

VOLUME 1 NO 1
SPRING/SUMMER
DESIGNER SHOES

\$9.95

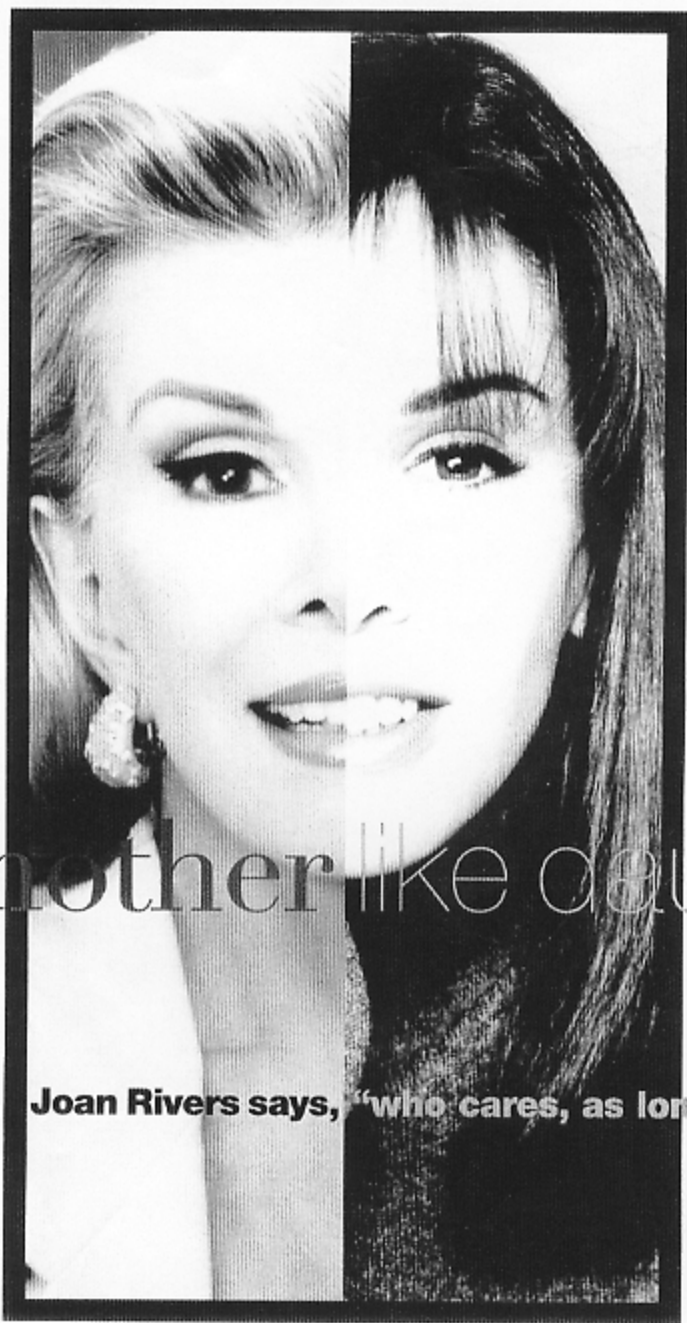
Shūz

your complete guide to what's underfoot

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like mother like daughter

If the shoe fits, Joan Rivers says, "who cares, as long as it looks good?"

"Can we talk?" About shoes? You bet we can.

Comedienne Joan Rivers and daughter, Melissa, love a soulful conversation. Their fashion beat covers everything that's neat, from head to feet. And when it comes to footwear, Joan is the first to admit that she is a shoe-a-holic.

"I love shoes, they make you feel very sexy," said Joan. "I have a closet full of shoes. I am the Imelda Marcos of East Side New York."

When I asked the famous funny lady if shoes were meant for walking, or merely to be used as a cobbler's canvas, Joan was quick to say that in her book, looks will win out over comfort every time.

"As long as a pair of shoes looks good, I don't care if they hurt my feet or not," Joan said. "When you're walking around New York, it's nice if your shoes are comfortable, but it's a must for them to look great."

For daughter Melissa, a good sneaker is the footwear of choice for comfort. But like mom, when it comes to dressing up an outfit, she too votes for a good-looking pair

of thin heels. "I like to wear a comfortable pair of sneakers," said Melissa. "Mom and I differ in that department. I think it's a generation thing, plus I live in California and she lives in New York. There is definitely a different sense of style between the two coasts. Although when I dress for success, both mom and I agree that a good-looking pair of heels is the way to go."

Joan, however, wouldn't be

caught dead in a pair of sneakers. When it comes to keeping her famous tootsies happy, she says the most comfortable footwear she has ever schlepped around in, is a pair of Chanel pumps.

"In fact, I'm wearing a pair right now while I'm walking on my treadmill," Joan added. "These are my workout pumps. They're very old, very comfortable and very cozy."

"High heels make a leg look sexy," Joan said. "Shoes can add such sex appeal to a woman's appearance. Anyone who underestimates the value of a shoe and what it can do for a wardrobe is wrong."

When asked about the difference between *(continued on page 12)*

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Mark Schwartz, designer

function, beautiful.

This season Mark has designed a line of fun little handbags to accompany his collection at the insistence of one of his clients, the Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas. They retail at around \$300. His shoes between \$275 and \$475. Mark is not making shoes for everyone. He is making them for a *connoisseur de pied*.

Each of his designs has a certain personality, a sense of fun and adventure; they do not take themselves too seriously, but nonetheless have an eye for the dramatic. These qualities match those of his flirtatious, whimsical, daring and sexy customers.

Mark's romance with shoes has lasted 14 years or so, finally culminating with his first collection this past fall. His shoe story began on Madison Avenue when he first worked for Rene Mancini. From there, he landed a position with Roger Vivier, not designing at all, but something was gelling in the back of his mind, shaping his sensibility, way back then. An osmosis of ideas and an aesthetic evolves slowly. He went from there to Paris to work under Jean-Claude Jitrois. Jitrois made sexy leather couture; Mark did the shoes to accompany the collection. Each of these work experiences lasted three or four years. All the while Mark was turning the ideas over and over in his mind, influenced mainly by the work of Vivier and Perugia, as well as the contrasts between an elaborate and painstaking detail of a time-honored art and the technological simplicity of a modern age. The learning curve leveled off, the impulse to create deepened. Last year he decided to go out on his own, apprentice and journeyman no longer. It's almost the medieval tale of the cobbler, although he is quick to point out the distinction between a shoe designer and a shoemaker; their codependency versus their com-

pletely unique functions.

Claudia Schiffer and Tracy Pollan wear his designs, and more aficionados will follow as Mark Schwartz becomes better known. Presently, Mark exists in that special pre-fame stage before it becomes too much work and not enough play. Before having a completely individual salon with your own custom-made shoe-horn paperweights for sale (by metal designer-friend Walter Rossi) and framed watercolors amidst your collection like so many spring petals, is the mark of a clever aesthetic and not the bureaucratized decision of a team of in-store design streamliners. He can still pick and change his fonts or give away paintings without realizing he could be giving away the prints. Because as he says, there is always more where that came from. He can always sketch, paint, build again. And there's always another season coming right around the corner. For now, fun for Mark is still genuinely felt, not a contrived "look."

Spring for what will certainly become a favorite pair of fantasy-imbued slippers: your cotton-candy pink be-bowed crocodile slip-ons, your Easter-silk pastel plaids, your kooky arch-heeled, Chinese-lettered wooden clogs or your black and white open-toed pony-hair mules, and maybe Mark will turn those profits into tuition for dancing lessons. Shoes like this and their creator deserve a turn on the ballroom floor. |

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Like Mother, Like Daughter

East Coast women and West Coast women regarding footwear, Joan whipped out her famous sense of humor to send a little "dig" at California's casual approach to fashion.

"New York women are much more pulled together," she said. "They dress much more upscale. After all, New York is the fashion center of the country. California

looks like every day is dress-down Friday."

Footwear is one of Joan and Melissa's favorite topics. This mother and daughter talk-show team live to chat about what's hot and what's not from head to toe on *E! Entertainment*, a daily fashion and gossip show.

"Melissa and I host all of the great events for *E! Entertainment*," said Rivers. "We do the Emmys, the Oscars, the Golden Globes, and afterwards we do a fashion round-up where we talk about who was wearing what."

When it comes to critiquing the star's wardrobe, this dynamic duo of fashion agree that shoes can make or break any outfit. So, come Oscar night, when it's time for Hollywood's beautiful people to put their best foot forward, both Joan and Melissa will be paying close attention to what that foot is wearing.

"I think we're going to see a lot of thin heels this year," Joan predicted. "The heels aren't quite as high, but they are staying thin, which is a much prettier look. Also a lot of ankle straps should be making the scene. They're very sexy and I think the smart woman will go that route."

The fashion guru also predicts that we can expect to see a lot of animal prints gracing the feet of female stylesetters this summer. She also said that open-toed shoes will be the thing to wear with pants.

"High-heeled slides are the sexiest thing you can wear in the summer with pants," decreed Joan.

I asked Joan and her daughter the same question and got two very different answers. "If you could only have two pairs of shoes, what would they be?" Melissa thought for a long time before replying, then she rattled off about ten different designers and types that ran the gamut from Bally flats to Manolo Blahnik pumps. It took about 60 seconds for her to decide

that it was an unfair question that had no answer.

Joan, on the other hand, replied without missing a beat. "If I could only have two pairs of shoes, one would be a nice skinny high-heel black Manolo Blahnik; the second pair would be a fabulous medium-heel Alligator pump."

Joan also says to buy smart when shoe shopping. And if you can't afford a pair of shoes to match every dress, she has a tip on how to make any outfit look good with one pair of shoes. "Here's an old trick a dancer taught me," recalled Joan. "If you can't afford to buy a lot of shoes, get a taupe-colored shoe and a taupe-colored stocking. You can wear that with everything. Your leg and your shoe should match. If you do that, you'll always get high fashion marks, at least from the knees down." |

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Do-It-Yourself Pedicure

one of your older towels. (Cotton balls leave lint.) Apply a bonding agent if you have it. Separate your toes, with cotton balls or (better yet) with a cotton tube sold for this very purpose. These look like long cigarette filters and work lots better than cotton balls. Apply base coat in vertical strokes. Wipe away any excess with an orange stick. After it's completely dry, apply two coats of color. Apply with vertical strokes and take the time to let all coats dry thoroughly. Add a coat of quick-drying medium if you like.

Keep your toes separated and stay barefoot for an hour.

Now that you know how to do this for yourself, you'll be more daring with nail polish colors. You might not want kiwi green on your fingers, but it's a real kick to play with color in the relative privacy of your beautiful toenails.

Manhattan's salon, Bliss

We can't all get to Manhattan's hottest salon, Bliss, but they've generously shared their famous hot milk and almond pedicure