

BEACH BUZZ | BY DEBRA LEIBOWITZ

Model mogul Irene Marie celebrates 25 years in business



Irene Marie's model agency celebrates its 25th anniversary this month. HANDOUT / IRENE MARIE AGENCY

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Irene Marie, the grand dame of modeling, will celebrate her agency's 25th anniversary alongside her 1,000 models, staff members (past and present), close friends and business associates at an invitation-only gala Dec. 13 in Miami Beach. The VIP soiree -- featuring a rock & roll concert and fashion show -- will kick off the launch of the new state-of-the-art venue at LIV Nightlife at Fontainebleau Miami Beach, part of the historic landmark's \$1 billion renovation.

A former international fashion model, Marie founded her agency in 1983 in Fort Lauderdale. Five years later, she moved it to 728 Ocean Dr. in

South Beach, where it remains today. Marie purchased the building, formerly the Sun Ray apartments, made famous by the chain saw scene in the movie *Scarface*.

Marie became known for campaigns including Versace, Guess and Calvin Klein -- and the discovery and development of supermodels **Niki Taylor** and **Cindy Taylor**. In 2006, MTV launched *8th & Ocean*, a television series chronicling the lives of models and staff at the modeling agency.

Cindy Taylor (*Wild on E!* host) will host the 25th anniversary celebration, which will feature a presentation by television journalist and Women of Tomorrow co-founder **Jennifer Valoppi** to Marie for her years of service to the mentoring organization. Guests slated to attend include: Maxim's "World's Sexiest Supermodel" **Joanna Krupa**, **Harry Casey** of KC & the Sunshine Band, Latin music superstar **Willy Chirino**, WBO heavyweight champion **Shannon Briggs** and supermodel **Niki Taylor**.

The event will conclude with a fashion show and concert featuring live performances by legendary artists, including Bob Seger's "Silver Bullet Saxman" **Alto Reed**, Eric Clapton's guitarist **George Terry** and **Tico Torres** of Bon Jovi. Event producer is Miami Beach resident **Patxi Pastor**.



Irene Marie, the “Grand Dame of Modeling,” Celebrates 25 Beautiful Years Alongside Socialites, Supermodels and Rock Stars at LIV™ Miami Beach.

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. – December 16, 2008 – More than 1,000 members of the fashion industry elite gathered on Saturday to celebrate **Irene Marie Models’** unprecedented **25th Anniversary** in Miami Beach. The exclusive VIP gala was part of the launch of the new state-of-the-art venue *LIV Nightlife at Fontainebleau Miami Beach*. Guests including Latin music sensations **Willy Chirino** and wife **Lisette Alvarez**, **Harry Wayne Casey** of KC & The Sunshine Band, popstar **Jesse McCartney**, baseball superstar **Alex Rodriguez**, Telemundo network president **Don Browne** and celebrity models **Vinci Alonso** and **Adam Senn**, were treated to an audio-visual spectacle, a unique fashion retrospect, and an All-Star Rock & Roll performance.

Irene Marie, accompanied by her husband Patrick Marie and their five children, was greeted on the red carpet by Miami Beach City Commissioner, Jerry Libbin. Commissioner Libbin presented Irene with an official proclamation and announced December 13th, 2008 as *Irene Marie Models Day* in the City of Miami Beach. Following her gracious acceptance of the proclamation, Irene and her guests were ushered inside where they were met with a multimedia presentation featuring giant images of Irene Marie Models past and present including Kimora Lee, David Fumero, Amber Smith, Beverly Peele and Marcus Schenkenberg.

Cindy Taylor, *The World’s Sexiest Host*, kicked off the night with a warm welcome to her fellow models, agency staff, and local and national fashion clients. Following her greeting, Cindy introduced and was joined on stage by news reporter, author and **Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program (WOT)** president, **Jennifer Valoppi**. Jennifer publicly acknowledged Irene’s contribution to the WOT and presented the founding mentor with a special congratulatory award.

After an hour cocktail soiree, *E!* personality **Michael Yo**, introduced the first of its kind Miami Fashion Retrospect. The vintage chic spectacle was produced by top stylist **Danny Santiago**, with hair styling provided by **Vidal Sassoon** and makeup by **Sephora**. The procession of forty Irene Marie Models dressed in vintage attire provided by **C. Madeleine’s** concluded with Irene’s first supermodel, **Niki Taylor**. Immediately following the show, Irene Marie appeared on the stage to thank her guests and to present her husband and children to the audience. The Marie family was dressed in complimentary silver outfits by local designer Renato Armijo of **Ever After Miami**.

The evening, which was produced by Miami Beach resident **Patxi Pastor**, concluded with an All-Star Rock & Roll performance featuring **Christina Christian** of American Idol, Bob Seger’s Silver Bullet Saxman **Alto Reed** and legendary guitarist **George Terry**.

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