



Design ideas that pull you in

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Stanley Carroll moves like a wind chime in a hurricane and talks fashion like an auctioneer. The city's style cognoscenti call him fashion forward, but his clothes don't so much push as pull you in, spit you out and leave you fashionably perplexed.

"I have a vision of what I want clothing to look like," he says, rocking from heel to toe in his southside boutique.

"Then I just pray to God that there is a market for it."

It is a testament to Carroll's vision — or perhaps to his prayers — that he has flourished in the city known as the gateway to the north,

three thousand miles from the epicentre of Canadian fashion and a long, long way from fashion's New York mecca.

He has cultivated a market here by tantalizing local fashionistas with homegrown haute couture and daring them to don bold designs that not only please, but puzzle.

"My designs start out with a pure, simplistic, minimalist appearance," he says.

"But when you look closer, there isn't a straight line in it — in terms of how your eye reacts to it, there is a certain sense of intrigue."

Carroll designs with curves because the human body has no straight lines; the idea is that the dress looks like it belongs on a woman's body. Take the Pocket Detail Dress (\$180), an unobtrusive, plain cotton piece with lines that swing unpredictably around the body and surreptitiously draw the eye inward.

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