

Piece of cake

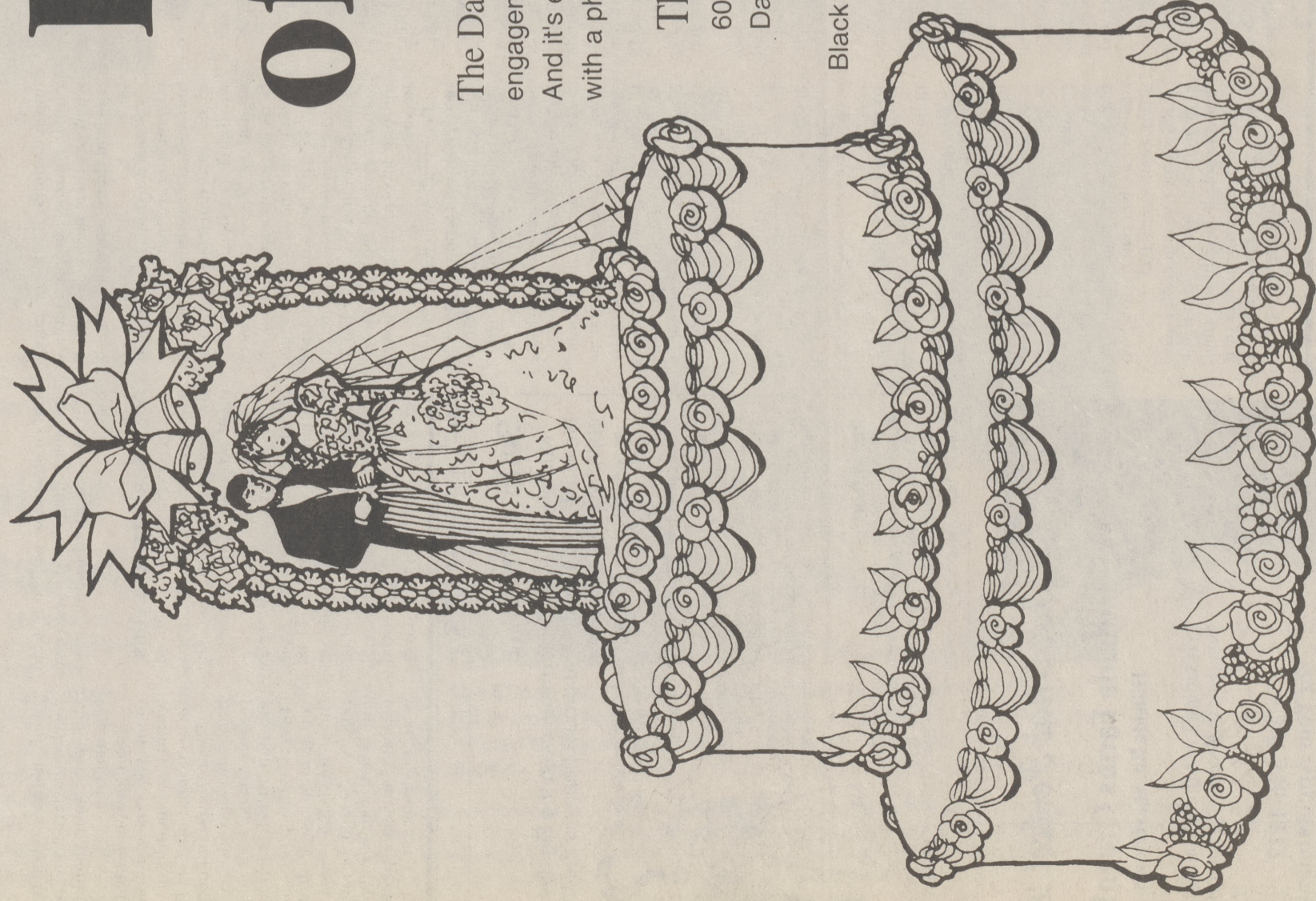
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Let a colorful gown set the tone for a romantic wedding

By SHARON MOSLEY
Copley News Service

And the bride wore mauve and green and pink and blue... yes, it's true, the brides of the new millennium have a colorful future. The newest bridal gowns are turning heads as they walk down the aisle in colorful wedded bliss.

"It used to be traditional for first-time brides to always wear white and second-time brides to wear color," says Millie Bratten, editor in chief of *Bride's* magazine. "Now that it's OK to wear white any time you get married, first-time brides are choosing to wear more color in their gowns."

White is still the predominant color for brides, no matter how many times they've been married, according to Bratten. A flip through the most recent issue of *Bride's* proves that point. But she admits there is definitely a trend for more color in bridal designs. Bridesmaids don't get to have all the fun.

"Bridal designers are using darker pale colors," says Bratten. "There are stronger champagnes, deeper ivories and even taupe. Many bridal houses, including Ansale, Lazaro, Vera Wang, Christian Dior and others offer designs in these sophisticated pales that

romantic white lace in a corset bodice accented with darker champagne satin straps and full skirt with a white lace peplum.

The golden tones are also brightening up bridal color palettes for wedding attire, says Bratten. "It's almost an antique gold," she says.

Vera Wang's butterfly dress is a frothy fit-and-flare design that is also a corset-inspired bodice with satin-covered buttons in the back with a trumpet skirt.

The metallics are glowing in not only gold, but silver.

"The platinum silvers are very contemporary," says Bratten. Designers favor combining platinum with white for a modern feel to bridal gowns. Ansale Alberta pairs a lustrous silver chantilly lace with a blush organza and gazeur in a bell-shape gown.

For the more adventurous bride, there are gowns in a variety of other more "noticeable" colors. And they're not just in blushing pink. Designer Margarita Zingg gives daring brides the option of wearing a hand-embroidered ball gown in mauve silk-taffeta. Kat-Moon Designs does its taffeta ball gown in mini green and Yumi Katsura comes up with a peachy idea in her organza and crepe sheath scrolled with gold-vine appliques. At Original Bride Couture by Manolo, a sleeveless floor-length sheath

shimmers in sea-water blue and white silk charmeuse.

"Today, fashion influences carry over very quickly to the bridal market," says Bratten, "and the colors follow." Romance is not far behind. There is a real influence of the elegant ball gown sweeping through the bridal pages and down the aisles. "It is grand-

scale romance," says Bratten. "It's Gwyneth Paltrow at her best."

Shakespeare thought he was in love. Indeed, the busies and ball gowns swirling out of recent movies and winning awards at the Oscars are now receiving rave reviews on one of the most romantic days around.

Other romantic details that get the colorful touch this year in bridal designs include special accents on bridal gowns: satin rosettes down the back of a dress, crystal-accented bows and hand-beaded fringe.

And, you can use accessories to add a splash of color to a traditional gown. Delicate necklaces with colored stones, jeweled tiaras and barrettes that glimmer in butterflies and flowers are just a few of the ways you can add subtle color to your bridal ensemble.

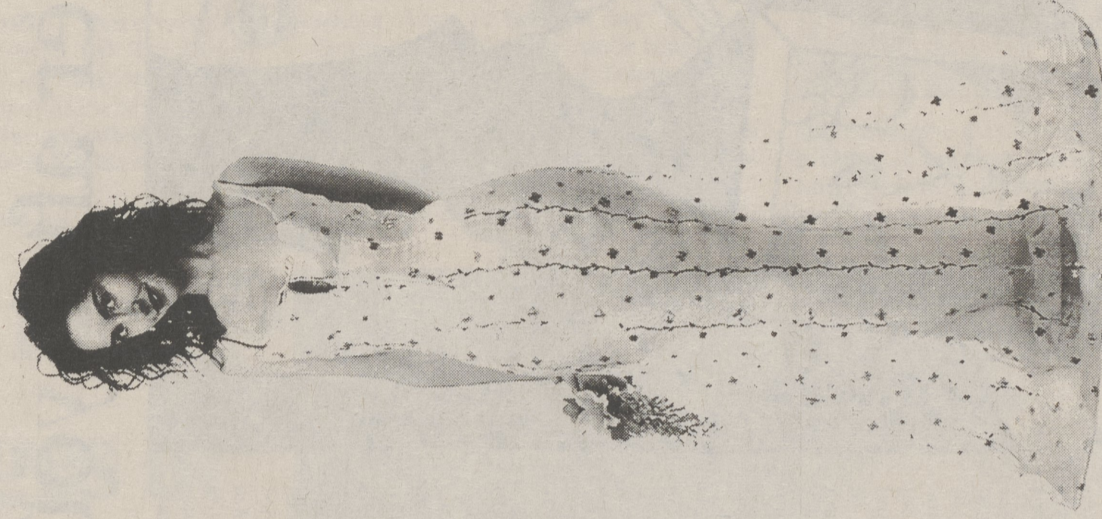
Beaded handbags and embroidered clutches also provide a glimpse of sophisticated pastels with power. Veils edged in sparkling silver crystals and silvery leather headpieces are other ways to top it off with glittering color.

Romance may be in the color of your gown ... or your accessories this year. But don't blush too much if you still want that night in white satin.

"Color is for a very special bride," says Bratten. "It's not for everyone."

Marriage Millions

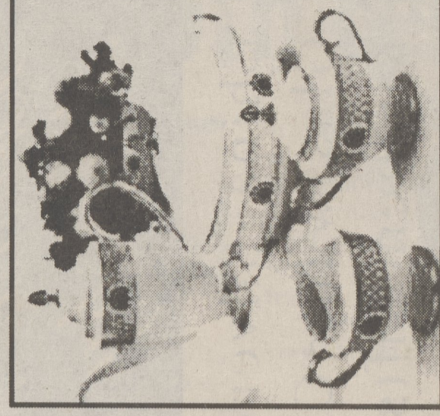
There are 2.34 million marriages in the United States each year, according to the Census Bureau's "Marital Status and Living Arrangements." (CNS)



Sheer romance will lead you down the aisle in this Yumi Katsura empire-waist wedding gown in peach-colored satin organza with floral and gold-vine appliques — a colorful alternative for the non-traditional bride.

scoop-neck beaded bodice in white with a full satin taffeta ball gown skirt in a rich champagne. Christian Dior's toast to the colorful neutrals juxtaposes

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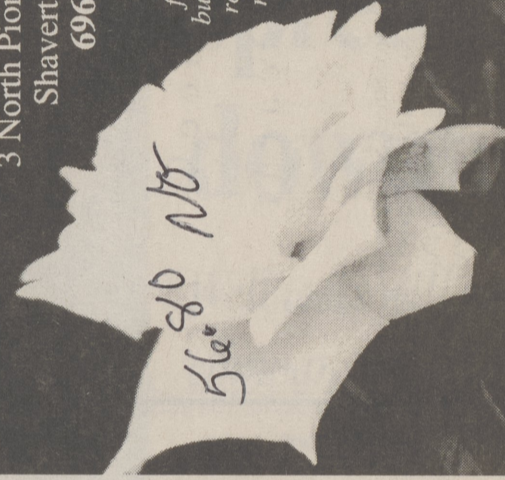
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