

Going back to her roots

Louise Alexander-O'Loughlin talks to Lisa Eastwood, the 'Red Carpet', A-list celebrity hairdresser. Having travelled the world, attending to a clientele which has included Keira Knightley, Gemma Arterton, Kirsten Dunst, Jennifer Garner, Heidi Klum, Sigourney Weaver, Ryan Gosling, Javier Bardem and Julianne Moore, Lisa has a black book that most hairdressers can only dream of. She now returns to her roots, rolls out the red carpet and invites the people of Surrey to experience her incredible talents.



Before I met Lisa I wasn't quite sure what to expect, given her own celebrity status in such a competitive industry. However, I was pleasantly surprised when this unpretentious, refreshing and highly amusing woman shared her life story with me. I think I did pretty well in extracting as many 'names' as possible during our conversation as she is extremely discreet and keeps her cards close to her chest...

Lisa, what brings you to Surrey?

I was born locally and after spending so many years travelling I wanted to return and spend more time with my family and friends

in the area. It's been a really easy move and I'm ready to start growing my client base here in Surrey.

Has Surrey changed since you grew up here?

I left Surrey 20 years ago so, yes, it has changed – it's a lot more cosmopolitan with fantastic places to go.

How did you get started in the industry?

From the age of 16 I worked in Surrey at various hairdressers for the first few years, I then moved to London and worked directly with Nicky Clarke as his assistant. In the early days I was very lucky to work on the London, Paris and Milan show teams with Sam McKnight and Eugene Souleiman.

How did you get to where you are now with your career?

I worked on the show teams and networked like crazy with photographers and basically everyone I could. It took around five years of hard graft to create my own images for my



portfolio. My aim was to get an agent, and no agency would consider me until I had an impressive body of work.

How was it back then? I guess there was no social media or anything like that – how did you show off your work?

It was a lot harder back then as you can imagine. It was very much based on your portfolio, which I had to send out all over the place.



Which campaign do you feel kick-started your career?

I worked on a shoot with photographer Elaine Constantine (pictured right) for *The Face* in 1997. That was her first fashion editorial. She was such an inspiration and her energetic style was contagious. She was quoted as saying her work "came at a point when people had seen grunge fashion for a few years and needed something else to look at." Little did we know that her iconic images in 'Imperfect Beauty' would be exhibited at the V&A. →



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You clearly built a relationship with Elaine. Where has that unique working relationship taken you?

I travelled the world with Elaine – I guess we inspired each other – and soon the work was being featured in The Face, Italian Vogue and commercially we worked with Jack Wills, Diesel, American Eagle, Levi's, Gap, Virgin Atlantic and it just snowballed. I am eternally grateful to Elaine for her continued loyalty over the years.

What has been the most embarrassing moment for you in the presence of a celebrity?

I was asked to style Demi Moore's hair for the Cartier Boutique opening in St Petersburg. I arrived at the hotel and to my horror there was a beautiful invitation to attend the event. So, wearing my standard work wardrobe of skinny jeans and Converse, I went to the dinner and then onto the opera – which was wall to wall high, HIGH end and luxe with me in nothing more than my work clothes! Highly embarrassing!



Who have you worked with most recently?

The amazing Irina Shayk (Cristiano Ronaldo's girlfriend), the Russian supermodel who has just landed her first role in the new movie

Hercules. We spent an incredible day at the Corinthia Hotel in the West End.



HELLO! readers recently voted Fearn Cotton's boho wedding hair as one of their top favourites.

Yes, I was really excited about that. Fearn is

one of my favourite clients, she really is a lovely person and so easy to work with. I was honoured to be asked to share her special day and I was over the moon to see my creation featured in the national press and HELLO!

So you really do dip in and out of Hollywood royalty and our national treasures don't you?

Yes, I certainly do. It's great to have a variety of clients, but at the end of the day they are all just normal people who have a job to do. It's important to build trust and confidence with each client so they are happy with the combination of great hair and your personality. That's the secret of getting rebooked!

Why do you think most clients open up and tell hairdressers the most intimate details of their lives?

Who knows? Maybe because doing someone's hair is very personal; it's a one-to-one experience and you are in a bit of a bubble for a period of time which is quite often the only time a client has a bit of peace and quiet. I do also think hairdressers are notoriously good listeners.

What are you working on next?

I am booked to shoot some editorials with British Vogue, Vanity Fair and an advertising campaign with Myleene Klass.

Have you ever had to work with a celebrity you were apprehensive about?

No, not at all. However, Anjelica Huston and Glenn Close both have reputations created



through the media that portrayed them as such powerful women which can be a bit overwhelming, but face to face they were absolutely charming.

Have you ever been totally star-struck?

Yes! By a perfect gentleman, Ryan Gosling at the premier of Blue Valentine.

So your clientele is a mix of women and men?

I have been very fortunate in my career to be booked for both.

What's the secret of your success?

It's all about timing! I was in the right place at the right time. Saying that, I worked exceptionally hard. Sometimes it has been physically gruelling, with constant worldwide travel. You also need to adapt your personality to suit the occasion plus learn to be tolerant and calm in any given situation, so over 20 years experience really does count for something.

What can you offer potential clients in Surrey?

For their hair to feel feminine, modern and effortlessly stylish at any age – I love to empower people through their hair. I really enjoy cutting hair, a great cut makes all the difference along with a fantastic blow dry, plus I also want to share some of my unique techniques. ●



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