



Record-Eagle/Lara Neel

**Stella Cole's Jennifer Kuula in a sheath dress. They are appropriate for informal and "destination" weddings.**

sophisticated look and I definitely like a more sculpted neckline with more interest rather than a straight bodice."

The traditional wedding gown remains the choice of many brides but others are choosing a color such as champagne. Not everyone can wear white, and increasingly brides are asserting their personal style and palette preferences. Other times, an accent hue such as red, pink or lilac is woven into the dress using embroidery or beading, giving a hint of color.

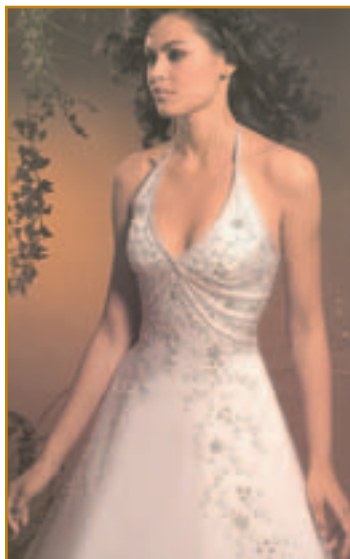
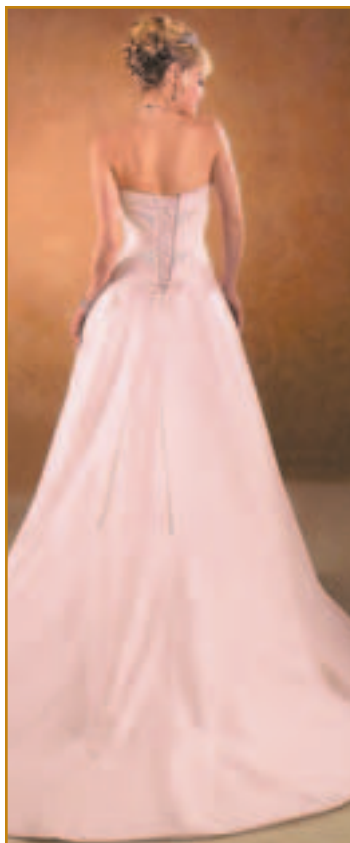
"We're seeing some amethyst, blue and pink," said Kendra Wise, manager of Formal Affair in Acme. "Some are completely that color but mostly just accents."

Designers are also paying attention to the back of the gown, since this view is in the spotlight during the wedding ceremony. Bustling in the train, embroidery, seed pearls and Austrian crystals please the viewers' eyes. These highlights are also often detailed throughout the gown.

"Since all eyes are on the back of the dress, the idea is to make it interesting for people to look at," Dyer said.

Veils and headpieces round out the gown and, after a few years of simple veils, lace and other styles are making a comeback. Headpieces and tiaras are regaining popularity with many brides choosing a tiara to complete their "princess for a day" look.

"Silk flowers are passé,



but the tiaras and open filigree are popular," said Dyer. "(Filigree headpieces) are a beautiful accessory and I know of a company that takes the headpiece and makes it into heirloom earrings and necklace the bride can wear forever."

As for bridesmaids, they no longer have to buy a strange and unusable dress to stand up with their friend or relative.

"I would love to be a bridesmaid now," Wise said.



**"We're seeing some amethyst, blue and pink," said Kendra Wise, manager of Formal Affair in Acme of this season's hot colors in wedding gowns. "Some are completely that color but mostly just accents."**

"They actually have some really cute styles now."

Designers have listened to women's woes, and the latest trend is two-piece ensembles in more user-friendly fabrics such as brushed cotton.

"With two-piece outfits you can wear the top separately, like with jeans, or dress it up in the summer," Liles said.

**Carol South is a local freelance writer.**