

Vogue beauty

Back lash

Who knew there was so much going on behind the flirtatious flutter of our lashes? Kathleen Baird-Murray takes a look at the magical world of mascara

*Y*ou've got to hand it to Chaja. A beauty marketing genius, she wrote the kind of snappy copy that could get a girl spending her last ha'penny on a pot of cream – never mind if she couldn't eat for a week. "Fear copy with a bit of blah blah", she called it. She walked about in a white coat so that everyone thought she >



was far more scientific than she really was. And by the end of her career she was a self-made multi-millionaire, thanks in no small part to a name change that had more of the ring of the cash-tills to it: Helena Rubinstein. But the thing we really have to admire Chaja for? She invented the world's first transportable, automatically refillable mascara, Long Lash in 1956, pre-dating the Sixties wave of fluttery caterpillar lashes that subsequently hit the streets, and putting an end to the use of block mascara and the tedious application that went with it.

Plus ça change. Fluttery caterpillar lashes are having their biggest moment since the Sixties this season, and multi-millions are still being made from our lashes. As Britain gears up for the launch of Latisse at Lashes Clinic – the prostaglandin-based fluid that when applied to the eyelids makes your

lashes grow long and thick in a matter of four weeks (70 per cent thicker in 16 weeks) – founders Mark Fuller and Usman Goheer, two GPs with considerable ophthalmology

experience, will no doubt be hoping that sales here will mirror those in America of about 2.5 million bottles a year. Discovered as a side effect of Lumigan, a glaucoma drug, Latisse is applied on the lid using a brush rather than directly into the eye and works by extending the growth cycle of the lash. (Incidentally, it's also great for anyone post-chemotherapy.) In the States, there was some controversy that it might create irreversible brown flecks in light-coloured eyes, but Allergan, which owns the prescription-only product, conducted widespread trials, obtained FDA safety approval in 2008 and, to date, there is no anecdotal evidence. The real controversy now is how much you pay for it. Four months' supply of Lumigan will cost you from £200. Sourcing costs mean the same supply of Latisse will currently set you back £600, even though they're effectively the same product. Go figure, but Lashes Clinic at least lets you choose which you want to buy (020 7873 2193 or Lashesclinic.co.uk). If you can't wait the requisite time for them to grow, try two lash-specialist bars that have recently opened and will give you (fake) luscious lashes that last for up to six weeks:

Lash Perfect Lash Bar (020 7434 4554) and Benito Brow Bar (020 7518 7566).

Meanwhile the mascara market is burgeoning, thanks to the fashion and beauty-technology planets aligning, a bit like the stars, as our love affair with the Sixties coincides with new developments in mascara brushes. The look is at its most striking when done with a combination of mascara and strip lashes – make-up artist Lucia Pica applied Shu Uemura's strip lashes to model Edie Campbell's lower lids only, as pictured on the previous page, then followed with lashings of mascara to top and bottom. "Lashes this season are about being cool, young – it's not Cheryl Cole Goes to the Circus," she says, quite rightly. Mac spokesman Terry Barber loves to forgo the ubiquitous eyelash curlers so that your lashes just jut out, naturally. Make-up artist Sally

Branka starts with the curlers, then coats the lashes evenly before going back over them, dabbing them with the tip of the brush and then fanning the brush over the lashes again to make them thicker.

"A Sixties eye is very even, fanned and goes up in a curl," she says.

Which brings us to the question of which all-singing, all-dancing mascara to choose: vibrating or straight? (The wands.) Fibre-enriched or lacquer effect? (The actual mascara formulas.) Over to the beauty industry's secret weapon, a modern-day Helena Rubinstein if ever there was one. L'Oréal's Jean-Louis Guéret is a husky-voiced Frenchman who has designed just about every bestselling mascara since 1987, from Lancôme to Yves Saint Laurent. "It's a shame I don't get commission for all the millions of mascara sold that I have created," he laughs, as only a man who currently has 42 per cent of the mascara market share in America can. He advises avoiding gimmicks and choosing instead something that's easy to use. "It's very important that the woman commands the applicator and not the other way around." He works six years in advance, and chuckles conspiratorially when I ask him about the future: "It will be easier. Everyone else is still focusing on the brush, but the future has nothing to do with all that. There will be no more fighting with the brush." Chaja would approve. ■

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