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Craig Seniscal of Flowers Fantasia admires a fresh bridal bouquet. The 18-year veteran florist says roses are most popular with brides.

— Bill Lanning

Roses most popular in bouquets

By NANCY HOSKIN

When choosing flowers for their special day, brides keep to traditions, preferring to carry a cascade of red roses down the aisle, according to Craig Seniscal, of Flowers Fantasia.

With more than 18 years of experience in floral design, Mr. Seniscal assembles bouquets and arrangements for more than 50 weddings each year, the busiest months for this florist being May through August.

After choosing a florist, a bride will sit down to discuss which flowers she likes, a color scheme and her budget. A selection is usually purchased which covers bridal and bridesmaid bouquets, boutonnieres for the groom, his ushers and for the fathers and grandfathers and corsages for mothers and grandmothers.

Arrangements are also purchased for the church and reception, from simple bud vases to table centerpieces.

Choosing which flower you might like will have a lot to do with your particular budget. Daisies and miniature carnations are a lot less expensive than the ever popular rose and orchid.

Because roses are imported they tend not to fluctuate in price. Spring flowers, on the other hand, like, irises, daffodils and tulips, are seasonal.

While most brides still prefer fresh flowers, silk flowers are becoming more popular, especially during certain holiday seasons, like Valentine's Day and Mother's Day, when it becomes hard for florists to guarantee certain flowers.

"Silk arrangements and bouquets can be made up ahead of time and can also be made available at a moment's notice," said Mr. Seniscal.

Silk flowers are slightly more expensive than real flowers, but look extremely realistic. Nearly all flowers are available in silk.

"Silk bouquets make wonderful bridesmaid gifts. It's something they can keep," explained Mr. Seniscal. "Bridesmaids can always bring their bouquets in and have them made into a centerpiece."

For brides who prefer fresh flowers, but wish to save their bouquets, Silica Sand, a preservative for fresh flowers, is available in craft stores.

According to Mr. Seniscal, more traditional and decorative items are popular for today's weddings, like, pew bows and candelabras.

Flowers prices vary depending on the wedding's size. A small, civil ceremony may require the bride to carry a bouquet with five or six roses, while a bride having a large wedding may like to carry the traditional cascade of roses and baby's breath.

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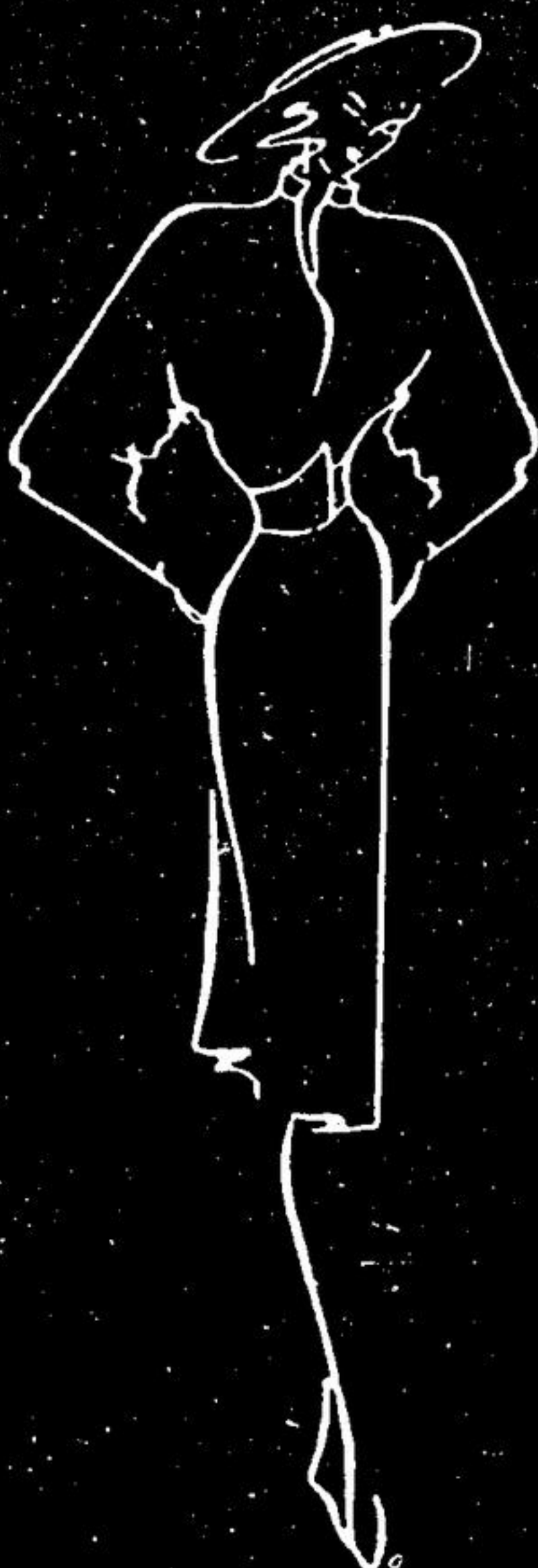
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