

Beauty

# IN S.F., A BRUSH WITH CELEBRITY

Star stylists of L.A. head north to color, cut and caress the tresses of Bay Area clientele

By **Carolyn Zinko**  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

There they are, celebrities with beautiful manes of shiny, swingy hair, smiling at us, winking at us from the pages of People, US Weekly and Allure magazine. What's the difference between their perfectly tousled tresses and our plain, humdrum locks?

A celebrity hairstylist, of course.

The rock stars of the styling world have long been inaccessible to the masses, or at least to those unwilling (or unable to devote a day) to fly to their Beverly Hills and New York salons. But celebrity stylists are increasingly coming down from the stage to set up shop in cities around the country, including San Francisco. It's part business diversification and part response to demand.

With the rising cult of celebrity and a trend toward glossy, healthy hair as the latest fashion accessory, clients are increasingly seeking (the economy notwithstanding) the artists who give Jennifer Aniston, Jennifer Lopez and Goldie

Hawn their signature looks.

The Northern California invasion includes Los Angeles hairdressers Johnny Bueno, Kim Vo, Jerome Molles, John-Francis Maseda and Michael Canale of Canale.

San Francisco is also occasionally graced by the presence of Oribe Canales, who goes by Oribe (pronounced OR-bay), has 3,000 Vogue covers to his styling credit and counts Lopez among his top clients. He was in town this fall, fresh from a Vogue photo shoot in Ibiza, for a training session and personal appearance to promote his luxury hair care line (his Royal Blowout Heat Styling Spray is an industry favorite) at Fes-ton salon on Claude Lane.

**'Making it a lot better'**

Canale and Maseda work on a rotating basis out of Elevation Salon & Cafe on Bush Street. Canale, a colorist with six offices nationwide, including Canale Salon in Beverly Hills and the McMillan Canale salon in Malibu, said his Bay Area clients have asked him for 15 years to set up shop in San Francisco.



**Michael Canale**, left, colors Lissette Hilsen's hair at Elevation Salon & Cafe. Celebrity clients of his and other S.F. stylists: Jennifer Aniston, top; January Jones; Elle Macpherson; Jennifer Lopez; and Angie Harmon.

Russell Yip / The Chronicle

Canale, who has worked on Aniston's hair, now flies in once every six weeks to see 25 clients in a day, with the help of a team of assistants.

"They're people looking for that natural look — they're not overdoing it," said Canale, whose work costs up to \$400 per head. "They're wanting it to look real, with a little bit more. That's sort of my gig. I can make their eye color pop out, I

can make their complexions look better. Most of my clients look like celebrities. Their hair is shiny; it's glossy. I don't know how to say that without being cocky. I'm using what they already have and making it look a lot better."

Maseda, of Privé salon in West Hollywood, has styled the hair of Angie Harmon, Elle Macpherson, January Jones and others, and his work has been featured on the covers of Lucky, Rolling Stone and Shape magazines, to name a few. He began flying to San Francisco for a day once every eight weeks last year. His cuts are \$250 to \$300 each, and he sees up to nine clients a day.

**'Top blonder'**

"When you come to me for a consultation, you get what I think," Maseda said. "I'm good at facial shapes and dealing with different hair textures. I know what I think will look great on them."

Vo, a Beverly Hills stylist and TV beauty expert once named by Vogue as America's "top blonder," opened his fourth U.S. salon at 11 Tillman Place, off Union Square. He has worked on Hawn, Kate Hudson and Britney Spears, and his product line includes an ingredient called *bo-kei*, a Vietnamese botanical that adds shine.

And the high-rise

beauty building at 166 Geary St., off Union Square, is home to Bueno and Molles. Bueno trained in Santa Barbara, where his clients included comic actress Molly Shannon and the music artist Dev. He worked in Beverly Hills salons before coming to Union Square in 2009.

He enjoys the laid-back appeal of Bay Area customers, who he says are not quite as entitled or brash as clients can be in Los Angeles. He specializes in color. Prices

colorist Tracey Cunningham (a Redken expert whose clients include Jennifer Lopez, Cameron Diaz and Nicole Richie), now works at Marzia salon, on the building's 13th floor. A native of Dixon, near UC Davis, Molles returned to San Francisco in April 2010 to be closer to family. A color specialist, he charges \$100 to \$300 for his services and counts among his local clients the often-photographed philanthropist Vanessa Getty.

Getty, who no longer takes an airplane ride to get her hair done, likes the way Molles enhances her natural color. "He pays incredible attention to detail and has a magical technique for blending your color at the hairline, as the sun

**"The hair is the most important thing you wear every day. It's got to look and feel beautiful."**

Jerome Molles, hairstylist

would naturally," she said. "I am thrilled to have him in San Francisco."

**Getty's go-to guy**

"In Los Angeles, there's more right up front given to you — the clients want you to know who you're talking to," Bueno said. "That's great and it's entertaining, but people here have a softer way of presenting themselves. They don't make you feel like you have to clear the aisles."

Molles, who worked in Beverly Hills at Byron and Tracey salon with

range from \$120 to \$325, for monochromatic looks to highlights, and his salon is on the building's 10th floor.

For some, the price is worth it — from a cost-per-wear standpoint.

"The hair is the most important thing you wear every day," said Molles. "It's got to look and feel beautiful because it brings you out and gives you the confidence you need. What's the difference between us and others? Extensive training and hands-on experience. You have to be an artist."

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### STYLISTS TO THE STARS' S.F. CONNECTION



**John-Francis Maseda:** Has styled the hair of Angie Harmon, Elle Macpherson, January Jones, Rebecca Romijn. Can be found on a rotating basis at Elevation Salon + Cafe, 451 Bush St., (415) 392-2969, [www.elevationsalon.com](http://www.elevationsalon.com).



**Jerome Molles:** Cited confidentiality in declining to name stars he had styled, but worked at Beverly Hills' Byron and Tracey salon, where Jennifer Lopez, Cameron Diaz and Nicole Richie have had treatments. Can be found at Marzia Salon, 166 Geary St., Suite 1300, (415) 392-2441, [www.marzia.com](http://www.marzia.com).



**Johnny Bueno:** Clients have included pop music artist Dev and comedian Molly Shannon; operates Johnny Bueno Studio, 166 Geary St., Suite 1005, (415) 362-2668, [www.johnnybueno.com](http://www.johnnybueno.com).



**Kim Vo:** Has worked on Britney Spears, Kate Hudson, Goldie Hawn, Pamela Anderson, and appeared on Bravo's "Shear Genius." Works on a rotating basis at his four salons nationwide, including Kim Vo Salon, 1 Tillman Place, (415) 421-0888, [www.kimvo.com](http://www.kimvo.com).

— C.Z.