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Making a name for herself as part of two music supergroups (Danity Kane and Diddy-Dirty Money), singer Dawn Richard is ready to take her place in the spotlight as a successful solo artist with the release of her CD *Goldenheart*. Dawn sat down with Associate Editor Carrie Williams to give us the scoop on her latest music, best beauty moves and, of course, her mane updates (two of her fave ways to wear upsweeps are featured exclusively here!) . . .

MODERN 'HAWK

"Dawn and I were going for a unique shape with a funky edge, as opposed to a traditional Mohawk style," reveals star hairstylist Yancey Edwards about this fashion-forward updo.

DAWN RICHARD a preview of her new look—right here! *Portraits by John Ricard*

DAWN'S STYLE SECRETS!

SBH invites you behind the scenes on Dawn's photo shoot where Yancey Edwards, owner of Shear Insanity in East Orange, NJ, crafted the singer's fierce updos! Keep reading for the hot style scoop...



THE MODERN 'HAWK'

"I wrapped synthetic hair extensions around two buns to create triangular shapes," details Edwards about this fierce look.

THE HAUTE HIGH-TOP

"I swept Dawn's hair up into a bun and bonded two packs of Jheri curl human hair extensions to her hair at the crown," shares Edwards. "Once all the extensions were in place, I backcombed the hair into an Afro, cut it with shears and used Wahl clippers to get the shape I wanted."

Being in the spotlight, how important is to have a great hairstyle?

Hair has a visual effect on my music. For example, the musical style of my CD *Goldenheart* is a very "modern day Joan of Arc" aggressive sound. So my hair is a lot stronger. One day I may wear a long braid and the next I'll have a high top full of curls, similar to a hairstyle Grace Jones once wore. I want people to see different "warrior" type hairstyles as beautiful, and that's a reflection of my music as well.

Do you believe all entertainers should have one signature hairstyle?

A lot of people in the industry think you come into the business looking one way and have to stay that way because people won't

understand you if you change your hair. But, I don't believe that. I like to do what I feel—I'm all over the place with my hair! I like to be edgy. The fun part about having hair is experimenting with different styles rather than wearing one look.

How do you wear your hair every day?

My every day hair has a lot to do with whatever I feel like doing for the day. I'm a big fan of getting up and letting my hair do whatever it feels like. The more tousled and natural it looks, the better. My hair is short on the sides and super long in the middle. I cut it this way because my hair was damaged from all the stress I put on it.

What are some of the ways you like to style your hair?

It varies. I can wear it all to one side and it looks like my hair is really short on one side. I can wear it all up in a ponytail so you see both sides are short. And I can go even further and style the long part of my hair into a beautiful Mohawk!

Is there a haircolor you haven't tried?

Yeah! I love the idea of a cotton candy ombre shade. I'd want my hair to go from pink to teal to blue—a range of pastel colors from light to dark. I think I could have it done where it looks beautiful and artistic, not so "costume-y."

How do you care for your hair?

My hair is thick and Natural, and Ojon products really work for me. I love them! I really like the leave-in conditioner—it's like a mask you leave in your hair for about 30 minutes. I use it every two weeks, and I often leave it in my hair overnight and wash it out the next morning.

What's the best hair advice you've ever received?

Moisturize your hair and trim it as much as you can. The longer you leave split ends, the worse it's going to be in the long run. I learned that the hard way! My hair used to be really long and I didn't care for it like I should have, so I had to cut a lot of it off. Learning to deep-condition and trim my ends regularly saved my hair!

Tell us about the vibe of your CD *Goldenheart*...

It has its own genre of music—I call it "heart" music because it's driven from a heartbeat. It's really progressive, almost like a tribal sound. I've taken the rhythm of old New Orleans music I grew up with and mixed it with native sounds of Africa I love and put it together to make this new sound for R&B. SBH

HAUTE HIGH-TOP

"Inspired by a flat top or high-top Fade from the '80s, I created a style that's retro but still wearable for an edgy star like Dawn," says celebrity hair guru Yancey Edwards.



HAIR: YANCEY EDWARDS/SHEAR INSANITY, EAST ORANGE, NJ; MAKEUP: DARYA LATHAM; FASHION STYLIST: KHALIAH CLARK; DESIGNER: MARCO HALL; PHOTOS: JOHN RICARD

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