



Johnny (left) and
Elie Maalouf

PURE ENERGY

THE BROTHERS MAALOUF SHARE THEIR UNIQUE APPROACH TO BEAUTY WITH METRO DETROIT

by MARY ABRAHAM photography by JON DONES

Forget yoga, forget heading to the spa. For a metaphysical time, call Johnny and Elie Maalouf, illustrious owners of Maalouf Salon in Birmingham.

The brothers have a non-traditional approach to hair and makeup: Begin with what's beneath the surface, and then go from there. This mindset has transformed the salon into a much sought-after retreat. It's the ultimate "happy place" — where a customer can not only be herself, but be the best possible version of herself.

A little background on the guys: Johnny has worked as a hair stylist in Detroit for more than 15 years, steadily building a loyal fan base. Elie, on the other hand, is the consummate jetsetter, spending the last 15 years in New York and abroad. He is a seasoned makeup artist whose techniques have been featured on the runways of Fashion Week and on the pages of *Elle*. In addition, he has worked with celebrities such as Eva Mendes, Heidi Klum and Naomi Watts, to name a few.

Believe it or not, Johnny and Elie have three other siblings who are all in the beauty biz, too, including youngest brother, Joey, who travels the world as a personal hair stylist and makeup artist to Rachel Zoe, star of the hit Bravo series *The Rachel Zoe Project*. (And yes, he is featured from time to time.)

But you won't find sibling rivalry here, only love: "We bring a certain energy out in each other," Johnny explains, gesturing to his older brother Elie. "For example, what I lack, he has, and what he lacks, I have. It's yin and yang." Elie gives an affirming nod and picks up right where Johnny leaves off: "It's a balance — a balance that works."

With the first year of partnership under their stylist belts, the two have a lot to be proud of — and even more to look forward to. Elie has recently launched a signature makeup line, available at the salon, and continues to travel to New York for shoots as needed. Johnny's client base continues to grow, and he is in the process of launching the Design Team Blog, set to hit the Web in March. This progressive venture will offer videos, discussion boards — you name it — that provide makeup, hair and fashion tips for anyone interested in achieving the hottest runway looks in, well, just a snip.

"We have a talent for highlighting the best in people," Elie says. "After all, we are a family who own this salon, so we want our clients and staff to feel like they are a part of our family. We want them to feel good, and we want them to feel important."

And there may be no more perfect example of this than a few hours in Johnny's stylist chair. "When I meet you, I need to see you," Johnny explains. "I need to understand who you are, where you work, how you live, etc., to create something that's only for you."

"And that's why nobody wants to leave," Elie adds. "Because from the moment you walk in to the moment you're walking out that door, you're part of something. A conversation, a collaboration — a family. There's a lot of energy here, and people feel it."

Visit www.maaloufbeauty.com in March for the debut of Maalouf's Design Team Blog