

The House That Scarves Built

By BERNADETTE CAREY

TWENTY-FIVE years ago, Vera Neumann offered her first collection of scarves, using her own fabric designs in patterns of leaves, ferns and flowers.

Yesterday, she stood in her new showroom, designed by Marcel Breuer and decorated with a mural symbolizing the patterns of that first collection, and greeted the press, buyers and guests who had come to see a sportswear collection from the multimillion-dollar fashion house that scarves built.

In recent years, all of her major collections have been inspired by the designer's visits to foreign countries, and for her 1967 fall line, she sought—and found—a muse in Ireland. Her O'Rainbow collection was shown to the tune of Irish jigs.

As part of it, Miss Neumann showed a group of luxurious scarves, which she calls her Gallery collection. She decided the time was right for a special scarf collection, she said, "because the scarf is becoming to the American woman what fans and veils were to women in the past." The Gallery scarves will sell for \$15.

The scarves were followed by silk, cotton sateen and silk wool toppings done in her fabric-print interpretations of the symbols and landscapes of Ireland—cobblestones, shamrocks, heraldic and floral prints—in colors such as Galway blue and leprechaun orange—shades of the Emerald Isle. All were matched with trimly cut slacks in solid tones, in stretch Banlon and hopsack fabrics.

There are more dresses in this new collection than in previous ones, including a silk-wool shirt-shift in a muted Paisley shawl print. The collection is priced from \$16 to \$36.

Six weeks ago, she said, her company had merged with Lady Manhattan. The merger, scheduled to be made final next week, will affect only the business side of the operation, she assured her audience.

"Vera," she said, smiling a leprechaun smile, "will be Vera forever."



The New York Times (by Barton Silverman)

Shirtlike tent style in a vivid silk print is included in Vera's collection.