



Ready, Set, Action, Cut!

By Wendy Crooks

HE'S "DANIEL FROM DALLAS" – Frisco, really. For the reality show on Bravo, however, he was called "Daniel from Dallas" and he was cast as one of the 12 hair stylists for the second season of *Shear Genius*.

At only 29 years old, Daniel Lewis has been in the hair styling business for 10 years. He opened his first salon, Green Peridot, in Tallahassee, Florida in 2002 and opened his Frisco location, an Aveda salon, in The Shops at Starwood two years ago.

Mr. Lewis watched the first season of *Shear Genius* and later learned the producers were having an open casting call in Dallas. He was intrigued but very busy. As the owner of two salons in different states he couldn't afford to wait in line for hours with the hopes of becoming a contestant. He did, however, have the insight and drive to contact the producers directly and ask for a private audition. A producer agreed to meet

with Mr. Lewis and by spring 2008 he was called to Los Angeles as one of the 12 contestants to start filming Season 2 of *Shear Genius*.

WHAT IS SHEAR GENIUS?

Shear Genius, a reality show on Bravo Wednesday evenings, starts out with a nationwide search for talented hair stylists and continues each week kicking off a contestant a week as their hair styling performances are deemed "not Shear Genius." The last contestant standing wins \$100,000, a contract with Nexxus product line and the chance to style for an *Allure* magazine photo shoot. Hosted by former *Charlie's Angel*, Jaclyn Smith, the challenges the hair stylists have to endure go from silly to downright ridiculous. Despite the absurdity of it all, each contestant seemed to take the challenges in stride. When they were asked to do a "Man's Best Friend" competition, each was challenged to

make dog owners look like their dogs. Of course corny comments like "Every dog has his day" couldn't be helped during that challenge. Then there was the food competition inspired by "The Kitchen Beautician." Each stylist chose from a plethora of gooey food items such as caramel, peanut butter, molasses, mustard, honey, flour, avocado, squid, sugar and sea salt. Their "Fear Factor-like" challenge was to make some sort of hairdo using those slimy and sticky items rather than traditional hair products.

After several contestants were eliminated, Mr. Lewis remained in "The Final Four." His time left on the show was limited, as his work was deemed "not Shear Genius" the very next week. Jaclyn Smith, wiping tears from her face, said, "Daniel, you are a true Texas gentleman and it has been great seeing your work." He replied, in his typical one liner style, that he was ready to get back to Dallas and, "Ya'll don't wear your hair

big enough for me.”

Since his departure, Mr. Lewis’ mother, Sandra, has spent hours sorting through tons of emails from fans that had their hearts set on him being the big winner. According to Mr. Lewis, “Frisco has been very good to us. The grand prize pales in comparison to the increase in business we have had. I did the show for our business and it has doubled since being on the show.”

“Daniel from Dallas” seemed to get along with almost all of the contestants and he seemed amused by the regular squabbles between the other contestants. Charlie, who ultimately made it to the top two, appeared to have a hard time getting along with everyone with the exception of Mr. Lewis. “Charlie and I are best buddies coming out of it. He was the yin to my yang.” His affection towards Jaelyn Smith was obvious too. He said, “Jaelyn Smith is one of the best people you will ever meet in your life.”

While it was difficult to be away from his family and friends for six weeks, that was only part of it. He was literally sequestered for that time as well. “I went six weeks without any email, telephone, television or news,” said Mr. Lewis. Despite being cut off from the outside world, he maintained that it was a positive experience overall. “It gives a voice to what we’re doing at Green Peridot. It was one of the best experiences of my life.”

What does the future hold for the local celebrity? “I am working on a product line,” says Mr. Lewis. “There is also some discussion of my own show, ‘Daniel Does Dallas’ to promote the product line.” Whatever direction he decides to take, this “Texas Gentleman” will be always be a cut above the rest.

Wendy Crooks is a freelance writer living in Plano.

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