



As You Like It

A love of all things artistic has catapulted hair stylist Marcia Ebdell-Blanch into an exciting new venture – a hair salon combining an art gallery in Stratford. In her new salon, As You Like It, she finds inspiration in the art that surrounds her. **JANE BAXTER** finds out more. Photography by Gemma Carr.

Ask Marcia Ebdell-Blanch why she's focusing on things other than just hair in her new salon, As You Like It Hair Gallery and she's quite clear and very passionate. "It's such a natural progression. I've been immersed in the arts for so long I think my 20-year career as a hair stylist has been leading me towards this moment," she explains.

English born, Marcia trained in England and worked as a session stylist for the BBC and a number of independent music video productions. UB40 actually wined her and dined her in payment for haircuts. She also worked with U2, The Prodigy, Pink Floyd, Massive Attack and Bjork.

Marcia was a stylist with Pinewood Studios and among her clients were Chloe Sevigny, Robert Carlisle (*The Full Monty*) and Ewen McGregor. Her love of dancing also saw her working with The Theatre Royal and The Royal Ballet. "In London in the mid to late 90s, I was really in the thick of things. I lived with musicians and performers and it was such a creative and dynamic environment."

She came to Cairns eight years ago and started working in the industry. During this time, she had a salon but she wanted more – much more. While getting a feel for her new home she started working closely with JUTE as production hair stylist.

"JUTE's work is just sensational and it's a privilege to be able to work with their creative team. If you haven't been to one of their productions, then you're really missing out," she laughs.

Marcia also discovered the wealth of artists residing in the far North. "There are some wonderful artists living and working in Cairns. It is so exciting. I am now able to combine my love of the arts with my career of 20 years."

As You Like It Hair Gallery will feature the work of a range of regional artists including paintings on canvas, photographic art, glass sculptures, pottery, millinery and jewellery. Individual artists will be featured on a monthly rotation and at the start of every four-week cycle, an open evening will be held to profile the new work.

When coming up with a name for the salon, she went back to her English background. "Stratford is where Shakespeare was born and lived his whole life. I wanted to come up with a name for the salon that was appropriate – combining a sense of theatre with, ultimately, something that I hope every client gets – a style, as they like it.

As You Like It Hair Gallery is also evolving into an eco friendly salon, reducing its carbon footprint. The gallery has Australian made natural products derived from plants. The focus is on creating an individual look and style for all clients, whether it's to suit your lifestyle or for a particular event, like a wedding.

You can sit back with a latte or a glass of champagne – and won't be rushed. Marcia and her team will spend the time with you to work out exactly what you want. And, you can wander around and view the latest art on exhibit. **CL**

As You Like It Hair Gallery :: 4058 0511