

# The New York Times

Copyright © 2006 The New York Times

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2006

## Front Row

*Eric Wilson*

### Galanos at 82: The Latest Take

**R**ETIREMENT isn't what I thought it would turn out to be," said James Galanos, eight years into his. Mr. Galanos, the onetime dress designer, was calling from San Francisco last week, on his 82nd birthday, to announce that he was working again, now as a photographer.

When Mr. Galanos closed his company, he swore he was so sick of the business side of fashion that he would never again pick up needle and thread. He did, however, keep close tabs on the careers of the younger designers he admired, like Rick Owens and Ralph Rucci, and watching them work seemed to reignite his own need for creative output. So Mr. Galanos bought a Nikon and started playing around, photographing landscapes in the Indian canyons near his home in Palm Springs or paper compositions he made in his kitchen. The Serge Sorokko Gallery in San Francisco opened a monthlong exhibition of his work last week.

"It was a little boring at first," Mr. Galanos said of his retirement. "But one has to do some-

thing and take your chances and so forth and so on."

Oh, come now. Such humility is unnecessary from a man whose photographs, like his fashions, demonstrate passionate attention to color and composition.

"I construct with color, a mirror and a little bit of simple lighting," he said. "It's amazing what comes out of a camera. I just pursued it."



Tom Gibbons

**REDESIGNED RETIREMENT** James Galanos at a show of his photos at the Sorokko Gallery.