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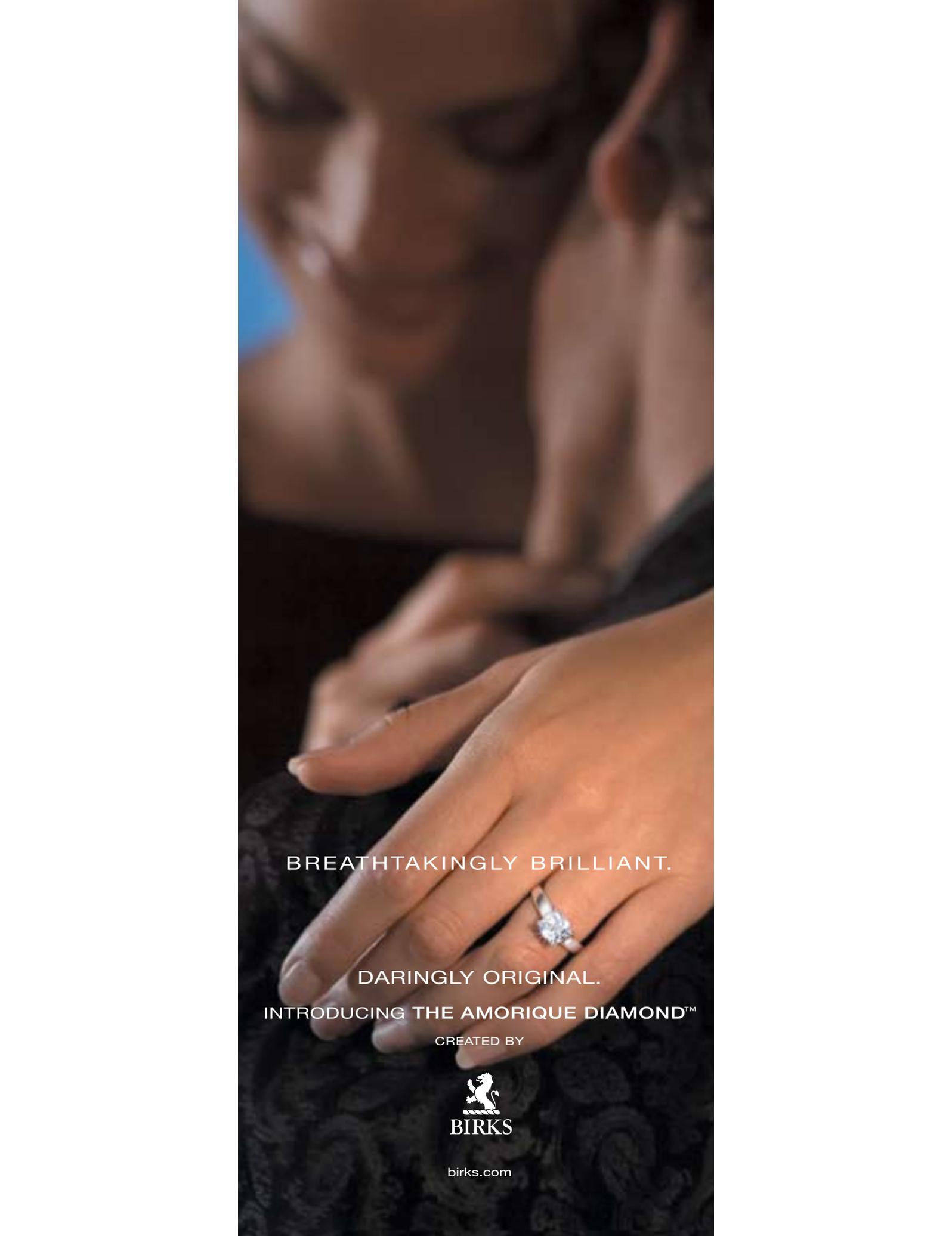


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Pronunciation: 'priv-lij'

Function: noun

Etymology: Middle English,
from Old French, from Latin
privilegium, a right or immunity
granted as a peculiar benefit,
advantage, or favor.

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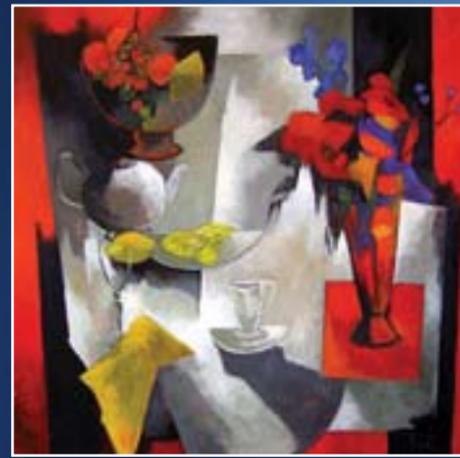


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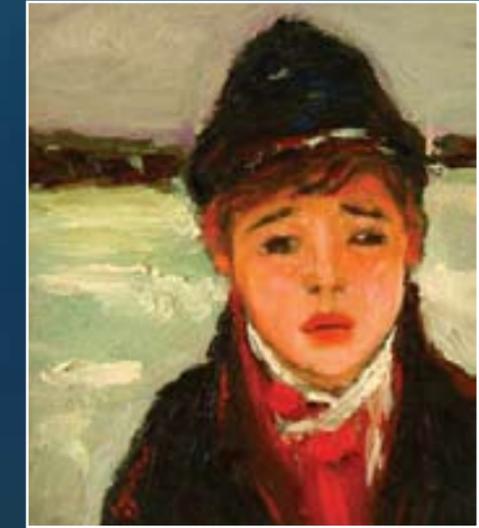
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Privilege Destinations™ with Attaché Service

National Retail Distribution "Coast to Coast", Elite Distribution

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Subscription requests can also be made online at www.privilegemgi.com

©Privilege Magazine™ 2006 is published 10 times per year nationally in the following cities:

Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Regina, Saskatoon, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver and Victoria.

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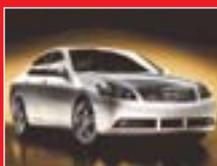
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It is 10:00am on Tuesday January 24, 2006. I am sitting in my comfortable balcony chair sipping on my iced coffee 31 stories above sea level in Dubai. I am watching an amazing collection of cranes moving back and forth, pouring freshly mixed cement in between carefully placed structures. Today is the first day after the Canadian federal election. I am thousands of miles away and part of me feels left out. I voted in the advance poll, but over the past 35 years I have always been there when democracy speaks.

It is wonderful to be part of a society that lives in harmony and in a totally democratic environment. Canadians have spoken in a typically cautious Canadian voice: the Liberals need a break to wash away the past few years; the NDP may act as the stabilizing mechanism; Quebec has also spoken loud and clear! Canadians have given a cautious go-ahead to a Conservative Prime Minister, signaling that Stephen Harper deserves a chance.

Even as I ponder how Paul Martin might be feeling the day after, I emphasize that PRIVILEGE Magazine will not take political sides. Not because every now and then we do not have the eagerness to scream as loudly on occasion as anyone else. It is because we are a lifestyle magazine and because in discussing politics you can never win. I know – I grew up in a political family!

As I continue sipping on my coffee, I realize I am witnessing not only the birth of one apartment complex, but also a new city, a new emirate, a new country. Call it what you will, it is a magnificent site, an extraordinary site, a fascinating site, an incredible site. It is Dubai! There is peace and tranquility amongst these cranes – a sense of calm, that life is much too important to waste on wars and fighting. Here more than 168 nations and religions have come together under one unwritten unanimous declaration of peace and with only one goal: Together we will build what no one could imagine; we will create a paradise that did not exist; we will compile together one of the most advanced and most beautiful cities on earth today, by taking the best of all regions and cultures, bringing these individuals under one roof, in the middle of the desert and providing them an environment to perform. And perform they have!

There is a definite lesson to be learned here – that the earth does not rotate around the United States of America, Canada, Britain, China or Russia. It rotates around the wants and the needs of the locals in places such



as Dubai. People have recognized sooner rather than later they need to diversify by opening doors, on their own terms, to the outside world in order to succeed in the coming years.

In our April issue we will launch the first of two "Privilege Magazine Reports on Dubai." We will let you know what is going on in that part of the world from the tourist point of view. Even with spectacular photography and words, we can only hope to come close to the amazement of being there and seeing first-hand what is happening. Just imagine that 30 percent of the world's cranes are located right in Dubai, working 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A city with a population of 50,000 ten years ago, more than 1,500,000 today, and expecting to grow to 5,000,000 by 2015, is just coming out of the sand.

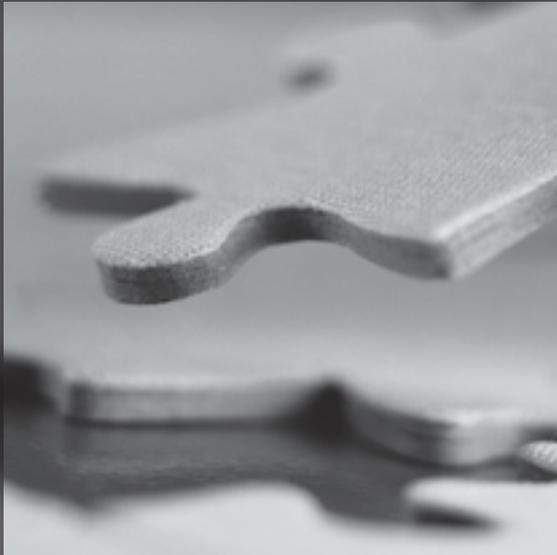
There are almost 10,000 Canadians who call Dubai home, many of them part of this emerging financial powerhouse by providing logistical and engineering expertise.

The year 2006 is a milestone for PRIVILEGE Magazine. As a monthly national publication we are now competing amongst the best and in order to compete you need to stand out. On August 10, 2006 we will host our 1st Annual PRIVILEGE Magazine Golf Tournament at the Toronto Board of Trade in support of charitable organizations. We are also sponsors of Santé, the Boor Yorkville Wine Festival, May 3 to 7, in Toronto's Bloor Street district. PRIVILEGE will also co-sponsor the Top 40 Under 40 CEO of the Year Awards, the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame gala and, together with Angus Yachts, we are assembling magnificent sailing cruises to the world-renowned Niagara-on-the-Lake wine region.

Whatever your political perspective, it's a small world and getting smaller. We just want to open a big window on it for you.

Thank you!

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On behalf of the entire staff of PRIVILEGE Magazine, I would like to say how proud I am of our accomplishments over the first year of publication. Your response to our vision of an opulent lifestyle magazine has been overwhelming and encouraging.

As editor, it is my responsibility to provide an array of accurate and thought-provoking articles by dynamic writers with topical and informative perspectives. Relying heavily on my musical training, I attempt to conduct all components of this composition as variations on a theme. I am also charting our course forward like a stealth bomber pilot, with a trajectory targeted at a clear vision as we propel towards the future.

For PRIVILEGE Magazine, 2006 is a time to celebrate yesterday's achievements and tomorrow's opportunities. It's a time to be grateful for the successes, challenges, supportive teams of family and friends, for good times and good fortune. Imagine – after only one short year of producing a quarterly Toronto-centric magazine, we are now publishing ten national issues, distributed in ten cities from Victoria to St. John's. As we look with anticipation toward hopes and dreams of the future, the first feature article in this issue profiles Canadian Space Tourism by Lisa Summers with special guidance by Captain Lyle Holbrook and Captain Terry Wong (page 34).

Long before becoming editor of PRIVILEGE, I recall this amazing excursion across Canada by Gregory Gallagher and Linda Hart. I remember getting descriptive emails that made me laugh until I cried. It is my great pleasure to be able to share with you their amazing trans-continental train journey (page 40).

With such offerings as skiing in the West (page 94) and across the country (page 98), Smart Phones (page 18), Quebec's Ice Hotel (page 84), Nova Scotian crystal by Anna Hobbs (page 57), Eating Around Corsica with



Barbara Kingstone and Jacqueline Swartz (page 66), The Relevant Investor by Beat Guldemann (page 50), Michael Cochrane's Wills and Powers of Attorney (page 46), Charles Grieco's Gastronomy section with the inaugural article, by Margaret Swaine, in our series on water (page 62), and Sheila Swerling-Puritt's Resurgence of Vodka (page 64) – this month's collection will appeal to many senses.

Topping off this already exemplary list are Automotive expert Mark Hacking, who introduces the spectacular Auto Showcase 2006 (page 75), Mark Belford's sparkling couture collection for spring 2006 (page 60), and the sensational Canadian design team of Yabu Pushelberg (page 54).

Those who know me are aware of one of my enduring passions and often hear my favorite mantra: "With privilege comes responsibility." Commencing this issue, we will be honoring those who emulate this concept. Andre Agassi has quietly raised more than 52 million dollars for underprivileged children and he is the first of many whom we will recognize for their greatness of spirit and humanity (page 52). Al Gilbert's portrait of the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, distinguished humanitarian, recipient of the Order of Canada and hero to many, is a must-see on the inside back cover.

So as we venture towards the future, sit back with your favorite libation and embark on a journey with us as we endeavor to reach new heights with a vast selection of life's finest experiences.

Beth McBlain
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IN MEMORIAM: CHEF PASQUALE CARPINO



On Friday, December 30th, 2005 Pasquale Carpino, better known to his friends and fans as the Singing Chef, Pasquale passed away peacefully at St. Michael's hospital.

As Executive Producer of more than 130 of his television shows, I have had the pleasure of working closely with Pasquale for more than 20 years. During this time I knew him not only as the Singing Chef Pasquale, but as a true friend. When I injured my leg this summer, Pasquale would from time to time call simply to sing an operatic song, knowing that it would raise my spirits.

Pasquale was also a dear friend to children of all ages and often fulfilled wishes for Starlight Children's Foundation (we'll always remember Ryan's wish). He was a proud supporter of the Canadian Centre for Abuse Awareness and was a regular at Johnny Lombardi's CHIN picnic, taking great pride in celebrating his Canadian/Italian heritage. He leaves behind a loving wife, Evelynna, and his two daughters, or, as he would say, his two princesses, Beatrice and Lisa.

Always a friend. God bless and peace be with you my friend, Chef Pasquale Carpino.



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Smart Phones – Clearly Still Evolving

The latest generation of smart phones combine cellphone, email and Internet, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) functions that synchronize data with your computer, multi-media players, cameras/video capabilities and mobile versions of Microsoft



The Palm Treo 650

Considered by many to be the best-of-breed and uses the proven Palm operating system, with lots of third-party software available.

The form factor is an excellent compromise of size vs. functionality with a bright screen and “qwerty” keyboard that is easily legible, and a handy 5-way directional controller. Standard Secure Digital (SD) cards provide added storage for songs, documents and photos. Excellent battery life.

Network connection is Edge enabled, significantly faster than dial-up, but not true high-speed. Bell plans an Evolution Data Optimized (EVDO) version in the not-too-distant-future, providing high-speed connectivity similar to cable/DSL. Surprise! You can also expect a Windows Mobile version as well.

Office software. Bluetooth and Infrared (IR) connectivity are also standard fare. They all work well enough, once you get the software sorted out, but expect to need some help from technical support.

No single device does it all with aplomb, and you’ll want to identify the features most important to you. If you travel, make sure the phone is multi-band and will work overseas.

Here’s a rundown of some of the best contenders.



QWERTY KEYBOARDS - A SHORT HISTORY

Pronounced KWER-tee, this refers to the standard arrangement of keys on a keyboard. The name derives from the first six alphabetic keys, which literally spell QWERTY. The layout was conceived in 1868 by Christopher Sholes, the inventor of the typewriter.

It is commonly believed that this strange arrangement was designed to prevent jamming of the typewriter keys, by physically separating the most commonly used letter combinations from each other.

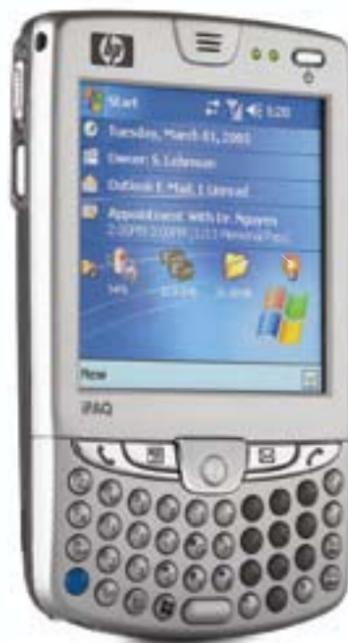
More advanced keyboards that allow for easier and quicker typing speeds have been put forward unsuccessfully over the years, most notably the Dvorak keyboard designed in the 1930s. While there is no rationale to maintain the qwerty arrangement on today’s electronic keyboards, tradition stands pat.

Minor quibbles: I’d like to see a “back button” added to the software navigation options.

iPAQ 6515

Although tech community reviews have been mixed, I grew to like this pocket PC. True, the blue-backlit “qwerty” keyboard is hard to read. The battery runs down rather quickly, and the pointer can be a little “hinky.” But it had many redeeming features.

Superior storage capabilities include both a full-sized and Mini SD slot. Absolutely amazing is the optional GPS navigation software package that provides audible address-to-address, turn-by-turn directions. Note: the speakerphone is hard to hear, and it drains the battery quickly. If you want this feature, the iPAQ is the only game in town. Best solitaire game in the bunch. Worst camera.



UTStarcom 6700

This is the latest entry from UTStarcom (previously Audiovox). It’s a cellphone-sized brick that won’t win any style awards. But it is very cool in its own ugly duckling way. It uses the latest Windows Mobile 5.0 operating system, complete with software glitches. Expect to need some help.

Unopened, you have a mobile device with a very large screen, half-a-dozen program buttons and a pointing device. A large “qwerty” keyboard slides out sideways, and automatically changes the screen orientation to landscape mode. Open, it offers the most real estate of any device. This is the first EVDO smart phone on the market.



The high-speed connection, large keyboard and screen make for a class-leading Internet and office software experience.

It comes with a single Mini SD slot. According to Adel Bazerghi, VP of Wireless Technology Development at Bell Canada, Bell expects the industry to standardize on the Mini SD or even smaller T-Flash cards, as the form factors continue to get smaller.

One excellent feature is the ability to act as a wireless modem for your laptop on the road.

Blackberry 7300r

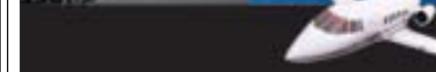
If you are a power email user, or a current Blackberry user, this is the phone for you. A much improved form factor that is comfortable to hold and still maintains a full “qwerty” keyboard. I didn’t care for the menu system, which relies on icons that are obtuse, combined with barely legible text descriptions at the bottom of the screen. No removable data card. No stylus. No camera. No media player. This is a no-nonsense power tool for power users. The combination of scroll wheel and buttons allows you to navigate the various programs. These are not intuitive, and require some practice to get used to. Long battery life is a plus.

- Mel NOODELMAN



SUPPORT CONSIDERATIONS:

A single source for hardware and software (Palm, Blackberry) makes technical support easier than the Pocket PCs, where you may have to deal with separate carriers, hardware manufacturers and Microsoft. Microsoft technical support requires additional payment.



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Aircraft companies such as PartnerJet, Exeaire, Flight Exec, Skyservice and Chartright can manage the purchase. Available support includes pilots, maintenance and ground service. Such firms can also provide third-party charters to reduce the costs of aircraft ownership. Allowing the managing company to sell aircraft "down time" to companies requiring charter service promotes efficiency and economy for unused time on your aircraft, and that means money in your pocket.



Additional benefits can include supporting corporate community service programs through using business aircraft to service certain emergency services, special events and charities.

The bottom line can hit new heights with a private corporate airplane.

- Gary CAMPBELL, AME

Watch for our new Aviation column by Gary Campbell, AME commencing in the April issue of PRIVILEGE.

Puma puts the vrrrooom in casual shoes



One retailer is willing to put its first foot forward to offer design-conscious men's runners. Puma, the funky German-designed sneaker line, unveils its upscale GT series collection this spring at Harry Rosen stores across Canada.

GT, which stands for Grand Turismo, is a class of semi-luxury performance automobiles as well as the inspiration behind the line. The idea was to fuse classic-style street-wear with the detailing and performance attributes of a Formula-1 racing shoe. The GT series comes in 12 styles, some with logos and hand-picked fabrics, and all mirroring luxury-car interior colors such as braken brown, safari beige and off-white-silver.

"It's weekend sportswear. They're great with a cotton suit or soft jacket, a tennis shirt and a pair of jeans," said Jeff Farbstein, VP General Merchandise Manager of Harry Rosen Inc. "The brand has so much identity with an upscale customer."

Available April 1 from \$200 to \$250 at Harry Rosen stores across Canada. www.harryrosen.com

- Zack MEDICOFF

The power of TWO - designer Spring fragrance

Jean Paul Gaultier, that eccentric French fashion designer who's always turning heads for his zany clothes and colorful advertisements, has launched Gaultier2, a new cologne/perfume as the perfect Valentine's Day gift. Exclusive to Holt Renfrew, TWO easily breaks the gender barrier as it acts as a scent for men and women. It actually arrives in two, and clicks together with a back magnet to give the appearance of one beautifully designed amber bottle. The scent is not too masculine or feminine, and is perfectly balanced with notes of vanilla, amber and musk. It's a wonderful fragrance to share, because both man and woman can feel sensual and sexy. Now that's the power of two.

TWO is available at Holt Renfrew across Canada, February 1st, 2006 or visit www.holtrenfrew.com for locations and details. Eau de parfum 2x 40 ml - \$110; eau de parfum 1x 120 ml - \$122; eau de parfum 1x 40 ml - \$79; massage oil 100 ml - \$52.

- Zack MEDICOFF



Jeanne Lottie Unveils a Diamant Rosé

Just in time for the most romantic holiday, Valentine's Day, Canadian fashion brand Jeanne Lottie is ushering in the new pretty women's scent, Diamant Rosé, which Jeanne Lottie creator Jane Ip hopes will become the brand's top fragrance.

Romantic and feminine, French-made Diamant Rosé seeks to reflect the essence of the Jeanne Lottie brand. Diamant Rosé, or "pink diamond," borrows its name from a jewelry piece and the pink crystal angular bottle encrusted with a deep pink diamond band is inspired by a Jeanne Lottie bag. "That bottle is a Jeanne Lottie trademark," Gillian Young, vice president of sales and marketing at Jeanne Lottie told PRIVILEGE. Also new, the brand plans to introduce a Diamant Rosé-scented handbag cream to keep natural leather soft and supple.

Unlike most fragrances today, Diamant Rosé is packaged in a vintage-inspired crystal dabber bottle perfect for a vanity table. Adorned with pink crystals, each handcrafted bottle is destined to become a collector's piece.

The floral scent includes top notes of rose petals with tangerine, freesia and tuberose in the heart and sandalwood at the base.

The Diamant Rosé includes a perfume available in a vanity dresser bottle and purse-size bottle in fabulous pink purse packaging for \$85. A portion of all sales will go to the Pink Bedroom Fund for The Campbell Family Institute for Breast Cancer Research at Princess Margaret Hospital.

The Diamant Rosé perfume is available at selected fine retailers across Canada, including The Bay, and in the Jeanne Lottie boutique in Yorkville. Check out www.jeanelottie.com for a location near you.

- Julie GABRIEL

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Parmigiani: Turning time red

The unusually flamboyant style of the new Kalpa Grande watch sets an authoritative tone with its intense scarlet beauty.

The manufacturer Parmigiani Fleurier has tinged its latest Kalpa collection with a radiantly bold red dial. The original approach is consistent with the brand's consummate mastery of each movement part as well as the watch's exterior. The new chromatic nuances also emerge in such original and distinctive collections as the Kalpa "Blu Lavanda" or "lilas."

The specially created red of the dial exudes radiance and depth, enhanced by a sunburst satin-finish on a silvered galvanic base. The incandescent glow, based on contrasts, is accentuated by the engine-turned *grain d'orge entouré* pattern. A red translucent lacquer applied to the entire surface imparts its characteristic brilliance. The applied, rhodium-plated, mirror-finish numerals and hour-markers light up the dial in a unique way. The Parmigiani Fleurier delta-shaped rhodium-plated hands are luminescent.

This Kalpa Grande Rouge limited edition is driven by the self-winding movement Calibre PF331 and is entirely crafted in-house. The attractive steel case gives this remarkable watch a dynamic and sleek appearance.

Specially coordinated with the glossy red Hermès crocodile leather strap, the Kalpa Grande Rouge is also available with a satin-finish or polished metal bracelet.

Initially founded in 1975, the manufacturer represents an unparalleled center of competence backed by a complete and entirely independent industrial facility. Right from the start, the trust shown by the Sandoz Family Foundation has contributed to brand stability and independence.

From 1999 onwards, new acquisitions in the field of watch exteriors (case manufacturing), micro-mechanical engineering and precision profile-turning have regularly enriched the vast pool of watch making resources with a broad range of technical know-how. Parmigiani Fleurier's profound attachment to the development of the entire range of watch-making professions represents the key reason behind its participation in the Fleurier Quality Foundation certification. Founded in September 2004, this new set of aesthetic and technical criteria was designed to certify that finished watches offer an enhanced definition of Swiss top-quality watch-making.

Haute Horlogerie is a traditional and yet constantly evolving domain. Parmigiani Fleurier is one of Switzerland's rarest, most comprehensive and efficient manufacturers of Haute Horlogerie. This rich diversity of production contributes to enhancing a watch-making heritage established and recognized in the Val-de-Travers for several centuries.

Since 2005, after five years of research and development, the manufacturer fully masters production of highly strategic components that are vital to mechanical movements: the regulating organ composed of the balance and balance-spring, as well as the lever escapement.

Geared towards the future, Parmigiani Fleurier is expanding in step with new technological challenges representing major milestones along its creative path, and is determined to ensure excellence.

Parmigiani is an exclusive brand distributed by Grigoras Canada Inc. 1989 and is available exclusively at La Swiss. For more information, please visit www.laswiss.com

- Lizzy J. TYRRELL



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The Ice is Nice

Brrrrr! Trendy C Lounge on Wellington Street West, owned by the Liberty Entertainment Group, used to be cool. Now it's positively icy. The new Ice Lounge — a bar made entirely of ice — opened on November 22nd, auspiciously the coldest day of the year to that date.

Young women dressed as Russian-fantasy ice nymphs greeted guests. Out-fitted completely in white and silver, they sported faux white fur boots and hats and shiny silver mini-skirts. With a glass sheet of falling water and a Smirnoff stand



Photo courtesy of Ice Lounge

nearby, the ideas of wet, white, vodka and ice began to take shape.

Smirnoff, sponsors of the evening, featured three different kinds of clear liquor — green apple with a splash of guava juice, the original Smirnoff's with a squirt of fresh lemon, and the signature cocktail of the Lounge — strawberry vodka with Hpnotiq, the tropical fruit liqueur.

The main C Lounge room featured an on-site chef preparing delicious Thai boxes of stir-fry noodles with succulent chicken strips, onions, red peppers and crunchy bean sprouts, with just a hint of hot. Chopsticks flew into action. Trays of plentiful food circulated, brimming with fresh oysters, bacon-ensconced scallops, Peking duck crepes with Hoisin sauce, little crab claws and colorful sushi rolls.

When it comes time to visit the Ice Lounge — don't check your coat! In fact, you'll be required to wear another one on top of it. Before entering the house of ice, a surreal backwards coat-check provides you with a parka and a pair of gloves in order to avoid your sticking to, or damaging your own garments on, parts of the frozen sanctuary. Behind the curtains, there is ice. Everywhere. Ice benches, ice bar, a giant Smirnoff bottle, goblets sculpted of ice, even ice ornaments on the ice tables. No ice needed in the drinks though, because the drinks are in the ice. The convivial atmosphere combined with the body heat threatens to melt the walls. Everything but the guests, however, remains properly frozen.

Quebec City builds its famous ice Hotel every year. Now Toronto has its own little ice palace. And it's very, very n-ice.

- Janice KAYE

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style into a decidedly tranquil sanctuary. The penthouses are extravagant and many offer separate living room, dining area and bedroom, master bath with Jacuzzi, beverage bars, flat screen television, DVD/CD players and, of course, butlers. Verandas are perfect for a cool evening or barefoot breakfast. Anticipate inspired menus from master chefs such as Nobu

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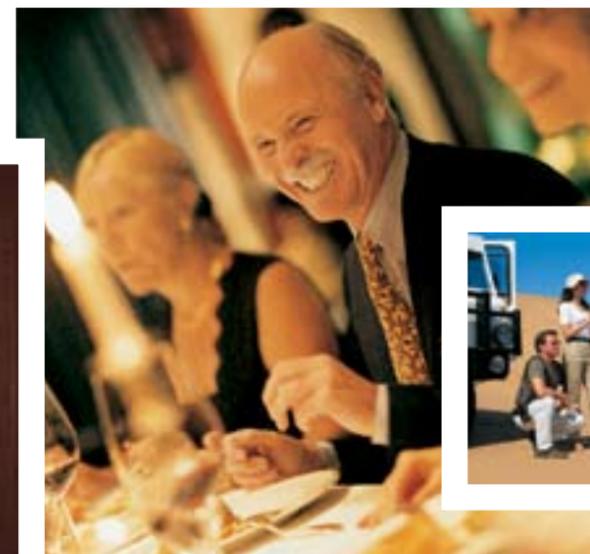
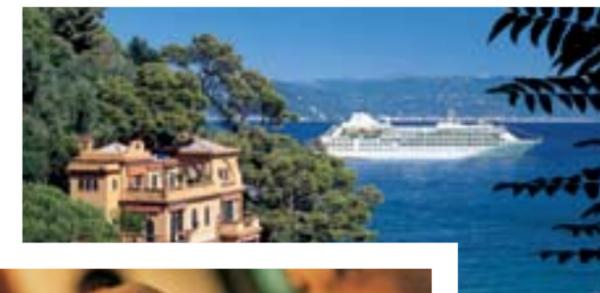
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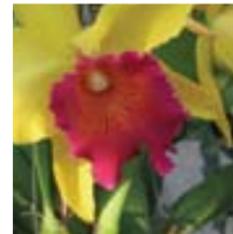
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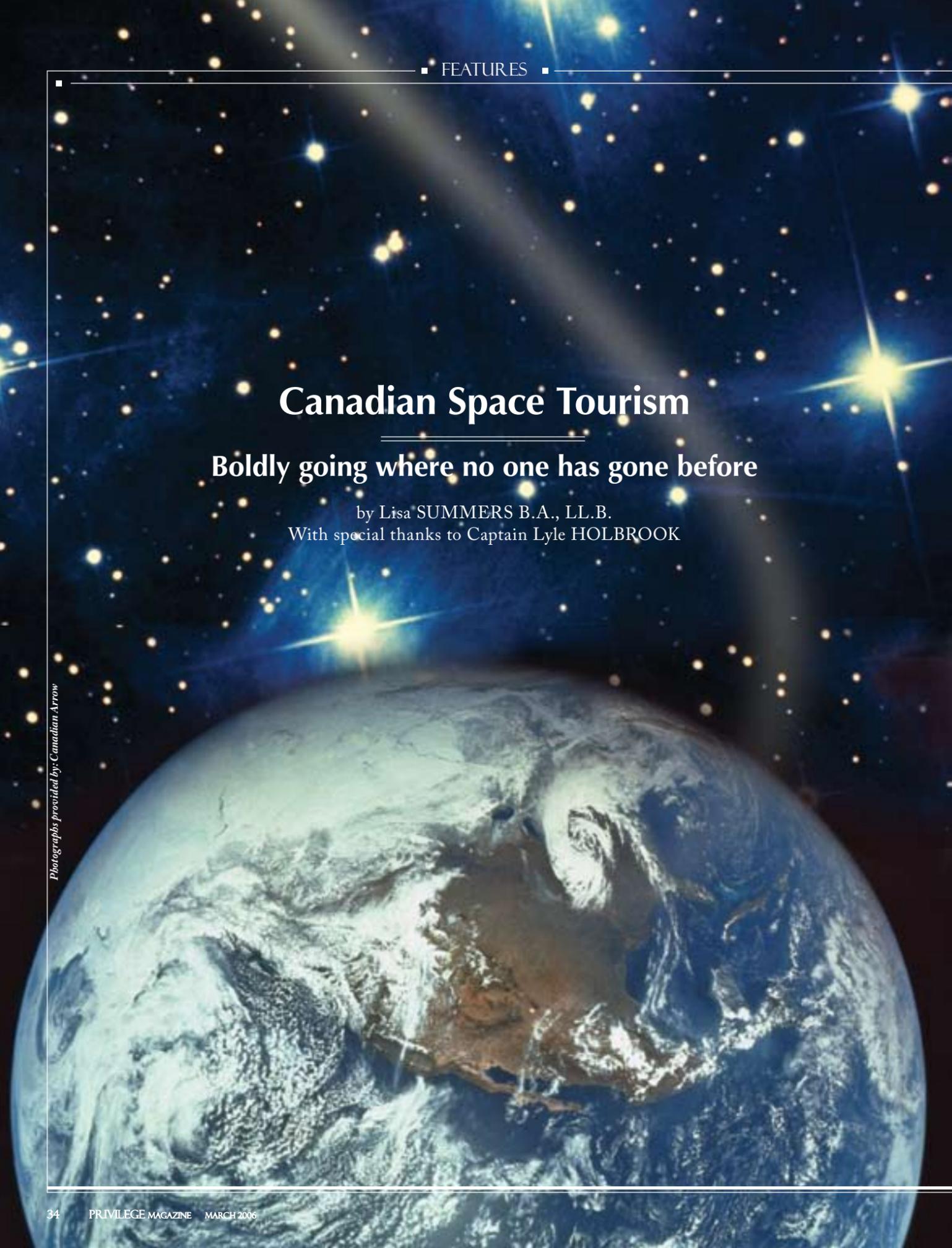
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Canadian Space Tourism

Boldly going where no one has gone before

by Lisa SUMMERS B.A., LL.B.
With special thanks to Captain Lyle HOLBROOK

Photographs provided by: Canadian Arrow



It has been called the final frontier and this year Canadians will experience a quantum leap in an industry previously controlled by national governments and reserved for an elite few. With the launch of Canadian Arrow's first flight, space will be transformed into a commodity of private business. And for the cost of a ticket, almost anyone can take part in the latest adventure to ignite the public's imagination — personal space travel.

The vision to personalize space led Geoff Sheerin to found Canadian Arrow, where he is President and CEO. Sheerin participated in the X-Prize Race, a contest with a prize for the first non-governmental organization to launch a reusable manned spacecraft into space and repeat the accomplishment within two weeks in the same vehicle. Modeled after early 20th-century aviation prizes, the US\$10-million award aimed to spur development of low-cost spaceflight. "I realized the X-Prize Race would allow me to get 'adventure capital' as opposed to venture capital...to build the company," said Sheerin.

In 1998, Sheerin began the hard work of developing a full-fledged space tourist company. In 2005, he joined forces with Dr. Chirinjeev Kathuria, creating Planet Space. Beginning with unmanned sub-orbital missions into inner-space and eventually bringing space tourism within grasp of anyone who can afford the US\$250,000 ticket price, Planet Space is positioning Canada at the forefront of a billion-dollar industry.

I recently had the opportunity to chat with Geoff, as well as Captain Terry Wong, one of the astronauts chosen to be part of Canadian Arrow. At times passionate, at times reflective, our conversation highlighted the importance of Canadian Arrow as a leader in the international space industry, a pioneer in the development of space tourism, and a new icon to watch on our national landscape.

PRIVILEGE: *Geoff, what are the goals of Canadian Arrow?*

Sheerin: The goals are the same as we had when we first started, which is to bring space down to a personal level.

PRIVILEGE: *Is this the first private initiative with respect to space travel in Canada?*

Sheerin: Actually, no...the satellite communications field was the first...Canada's technologies and capabilities for building satellites are known around the world... The first communications satellite was launched by Canada.

PRIVILEGE: *Does the name Canadian Arrow have any special significance?*

Sheerin: It sure does. Every Canadian is aware of the Avro Arrow. When it was cancelled, a lot of the aerodynamics and aerospace engineers went down to NASA and helped the NASA team redesign their first manned flights... especially their Gemini program, which helped them pave the way to the moon. So, we knew this history and hoped some of the team's spirit and talent would rub off on us... if we named the program after them.

PRIVILEGE: *Terry, what are the risks involved in space travel?*

Wong: There's always a risk involved with anything. There's a risk involved in driving a car...there's a risk involved in flying a helicopter; there's a risk in anything you do. It's not so much the risk you have to look at; it's the adventure aspect of it as well...I'd put the risk of going into sub-orbital space about the same as skydiving.

PRIVILEGE: *Is it true that once you get above 50,000 feet you can see the curvature of the earth?*

Wong: You can see the curvature of the earth. Getting up to the altitude we're going to, about 100km, you're going to see a definite clear view. You'll see the curvature of the earth and it will be quite a beautiful sight...that's what our passengers are going to see.

PRIVILEGE: *I've also heard that, at that height, the sky no longer appears blue, but black.*

Wong: That's absolutely true. You're in space. You get close to the same view that the shuttle astronauts get.



Larry C. Clark, Captain David Ballinger CD (ret'd), Jason Paul Dyer, Captain Wayne "Terry" Wong, Captain Marvin Edward "Ted" Gow, Dr. Yaroslav "Yarko" Pustovyi

*Our vision is to bring space
down to a personal level*

- Geoff Sheerin, CEO, Canadian Arrow

It's going to be one heck of a ride.

- Captain Terry Wong, Astronaut

PRIVILEGE: *What else do you see or experience?*

Wong: You'll experience weightlessness for a few moments, while we're up there. And after a few minutes where you're seeing space...we'll come back...for a waterborne re-entry... It's quite exciting. It's going to be one heck of a ride.

PRIVILEGE: *What is the purpose of your inaugural flight?*

Sheerin: To make sure everything we think is going to work does work.

PRIVILEGE: *When do you expect to launch?*

Sheerin: Right now, I don't have a date. The paperwork's really going to be the determining factor for the launch.

There's an old joke that your vehicle isn't ready to launch until your paperwork equals the weight of the vehicle.

PRIVILEGE: *Is it presumed to be in 2006?*

Sheerin: Absolutely.

PRIVILEGE: *And so the first flight up will not be manned?*

Sheerin: Absolutely not. It isn't necessary for that to happen. Actually, the second and third flights will not be manned either because we will be triggering the escape system for pilot and passenger safety.

PRIVILEGE: *Terry, how many crewmembers will go up on the first flight when you're ready?*

Wong: There are six astronauts and there are going to be two crewmembers on the inaugural flight. There's six of us so [Geoff] can choose three crews of two...

PRIVILEGE: *Geoff, since we have no Cape Kennedy or similar launch site here in Canada, where do you intend to launch from?*

Sheerin: Actually, we've talked to the military about borrowing their Meaford Range...on early tests and...we're in the process right now of working on an environmental study and doing the required paperwork to get launch permission from their range.

You may have heard of offshore drilling rigs down in Lake Erie, where they drill for gas. Exactly the same device is what we want to use out in the Georgian Bay area... That would allow us to launch very safely offshore and since we have a water recovery, it's all very safe for the astronauts and passengers.

PRIVILEGE: *Is the rocket propellant environmentally friendly?*

Sheerin: Absolutely. I'm glad you asked that question Lisa, because we're using ethyl alcohol. We could get

more performance out of our rocket if we put kerosene on board, but we like the propellant that we have. It's a little more expensive, you get a little less performance, but

ethyl alcohol comes from corn and, if you accidentally dump it into the water, it is water-soluble so it quickly evaporates.

The rest of the hardware onboard Canadian Arrow is no more harmful than the inner interior you'll find in any boat or ship that's out there. So there are no other liquid propellants that could damage the water content or anything else...we actually have a very green vehicle compared to a lot of others.

PRIVILEGE: *Are you receiving any funding for your project?*

Sheerin: Dr. Kathuria, our new partner, is funding our processes right now. After that, we expect customer sales to fund the rest.

PRIVILEGE: *How much funding are you looking at?*

Sheerin: It's into the millions of dollars. I think our competition would be shocked at how inexpensive we are compared to some of the other vehicles. So we're going to keep that close to our chest.

PRIVILEGE: *Tens of millions?*

Sheerin: It would be under ten million dollars.

PRIVILEGE: *Are you receiving any government assistance or other funding?*

Sheerin: We have other investors Dr. Kathuria is our major one...Right now we're not pursuing any government funding.

PRIVILEGE: *Do you have any affiliation with the Canadian Space Agency?*

Sheerin: No, the Canadian Space Agency stayed away from any comments on the X-Prize Race other than about the race in general, but they decided not to comment publicly on individual groups or teams.

PRIVILEGE: *How many people does the spacecraft seat?*

Sheerin: Three people.

PRIVILEGE: *What would a useful load be? What kind of cargo will you take?*

Sheerin: The nose cone itself can take up



to 3,000 pounds. It's 65 inches in diameter and 22 feet long.

PRIVILEGE: *What kind of commercial ventures do you hope to carry out?*

Sheerin: Planet Space will carry out not just the suborbital tourist end, but we'll be looking for additional partners to do other various types of orbital missions, and definitely pursue other kinds of space science.

PRIVILEGE: *How long will a given flight last, when you have passengers?*

Wong: Approximately twenty minutes, to give you a ballpark figure. It's four times the speed of sound going up into space about two-to-three minutes, and about five minutes in space and then the waterborne recovery so, about twelve minutes coming back down. So it's a fairly short mission... but it will be quite the view.

PRIVILEGE: *How much will it cost?*

Sheerin: It is estimated at \$250,000 a ticket right now.

PRIVILEGE: *Do you see the cost coming down significantly in the future?*

Sheerin: Absolutely. That's why we're seeing companies trying to make a profit at this. That will bring the price down. For obvious reasons, as you make more and more flights, you begin to learn and understand your procedures more so you can streamline them.

PRIVILEGE: *How many spacecrafts do you have right now?*

Sheerin: We have the components to construct one. We'll have those together for the first flight. But in the near future we'd like to operate a fleet of five.

PRIVILEGE: *What kind of training will passengers need?*

Wong: We've actually created an entire astronaut-training program.

It's based on a two-week curriculum because people can only get so much time off work to come out and do something like this: An adventure of a lifetime!

It will be almost like a military training program...We'll be

sending the passengers materials to get themselves into shape before they even show up, a certain level of conditioning, and then we're going to take them through the rest. The training itself is training that I've been through, like the "dunker-trainer" where they put you in a dark cockpit... and we drop you in the water and it spins... you're completely disoriented, it starts to fill with water and you have to escape.

Another one will be in the centrifuge...just like in those James Bond movies...

PRIVILEGE: *Will the travel preclude the average person? What kind of shape will you have to be in to go up safely?*

Sheerin: If you're healthy enough to hold a certificate for a private pilot's license, you're in.

PRIVILEGE: *Are there any health risks?*

Sheerin: We've had a doctor on our program for a while who's been answering these kinds of questions... There's not a lot of data out there on what we'll call "the average person." It's

been a lot of fighter pilot and astronaut data...So really we had to go to the commercial aviation end to find out what tolerances could be expected and what could happen... all the usual hazards that could happen in general aviation apply. You will not be able to fly if [our doctor] looks at you the day before and says you're not flying.

PRIVILEGE: *Are there any special considerations for women?*

Wong: A male or female would...take exactly the same training.

Sheerin: Well, the question is, Lisa, why aren't we attracting women? ...Only three percent of our applicants to become astronauts were women... So there's a question... that we'd certainly like to be able to answer in the future.

PRIVILEGE: *Is there a moral issue at stake? Is it right to be spending millions of dollars on space exploration when, here in North America, we have humanitarian crises like Hurricane Katrina to deal with?*

Sheerin: Our government spends millions of dollars trying to get kids interested in science and technology, careers that are really expanding the human spirit...For very little money, here's Canadian Arrow producing [what] will quite frankly become a Canadian icon...kids will look and realize, boy, we can do this, this is exciting, and they will get interested, and personally excited about space again...

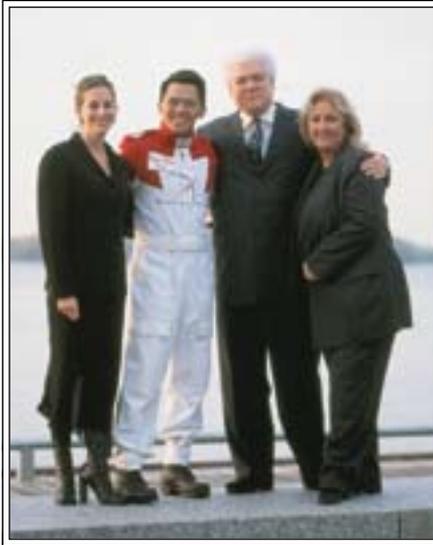
money goes into these communities and...helps build a future...

PRIVILEGE: *What potential do you see for space exploration and space tourism in the next 25 years?*

Sheerin: I think...the most important thing happening right now is that companies like Planet Space and Canadian Arrow are going to make space profitable. Some people may think "profit" is a dirty word but any organization needs to make sure that it's profitable, and by doing that you generate wealth for your community, for individuals, and for any stakeholders involved in that. And that's not been done before in space. In actual fact, the technology is...easier than building the business.

PRIVILEGE: *What does this mean for Canada economically?*

Sheerin: ...It puts us front and center in space travel. I think it's critically important. We're very lucky to have the people in our nation who can actually make this happen.



From left to right: Lisa A. Summers, Captain Terry Wong, Tom A. Vachliotis, Publisher & CEO and Beth McClain, Editor-in-Chief. Photography provided by Rudy Von Tiedemann

Sheerin's vision of a future where space tourism is brought within reach of the average person is poised to become reality with the launch of Canadian Arrow's first unmanned flight this year. As the adventure unfolds, all of us will have a chance to shape this new reality — by encouraging young people, especially women, to enter the field of aviation, by supporting initiatives to advance research and streamline costs, and by embracing a new era of travel unlimited by terrestrial borders.

Gene Roddenberry's world of space exploration is no longer just for *Star Trek* enthusiasts and rocket scientists. By opening the frontier of personal space tourism,

Canadian Arrow has also opened a new realm of possibility for this generation and for generations to come. For centuries, men and women have gazed at the night sky and dreamed of a future where they could visit the stars. The future is finally here. P



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All Aboard!

Canada's Transcontinental Train

by Gregory B. GALLAGHER

Train travel lives! Passengers who come and go from Montreal's elegant Gare Centrale, the station hub, partake in a time-honored tradition. Gregory Gallagher joins the many voices who have spoken the history of the rails, with his personal account of an epic cross-country journey.

The poetry of a transcontinental train adventure begins for my lady Linda and me upon arrival at Montreal's Central Station. As if on cue, a capped employee opens our taxi door, then heads quickly for the trunk to wrestle with the luggage, while shouting directions to other cabbies vying for access to unload their patrons. The billowing steam of the sub-zero temperature creates a perfect backdrop to the zany idea of a mammoth train escapade in January.

The larger-than-life fervor continues to evolve as we enter the Grand Hall, where thousands of early morning commuters and long-haul travelers weave in and out of each other's paths. Linda and I are happy to be leaving the coldest weather Québec has seen in thirty years, never imagining the cold would get worse as we headed West!

Although VIA Rail's Corridor Service between Québec City and Windsor is the busiest route in their national coverage, it is still surprising to see so many folks on a winter Monday train to Toronto, our first stop on the three-day trek to Vancouver. We choose to bed down at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel, because it is conveniently located directly across from Union Station, featuring bellman service from inside the train to our hotel room and then directly back to our sleeper compartment the next morning. That decision provided us with an inside look at one of the "Grand Dame" hotels and a wonderful taste of gourmet cuisine at the Epic dining room.

The next morning, we board the Silver & Blue Canadian and are pleased that we are using the rule of thumb, "Less is more." We chose the type of suitcases that

fit into those tiny metal forms at most airports, ultimately measured for the overhead compartments. This philosophy proves to be a huge boon onboard, since larger suitcases belong to a separate baggage car, making access extremely inconvenient.

Since this caliber of train is not the Orient Express, dressing up in a swanky outfit for each meal is not de rigueur. Some gentlemen do wear blazers at dinner and some ladies do flash more than costume jewelry, but they are the exceptions these days. Sad to say, blue jeans and running shoes have become a kind of style epidemic. The upside to this demise of individual flare is that packing becomes much less bulky. Train travelers should take only clothes they absolutely need, and all garments must do double and triple duty.

Traveling due north out of frigid Hogtown, we spend most of the first day luxuriating in the fare served in the first-class dining car. From Pacific salmon, lake trout and Arctic char

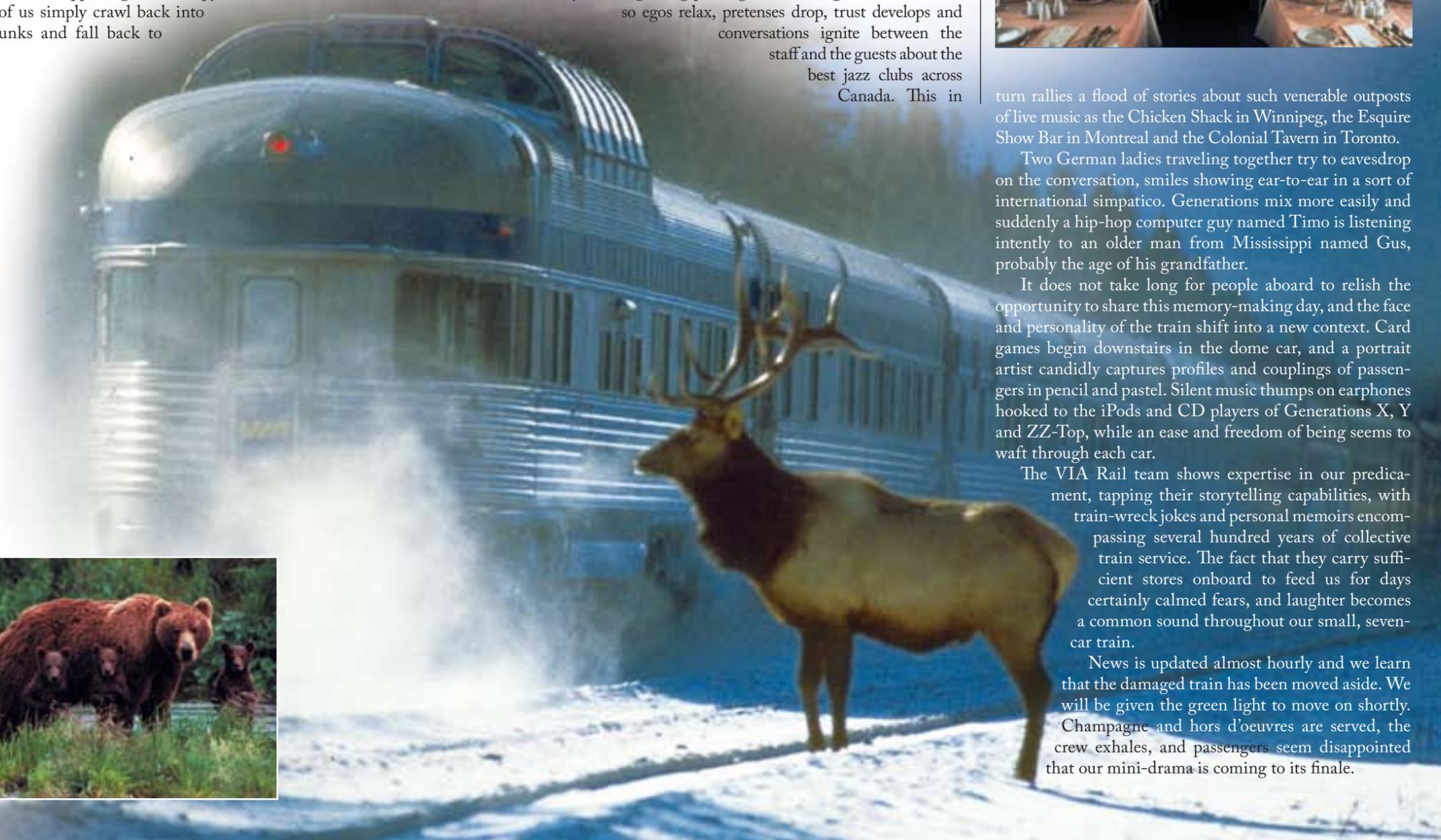
to filet mignon, bison, curried lamb and prime rib, the chef's culinary repertoire would eventually encompass a surprisingly dynamic range of main dishes, as well as inventive soups and desserts to make any upscale eatery proud.

Trouble on the Track

We eventually reach the northern hinterlands between Armstrong and Sioux Lookout and then, as passengers sleep, all hell breaks loose. The train comes to a stop and, as people peek out into the wild surroundings, no one is quite sure what is happening. Too sleepy to bother, most of us simply crawl back into our bunks and fall back to sleep.

It is minus 58 degrees Celsius as we enter the breakfast car to discover there has been a freight train derailment on the tracks ahead. Brilliant sunshine streams through the bank of large windows and floods the dining car, as the engineer and the kitchen staff attempt to work without heat, covered with blankets. The bathrooms freeze solid in most of the cars and murmurs of concern begin amongst the bewildered passengers. The veteran staff members seem unfazed by the dangerous turn, managing to serve a hot, delicious breakfast to the 48 first-class passengers who begin bonding under the adventurous circumstances.

Protocol and the laws of the rail in these situations are very clear regarding passengers remaining aboard the train, so egos relax, pretenses drop, trust develops and conversations ignite between the staff and the guests about the best jazz clubs across Canada. This in



turn rallies a flood of stories about such venerable outposts of live music as the Chicken Shack in Winnipeg, the Esquire Show Bar in Montreal and the Colonial Tavern in Toronto.

Two German ladies traveling together try to eavesdrop on the conversation, smiles showing ear-to-ear in a sort of international simpatico. Generations mix more easily and suddenly a hip-hop computer guy named Timo is listening intently to an older man from Mississippi named Gus, probably the age of his grandfather.

It does not take long for people aboard to relish the opportunity to share this memory-making day, and the face and personality of the train shift into a new context. Card games begin downstairs in the dome car, and a portrait artist candidly captures profiles and couplings of passengers in pencil and pastel. Silent music thumps on earphones hooked to the iPods and CD players of Generations X, Y and ZZ-Top, while an ease and freedom of being seems to waft through each car.

The VIA Rail team shows expertise in our predicament, tapping their storytelling capabilities, with train-wreck jokes and personal memoirs encompassing several hundred years of collective train service. The fact that they carry sufficient stores onboard to feed us for days certainly calmed fears, and laughter becomes a common sound throughout our small, seven-car train.

News is updated almost hourly and we learn that the damaged train has been moved aside. We will be given the green light to move on shortly. Champagne and hors d'oeuvres are served, the crew exhales, and passengers seem disappointed that our mini-drama is coming to its finale.

Moving On

The train is now approximately six hours behind schedule as we pull into Winnipeg in the middle of the night. A new crew groggily replaces the exhausted Toronto team, while most travelers snooze or peek out their doors to see who is boarding. Cars are added, fresh potable water taken on, new supplies stacked, engineers trade places and we are off again — bound for the wide-open spaces of Saskatchewan, the horse country of Alberta and the mountainous eloquence of the Rockies.

One of the most unusual experiences of such a voyage is the daily lottery of who sits with whom at mealtimes. Invariably, you find yourself seated face-to-face with people you might never choose to sit with for one reason or another. The usual impeccable biases come into play: too old, too young, too grouchy-looking, too haughty, too rich, too poor — all of these judgment calls are made based solely upon appearance. The train setting removes the luxury of such discriminatory calls, and everyone is the richer for it. We find a constant set of surprises unfolding about the lives, families, and histories of our travel-mates.

To experience the rhythms of one's own land through the enthralled perception of first-timers is to be reminded of Canada's remarkable wealth of cultures. As we listen to the narrative of Australian teenagers and their parents, who have never seen snow, we bask not only in the camaraderie, but also in their wide-eyed wonder at Canada's beauty.

We also get to know a man from Texas who has taken this transcontinental trip 31 times and never tires of it because each train has a different crowd, a new set of variables. He knows the mile-markers as well as the staff and spouts a steady stream of memories from his bank of journeys. We share moments with him in the front of the observation car late in the evening, with the lights of the train playing tricks on the snow ahead of us. He is able to tell us what we will see around certain corners, at the end of long stretches of track. It boggles our minds to consider how well he knows the lay of our land.

Heading Home

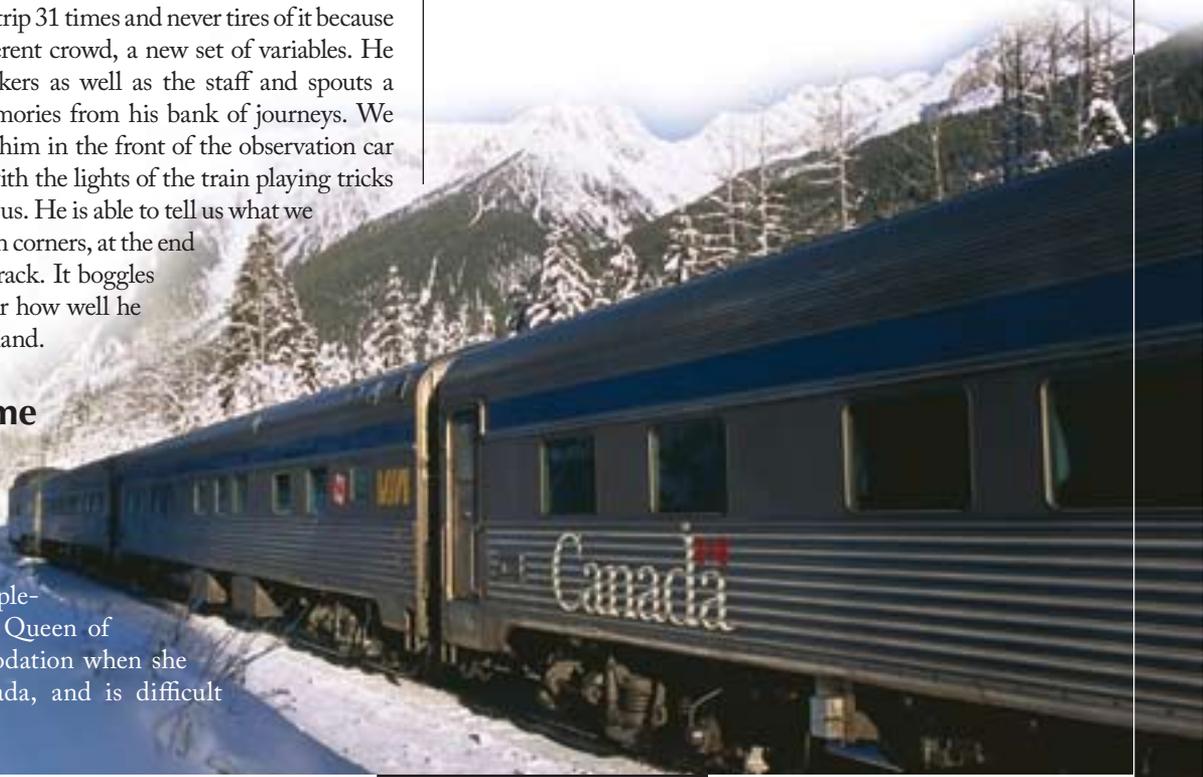
The return East is quite different for us because we are able to book what is called a triple-sleeper. This is the Queen of England's accommodation when she travels across Canada, and is difficult

to reserve, since there are only one or two per train. The sleeper is significantly larger than the standard double room, with twice the floor space, wider windows, and no bunk beds! It is also the most comfortable room on the train for larger people or the physically challenged.

Now the stopping and starting in what looks like the middle of nowhere is the only reminder of the passengers who are picked up and dropped off in remote areas of this vast land. We are in awe that this kind of service is still provided. Perhaps the train watchman's tiny hut, with its golden glow from an oil lamp, makes us feel a little safer on these lonely tracks. We relax and luxuriate, happy to be a part of these longstanding traditions.

Pulling into Central Station in Montreal, we disembark with a mixture of relief and regret. We achieve our lifelong yearning to see our country aboard this mythical transcontinental train, and we come away from it with a richer impression of our fellow Canadians than we could ever have anticipated. Many hands write the poetry of these rails, and we proceed across the Grand Hall immediately to book a trip to Gaspé and Eastern Canada. The dream continues....all aboard! 

Gregory B. Gallagher is the author of Eyewitness Top Ten Travel Guide: Montreal and Quebec City, published by the Penguin Group International's imprint Dorling-Kindersley from London, England. He is also writing two new travel guides about Montreal and Quebec City to be launched worldwide on March 1, 2006.





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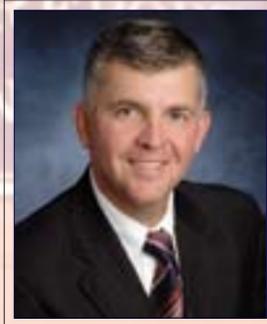
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Want Some Peace of Mind in 2006?

by Michael G. COCHRANE LL.B.

A few months ago, I heard an interesting story about a man who was an avid sailor. He put his boat into the lake one day and headed out for some peaceful moments of sailing. Several hours later the boat returned to shore, minus the sailor. His family and friends faced some awful questions. Had he fallen overboard? Was he dead? Was it an accident? Was it suicide? Hours went by, then weeks, then months and years.



Around the same time, a man in his seventies sat in an emergency waiting room while doctors attended to his very ill wife. She had become delirious as a result of a serious but undetected, infection. This time it was the doctors who had questions, questions about the kind of treatment and care that this man's wife would need. Within a few weeks the questions were from health care providers in an extended care facility about whether and how measures should be taken to resuscitate his wife in case of "emergencies."

If we were in such situations, we would probably wish that we had the clarity of mind to make good decisions, to know what to do and how to do it. We would turn to family and friends for support in making those tough decisions. Imagine the person at the center of the problem, the person who we would think is least able to help, actually being able to provide us with some of the solutions. It is possible — if Powers of Attorney and Wills have been made in advance. Those faced with a crisis could actually have some tools available to them to do the right thing.

In the case of the missing sailor, he had the foresight to prepare a Will and Powers of Attorney for Personal Care and Property long before his decision to go sailing. Even the elderly woman, now in extended care, had taken the time, during better days, to put her affairs in order with a Will and Powers of Attorney.

Powers of Attorney are meant to be pre-estate documents. They are intended to give specific authority to a person or persons to manage financial affairs or personal affairs while a person is still alive but incapable or unable to make the decisions them-

selves. Generally speaking, there are two kinds of Powers of Attorney. There is a Power of Attorney for Property, or financial decisions, which authorizes someone to make decisions concerning the financial situation, payment of bills, transfer of property, cashing of pension checks and so on. In the case of the missing sailor, the friend whom he had appointed as his Power of Attorney ran his company, paid his employees and looked after the family

financially for a number of years. He eventually sold the company for a profit. The Personal Care Power of Attorney, on the other hand, empowers someone to make decisions about your personal situation, such as where you will live, who will look after you, what you will eat, what kind of care you will receive and even who will be entitled to see you. In the case of the elderly woman, her husband was able not only to provide directions to the doctors in emergency, but was also able to obtain the best possible extended care help for his wife, right down to her ongoing nutrition and personal needs.

Many people assume incorrectly that a spouse or a family member will automatically be able to pay bills and take steps on behalf of a person who is suddenly incapable. They are in for a rude awakening when they are told by banks and other financial institutions that they do not allow spouses or family members simply to deal with property in the absence of a Power of Attorney or a Court Order. Even if a property was held jointly, for example the family home, it could not be sold unless a Power of Attorney authorized it or, after great expense, a Court Order had been obtained.

The Power of Attorney is valid only when a person is alive. Once a person dies, their Will takes over and provides how their assets and liabilities are to be dealt with. If there is no Will, then the rules of intestacy apply and, once again, the Courts and lawyers get involved at great expense.

Powers of Attorney for Personal Care and the so-called Living Wills are very similar. Some provinces in Canada recognize the validity of Living Wills and

some provinces, such as Ontario, allow an individual to set out in a Power of Attorney some considerations and wishes for their health care and medical intervention, in the event they are unable to speak for themselves. For example, if a person does not want to be kept alive by artificial means or they do not wish to be resuscitated through heroic medical measures, these wishes can be communicated in specific wording in a Living Will or a Power of Attorney for Personal Care.

This important authority to look after your personal care and property should obviously be given to someone in whom you have the utmost confidence. You may wish to select a friend who is particularly astute in business matters for the Power of Attorney for Property. A trusted and close friend may be the right person to have authority in a Power of Attorney for Personal Care. Who would you want to make decisions on your behalf — someone you personally selected or someone appointed by a Court?

There is no more affordable service provided by lawyers than the drafting of Wills and Powers of

Attorney. I think one of the most rewarding aspects of helping individuals and families with these matters is their reaction after the Powers of Attorney and Wills have been signed. They lean back in the chair, give a sigh of relief and say, "That was a lot easier than I thought it would be. It really gives me peace of mind."

As you go forward in 2006, you may discover that a great contribution to your own search for clarity may be achieved by giving yourself — and someday your family — that peace-of-mind feeling. ■

Michael Cochrane is a partner with Ricketts, Harris LLP in Toronto, Ontario and co-host of ROBTV's "Strictly Legal" Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. He is the author of several books, including "For Better or For Worse: The Canadian Guide to Marriage Contracts and Cohabitation Agreements" (published by John Wiley & Sons Canada Ltd.) This column will be a regular feature and Mr. Cochrane welcomes your comments or suggestions for future columns of interest to readers of PRIVILEGE. His e-mail address is mcochrane@privilegemgi.com

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Wine Cellars: The New Tasty Thing for Luxury Condominiums

By Lynn TRIBBLING



Party rooms, weight-training equipment, and lap pools have had their day. Now affluent purchasers of luxury high-rise condominiums have a new item on their wish list. The absolute necessity is a fully humidified, temperature-controlled, custom-fitted, 400 bottle capacity, wine vault to sequester the cherished '61 Petrus and the '82 Lafite.

I recently worked closely with a major Developer in the design and marketing of an ultra-lux waterfront condominium in Toronto. The project, The Waterford, won several design awards and sold well. Most of the suites were in the million-dollar range, and included, as a standard feature, a kitchen wine fridge, as well as an unfinished wine storage area in every suite for the purchaser to customize. Many of these purchasers spent tens of thousands of dollars and countless hours with consultants creating the perfect room for wine worship, replete with Latinate inscriptions on the walls and tasting altars to sacrificially decant a rare Richbourg. In one case, the tab for the resplendent temple of libation was over \$50,000.



In years gone by, other savvy developers have taken the priorities of wine enthusiasts to heart, offering collective wine storage in a remote basement location. But this is a travesty for a serious wine buff who is not satisfied with mere visiting rights to some impersonal facility, a mangy cantina, in the bowels of the condominium complex. The wine purist, myself included, never wants to be more than 30 seconds away from their precious liquid treasures. My own condominium wine cellar has a special door that locks from the inside in case of nuclear attack, so I can take refuge in my tiny sanctuary and drink myself to sublime stupefaction as the world comes to an end.



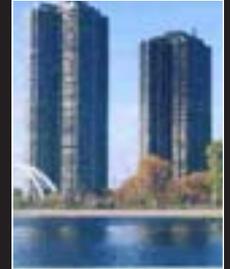
Wine cellars were pivotal in several of my high-end condominium sales in Grand Harbour, King's Landing and Palace Place. One vendor had combined two suites and converted the second kitchen into a spectacular ensuite wine cellar. Complete with custom walnut cabinets, grapevine motif, limestone

Tuscany-inspired \$30K Wine room



floor, special low lighting, constant 55-degree micro-climate, antique serving table and shelving for 500 bottles, it clinched the deal at \$1.3 million.

One of my current listings, a \$1.8-million downtown penthouse, at West Side Lofts, features a separate wine



apartment across the hall! It is incredible, feels like a medieval Tuscan villa — rustic stone floor, hand-painted murals of pastoral country vineyards, state-of-the-art Sub-Zero refrigeration, dark cherry built-ins, and the owner's name inscribed in burnished gold script above the door. Wow!

Wine appreciation has certainly grown, as more people attend tutored wine tastings, enroll in oenology courses, and set sail on wine-themed cruises. Witness the blockbuster success of the award-winning movie *Sideways*, a delightful little parable of redemption that explores the metaphor of "the heartbreak grape," pinot noir. People who share a passion for wines have an instant bond and an inexhaustible source of conversation. Their demeanor animates as they talk of a "fruity nose," "muscular viscosity," and "luscious legs." Wine, like real estate, is an excellent long-term investment. If you have a vintage bottle of Chateau Le Pin or Screaming Eagle in your cellar, you know it practically doubles in value every year. In the event that you have multiple bottles in your collection, call me immediately — I will consider matrimony!

If you live in a condo and are an aspiring wine connoisseur, but find the extravagant cellars cited above beyond your budget, you can start small. Buy a copy of Robert Parker's biblical Wine Buyer's Guide and a couple of bottles of Gray Fox Cabernet, (\$6.70) or Yellow Tail Shiraz, (\$14.95), both outrageously cheap and splendidly quaffable New World gems. Store them in your shoe rack, and be sure to write your name in gold above the closet door. You do not have to spend a fortune to experience poetry in a bottle. Someone said, "Wine is a little like love; you know when the right one comes along." Cheers!

Lynn Tribbling is an Award-Winning Sales Representative, Coldwell Banker Terrequity Realty. To contact her, visit www.lynntribbling.com or email: lynntribbling@gmail.com

Manners from the heart

Politeness all year long

by Shannon SMITH

There are those who save heartfelt greetings and gracious manners for just one or two days of the year. Some assume a kind of superficial veneer for special occasions, such as Valentine's Day. Artificial politeness is simply an attempt to make others believe we are something we are not, for just one day.

Isn't it refreshing when someone with manners crosses our path, especially now that crassness has practically become the norm? When true politeness is genuinely part of a person's character, the outer trappings reveal the internal reality. Manners do not necessarily come naturally. It's the response of the heart, of kindness, sincerity and truthfulness, for which no amount of surface polish can be substituted. Part of beautiful character is a heart filled with such honest intentions. We respond positively when an individual is attentive, kind, considerate and respectful toward us. The old saying, "You get what you give," rings true.

Good manners are developed through practice and a spirit of generosity. When we realize that manners are the outward expression of inward virtues, rather like the hands of a watch indicating that the machinery within is perfect and true, we'll then understand the power of applying the simple Golden Rule: do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Sometimes we meet and must do business with those who are devoid of these noble qualities. On the other hand, isn't it refreshing when we meet an individual whose personality is like the warm rays of the summer sun?



History is dotted with examples of individuals who possessed the power of an indefinable charm of style. Among the qualities which contribute to worldly success, true politeness ranks among the first. It is our attitude towards our fellow human beings, perhaps more than any other quality, that promotes or obstructs success in life and impacts business advancements. We value, court and seek the friendship of individuals with genuine character, while shunning those who are crude, rude and cold. Isn't someone with manners more appealing on every level, including the profes-

sional? Ralph Waldo Emerson said it best: "Manners make the fortune of the ambitious man."

More than one of the golden keys to the door of success, good manners represent the crowning jewel of a noble character. One great motivating power of our conduct is the heart. Manners shouldn't be like a rich, colorful cloak put on for a few days of the year but a constant companion fully integrated into one's personality.

Shannon Smith is Canada's leading image strategist and president of Toronto based Premiere Image International. She presents customized training programs to companies and individuals in personal branding across North America. Her book "Power Manners" is now available.

Please visit www.premiereimageintl.com. Contact Shannon Smith at shannons@privilegemgi.com

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The Relevant Investor

by Beat J. GULDIMANN, LL.D.

As a wealthy individual, it's a pitch that you may have heard too many times from too many financial institutions: Make your dreams a reality by handing the reins of your financial future over to us; only we have the unparalleled expertise and comprehensive financial solutions to meet your every need.

Sound familiar? Whether from a global financial powerhouse or a local institution, the promises made to prospective clients have a similar ring. They are created to appeal on several levels. Emotionally, you are assured of the comfort of relying on a partner who shares your dreams and values when it comes to deciding whom to trust with your finances. Technically, the firms pursuing your business boast the requisite leading edge products and sophisticated systems required to implement successful investment strategies.

With every recognizable name in the wealth industry extending similar offerings, you have the daunting task of selecting an organization to be your preferred partner on the journey to build, realize and protect your family wealth. The freedom to make such a choice is a privilege to some and a burden to others. Many look to accountants and lawyers or even school-tie peers and friends for assistance and wisdom. While some may find this a productive strategy, it bears the flaw of dependence on the financial acumen of your professional and social relationships – hardly a sure bet. At the end of the day, the fact remains that only you have the authority to make these critical choices regarding your wealth. Equally sobering, you bear prime responsibility for the ramifications of the financial choices you make.

To whom does a person of wealth turn? You may find the following thoughts useful to serve as a virtual dashboard as you carry out your responsibilities towards your



own goals and your family's financial independence:

First, you need to realize that large financial institutions exist to create profits from selling products and services, not to assist their clients philanthropically in making wise choices. Large Canadian and global financial institutions want to sell you financial products and services much more than they actually care about providing comprehensive solutions to your wealth needs. They get paid through commissions, fees, management charges and spreads, and consistently strive to optimize their profitability by maximizing

revenues and minimizing costs.

If they provide you with additional free services such as retirement or estate planning, they usually do so in order to create a more favorable environment in which to sell from their product shelf. In other words, theirs is a product focus first and foremost, irrespective of the stories they tell in their marketing brochures. In order to make the right choice, you need to be conscious of the conflicts of interest that may exist between your goals and the objectives of any large institution. One simple way to maintain your independence may be to spread your wealth among a number of firms that vary in size and scope.

In a previous PRIVILEGE article, I have pointed out that it is especially important for wealthy families to set objectives and long-term goals throughout all stages of wealth. Doing so significantly increases your chances of making the right decisions and successfully managing your wealth. The key is to determine

from the outset precisely what makes your financial resources relevant to your life, both to you as an individual and to your family. The changing numbers on your annual net worth statements remain largely meaningless as long as you leave the question of relevance unanswered. Criteria for

The key is to determine from the outset precisely what makes your financial resources relevant to your life – both as an individual and as a family.

relevance are individual to your personal and family circumstances and directly relate to the values and philosophies you choose to adopt as guiding principles to define your purpose.

In order to determine what issues are sufficiently important to drive your wealth management strategy, you are faced with a much more fundamental task than is the average person saving money to be able to make the next big-ticket purchase. Here are a few places to start the process of discovering the key drivers of your wealth and investment strategies:

- What are the main priorities defining your lifestyle? Are you more inclined to save disposable cash or to spend it? Do you know your spending patterns? Are you expanding your lifestyle by upgrading your home or secondary residence(s) or are you empty nesting? Do you plan to live only in Canada or spend more time in other jurisdictions?
- How would you define your key responsibilities? To the financial well being of your children and their (future) families? To your extended family or your community? To charitable causes?
- How important is it to you and your family to build a legacy within the scope of your family and/or your community or society as a whole?

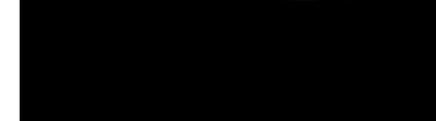


Your answers to the above questions and other issues that may come up in your situation are going to have significant short- and long-term impact on how you set your investment priorities, policies and strategies. Once you know your key wealth drivers, you will be able to determine whether or not cash flows are a real concern or cross-border taxation might become a serious issue. You will also know how much of your wealth you are willing to set aside to deal with your future responsibilities towards the next generation or to build a philanthropic legacy.

At the end of the day, the disciplined application of these fundamentals will have far greater bearing on your overall investment success than periodic adjustments to your asset mix or the products you select to implement your strategies. You may also find that knowing your relevance factors will give you the base to recognize the

caliber of alignment with your values that is demonstrated by the financial firms vying for your business. This will make it easier for you to choose whom you want to entrust as the custodian of your wealth. ■

Beat J. Guldumann is a Vice-Chairman at Toronto-based Hampton Securities Inc. and leads the firm's Global Private Client practice. He holds a doctorate degree in law from Basel University (Switzerland).



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Designing Canadians

A unique vision transcending borders

by Andrew LOPEZ

It truly is a privilege to sit down and interview the principals of interior design firm Yabu Pushelberg — two Canadians whose humility, passion, vision and timeless design have allowed them to transcend borders and become global design icons.

Creative director George Yabu and managing director Glenn Pushelberg, both graduates of Design at Toronto's Ryerson University, joined forces in 1980 to create Yabu Pushelberg (YP), a firm synonymous with design excellence in the hospitality and retail industries. Yabu Pushelberg has received awards from all over the world. The two men were inducted into the Interior Design Hall of Fame in 2002.

Yabu Pushelberg, with offices in Toronto and New York City, has designed the identity of some of the world's most luxurious and recognized brands. These include retailers Bergdorf Goodman and Tiffany's, hotels such as the Four Seasons, W and St. Regis, as well as such fine dining restaurants as Blue Fin (in the W Hotel Times Square in New York) and Shibuya (in the MGM Grand in Las Vegas).

According to YP senior director Chris Koroknay, one of YP's strengths lies in the ability of both Glenn and George to maintain a youthful exuberance and charm. "They allow the studio to play, to be fresh and to encour-

ter many layers of discovery in the design journey," he explained. "It is this ability to express combined with the willingness to be approachable and honest that captures the imagination of our clients."

For George Yabu, each design experience encompasses a sense of freedom, escapism and fantasy. "We evoke thought, feeling, emotion, delight and surprise in all our projects," he said. "Our purpose is to allow people to come alive in the spaces we design, by stimulating their senses. While many companies design only for the client, we understand that design is ultimately for the user. It is our way of giving something back." Both Yabu and Pushelberg refer to their staff as a family. "We look for creativity and a mutual sense of respect in those who comprise our team. We have an immense pride for our family," beamed Yabu.

Just before the holidays, the pace of the Toronto office reached frenetic proportions, as the team worked on 60 to 70 projects in different stages of development all over the world. Glenn and George seamlessly collaborated with their various team members. "Just trying to do a job," Pushelberg remarked casually, even as he remained on top of so many projects at the same time. For Glenn Pushelberg, "Design is the practice of possibilities, where architecture is rational and design is artistic. It is capturing the lyrical point of view. We must balance between the rational and the ethereal, evoking a mood or emotion, looking at a room or space from all its aspects. We strive to be evocative rather than provocative." His drive, he said, comes from the "curiosity to see how far you can go and discovering the possibilities created from it. Our family is comprised of people with the right attitude, willing not only to work with others, but also to be open enough to learn from them.



Left: W Hotel Times Square, NYC ;
Right: George Yabu and Glenn Pushelberg,
principals of Yabu Pushelberg



Blue Fin Restaurant
inside W Hotel
Times Square



From left: Graves 601 Hotel, Minneapolis; Shibuya Restaurant inside MGM Grand, Las Vegas; Lane Crawford, Hong Kong

We strive to create beautiful environments that outlast trends. There are so many aspects to consider — from the client, budgets, contractors and suppliers to developing and editing ideas and refining our craft — until it all comes together as our expression.”

Pushelberg noted the unique perspective and advantage of being based in Canada, a position that allows for the wonderful multi-cultural expression found in the YP family. “There is a huge talent pool in Canada,” he said, “with the ability to transcend borders due to the makeup

of our country, in that we don’t share a singular view but multiple perspectives truly reflecting the world we live in.”

I’ll leave the last word to the legendary Canadian Isadore Sharp Founder, Chairman, and CEO of Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts, the world’s largest operator of luxury hotels. When asked to comment on YP he said: “The team at Yabu Pushelberg have an unusual talent and a unique style that is both contemporary and timeless. They truly create interiors that will endure the test of time.”



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Crystal is a Many-Faceted Thing

by Anna HOBBS

ROM Crystal collection. Photo by Stephen Smith



Call it an accident at the beach. That's the best explanation that historians going back to Pliny, the sage of Rome in the first century A.D., have come up with to explain the invention of one of mankind's most durable substances. Glass.

According to Pliny, Phoenician traders, while heating up their evening meal, noticed a strange phenomenon when the nitrate rocks on which they placed their cooking pots melted and mixed with the sand from the beach.

A clear liquid formed — and later hardened. That led to many practical applications. Think windows.

Then in 1676 George Ravenscroft added lead oxide to normal silica glass. Et voilà — crystal, a far more brilliant, sparkling glass (contemporary full lead crystal contains 30 to 35 percent lead). It appealed to artists who found that its superior quality could be molded into everything from stemware to jewelry, souvenir baseballs to dramatic abstract sculptures.

Consider the achievements of Mark Raynes Roberts who trained in Britain as a silversmith and hand engraver before immigrating to Canada. It was his passion for crystal and its limitless design possibilities that led him to the creations that have earned him the reputation of the country's foremost crystal sculptor. His "canvas" is optical quality crystal with 45 percent lead content, the same

as in the Hubble telescope. With some pieces costing Roberts as much as \$10,000 before he even begins, this work requires, not only an artist's creative eye, but a steady hand. "It's an understatement to say you have to be incredibly disciplined and very focused," he says. In addi-



Waterford collection



Waterford collection

tion to commissioned pieces for private collectors, Raynes has designed crystal sculptures as gifts for royalty, heads of state, human rights leaders, sport superstars and corporate leaders. Today he works from a pristine studio/gallery in Creemore Ontario and has a crystal boutique in downtown Toronto.

Swarovski

Consider, too, the achievements of the Swarovski family, based in the Tyrolean town of Wattens. One of the world's great family businesses, it has managed over the past century to become the world's leading brand for cut crystal, producing jewelry stones, fashion items, home accessories and collectible animal figurines. Swarovski crystals dazzled in Queen Victoria's hair ornaments; they adorned Dorothy's ruby slippers in the original *Wizard of Oz*; they covered the gown Marilyn Monroe wore when she sang happy birthday to President Kennedy in 1962. And for the past two years, they've twinkled from the star atop the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree — all 25,000 of them.

In 1895, Daniel Swarovski created the firm after inventing a machine to cut crystal stones to resemble faceted diamonds. Today the fifth generation runs the company of 16,000 employees with world-wide distribution.

Waterford

Since 1783, when the brothers George and William Penrose founded a crystal manufacturing business in Waterford, Ireland, the name Waterford has been synonymous with the world's finest stemware. Today some 15,000 Canadians a year tour the factory and indulge in a little retail therapy shopping amidst the world's largest display of Waterford crystal. It's an opportunity to marvel at the amazing process as master craftsmen blow through hollow irons and to see molten amber-colored blobs morphing into exquisite, colorless pieces. Viewers learn that the ingredients are no longer a secret known only by the chemist, but a formula mixed by computers.

Nova Scotian Crystal

Nor are the delights of fine crystal restricted to Old Europe.

It may be the new kid on the block, but Nova Scotian Crystal is all about tradition, all about making exquisite, mouth-blown, hand-cut crystal the old fashioned way.

Ten years ago, this company was a glint in the eye of Irish-born Celtic folk singer turned investment dealer and entrepreneur Denis Ryan. He dreamed about preserving the heritage of a dying art in his adopted home. "People told me I was crazy," he said. "But today, that dream is a reality."



Swarovski collection

Ryan lured several master craftsmen from his native County Tipperary. They are now passing on their time-honored secrets to young Canadians.

Halifax's picturesque waterfront, with its 500,000 visitors a year, is the ideal location for tourists and locals alike to watch master craftsmen blow, cut and polish stemware and decorative accessories. From conception to creation to purchase, you get to experience the entire process and take it home with you.

You can order on line from www.novascotiancrystal.com or by calling 1.888.977.2797.

ROM Crystal

When it opens later this year, the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal will be the jewel in the crown of Renaissance ROM. From its base, eight metres below grade to its highest peak five stories above Bloor Street, the addition will be a series of enormous vertical spaces that will interact with light and atmospheric conditions, creating a myriad of hues and tones. The inspiration for the shape and name of the building came to architect Daniel Libeskind from the dynamic geometric forms he observed in the museum's collection of crystal minerals. The ROM's Katherine Dunnell explains that natural crystals, which will be part of The Crystal collection, vary from rare, perfectly transparent specimens to those that are entirely opaque.

Like crystals everywhere, they are both many-faceted and many-splendored.

Fascinating Facts

- ❖ Glassware for the table was first used extensively during the Roman Empire, but came into its heyday in the 18th century.
- ❖ By the 13th century, Venice was a major glass center
- ❖ Steuben Glass Works, founded in Corning, N.Y. in 1903, specialized in the Art Nouveau style.
- ❖ Lead, the defining element in true crystal, makes the glass not only heavier, but also softer and therefore easier to cut.
- ❖ Fine crystal should be washed by hand. Because it is soft, the action of water and dirt can scratch the surface, eventually ruining its luster.
- ❖ Once crystal has become dull and cloudy from the dishwasher, nothing will restore its luster.



“ It is an idea whose time has come, again. Historically, fireplaces were a central feature in the room, and people were drawn to them and the comfort they provided.

Today, most companies will install a fireplace and hand over the responsibility of the mantle to an outside source. They have become utilitarian and unimaginative.

At Fireworks, we believe a fireplace should reflect your personal flair, that it should be a key focal point in the room, rather than an appliance. We believe that the designing a fireplace is a creative design opportunity, to express visual ideas in a compelling manner. Whether creating a fireplace with water cascading down and around the fireplace, to unique treatments using different types of stone for our color palette. ”



Richard Nicholson

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The women beneath his wings

Fashion designer Mark Belford and his inspiration
by Andrew LOPEZ

Every successful artist or entrepreneur can name at least one person who served, knowingly or not, as a role model. Couturier Mark Belford is lucky. He has four. In the foreword to Edith Head's autobiography, *Edith Head's Hollywood*, published two years after her death in 1981, screen star Bette Davis wrote, "Edith Head was one of Hollywood's greatest designers. She was an amazing woman in a field that was dominated by men in the 1930s and 1940s. While other designers were busy starring their clothes in a film, Edith was making clothes to suit a character; for her, the character always came first."

The legendary Edith Head inspired a generation of designers and stands as one of the greatest influences on the work of Mark Belford, one of Canada's finest couture designers and dressmakers. Part of his gift is the ability to capture the essence of each woman he has dressed, a testament to the elegance and sophistication of his art.

To Belford, couture dressmaking goes beyond fabric and design. "It's art and it's family," he explained. Art, "because each dress is a fantasy that evokes the glamour found in a custom one-of-a-kind gown." It gives birth to the relationship between the client and the designer. "Every gown I've made has gained me a new friend, every dress has a story," he said. The relationship becomes a collaboration, examining the marriage between beautiful jewelry, fabric and the essence of the client. Belford loves the old-world flavor and elegance evoked when he sees exquisite diamonds. "It reminds me of the process where every masterpiece must go through its own evolution," he said. "In the case of diamonds, allowing time and pressure to turn simple rock into crystal-clear gems."

Perhaps no greater lover of diamonds has existed than Elizabeth Taylor. The screen legend always used her spectacular jewelry as the basis for pairing with gowns. Belford also takes inspiration from this aspect of "La Liz." In fact, his two movie-star influences—Elizabeth Taylor and Edith Head—came together in an unforgettable way in the 1951 film *A Place in the Sun*. Taylor was

Illustration by Mark Belford, photography by System 4/Valerie Wilcox, hair-makeup: Luisa Duran using Chanel, jewelry by Raynes Jewelry, model: Ana Zatoevic



brehtaking in a pure-white cocktail dress that set off her jet-black hair. And there are more beautiful women in Belford's life.

His art is imbued with family memories and energy. Two women with perhaps an even greater influence on his work are from his own life. "The two women who have influenced my whole life and stand as my pillars are my mother and grandmother, even now that they're gone," he explained. In 2003 Belford said: "Design is my passion and my career has been enriched by several generations of stylish, confident, beautiful women in my family who have nourished my creative spirit with their positive energy and appreciation of a graceful aesthetic." In proffered photos of Belford as a boy, holding the hands of his mother and grandmother, the warmth of spirit and exquisite elegance of the elder women nearly jump off the page.

It was in 2000, with the support and encouragement of his mother and grandmother, that Belford, then unknown in the fashion industry, sent four sketches to famed Hollywood fashion house Giorgio of Beverly Hills. They responded by contracting him to design four gowns showcased in their preliminary Oscar Gala selection and were purchased and worn on the red carpet at the Academy Awards® that same year.

The ever-important U.S. market opened like an oyster-shell to the talented Canadian designer. Just as he prepared to go to the United States, however, his mother was diagnosed with cancer. While many might have pursued the fame and recognition of Hollywood, Belford stayed home in Toronto to take care of his beloved mom. Shortly after she succumbed to the illness in 2002, Alzheimer disease struck his grandmother as well. Belford continued practicing his craft in Toronto, close to his grandma, who passed away in November.

In the last three years, many of the elite of Toronto's society have worn Mark Belford creations. As he continues to merge the elegance of diamonds with the finest fabrics, he captures time and again the essence of so many clients and newfound friends. The young year glows brilliantly for him, as he once again looks south to Hollywood, where the great Edith Head inspired him with her crafted creations for the stars. He is eager to meet those who will wear his wonders on the 2006 red carpet. Always believing that his most important influences, the women of his family, are watching over him from above, Mark Belford also feels they are proud of the man he has become, and that they know they will always be in his heart.

For more information, please visit www.markbelford.com. To reach Andrew Lopez, email andrewl@privilegemgi.com



The World of Gastronomy



J. Charles Grieco with chef Basilio Perce of "Canoe" restaurant

*... the reasoned comprehension
of all that concerns the
nourishment of man.*

Brillat-Savarin, *Physiology of Taste*, 1825

Libations – water or spirits — and dining adventures all have their place within the nourishment of man and our reasoned comprehension of the understanding of civilization.

Disparate as these may seem, they are parts of the complex fabric of life that differentiates humans from animals.

The history of vodka is long and circuitous, but there is no denying its place in today's world as told in the article that follows in this section.

Speaking of history, few characters loom as large as a certain diminutive figure from the past. His footprint is evident throughout Europe and his legend constantly reminds us of adventure, boldness, military exploits romantic love, splendid dining and imbibing. Read with interest the culinary experiences of two ladies who have dined under the shadow of Napoleon in the storied destination of Corsica.

A clear vision of one of the foundations of life — water — is one of our prime considerations this issue. We examine the phenomenon of turning Newfoundland icebergs into water. Over time these pages will further explore water, from the hand-pump of pioneer days to the modern kitchen tap. Households now frequently equip themselves with filters and reverse osmosis systems for drinking water, cooking and the making of the common ice cube.

So sit back with your flavored vodka, or that cool glass of water, designer or not, and dream of Napoleon's exploits and the food that his beloved Corsica makes available.

J. Charles Grieco
Gastronomy Editor
charlesg@privilegemgi.com

Purity Frozen in Time

by Margaret SWAINE

Off the coast of Newfoundland, some not-so-crazy Canucks are harvesting icebergs for the production of vodka, pure drinking water and now gin.

Why would anyone want a “chip off the old Rock” of these million- to 500-million-ton frozen floating mountains? It’s dangerous work. People have been killed by ‘bergs that suddenly roll over or drop chunks the size of a skyscraper. It’s worth the risk because the water is the purest on earth. Icebergs formed eons before the contamination of the environment. “We predate all the pollution,” said David Sacks, president of the Canadian Iceberg Vodka and Canadian Iceberg Water corporations. His companies date the ‘bergs to 12,000 years ago. Icebergs are purity itself frozen in time. Measured by parts per billion (ppb) or even parts per quadrillion, iceberg water has no PCBs, no pesticides, no herbicides, no dioxin, no furans — in other words nothing that can harm you. The iceberg harvest season is typically May to September. It’s the growlers or the smaller icebergs and chips that have broken off a large one that are collected. A skipper will shoot at an iceberg to create sound waves that will knock off any boat-crushing pieces just about to fall. The iceberg, however, is not dynamited as some have suggested. It breaks up naturally by the action of sun



and sea. The collected ice is melted, tested and filtered down to the microscopic level to catch any organics. “We’re filtering out even the common cold,” quipped Sacks. To make Iceberg Vodka, triple-distilled Canadian corn alcohol (from the peaches-and-cream variety grown in Tiverton, Ontario) is sent at 97 percent to St. John’s to be blended with iceberg water until the alcohol is the standard 40 percent. The resulting vodka is exceptionally pure, clean, fresh and smooth with an uplifting edge. It has rightfully won numerous awards and is in my opinion one of the best vodkas on the planet. Straight iceberg water is sold in half-litre and litre bottles at \$5.99US/litre in New York, New Jersey and other states or online at www.icebergwater.com. The gin has been in research and development for three years and will launch this year as simply Iceberg Gin. All around the world from Australia to China to Switzerland, a part of the pristine Canadian Arctic has been sipped by appreciative vodka connoisseurs since 1995 when Iceberg Vodka made its first appearance. Now gin aficionados and pure water lovers will get a taste, too.

Eating around Corsica

by Barbara KINGSTONE, Jacqueline SWARTZ

Corsica, the French island said to be the most beautiful in the Mediterranean, where wines are designated by Appellation Contrôlée, olive oil has its own guarantee of authenticity, and the cheese comes from local goats and sheep. Ajaccio, the regional capital, is a sophisticated place and a magnet for Napoleon fans, who come to Ajaccio to see his birthplace and museum.

But we two women of a certain age had our own quest: to savor the island through its culinary bounty. First stop, U Stazzu, known for its ham products, preserves, olive oil and chestnut flour. On Corsica, renowned for its great *charcuterie*, people want to know where the pigs are raised and what they eat. *Prisuttu*, a version of prosciutto, is made from semi-wild pigs that feed on chestnuts.

Nearby was the outdoor market, bursting with local vegetables and fruits, cheese and cured ham. We snacked on *chausson*, a pastry made with Swiss chard, onions and *courgette*. And who could resist a vial of essential oils made from the island's signature scent, the maquis, the fragrant underbrush of broom, lavender and myrtle.

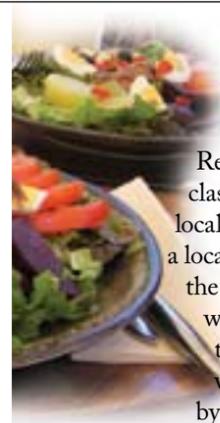
Then the driving began. We followed the sinuous road down the coast to a fish restaurant, l'Ariadne Plage. Here when they say regional, they don't mean the island but the neighborhood. *Chapon*, a tender white fish seemed to have jumped from

the sea below to our plate. Even the lemons tasted exceptional with the grilled fish. *Alziopratto*, our first taste of Corsican wine, turned out to be a good dry rosé.

Our next stop was Piana, designated as one of the most beautiful villages in France. Our hotel, Les Roches Rouges, carried only two stars. Yet it turned out to be a splendidly restored country hotel.

Before dinner, the hilltop terrace was filled with people, aperitifs in hand, gazing out at the glittering blue sea beyond and the burnt-orange mountains. Then on to the dining room, with its *trompe l'oeil*, gilded pillars, colorful borders and highly polished wood floors. Our meal began with plump white asparagus dressed in a coulis of balsamic vinegar and thin curled slices of fresh parmesan. The finale was a selection of local goat cheese and creamy chestnut *crème brûlée*. Corsica has acres of chestnut trees, and the local cooks don't miss an opportunity to use their bounty.

The Calenches, a forest of huge orange rock formations that look as though they had been sculpted, straddle the sides of the ever-twisting road along the coast. Several hours and many hundreds of hairpin turns later, we reached the mountain town of Corte, far from the Mediterranean seaside. Here, all of a sudden, there were pine trees and streams. Our hotel, Dominique Colonna, thoroughly deserving of its three stars, featured rooms facing the river, with its reassuring sound of water cascading down from the gorge.



Dinner that night was at the Auberge de la Restonica, a short walk from door to door. This is a classic auberge, with a rustic dining room serving robust local specialties. A hearty vegetable soup included *blette*, a local green. *Bruciu*, the local mild cheese, criss-crossed the baked eggplant. In winter, we might have opted for wild boar with chestnut polenta; instead we chose trout that came from a nearby river. This was the way trout should be — fresh, tender and unaltered by herbs.

The following day, after an early start, we drove through an arcade of eucalyptus, palm and olive trees to Auberge Relais La Signoria, a country estate that looked fit for a king. In fact, the property was owned by Louis XV, who gifted it to a French nobleman.

The dining room hits you with a shock of color. Staid black painted frame country chairs are covered in velvets of lady-like lilac, tempting tangerine, blazing red, acid green and Mediterranean blue, and it all works.

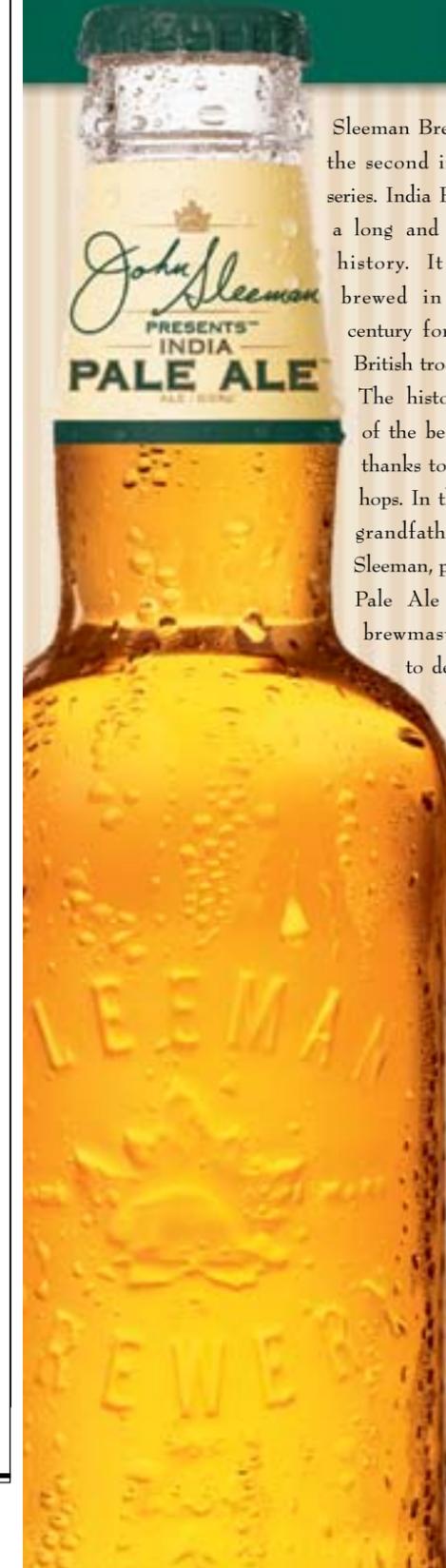
The menu, too, had us ooh-ing and aah-ing. After an *amuse bouche* of leek-filled ravioli, we indulged our love of artichokes, fortunately in season, with the tasting menu, variations on a theme of artichoke. Creamy artichoke soup was followed by artichokes stuffed with smoked pancetta and fresh brucio cheese. Then came a fricassee of artichokes and pinenuts accompanying slices of *rougets* (a red mullet). Fortunately, the portions were small, for this was followed by lamb en cocotte — with artichokes. Each course was paired with wine. One of our favorites was a full-bodied red called Patrimoine.

Then we headed south, stopping at Porto Vecchio, a sophisticated town that draws Catherine Deneuve and other movie stars. Lunch was an exuberant Salade Niçoise in a café on the Place de l'Église. Afterwards, we visited the nearby olive oil boutique, which had an exhibit of ancient oil containers as well as contemporary designs.

From there it was less than a half-hour to Bonifacio, the southern port, and an easy turnoff to our hotel, Centre Nautique. Floating in the distance is the upper town and the old city. For dinner, we opted for the steep climb to the old city and an award-winning restaurant called both Stella d'Oro and Chez Jules. It's a family affair, and the mother started our dinner by serving us her local eggplant parmigiana. Then came the fish with lobster sauce — that indigenous Chapon — and grilled calamari with vegetables. The wine was a fine Fiumicoli.

After dinner, we strolled along the medieval streets of this fortress town dating from 833 AD. The next day we would return to explore the Bastion de l'Étendard, and its museum. But this night, after a memorable meal, we took the blessedly downhill walk to our ship-like hotel, where we slept high above the yachts, dreaming of future meals of fresh fish, artichokes, goat cheese and a chilled rosé. 

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Sleeman Brewery is pleased to introduce the second in the *John Sleeman Presents* series. India Pale Ale has a long and fascinating history. It was first brewed in the 18th century for export to British troops in India. The historic journey,

of the beer that is, was made possible thanks to the clever infusion of extra hops. In the late 1800's, my grandfather, Mr. George Sleeman, personalized this Pale Ale recipe with a brewmaster's attention to detail. The result can be enjoyed

today. And true to form, only 100% natural ingredients were used to create this legendary brew characterized by its bold taste and hop aroma. Hopefully you'll enjoy this beer as much as the troops once did.

I'd love to hear how you enjoy India Pale Ale and the entire *John Sleeman Presents* series. Just drop me a line at Sleeman.ca. Cheers,

John Sleeman



India Pale Ale — brewed for British troops in India. Loved by both officers and infantrymen.

Harbin Ice Lantern Festival

by Rachelle DICKENSON



The city of Harbin, located in the province of Heilongjiang, China, sparkles from January to March. This hot winter tourist spot, just a two-hour flight north of Beijing, sports glittering, freezing Cathedrals, cafés and castles, and wild horses that dance in the blazing sun light and glow at dusk.

Harbin's Zhaolin Park is the site where the Ice Lantern and Garden Festival was established in 1985. The Ice Lantern Festival has grown to international fame and now includes the International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival located on Sun Island Park in the center of the frozen Songhua River.

The two festivals occur at the same time but according to R. Todd King, both have very different histories and

atmospheres. The Ice and Snow Sculpture festival on Sun Island, established in 1999, is now a massive sponsored event that draws sculptors and tourists from all over the world. The Ice Lantern and Garden Festival in Zhaolin Park is a smaller, more traditional Chinese festival, reminiscent of the style of snow and ice celebrations that have been held in Harbin for decades. Both showcase extraordinary ice and snow carvings, although the International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival is the more extravagant with its neon-lit, brilliantly colored ice and snow carvings and buildings that dazzle the eye.

This quiet city has a rich and diverse history.

Occupied by Russia, Manchuria and finally China, Harbin's tapestry of culture is reflected in the local restaurants, cafés, shops and in the carved ice and snow. This amazing winter event costs about \$10 to enter and begins January 5.

For more information please visit R. Todd King's Website, www.rtoddking.com and click on 'Harbin, Sanja & Beijing' to view stunning

photography.



Photographs provided by: Ruth Lor Malloy

Mounties at China Travel Fair 2005

by Ruth Lor MALLOY

Officers Parma Cheema (left) and Bob Vallance of Vancouver's Royal Canadian Mounted Police were recently hard at work promoting Canadian tourism at the China International Travel Mart in Kunming, China. Exhibitors like Tourism Vancouver, Tourism British Columbia and Yukon Tourism were among the dozen Canadian booths at China's most important travel fair. Next year China is expected to give permission to Chinese tourist groups to visit Canada. The women dressed in Tang dynasty costumes are dancers from the Tang Dynasty theme park in Xi'an.

Photographs provided by China National Tourist Office

Bloor Street Entertains

Black tie gala in support of CANFAR

by Julie GABRIEL

The Toronto crowd that matters — Bay Street honchos, political heirs, Hollywood North stars, philanthropists, fashion designers, assorted socialites — all gathered in their big-shot way at the splendid Hart House of the University of Toronto for Bloor Street Entertains' black-tie gala fundraiser, one of the annual highlights of Toronto's social scene. The reason: to raise money for CANFAR, the Canadian Foundation for AIDS research.

The ninth annual gala kicked off earlier in the day with more than 20 of Bloor Street's most glamorous boutiques, including Holt Renfrew, Williams-Sonoma, Escada, Cartier and Tiffany & Co., rolling out red carpets and transforming into restaurants featuring culinary masterpieces from Toronto's most celebrated chefs. Susur Lee of Susur created a feast for Williams-Sonoma, Jason Rosso of Sassafras treated the guests at Pottery Barn, Claudio Aprile of Senses cooked at Tiffany's, and Jamie Kennedy of the eponymous restaurant became the culinary head of the Rolls Royce salon.

Celebrations continued at historic Hart House with live performances by Jaymz Bee and his Royal Jelly jazz band, the Neil Brathwaite jazz trio, and a travel auction called "Planes, Trains and Automobiles" spiced up with delectable hors d'oeuvres and desserts. Beautiful, high ceilinged and dark paneled, Hart House is awe-inspiring at its most mundane. But when Las Vegas-style neon lights lit the room, the scene drew gasps even from guests who have been there, done that.

CBC Radio columnist **Justin Trudeau**, charming son of the late Pierre Elliott Trudeau, was there with his impossibly good-looking bride, CTV and Radio-Canada host **Sophie Gregoire**. If you like actors — and who doesn't — **Dan Aykroyd** and **Stephen**

Dorff attended the gala along with **Cynthia Dale**. If gay pride is your thing, you would admire the unashamedly flamboyant **Salah Bashir** (pic.1), vice-chairman of CANFAR, wearing his trademark strands of queen-size pearls on top of Hoax Couture suit and later escaping into the cold night wearing a Shalyapin-worthy sable coat. Spotted in the crowd were **Farley Flex**, *Canadian Idol* judge and founder of Flow 93.5 FM, multiple Juno-winning R & B star **Billy Newton-Davis**, and **Valerie Pringle**, host of CBC's *Antiques Roadshow* and CANFAR's spokesperson.

The fashion aspect of the event was above reproach, with Dolce & Gabbana-clad publisher **Anne-Marie Canning** accompanied by CANFAR's Have a Heart Founder and Chair **Penny Shore** (pic. 3 left), wearing a conceptual Ilana Wolf creation. PRIVILEGE publisher **Tom A. Vachliotis** donned an exquisite Ben Berke suit (pic.3). Seasoned fashionista **Andy Body** sported a rare diamond-studded vintage watch and 1930's Cartier pin, while event designer **Stefan Wypchol** (pic.4), adorned his jacket with *exactly* 75 silk bows.

The highest fashion accolade goes to **Sara Waxman** (pic.2), the evening's chair and grande dame, wearing an impressive gown: "It is created by a famous Canadian designer," she hinted. "But he wished to remain anonymous. He did this dress just for me. The color? It's called golden mango."

All the glamour was for a great cause. Since its inception in 1987, CANFAR has awarded grants totaling more than \$12 million to Canadian HIV/AIDS research projects. Just last year, CANFAR awarded more than \$1.4 million in research grants. Can you think of a better way to use your money and influence?



Photographs provided by Tom Sanzler



Toronto International Art Fair

81 galleries from 13 countries

by Jody GLASER



Photographs provided by ABOUT TOWN

The sixth annual Toronto International Art Fair (TIAF) was held November 3rd to 7th, 2005, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

“Art transcends borders,” said Matthew Teitelbaum, head of the AGO, at the Opening Night Preview. “The fair not only generates buzz for contemporary art, both Canadian and international, it also celebrates



David Mirvish

Toronto as it welcomes dealers and art enthusiasts from abroad.” TIAF required more floor space this year to host 81 galleries from 13 countries, resulting in a vibrant mix of established and emerging artists.

All proceeds from the preview were committed to education and exhibition programming at the Art Gallery of Ontario. During the evening, the TIAF Award of Distinction was presented to well-known bookstore owner and art dealer David Mirvish. The award recognizes a Canadian individual whose dedication has contributed to the profile of the Canadian art scene.

As an art dealer, David Mirvish has served on many boards, most recently as a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa. Mirvish owns and operates two theatres in Toronto, as well as David Mirvish Books/Books on Art, located in the heart of Mirvish Village in downtown Toronto.

For more information visit www.tiafair.com

Mozart very much alive in Austria

by Barbara KINGSTONE

This year, 2006, Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgang Theophilus Mozart, better known as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, born in 1756 in the historic and beautiful city of Salzburg, will reclaim the headlines as one of the most important names in classical music.

On the anniversary of his 250th birthday, Vienna and Salzburg, cities devoted to music and culture, are going all out and planning 12 months celebrating the accomplishments of the musical genius who wrote 22 operas and 600 compositions.

By the time Mozart was five years old he had already learned to play the clavier and was composing. Concert tours took the precocious prodigy all over Europe. A year later he was performing at Schoenbrunn Palace before Empress Maria Theresa and Emperor Francis.



Like most things worth having, some pre-planning is a good idea. With all the fanfare surrounding the country’s favourite son, this will be the year to visit and hear many of Mozart’s compositions and the important Mozart operas — *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni*.

As was once said of Mozart, “After this music, there is only God.”

For more information call the Austrian National Tourist Office 416.967.4867 in Toronto or visit www.mozart2006.net

Blind Michelangelo

Blind Kids Art: First Annual Art Sale and Benefit

by Rachele DICKENSON, MA

Blind Kids Art (BKA) made its debut Saturday, December 10th at Latitude 44 with the gracious hospitality of gallery owners Mary Anne and Janet DiBernardo. Chairman of the Board of BKA, Alex Travnickova, drew together more than 30 top international and national artists who donated their works in support of BKA. The charitable organization is designed to give visually impaired and blind children free access to art classes. In Alex’s studio, the children take lessons in pottery and sculpture in an atmos-



Photo provided by Nino Arlizzi

phere where art is no longer just about looking, but about participating. Alex seeks to emphasize the importance of decentralizing sight in the art process;

that is only one aspect of art and art experiences. Featuring the corporeal paintings of artist/graphic designer Andy Sookrah, the musical stylings of Andrea Hardwick, supported by equipment from Steve’s Music, the breathtaking jewelry designs of Mark Raynes Roberts, the bold abstracts of yours truly and the delicious culinary samplings of Encore Catering, the auction at Latitude 44 was a tremendous success. With many of the artists in attendance as well as art lovers, cultural professionals and educators intermingling, it soon became clear that our experience of art can be enhanced far beyond vision.

To see images of the Blind Michelangelo Event and the art and to learn more about Blind Kids Art, please visit Erich Design’s web creation www.blindkidsart.org

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From the Rainbow with Love

A colorful event with a Russian theme

by Jody GLASER

In keeping with glamour, Reach for the Rainbow's 2005 Crystal Ball looked to one of the world's most alluring and colorful countries for the fantasy theme of its signature annual event. Inspired by the days of Czars and Czarinas, "From Russia with Love promised to delight and excite," according to Donna Trella, executive director of Reach for the Rainbow.

Last year's Crystal Ball raised \$1.4 million, contributing 40 percent of the charity's annual budget. Thanks to loyal patrons and one of Canada's most exciting live and silent auctions, this year looks to meet and exceed previous goals. Through a computerized bidding system, fur coats, luxury automobiles and vacations to Russia all went on the block.

The November evening, presented by BMW Group Canada and host sponsor Teranet Inc., began with photos and a ceremony to



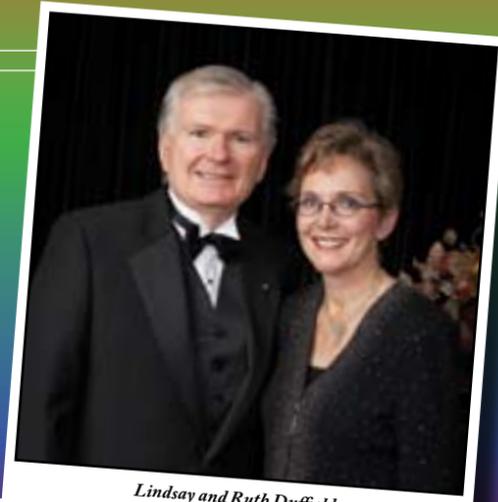
Honorary Chairpersons (left to right): Steve Jones, Sr. VP Corporate Communication and Government Affairs, Siemens Canada; Lindsay Duffield, President & CEO, BMW Group Canada; Donna Trella, Executive Director, Reach for the Rainbow; Aris Kaplanis, President & CEO, Teranet Inc; Domenic Santagnida, Reach for the Rainbow Board of Directors - Chairman and Rick Reid, President, Tech Data

recognize Reach for the Rainbow's featured family. Global Television weather anchor and spokesperson Susan Hay participated in a video, about Reach for the Rainbow's inclusive programs, holding the attention of the crowd of 1500. VIPs in attendance included PRIVILEGE publisher Tom Vachliotis and wife Pat, author Valerie Gibson, and President & CEO of BMW Group Canada Mr. Lindsay Duffield.

marvelous way to conclude the evening. People gathered close to the stage, all eyes on the diva. I was a little surprised to see young people respectfully singing along with these pop hits from decades ago.

Following a Russian-inspired gourmet dinner, guests could visit the Grey Goose Vodka & Caviar Centre Lounge for an icy drink along with caviar served from an ice bar. Then it was back to the silent auction to check and possibly update bids.

Musical legend Dionne Warwick capped the evening with a medley of some of the many wonderful songs she and songwriter Burt Bacharach gave us throughout the '60s and '70s — what a



Lindsay and Ruth Duffield



Linda Leatherdale with Tom and Pat Vachliotis

Reach for the Rainbow is a registered charity, based in Toronto, serving Ontario families who care for individuals with physical and developmental disabilities. Events such as the Crystal Ball are crucial to sustaining the charity's integrated programs and celebrating diversity.

Na zdorovye!

For more information visit www.reach.on.ca



Global Television Network's Susan Hay



Special guest Dionne Warwick



Donna Trella, Reach for the Rainbow's Executive Director with Al Heitapakka



John Cyopeck, President & CEO of Canpar and Award of Distinction recipient with wife Maureen

For general information, please contact us at 416-503-0088, or e-mail info@reachfortherainbow.ca

Looking Good, Feeling Better

Beauty industries step up

by Jody GLASER

In November, the 14th Annual Look Good Feel Better Ball took place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Themed "Paris," the gala treated guests to the sights and sounds of diverse Parisian neighborhoods. Decor included fabulous flower carts, Moulin Rouge posters, park benches, and classic street lamps.

The fundraiser, on behalf of women on the way back to wellness, has collected \$5.8 million over the past 13 years, attracting more than 700 guests, personalities and leaders from the beauty industry who come together to support and celebrate a truly inspiring program. Through simple techniques, involvement helps boost the self-image of women undergoing cancer treatments. When patients are



receiving chemotherapy and radiation, a healthy optimistic attitude boosted by self-esteem plays a tremendous role in recovery.

Many companies presented huge checks in support of that goal, including L'Oréal, Shoppers Drug Mart, Loblaws and RBC Financial Group. The LGFB foundation holds free two-hour workshops in hospitals and cancer clinics across the country to

help women regain confidence. It also publishes an annual magazine sponsored by the Cosmetic, Toiletry and Fragrance Association Foundation.

Erica Heller, a Seneca College fashion merchandising graduate, was thrust into aggressive chemo last year. She now acts as a spokesperson for Look Good Feel Better. "It's not a very attractive disease," Heller said of cancer, citing hair loss, yellow skin, and dark circles while undergoing treatment. "You feel very self-conscious. In the Look Good workshop, everyone has cancer and understands."

The Parisian dining experience concluded with a flourishing Cancan revue that rushed the stage with a flurry of movement and color. Guests strolled through the silent auction that featured many program sponsors' delicious donations, including wines, fragrances and fashions. 

*For further details visit
www.lookgoodfeelbetter.ca*

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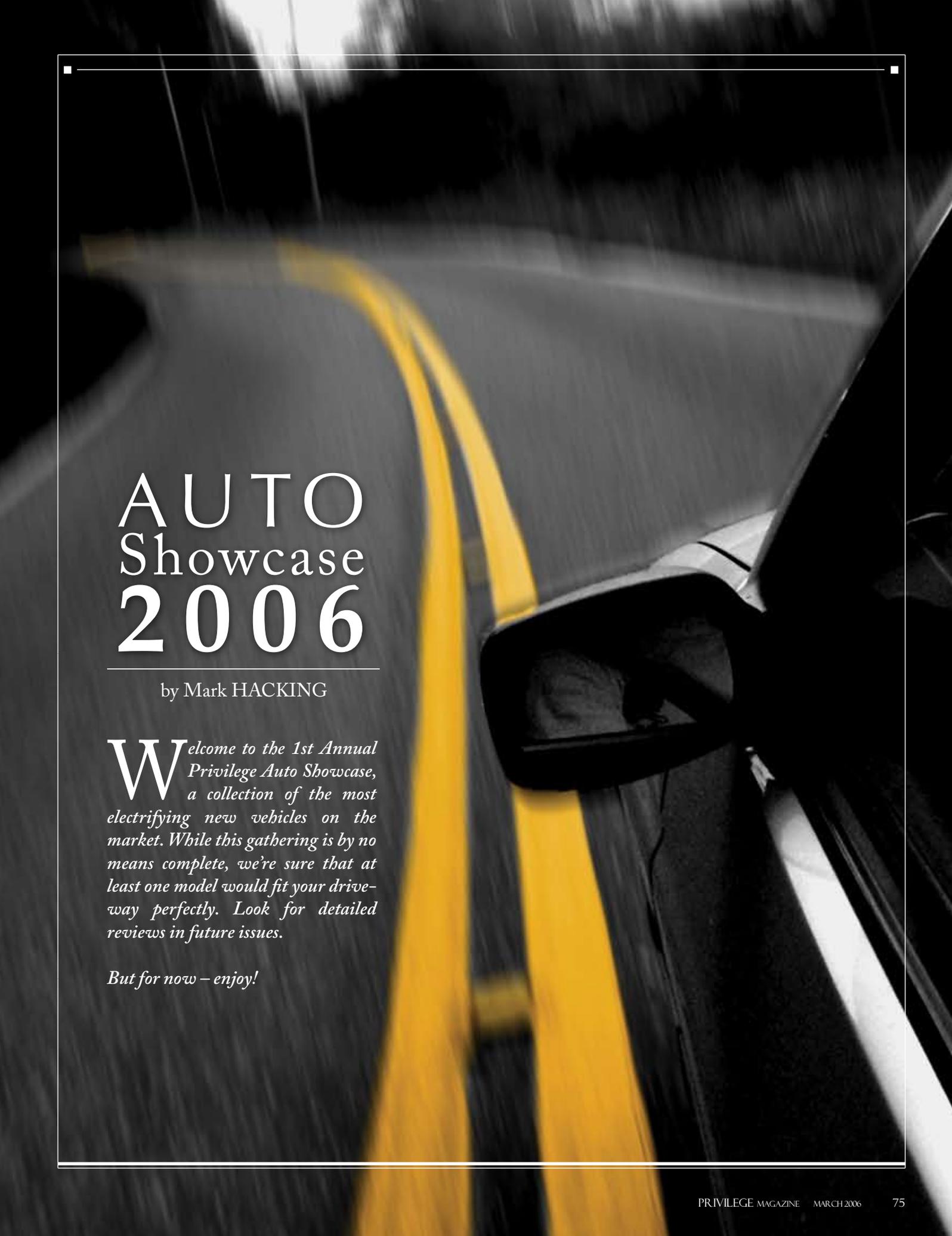
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AUTO Showcase 2006

by Mark HACKING

Welcome to the 1st Annual Privilege Auto Showcase, a collection of the most electrifying new vehicles on the market. While this gathering is by no means complete, we're sure that at least one model would fit your driveway perfectly. Look for detailed reviews in future issues.

But for now – enjoy!



AUDI RS 4

The **Audi RS 4** is the proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing; it's the most powerful version of the company's A4 sedan ever produced, yet its styling remains decidedly understated... apart from the chrome touches and 19-inch rims. Under the skin, the RS 4 features the 4.2-litre V8 engine from the flagship A8, FSI direct injection technology (first used to power the Le Mans winning R8) and an 8250-rpm redline. Engine output is a massive 414 horsepower, enabling the swift sedan to rocket from 0-100 km/h in about 4.8 seconds. Other goodies include brakes borrowed from the Lamborghini Gallardo and a new version of the legendary quattro all-wheel drive system that sends 60 percent of the power to the rear wheels, thereby creating a more agile and more fun A4.

CATEGORY: SEDAN/WAGON

Price: \$TBA Transmission: 6-speed manual Engine: 4.2-litre V8
Horsepower: 414 hp @ 7800 rpm Torque: 317 lb-ft @ 5500 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 4.8s Top speed: 250 km/h



BENTLEY CONTINENTAL FLYING SPUR

A four-door sibling for the immensely popular Continental GT, the new **Bentley Continental Flying Spur** boasts the same twin-turbo, 6.0-litre W-12 cylinder engine with its 552 horsepower and 479 lb-ft of torque. All that power, combined with all-wheel drive, enables the Bentley to hit 100 km/h from a standing start in less than five seconds and climb to an estimated top speed of close to 315 km/h – which would make the Flying Spur the fastest 4-door sedan in the world. The interior is similarly top notch with wool carpeting, no fewer than 15 leather hides sewn in and five coats of lacquer applied to all the wooden accents. Over and above all that, this Bentley has the coolest name in the car business.

Price: \$230,000 Transmission: 6-speed auto Engine: 6.0-litre twin-turbo W12
Horsepower: 552 hp @ 6100 rpm Torque: 479 lb-ft @ 1600 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 5.0s Top speed: 312 km/h



BMW 330i

Despite the best efforts of its competitors, BMW still rules the sports sedan roost. The fifth generation of their ubiquitous 3-Series continues the tradition – and the **BMW 330i** is the best of the new bunch... until the next M3 arrives, at least. The 330i is powered by an all-new 3.0-litre inline 6-cylinder engine that produces 255 horsepower, up from 225 in the previous model. The formidable engine revs to 7000 rpm and propels the car to 100 km/h in just over six seconds. But the real strength of this small sedan is its handling; on the track at speed, the BMW is planted to the tarmac and possesses handling so intuitive, it seems to predict the driver's next move.

Price: \$47,900 Transmission: 6-speed manual Engine: 3.0-litre inline 6
Horsepower: 255 hp @ 6600 rpm Torque: 220 lb-ft @ 2750 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 6.2s Top speed: 210 km/h



BMW 530xiT

The days when station wagons were considered staid and conservative are long gone – especially with hot family haulers like the new **BMW 530xiT** on the market. With an inline 6-cylinder engine (255 horsepower) and BMW's sure-footed xDrive all-wheel drive system, this wagon boasts plenty of performance, no matter the weather conditions, as well as about 100 litres of storage space. So it's an excellent choice for those considering a larger, more cumbersome SUV. Not only that, the controversial design of the 5 Series actually looks more graceful in wagon form. Still not convinced? The 530xiT just won the AJAC award for Best New Luxury Car, beating out the likes of Audi, Infiniti, Lexus and Mercedes-Benz.

Price: \$72,800 Transmission: 6-speed manual Engine: 3.0-litre inline 6
Horsepower: 255 hp @ 6600 rpm Torque: 220 lb-ft @ 2750 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 7.2s Top speed: 210 km/h



BMW M5

The previous edition of the **BMW M5** was considered by many to be the best car in the world, so what to make of a new 2006 model that has 100 more horsepower and greater handling capabilities? Answer: Consider the M5 better than ever. Under the hood lurks a V10 engine that displaces 5.0 litres, incorporates F1 technology and cranks out a neck-wrenching 500 horsepower. This BMW offers a 7-speed sequential transmission (also derived from Grand Prix racing) and a shifter-mounted button that switches the engine control unit from "normal" mode (and a measly 400 hp) to full-on "sport" mode. With all of these characteristics, the new M5 makes a strong bid to retain its status as the very pinnacle of automotive achievement.

Price: \$115,500 Transmission: 7-speed sequential manual Engine: 5.0-litre V10
Horsepower: 500 hp @ 7750 rpm Torque: 383 lb-ft @ 6100 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 4.6s Top speed: 250 km/h



DODGE CHARGER SRT-8

The **Dodge Charger SRT-8** is, in a word, audacious. A 6.1-litre, 425-horsepower Hemi V8. Twenty-inch wheels. Brembo disc brakes. And a wide-mouthed front grille and functional hood scoop that threaten to swallow everything in its path. While purists may bemoan the fact that the 21st century Charger is a 4-door and not a 2-door like the 1960s version, they probably haven't driven the SRT-8 yet. Acceleration is strong (0-100 km/h in close to five seconds), top speed is significant (just above 270 km/h), the balance is incredible and the sound of the Hemi reverberating through a tunnel is music to the ears of any gearhead. Inside, the deep bolstered leather seats feature suede inserts designed to keep you in your place as you power-slide around corners. Sweet.

Price: \$44,790 Transmission: 5-speed auto Engine: 6.1-litre V8
Horsepower: 425 hp @ 6200 rpm Torque: 420 lb-ft @ 4800 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 5.0s Top speed: 273 km/h



INFINITI M45

With the new **Infiniti M45**, the luxury arm of the Nissan offering has yet another world-class car on its hands. This sleek sedan offers a 4.5-litre V8 that delivers 335 horsepower and a rear-wheel drive chassis that handles magnificently. The optional sport package raises the M45's game even more, with 19-inch wheels, performance tires and rear active steering. Apart from these features, the Infiniti comes with a number of next-tech options such as a lane departure warning system, adaptive front lighting, a rearview monitor, Bluetooth wireless connectivity and a 14-speaker Bose Studio surround-sound system. For those seeking extra grip in the winter, the V6-powered (3.5 litre; 280 hp) Infiniti M35 is available with all-wheel drive.

Price: \$64,400 Transmission: 5-speed auto Engine: 4.5-litre V8
Horsepower: 335 hp @ 6400 rpm Torque: 340 lb-ft @ 4000 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 5.6s Top speed: 250 km/h



LEXUS LS460

Lexus still excites with their new **LS460** and **LS460L** (long wheelbase), powered by a 4.6 litre-V8 that produces a healthy 380 hp and 370 lb-ft of torque combined with the world's first 8-speed automatic. Lexus claims 0-100 km/h in less than 5.5 sec. Luxury features include a heated steering wheel and semi-aniline leather seats matched to one of three wood grain trims. Rear seat occupants have power reclining seats with power leg rests and a massage feature, while body heat sensors help maintain the perfect temperature for all passengers. The LS also features a nine-inch rear screen monitor along with a Mark Levinson audio system. Look for more from Lexus in the LS range this year with a hybrid (gas/electric) version.

Price: \$TBA Transmission: 8-speed automatic Engine: 4.6-litre V8
Horsepower: 380 hp (est.) Torque: 370 lb-ft (est.) 0-100 km/h (est.): 5.5s Top speed: TBA



MAYBACH 57S

Not so much a mere luxury car as it is a visit to a swanky day spa, the **Maybach 57S** takes the formula for sheer opulence established by the "regular" 57 and gives it a big boost of adrenaline. Working with a 6.0-litre twin-turbo V12 engine from in-house tuning gurus AMG, the massive Maybach can go from 0 to 100 km/h in under five seconds and reach a top speed of over 270 km/h. To handle the increased performance, the 57S has stiffer suspension and a lower ride height – but it's still one smooth commuter. Visual differences separating the new 'bach from the old include a new grille, headlamps and tailpipes, as well as subtle badging and not-so-subtle 20-inch wheels.

Price: \$TBA Transmission: 5-speed auto Engine: 6.0-litre twin-turbo V12
Horsepower: 612 hp @ 4800 rpm Torque: 738 lb-ft @ 2000 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 5.0s Top speed: 275 km/h



MERCEDES-BENZ CLS55 AMG

Despite the fact that it's billed as a 4-door coupe, the **Mercedes-Benz CLS55 AMG** is as beautiful a "sedan" as you're likely to find at any price. (Its low nose, sweeping roofline and combination C-pillar/rear trunk lid suggest that it leapt right from the designer's hand to the production line undiluted.) Now, with an AMG-tuned, 5.4-litre supercharged V8 (469 horsepower; 516 lb-ft of torque), the CLS55 goes as fast as it looks – expect 100 km/h to arrive in just 4.5 seconds. This swift number also features sport-tuned suspension and shift buttons on the steering wheel to enhance the driving experience. For a milder approach, there's also the CLS500: a fraction of the performance, but at a fraction of the cost.

Price: \$125,600 Transmission: 5-speed manu-matic Engine: 5.4-litre supercharged V8
Horsepower: 469 hp @ 6100 rpm Torque: 516 lb-ft @ 2650 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 4.7s Top speed: 250 km/h



FORD GT

While the **Ford GT** has been available south of the border since last year, this exclusive supercar makes its debut in Canada in 2006. Heavily inspired by the Le Mans-winning Ford GT40 of 1966, the new GT is even more impressive in person than on paper. Still, check these stats: a 550-horsepower supercharged V8, 0-100 km/h faster than just about everything on the road and a top speed of 328 km/h. The Ford also offers superior handling, precise steering and massive braking power – so, essentially, it's a purebred racecar for the streets. Style-wise, the GT represents the perfect formula for effective, retro-inspired design with its bold air scoops, chunky racing stripes, form-fitting tires and long, low profile. The Ford GT will be available only in very limited numbers.

Price: \$184,995 Transmission: 6-speed manual Engine: 5.4-litre supercharged V8
Horsepower: 550 hp @ 6500 rpm Torque: 500 lb-ft @ 3750 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 3.6s Top speed: 328 km/h



FORD SHELBY GT 500

Introduced in late 2004, the latest generation Ford Mustang wowed car enthusiasts with its muscular good looks and significant bang-for-the-buck factor. Now, there's even more excitement on the horizon with the new **Ford Shelby GT 500**, a 475-horsepower version of the legendary coupe that should, once and for all, erase all memories of the Charlie's Angels-era Mustang II. A pure homage to the muscle car era, this Mustang promises everything you'd expect in a Shelby: robust acceleration, superior braking (courtesy of Brembo calipers and huge vented rotors), and tremendous road grip and feel (with bits and pieces from Ford's SVT tuning shop). Visually, the Shelby GT 500 strikes the right chord with Le Mans racing stripes, 19-inch wheels and grille-mounted cobra badge.

Price: \$93,800 Transmission: 6-speed manual Engine: 5.4-litre supercharged V8
Horsepower: 475 hp @ 6000 rpm Torque: 475 lb-ft @ 3750 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 4.1s Top speed: 256 km/h



JAGUAR XK

With the 2007 model year, the **Jaguar XK** attempts a major image change. While the "old" XK was a highly refined car with decent performance characteristics, the new model ups the ante with increased power, racing-inspired touches and a lightweight, all-aluminum body. As a result of the slimming process, the Jag boasts improved acceleration figures (0-100 km/h in a hair over six seconds), better fuel economy and more nimble handling. The shape of the XK reveals a clear link to Aston Martin (the same designer influencing both lines) – it's a steroid-powered silhouette that means all business. The interior is similarly enhanced with added space and F1-style paddle shifters to operate the 6-speed automatic. A few seasons down the road, expect a new Jaguar XKR with a 400-horsepower supercharged engine.

Price: \$TBA Transmission: 6-speed auto Engine: 4.2-litre V8
Horsepower: 300 hp @ 6000 rpm Torque: 303 lb-ft @ 4100 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 6.0s Top speed: 248 km/h



LAMBORGHINI GALLARDO SPYDER

With so much automotive excellence on the roads these days, the supercar nicknamed "the baby bull" tends to get lost in the shuffle. But the launch of the new **Lamborghini Gallardo Spyder** could change all that – if only because the convertible is possibly even more gorgeous than the coupe. With a sweet-sounding V10 engine, all-wheel drive and a six-speed sequential transmission, the Gallardo is driving pleasure distilled to its purest form. Throw in a slick removable top and you've got all the elements needed for a truly memorable Sunday summer drive. With said top down, the Gallardo Spyder resembles a fighter jet, a pretty appropriate comparison considering the car's 0-100 km/h time (about 4.1 seconds) and top speed (close to 307 km/h).

Price: \$TBA Transmission: 6-speed sequential manu-matic Engine: 5.0-litre V10
Horsepower: 520 hp @ 7800 rpm Torque: 376 lb-ft @ 4500 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 4.1s Top speed: 307 km/h



PORSCHE CAYMAN S

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Price: \$83,900 Transmission: 6-speed manual Engine: 3.4-litre flat-6
Horsepower: 295 hp @ 6250 rpm Torque: 255 lb-ft @ 4400 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 5.2s Top speed: 274 km/h



VOLVO C70

With the introduction of the 2007 **Volvo C70**, the Swedish carmaker brings back the coupe/convertible that was very much under-appreciated during its initial tenure. Produced in partnership with legendary coachmaker Pininfarina, the Volvo features a power, three-piece retractable hardtop that stows away neatly in the trunk in under 20 seconds. The shape of the C70 is very much in keeping with the company's S40, S60 and S80 sedans – meaning, a slightly rounded yet muscular shape that puts the emphasis on aerodynamic efficiency. Powered by a turbocharged five-cylinder engine, the C70 won't set any land speed records, but it will provide ample acceleration to get the wind whipping through your hair. Of course, being a Volvo, the C70 also promises to be one of the safest convertibles on the market.

Price: \$55,995 Transmission: 6-speed manual Engine: 2.5-litre turbocharged inline 5
Horsepower: 218 hp @ 5000 rpm Torque: 236 lb-ft @ 1500-4800 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): N/A Top speed: N/A



AUDI Q7

While they may be late in officially entering the SUV game, it was only natural that the innovators of quattro all-wheel drive should decide it was high time to launch the bold **Audi Q7**. Built on a stretched version of the robust Porsche Cayenne/VW Touareg platform, the Audi features muscular styling, 20-inch wheels, three rows of seating and ample power from a 4.2-litre V8 with race-bred direct fuel injection. Using the all-wheel drive system from the new Audi RS4, the Q7 promises to offer plenty of all-weather traction along with a measure of tail-happy driving fun. As per Audi standards, the interior is a luxurious environment with top-notch fit and finish. Down the road, the Q7 will also reportedly be offered with a 3.0-litre turbo diesel engine (233 hp).

TRUCK/SUV
Price: \$TBA Transmission: 6-speed auto Engine: 4.2-litre V8
Horsepower: 350 hp @ 6800 rpm Torque: 325 lb-ft @ 3500 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 7.0s Top speed: 248 km/h



JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE SRT-8

Care to take a guess as to which SUV is faster than any current off-roader from BMW, Mercedes-Benz or Porsche? It's the brand new **Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT-8**, the latest brain-child from the mad scientists at DaimlerChrysler's SRT division. Working with the monstrous 6.1-litre Hemi V8, the Grand Cherokee generates five-second 0-100 km/h times – on either dry pavement or wet. Cosmetically, the Jeep looks less in-your-face than the other new SRT models, but it still has some nice touches: an aggressive front fascia, dual exhaust pipes, Brembo brake calipers and 20-inch alloy wheels. Aside from its impressive on-road performance, the fastest and most powerful Jeep ever is, first and foremost, still a Jeep – which means that it also has far more off-road capability than the average SUV.

Price: \$48,495 Transmission: 5-speed auto Engine: 6.1-litre V8
Horsepower: 420 hp @ 6000 rpm Torque: 420 lb-ft @ 4800 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 5.0s Top speed: 248 km/h



LAND ROVER RANGE ROVER SPORT SC

Confusingly based on the LR3 and not on the Range Rover, the **Land Rover Range Rover Sport SC** is nevertheless a stylish number with impressive performance attributes, both on-road and off. Powered by a supercharged V8 engine on loan from Jaguar, the Range Rover Sport is the quickest and most nimble SUV in company history. The 390-horsepower engine delivers sprightly performance (0-100 km/h in just over seven seconds), while the Dynamic Response suspension system and 20-inch tires keep the SC flat and glued to the ground with surprising efficiency. As good as this Land Rover is on tarmac, it's even better when the going gets rough; with such nifty features as Hill Descent Control and Terrain Response, this SUV easily clears all manner of obstacles in all kinds of conditions.

Price: \$93,800 Transmission: 6-speed auto Engine: 4.2-litre supercharged V8
Horsepower: 390 hp @ 5750 rpm Torque: 410 lb-ft @ 3500 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 7.3s Top speed: 224 km/h



LEXUS RX 400H

If you want to ride in high style – both from a comfort and a vertical standpoint – you can do far worse than sitting behind the wheel of a Lexus SUV. Now, with the introduction of the hybrid **Lexus RX 400h**, you can also do your bit for the environment at the same time. Whereas the conventional RX 330 features a 223-horsepower V6, the RX 400h bolts on two additional electric motors to its V6 to create a combined output of 268 horsepower. This means the hybrid version is not only more fuel efficient and more environmentally friendly, it's also quicker off the line – talk about a win-win! The RX 400h also features standard all-wheel drive, a continuously variable transmission, a navigation system and plenty of luxury appointments.

Price: \$62,200 Transmission: CVT Engine: 3.3-litre V8 + front and rear electric motors
Horsepower: 268 hp @ 5600 rpm Torque: 212 lb-ft @ 4400 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 7.6s Top speed: 198 km/h



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Horsepower: 268 hp @ 5600 rpm Torque: 212 lb-ft @ 4400 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 7.6s Top speed: 198 km/h



LINCOLN MARK LT

Under the skin, the **Lincoln Mark LT** may be just a Ford F-150, but it's still one luxurious ride. On the outside, this rugged pickup has been dressed up with chrome bodyside cladding, 18-inch aluminum wheels and the distinctive Lincoln waterfall grille. Inside, the Mark LT offers a clean and ergonomic layout, along with rich leather seating and ebony wood accents. The 5.4-litre V8 delivers plenty of power for towing, say, a speedboat or hauling around a week's worth of camping gear. You also have a choice of two- or four-wheel drive, depending on how much towing and hauling you plan to do. With a strong backbone and style for miles, the Lincoln Mark LT is a little bit country and a little bit city.

Price: \$49,995 Transmission: 4-speed auto Engine: 5.4-litre V8
Horsepower: 300 hp @ 5000 rpm Torque: 365 lb-ft @ 3750 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 9.7s Top speed: 185 km/h



MERCEDES-BENZ ML63 AMG

There are makeovers and then there are extreme makeovers. The new Mercedes-Benz M Class represents an extreme makeover; it's comprehensively better than its predecessor in every significant measure, from performance to safety to appearance. The **ML63 AMG** is the king of the class, motivated by a 503-horsepower V8 that should see it rocket from 0 to 100 km/h in less than five seconds. All that power is transmitted to the 20-inch wheels through a trick, 7-speed automatic transmission with three different settings: comfort, manual and sport. To keep pace with the ML's sheer speed, the suspension has been tuned by AMG to offer superior road holding. Also available are the ML350 (3.5-litre V6; 268 hp) and the ML500 (5.0-litre V8; 302 hp).

Price: \$TBA Transmission: 7-speed auto Engine: 6.3-litre V8
Horsepower: 503 hp @ 6800 rpm Torque: 465 lb-ft @ 5200 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 4.9s Top speed: 248 km/h



MERCEDES-BENZ R500

While the manufacturer may bemoan the fact that their new category-buster has been slotted in with the SUVs here, the **Mercedes-Benz R500** is more of an SUV than anything else. With its permanent all-wheel drive, plush ride, well-appointed interior and seating for six passengers, the R500 is a people-mover par excellence. Power is supplied by a 5.0-litre V8 (302 horsepower) mated to a 7-speed automatic transmission (a segment first); this combination makes the R500 one smooth highway cruiser. The optional air suspension adds an extra layer of silkiness to the ride and the traditional M-B luxury features make small work of those long commutes. For a little less commitment, there's the R350, powered by a 3.5-litre V6 (268 hp).

Price: \$75,950 Transmission: 7-speed auto Engine: 5.0-litre V8
Horsepower: 302 hp @ 5600 rpm Torque: 339 lb-ft @ 2900 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 7.0s Top speed: 240 km/h



PORSCHE CAYENNE TURBO S

Porsche has done it again by coming out with the most powerful production SUV to date with their new **Cayenne Turbo S**. Those who crave horsepower will not be disappointed when they find under the hood no less than 520 hp from a twin-turbocharged V8 which peaks at 5500 rpm and torque of 530 lb-ft from 2500 past 5000 rpm. It just takes 4.8 seconds to reach 100 km/h. Top speed is said to be 270 km/h (167 mph). The Turbo S runs on 20-inch SportTechno wheels with optional SportDesign wheels. Porsche promises an athletic driving experience with 62% of the torque being delivered to the rear wheels, offering better driving dynamics like a rear wheel drive sports car.

Price: \$157,000 Transmission: 6-speed automatic Engine: 4.5-litre twin-turbo V8
Horsepower: 520 hp @ 5500 rpm Torque: 530 lb-ft @ 2750-3750 rpm 0-100 km/h (est.): 4.8s Top speed: 270 km/h

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Solace Illuminated

By Rachele DICKENSON, MA Art History McGill University

There is a quality of gold that is unique from other precious metals: it is a painting medium. Goldleafing is a means of decorating sculptures

and surfaces that is as old as the metal itself. Pounded into fine lighter-than-air sheets, goldleaf will adhere to most natural or organic surfaces such as cotton or wood paneling with mild adhesive, such as Renaissance rabbit skin glue or modern white glues.

Its value and significance is near universal and many

cultures share the association of gold with divinity. This is perhaps because goldleafed surfaces appear to have a radiant depth in darkness and emit a warm glow when all other light is gone.

The allure of goldleaf is what inspires and motivates Suezan Aikins in her art practice today. The endurance of an inner light long after darkness fall resonates deeply in her life and work, and that echoed in me when I experienced these works.

Born in Montreal, Suezan was raised on art. She attended the Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto, the École du Musée des Beaux Arts, Montreal, the Nova Scotia Academy of Art and Design, and, in a life-changing move, the Yoshida Woodblock Print Studio, Tokyo. It was in Japan that the inspiration for these goldleaf techniques took a decisive hold. Again, distracted by the luminosity of goldleafed panels in her rooms, Suezan applied her already established expertise in the complex art of woodcut printmaking and stretched her skill base over the next ten years to accommodate entirely new modes of material application and composition in gold.

The quality of goldleaf and the colors that radiate from it in Suezan's application are such that transparent pigments enhance the radiance of the leaf instead of restraining it.

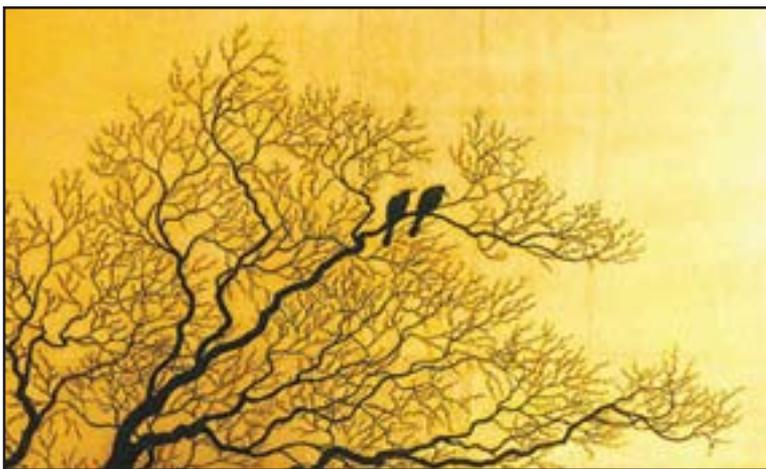
The gently textured surfaces create an atmospheric quality that reminds one of the serenity and spirituality inherent in nature. Suezan was influenced by the bold goldleaf

techniques used in Medieval Christian art that consisted of specific areas of illumination cropped into shape by opaque pigments and dyes.

Suezan believed, and rightly so, that the illumination inherent in the leafing would infuse the pigments in kind, if they were translucent enough to permit the passage of light. She also felt

the application of more deliberate textures to the leafed surface could be used to invoke atmospheres from nature, such as rainfall and mist. Having suffered a severe accident and enduring chronic pain, Suezan finds solace and strength in these light-infused images of the momentarily calm Atlantic Ocean.

After two years of developing and perfecting new techniques, four years of composition experimentation, countless blocks of wood thrown in the fire, and four more years of production, Suezan found a process that satisfied her meticulous nature and produced a body of work that is as spiritually warming as it is visually appealing. ■



These works are available through Suezan's website, www.suezan-aikins.com, which provides links to her extensive and diverse oeuvre, as well as information on her education and career. She also welcomes studio visits in Prospect Village, Nova Scotia.

ICE HOTEL

Hot ticket, cool luxury

by Gregory B. GALLAGHER

The hotel idea originated in 1989, when some Japanese ice artists visited Jukkasjärvi, Sweden, resulting in a much publicized exhibition of ice art. In spring 1990, a funny-looking igloo took shape on the ice of the River Torne. Hundreds of visitors gaped in amazement at the 60-square-metre Arctic Hall. One night, some of the guests even spent the night in sleeping bags, snuggled under a pile of reindeer skins, and the next morning were ecstatic about the experience. Thus the Ice Hotel legend began...

There is no hotter ticket in Canada for the first 90 days of the year than a room at the famous Ice Hotel west of Québec City. In the tradition of Harry Houdini, this one-of-a-kind structure of cool blue ice magically appears each winter and disappears with the thawing of spring. While it stands erect, exuding its mythical blue aura, those seeking accommodations in the 34 distinctive rooms or Theme Suites will have to jostle with sheiks, movie stars and oil barons. Like the "Rat Pack" of old, this hip, international "Ice Pack" of clients makes reservations as early as two years in advance.

As bizarre as it sounds, the Ice Hotel's four-foot-thick ice walls create a solid insulation and produce a constant temperature, much like a Thermos. The inside temperatures remain a surprisingly constant -2° to -5° Celsius. As guests try to sleep through a typically cold Québec night in January or February, the exterior temperature may be -28° Celsius or lower, but the interior temperature will never fall below -4° Celsius. Positively tropical!

Covering a total surface of 3,000 square meters (30,000 square feet), the Ice Hotel represents a tremendous construction undertaking, carefully timed and tuned to Mother Nature's wintry pulse. In fact, 12,000 tons of snow and 400 tons of ice

Photographs provided by Xavier Duchesne, www.vdphoto.com © Ice Hotel Québec-Canada

are used during the five weeks it takes to build this annual feat of architecture. The earlier the Arctic air masses begin to descend, the better for this temporary hotel enterprise.

If you and your significant other are still speaking to each other after a night of surely unusual dimensions inside this romantic fairy-tale setting, you might even be game for exchanging vows here. The Ice Hotel Chapel surprises even the most cynical, and *Bride's Magazine*, the ultra-conservative wedding yardstick, seems to agree. They featured an extensive spread in the September 2005 issue, extolling the many virtues of tying the knot here.

To finish a day of nuptials, why not spend the night in one of the Theme Suites? Just before heading to bed, enjoy a trip to the hot tub and sauna to complete a wedding night few can boast of having experienced. There are actually three different wedding packages to choose from — Magical, Exotic or Idyllic.

Whether you actually wed inside the chilly chapel, you can heighten any experience here by combining it with a range of add-on activities: Adventure Inukshuk (dog-sledding), Portneuf Adventure (snowmobiling), Catshalac (ice-fishing), and Duchesnay (cross-country skiing, snow-shoeing and skating). I think it must have been Ice Hotel Canada founder and CEO, Jacques

Desbois, who coined the phrase, "To enjoy winter at its best, you must embrace the outside."

To make it easier for folks to do just that, the Ice Hotel relocated itself inside the extensive provincial park system in Québec, and is now able to offer visitors an encyclopedic choice of winter activities. Even smarter is the onsite option of using "normal," i.e. non-icy, overnight accommodations inside rustic lodges, rooms and villas on the shores of the Lake Saint-Joseph.

The Ice Hotel accommodations come with an appropriate price level, ranging from a weeknight for two at \$595, to a weekend night Theme Suite for a family of four at \$1,595. The overnight prices actually include two rooms: you get another private room at the Station Ecotouristique Duchesnay thrown in, just in case you are unable to sleep through the entire night in your frosty igloo.

The nightly tariff also incorporates cocktails in the Absolut Bar, one four-course dinner in the lodge and a full buffet breakfast the next morning, plus all gratuities, equipment and access to the hot tubs, sauna and the Ice Hotel itself during the day. Considering the level of exclusivity of this hotel (see sidebar), the prices are a great deal. No wonder they are booked so far in advance.



Photography provided by: *Hôtel de Glass@Ice Hotel Québec-Canada*



To embrace the winter with a little motorized help, there are separate snowmobile packages offered which include a 550cc machine for one or two people, gas and oil, Arctic clothing (boots, mittens, snow-suit and cowl), visor and helmet, license and map of the trails. This allows winter vacationers a glorious chance to venture into the pristine wilds of one of the snowiest regions in the country.

Day passes can be purchased and amount to an exceptional dollar-for-dollar value (adults \$30, kids \$15), since they include the services of the Interpretation Centre, a discover/rally site, access to the walking trails, an ecotour, forest orientation, forest survival, snow-shoeing, cross-country skiing, skating, snow slides and the games room.

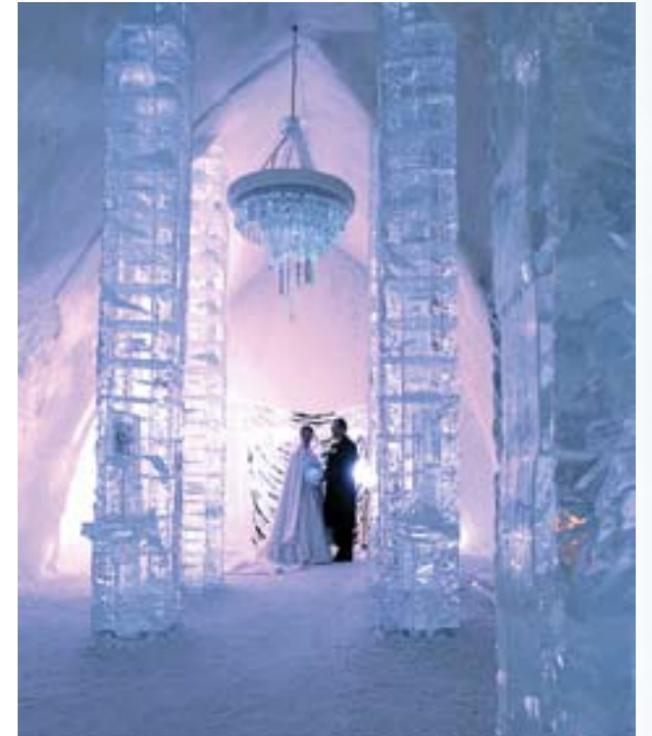
If it sounds a little scary to be out there in the bush, you can book an accompanying guide, if there are at least two of you, to a maximum of six snowmobiles per guide. One of the favorite rides through the Ice Hotel's surrounding wilderness is the moonlight sojourn. If you are lucky enough to experience this romp on the night of a full moon, you are guaranteed to remember the light spectacle on the surface of the snow for the rest of your life.

The services and activities at Ice Hotel/Duchesnay are so unusual and diverse, the venue is becoming one of the most popular special event and corporate retreat choices in North America. More and more groups and family celebrations are opting to book the whole gang into the complex, knowing that the vast array of activities and the unorthodox accommodations truly set it apart from other locales and assure any gathering a memorable experience.

The royal treatment prevails here for group events with ice logos, a red-carpet welcome, ice-sculpture and ice-carving demonstrations, ice bars and ice glasses, first-class live entertainment, hot and cold buffets and even fireworks. Corporate incentive types will also appreciate the Ice Hotel/Duchesnay combo as the ideal winter resort to sequester their team during think-tank retreats.

Digging in to the challenges of motivational tooling and team building in the morning, the group can then enjoy the rest of their day dog-sledding, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, attending igloo-construction, ice-sculpture or ice-carving workshops. On the opposite side of the water spectrum, the hot tubs, saunas and Absolut Bar are popular destinations in the aftermath of such icy pursuits.

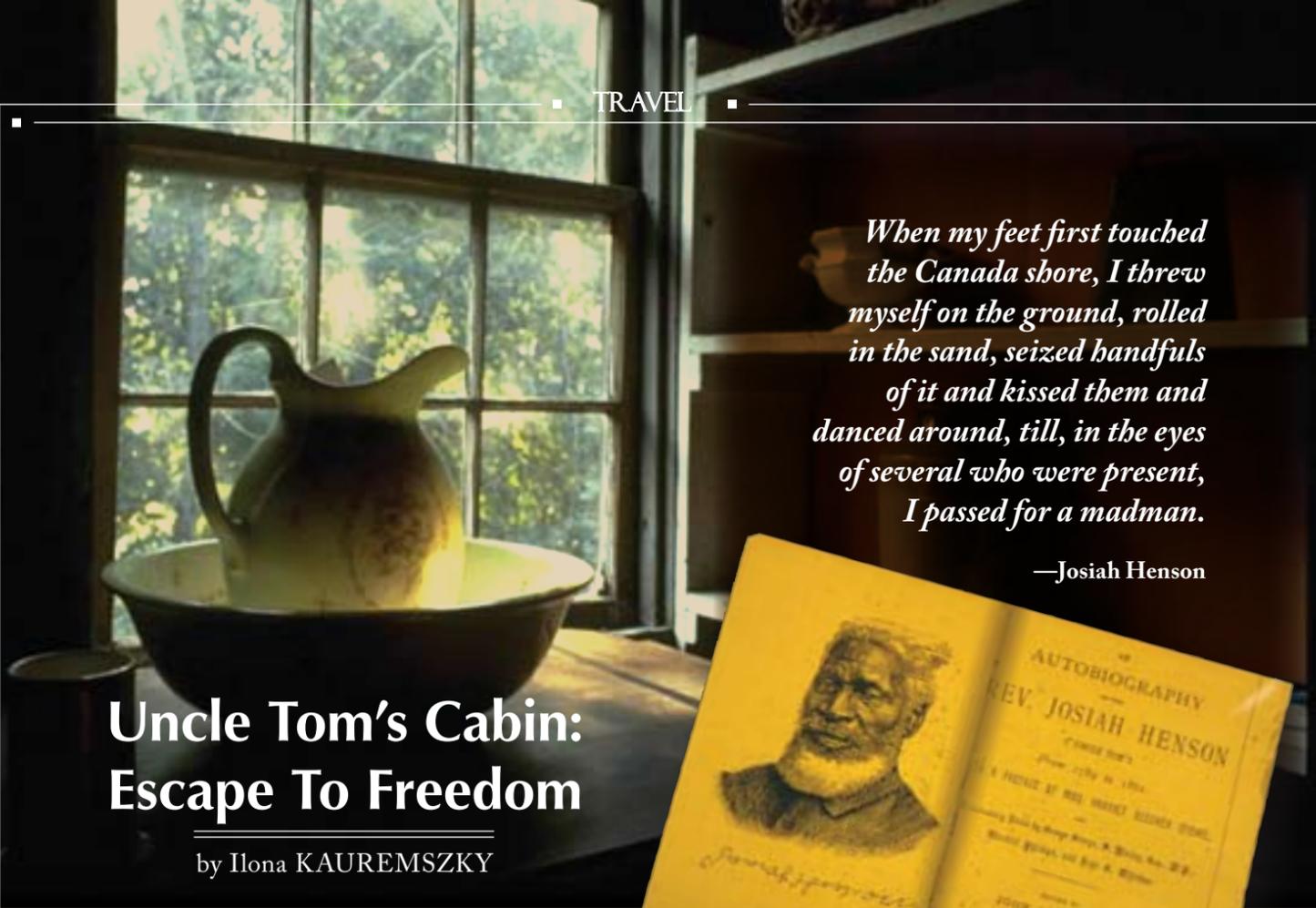
The particular nature and location of our beloved Ice Hotel Canada beckons you to visit, whether overnight, or as a day guest. Either way, you are sure to appreciate the magic and poetry of this singular achievement by



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N'Ice Club Launches at Mont-Tremblant
Until March 19th visitors to Mont-Tremblant can see the N'Ice Club lounge up close, as the Ice Hotel team has installed this arched satellite structure made of 100 tons of ice and 1,600 tons of snow for some cool entertainment at Canada's second-largest ski resort. www.niceclub.ca

Monsieur Desbois and company. This is the hottest ticket to cool luxury anywhere in North America, but hurry...it will be melting soon!

*Gregory B. Gallagher is the author and photographer of the bestselling Penguin International travel book *Eyewitness Top Ten Travel Guide: Montreal and Québec City*. He is currently writing new travel guides for Expedia about both cities, to launch worldwide March 1st.*



Uncle Tom's Cabin: Escape To Freedom

by Ilona KAUREMSZKY

*When my feet first touched
the Canada shore, I threw
myself on the ground, rolled
in the sand, seized handfuls
of it and kissed them and
danced around, till, in the eyes
of several who were present,
I passed for a madman.*

—Josiah Henson

Harriet Beecher Stowe, a white girl from small-town Connecticut, was so appalled by slavery that she penned a story about one fugitive slave's life and called it *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Her novel was largely based on the 1849 autobiography *The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, Now an Inhabitant of Canada*. Beecher Stowe, whose family was known as "the Beecher preachers" for their long lineage of ministers, had written an acclaimed book that became America's first international bestseller. During its first year alone, 1852, it sold more than one million copies in England and 300,000 copies across the U.S., outselling even the Bible.

Uncle Tom's Cabin, which has been translated into 62 languages, has remained part of the school curriculum in some parts of America and is mandatory in schools across Holland as a result of their strong abolitionist ideals. The book was used as a rallying cry for abolitionists during the Civil War. It was said that President Abraham Lincoln, upon meeting its author, remarked, "So this is the little lady who made this big war."

The epic story chronicling the life of the Kentucky slave named Uncle Tom was the real-life story of Josiah Henson, a Methodist preacher then living in a tiny settlement in Canada, finally freed from his chains of bondage in Maryland.

Amid the thick black walnut groves of Dresden, Ontario, Henson created the Dawn Settlement, a northern refuge for

free slaves. In its heyday of the early 1850s, Dawn was home to 500 free Black families. Henson helped found the British American Institute, North America's first manual training school, where there was a rope factory, brickyard, sawmill, grain mill and blacksmith shop. While many free Blacks knew only about harvesting tobacco and cotton, Henson yearned to teach them about a variety of other farming methods, such as grain and livestock.

"Josiah Henson was a man of integrity and fortitude," said Barbara Carter, Henson's great-great-granddaughter and resident of Dresden. "He was a man who became a Methodist minister both in the United States and in western Ontario. And as we know he loved the scriptures."

Today visitors and genealogists attempting to retrace their roots are heading to the historic site known as Uncle Tom's Cabin. The arrivals stem mainly from Ohio, Illinois, Michigan and New York. In the small town of Dresden, about a 1 ½-hour drive north of Detroit, sits Uncle Tom's cabin. The two-storey clapboard house is constructed of cedar and tulipwood and, by the rural Ontario standards of its day, was considered a substantial building.

When Reverend Josiah Henson was just a small child, he saw his family separated, and always remembered the

tears his mother shed when his brothers and sisters were literally torn from her arms. The future minister also recalled the family praying in church. "When I arrived at the place of meeting, the services were so far advanced that the speaker was just beginning his discourse, from the text Hebrews ii 9. 'That he by the grace of God, should taste of death for every man.' This was the first text of the Bible to which I had ever listened, knowing it to be such. I have never forgotten it, and scarce a day has passed since, in which I have not recalled it, and the sermon that was preached from it," he wrote in his autobiography.

That sermon changed Henson's life. He wrote, "I was in a state of the greatest excitement at the thought that such a being as Jesus Christ had been described should have died for me — for me among the rest, a poor, despised, abused slave, who was thought by his fellow creatures fit for nothing but unrequited toil and ignorance for mental and bodily degradation."

Considered by many to be the most important fugitive slave of his time, Henson's life as retold in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* opened up the eyes of America and much of the rest of the world to the tragedy of slavery. Some believed such acts could not occur in their day and age. "It really was the first book that was an outcry against an American law," said Steven Cook, curator of Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site. "It was condemning slavery and telling about how the Blacks were being treated."

The book's popularity transformed Reverend Henson into the 19th-century version of a pop star. He traveled the North American lecture circuit denouncing the injustice of slavery through inspiring sermons. He journeyed to Europe three times, met the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Prime Minister of England, Lord John



Russell. When Henson met Queen Victoria, she penned the following in her journal on March 4, 1877: "Reading, in that most interesting book *The Life of Mr. Josiah Henson, a Fugitive Slave* and the original

of Mrs. B. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. He is now in his 88th year, and his sufferings, energy, patient endurance, and his anxiety for the good of his suffering brethren, are admirable." A transcript of that personal note is on view along with the original framed portrait of the Queen, a gift she gave Henson on that trip.

In Dresden, the Ontario Heritage Foundation operates the 5,000-square-foot interpretive center, home to the North Star Theatre and the Underground Railroad Freedom Gallery. The Foundation's Chair, the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, has worked with the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation to revitalize the site as a beacon of freedom for all. A 30-minute video on Josiah Henson's life recounts his work on the Dawn Settlement and as one of the grand conductors of the Underground Railroad. It's believed Henson made more than 118 trips back to America.

Over at the gallery, artifacts from the early Black settlement are housed. A hand-carved black walnut rocking chair hewn from the trees at Dawn sits as a memorable monument to the workmanship of Henson's students at the short-lived British American Institute.

Only vestiges of the early Black settlement remain on this five-acre site. The once-thick walnut groves are long-gone. A simple clapboard house known as the Harris House, an early example of a Black settlement house, stands adjacent to an austere whitewashed church whose interior is filled with haunting gospel music. At the front stands a simple oak pulpit, Henson's own. Then there is the original Uncle Tom's Cabin, Josiah Henson's house, which was moved to the current site a few years ago.

"Canada was a true haven during the Underground Railroad. It was the great northern light for these Blacks," said Cook, concluding, "The number one thing people say today is we can't believe we made it here. It is so hard to find. Well, that's why Josiah Henson lived here — because it was so hard to find."

Henson settled on Dawn, the last stop on his Freedom Trail. He died there at the age of 94 and is buried on the grounds of the land that provided him freedom after 41 years of slavery. ■

For more information and to order video:
519.683.2978 or 519.862.2291,
info@uncletomscabin.org, www.uncletomscabin.org



Photographs by Stephen Smith. Historical photos courtesy of Ontario Tourism

Vinotherapy

A great grape discovery

by Anna HOBBS

It is 1995. An enterprising young woman named Mathilde Cathiard Thomas, whose parents own a Bordeaux wine estate, Chateaux Haut Smith Lafite, learns that grape-seed extracts contain polyphenols that are as beneficial in caring for skin as a glass of red wine is in reaming out arteries.

Seizing the moment, Thomas developed a line of beauty products, Caudalie, and opened a luxury spa, Les Sources de Caudalie, in the midst of mama and papa's vineyard. She even trademarked the names — "vinothérapie" and "wine spa." Her vision and subsequent success uncorked a flood of spas around the world offering grape-inspired treatments. Cosmetic competitors also jumped on the wine wagon, adding grape-seed products to their skin care lines.

The findings of Dr. Joseph Vercauteren, pharmacology professor at the University of Bordeaux, suggest that polyphenols — the naturally occurring antioxidants found in grape seeds — are 50 times more effective in protecting the epidermis than vitamin E. They act as protectors against cell damage caused by nasty free-radical molecules associated with smoking, pollution and sunlight, all of which contribute to premature wrinkling.

In addition, the acids found in fruit act to slough off the epidermis, giving the skin a fresher, more radiant look. Grape's tartaric acid is less harsh than the citric acid in lemons, a popular ingredient in beauty products in recent years. Because grape seeds are rich in saturated fatty acids that are easily

absorbed into the skin, grape derivatives are being touted as powerful moisturizers.

The ability of the humble little pip to exfoliate, moisturize and protect has not gone unheeded. Proponents believe that, as well as imbibing a glass of wine a day to keep arteries in free-flowing form, we should be massaged and bathed in it. The Bacchanalian-sounding treatments on offer at wine country spas around the world include sauvignon soaks, soothing chardonnay wraps, invigorating crushed cabernet body scrubs and relaxing merlot massages. None of these treatments uses actual wine, so there's no danger you'll emerge smelling like coq au vin or beef bourguignonne.

"We consider grape extracts hormones of youth," says Vera Kantor, owner of VeraBella, a Beverly Hills beauty emporium whose menu of treatments features a decadent champagne and caviar facial to revitalize the skin. According to Kantor, after one treatment the skin looks so transparent it glows.

The treatment has been dubbed "the Awards facial," because half of Hollywood apparently lines up for it before the big event.

In Canada, vinotherapy treatments are available at wine country spas — Beyond Wrapture in Kelowna, British Columbia and The Spa at White Oaks Resort and Conference Centre in Niagara-on-the Lake — and at Elizabeth Milan Spa at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto.

In light of these heartening discoveries, the ancient proverb might have to be changed to *In Vino Pulchritude*.

In wine — beauty.



A Clear Picture

The eyes have it

by Alexandra PENN

Frequently referred to as the windows of the soul, the eyes reveal much of the inner workings of the human body and spirit. A powerful communication tool, eyes reflect hope and promise, wisdom and experience, guilt and dishonesty, along with the starry-eyed look of love. Good eyesight is a valuable gift and some of the ways of protecting it can be real eye-openers themselves.

One is the case for regular eye examinations. According to the World Health Organization, approximately 180 million people worldwide are somewhat visually impaired. Between 40 and 50 million are blind and 1.5 million of those are children. Depending on the cause, four out of five cases of blindness and vision loss were avoidable.

The verdict on whether carrots help us see in the dark is uncertain, although eating certain foods does protect vision and delay eye degeneration. Initially trained as a nutritionist, Dr. Barbara Caffrey, a practicing ophthalmologist of 27 years, suggests that a well-balanced diet and vitamin intake plays an important role in maintaining healthy eyes. "Drink lots of water to stimulate tear flow and eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables," she said. "Vitamin A deficiency is the leading cause of blindness in Third-World countries. A lack of B-complex can lead to bloodshot, burning or gritty-feeling eyes, cataracts and sensitivity to bright lights.

The A, C, and E vitamin mix, as well as zinc, delay macular degeneration and its progression. Selenium may help prevent cataracts and slow the aging of the eye. Smoking is correlated to cataracts and degeneration, and vitamins C and E may also help to restrain their development or progression." Dr. Caffrey further advised wearing sunglasses that protect against the ever-eye-damaging UVB rays.

Head to the optometrist first for an eye examination. Based on the health of your eyes, he or she would determine if you need glasses or contact lenses. If, however, during the course of your eye examination the optometrist were to find any eye disease that he or she was unable to deal with, a referral to an ophthalmologist for medical treatment would be made.

Contact lenses aren't for everyone. Heavy-duty prescriptions or high astigmatism may require rigid contact lenses or thicker soft contact lenses that could be uncomfortable. The curvature of the eye surface and lid position also influence the type of lens required. With an irregular eye curvature, only a rigid contact lens sitting on a soft lens, piggyback-style, permits useful vision. Sensitivity and tear film can make or break the fit and some cannot tolerate anything on the surface of the eye.

Good news abounds today, with companies such as Vistakon that has created the Oasys lens that stays wet on very dry eyes. If you're bent on tossing out those lenses and glasses and opting for LASIK, LASEK or other surgical procedures, check out the revolutionary 24/7 lenses.

Without batting an eyelash, I am positioning healthy eating and regular eye check-ups at the top of my New Year's resolution list.

And I may need a couple more pairs of designer sunglasses to protect the windows of my soul. All the better to see you with, my dears.



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Consummate Cozumel

One of the top five dives

by Stephen BURNS

During spring break of 2002, after a particularly long and loathsome winter in Toronto, my then 15-year-old son Matthew and I were enjoying the warming sunshine of Mexico. Although Matthew's younger brothers strongly vocalized a preference for a skiing vacation at Mont Tremblant, the prospect of even more frigidly alerted their mom and me to convince them that Spanish could prove more valuable than French (showing once again that age and treachery will always overcome youth and zeal). We swapped the younger boys' snowboards for bathing suits and

looked forward to spending some quality time with our sons. Destination: Cozumel.

Its superb scuba-diving consistently ranks among the top five dive destinations in the world and remains one of my favorites. Literally dozens of outstanding dive sites line the southwestern shore fronting some of the most luminously luxurious resorts in Mexico. For the more adventurous, a short ferry ride to the mainland allows you to dive the fresh-water cenotes or caves that appear magically in the dense foliage near Tulum.

I've been to Cozumel several times — sometimes with my family, sometimes just with my dive buddies. Only 28 miles long and 10 miles wide, the island caters to the tourist business, with large cruise ships frequently plying the beachfront with thousands of shoppers at a time. With personal security an important issue, the local police have adopted a no-nonsense attitude. The total absence of street beggars is a welcome change from some other vacation spots.

After the usual aggravations at Pearson International Airport, we had a thankfully uneventful flight to Cozumel and checked into the all-inclusive upscale Occidental Grand. For once, the reality surpassed the brochure: the resort was stunning in its hacienda-style design, the rooms opulent and spacious, the grounds lush with small accommodation units spread out over the large property, the swimming pools intelligently located far from the rooms, the six specialty restaurants well-serviced, and the beach!

Imagine breathtaking pastel sunsets with the lights of Cancun and Playa del Carmen twinkling on the Yucatan Peninsula just 12 miles across the channel.

Even though all meals and drinks are included in these packages, we often opt to cab into the town of San Miguel, where a variety of excellent restaurants, the quaint town square and blocks and blocks of Mexican shopping offer local dining, color and entertainment.

On this particular day, we chartered the XTC Divers boat to take Matthew and me for some

private diving just offshore. We perched on the rails of the small boat, scuba gear in place, waiting for the signal. I watched him prepare with pride, recalling our trip to Provo two years earlier, when he became a certified diver, and the adventures we shared together in the intervening years (every year or so, as I have done since they were five years old, I take one of my sons on a one-on-one adventure with me). The dive-master gave the signal and we rolled backwards off the rails into the ocean, our hands pressing our masks to our faces. We surfaced, signaled "OK" to the dive-master and made our descent onto Palancar reef.

The massive coral formations were reminiscent of giant mushrooms towering a hundred feet from the ocean floor to just below the surface. Visibility in the crystal-clear water seemed endless. Schools of small fish darted every-

where. The occasional barracuda belligerently claimed territory and we were fully prepared to yield. We swam slowly, following the dive-master, enveloped in the sights and myriad of emotions that become part of the experience. It is easy to become addicted to the multi-dimensional high that scuba diving induces. First there are the visual phenomena — the undersea otherworld of exotic coral formations and colorful marine life. Then there

is the exhilaration of flying through the water controlled merely by breathing. There's the "edge" of course — this slightly dangerous activity, performed with caution and training, that triggers the adrenaline rushes my son and I find so appealing. And finally, there is the serenity arising partially from the constant deep breathing so necessary to make the compressed air supply last.

All too quickly, the fleeting hour ended. After passing our tanks from the surface to the on-board crew and climbing the ladder back into the boat, I looked at my son and he looked at me. Knowing smiles echoed on our faces. We experienced something that was as personal and private as it was shared and bonding. The very next year, he would accompany me on a spectacularly thrilling, though very safe, shark dive, where a feeding frenzy was arranged right before our eyes. But that's another story...



Stephen & Matthew Burns - Cozumel, 2002

Cozumel's nature and beauty continues to lure visitors to its shores every day. The Cozumel Tourism Board is proud to announce that the island has made impressive strides toward normalcy in the weeks since Wilma. The heart of Cozumel still beats strong, and the island remains a world-class tourism destination.

Visitors can currently look forward to finding a wide selection of hotel rooms in Cozumel and enjoying the services of its restaurants, shopping centers, and service providers. With sea and air transportation to the island not only back at full capacity but growing, there is no better time to indulge in a vacation to the Mexican Caribbean.

- The Cozumel Tourism Board

Spectacular skiing in B.C.

Getting in the mood for the 2010 Olympics

by Peter GROSS

Look up —
way up — because
these aren't ant-hills.

There may be some nifty
ski places in Ontario, but
that province's largest mountain
is Ishpatina Ridge at 693 metres.

British Columbia has 21 mountains meas-
uring at least 3,400 metres from base to peak.

The British Columbia Tourism
Department lists 24 recreational ski
areas in the province — a veritable
smorgasbord of skiing possibilities for
both hard-core and novice skiers. Whistler
and nearby Blackcomb are the places of choice for
many high-end skiers; they were firmly esconced on
the map well before snow-boarder Ross Rebagliati's
smokin' performance at the Nagano Winter Games.
This year Whistler Mountain celebrates its 40th anni-

About
300 million years
ago — give or take a week or
two — the earth realized that it had very little
in the way of appealing ski terrain on what would
become Canada's west coast. Probably excited about the
thought of a 100-centimetre base and exotic knee-high
powder underfoot, the planet began to stir and boogie;
massive oceanic plates rocked and pulsed. The motion
drove up huge slivers of rock from under the thick contin-
ental mass on the west side of North America, forming
spectacular mountain ranges — the Rocky Mountains
— south into Utah and north through Alberta and BC
to the Coastal Mountains which frame the west.

Photo by © Greg Griffith, Mountain Moments Photography

versary as a ski resort and Blackcomb passes the 25-
year mark.

Between the two, it's a massive operation. They have
the most terrain (8,171 acres) and the greatest vertical
(1,609 m) in North America. Whistler-Blackcomb also has
the world's most advanced high-speed lift system with 15
express lifts out of a total of 37 lifts. Your ski thrill is very
close to instant gratification.

Some of the runs have a lifetime of their own. It's possible
to be lifted to the top of the mountain and ski downhill as
far as 8 kilometres, which might take up to 20 minutes.
Be assured, after an exhausting, exhilarating day on the
slopes, you can be pampered by the highest quality accom-
modations. One of many hotels located right at the base
of the mountains, the Fairmont Chateau Whistler, offers
the ultimate in amenities for the discerning skier. Packages
run \$340 a night (per person based on double occupancy)
which includes the complete skiing experience.

Those with more disposable cash might opt for the
Fairmont Gold Penthouse at \$2,000 a night. "This is our
most expensive room," said Shawna Merrell, public rela-
tions manager for Whistler and Blackcomb. "It's a two-
story room, 1200-square-foot with 25-foot-high floor-to-
ceiling windows with mountain views. There's a fireplace
and a whirlpool bath."

It's not often the penthouse sits idle. Whistler and
Blackcomb is a magnet for visiting movie stars and big-
name sports celebrities. Look over your shoulder and you
might catch sight of Cameron Diaz, Justin Timberlake,
Hilary Swank or Queen Latifah.

For the ultimate thrill, well-flushed visitors spend the
day heli-skiing. Coptered to the top of the mountain, clients
can pay \$600 for three runs or get the helicopter for the
whole day for \$1000, which entitles them to six descents.

A scenic 45-minute drive from Kamloops sit the Sun
Peaks, which publicist Steve Ogden calls "a complete and
unique winter resort."

Sun Peaks has close to 4,000 acres catering to every
playful whim, from powder-filled alpine bowls to Nordic
skiing and skating. If you just want to hit and run, packages
including one night's accommodation and a day of skiing
start at just \$99 (per person per night based on double
occupancy). Two nights' accommodation, one day's skiing,
a sports center pass, a half-hour sleigh ride and a snow-
shoe tour cost \$119 per person. During the peak season of
January to March, prices could increase.

Lift prices for adults are \$57 and a full-rental package costs
\$30. The youth rate is \$49 for the lifts; the children's rate
is \$30.

If you're lucky, you could end up skiing beside Canada's
most famous skier. "Nancy Greene Raine was an Olympic
champ and Canada's Female Athlete of the Millennium,"
Ogden said. "She lives and works at Sun Peaks and is our
director of skiing."

And she can get a good deal on a Mars bar as well.

Mt. Seymour is quite a modest operation compared to
some of the destination ski areas. Sitting on the north
shore of Vancouver, however, it offers immediacy for city-
dwellers. Mt. Seymour is actually three hills — Cypress,
Grouse and Seymour — which you can access by three lifts
or the Magic Carpet Ride, a moving sidewalk that appeals
to beginners as it gently carries them uphill.

"We've tried to position ourselves as the place for
families with children," said Andy Boniface, spokesman
for Mt. Seymour. "The snowboarding is very popular and
for the teenagers we have extensive terrain dedicated to
freestyle."

There's no cross-country at Mt. Seymour, but lots
of snow-shoeing, and Enquist Park is dedicated to
snow-tubing.

An adult lift ticket costs \$38, a youth ticket is \$31, and
it's \$19 for kids. Full rental is \$39 for adults and youth, \$24
for kids.

For a stunning visual experience, Mt. Washington is
probably the place to go. Located right on Vancouver Island,
the Mount Washington Resort offers a breathtaking view
of the Pacific Ocean to the west or a mind-boggling image
of Strathcona Provincial Park to the east. With 60 runs and
a 3700-bed Alpine Village, Mt. Washington invites you to
watch whales in the morning and luge in the afternoon."

Modern lifts can rocket skiers to the top of the 1588-
metre mountain at a rate of 12,200 people an hour. With
the 2010 Winter Games coming to British Columbia, Mt
Washington is luring athletes to train in conditions
as good as those of any previous Olympics. For those not
quite ready to slalom at break-neck speed, a daily costs an
adult \$51, youth \$42 and kids \$28 with children under six
free.

In just a few decades, skiing has evolved from a niche
sport to something whole families can afford and enjoy.
Most BC resorts are now diversifying, offering high-
quality downhill, but also cross-country, snow-shoeing,
luge, snow-boarding and tubing, which might encourage
you to bring out that inner child and plummet down a
mountain on an inner tube.

MMMMM... Marilyn in the West

Taking a lesson
from the blonde bombshell

by Ann CAMPBELL

MMy husband wants me to be MMMMM...Marilyn. No, not for the obvious reason — I'm already blonde and, well, sort of voluptuous. It's the attitude he's after.

The legendary bombshell is quoted as saying, "Ever notice that 'What the hell' is always the right decision?" My husband hopes I'll cop that attitude and agree to indulge in some of British Columbia's more decadent winter activities, from starlit fondues and storm-watching to a wild adventure, involving a full-body harness and cable stretched high above a raging river.

Oh, what the hell.

Sweet Nights

The stars sparkle as we strap on snowshoes and tromp into the snowy forests of Mount Seymour, 30 minutes outside downtown Vancouver, on the Night Magic Chocolate Fondue Tour (\$38, Saturday evenings and Valentine's Day). We follow our guide and his bobbing head-

lamp to a candle-lit grove where hot chocolate, fruit and pots of chocolate await. For 30 minutes we nibble and sip and congratulate ourselves on being out on such a perfect night. When I've had my fill — really, I don't think I could eat another morsel — I spy a lonely strawberry. "What the hell," I say as I plunge it into the chocolate.

Mild Days

What could be more decadent than enjoying fine weather while the rest of the country shovels snow? Vancouver Island is not only blessed with Canada's mildest climate, it also has golf courses and spa resorts so perfectly spaced out they practically scream, "Road trip!"

If golf's your game, choose the Vancouver Island Golf Trail package and enjoy six rounds of golf and six days' accommodation starting at \$525. If spas are your thing, begin at the elegant Willow Stream Spa in Victoria's Fairmont Empress hotel, then venture north to the newly expanded Grotto Spa in Parksville's Tigh-Na-Mara Seaside Resort. Continue on to the girl-group friendly Kingfisher Oceanside Resort and Spa in Courtney and the wild west-coast retreat of Tauca Lea Resort in Ucluelet. And don't forget, whenever a spa attendant offers you anything — tea, lotion, hot clothes — smile and say, "Well, why not?"

Mondo Waves

An "Oh, what the hell" attitude is your most important accessory during Tofino's winter storm-watching season. That and the rain slicker that hangs in your room at the Wickaninnish Inn. This rustically elegant Relais & Chateaux property is renowned for its spa, cuisine and location on the edge of the Pacific. Brave the elements with a walk on the beach, then return to your room to light a fire, fill the soaker tub and — what the hell — order room service (2-night packages from \$719).

Powder and Poker

Imagine snow swirling as your Canadian Mountain Holidays helicopter lifts off, leaving you on the crest of a remote mountain in eastern B.C. Your

guide points to a pristine chute and yells, "Are you ready?" You're tired — you've been in deep powder all day — but you know the right answer: "Hell, yes!"

CMH has a wild card up its sleeve this season with their "Powder and Poker" week, April 22 to 29 at Adamant Lodge. Guests ski all day, then enjoy poker lessons and tournaments each evening, lead by World Poker Tour champion Phil Gordon. The \$5,889 fee includes accommodations, meals, most alcohol and \$500 in fun chips. At the end of the week, all winnings are donated to charity.

Slippery slopes

If you prefer lift-assisted skiing, consider a stay at the Four Seasons Whistler, recently voted Canada's Top Resort by readers of Conde Nast Traveler. Rooms start at \$495 and are thrillingly spacious, with crisp white duvets, gas fireplaces and bathrooms larger than your first apartment.

On the weekend we visit, our ski equipment is magically transported from our car to the ski concierge at the base of Blackcomb Mountain (a five-minute stroll from the hotel). When we arrive, everything's set — boots warmed, skis glistening, cheerful staff member Emma ready to help. "May I buckle your boots for you?" she asks. I begin to say no — really, this is a slippery slope to total decadence — then decide, what the hell. Another attendant hands me my skis and I purr, "I could so get used to this."

Serious air

I discover skiing is not the only way to get your heart pumping at Whistler. A Ziptrek Eco-tour (\$98) involves climbing into a full body harness and zooming along steel cables stretched high across turbulent Fitzsimmons Creek. On the third of my five crossings, Nicole, my guide, comes up with a cool idea. "How about going backwards?" she asks. I've just come across the 355-metre cable and am feeling an adrenaline rush, big time. Bet you can guess my answer.

B.C. information and packages:

Tourism British Columbia: www.hellobc.com

Four Seasons Whistler: www.fourseasons.com/whistler

Mount Seymour: www.mountseymour.com

Vancouver Island Golf Trail:

www.golfvancouverisland.ca, www.islands.bc.ca

Photo by: Bell 407, Roger Laurilla

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Falcon Lake
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www.falcontrails.mb.ca

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www.holidaymountain.com

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Radcliffe Hills Ski Area
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Brookvale
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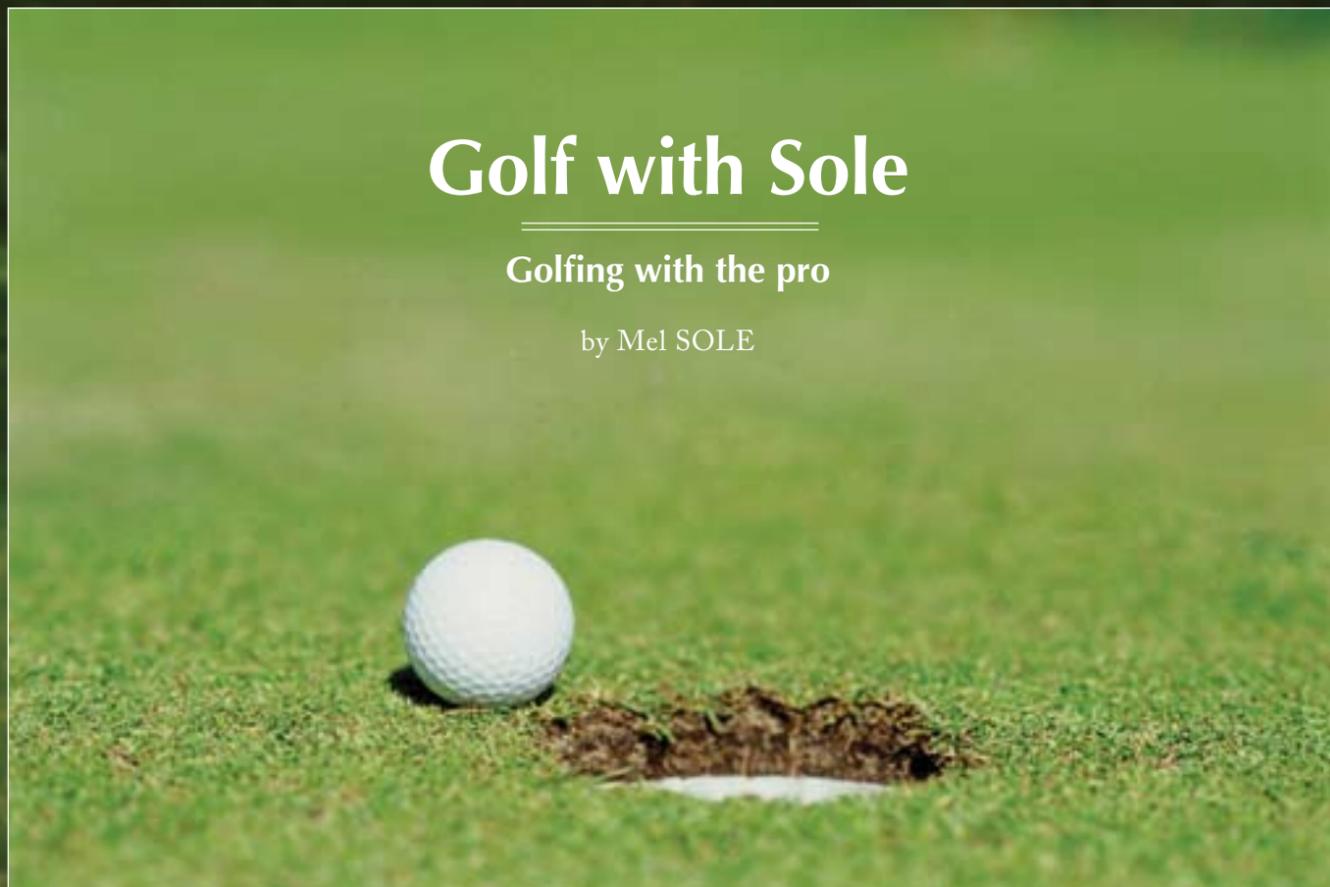


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The Grip - Which One is Right for Your Hand Type?

The grip is the most neglected element of the golf swing. As an instructor I see more bad grips than bad swings, and I have never seen a good player with a bad grip.

For reasons of clarity I will be referring to top hand and bottom hand rather than left or right. This is so the article can be understood by both left- and right-handed golfers.

To decide which grip is best for you, you need to know what type of hands you have. Do you have strong hands and arms, or are you weak in that area, and are your fingers long and thin or short and pudgy? This will help determine the right grip for you.



Picture #1

The Baseball Grip

The baseball or 10-finger grip is good for lady golfers and senior golfers

who do not have a lot of strength in their wrists and forearms. This allows the lower hand to be a little more active through the hitting area, helping rotation and resulting in straighter shots and more distance (Pic. #1).

The Overlapping Grip

The Overlapping or Vardon grip (named after famous British golfer Harry Vardon) is most popular and is suitable for most male golfers and female golfers with strong arms and wrists. This grip unifies the hands and helps them work as one unit. It is used by 85 to 90 percent of the golfers today (Pic. #2).



Picture #2

The Interlocking Grip

The interlocking grip works well for people with short fingers and pudgy palms who find it difficult to get the small finger to overlap correctly or sufficiently. The small finger and index finger of the opposite hand interlock again unifying the hands in order to work as one unit. (Jack Nicklaus uses this grip so it's obviously effective!)



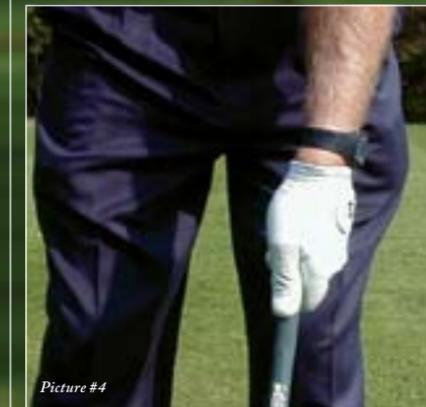
Picture #3

There are a number of common denominators regardless of which grip you choose. For clarity for both right- and left-handed golfers, I will say "back and front" rather than left or right and "upper and lower" for the hands (Pic. #3).

The Top Hand Position

The top hand needs to be placed on the club so that as you look down you can see two knuckles. The line formed by

the thumb and the back of the hand is pointing to the back shoulder as seen in Picture #4.



Picture #4

The Bottom Hand Position

The bottom hand is placed on the club with the palms adjacent to one another and the lines formed by the thumbs and the back of the hands are parallel to one another. The lifeline of the bottom hand fits snugly over the thumb of the top hand. This position is important so take your time in getting the right feel. The thumb and index



Picture #5

finger of the bottom hand form a slight "trigger grip" with the tips of each finger touching.

As you can see in Picture #5, the grip should have no gaps. I suggest

that golfers make it a habit to hold the club often so that the grip they are adopting feels comfortable as soon as possible. As a beginner, I used to sit watching TV in the evenings with the club in my hands and just move it around to get the feeling that the club and my hands were becoming one. If you ever see a picture of Arnold Palmer's grip, it seems like he was born with a golf club in his hands!

Since the grip is going to be with you for the rest of your golfing life, work diligently at this in the beginning — you won't be sorry. 

MEL SOLE is owner and operator of the Phil Ritson-Mel Sole Golf Schools in the USA and Mexico. School sites include Ellicottville NY and Pawleys Island SC (Myrtle Beach). Sole has been consistently named a "Top Teacher" by Golf Magazine (most recently in the February 2005 issue).

The Ritson-Sole Golf School scored in the top five of "America's 25 Best Golf Schools" in Golf Magazine in June 2005.

Mel's golf instructional book titled, Golf: Step-by-Step was published by Sterling Publishing in 2003. He is a teaching editor with Golf Tips magazine, and his lessons have also appeared in Golf Digest, Golf Magazine and Golf Illustrated.

Reach Mel at his South Carolina headquarters, 1.800.624.4653. info@ritson-sole.com, www.ritson-sole.com

THE SOARING SUCCESS OF THE SMALL BUSINESS SECTOR

As the small business sector continues to lead the charge in an improving Canadian economy, small businesses are on the lookout for new ways to maintain the momentum.

● ● ● ● FOR MOST, THE GOAL IS not only to improve profitability and increase productivity — but also, to allocate less time for administrative duties and more time for business building or even, rest and relaxation.

Business advisors and tax professionals agree, there are ways to achieve these goals. Here's what they suggest:

1. Separate business and personal expenses. This will simplify life at tax time,

resulting in fewer headaches. By consolidating business purchases, you maintain an accurate record of your business costs (and profits).

2. Build a credit history for your company. Good credit is important, particularly if a business wants to grow. Registering for recurring payments and pre-authorized debit will ensure good payment records.

3. Seek out business tools that improve productivity and increase profitability. In

particular, look for multi-faceted tools that will let you run reports that analyze and organize your purchases and help you plan your business expenses.

4. Take advantage of the extra benefits that come with some credit cards, such as travel protection and extended warranties for your business purchases.

By incorporating this advice, small business owners can get a few steps closer to a better work/life balance.



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THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Kevin Wallace and Saul Zaentz in association with David & Ed Mirvish and Michael Cohl present **THE LORD OF THE RINGS** world premiere performances beginning February 4, 2006 at The Princess of Wales Theatre, 300 King Street West, Toronto. For more information, or to make a reservation visit www.lotr.com or call 416.872.1212 or Toll Free at 1.800.461.3333



HAIR

Canstage's revival production of **Hair**, big and beautiful, shakes loose March 20-April 22. CanStage 416.368.3110, boxoffice@canstage.com or Ticketmaster 416.872.1111

SWAN LAKE AT THE HUMMINGBIRD

After stunning successes across Canada, James Kudelka's **Swan Lake** returns for a final bow at the Hummingbird Centre February 2006. Siegfried and Odette's epic love affair graces the stage to Tchaikovsky's exquisite score and brings the breathtaking beauty first seen in 1880 Moscow to Toronto one more time. www.national.ballet.ca



BRITISH COLUMBIA

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

The diverse and substantial work of **Brian Jungen** is on exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery until April 30th. This collection of drawings, assemblage, and installations presents a biting commentary on consumerism and the production of culture. Jungen transforms prefabricated materials, such as running shoes and lawn furniture, into intricate and challenging commentaries on the establishment of consumer culture and its implications for indigenous cultures. Vancouver-born, but based out of Montreal and New York, this display at the Vancouver Art Gallery is an excellent opportunity to experience the full breadth of his wit.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

CARIBOU CARNIVAL

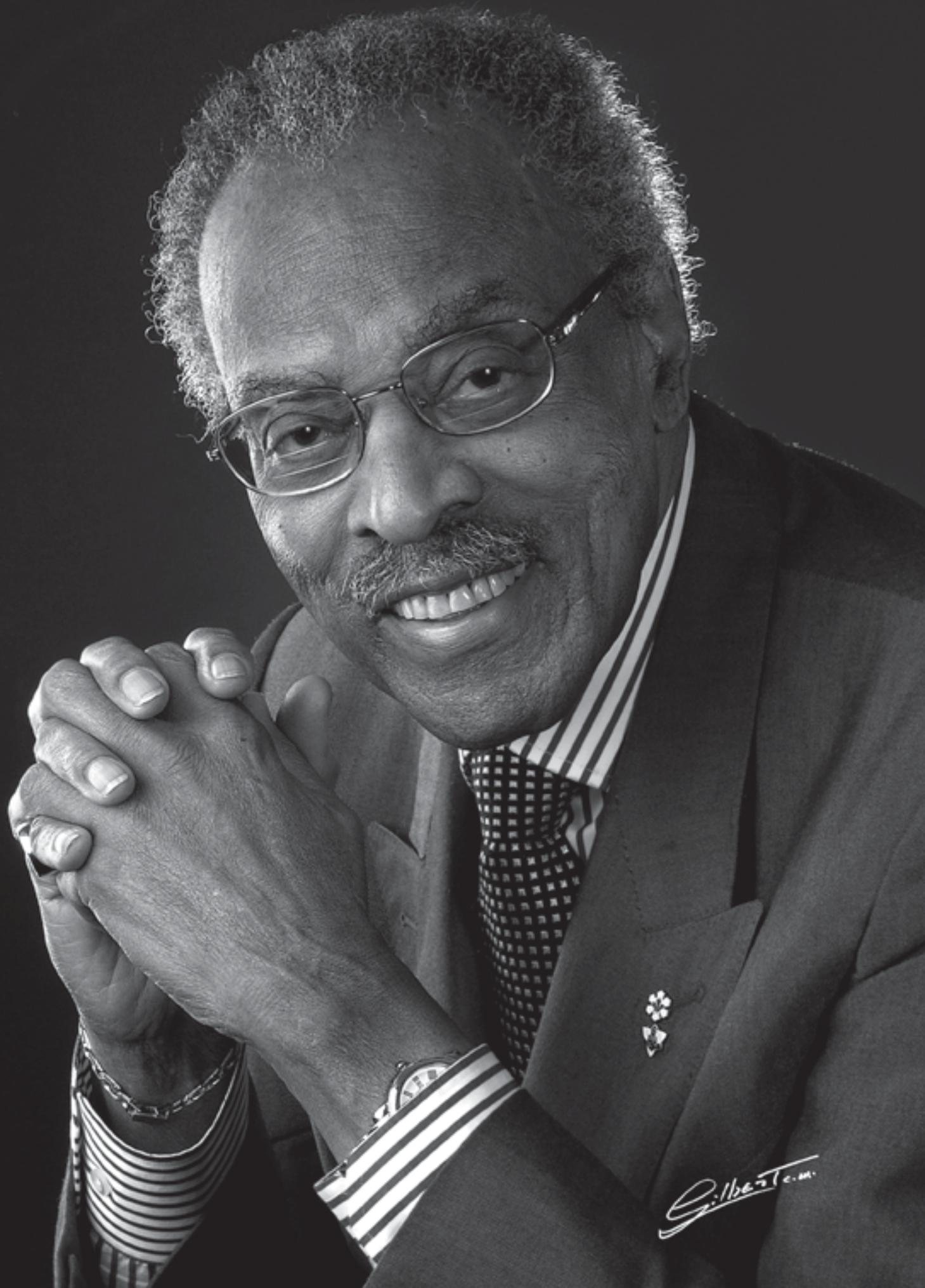
The Diamond Capital of Canada hosts the annual **Caribou Carnival**. During the weekend-long festivities Yellowknife celebrates the coming of spring. From March 25 to 27, end-of-winter mayhem ensues and all stops are pulled out. This great northern tradition features Inuit Games, snow sculpture contests, and the famed Ice Worm Race (mountain bike racing across frozen lakes). The festivities crescendo with the Caribou Capers and the Crowning of the Queen! For more information visit www.cariboucarnival.com or call 867.873.9698.

NEW BRUNSWICK

ART IN DISPUTE

The Beaverbrook Art Gallery is proud to extend its controversial exhibition "**art in dispute: The Beaverbrook Art Gallery.**" The dispute between the Art Gallery and the interest holders of Lord Beaverbrook's estate has troubled the ownership of almost half the gallery's collection. The exhibition affords viewers an opportunity to view the works in question and learn more about the dispute and its impact on the Beaverbrook Gallery and museum processes. The exhibition also provides an opportunity to experience a Salon-style hanging so popular in Victorian era galleries and homes. To find out more visit www.beaverbrookartgallery.org.

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