

INDULGE

an eye for design

By CRAIG LAWSON

Models, models, where are all the models? Fashion design student Bert West, 39, is organising an end-of-year showcase and is having trouble finding suitable models.

"They are all ultra-young girls who seem to be after their 15 minutes of fame," she says.

"And some of the garments are probably not suitable for young girls.

"They might be showing too much skin, which could make for some very uncomfortable viewing," she says.

These are just some of the interesting problems West has encountered in organising the Southern Institute of Technology graduate showcase, Chrysalis.

West is one of seven fashion design students preparing for their graduation show.

It is part of their course to organise an end-of-year fashion show and West has been made project manager.

She started organising the event in July and is in charge of 60 people and 20 models.

West is also busy designing and making garments for the show.

Normally, she would not make girly clothing, but this time has been surprised with the results.

"The things I have made for the show are really girly – it must be the prom queen in me trying to get out." West is planning to do a business course next year and work towards starting her own fashion label.

But, along with the rest of the class, she is now focused on finishing her garments for the showcase.

"We are all sewing so fast I think we are getting the speed wobbles," she says.

Chrysalis will be held at Centrestage on Friday, November 13.



A Michelle Johnstone design:
A strapless dress, made from red stretch fabric and orange gathered tulle. Ballet was her inspiration for this dress.

A Brenda Duthie design:
The Prada headquarters in Japan was the inspiration for this dress. Architecture was the theme for its formal wear assignment; the dress is structured and completely lined, teamed with a handmade crochet jacket.



A Nadine Robb design:
Inspiration for this garment came from the fairytale *Little Red Riding Hood*. It is made from six pairs of jeans and an enormous red skirt.



A Bert West design, above:
A party dress with a hand-embroidered bodice and satin racing. Designed with the racing carnival in mind, fascinator on your head, Lindauer in your hand and a stash of \$20 notes down your cleavage.



A Clare Miller design:
There are zips down all the panel seams, which can be undone so the dress can then be shimmied up to a shorter length and the panels stick out like a Chinese lantern. Inspired by the movie *Transformers*.



A Lucy Hutton design:
This tutu dress is inspired by ballet and is made of taffeta and detailed with gathers and ruffles. Decorative handmade fabric roses adorn the garment.

living with menopause

What to do if menopause makes you miserable?

Start with a visit to your doctor. If you don't have one you really trust, fix that problem before you try to tackle the rest, women's health experts recommend.

A good doctor will do an exam to make sure menopause is what is causing your symptoms, take stock of which ones are most bothering you, and help you weigh the benefits and risks of treatment options with your medical history in mind.

For example, women bothered most by sleep problems may find a non-hormone solution. Ditto for vaginal dryness.

Hormone therapy: Taking oestrogen, progesterin – or both – works. It takes hot flushes, improves sleep, keeps bones strong and prevents vaginal dryness. It also can raise the risk of cancer and heart problems. However, studies show that the risk is small for an individual woman who starts on the pills at normal menopause age (between 45 and 55) and uses them for fewer than five years.

Experts suggest:

- ▶ If you use hormones, use the lowest dose for the shortest time possible, and try to quit or cut down every few months.
- ▶ Ask about ways to use hormones other than taking pills, such as oestrogen patches, which can be cut to adjust the dose, or oestrogen-secreting vaginal rings. Some preliminary research suggests these modes may be safer than taking pills.
- ▶ Do not take hormones to try to prevent heart disease

or dementia. If you take them to keep your bones strong, talk with your doctor about possible alternatives.

▶ If you were taking birth control pills for symptoms during the transition into menopause, check with your doctor about whether to continue. Many oral contraceptives contain much more oestrogen and progesterin than traditional hormone replacement therapy does.

▶ For hot flushes, try to figure what triggers one, such as hot drinks, spicy foods, alcoholic drinks, stress, hot weather, or a warm room. Dress in layers, and keep your office and home cool.

▶ Eat a healthy diet to keep bones strong, maintain a healthy weight, get regular exercise and don't smoke.

▶ To sleep better, go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, eat regular meals at regular times, and not late at night. Limit caffeine. Avoid nightcaps: Alcohol may make you feel drowsy, but it interferes with sleep patterns.

▶ Creams can help with vaginal dryness. – Sources: US Food and Drug Administration, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute.

US National Institutes of Health, Institute on Aging AP



organic benefits

By DIANA PLATER

It's no wonder Shelley Pryor is the picture of health. She relies on her organic garden not only for food, juices and tea, but also for medicine and cosmetics.

And she thinks the recession has had one positive outcome – more people have started their own veggie gardens.

Pryor is the organic gardener at Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat in the Tallebudgera Valley behind the Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia. She lives 15 minutes away on a steep 1.2ha plot on a ridge overlooking the valley, where she has her own garden.

Composting and improving and remineralising the soil is the key for a good garden, she says.

She has medicinal plants such as yarrow and comfrey growing everywhere, because they're "great companion plants".

If she gets cut or hurt, she can grab some comfrey, which is great for bruises.

Aloe vera can be cut up and the juice drunk or put on your dry skin or pimples, and lemon myrtle is good as a skin scrub.

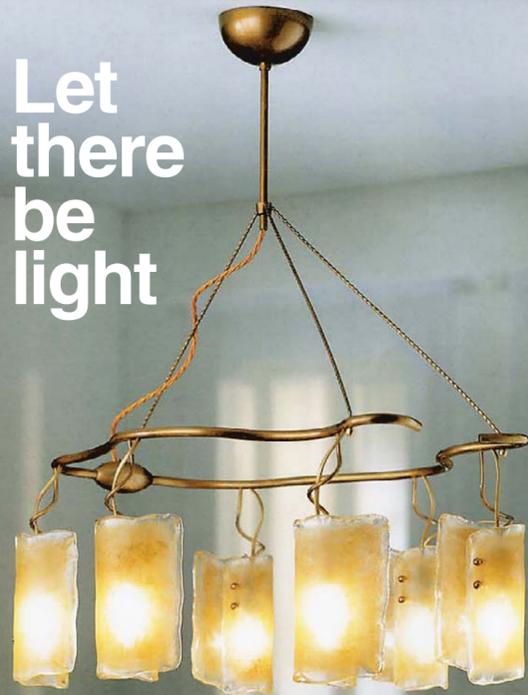
Some of Pryor's organic tips:

▶ For a worm farm don't put in citrus fruit, salty food, dog poo or green grass clippings. But dog hair is okay, as are egg shells, toilet rolls, coffee, tea and dry grass clippings.

▶ Make sure veges, potting mix and anything else that says it's organic is certified.

▶ Put beer in a jar on an angle the night before you plant your seedlings and slugs will drink it and drown.

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