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Glamour, without a script

By Suzy Menkes

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If the legendary Carole Lombard were still stalking the silver screen, she would surely turn for her personal wardrobe to **Barbara Tfank**. For the former movie costume designer was inspired by Hollywood's screwball comedies of the 1930s in her latest capsule collection of classic glamour, elegantly updated.

A chic black suit with puffed sleeves was given a second life by changing the proportions, while Tfank used her personal collection of fabrics to update a couture past - for shoes, drawing on her stock of vintage Bianchini-Férier fabrics.

"I am a real textile lover, but they need re-coloring and re-screening," said Tfank, who included materials bonded to give a sheen to the surface of a lilac dress and a flower bed of blooms constrained in a slender sheath. Diamonds - a material girl's best friend - made the jeweled accessories from a shoulder clip to a barrette in the Rita Hayworth hairdos.

A bicoastal life enables Tfank to keep in touch of both Hollywood style and New York's edgy modernity. But she sees her current role as a quirky fashion designer with an international following as quite different from the years she spent creating style on celluloid.

"For film, you are always following a script," says Tfank. "Fashion is freeform - you go wherever the mood takes you."