

Chicago Designers

Sujata Gazder

Surrounded by the extravagant brocades of Benares, the exquisite design of the Taj Mahal, and the graceful patterns of pashmina shawls and decorative saris in her homeland of India, women's designer Sujata Gazder's definitive style of traditional designs with contemporary edge was born. Honed at Chicago's Roosevelt University, it is this distinct and

personal style that has landed Gazder the title of a "Rising Star of Midwest Fashion." Sujata's ultra-feminine line of day dresses, tops, jackets, and eveningwear of laces, organza's, and leathers with a flirty style and undeniable grace, is the ideal option for the woman seeking modern clothing. Adorned with peeping lace, bows, buttons, and beading, each of Sujata's original designs exuberate the glamour, elegance, and fresh look that are not only the staples of her collection, but of the modern woman's closet as well.

See: *Allure of Couture*

Buy: Visit her website

www.sujatagazder.com

-Ashley Chanter

Wrath Arcane

"Domestically produced activism," are three words given by designer Sean Bilovecky that encompasses the message of Wrath Arcane. Bilovecky and Cleveland boutique owner Brian O'neil began their line in January of 2006, and formed a set of new deals for the fashion world. With environmentally conscious manufacturers and each piece cut and sewn in either Pennsylvania or New York, they keep the men's contemporary sportswear label homegrown. Wrath Arcane translates as "secret anger" or "forgotten rage," however, the collections do not embody the literal meaning of the brand. Their objective is to increase consumer awareness of a garment from the inside out. Instead of a model influencing the consumer to buy the product, their models wear masks to reinforce the design and the brand's mission.

See: *Gen Art's Fresh Faces in Fashion*

Buy: *Active Endeavors and Untitled* in Chicago

www.wratharcane.com

-Hilary Shaffer

Katrin Schnabl

Katrin Schnabl, from Germany, started her career by graduating summa cum laude from New York's Fashion Institute of Technology with her degree in Fashion Design. She then worked under Jil Sander, Carolina Herrera and Robert Danes and went on to owning Miche Kimsa, of which she was the principal designer. In 2002, she started her own signature line and now spreads her talent while teaching in the fashion department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her line has eight collections: aerial scape, nature/hoir, tea in the sahara, untended garden, structure and collapse, engel über chelsea, and heather & frankie. These collections carry pieces that range from feminine and frilly to dramatic and angled. Thanks to her dancing background, many of Schnabl's pieces are a reflection of movement and grace.

See: *Macy's Designers of Chicago Show*

Buy: Visit her website
www.katrinschnabl.com
-Nora Silver

Cyndi Chan

The Chicago-based designer Cyndi Chan is getting some serious attention on the national fashion scene and is about to step it up a notch this fall as Macy's picks up her lines, Ori-en and Zen Tee. "It's all about the fabrics!" Chan emphasizes. Her prêt-a-porter fall collection has strong movement with draping of flowing pleated skirts and dresses in glimmering silver that fall sensuously over curves. Even Chan's more structured pieces have a delicate flexibility provided by a stretch twill fabric. Ori-en has a feel of the 20s and 30s with flapper sleeved tops, drop waist dresses and high-waisted, pin striped pants in merlot hues that even Al Capone would have given a nod to. The former Donna Karan intern also is clearly inspired by 60s icons such as Audrey and Marilyn with namesake trenches and dresses.

See: Macy's Designers of Chicago Show

Buy: Macy's through the holidays
www.cyndichan.com
-Kari Skaffen

Abigail Glaum-Lathbury

Most fashion designers look to the past for inspiration, Chicago designer Abigail Glaum-Lathbury, a graduate of the Art Institute, finds beauty in the unlikely. Her ethereal pieces are organic, encapsulating those little moments of life that is both uncomfortable and breathtaking. Her groundbreaking work redefines the relationship between the garment and wearer. Her pieces are aesthetically pleasing, yet they challenge people to redefine traditional conceptions about beauty. For her final school project, she created a collection modeled after spoiled slices of meat. She emulated their organic forms by creating latex castings from a plaster "meat" mold and then sewed the slices together and onto pieces of fabric. The final gown had an ephemeral quality, yet structurally was reminiscent of a high-necked Victorian dress.

See: Gen Art Fresh Faces

Buy: Exclusively at Habit
-Tara Dubbs

James De Colón

Designer James De Colón of De Colón & Company has been working in the fashion industry for about thirty years now, primarily in Chicago, New York and San Juan, Puerto Rico. His line is worn internationally and includes styles for women varying from ready-to-wear to evening couture, and from limited edition to one of a kind. The designer creates thoughtful feminine touches to enhance style and fit. "The greatest thing about my job is that I have the opportunity to communicate with women and create designs that make them feel good about themselves," says De Colón. His designs can be viewed at his private studio at 8223 S. May St., Chicago by scheduling an appointment at 773.371.0321.

See: Allure of Couture

Buy: His private studio
- Hilary Shaffer

Beth Lambert

Beth Lambert, who after struggling to find clothing that suited her needs in her corporate real estate career, created her line of versatile, but vibrant mix and match apparel, Scarlet Designs. From jackets to pants to tops, all of Lambert's pieces can be worn with items already in your closet for almost any situation, a business meeting, lunch with the girls, or a black-tie event. Also, check out Lambert's latest creation. This designer has recently paired up with famed photographer Stan Malinowski and the International Children's Foundation Center to craft an original screen print skirt featuring one of Malinowski's images of the Harold Washington Library. The ball skirt is available for \$2,499, with \$500 going directly to ICFC.

See: The See More Shopping event

Buy: Her studio above Jimmy Choo at 65 E. Oak St., Chicago
www.specialoccasionseparates.com
-Ashley Charter