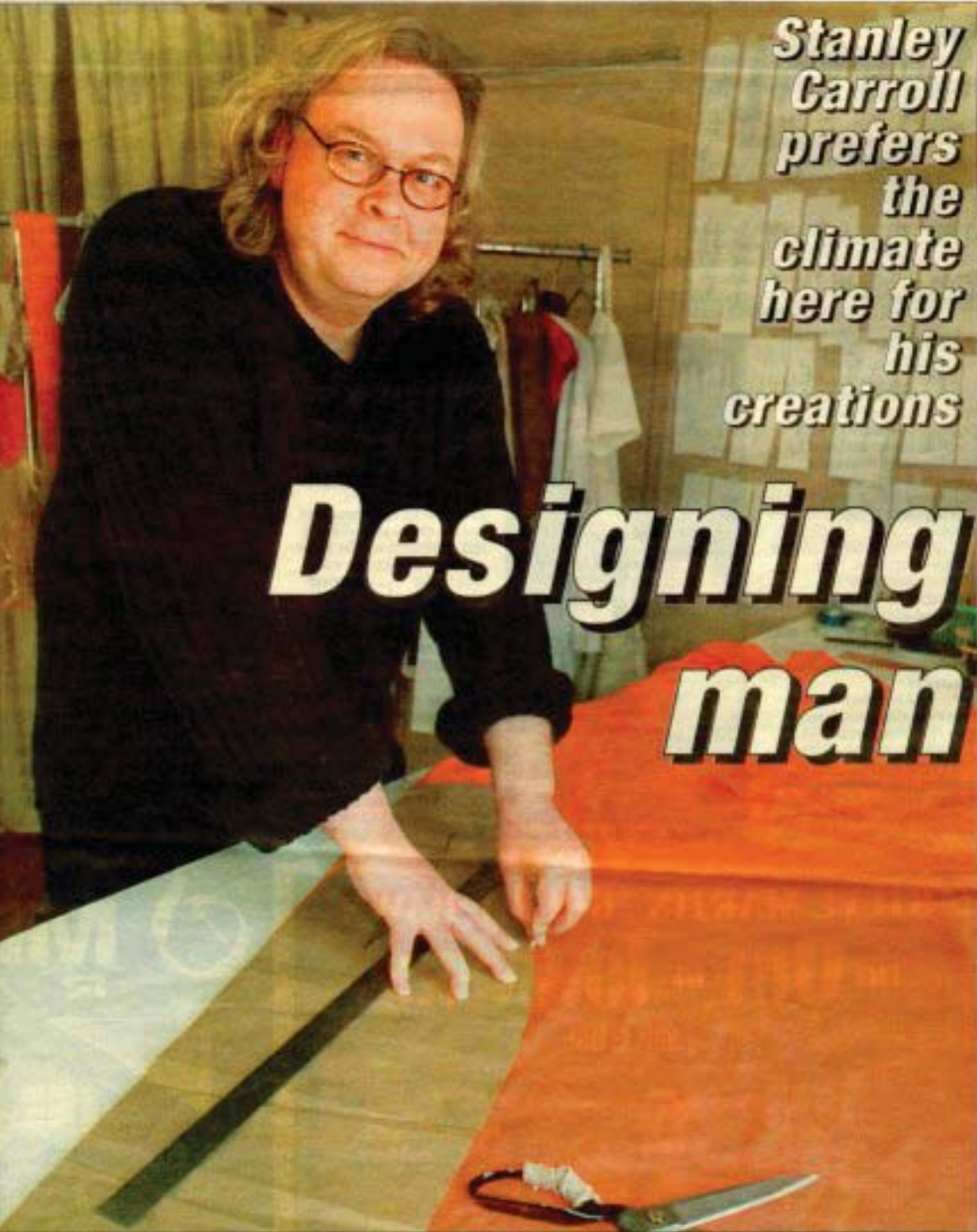


**Stanley
Carroll
prefers
the
climate
here for
his
creations**

Designing man



— DAN REDLUBER, Sun photos

Stanley Carroll runs his fashion business from his Old Strathcona home. 'It's a creative breeding ground,' he says.

By SALLY JOHNSTON
Lifestyle Editor

It's a long way from the international fashion hotspots of Milan, Paris, London and New York.

But Edmonton is providing a very comfortable base for local fashion designer Stanley Carroll.

"I am making a very good living. Probably now is the most fun and creative point of my career," said Carroll, who launches his 1999 spring collection tomorrow night.

He works from his 70-year-old Strathcona home where the converted living room doubles as a bright studio and showroom.

Edmonton is such a great creative breeding ground for arts, music, anything," he said, explaining why he kept his business in the city for 15 years.

"The cost of operating here is cheap and there is a no-rules environment.

"Of course, we are fighting for the local dollar, but we have carved our own little niche."

Carroll is not alone. There is a thriving, if small, apparel-manufacturing industry in Alberta.

About 300 firms employ around 3,000 workers, said Marcy Hettl, co-owner of the fashion design programs at Edmonton's Marvel College, a private vocational school.

Like Carroll, most of the clothing-manufacturing businesses are small-scale, employing less than five people. And most specialize - in areas such as industrial uniforms, corporate wear, outerwear, children's clothes and exclusive fashions.

"I think the reason Stanley has survived is because he has found his market and because he has always followed his beliefs (about design)," said Hettl.

Said Carroll: "My customers are a

diverse group of people who are looking to make an individual statement," he said of his limited men's and women's lines.

Local drag queen Darrin Hagen said Carroll's clothes are "sexy and daring."

"I have worn his clothes as a boy and as a girl. They are very eye-catching. I especially like it when he lets the skin show through."

Hair salon owner Heather Bilodeau was referred to Carroll by friends about a year ago.

"I love the flow and feel of his dresses; they are very feminine," said the 31-year-old who has several Stanley Carroll outfits in her closet.

"Because I'm five-foot-10, I often have problems finding a good selection of clothes. But Stanley will customize items for me."

"His detailing is great too. Like one dress which has a pocket at the back. I always get noticed in his clothes."

She also finds his prices compare well