



presents

the worthy 30



CHERCHEZ LES FEMMES

BY SHINAN GOVANI *with Brittany Mahaney*

And we're back! Last week we anointed the 514's 15 most Worthy gentlemen, a list that lives on at natpo.st/worthymenMTL. Today, bearing beaucoup de babes, we present you our quasi-annual, entirely unscientific second half of the Worthy 30: The Montreal Edition, turning our gazes now to local swans of all shapes and (heel) sizes, not to mention varying states of adorable neuroses. Based on my own social gallops around the town and some pithy recommendations, here they are! Let's review: To be eligible, one needed a modicum of attractiveness, some discernment, a dollop of accomplishment and that un-pin-downable thing we call "It." Some of these choice chicks are more famous than others. Others are more available than some (to qualify, they needed to be unmarried, unengaged or unterminally shacked-up!). We run the gamut, we do, from one of Canada's ne plus ultra in heiresses to a gravitas-loaded prof at McGill to one of le belle ville's steamiest chefs! Oh, and way back in February, we anointed Toronto's most eligible: Get reacquainted at natpo.st/worthymenTO and natpo.st/worthyladiesTO



FRANCE-MICHÈLE THOMAS

age 29 forever

She knows her *Tatler* as well as she knows her *Paris Match*. And, boy, does she have a handle on her "investment pieces."

Both style savant and pop cultural polymath — and born in Haiti! — she PR-pros these days at Montreal's Tuxedo Agency. **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** I like to mix things up, there are some living and some deceased, all of them fabulous. Dame Barbara Cartland, Émile Zola, Michelle Obama, Victoria Beckham, the Davids (Gahan and Bowie), Bill Maher, George Clooney, Dominic Dunne, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Nan Kempner (for my friend Vyara), Yves Saint-Laurent (pre-crazy), Haider Ackermann and Olivier Rousteing. **GUILTY PLEASURE** Long brunches and dinners. Lazy afternoons.

WORDS TO LIVE BY A wise friend once said "Trying to change people is like sitting in your car in the parking lot of a Canadian Tire, waiting to buy tomatoes." **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *The Draughtsman's Contract* by Peter Greenaway and *High Heels* by Pedro Almodóvar. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Cate Blanchett, because she can play anyone. Even me. **DREAM VACATION** French Polynesia, and to travel through Brazil, no backpacks please. **THE TRAIT YOU MOST VALUE IN OTHERS** Loyalty and honesty. Equally. **A PERSON LIVING OR DEAD YOU MOST ADMIRE** Barack Obama.



KIRSTEN JOHNSON

age 40

Armed with a masters in public health from Harvard and a magna cum laude in the school of globe-trot, this assistant professor in McGill's Faculty of Medicine has a plethora of side roles, including, oh, the directorship of the McGill Humanitarian Studies Initiative (HSI). The latter being where she teaches aide workers in the "nuts and bolts of disaster response." A one-woman manifestation of that old saw: Busy People Get

More Done. **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** The Dalai Lama, Aung San Suu Kyi and Nelson Mandela. **GUILTY PLEASURE** Milk chocolate. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** Freedom is the oxygen of the soul. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *Indiana Jones and Star Wars*. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Charlize Theron. **YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE** All the comforts of living in North America. **DREAM VACATION** Sailing on a dive boat through Micronesia or mountain climbing in Bhutan. **A PERSON LIVING OR DEAD YOU MOST ADMIRE** Romeo Dallaire. **YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION** My son, Declan.

SONIA BENEZRA

age 50

A charm sorceress who knows her portion controls! A fixture on the Quebec media scene for 25 years — she's interviewed *les tout* via her show on both TV and radio — this "Oprah of French Canada" also recently became the first-ever Canadian spokesperson for Jenny Craig (breaking all sales records in Quebec). There are those who say she's never been hotter. **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** Robert Redford **GUILTY PLEASURE** Napping.



EMMA CARDARELLI

age 33

The things she can do with a pasta strainer! This in-season cook was the former chef de cuisine at the very popular Liverpool House, and is now busy readying to open what'll be one of the eating stops in the city when it does — her own place, Nora Gray. (Oh, and, psst... she can do Sigmund as well as she

can Nigella! One of her majors in university was psychology!) **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** My nonna, Eleanora, Julia Child and Alice Waters. **GUILTY PLEASURE** Any fried food, I just can't help myself! **WORDS TO LIVE BY** Love and laughter are the food of life. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *Mostly Martha*, a great little German flick about cooking and love. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Maybe Amy Adams? **DREAM VACATION** Right now, it would have to be a month in Sicily. **THE TRAIT YOU MOST VALUE IN OTHERS** A sense of humour!

STÉPHANIE TATUNCHAK

age 19

As a host at one of the hottest restaurants *maintenant* in Montreal, Le Filet, this young thing gives good Charlotte Gainsbourg. Watch her be all pensive and coquettish and androgynously ethereal as she guides you to your table. **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** J.D. Salinger and Albert Camus. **GUILTY PLEASURE** The Food Channel. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** "Everything has been figured out, except how to live" — Jean-Paul Sartre. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** It has very little depth and content but there's no other movie that makes me laugh at every line — *Snatch*. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Zoëe Deschanel. **YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE** A plane ticket bought on an impulse.



THE QUALITY YOU MOST VALUE IN YOURSELF "Wit is cultured insolence" — Aristotle. **YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION** A restored Steinway.



WORDS TO LIVE BY In life the only thing that really belongs to you is what you've given away. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *All About Eve*. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Jennifer Lopez. **THE TRAIT YOU MOST VALUE IN OTHERS** Compassion. **THE QUALITY**

YOU MOST VALUE IN YOURSELF Compassion. **A PERSON LIVING OR DEAD YOU MOST ADMIRE** My father, who passed away when I was 17. **YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION** As cliché as it sounds, my family and friends.



JENNIFER CAMPBELL

age old enough to know better

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: FRANCE-MICHÈLE AND ABEILLE — VINCENTZO D'ALTO FOR NATIONAL POST; EMMA — BRYANNA BRADLEY / POSTMEDIA NEWS; JENNIFER — ALLEN MCINNES / POSTMEDIA NEWS; SONIA — CRILA PHOTOGRAPHY; KIRSTEN — RACHEL GRANOFFSKY.

More Worthies await on the next page...

Perignon, sky-high stilettos, reality TV, glam vamps. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** Live your best life. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *Love Actually*. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** The love child of Monica Bellucci and Sacha Baron Cohen. **YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE** My dog Presley, King Canine. **DREAM VACATION** Aloha, Hawaii! **THE TRAIT YOU MOST VALUE IN OTHERS** Integrity. **THE QUALITY YOU MOST VALUE IN YOURSELF** Loyalty. **A PERSON LIVING OR DEAD YOU MOST ADMIRE** Barack Obama. **YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION** Lucky charm bracelet.



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VANCOUVER, WE'RE COMING FOR YOU THIS FALL!

Know any Worthy Lotuslanders? Send their specifics to sgovani@nationalpost.com, and keep reading for the next edition of The Worthy 30 presented by **GREY GOOSE VODKA**



GENEVIÈVE BORNE

age 42

Strike a pose! This television sweetie and must-have guest — whose long-ago interview with Madonna is still considered by some a classic — earned the affinity of her home province when, in a public fight with breast cancer a few years back, she bravely appeared on TV with a bald head. A survivor in more ways than one. **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** Dalai Lama, Deepak Chopra, Paul McCartney and Madonna. **GUILTY PLEASURE** Dancing to Madonna in my living room. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** There are a thousand lives in one life. What I am today I never was and never will be again. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Madonna (I know, I'm fascinated by her!). **DREAM VACATION** Bali. **THE TRAIT YOU MOST VALUE IN OTHERS** Discretion. **THE QUALITY YOU MOST VALUE IN YOURSELF** Discretion. **A PERSON LIVING OR DEAD YOU MOST ADMIRE** Paul McCartney.



ALISON SILCOFF

ageless

The philanthropic genie behind one of Canada's biggest annual galas, the Daffodil Ball, she's helped to raise more than \$21.5-million net over the years for the Canadian Cancer society. Has the ability to mine humour in even the unlikely of places. **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** Brilliant historian and celebrity TV personality Simon Schama (an old friend from my Cambridge days), who can hold forth on any subject from Schubert to stilettos and from Einstein to ice cream, as well as his specialty subject; my favourite playwright and cynical wit Alan Bennett, Anna Wintour,

Jon Stewart, Nigella Lawson. **GUILTY PLEASURE** Sleeping in till 10 a.m. Then breakfast in bed with all the newspapers. **YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE** A week in Milan shopping, going to La Scala and eating in wonderful restaurants. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** "Never give up. Never, ever, ever" — Churchill. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *Sophie's Choice*. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Marisa Berenson. **DREAM VACATION** India. I've never been and it's been top of my list for years. **A PERSON LIVING OR DEAD YOU MOST ADMIRE** Pierre Trudeau. **THE TRAIT YOU MOST VALUE IN OTHERS** Intellectual brilliance combined with a sense of humour and irreverence. **THE QUALITY YOU MOST VALUE IN YOURSELF** Resilience.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: GENEVIÈVE — MARIE-FRANCE COALLIER / POST-MEDIA NEWS; ALISON — KEVIN ALLWOOD; RACHELLE — JEFF VESPA / WIRE IMAGE / GETTY; CAROLINE — CRILA PHOTOGRAPHY; SOPHIE — PAT PINOTTI FROM STUDIO 55; LAURIN — JOHN MAHONEY / POSTMEDIA NEWS



RACHELLE LEFEVRE

age 32

Riotous red of hair and green in terms of causes, this pot-stirring thespian — "Canada's frank new sweetheart" is how she's been described — has been all over the big-and-small radar in recent years: a breakout in the original *Twilight*, as one of the many wives in *Barney's Version*, and as an adventure-packing doc on ABC's *Off The Map*. Back in her hometown she is these days shooting a film — a French one! "I love how messy human beings are," she's said. "We're trying to fit into the boxes in society, yet we have those moments where we want to come unhinged. I'm always looking for the roles where it gets messy."



SOPHIE DESMARAIS

age 49, but I like to say I'm 39

With an amiable disposition and ravishing looks — à la Michelle Pfeiffer — this is one heiress who brings way more to the table than just loot. An extreme philanthropist, this daughter of Power Corp. mogul Paul Desmarais Sr. is also a booster of hometown entrepreneurialism — even lending her name (and face!) to Lift and Firm, an anti-aging panacea courtesy of cosmetics doyenne Lise Watier. Divorced from her in-the-news Parisian husband

Éric Le Moine de Sérigny, she was also "spotted" some time back in the orbit of federal minister Peter MacKay. **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** Oprah, Nelson Mandela and Céline Dion. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** I live by so many words but I'd say generosity because it's full of other words like empathy, help, share and give. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *Legends of the Fall*, *Pretty Woman* and *The Notebook*. **YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE** Flying overseas in a private plane with my brother — Paris to Montreal. **THE TRAIT YOU MOST VALUE IN OTHERS** Honesty and a sense of humour. **THE QUALITY YOU MOST VALUE IN YOURSELF** Sense of humour. **A PERSON LIVING OR DEAD YOU MOST ADMIRE** My father. **YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION** My children's well-being.



BRIGITTE CHARTRAND

age 34

Think Nirvana and *Edward Scissorhands*. That's who this professional clotheshorse points to in describing some of her earliest influences. A wisp of a thing, with a knack for fashion clairvoyance, her boutique, Reborn, is the hot destination in town. **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** Leonard Cohen, Adrien Brody, David Bowie. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** Live your life, not the one others wish for you. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *Jamon Jamon*, *Before Night Falls*, *Edward Scissorhands*. **YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE** My dog, Pema. **DREAM VACATION** Anywhere tropical *without* my cellphone ... **YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION** My store, Reborn.



LAURIN LIU

age 20

One of the gotcha batch of young NDP MPs elected in the last national election, Liu is all Witherspoonian spunk and freshman passion. Fluent in English, French and Cantonese, soon enough she'll be combining her parliamentary hijinks with her studies at McGill (a major in History and Cultural Studies with a minor in Islamic Studies!) **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** Judith Butler, Eve Ensler and Alice from *Eyes Wide Shut*. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** "Words should express just what one wants to say" — Nana Kleinfurkenheim. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *Sedmikrásky (Daisies)* (1966). **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Bill Murray. **A PERSON LIVING OR DEAD YOU MOST ADMIRE** Tarja Halonen.



CAROLINE NÉRON

age 37

So beautiful, she was the bombshell who fell out of the sky into Richard Branson's arms in a 2005 campaign for Virgin Mobile! An actress/singer/vampire — well, she did play the latter once in a film — she's also got her own self-styled jewellery collection. It, and she, continue to turn heads. **DREAM DIN-**

NER GUESTS René Angélil, Céline Dion and Guy Laliberté. **GUILTY PLEASURE** When in Paris, having dinner with friends at Hotel Costes. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** *La vie est bien faite*. It means you reap what you sow. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Mila Kunis. **A PERSON LIVING OR DEAD YOU MOST ADMIRE** Guy Laliberté. **YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION** My most treasured gift (but not possession), my daughter.



KATHY ACIMOVIC

age 32

Fizzy, clever and very well-shod: that's how this desirable shapes up. The senior PR manager for ALDO, she's not just a world-

wide shoe enabler — she's an ambassador, herself, for Montreal. **DREAM DINNER GUESTS** Josh Peskowitz, David de Rothschild, Andy Samberg, Dave Eggers, Francis Ford Coppola and Charles Saatchi. **GUILTY PLEASURE** The *Step Up* movie franchise, I hear *Step Up 4Ever* is in the works! Along with just about every teen show on the CW. **WORDS TO LIVE BY** Fail again. Fail better. **FAVOURITE MOVIE** *Rear Window*. **WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE** Rachel McAdams. **YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE** Shoes — hence the gig. **DREAM VACATION** Surf camp. **THE QUALITY YOU MOST VALUE IN YOURSELF** Unwavering enthusiasm for the things I love.

AND THE VERY HONOURABLE MENTIONS...



JESSICA PARÉ

Not sure about her stenography skills in real life, but this much is true: This actress drives many men mad!



MANON GAUTHIER

Oh, the sangfroid of this CEO. Ranked one of Canada's "Most Powerful Women," she keeps things moving at the Segal Centre for Performing Arts.



JULIE COUTURE

Delicious! Surely, you know the mummy type! Adds sparkle to some of the higher echelons.



NIKKI YANOFSKY

Do you believe? The second coming of Ella Fitzgerald — even if this scatter still has to do homework!



PHYLLIS LAMBERT

The Bronfman grande dame has rightly been dubbed "The Joan of Architecture" by the *Wall Street Journal*.