

'He's definitely very creative and talented,' says Alfred Sung.

THALIE is one of the more senior Canadian fashion houses, having been launched all of ten years ago. It is run by Syrian-born Antoine Nasri and his Montreal-born wife Odile. Their sales in Canada last year reached £6 million.

The Nasri family emigrated to Montreal in 1970 and founded the Bedo stores chain. Working with designers in Canada and Hong Kong, Nasri and his wife have developed a range of women's clothing which is both comfortable and affordable. 'Anyone can make a £300 sweater look beautiful,' he remarks. 'The challenge in this game is to make a beautiful £30 sweater.'

Nasri's interest in fashion developed at an early age. 'When I was a boy in Syria,' he recalls, 'I used to choose clothes at the Salvation Army and take them home and wash them. Then I'd resell them at school.'

Until this year, Thalie has concentrated its efforts on the Canadian market. Now the time feels right for the company to spread its wings, and it is planning to export to the United States, West Germany and France, as well as to the UK.

Thalie's autumn and winter collections have a twenties and thirties look. Garbo-style wide trousers, high-waist trousers with short fitted jackets, and Bermuda shorts with short jackets are included in the range.

Among the other fashion houses which have been selected by Liberty's are PRICE ROMAN. It consists of Kenya-born Derek Price and Ontario-born Tess Romaniuk, who established their own label in November, 1986. 'We like to do clothes that are exciting,' say these two workaholics, whose styles are daring enough to appeal to the young, yet have a standard of finish that appeals to the older person.



Joyce Gunhouse and Judy Cornish of COMRAGS met when they were both students of fashion design at Ryerson. They presented their first womenswear collection under the Comrags label in 1983, and have recently branched out into menswear. The hallmarks of their clothes are quality workmanship and good styling. Both women believe clothes should be fun to wear, and there is an element of humour in many of their designs.



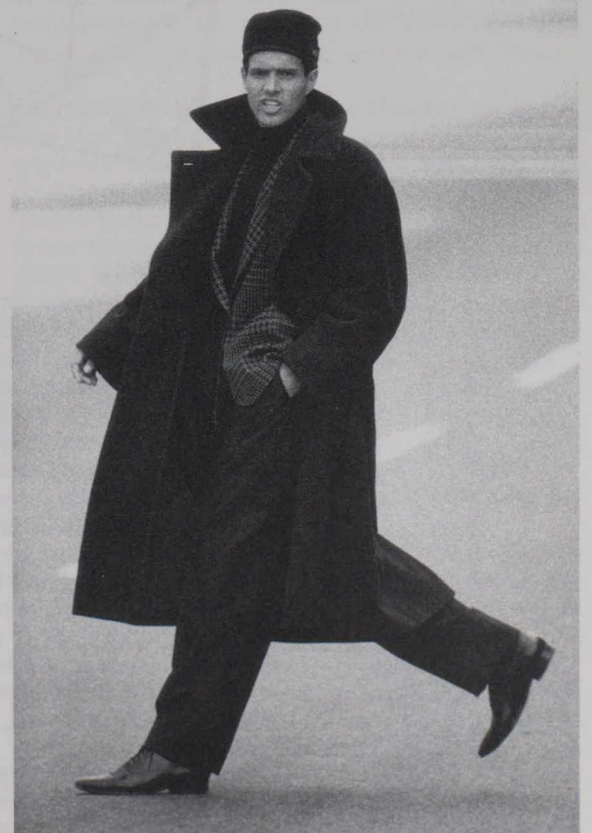
ZAPATA (Nancy Young and Karen Gable) was established in 1978, and has grown from a small design studio catering to a limited clientele into a label that has a strong design signature. For its autumn 1988 collection, detail and proportion

play a significant part, and fine fabrics are used creatively.

Intriguingly, not all the talents represented at Liberty's trained as fashion designers. BABEL, for instance, brings together the talents of two architects, Pauline Landriault and Scott Cressman, and an industrial designer, Karim Rashid; while ANNE SEALLY was trained in theatre design and worked on period costumes before turning to contemporary fashion. Her designs have a timeless quality: classic suit shapes with a variety of coordinating separates, which mainly appeal to women executives.

LAURA KAPP has built her reputation on a line of fine quality handknit sweaters for men who like their clothes to reflect their personalities and life styles. There are classic arans, as well as sweaters with zany lizard and dancing people motifs. Kapp has recently started designing sweaters for women.

By contrast, Toronto-born MICHAEL TONG started out designing women's fashions, but now concentrates on menswear ranging from the avant-garde to the traditional. Tong uses traditional fabrics and colours, and his cuts are loose and relaxed.



Montreal-based DENOMME VINCENT (Marcel Dénomme and Louise Vincent) also specialise in menswear. Their designs have a European look, and their simple, unadorned lines appeal strongly to the contemporary man.

*Dénomme Vincent specialise in menswear with a European look.*