

# STYLE

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

## ***Eskelle's belles***

FEELING UNFULFILLED BY THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN THE APPAREL INDUSTRY, Elizabeth Del Castillo and Kelly Whitesell decided to combine their creative wits and first names to handcraft their own boutique and clothing line, Eskell (953 West Webster).

Friends since high school in Indiana, the two reconnected at Indiana University, where they both received associates degrees in costume construction and design. A few fashion-related degrees and jobs later, the ladies were debuting their first collaborative clothing designs last spring at Chicago's Acme Art Works and building the foundation of their now month-and-half-old Lincoln Park boutique.

The remaining one-of-a-kinds from their debut now hang in Eskell, attached to whimsical descriptions like "Powder Room Fringe Top" and "Nightflower Deco Dress." They plan to showcase their fall line in November.

Tucked inside a room full of vintage décor—a vacant birdcage, a crystal-adorned chandelier and a retired Singer sewing machine—a sumptuous piecemeal of items by lesser-known lines make up the rest of Eskell's collection: revamped bombers by Judi Rosen, wool shrugs with chunky garnet buttons by Thorn, screen-printed shirts galore by H. Fredriksson, Moss Mills and M. Carter, wool knickers, seventies-chic bell bottoms, gauzy hoodies and sweaters kissed with small cameos along one shoulder, to name a few.

Accessories provide tasty toppers for Eskell's main entrée, particularly in the form of charm necklaces by In God We Trust, cable-knit legwarmers and vintage-looking silver flasks and cigarette holders. Don't overlook the sexy, silly cotton garter belts, a spinoff of your kid brother's tighty whities donning cartoon images of racecars and cowboys. *(Jessica Herman)*

