

BUSINESS

HOW TO REACH US — Rima Shah, Business reporter • Phone: 637-3238 • Fax: 241-1975 • e-mail: rima.shah@latimes.com

Preparing for a brush with fame

Make-Up Designory in Burbank gives the basics for a career in makeup, both special effects and cosmetic.

By Rima Shah
The Leader

DOWNTOWN BURBANK — At this school in downtown Burbank, students learn the essential skills they need to survive in the world — the beauty world.

Through classes such as "beauty make-up artistry," "studio hairstyling," "wardrobe styling" and "special make-up effect," the Make-Up Designory school teaches what it takes to appear not just beautiful but also burnt, scary and bleeding.

Founded in 1997, the school moved to downtown Burbank in 2000 in search of a bigger

location.

"The concept was to create a makeup school that would create a new approach to the way makeup is taught," said Paul Thomson, the school's director of education.

Some of the schools, Thompson said, used the same techniques that have been used for the past 20 years. In order to revamp the way makeup is taught, the school's faculty and staff invented new techniques and even wrote textbooks.

"Everyone who works here is from the industry," Thomson said, about the nationally accredited school's 16 teachers.

In the 8,000-square-foot building, students peered at mirrors experimenting with makeup colors, played with hair and wigs, and learned how to handle clothes. Alien and monster masks lined the special effects studio.

Brittany Shirley, already a



SCOTT ROBY *The Leader*

Jessica Ploghoff holds still while Brittany Shirley applies eyelashes. The two are students at Burbank's Make-Up Designory.

professional cosmetologist, came from Texas to attend Make-Up Designory. Shirley learned about the school through the Internet a few years ago and saved up enough money to attend.

"I've always been interested in makeup," Shirley said, adding that the courses were great. "Everyone holds a professional attitude."

Upon graduation, students move on to work in film and television, in catalogs, for magazines or for cosmetics company, and sometimes as beginners at a department store's makeup counter.

Acknowledging the struggles beginners face in starting a career in the beauty world, Thompson said the school tries hard to teach them about the business aspect of the craft. There are regular workshops advising students on how to find work and the school has a full-time staffer to help with career planning.

"It's a very hard career," Thompson said. "It's one of those careers that require a great deal of effort. But if you wanted

THE MAKE-UP DESIGNORY FILE

- **WHO:** The Make-Up Designory.
- **WHAT:** School of beauty and special effects.
- **WHERE:** 129 S. San Fernando Blvd., Burbank.
- **INFO:** 729-9420.

it, you would make it happen."

Classes range from three weeks to six months. Fees range from \$1,600 to \$10,000 depending on the course, and may include extra fees.

Moreover, the school has launched its own line of makeup, which they sell in their Burbank location. There are also plans to open a store in New York. Susanna Aroutiounian, also a student at the Make-Up Designory, said she always wanted to be a makeup artist and enrolled in the course after graduating from high school.

"It's everything that I expected," Aroutiounian said. "It's very informational and changed my outlook toward makeup."