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# Couture collection shows designer's timeless style

By Jason Hardy  
 Staff writer

Career fairs, for the most part, are not geared toward kindergarten classes.

After all, what do kindergartners know?

Of course most kindergartners aren't like Mary Anne Vacarro was.

"I was one of those people who knew when I was in kindergarten what I wanted to do," she said. "I never swayed. I always came back to clothing design."

Vacarro, a couture designer from Omaha, is currently the subject of an exhibit at the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery. "The Many Sides of Mary Anne Vacarro" runs through March 3 and features a collection of one-of-a-kind apparel designs.

As a couture designer, Vacarro creates clothing specifically for clients who request her services. The clothes are all made to fit the individual's exact size, and Vacarro also consults them on fashion elements as well.

Barbara Trout, a representative of the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery, said that the exhibition encompasses a wide variety of her work because of the nature of Vacarro's business.

"I can't think of anyone in any of the major cities of the Midwest that

has a business quite like hers," Trout said. "There are anything from ball gowns to wedding gowns, there's evening wear, cocktail dresses and even suits."

Trout said that one thing unified all of Vacarro's designs - quality.

"It's the type of garment that has been specifically cut and measured to fit the needs and tastes of one person," she said. "It's very fine, meticulous hand-sewn craftsmanship and the highest quality of fabrics."

"This show also gives a representation of how timeless her designs are. She has things that were done in the 1980s that could be shown in the magazines and on the runways of today."

Vacarro said she was proud her work is considered timeless because it's something she's worked toward since her beginnings in the 1970s.

"I don't really ever refer to myself as a fashion designer - I'm a clothing designer," she said.

"Fashion is too much of a timely element. I can hold up a piece of fabric and think of a million ways to use it and, by sketching and sketching, I eventually put down something that I know I can wear today and 15 years from now."

"The thing that makes me feel good about the show is that the pieces from the early '80s are as good

PREVIEW

## "The Many Sides of Mary Anne Vacarro"

**WHERE:** Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery, 234 Home Economics Building, East Campus

**WHEN:** Jan. 31- March 3

**COST:** free

**THE SKINNY:** One-of-a-kind dress designs showing on East Campus

as the ones from a month ago."

Vacarro said the reason her clothes are so timeless is because she puts a lot of effort into making each piece something special.

"You use what elements are there during the times and you interpret it your own way. I have a personal feel for what I design," she said. "Also, I don't sell something without seeing how it feels on me. I don't sell an arm hole unless I see how it works."

She said having a solo exhibition at the Textiles Gallery was very satisfying, but the true payback for all of her hard work over the years is something more personal.

"It's just the feel I get for doing it," Vacarro said. "It beats me up, but the rewards in it are so personally gratifying."

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