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Clown Jewels

Circus folk think Wayne and Marty Scott make the greatest shoe on earth

What kind of clown would pay \$257 for a pair of floppy shoes? How about Swedie the Clown, eagerly awaiting his fourth pair of shoes made by hand—and with straight faces—by Wayne and Marty Scott.

"I love them," says Swedie, 21, of his fabulous footwear. "They hold up no matter what." Swedie—otherwise known as Mark Carfora of Clifton, N.J.—isn't the only member of the orange-haired fraternity to appreciate the couple's craftsmanship. More than 2,000 clowns the world over—including the entire Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey brigade—are tripping over themselves to wear the shoes, which, at \$185 to \$285, come in 40 colors and 21 basic styles, from wing tips to frog feet. Says Wayne, 70, himself a former clown for Ringling Bros., where Marty, 65, worked in wardrobe: "We smile at a lot of 'em."

The Scotts made the initial leap from show to shoe business in 1972 when Wayne, clowning in a Shrine circus, had a crisis of the sole. He decided to repair his 3-D checkerboard shoes himself, using an old sewing machine. Soon other clowns got wind of his expertise, and enthusiastic word of foot traveled fast.

It takes the Scotts, who have four grown children, about six hours to turn out a pair of shoes in a trailer-workshop on their property in Howey-in-the-Hills, Fla. Outside of occasional in-costume appearances in local parades, they stick close to home these days. "We don't have time to go and clown for ourselves," says Marty.

"So our shoes go out and make people happy for us." ●

"It's just fun to make them," says Wayne Scott (with Marty) of their fancy footwear.

GRAPH BY BRIAN SMITH

