

SHE'S GOT THE LOOK

PRISS SALON OWNER JON LIECKFELT STYLES KRISTIN CHENOWETH'S NEW FILM

The task of styling a celebrity like Kristin Chenoweth for a major motion picture may look simple, but beneath the gorgeous blond tresses and soft peach lips, there lies a fairly complicated backstory that requires a highly skilled author.

And Jon Lieckfelt, owner of Priss Salon in Birmingham and Chenoweth's stylist for her filmed-in-Detroit movie *Family Weekend*, knows the script.

Before cheeks are blushed or powder puffed, Lieckfelt literally read the *Family Weekend* movie script, creating in his mind the look and feel of the character in which Chenoweth was cast. "It's like reading a book, where you get an idea in your mind of what a character looks like," says Lieckfelt. "Then I bring my ideas to the director and we come to an agreement on that."

But it's not a done deal yet, says Lieckfelt. The next step is to meet with the star and get her ideas and learn what look she is comfortable with. "Kristin is always the pretty blond with nice makeup, and she doesn't stray too much from this," he says, pointing to her alcoholic-but-pretty role of April Rhodes in Fox's *Glee*.

Luckily, Lieckfelt and Chenoweth agreed pretty should win out for a comedy like *Family Weekend*, and they set to work.

"Kristin's eyes are her strongest feature; so we used a warm neutral palette, which makes her very light blue eyes sparkle," says Lieckfelt, who used Priss custom-created shades for Chenoweth's role. "The first thing you notice is the color of Kristin's eyes, before you ever notice the makeup she has on."

Early in the film, Chenoweth's character is an advertising executive with a pulled-together look, but through an unexpected series of events, she is kidnapped by her own children, presumably without access even to lipstick. And for Chenoweth, Lieckfelt's skill makes her job on set much easier to do beautifully.

"Working with a great stylist is very important because he has to make me look professional in the film, but as time goes on, a little rougher," says Chenoweth. "He has to be very good at the difficult job of continuity. And I feel sorry for him because he has to work with my hideous hair, but he somehow manages to make it look good," she adds.

To reveal too much more may be considered a spoiler for the film and, at the very least, would give away trade secrets; so let's just say fans of Chenoweth's classic looks will not be disappointed.

For Lieckfelt, becoming entrenched in the growing film industry in Detroit was a conscious choice. With 20 years of editorial experience in fashion glossies, Lieckfelt knew that the film industry would allow him to stretch his creative wings. So he worked hard for two years to become a member of the International Alliance for Theatrical Stage Employees Union Local 38 so he could be available to producers and



Jon Lieckfelt

directors looking to film here in Detroit.

"I had to do my grunt work," says Lieckfelt. "The industry cares a lot about what you have done in movies, and you have to complete a certain number of days in a calendar year just to apply. I have been lucky to have friends in the industry to help sell my abilities to producers and directors."

It paid off. Each day on set, as Chenoweth and Lieckfelt worked to create a character and take her through the pages of the script, they developed a relationship based on shared understanding.

"When you are making a movie, just like when you record an album, it's there for all time," says Chenoweth. "That's why it's important. The stylist has to make me look a certain way, not just pretty, but the true character. And not just for one day, but for 30 days. And Jon did all that. He's really fantastic."

Off set and back at Priss, Lieckfelt's makeup studio in Birmingham's rail district, it's business as usual. "There's a celebrity division of what I do, but everyday women are responsible for the real success in my business," says Lieckfelt. 🍷 – Claire Charlton

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