This work created a stir because of its simple lines that could be worn by anyone.

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Text: Nina Hyde

When nearly 2,000 guests arrived on the deck hangar of the battleship *Intrepid** for the Issey Miyake show recently, they found 40 members of the New York Choral Society seated on stage and wearing the Japanese designer's easy-fit, washable cotton clothes from his new Plantation collection. Miyake's point was not only to open the show with a splendid "Gloriana" by Benjamin Britten, but also to show that absolutely anyone can wear these simple, neutral-colored clothes.

"I expect people who own these clothes to discover when and how to wear them and not just wear them one way," Miyake said. "My design is no design."

"Miyake restores my faith that there is something new under the sun in fashion," said Stella Blum, curator of costumes at

the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

The most important part of a Miyake collection is the fabric, and he will take as long as a year, if necessary, to get just the cloth he wants. He has made modern versions of traditional Japanese fabrics, including an *ikat-weave kasuri*, a farmer's check and *shijira-ori* weaving. Sometimes he'll change their scale or color and occasionally add synthetic fibers. He was the first to use Ultrasuede, later popularized by Halston... Everything inspires him.

Fittingly, in 1978, Miyake won the coveted Mainichi Design Award, the first time that the Award was given to a fashion designer. It is usually given to architects and environmental designers.

Now, Miyake wants to have a show for students in Paris and New York, as he'd done in Tokyo. ...

"Paris is an old and traditional place; it needs new blood," he said. "The joining of the japanese with the French should make a new movement. I think it should be good for Paris." It

will be good for others, too. (Excerpt)

* A US aircraft carrier first launched in 1943. Put on display at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in 1982 after decommissioning.