



REACH FOR THE STARS



For those with more free time than what's legally considered employed, the face in these pages should be all too familiar. On television around the globe in various programs and segments, he is the name behind the big question "Who are you wearing?" Charlie Lapson is, currently that hot, perishable and delicate phrase, "it".

*Interview by P Ramakrishnan
Images by Hyvis Tong*

At the Emmy's he's getting smooched by Felicity Huffman, striking a pose with Jennifer Aniston on the red carpet for the good people of Hello or being arm candy to the new Mrs Parker, Eva Longoria. La Lapson has pitched his fork on so many stars, he's a veritable People magazine spread in motion.

The man behind the scenes and behind the seams of many a show – from Desperate Housewives, American Idol to dolling up the last decade's most iconic fashionistas – the gals of F.R.I.E.N.D.S. and Sex and the City, it wouldn't be far fetched to deem him King Midas; the shows he's been behind have all turned into gold.

Between shots and a fashion shoot at Halo, we asked some life-affirming questions to the designer, just before he scooted off to Tokyo.

escape: Tell us what the gals at Desperate Housewives are going to be wearing in the coming season?

Charlie Lapson: The characters are always developing, and they need to be dressed appropriately for the plot. You will see crop tops, cocktail dresses, and an array of my handbags and jewelry mixed in. Pinks and tans seem to be a big part of the daytime looks.

escape: Every woman should have...

CL: ...a beautiful pair of earrings, at least one ring, one favorite bracelet and one necklace. From there you can build your wardrobe to go with every outfit. Just start out with the classics and if possible, a comfortable (affordable) size diamond should be set in the ring or earrings.

escape: You've worked with a lot of celebrities in the last decade. Who have been favourites?

CL: I enjoyed working with people like Jennifer Aniston, Eva Longoria, George Clooney. They are just real and kind, and

have a good attitude about life. When working with fashion for celebrities, we are helping them build their image, so it's great when they are accommodating.

Some of the newer stars are also quite personable, such as America Ferrara from Ugly Betty. I think she will go far because she is charming and possesses that special something that many people can relate to.

escape: You were part of many iconic shows before they became huge - how much did luck and fate have to do with it?

CL: It really is a combination of how these things happen. First thing is, I believe in the underdog, it's important for me to give everyone a chance. You never know what will happen next in life, as was the case with American Idol. That happened when an associate was attached to the show in the first season, and he knew the contestants didn't have a budget for clothing and they were going to have to wear t-shirts and jeans.

They were broke, as they weren't stars, and had no one to turn to. I showed up at the set with shirts, jackets, pants, dresses, jewellery, etc, and basically loaned them out. I had no idea that the show would then explode and would be seen around the world.

The same with Desperate Housewives. I've known Eva Longoria for at least eight years, from when she was on the soap opera. I worked with many of her cast mates as well as her character. Then a few years ago, when I heard about this new show she was doing with Felicity Huffman, I was there to loan products for them when not many others would. No one knew if the show would last past the pilot. Lucky for me I did that, and then came Felicity's jewels for the award shows, and the rest is history.

escape: This season, what should young ladies 18-30 be wearing? And what should they be not caught dead? Same with guys.

CL: The trend of wearing dresses is coming back, something for all ages of women. Jeans and casual clothing is still the prime daily wardrobe, but casual dresses for

school and office are very hot now. Also, a revival of 80's club chic - think of the last year of Studio 54, and the party scene that went with it.

There's talk about school girl chic, such as plaid skirts and uniform looks, but I think that should be kept for school and not for play time at parties.

Fuchsia is coming on strong now and everything in that color and shades of deep pink is right on track. Tops with textures mixed together with pants or skirts of different patterns is big in LA and Europe now. And lace items are used as layering pieces. It adds that feminine touch.

Handbags are hot in all shapes, but especially the two extremes, large size totes for carrying work or school supplies, laptops, workout gear, and on the other

end, small evening clutch styles. Don't walk around with your office in your bag at a cocktail party.

escape: Style icons change with the season. Who are two people you think you'd keep a watch on?

CL: It seems like Eva Longoria is becoming a modern style icon. She's the modern woman, very different from the days of Jackie O. In Eva's case, she has a different physique that expresses her beautiful Latina looks.

Another one of the younger actresses is Hayden Panetiere [from Heroes]. She always looks stylish and well accessorized (with my handbags and jewellery!). And Anne Hathaway is on her way to major stardom. She really is a fashionable woman contrary to her looks in The Devil Wears Prada.

