



PHOTOS: Courtesy of Aveda

FEATURE

by Bob Lupinacci

A VERY SPECIAL Marjorie Clarke ROCKS AVEDA'S MASTER JAM

**Aveda, Neill Corporation and The Salon People
celebrate women artists in a dynamite two days called Eve**



Marjorie Clarke

Miami— Joining a roster of proven artistic marvels, NAHA Hairstylist of the Year Marjorie Clarke created a most memorable presentation at Aveda's recent Master Jam, *Eve*, a celebration of women, cosponsored by Aveda, Neill Corporation and The Salon People. In just a few minutes, Clarke created four amazing looks on four models before our eyes, without saying a word. The words— moving words— soon followed.

"What you just saw," she uttered in a curiously serious tone for the moment, "was Marjorie Clarke the hairdresser. Now you're about to see Marjorie Clarke the woman." Clarke's transition from lighthearted, exuberant artist to a woman with a poignant message unfolded in a wash of emotion, saturating the audience's collective soul with empathy as she shared her story of a hairdresser changing her life. It goes like this:

Marjorie Clarke desperately needed to experience the joy and the human right to feel good about herself despite the plague of insecurity, self-doubt and eroded self-esteem inherent in humble and trying conditions. She craved to feel beautiful, important and special for her high-school graduation day. The only person ever to cut Marjorie's hair— ever— was her carpenter dad. But just before graduation day, her mom came up with a \$10 gift to Marjorie. So she raced to the local Belle Isle, Newfoundland, salon filled with hope and raw human emotional need. When she opened the door, her heart sank: There were 11 people before her. Marjorie thought the hairdresser would be too tired and might rush her and not give Marjorie her all. "But when I finally got into that woman's chair, she treated me like I was the most important person on earth," Clarke recalled. "And when she was finished and she turned me around, I looked in the mirror and thought, 'I'm beautiful. I feel so special,'" she said with emphatic appreciation. "At that very moment, I decided that this— dressing hair and making people feel special— was what I would do with my life. Fast-forwarding almost 20 years," she said, "as I walked up to the stage to receive my NAHA award for Hairstylist of the Year, all I could think about was that hairdresser who made me feel so special." But there's a lot more to Marjorie Clarke, the hairdresser and the woman. A lot more.

Today, Marjorie Clarke is making a lot of women feel very special through *Hairforce*, an organization committed to abused women. Marjorie was an abuse victim herself, a silent victim who has chosen to speak out and teach, encourage and help the scores of abused women speak out against the violence and suffering they have endured at the

hands of physically and emotionally abusive men.

According to the F.B.I., as many as 4 million women are battered each year, and nearly 1,500 are killed annually in the U.S. At least 170,000 of those attacks require hospitalization, emergency-room care or a doctor's attention. Every year 1.2 million women are forcibly raped by their current or former male partners, some more than once. But shockingly, there are more than twice as many animal shelters (3,200) in the U.S. than shelters for abused women (1,500).

More than making women feel beautiful in her salon, Marjorie Clarke makes these frail and battered women feel special in their own hearts by helping them get the help that they profoundly need and deserve. She's helping them realize that they are not helpless and they are not responsible for their abusive mates' actions. And she's helping these needy women depend on themselves and take the courageous action they need to take in order to create a meaningful and enjoyable life of their own— on their own. You can help, too, by visiting hairforce.org to find out what you can do in your own salon, your own town, maybe even in your own home to put an end to abuse.

As though this weren't enough for the money at this event, more magic followed in the form of Aveda global artistic director Antoinette Beenders's striking work. Next was Vivienne Mackinder's moving artistry and innovative teaching. Aveda *Pureessionals* Kelly McCarty, Leslie Munsell, and Dylan Sit, and academy trainee Lupe Voss presented Aveda's Spring/Summer collection; Cynthia Winston and Van Michael Miami Team re-enacted backstage at Fashion Week; and Gina Derry and Jen Hughes presented a very cool men's segment. Texture with Lisa Vann led off day two, followed by Rita Rusk, before breaking for a host of hands-on classes taught by this impressive roster of artists and Aveda Pureessionals. All quite moving.

One final note on Master Jam magic: Last year at a dinner during this event in New Orleans, we were short one seat; there wasn't a seat for Michael Baker, artistic director at the celebrated Van Council Salon in Atlanta. Aveda PR manager Vicky Melen, with some help from divine intervention and a resourceful maitre d', found a seat for Baker next to someone he'd never met: Neill Corporation's Debra Neill. Just a bit more than a year later, Michael Baker and Debra Neill are joined as husband and wife. Congratulations and all the best. Maybe Vicky Melen will help find you a seat at dinner; email her at vmelen@Aveda.com. HC&D

Marjorie Clarke

Vivienne Mackinder

Antoinette Beenders

