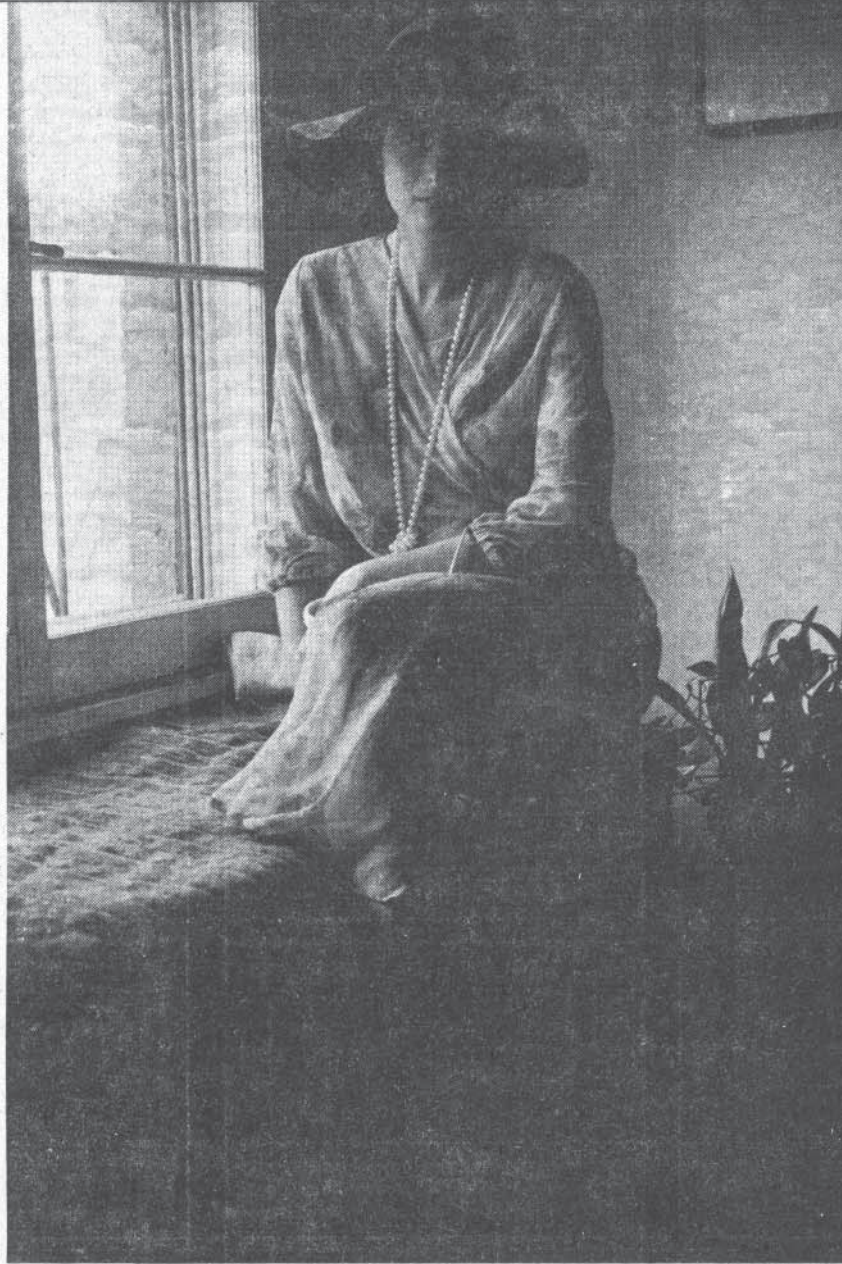


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Page 38

RAGS/8

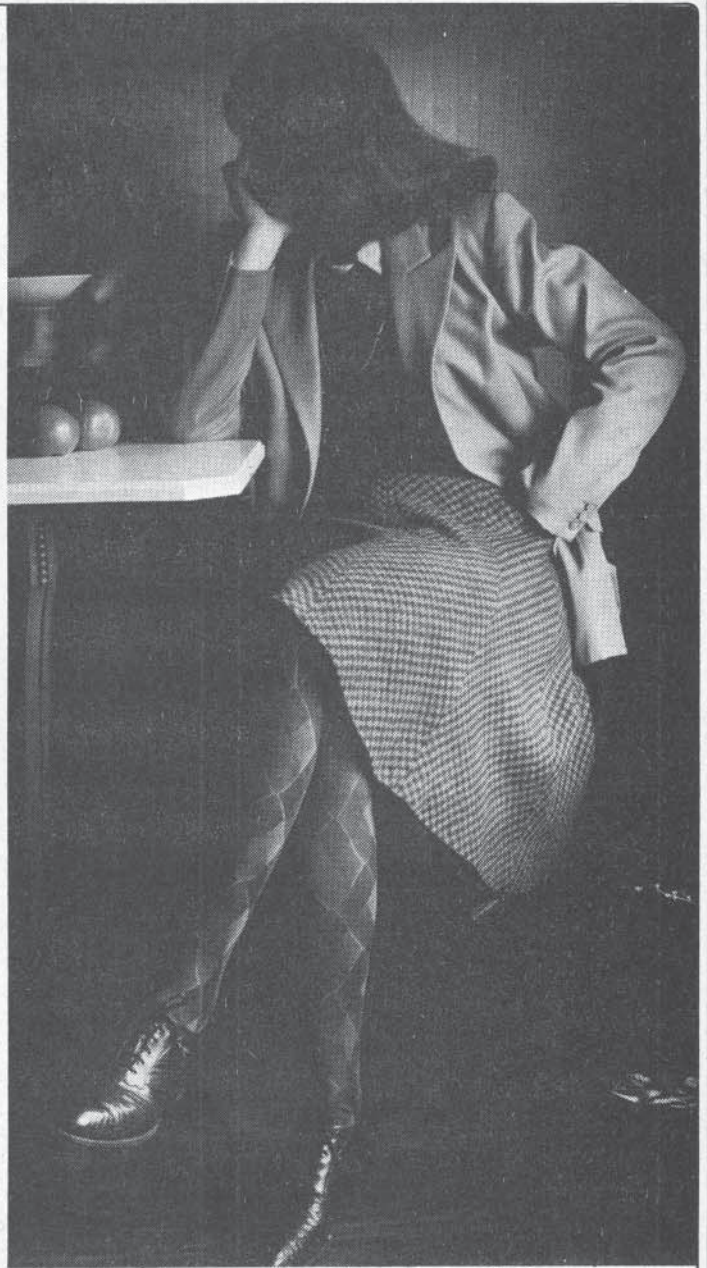


Gliding Down Memory Lane with
**Amanda
Stinchecum**

by Malachi Constant/photos by Peter Hujar



This black wool coat with blue and silver bands went for \$15



The V neck sweater cost 25 cents, as did the cotton lysle argyle stockings

Amanada Stinchecum likes old clothes. Not because they're freaky or with-it or anything like that, but because—cared for properly and worn carefully—along with new clothes—they're graceful and provocative and satisfying.

Part of the trick, of course, is knowing where and how to get fine old clothes. Says Amanda, "People tend to wear costumes because they're putting together something they've seen before. They've seen it on someone else or they're a period or something. That's why old-clothes wearers don't look like themselves. They're not expressing a personal style. You should be searching old clothes stores

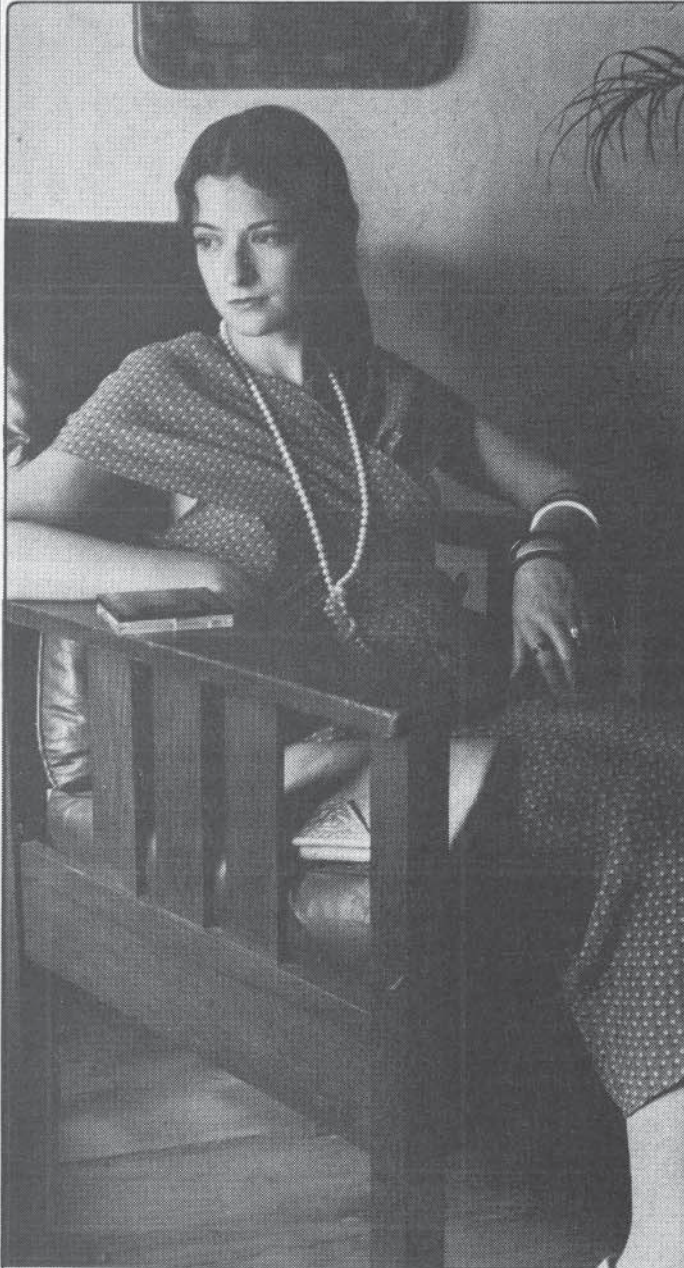
for things that suit you, not just anything striking."

What's the first thing she looks for? "Fabric. That's the first thing you see. If the material is really great quality, then you look at the garment. Is it falling apart? Does the cut suit you? That's the way you do it. Altering can get into too much work, but I often re-dye things."

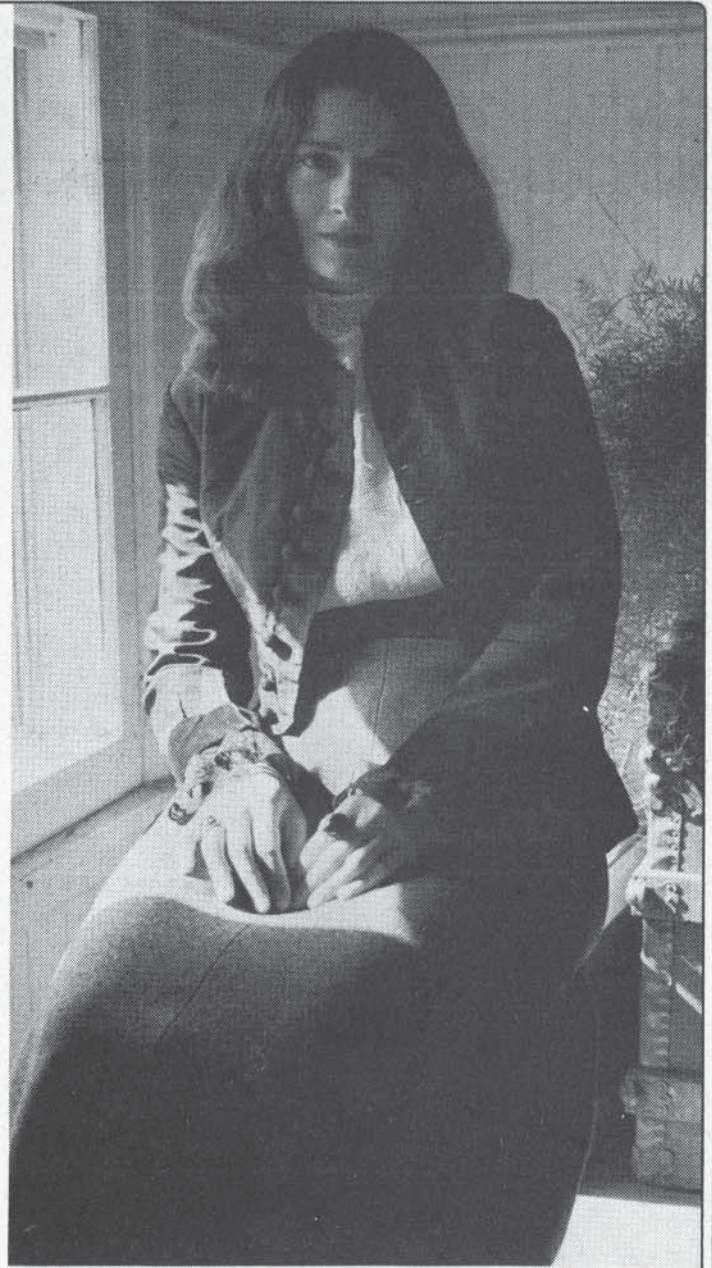
How about prices? "Try to guess whether the price is fair. Figure out what the guy who owns the store paid for the item, then ask what they want for it. If there's more than a 100 per cent markup, forget it. On the other hand, with a high markup, it's more likely that you'll be able to bargain."

Do the old clothes places know which stuff they've got is good, and do they display it? "Well, at the Charity Thrift Shops on the Upper East Side (in New York City), for instance, they're often wrong. They just put out what they can get the most money for—the jazziest, least second-hand-looking thing. There's a place called Greenwich House on 6th Avenue, which marked some slightly antique stuff up 300 per cent when they caught on to the fad. At the Salvation Army, they concentrate on putting out china and silver—the clothes are really second-hand."

What are the best buys, usually? "Silk underwear is one of the classic



An extraordinary example of bias cutting, this dress was originally made for Amanda's mother in 1932.



The Victorian blouse and black silk jacket were both under \$2

thrift shop buys. A silk slip is \$40 new, 15 cents to \$5 at the Salvation Army. Just be sure the fabric hasn't rotted. I can stick my hand in a box of underwear and pull out the only silk slip in there without looking." One of the main reasons for buying old clothes is quality—you find things that either aren't made anymore or that you couldn't ordinarily afford.

When Amanda worked at *Women's Wear Daily* (she was, at various times, the Millinery Editor, the Children's Wear Editor and the Medium Priced Dress Editor), designers she

met were turned on by what they saw her wearing. One borrowed some buttons to be copied, another had all the hats in one showing modeled after the color and shape of one of her hats and still another saw the graceful possibilities of her long skirt long before Paris discovered the Midi with a glad cry.

"I seldom feel uncomfortable in my old clothes," says Amanda. "I don't think people stare, especially now, unless they know what they're seeing—an unusual garment or a great find. people don't see me as a freak." 🐾

This Tiffau & Busch tweed coat cost well over \$200 new, but Amanda picked it up for \$60.

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