



KENNETH

"I was in the salon's storage area one day, sitting on a big bag of henna, going through Kenneth's old press clippings," says Kevin Lee, the new creative director for Kenneth Salon at the Waldorf-Astoria. "Kenneth walked in and said, 'That happened so long ago. Why do you care?' His history is so rich, it shouldn't be forgotten."

It's no wonder that the legendary Kenneth Battelle, 74, has chosen Lee, fashionably preppy, handsomely tanned, and remarkably modest (given his chosen profession), as keeper of the flame. Battelle—that's Mr. Battelle to you—has little interest in doing it himself. He's part of a generation for whom tooting one's own horn is anathema. And after tending to the likes of Jackie Kennedy, Marilyn Monroe, and Babe Paley, other accomplishments must not seem worth tooting. Moreover, he's too busy cutting hair four days a week—always in a suit and tie—to bother. But after careful de-

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hair apparents

Their names are fiercely guarded by supermodels, society girls, and celebrities. Now we reveal five of Manhattan's hottest insider stylists.

liberation, and a fifteen-year working relationship with Lee, Battelle is passing the torch, slowly, allowing Lee, 39, to take on a younger set of boldfaced names and secure his spot in hair history.

The unspoken loyalty among stylists and clients, along with a few needlepoint pillows stitched with sayings (MY LIFE IS NOT WHAT I HAD IN MIND), and painted chests of drawers that serve as styling stations, creates an intimate, exclusive atmosphere in the salon. "They used to refer to the salon years ago as the Kenneth Club," says Lee. "You come in, and people know who you are. They know your children. They knew your mother. In a lot of instances, there can be generations of the same family in the salon."

If your grandmother is under the dryer next to you, the hip factor is bound to be low. The salon is definitely old school, but that's exactly what's attracting a new, socially prominent generation to its well-worn patina: Aerin Lauder, Tory Burch, Lauren duPont, Alexandra Lind, and Julie Janklow are clients of Lee's. So is Gloria Vanderbilt. "The younger people who come here don't need a trendy hair factory to feel like they're fashionable," says Lee. The pampering atmosphere, including suede hassocks at the shampoo bar, tea sandwiches served by attendants, and a coziness that's as rare in New York as a backyard, doesn't hurt. Customers' knowledge that they're following in the footsteps of the preeminent American fashion icons doesn't hurt, either. "Actually, few women in this generation know what the name Kenneth really means," says Lee. "The women Kenneth did, that whole carriage trade, continues today. But it's a different time. There will never be another Babe Paley."

On the off chance that an idol of Paley proportions does emerge, you'll probably spot her slipping in the back door of the Waldorf, on her way to the Kenneth Club for a trim.—CHRISTINE SHEA
Kenneth Salon at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, NYC, (212) 752-1800. Cut/blow-dry with Lee starts at \$150.



kevin lee

LEE, THE NEWLY APPOINTED CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF THE VENERABLE KENNETH SALON, WITH HIS CLIENT LAUREN DUPONT.

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