

Q Dear Marylou: I have foot problems that prevent me from wearing high-heeled shoes. I have no trouble finding flats for day, but can't find anything suitable for evening. Do designers frown on flats with evening dresses? Any ideas? __R.T., Cleveland, OH.



Dear R.T.: Ever since Dolce & Gabbana sent out 19 work-of-art evening dresses for fall with flat-heeled shoes, there's been a fashion groundswell to get grounded. But before Dolce & Gabbana there was **Paul Mayer**, the French-born designer for **Attitudes** who has become the maestro of the **ballet slipper**. For fall, he makes them in everything from leopard-printed suede, quilted patent and woven leather for day to silk crepe de chine, lace-over-mesh and a silvery pleated silk for evening.

Mayer says his ballerinas have become "an addiction" with some customers, who own as many as seven pairs. Prices range from \$180 to \$250, depending on materials. The collection also includes mules—some with pointy toes as well as the traditional round toe—and the new **D'Orsay** pumps, both flats. Come spring, there will be a ballerina with a kitten heel. Why is the ballet slipper so en pointe right now? Mayer says the secret is comfort. "These shoes feel like nothing, and they look good with everything." Even ballerina skirts, of course. For store information, write to Paul Mayer Attitudes, 1040 First Ave., New York, NY 10022 or email him at PaulMayer@nyc.rr.com.

Q Dear Marylou: Why did the “AngloMania” exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art not include the clothes by such famous London designers as Zandra Rhodes, Jean Muir, Ossie Clark, Mary Quant or Thea Porter? They were all leading London designers in The ‘70s, the time covered by the exhibition. __L.L., New York, NY.

Dear L.L.: I took your question to **Andrew Bolton, the Costume Institute’s associate curator** and the one who organized the exhibition, which ended September 4. His response:

“I chose 1976 as our start date because it was the birth of punk as well as the birth of post-modernism—that term from architecture. The designers chosen for the exhibition were well known for pondering the past for inspiration. The selection was extremely rigorous. The exhibition is not a survey of British fashion.

“I chose designs that related to the museum’s six English Period rooms. With the rooms as a guideline, the selection of designers was made easier. Every item selected had some sort of dialogue with the rooms themselves. I wanted to show that some themes are consistent within British culture throughout history. ‘**AngloMania**’ is a conceptual continuum of the English imaginary.” (Brit **Suzy Menkes**, the International Herald Tribune’s multi-awarded fashion editor, calls it an ode to irony.)

When I asked Bolton why he left **Zandra Rhodes** out of the punk presentation (she was the first London designer to elevate punk from the streets to the salons), he responded: “In a way, Zandra’s interpretation was a pastiche of punk, but the first to articulate punk were **Vivienne Westwood**, along with **Malcolm McLaren**.”

Q Dear Marylou: My favorite cashmere sweater is the victim of moth holes. I can’t explain why, but the sleeves remain uneaten. Any ideas for recycling the sleeves? __H.M., Denver, CO.

Dear H.M.: You could cut off one sleeve, sew the ends together and wear it as a scarf. You could cut off both sleeves, join together and wear as a long muffler. Or, most creatively, you could **celebrate the 30th anniversary of punk** by creating even more (and bigger) holes in your sweater and wearing it as a holey cause endorsed by punk mother **Vivienne Westwood** (of course), **Karl Lagerfeld**, Y3 by **Yohji Yamamoto** and **Undercover**, to name a few, and now more widely embraced by contemporary and junior designers.

Q **Dear Marylou:** What's your take on the fashion longevity of leggings? Will they make it into spring? __D.J.T., Birmingham, MI.

Dear D.J.T.: Yes, especially in the contemporary and junior markets, Pre-spring collections showed a lot of more colorful and more patterned versions, even in such fabrics as lace, and often cropped to calf and/or just-below-the-knee lengths. My favorite new expression comes from **Hudson Jeans' Jersey Girl line**, where **knitted leggings** are styled to look like jeans, complete with back yokes, studs and back-pocket labels.

Even if the fashion world were to totally abolish leggings from the top 10 list, you can always save them for winter and wear them as thermal warmers under pants.

(Marylou welcomes questions for use in this column, but regrets she cannot answer mail personally. Send your questions to info@fqi.org.)

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