

Review of the Field in Art Education

Fashion Journalism

Next to steel, the biggest industry in the United States today, is fashion. New aspects are making fashion an unlimited field for ambitious students—in design itself, in merchandising, in stagecraft and even in journalism.

Of great significance, therefore, is the fact that the United States now provides the best training for American designers, many of whom have heretofore been lured by the prestige of Paris and the glamor which has surrounded French creations. American schools have broadened their facilities for fashion study as it relates to contemporary life. Students at the Traphagan School of Fashion, New York, come from France and other European nations as well as from every state in the union.

Keeping abreast with current needs, the Traphagan School offers for the first time a course in fashion journalism, which prepares students for positions on magazines and newspapers in advertising departments and agencies where they will interpret in words what they themselves or some other designer creates. The course is conducted by Marie Stark, formerly associate editor of *Vogue*, who teaches copy writing as related to fashion illustration and costume design. Ethel Traphagan, director and founder of the school, felt the necessity for a course of this kind because "fashion has a language of its own, crisp, snappy, technical."

Further, fashion has a rhythm of its own, Miss Traphagan feels. The dress designer must learn to know the human body in motion as well as in repose. She must have the feel of bones and muscles beneath the silk sheathing. Posture classes give the students an opportunity to study the flutter of draperies in motion and to acquire personal poise as well as to understand other practical problems. While the traditions of costume design and illustration are forcefully presented, the school aims to go beyond tradition by relating fashion design to the tempo of modern living. Historic styles in interior decoration are studied and correlated with fashion that students may acquire a background that should enhance their ability to create something really American.

Industrial progress has placed a multitude of new discoveries at the disposal of the designer. Expert stylists utilize the creation of new synthetic processes, new weaves and new shades. Traphagan students take their notebooks to the mills and study fabrics at first hand as they come off the looms. Talks on oriental and occidental fabrics and museum study augment the student's knowledge.