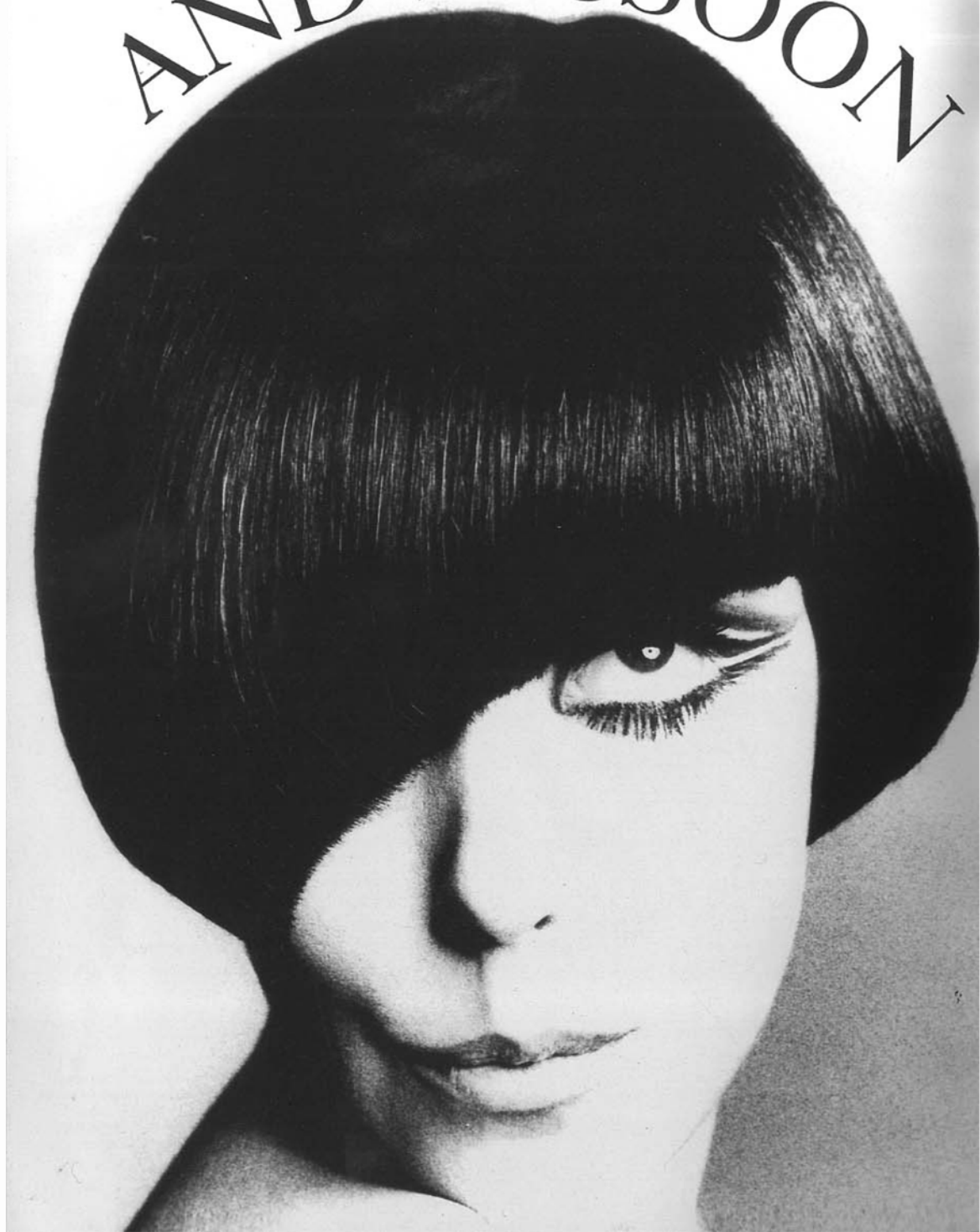


AND SASSOON

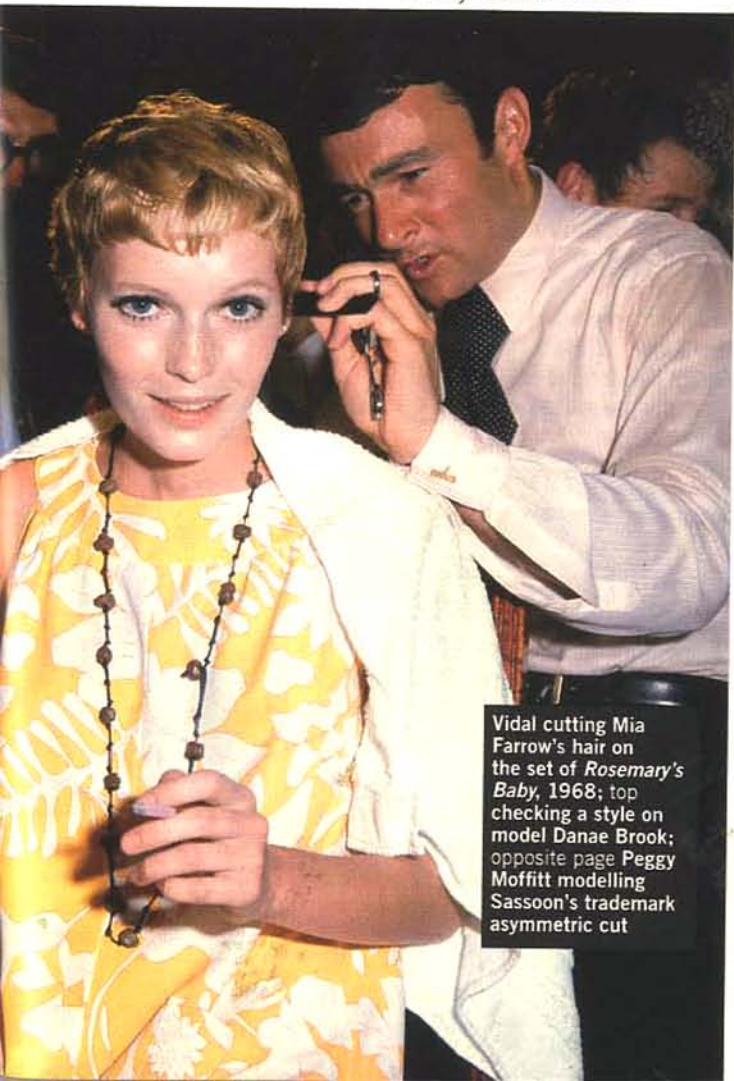




# CREATED

You know his cuts (in fact, you've probably had one!). Now meet the man behind beautiful, modern, easy-to-wear hair, **Vidal Sassoon**

# SWISH...



Vidal cutting Mia Farrow's hair on the set of *Rosemary's Baby*, 1968; top checking a style on model Danae Brook; opposite page Peggy Moffitt modelling Sassoon's trademark asymmetric cut

**H**aving a good hair day? Then you should probably thank Vidal Sassoon, because he's the Brit who invented them. Seriously! It all started with the now-iconic '60s bob; apart from the flapper look, which was short but not sharp, haircuts didn't really exist before then. Instead, women went to the salon for a set.

"And three days later they'd come back for a comb-out, because they couldn't do it themselves!" says Vidal. "They spent half their lives in the salon and I thought, 'Why not have a cut once a month, and let the hair have movement and life and shine?'"

And so The Mary Quant was born. Sassoon debuted his breakthrough bob on the designer, but it really took off when he cut actress Nancy Kwan's mane (and it was a mane – she could sit on it!) for her 1963 role in *The Wild Affair*. It was the start of a revolution that gave women what we take for granted today: freedom from hairdressers, hood dryers and hot rollers. In other words, easy, chic, healthy hair. That's why a new film about his impact is called *Vidal Sassoon: The Movie – How One Man Changed The World With A Pair Of Scissors* (in cinemas May 20 – see review, page 222).

It all happened in Swinging London and Sassoon put British hairdressing on the map with his groovy graphic shapes. "Before ►

◀ that it was very French," he recalls. "After that we started to graduate the bobs. The necklines of the clothes were so damn beautiful, I thought, 'If a woman has a great neck, why not show it off?' We cut to the neckline, the jaw... it was very different."

Inspired by architecture such as the Seagram Building in New York, he reinvented his 'geometric line' over and over again. There was The Mia Farrow (that famous pixie crop), The Goddess (a super-short perm inspired by the curly hair he'd seen in Harlem), The Carol Channing and The Peggy Moffitt (asymmetric bobs) and The Grace Coddington, aka The Five Point Cut. "For me," says Sassoon, "this is the optimum in geometric cutting."

Another signature of a Sassoon cut was that it had 'salon memory': it was precision shaped, so it always did what it was supposed to do – although not every client was crazy about seeing her tresses on the salon floor. "We had the occasional woman leaving in tears!" he admits. "However, for the women who did keep it, the hair on top (which was longer than the back and sides) moved like crazy when you swung it, then fell perfectly into place." See? Every girl's hair dream! GLAMOUR caught up with the legend himself.

**GLAMOUR** What makes a great cut?

**SASSOON** "Understanding a woman's bone structure. A good cut takes 30 to

40 minutes; it's done on wet hair, then you finish it off dry. You know it's a great cut when you can style it yourself [at home]. You should be able to 'shake your head and it's there.'"

**G** How can a woman make sure she gets a great cut?

**VS** "Get referrals from friends with great cuts, so you already have confidence in the stylist. Give him a general idea of what you want and let him be creative. I once had a client whose hair I cut short on one side. Before I could finish, she grabbed the other side and said, 'I've changed my mind!' I said, 'So have I, but I have to shape it slightly so it makes sense.' And she walked out with an asymmetric bob."

**G** What mistakes do women make with their hair?

**VS** "I don't think it's the woman, it's her hairdresser. You need someone to say, 'I know what suits you.' You don't have to like each other but the hairdresser has to be in control. If he is, she'll probably walk out of the salon smiling."

**G** What are your top product picks these days?

**VS** "We're spoiled for choice. We used to 'put the green stuff in the



## CUTS VIDAL LOVES NOW



**Halle Berry** "She has one of the most beautiful heads in the world, like Mia Farrow."



**Michelle Williams** "Her hair looks terrific."



**Cate Blanchett** "It swings beautifully – whoever does it does a very good job."



**Scarlett Johansson** "For a girl who doesn't know what to do with her hair, she does very well indeed!"



Clockwise from above  
**Creating Mary Quant's iconic crop;**  
**actress Nancy Kwan rocking a Sassoon 'do;**  
**styling Carol Channing;**  
**Jane Johns modelling The Goddess;**  
**a pageboy cut for Grace Coddington**



bucket and boil it' to make our own shampoo. We couldn't make our own conditioner and there were so few around it was primitive, but the major companies have made enormous progress. It's the same for salon treatments. There are so many to choose from and how can you be against innovation? That's what I stood for all my working life."

**G How can women make sure they find a flattering colour?**

**VS** "When highlights first became popular in the late 1950s, we loved them. Our colourist once worked on a client from 9am to 5pm because she wanted to be white blonde. She said, 'I've been here all day and I'm still not white blonde,' and he said, 'Madam, you will be when you see the bill!' For colour there can be so much misery, so if the colour suits your skin and you have a sense of fun, go for it."

**G And what do you think about long hair?**

**VS** "I'm not anti-long hair. I think long hair cut beautifully is absolutely charming and it looks just as good as short hair cut beautifully. The look that I hate is two hanging curtains – one on each side, hiding a woman's beauty. I don't mind long hair if it's well cut, but I do mind messy hair curtains."

## How Vidal Sassoon changed YOUR hair

Britain's top stylists explain how the '60s super-snipper continues to inspire the looks they create for celebrities, for the runway and, ultimately, for you.

**Sam McKnight** "I never worked for Vidal but I've reinterpreted his looks many times on the likes of Agness Deyn and Tilda Swinton. His influence is still relevant today."

**Neil Moodie** "I don't believe there will ever be such a revolution in haircutting again, because Vidal's techniques can be applied to any look. My favourite is the graduated bob. It changed the way women styled and looked at their hair and it never goes out of fashion."

**Guido Palau** "Vidal Sassoon set the cutting blueprint for hairdressing today. His technique is the basis of every great cut being done now. My favourite looks are the Five Point and the Nancy Kwan bob – still beautiful, modern classics. I was actually fired from Sassoon, so it pushed me to be what I am today and I gained an insight that has followed me throughout my career."

## CUTS VIDAL WILL LOVE FOREVER



**Louise Brooks** "She made an enormous impression and the whole flapper thing was marvellous."



**Linda Evangelista** "The first model to keep changing her look and inspire others to do the same."



**Nancy Kwan** "People are still wearing her look and she was so beautiful – nobody wore it better!"



**Grace Coddington** "All the other models were saying, 'Where can I get my hair cut just like yours?'" ©

Press: Vidal: The Autobiography is published by Hutchinson, £10.99. "Bobby" (mini)