



Photo: Ellen Tofflemire

Parnass and Pelly's designs: at the forefront of avant garde fashion.

machine . . . Nicola and I mine what we call the 'collective memory' of our generation to produce new combinations of ideas for the 1980s. Images of Colonial Raj vests, Harlem's Apollo Theatre in the thirties, professional sports gear, rebel guerillas of every culture, Hollywood's forties 'glam/lux,' and always the military . . . these are all part of our intellectual resource."

The name Parachute was chosen in part for its bilingual nature — an important consideration in Canada — and in part because it carries a connotation of risk. Says Pelly: "We feel our customers have to have courage; they must meet us half way with the designs."

While the Parachute look may not be for everybody it has certainly pleased enough "courageous" people to parachute Parnass and Pelly to the forefront of avant-garde fashion.

Debora Kuchmé

Debora Kuchmé has arrived. After almost five years with her own label, she is now hailed as one of Canada's premier designers.

Her latest coups are proof enough of that: her creations were part of a fashion show organized for the Duke and Duchess of York during their visit to Toronto last year; she is a finalist for the Woolmark Award recognizing outstanding Canadian talent in clothing design; and recently Kuchmé was invited to participate in the Festival of Canadian Fashion, Spring/Summer '88.

Concerned with quality as well as novelty, Kuchmé is committed to using only the best fabrics and is continually increasing the variety of her creations. Designed primarily for the professional woman, her collections enhance the female form while promoting style and understated elegance.

Debora Kuchmé began her professional career in Toronto in 1975 as patternmaker for Canadian designers Wayne Clark and Aline Marelle. Within months, she was creating her first evening wear line.

After five years, Kuchmé moved to The Monaco Group (then known as Ms Originals) which subsequently introduced the Debora Kuchmé day wear collection. But she longed for independence and after three years there, Kuchmé left to start her own label. Joining forces with Monty Millberg, a New York City dress manufacturer, she launched the "Debora Kuchmé" line of women's apparel.

"I was supposed to move to New York," recounts Kuchmé, "but Canada is my home — I love it here and finally decided that it's where I want to stay." Her decision to remain was not part of some big plan: "I don't like strategies; you get too many disappointments that way."

Today, 75 per cent of Kuchmé's business is in the United States. Bonwit Teller, Bergdorf Goodman, Saks Fifth Avenue, Lord & Taylor, and Bloomingdales — all

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well-known American retailers — carry the Kuchmé line. For fall 1988, a sporty casual line under the American label "Sketches" is also planned.

Recently Kuchmé ventured into a new area: manufacturing. Founded only last year, Kuchmé Manufacturing Ltd. enables the Debora Kuchmé line to be produced in Canada, then sold and shipped directly from Toronto headquarters.

Indeed Kuchmé has arrived . . . and it looks as though she is here to stay.

Zonda Nellis

Clothes by Vancouver fashion designer Zonda Nellis are known in many circles as the latest rage. Her creations have been worn by such celebrities as Catherine Oxenberg on the U.S. television series "Dynasty," and by Phylicia Rashad on "The Cosby Show." And Nellis' designs sell in the most sophisticated stores in the United States, including Nieman-Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman. In Canada, her fashions are sold at E.A. Lee Ltd. and at Nellis' new atelier, both in Vancouver.

