

# MME SIMCOX DESCRIBES Various Forms of The Tunic

MME SIMCOX IS AMERICA'S GREATEST  
DESIGNER & CREATOR OF FASHION

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Summer days are here and summer modes. And as you study the interesting presentations of the individual couturiers it seems as though the spring maid had peeped in her mirror and found her attire a trifle too buoyantly youthful. The summer girl has smoothed away her hip puffs, straightened out her frills and drawn them downward into prim looking tunics and skirts.

To be sure, some of the puffs refuse to "stay put" and flare still saucily outward, but the direction of the modes is toward the elongated silhouette. Milady has also pulled down her belt, and the bodice of her gown is developed into a long narrow basque that possesses a decided suggestion of the Victorian era of dress.

The neck of her frock is cut with a deep curve at the throat, which invites the use of a flaring Norman or Gladstone collar, while the sleeves droop modestly over the shoulders. The maid of the spring opening has certainly "reefed her sails," although I am glad she let the little breezes puff them gayly for the first spring months. Who was not happier for the buoyancy and fresh colors of these early styles? However, youthful modes that incline to frivolity have passed with the season, and the later modes are really more practical in that they suit all figures. Summer garb affects a straighter contour, which tends to give more slenderness to the wearer—a feature that will doubtless bring joy to the woman whose embonpoint was accentuated in the spring modes. In these new creations the breezes have gone out of the puffs and the summer sun has allowed the frills to droop.

The tunic which has brought about

this wonderful change of outline masquerades in several different forms and, not content with monopolizing the skirt, invades many another department of dress. There is the straight tunic that is frequently the distinctive note in the smartly tailored suit. This may be slightly gathered at the waist so that it fits rather snugly around the figure and extends well below the knee. Various individual touches are noted on such modes, and, as I think a concrete example always better than a lot of generalities, I will describe one or two that merely hint of the divers ways in which these may be modeled. On a mastic colored suit very attractive motifs were embroidered in silk floss at the center front, on the sides and in the rear. The design, inspired by the Iris, was decidedly decorative and allowed the introduction of most beautiful lavender and green silks whose lovely color was enhanced by the tiny specks of rich brick red that were cleverly combined in the ornament.

On another model worn by a young woman who dearly loves the out of doors and insists on wearing navy blue irrespective of the demands of fashion blue bands of striped silk bound the blue gabardine. As if to indicate a panel in front two folds of the silk radiated toward the waistline and in the center back one long strap of silk flanked with folds of shorter length gave an attractive finish to the creation.

When something less simple, but still rather tailored, is desired, especially when wool fabrics are used, the tunic is oftentimes developed in large pleats that are stitched part way so that there is no great bunchiness around the hips. A very different arrangement is sometimes given when the tunic seems to be evolved from a close-fitting yoke. A pleasing tailor which I designed for the young woman to whom I have already referred was fashioned with a small smocked panel just below the girde in the front, so that the fullness was greatest over the instep.

### A Gown of Rare Charm.

The possibilities for novel treatment of the tunic are even greater in silk and in cotton materials, as they are so much lighter in weight and more pliable. A charming rendition of this adornment is pictured in the illustration marked No. 2. Here the tunic lacks any semblance of formality and



to the careless eye seems to suggest the shawl-like draperies that dark skinned women of other lands adopt. However, this tunic is very cleverly arranged. In the front of the figure it is fastened just below the waistline, and as it is drawn towards the back it reveals a small triangular section of the lace founcing that distinguishes this creation. A cluster of roses skillfully conceals its point of contact, and from this it hangs loosely apart, so that one may look with satisfaction at the magnificent lace underskirt.

The corsage, which is remarkably décollete, possesses an inverted pleated bounce of handsome lace that balances the spreading ends of the silk tunic, while the coiffure boasts of a richly jeweled Spanish comb.

However, the tunic appears not only on the elaborate evening gown or smart tailleur. The afternoon dress is enriched by it in one of its manifold forms. A creation that typifies many of the most delectable features of the present modes is depicted in the sketch marked No. 1. This gown is most picturesque, for the coat-like waist is originated from a magnificent white Chinese silk exquisitely embroidered with the wonderful colors of the ori-

ent. Conforming to the present vogue for some mannish detail on the most feminine of costumes, it is elaborated with a straightly cut waistcoat of chrysanthemum yellow. Small silk covered buttons reflect the modes of our ancestors, while a flaring Norman collar of sheerest batiste crests this adorable creation. But our interest for the moment is in the skirt whose tight fitting foundation of yellow satin contrasts strikingly with the tunic of black nixon. Closely pleated, its many folds advance and retreat as milady turns herself about when she meanders through the beautiful gardens or dilates on the latest sociological questions as she steps within the salon of some learned friend. A charming dash of color which one must not overlook is found in the roses that mark the limits of the black silk girde, for these are evolved from rich shades of violet.

But so great is the enthusiasm for the tunic at this time that even the tailored coat is distinguished by tunic-like appendages that doubtless foretell the return of the redingote.

The Tunic Masquerades on the Coat. The illustration No. 4 is a particularly good example of the unusual man-

ifestations of this characteristic feature. The coat is very quaintly modeled in the styles that were adored by the women of the Victorian era. Distinction is attained by the pleated tunic that extends around the sides and back of this much buttoned garment.

The skirt shows the tunic in uncommon guise. Almost concealing the tight-fitting underskirt, it originates just below the knee and attains a certain fullness by the many pleats which compose it. Although this creation is rather severe in its style, dainty touches are obtained by the adorable cuffs and collar of fine white organdy.

Even the cape seems to have come under the spell of the tunic. The lovely wrap designated as No. 3 on this page shows tier after tier of beautifully pleated chiffon, whose spiral drapery proves a charming sheath-like covering for the closely-draped inner shell of liberty satin. Black is favored for this production, which depends for its artistic success on the rare richness of the fabrics. However, this style would also be most pleasing if evolved from some of the colors that nature uses. You know the lovely warm browns with which she covers her buds? Well, just let us suppose that the inner wrap is made from a silk of that tone, while the lace wings are fashioned from delicate cream lace. In this scheme we have reversed the order of nature, but the result is charming.

### Monkey Fur is the New Decoration.

A very unusual decoration of monkey fur forms the collar of this wrap. This fur, which is quite a fashionable "trapping" at this time, is sometimes so closely set around the throat that it gives the appearance of whiskers and is really only chosen by women who delight in eccentric adornments.

Sometimes I feel that, after all, good taste in dress is a gift from the gods—purely artistic and inspirational. Nevertheless, even if you possess this sense, you must give careful thought to the artistry of clothes, for much distinction and charm are achieved by intelligent observation and adaptation. Lack of imagination is frequently the cause of failure in successful dressing.

There came to my atelier this spring one of the season's most attractive debutantes, whose portrait has smiled to you more than once from the society columns (but, like priests and physicians, we designers must tell no names). As she crossed the threshold it was delightful to see her enthusiasm over some of my creations. She would fain have selected one costume after another, but my artistic sense triumphed over any commercial desire.

All the gowns were exquisite in themselves—"joys," my young client named them. However, I told her I wished to chat a bit about clothes before we talked gowns. Needing living texts for my subject, we laid aside conventions to the extent of stepping into Sherry's for lunch.

### Your Personality is Emphasized in Your Dress.

Between the unfolding of our serviettes and the drinking of our coffee, with gay folk all around us for inspiration, I expatiated on my pet theme. The young girl listened most intelligently, as I found when we again returned to my salons. After discussing the psychology of modes and colors in relation to the personality of the wearer and emphasizing it, even dipping a bit into the occult and touching upon the so-called astral colors, I commenced my salad with the following homily: "Youth is an egoist. That is part of its charm, for youth is infinite-



ly sure of its place in the universe. So in clothes one must never lose sight of one's own personality and faithfully clothe it. If only we might stand on one of Whistler's black velvet floors and have the whole studio to ourselves dress would be a simple matter.

But as it is, the problem of harmony extends not only to the wearer, but to the surroundings in which the gown appears. Fancy that cerise faille you wanted in Mrs. S—rose salon. Myriad other gowns will be there, and you must be able in your dress not only to challenge them, but bear their possible detraction.

This is why my artistic self always prefers a gown that expresses a single, well thought-out color note. It is sure to achieve distinction among a legion of costumes, beautiful in themselves, but through the employment of various ill-chosen contrasts, falling in the scheme of the complete picture.

Present modes demand variety in color and line, and at this point we artists assert our skill to concoct a gown beautiful as a design, and yet a distinct unit of color and line in the crowded ball room or thronging avenue.

Dressing is a careful art, and enthusiasm will help, but not altogether achieve, I concluded, as we turned again to the selection of gowns for this beautiful young woman.

### Correct Accessories Must Complete the Costume.

Variety and charming bits of color are often effected by the correct accessories. Have you not seen a picture in which the artist led you deftly to a dash of brilliant color perhaps merely by a dash of vermilion or emerald green which made the picture? Of like importance are accessories. A gay parasol will frivel a whole costume or a smart bag enliven it. This is a season when a great variety of ingeniously shaped and covered parasols are being carried. There are Minaret, Japanese and dome shapes. In other styles the ribs are bent in eccentric outward or downward curves, and as for covers chiffon, lace, silk and chiffon afford a delectable choice. Indeed from filmiest lace creations to colored golfinies there is such assortment that milady's choice is practically unlimited.

Broad black stripes upon white are exceedingly well liked. Some of these show a plain border of tomato red, green, purple or rose. Roman stripes or Scotch plaids, too, are effective, although the dainty summer maid is glad that this is a season of the "Reign of Lace," for this fabric bespeaks the innate refinement that is incomparably associated with good birth and breeding.

Handles are both plain and elaborate. Long enamel sticks are frequently seen. There are also carved ivory handles, while some are studded with semi-precious stones and iridescent beads. Fine Dresden china was chosen for the handle of an exquisite pompadour silk.

### Novelties in Neckwear.

In neckwear the collar that is now the delight of the fashionable woman shows greater width and is more wired, so that the frills are fast becoming more Elizabethan in proportions. A tight-fitting little taffeta suit showed a round, upstanding neck frill, compelling milady's chin to look up persistently, not down. Organdy combined with ostrich banding is another smart style, while some of the newest jackets have side pleated frills of sheerest linen plainly hemstitched or edged with lace.

Cobwebby materials are employed, and the capes at the back of the collar vary from a pleated sailor-shaped model to a long stole reaching to the hips. Occasionally a sheer frock has a wide sash with this stole-like cape in black or other pronounced color.

The gauntlet cuff is favored, and it in turn has often a small inverted gauntlet at the wrist.

Velvet is advancing in favor and this is noticed in several of the details of the loveliest gowned woman. Many of the loveliest evening gowns have snug-fitting underdresses of black. Indeed, deep hems of velvet are often used on the afternoon or lingerie frock, while some of the most adorable white taffeta silks are griddled with folds of velvet in glowing colors. Occasionally these present a slightly tailored aspect and are finished with large smoked pearl buttons. Of course the velvet hat is again in evidence, made entirely of the material or combined with lace or fine braid.



So Subtle Is the Psychology of Clothes That a Woman May Add to Herself the Charm of a New Personality by Merely Changing Her Dress. *Clara E. Simcox*