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Showcase '86: more to fashion than meets the eye

Showcase '86, a fashion extravaganza produced by juniors Mary Pelletier and Denise Lemons, was held Friday night in the Carson Hall dining room. The showcase, sponsored by the President's Council, included 27 models and 12 technical assistants, all University students.

Pelletier said preparation for the show began in October and continued with research during Christmas vacation, model calls and selections in January and production plans and rehearsals through April.

The show was divided between Pelletier, who was in charge of the fashions, and Lemons, who was in charge of production. In addition, Lemons said, "this year's show involved more choreography and theatrics than the '85 show. It was a much more elaborate production."

Commenting on the fashion aspect of the show, Pelletier said, "The clothes this year represented a great mix of fashion styles and economic levels, which I think provided a well-rounded show."

Swim, formal, jean, preppie, black and white, Caribbean and avant-garde wear were some of the different fashions that comprised the 12-set, 1 1/2-hour showcase. Seven local stores provided the clothing: The Closet, Jay Jacobs, Squire, The Trading Company, Track 'N' Trail, the University Bookstore and The Wild Pair.

In attendance at this year's showcase was President Chris Cusick of Academy One Inc., a modeling school in Portland.

"Obviously the show wasn't a New York show but considering the facilities, they did a nice job, showing creativity and talent."

The technical side of the show — the lighting and sound — was superb. It was very

professional," he added.

"The show was more gimmicky than the real market. Currently the fashion market is sophisticated and simple," Cusick said. "However, due to the nature of the audience, the show was properly produced."

Also in attendance was Rosemary Ridenour Huserik, a freelance fashion coordinator, who said, "Besides the one error with time lapses between the sets, it was an otherwise fine production."

Senior Michelle Payer, who was a model last year as well as this year, said, "I was really nervous backstage, but by the first set, I could feel the rapport with the audience, and I became relaxed and comfortable."

Pelletier said she thought of the concept of producing a showcase for educational reasons. "I want to put a portfolio together of the show and send it to the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City, the school I hope to attend after graduation at Oregon."

"Hopefully after graduation at the Institute, I can become one of the top fashion consultants in the world."

Lindsay thinks Pelletier, who is a business major minoring in dance, has a good chance to be accepted. "She seems like a great organizer, and it is obvious that she put a lot of time into the show. You have to want it from the inside and it appears that she does," Lindsay said.

Lemons is also a business major with a dance minor. "I want to pursue the business or management administration side of the arts," she said. "And being in charge of the production side of the show has given me valuable experience."

Senior Fred Freeman, one of this year's models, said that besides being an event that displayed clothes, the showcase "helped all of us with poise and self-confidence. It helped us become more confident in front of people."

Pelletier credits two people involved in the show, emcee Blaine Erickson and backstage manager Michelle Meckstroth.

About 250 people attended this year's showcase — half the number that attended Showcase '85.

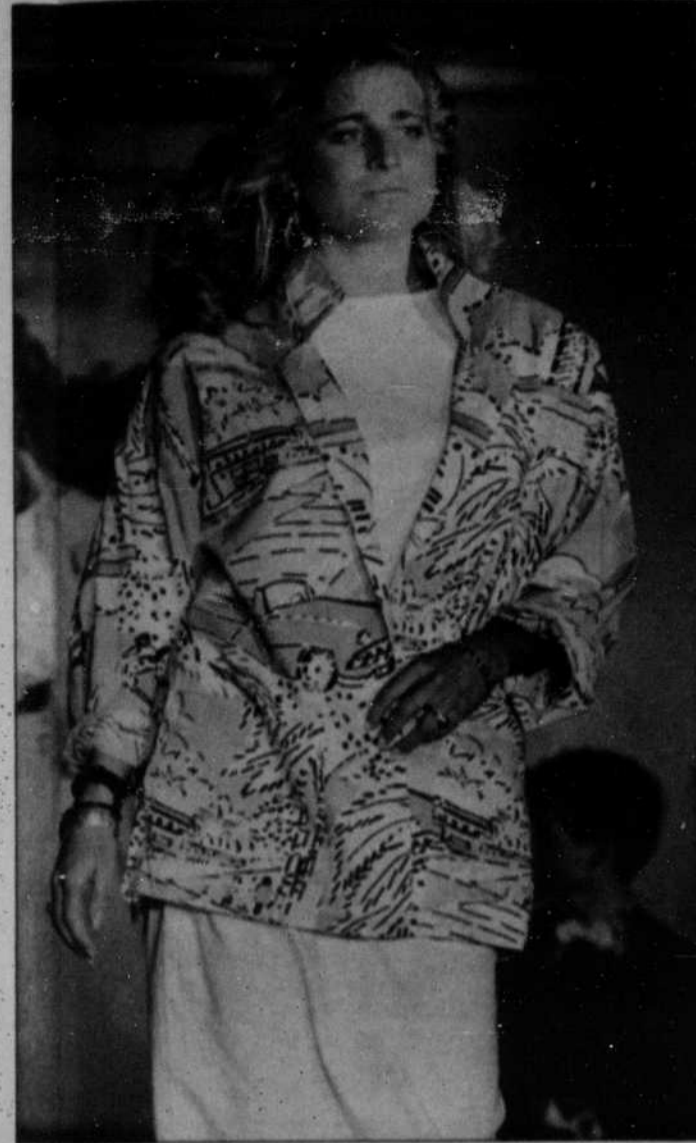
"Last year the crowd was rowdy and loud while this year's audience was more serious," Pelletier said. "I think that quality is more important than quantity, so this year's audience was excellent despite the numbers."

So, Showcase '86 came to an end and as the lights were being taken down, the chairs arranged to proper order and the stage disassembled. What were Pelletier and Lemons doing?

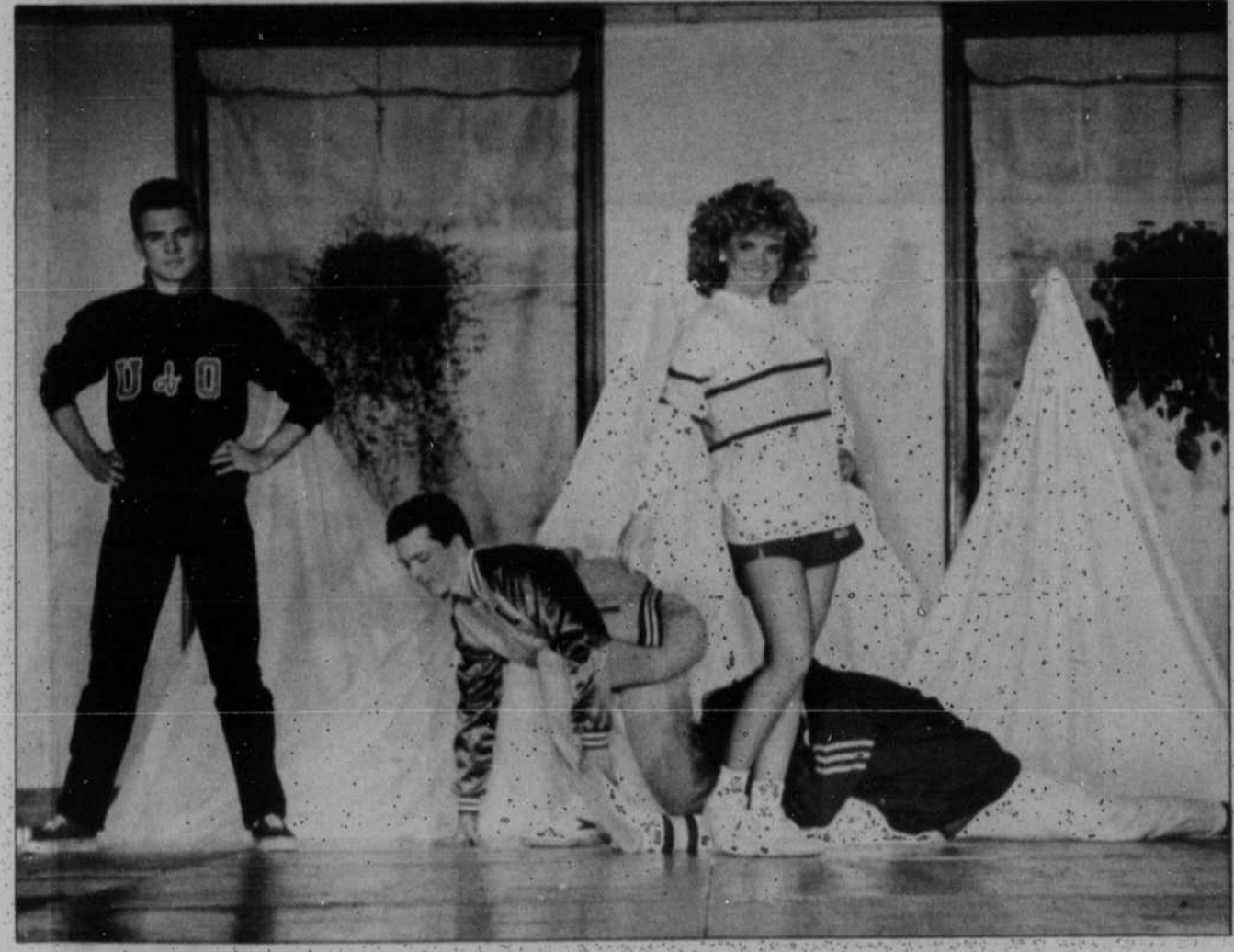
"We are planning for next year."



Clockwise from top: Jill Brenton demonstrates the flashy use of a jean jacket; models below incorporated a dance routine into their college fashion sequence; Fred Freeman models a professional but upbeat suit; Deana Holt shows the fresh and wild prints coming out this spring.



Story by Steve McCurdy
Photos by Shu-Shing Chen



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