



Here is a group of French women, adepts at the art of "putting on a show"