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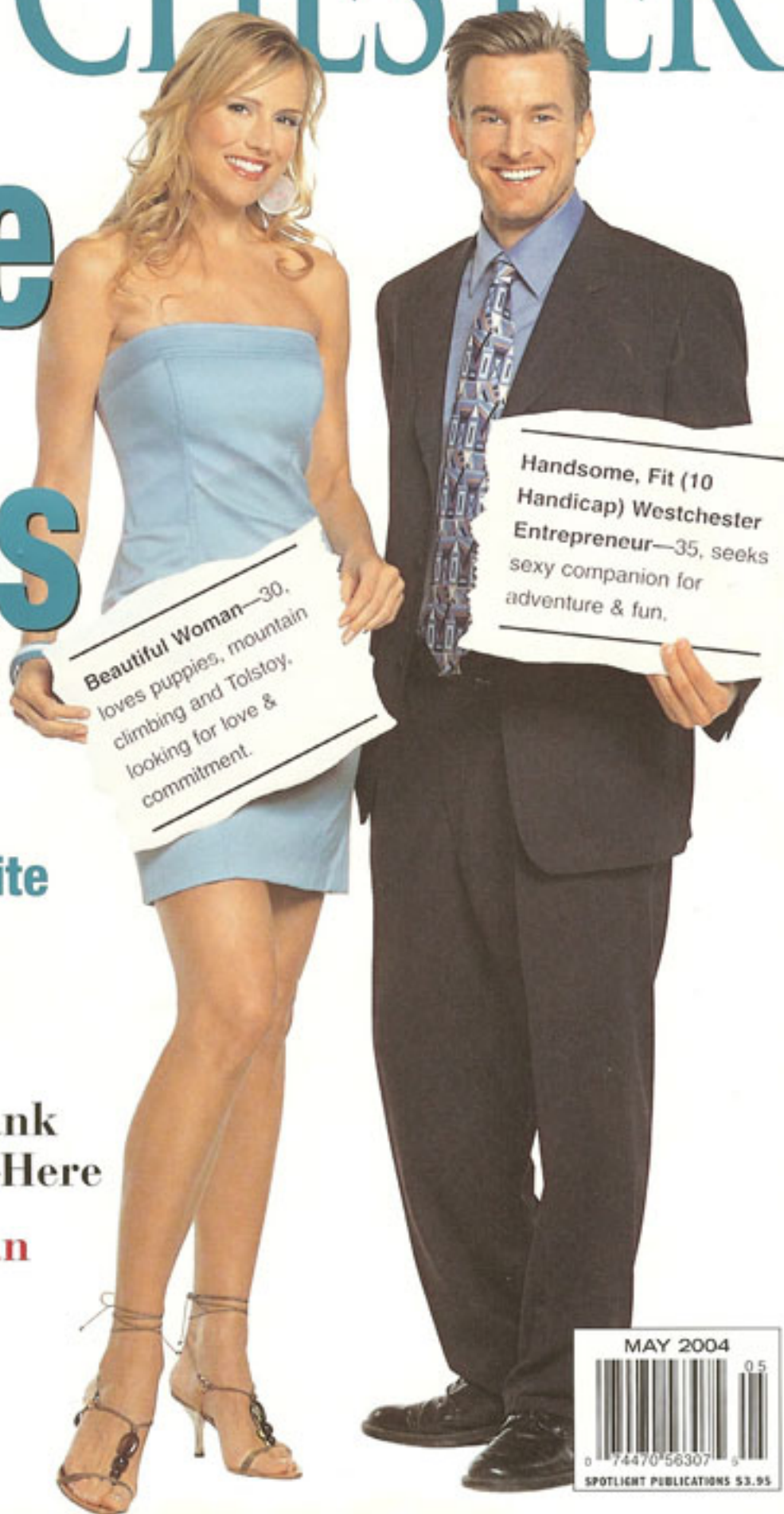
The Top Hairstylists  
And Hair Colorists

The Houses That Frank  
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Meredith Vieira's Man

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# *Shear Artists*

*We Combed the County  
For Hairstylists And Colorists  
And Found 17  
That Are Truly a Cut Above*

BY H. M. EPSTEIN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHILLIP ENNIS



I was having a bad hair day. My roots were showing and I was desperately in need of a great cut and some coddling. However, I was loath to commute to Manhattan, again, and wait an hour, again, for my overpriced stylist and her Greek chorus of assistants to "do" me. Cappuccino and a neck massage weren't going to be enough to sweep away the stress of running for the train to beat the school bus home. There must be some great hair designers in Westchester, I reasoned—if only I could find one.

Like Diogenes searching for an honest man, I contacted directors of cosmetology schools, salon professionals, educators and salon trade publications to find the best of Westchester's haircutters and colorists. The following 17 professionals were each recommended by at least three reliable sources.

Not only did I get some recommendations, I also received a bit of an education. I learned that there are two schools of thought in hair salons: total design and specialization. Half of the top hair artists work by conceiving and creating a complete look for their clients through cut, color and style, and sometimes makeup. They consider themselves "hair designers." The other school is made up of the "specialists," who believe that focus on only one skill set is the key to great hair. Some dedicate themselves to the art of color, others to the sculpting of a precision cut. Here are 17 hair artists who, no matter from what school of thought they hail, are simply the best.

## *The Standard Bearers*

### **Rocky Plateroti and Franco Marino**

Hair Designers/Colorists, Co-Owners

#### **ARTISTA FOR HAIR**

455 Central Park Avenue, Scarsdale, NY

(914) 723-1311

Hours: Tues. & Fri. 10-7.

Wed. & Thurs. 12-9, Sat. 9-5

I would love to call Rocky Plateroti and Franco Marino the Godfathers of Hair, like James Brown is the Godfather of Soul, but I can't. Yes, Plateroti, 45, and Marino, 48, were among the first to raise the creative bar for hair in Westchester. Since 1989, they have set the standards and, along the way, have trained or counseled many of the county's other top hair artists. But "Godfather" connotes the past, and these two Italian-born gentlemen still work on the cutting edge of hair design and education. Together and separately, they have been educators and platform artists for Aveda, L'Oréal, all three IBS (International Beauty Show) shows in the U.S., and the renowned CosmoProf show in Italy. In 2001, *Elle* magazine named Artista Salon one of the best color salons in the New York Metro area and the only one in Westchester.

**Entrepreneurs:** In addition to their salon work, Plateroti and Marino market

the Green Light line as well as their own lines of haircare products, including the patented Color Traxx system that allows multiple colors to be applied to a single strand of hair. They also run a school for all levels of hair artists, the Artista Academy.

**Quirky fact:** Marino plays bass in an Italian-American wedding band and is studying saxophone and jazz.

**Plateroti & Marino's prices:** cut and style, \$90 and up (men, \$60 and up); single-process color, \$90 and up.

**Unique Services:** hair and scalp treatments, Japanese relaxer.

## *The Power Hitter*

### **Omar**

Stylist, Salon Director

#### **PREMIER ATELIER**

125 Westchester Avenue, White Plains, NY

(914) 328-5100

Hours: Mon.-Wed. & Fri.-Sun. 10-6.

Thurs. 10-8

What do you get if you cross Frederic Fekkai with José Eber? Omar (one name only, please), who traded a burn-at-both-ends life of styling celebrity hair in private jets and *W* and *Vogue* photo shoots for a long-term career. After seven years at Frederic Fekkai's salon, at the tender age of 26, he took an offer from José Eber to become

salon director at Eber's White Plains salon. "I wanted a little bit more balance in my life," he says. "It was quite chaotic and crazy." Seven years later, in June 2003, José Eber sold the salon to Premier Atelier whose owner Brian Luborsky retained Omar, now 33, as salon director.

**Specialty:** Omar likes handling challenging hair types: curly, thin and African-American. "You have to have a great deal of control in your hands to handle African-American hair because it's so strong and it's so thick and curly that it just does what it wants." When African-American clients want a smooth look, he prefers to blow-dry their hair even though it's easier to set it. "It comes out looking a lot more natural."

**Omar's prices:** cut and style, \$120 and up (men, \$75 and up).

**Unique services:** hair and scalp treatments, permanents and relaxers.

## *The New Yorker*

### **Shin Tsudome**

Stylist, Owner

#### **SALON SHIN**

731 White Plains Road, Scarsdale, NY

(914) 472-3917

[www.salonshin.com](http://www.salonshin.com)

Hours: Fri.-Sat. 9:30-5

Let everyone else talk about bringing Manhattan-quality haircare to Westchester. Shin Tsudome did it in 1996 when he opened the Scarsdale branch of his East 47th Street salon. Born in Okinawa, Tsudome, 48, came to the U.S. in 1982 having already worked for eight years as a stylist in Japan. Precision cutting was not invented by Vidal Sassoon; the texture of Japanese hair makes precision cutting a necessity, not a style. Any errors or imperfections are instantly visible, which is why, Tsudome says, "Asian hair is the most difficult to cut." Tsudome's clients may not have any complaints about his precision cuts, but his many Westchester clients complained about "the driving and dropping off of their kids at the babysitter and the difficulty parking" in order to see him in Manhattan. "So I opened here seven years ago," he says. Now that's service.