

Still in the Game

BY LAURIE CHESBROUGH

As a personal stylist most people assume that I can't resist pouncing on every fashion disaster I see on the street. Not at all.

What I can't resist is acknowledging someone who has that special "Style Synergy", a personal style that defies age and keeps me wanting to see what they'll put together next. The person exudes self confidence, beauty, and warmth. They're secure in their own skin and leave a lasting impression. That's precisely how I felt the first time I met 65 year-old Kathy Miller of Alexandria.

Miller is the Senior Vice President of Agency Services with Summit Marketing in Arlington, Virginia. Her job is a hybrid of client services, sales, writing, and working as a creative director. She's spent three decades on the agency side and is very in-tune with the importance of relevancy in the workplace. Miller says, "In my line of work, the company and client expect you to be on your game creatively and have a flair for the dramatic...you have to keep up. You have to be bold and have tons of energy. Looking good and feeling pulled together is a must."

Kathy attributes the shaping and success of her "funky, functional" style to her mother's practicality and her Aunt Emma's avant-garde approach to style. "Mother told me to start with the basics; buy classic pieces in beige and grey and build around it." Miller's funky side was inspired by her aunt. "I couldn't wait for Aunt Emma to visit so I could see what she was wearing and her hair color of the week. She had the wildest hairpieces and plenty of furs. She always looked fabulous!"

Miller does have some challenges. Long arms, a short waist, and long legs make

finding the perfect fit a bit difficult. She goes for well-made pieces that fit her shape and suit her style, and she doesn't care where it's purchased from as long as it meets her criteria. While her closet does have a piece or two of grey and beige, most of her wardrobe consists of an array of styles in her favorite color black. She notes that she never has followed the color wheel. She adds contrast with unique jewelry, scarves, and wraps. She loves shoes and today her closets are filled with comfortable but sassy lower heeled pumps and wedges.

How has Kathy evolved into a 60-something professional with style and energy? Miller reflects, "I must have reinvented myself 25 times. Five years ago, I made a career move from Atlanta to Alexandria. I met fabulous new friends and accomplished career goals I never thought possible. I'm not saying it's all been easy, but I wanted to prove to myself that I could do it and I did. As we get older, it's important to try new things. If you're in a rut, seek the advice of a professional personal stylist, hair stylist, or makeup artist. The experience of being in this article and photo shoot for The Zebra has been a real confidence booster, and I've gotten some great advice which has added more flare and style to my look. We owe it to ourselves to keep growing and improving and looking fabulous at any age."

I'm styling more and more women these days who are concerned with keeping their job status rather than vying for promotion. Their concern is warranted; with current budget cuts, downsizing, and furloughs, you absolutely need to maintain your relevancy in the workforce for a longer period of time. The new ideal average age for female retirement is 67. Presenting and showcasing yourself in the best possible light are important components in maintaining staying power and being remembered. I like to remind my clients that while you can't compete with youth, you can stay 10 steps ahead of it and Kathy Miller knows that path.





HILLARY'S HAIR TIPS

Hair stylist Hillary Kellett of Urban Halo Salon in Clarendon liked Kathy's overall hairstyle and had a few helpful suggestions to help create different looks with her short hairstyle that fit her personality. For Kathy's gown glam look, Hillary went with a classy and clean look. The sides were sleeked with gel, the top was bent back for fullness, and the bangs were pulled to the front. For the swing coat/going out look, Hillary tightened up the neckline and fringed out the hair. A funky look for the leather jacket and jeans was achieved by blowing out the hair and adding a texturized pomade to piece out the bangs. For those of you concerned with crow's feet or don't like your forehead, Hillary suggests using a styling product and pulling the bangs and hair forward. Hillary offers one more piece of advice; "Work with your stylist to choose a hair style that showcases your personality, not just your age."

If you'd like to be considered for a style revival contact Laurie Chesbrough at the Zebra, laurie@thezebra.org.

PERSONAL STYLIST

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HAIR

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MAKEUP

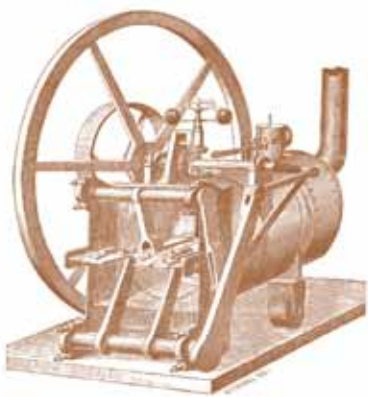
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