

Intercoiffure America/Canada expands horizons

Lois Christie is the founder and CEO of **Christie & Co Salon Spa**, one of the largest salons in New York City, as well as the president of **Intercoiffure America/Canada**, which represents the elite salons of North America and some of the most prestigious salons worldwide. **Beauty Industry Report (BIR)** was delighted to sit down with Lois to learn about the new initiatives and annual **Fall Atelier**, which takes place in New York City at the Waldorf-Astoria on October 15-17.

BIR: Lois, before discussing Intercoiffure, share your story with BIR's readers.

Lois Christie (LC): I started with a \$1,500 loan from my uncle and a dream to own one of the best salons, with an atmosphere in which hairdressers could continue to learn and be creative. That dream has grown into a reality, and today, Christie & Co Salon Spa is one of the industry leaders and most elite salons in the New York City area. I joined Intercoiffure in 1992, thanks to an invitation from **Leland Hirsch**, salon owner and founder of **ARTEC**.

BIR: Please share some background on Intercoiffure with BIR's readers.

LC: Intercoiffure is a very unique organization started in Paris by the famous hairdresser, **Alexander de Paris**, in 1933. At that time, the founders didn't consider American hairdressers good enough to be members. In 1965, we were finally invited to become members, and today, North America represents the most important and largest chapter.

BIR: Who can join Intercoiffure and what are the benefits?

LC: Membership in Intercoiffure is open to employee-based salon owners who follow best business practices and offer educational programs and benefits for their employees. They also must be licensed hairdressers. These elite professionals value Intercoiffure's networking as one of the most important benefits, as members share their knowledge with each other.

We have three types of memberships. An A member is a salon owner, a B member is a manufacturer and a C or specialty member is a trend setting editorial stylist, such as **Oribe**, **Ted Gibson**, **Gina Khan** or **Vivienne**

MacKinder, just to name a few, as well as makeup artists, photographers, celebrity stylists and people involved in the beauty and fashion businesses.

BIR: What actions are you taking to attract those types of members?

LC: We are running ads every month in **Beauty Launchpad** magazine and by virtue of the quality of our current membership, salons and sponsors are eager to join our ranks.

BIR: How can a beauty professional become an Intercoiffure member?

LC: They can visit www.intercoiffure.com or call **April Menendez** at 818-782-7328 for more information and a membership package.

BIR: Your fall and spring events are quite prestigious. Please tell me more about them.

LC: Our gala fall event, which we call our Atelier, takes place at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City every October. Next month, our Atelier has a celebrity red carpet theme. **Oribe** will be presenting on our black tie Red Carpet Awards Night. On Sunday, legends such as **Stephen Moody** and the **Sassoon** team will present, **Winn Claybaugh** will offer motivation and **Ted Gibson** will do the grand finale.

In the Spring, we host our annual technical and business educational event and annual White Party at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach, FL. Your readers can learn more and see pictures on our website.

BIR: Tell me about your role as the first female president of Intercoiffure America/Canada.

LC: Being the first women chosen to lead such a powerful group of successful salon owners truly is an honor and a privilege. Our board has been very progressive in making changes to attract new salon owners. In the last four years, we have grown our membership and created a whole new image for Intercoiffure by attracting celebrity hairdressers, such as **Vivienne Mackinder**, who has become the first female fashion director of Intercoiffure Pure, non-proprietary education for salons shared owner to owner is priceless.

BIR: I understand that the organization has established a number of Council Groups, including makeup, hair color, hair cutting

and esthetics. Tell me about these groups?

LC: One of my initiatives has been to create advanced education councils. The Color Council, led by **Gina Khan** and **Jo Blackwell-Preston**, was created by colorists for colorists, to share knowledge, trends and business ideas. The Haircutting Council, headed by **Frank Gambuzza**, teaches the newest cutting trends and techniques. The Skin Care Council is directed by **Lydia Sarfati**, who provides valuable lessons on how to improve your spa business. The Makeup Council is directed by makeup artist **Lori Neapolitan**, bringing us new makeup trends and technologies.

One of the most exciting initiatives is our **Rising Star Program**. We have connected with beauty schools, which send their top students to our events so these future professionals can meet the Intercoiffure salon owners and learn about working for an Intercoiffure salon. We also have our **Nouveau Group**, which is for stylists under the age of 27. Led by **Perry Monge**, this group of young talented stylists keeps us all motivated, and our salon owners especially benefit, bringing their young talent to learn and work with the best in the business.

BIR: Who have been your mentors?

LC: One of my first was **Jon Gunter**, who had the first color-only salon in New York and created the first club for hair colorists. **Vidal Sassoon** and **Paul Mitchell** were still teaching when I was building my business, so I had the honor of their training. But it is the friends I meet through Intercoiffure that I really value. People like **John** and **Maryanne McCormack**; **John Jay**, the past president of Intercoiffure; **Adam Broderick**; **Gina Khan**; **Jo Blackwell**; **Vivienne Mackinder**; and **Deborah Carver**, the publisher of **Beauty**



Lois Christie,
president

Launchpad, have proven to be true supporters of Intercoiffure and give so much back to the beauty industry. It is inspiring to work with them.

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Visit www.intercoiffure.com.