

AMERICAN SALON

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1988 SALON
SUPER STARS
AWARDS
FOR
CREATIVE
EXCELLENCE

THE
BEST
OF
AMERICA

'88 SPRING/SUMMER
STYLE TRENDS

EXCLUSIVE
LONDON AND PARIS
SHOW REPORTS!!



SPECIAL MANAGEMENT SECTION
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LELAND HIRSCH

hair colorist of the year

Leland Hirsch is a master of the rainbow. When it comes to color, he's done everything imaginable, short of wearing it — his black attire is his trademark.

A tireless promoter of his craft, Hirsch primarily considers himself an analytical hair colorist.

"An analytical hair colorist tests against standards," he explains. "I make human hair swatches and test a product on gray hair; pigmented hair and porous, bleached hair. Then I dip the swatches in acetone nail polish remover to see if the color holds up."

An early achiever who started mixing hair color at the age of 16, Hirsch was only 20 when he headed up his first color department. At the age of 24, he did his first editorial photo shoot. His benefactor was *Vogue*. "I'd never done a shoot before and I didn't sleep for a week," recalls Hirsch. "Now, I do two or three major shoots a year."

Hirsch got the plumb assignment at *Vogue* through his association with manufacturers. How that came about is a story of another color.

COLOR BY NUMBER

In the late '60s, Hirsch was teaching at the Ultissima beauty school and working in its salon when he discovered a color inconsistency that led to his first major industry contribution — a system for numbering hair colors.

"In the '60s, product numbering systems were mumbo jumbo," says Hirsch. It was impossible to select a color with

SINCE AGE 16, LELAND HIRSCH HAS
CREATED RAINBOWS WITH PROFESSIONAL
HAIR COLOR. HIS 'TESTING AGAINST
STANDARDS' APPROACH CONTINUES TO
SHOOT THE INDUSTRY FORWARD.



Analytical colorists know what's in a product and how it performs. Hirsch tests color against standards to determine how well it holds up. His laboratory training began when he was 16-years-old.

the same quality as another, only a bit lighter or darker. As a result, you couldn't adjust a client's color from month to month.

"I knew that European color lines were more systematized, so I went to the color companies with suggestions for similar numbering systems. They listened, and I became the first *salon* colorist in the industry to be involved with manufacturers."

Hirsch worked for several companies over the years, training and teaching throughout the United States and Europe. Today, he continues his love affair with color at Nubest & Co. in Manhasset, NY, which he co-owns with Michael Mazzei.

Hirsch's department of 15 colorists books over \$500,000 a year. On an average week, it takes in \$10,000. What's the secret to attracting all that green?

"The keys to a successful color department are management, incentives and education," says Hirsch. "We use the profits from retail sales for profit sharing, hospitalization and incentive programs. When color-

ists realize it's their business, they're motivated."

Besides running one of the hottest color departments in the United States and developing yearly hair color forecasts for the Clairol company, Hirsch is creating his own legacy with Haircolor U.S.A., an annual workshop/seminar for hair colorists. "Haircolor U.S.A. began when Jessie Briggs and I decided to do something meaningful for colorists," says Hirsch. "The event is very educational; no selling is allowed. Manufacturers teach their lines and colorists show their techniques at their own presentations."



Color '88? Leland Hirsch predicts hand-applied hair color that enhances the lines of the design. Here, he applied a level 4 red/orange with equal parts 20 volume developer at midshaft, and a level 6 red/orange color with equal parts 20 volume developer from midshaft to ends. To create the brunette color, he applied a blue black color at scalp and lower shaft (first 1/2 inch), a deep brown from lower shaft to midshaft and a medium brown from midshaft to ends, all with 20 volume developer.

"I like a freeform color technique," says Hirsch. "I backcomb the hair and apply the color, following the style. Hirsch uses one to three colors to create an effect that looks different — but equally beautiful — from any angle (right).

SPECIALIZE!

Since Hirsch has been creating rainbows for over 20 years, we asked him to look into his crystal kaleidoscope and tell us what he sees down the road.

"First, colorists as specialists," he says. "You don't go to an internist for an eye operation and you should look at hair the same way. I'm not saying stylists can't do great color; I'm saying they shouldn't. Clients feel better taken care of with a specialist and you're in this business for one reason: to satisfy the client.

"In terms of technology, lightening hair with lasers. Theoretically, it's possible. Whether the government will ever let us do it and if the Ultraviolet light can be controlled is yet to be seen. New organic dyes compounded from natural fibers become reality, too. Imagine if we could take hair from animals and synthesize it into hair dye — dye that doesn't oxidize, but is absorbed and becomes part of the hair. It's all possible, conceptually."

If you'd like to be the colorist who helps it all come about, here's Hirsch's best advice:

"Learn all you can about your craft. Become an analytical hair colorist. Know what's in a product and how it performs under all conditions. Travel more, observe everything, get involved, train others and make the most of yourself. We all want to leave something behind when we leave this planet."

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Leland Hirsch with Nubest & Co. co-owner Michael Mazzei and the color department staff (below). Incentives keep these analytical colorists going. Photos by Gilles Berger.

"Learn all you can about your craft... Know what's in a product and how it performs under all conditions."

