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WITH CHRISTIAN BALE, STAR
OF TERMINATOR: SALVATION**

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THE MIGHTY BALE

STRUT SITS DOWN WITH MOODY, BROODY SUPERSTAR CHRISTIAN BALE AND ASKS HIM TO REFLECT ON HOW HE SAVED ONE ICONIC FRANCHISE (*BATMAN*) AND IS ABOUT TO RESURRECT ANOTHER (*TERMINATOR*). FOR A YOUNG GUY, HE'S GOT A LOT RIDING ON HIS SHOULDERS.

By Fred Topel

LARSEN & TALEBERT/ICON INTERNATIONAL

Unlike the rest of us, Christian Bale made some very smart decisions at the dumb age of 12. He was just a kid who happened to catch the eye of Steven Spielberg, who cast him in his epic war film *Empire of the Sun*. Bale played a young boy who winds up alone in an internment camp. The film contained difficult, emotional material even for established actors like John Malkovich. But there was Bale, mesmerizing, captivating. At 12.

Bale grew up in England, Portugal and the US, raised by a dancer mother and two actor grandfathers. He was already on stage at 10. After *Empire*, he took on some typical teen roles in *Newsies*, *Swing Kids* and *Little Women* before returning to serious fare in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1999, the same year he became one of cinema's most memorable lunatics, Patrick Bateman in *American Psycho*. A string of smaller films followed (*Equilibrium*, *Laurel Canyon*), until six years later when Bale revived a faltering superhero franchise with *Batman Begins*. With its sequel, *The Dark Knight*, leading the decade's box-office totals by a solid \$100 million and generating Oscar buzz as early as last summer, another of Bale's choices proved sound.

With such a superb track record, Bale at 35 can be confident in his latest decision: to carry the first *Terminator* film without Arnold Schwarzenegger. In this summer's *Terminator: Salvation*, Bale plays the role of John Connor, formerly played by Edward Furlong and Nick Stahl in movies and Thomas Dekker on television. With Schwarzenegger busy running California,

ing "it would be weird to hear a cockney actor talk about Bruce Wayne." He is in the middle of shooting *Terminator*, and getting him to agree to the role was a hard sell. He already had a big franchise, and he only agreed to *Batman* because he believed in director Christopher Nolan's approach to comic-book material. "Initially, it was not an attraction," says Bale of *Salvation*. "I wasn't sure where it could go. Before I gave an answer, I went back and reviewed the other movies. I felt like okay, unlike *Batman Begins*, where we were saying that this is the beginning, [*Salvation*] would be something where we would be respecting the previous mythology."

Were *Salvation* a new start to the story, Bale might have found it too similar to his *Batman* role. "What I view in *Salvation* and what has ultimately made me choose to make it is that I see the same potential for reinvention and for breathing new life into the mythology. That's what I view our responsibility as filmmakers to be. It's pointless if we don't succeed in doing that."

That sort of analysis carries through to Bale's day-to-day life. His *Terminator* director, Joseph "McG" McGinty Nichol, describes the on-set discussions he had with Bale. "I can't go, 'Okay Christian, you go off camera left.' Christian is going to talk to me about what went into the decision to go off camera left, which is wonderful. It's the elegant opposition you want. You don't want people just going, 'Yeah, whatever, tell me what to do and we'll do it.'"

“HE’S THE MOST PROFESSIONAL, PASSIONATE ACTOR YOU’RE EVER GOING

this *Terminator* needs Bale more than Bale needs another hit.

The last time we saw a *Terminator* was in 2003's *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines*. That film ended with John Connor (Stahl) and Kate Brewer (Claire Danes) facing the rise of Skynet, locked in a safety bunker while robots enslave mankind. The film sets up the future where *Salvation* will begin with Bale as John Connor.

We sat down with Bale in Beverly Hills to talk about his two blockbuster roles. It was right before his now infamous on-set rant and subsequent apology. Interestingly, when discussing American icons like Batman, Bale maintains his American accent, believ-

Even the decision to do *The Dark Knight*, which seems like a no-brainer now, required equal consideration when it was just a collection of storyboards on Nolan's desk. Bale was not 100-percent sure he wanted to be in a sequel. "I knew that Chris had proven his ideas in *Batman Begins*, so I feel as though he was given more freedom to make exactly the movie that he wished to make for *The Dark Knight*. He can correct me on that if I'm wrong, but that was my feeling."

Even more than the script and his own instincts, there is one person who can convince Christian Bale to choose any given film. "The director makes the movie fantastic, and if a movie fails miserably, it's the director. He should get all the credit and all the blame.

TO FIND. IT'S JUST THAT SIMPLE. BALE IS ALL ABOUT THE WORK.”



LARSEN & TALBERT/ICON INTERNATIONAL



THE PRESTIGE



3:10 TO YUMA



BATMAN BEGINS



RESCUE DAWN



THE MACHINIST



AMERICAN PSYCHO

FILMOGRAPHY + ROLE

- KILLING PABLO (2009) ▶ Major Steve Jacoby
- PUBLIC ENEMIES (2009) ▶ Melvin Purvis
- TERMINATOR: SALVATION (2009) ▶ John Connor
- THE DARK KNIGHT (2008) ▶ Bruce Wayne/Batman
- I'M NOT THERE (2007) ▶ Jack/Pastor John
- 3:10 TO YUMA (2007) ▶ Dan Evans
- THE PRESTIGE (2006) ▶ Alfred Borden
- RESCUE DAWN (2006) ▶ Dieter Dengler
- THE NEW WORLD (2005) ▶ John Rolfe
- BATMAN BEGINS (2005) ▶ Bruce Wayne/Batman
- HARSH TIMES (2005) ▶ Jim Luther Davis
- THE MACHINIST (2004) ▶ Trevor Reznik
- EQUILIBRIUM (2002) ▶ John Preston
- REIGN OF FIRE (2002) ▶ Quinn Abercromby
- LAUREL CANYON (2002) ▶ Sam
- CAPTAIN CORELLI'S MANDOLIN (2001) ▶ Mandras
- SHAFT (2000) ▶ Walter Wade, Jr.
- AMERICAN PSYCHO (2000) ▶ Patrick Bateman
- A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (1999) ▶ Demetrius
- ALL THE LITTLE ANIMALS (1998) ▶ Bobby Platt
- VELVET GOLDMINE (1998) ▶ Arthur Stuart
- METROLAND (1997) ▶ Chris
- THE SECRET AGENT (1996) ▶ Stevie
- THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY (1996) ▶ Edward Rosier
- LITTLE WOMEN (1994) ▶ Laurie
- PRINCE OF JUTLAND (1994) ▶ Amlred
- SWING KIDS (1993) ▶ Thomas Berger
- NEWSIES (1992) ▶ Jack "Cowboy" Kelly
- EMPIRE OF THE SUN (1987) ▶ Jim "Jamie" Graham

LARSEN & TALENT/ICON INTERNATIONAL

WARNER BROS. PICTURES (THE PRESTIGE, BATMAN BEGINS), LIONSATE (3:10 TO YUMA, AMERICAN PSYCHO), FILMAX GROUP (THE MACHINIST), MOM (RESCUE DAWN).

I get as much satisfaction from doing a small movie as I do from *Batman* or *Terminator*. Movies are a huge collaboration, and often they don't come out right. I've been in many of those, but I still continue in my belief that if it's done correctly, everything can be superb."

It was Bale's belief in Nolan that sealed the deal for the *Batman* sequel. "I knew Chris was not going to bother making another movie if he didn't feel like he could improve upon the first one. I went to his house, I sat and read the script and felt like he had really nailed it. He exploded all of the clichés of genre movies – this was no longer an action movie. *The Dark Knight* was no longer a superhero movie. This was a movie that can stand shoulder to shoulder with any genre. Of course, we have the resources and the ability to have the spectacle of the stunts and the explosions and all the excitement of that, but without compromising great storytelling. The special effects and explosions, they don't mean crap if they're not in the context of a really great, substantial drama."

The only difficulty in his *Dark Knight* ride was the passing of Heath Ledger before the film's release. Ledger had completed his performance as The Joker when he died of mixed prescription medications. He has since won many awards posthumously for his work, including a recent Oscar, and Bale is happy to share the spotlight.

"It's wonderful that people are recognizing Heath," Bale said as soon as raves came in for his co-star. "I love the fact that Chris created a movie where people are talking about accolades for an actor in a superhero action movie. Usually that is never even considered. So kudos to Chris for doing that, and to Heath for coming forward with that devastating performance."

The coroner ruled Ledger's death an accident. As Bale knew him, Ledger earned his colleagues' respect for his commitment to the Joker role. "He has raised the bar, completely. He was absolutely committed. I enjoyed working with him immensely. Clearly it is tragic that we are talking about this as his last complete performance. I would love it if he were to walk into the room right now. He would be talking – he's great company. I looked forward to working with him many times in the future. I looked forward to being his friend for many years to come, but *The Dark Knight* can be a celebration of his talent. He was a fierce talent, and I was very fortunate to witness that talent and work with it and know the man during his lifetime."

In the wake of *The Dark Knight*'s financial and critical success, Bale faced controversy in his personal life. He was arrested for assaulting his mother and sister, though charges were ultimately dropped. Before the matter was settled, reports said Bale defended his



PUBLIC ENEMIES

THE NEW WORLD

HARSH TIMES

REIGN OF FIRE

I'M NOT THERE

THE DARK KNIGHT

AMERICAN PSYCHO

FIVE BEST ROLES

Christian Bale has never been satisfied doing what comes easy. In fact, he tends to go out of his way to make things as difficult as possible. His career is checkered with tough roles that would not have succeeded in the hands of an actor without his level of commitment. Here are his five bravest roles to date.



American Psycho, 2000
Patrick Bateman
 Although the film was neither a financial nor critical success, the role of Patrick Bateman proved to be the breakout of Bale's adult career. He plays Bateman, a vain, arrogant and reprehensible investment banker/serial killer, without the slightest bit of irony. Bale is in the midst of this satire, never winking at the camera, fully committed to the truth of his character. It's a singularly brave performance because the man he plays is so unapologetically contemptible.

himself yet again. Bale has stated that when he started training for the role of Bruce Wayne/Batman he was incapable of doing a single push-up. By the start of filming, he was 210 lbs of solid muscle.



Rescue Dawn, 2006
Dieter Dengler
 Bale signed on for 44 days in the jungles of Thailand under the direction of notorious German filmmaker Werner Herzog. He was keen to take part in the kind of quixotic film productions for which Herzog is legend. And for his participation, Bale was dragged through the jungle by buffalo, forced to swim through snake-infested waters and hung from the railing of a helicopter flying low over the trees.



The Machinist, 2004
Trevor Reznik
 Bale lost 63 lbs to play an insomniac machinist in the middle of a mental breakdown. His performance is haunting and authentic, as he isn't merely playing exhausted and confused, but was actually exhausted and confused throughout the production of the film. The effects of starvation not only transformed Bale's body but his mental state as well, creating a fully convincing performance.



I'm Not There, 2007
Jack/Pastor John
 Before reprising his role as Batman in *The Dark Knight*, Bale signed on to play another iconic American figure, Bob Dylan. Starring alongside Cate Blanchett, Heath Ledger and others, Bale played one of six incarnations of Dylan featured in the film. It was a brave move for an actor just entering the A-list to share billing with five other stars. And it was equally brave to take on a small role in an unorthodox movie that mixes genres and film styles, and to portray someone so prevalent in the minds of the audience.



Batman Begins, 2005
Bruce Wayne/Batman
 Playing Batman may sound like a no-brainer decision to some, but when Bale was tapped for the role, he had just whittled his body down to a skeletal 120 lbs. He had to transform

wife against his own family's insults. At the time, he was midway through *Terminator*, and McG was quick to defend his star. "He's the most professional, passionate actor you're ever going to find. It's just that simple. Bale is all about the work. He loves his wife, he loves his child, he loves being an actor. He's not interested in materialistic things. He wants to come to work prepared. Just for the record, he's a big-hearted, good guy. I've worked with a lot of people, and that's just simply who he is."

Protecting his family may be Bale's most important choice. He avoids personal questions in most interviews. Still, he was aware how things might change for his family after *Batman Begins* hit. He found he was able to keep his wife separate from the hype of the blockbuster film. "I've never really put her in a position where she has to share me with anyone," says Bale. "She's my wife and that's it. That's the most important thing. Of course I appreciate the fans. I'm human. I appreciate people telling me that they like my work and telling me that they think I'm good. That's great, but I absolutely don't get bothered by anyone. People are always, so far at least, very respectful. We haven't had any problems."

A certain intensity, both physical and mental, has accompanied most of Bale's roles. He bulked up in *American Psycho*, then wasted away to skin and bones in *The Machinist*. He endured the simulated torture of a

Cambodian POW camp in *Rescue Dawn* – all, as he says, "because I like going to hell and back." The prospect of more *Terminator* and *Batman* films suggests many more rigours to come.

"Maybe there's a temptation to find a role where preparation involves drinking a lot of wine and eating a lot of pasta and putting on a lot of weight and taking it easy," says Bale. "I think I put my body through enough transformation in the past few years that at my age, I'm starting to think, 'Yeah, I might start to have consequences if I keep doing this to myself.' I'm starting to feel less invulnerable, but I enjoy the notion of strenuous work. I like it. I like to know I really worked at something. I don't like taking it easy. The thing that I dislike most about filmmaking is waiting, waiting around. You're standing around doing nothing. That's what I dislike."

Ultimately, Bale will continue to make blockbuster films like *Terminator* and *Batman* with guaranteed audiences and accolades, and he will likely continue to act in little-seen dramas like *Harsh Times* or *Laurel Canyon*. "I've never given a damn about whether a movie's independent or a studio picture," says Bale. "I've just gone with whatever story appeals. I've made mistakes. Sometimes you can't see the big picture. I'd say that my confidence has grown in knowing whether a film's going to be any good while I'm making it. I will still make mistakes in the future, but fewer than in the past."

UNIVERSAL PICTURES (PUBLIC ENEMIES), NEWLINE CINEMA (THE NEW WORLD), THE WENSTEIN COMPANY (HARSH TIMES), LIONS GATE (AMERICAN PSYCHO), TOUCHSTONE (REIGN OF FIRE), KILLER FILMS (I'M NOT THERE)

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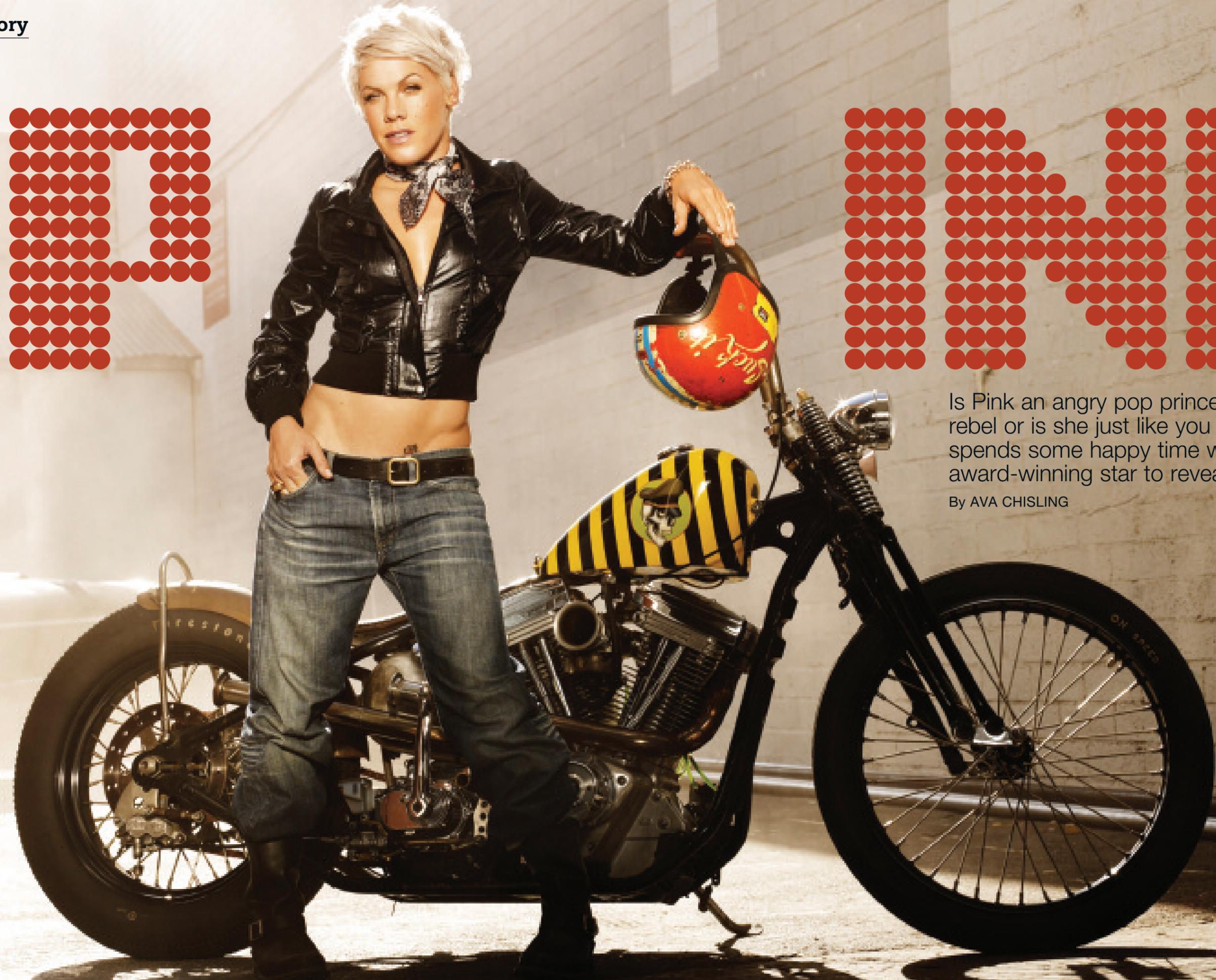


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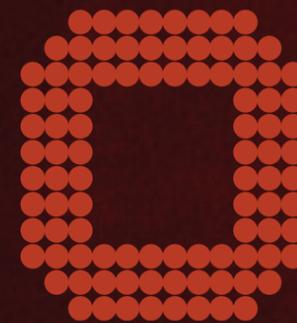
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Is Pink an angry pop princess, an outspoken rebel or is she just like you and me? Strut spends some happy time with the multiple award-winning star to reveal her true colours.

By AVA CHISLING



PAL HANSEN/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES



ver the years, Pink has been described as a hard-ass, a diva, a pop princess, a punk princess and an outright punk – the latter in reference to her character and not her music, often used by critics who just want her to shut up. Recently, in the middle of the promotional madness for her latest CD, *Funhouse*, Pink expressed her opinion of Sarah Palin, the gun-totin', animal-shootin', Republican sidekick to John McCain. Pink said she was a yee-ha or a woman hater or an animal killer, or some combination of all three. It doesn't matter what she actually said, because her words are usually twisted into whatever shape will attract the most viewers. What is clear, however, is that Pink said something that made people mad, as she often does. Her opinions have earned her a reputation as an outspoken hothead and a rebel, but is she either of those things? Let's see.

Pink expresses opinions that many of us share – that little starlets are too skinny and have no talent, that the music business prefers big breasts to true grit, that animals are needlessly slaughtered and that gay people should have the same rights as everyone else. As a kid, she fought with her mom and dad. As an adult, she rides a motorcycle, dyes her hair and has some ink. She has insulted young Hollywood by name, had a short marriage to Carey Hart and is often the subject of gay rumours, particularly since she has been seen kissing women in public. These events are a big deal because someone is there to record her every move. But truth is, taken as a whole, Pink's life is our life, just far more public and definitely a lot more fun.

In her videos, Pink plays the clown, the heroine and the angst-ridden teen. She falls off a skateboard, a treadmill and a bar. She lies naked on the surgeon's table ready to be sliced up like a pig, and dances naked like MJ in front of an audience. Pink's work is filled with wink-winks to her fans because she believes they get her. And why not? Her music is good and her lyrics relatable. She is crazy-photogenic, comfortable as the tough girl, of course, but also the vixen and the fashion diva. Pink and her music have remained consistent, sometimes a bit more rock than pop, sometimes the reverse. The first single off of *Funhouse* ("So What") is great, but it's not unlike her other singles. There is a long-term successful Pink formula, but is it filled with real rebellion? Here's our time with Pink. You be the judge.





Turtleneck **D&G**,
feather skirt **Moschino**,
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Feather dress
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hat Comme des Garçons,
tights Wolford

Black leggings YSL, silk shirt YSL,
belt Gucci, jewels Kenneth J. Lane
and Alexis Bittar, tights Wolford,
shoes Christian Louboutin



Suit YSL, coat Marc Jacobs,
jewels Alexis Bittar

Photographer Danilo Hess
Stylist Annabet Duval
at Fordartists.com
Make-up Martin Wieser
at MYR Jan Inc.
for M.A.C. Cosmetics
Hair Tamara McNaughton
using Bumble and Bumble

AFTER A YEAR OF CAREER HIGHS AND RELATIONSHIP LOWS, STRUT'S FAVOURITE BLUE COMIC FOCUSES ON THE SERIOUS BUSINESS OF MAKING PEOPLE LAUGH. By RYAN BARNETT

DIRTY WORDS & LAUGHTER

It was a bittersweet year for Sarah Silverman. The sweet part included an Emmy nomination for her guest role on *Monk*, the renewal of her series *The Sarah Silverman Program*, and the massive online success of her music video "I'm F*cking Matt Damon," which premiered on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* in January. The bitter part of Silverman's year was her summer breakup with Kimmel, something neither of them spoke about publicly, so let's get back to the good part.

"I'm F*cking Matt Damon" immediately went viral on YouTube, receiving 5 million views in 14 days. Two weeks later, Kimmel aired his own confession in an all-star music video that revealed he was fucking Ben Affleck. Soon after, *People* magazine bestowed the title of "Funniest Couple Alive" on Silverman and Kimmel, and this past September Silverman won a Creative Arts Emmy for the "Matt Damon" video. When the couple broke up in July, media outlets clamoured to be the first to print such "hilarious" headlines as "Kimmel and Silverman No Longer F*cking." Their publicists issued a joint statement

confirming the split and simply added, "Jimmy and Sarah have and will have no further comment." And comment they didn't — Silverman no longer entertains questions about her personal life. Even as rumours of a reconciliation began circulating in October the couple remains coy about their status.

Sarah Silverman is a blue comedienne. Her penchant for dirty words and scatological humour was nurtured at the knee of her father, who was particularly amused by his baby girl's recitation of naughty words: "bitch, bastard, damn, shit." While many of the top comics today came up through improv troupes, Silverman went the route of a stand-up comic. "I didn't know about that other stuff then," she says. At 23, she was hired as a writer and feature player for *Saturday Night Live*, but she was fired after only one season, informed of the news via fax.

Silverman's rise to the top is one of false starts, cancelled sitcoms, bitchy girlfriend roles, mini-controversies and not-so-mini-controversies (like the time she told a joke on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* that hinged on her use of the term "Chinks"). Producers

didn't quite know what to do with the pretty girl with the dirty mouth. It was after her appearance in the documentary *The Aristocrats* and the release of *Jesus Is Magic*, a 2005 film based on her stand-up act, that Silverman began to reach the mainstream. She made the late-night talk show rounds, including several appearances on Kimmel's show. She hosted the Independent Spirit Awards in 2006 and again in 2007, when she also hosted the MTV Movie Awards. That same year, Comedy Central allowed her to create the perfect vehicle for her talent: *The Sarah Silverman Program*. In it, she plays an "earnest, arrogant and ignorant" woman named, not surprisingly, Sarah Silverman. It was an instant hit. The show's first two seasons, like her stand-up act, tackled controversial subjects like abortion, AIDS, racism, necrophilia... It's absurd and not for everybody, but it is often hilarious.

As *The Sarah Silverman Program* enters its third season, I caught up with the comic to discuss stardom, her show, stand-up comedy and her future in "the business of show."



PANDALE SAVIN/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES



“NETWORKS ARE A LOT LIKE INSECURE PEOPLE. THEY WANT WHAT THEY CAN'T HAVE AND ONCE THEY GET IT THEY LOSE INTEREST”

In an interview given around the release of *Jesus Is Magic*, you said “People have said that it’s going to be my year for the past 12 years.” Do you feel like you’ve had your year yet? I hope not. I like the gradual climb, but you never really actually want to “get there,” because then what?

Is stardom something you’re aware of when it’s happening? I’m no Lindsay Lohan, but it seems like people know who I am. Weird – but sometimes it’s really nice. If they recognize me, people might let me hold their babies and stuff. That’s a treat. And I like feeling liked. That’s probably the desperate pathetic need that got me into the business of show. It’s not a new story. We’re all needy freaks, I’m sure.

Some people feel a certain amount of guilt about their success – do you feel this way? I’m in a tiny, dirty hotel room on the road in the middle of nowhere. I’m okay about my incredible success.

There must have been a time in your life when you did see that as successful, no? Living the life of a true comic? Yes, of course. I was happy when I was first paid for doing stand-up. I still am. But I don’t feel guilty about it. Once I was in line at airport security and the woman who worked there grabbed my hand and took me right through – that I felt guilty about. I thought about how I would feel standing in the long line and seeing some asshole from TV go right through. At the same time, I didn’t want to seem ungrateful to this woman. The whole thing can be awkward.

When I saw the first episode of *The Sarah Silverman Program*, I thought it was very funny but way too bizarre and risky to last. Are you surprised by the success of the series? Thanks for the vote of confidence. I’m really happy with the success of [the show] because I’d like to keep doing it. We are all friends – the writers, producers, cast and espe-

cially the crew. We like to be together. And I figure you’ve got it pretty good when you’re laughing really hard every day. It’s kind of a constant contest of who can be more stupid – aggressively stupid – and silly.

I think Steve Agee, who plays Steve on the show, is hilarious. Where did he come from? He’s so good I feel like I should have noticed him elsewhere. He is so natural and hilarious. I met Steve when he played guitar in a play my friend wrote. The second we started talking, it was like we had known each other forever. For a long stretch we hung out every night, playing Nintendo’s GoldenEye, watching *You Don’t Know Jack* – yeah, we’re really, really cool... Actually, there’s a scene in an upcoming episode where we flash back to when Brian [played by Brian Posehn] and I become friends, where I show him the great acoustics you get from peeing into a Pringles can. That actually happened with Steve and I.

Were there many aborted show concepts before landing on the show you have now? I had a deal at HBO for a couple years. I wrote two different pilot scripts with Larry Charles, who is amazing, and they were both awesome but HBO wouldn’t make them. Networks are a lot like insecure people. They want what they can’t have and once they get it they lose interest. I left and went to Comedy Central, we made the pilot, they picked it up and after the first six aired, HBO called my manager to see when my contract was up. Can you believe that? Pathetic.

What were some shows that influenced you while creating *The Sarah Silverman Program*? *Rhoda*, *Pee-wee’s Playhouse*.

Your series is heavily steeped in the traditions of melodrama. Is that an editorial line that was set early on in the show’s development? For me, there’s a lot of comic value in contrasts. Comedy told earnestly, or absurdity served straight as an arrow.

I remember being astonished that you made an episode about your character just assuming she has AIDS, or the episode in which you date and then dump God. Are you surprised by what you’ve been able to get away with on the program? That’s the great thing about Comedy Central – they give notes and are involved, but ultimately the episodes we put out there are exactly what we want them to be. The only compromise is that we have to cut stuff out for time – each show has to be exactly 21 minutes and 30 seconds – and that can be heartbreaking.

Do you find creating 10 episodes good for quality control, or could you do more? I don’t think I could do more than 10. Ten is perfect.

Is there an episode idea that you’re dying to do, but for whatever reason haven’t or won’t? We have an episode we’re sitting on where I realize I’m retarded, and so I become much more productive and self-sufficient than I’ve ever been – getting a job at a grocery store, doing my own laundry, opening my own bank account, etc.

Do you think that the laugh-track/multi-camera sitcom is dead? No, I don’t think so. Maybe it needs to grow and change a little to survive, but *Everybody Loves Raymond* was good, and Julia Louis-Dreyfus’ show as well.

Do you feel like you could play characters far removed from yourself? Yes, and I would like to. Though I think any character you play, you want to bring a part of yourself to it. Jack Nicholson is a brilliant actor who has played all sorts of people, but there’s always Jack in there, don’t you think?

From the time that you said “Chinks” on *Late Night with Conan O’Brien* you’ve been widely seen as a controversial comic. Did you ever say something for which you weren’t prepared for the backlash? The Britney thing at the VMAs. I had no idea she wouldn’t be great, like she had been at every other VMA. They put me on right after her, so I had to do some Britney jokes to segue into the rest of my stuff. They were jokes we wrote – they weren’t off-the-cuff. I didn’t even watch her, I was too nervous preparing for my part. I had no idea she was not going to do well or that she was not well.

You have a unique comedic voice. How long did it take you to develop your brand of comedy? I’m still developing it! It’s a long road. Hopefully it won’t end until I’m an old lady. Being a comic is something you are born with. It’s not a gift, it’s a birth defect.

What kind of act did you begin with? Were there any comedians that you emulated? When you start out, you are influenced by the comics around you. You are a freshman and you kind of emulate the seniors until you find your own voice. I was trying to be like Dave Attell and Colin Quinn, neither of which worked for me. I was bad at it. But you just keep going until you find your own voice.

Many comedians have attributed their choice of career to emotional problems – you have been quite open about your depression. Is there something about unhappiness that

causes you to want to make people laugh? Comedy has always come from suffering. That’s why culturally you’ve always seen a lot of black and Jewish comics. But I don’t romanticize it – I want to be happy. Desperately.

Do you find joy in your work? Yes. I think I’m very lucky for a comedian, and I really try to see that I’m doing everything I dreamed about.

How long can you ride off of an accomplishment before you’re onto the next goal? Way too long. Comics are lazy assholes.

Are you a fan of comedy? Yeah! There are great comics out there. Todd Glass, Todd Barry, Tig Notaro, Doug Benson, Garry Shandling, Kevin Nealon, Zach Galifianakis, Nick Swardson, Jeff Ross, Laura Kightlinger, Louie C.K. Though TV-wise, I am way more into drama.

Kevin Nealon is a comedian I regularly see cited by other comics. Can you explain why he is so funny to other comics? All you have to do is see him live to know. He’s brilliant. There’s no one like him. And he’s a salt-of-the-earth person to boot.

Who are your idols? Who would be in your comedy family tree? Steve Martin, Albert Brooks, Garry Shandling, Ruth Gordon.

How much of your identity is wrapped up in being a stand-up comic? I’ll always think of myself as a comic.

What can we expect for the new season of the show? Will Sarah warm to Officer Jay? Will Brian and Steve get married? Will you finally retrieve your mom’s pelvis and “boob bones”? Jay and I have a sweet moment on one of the episodes. Oh, so much is going to happen this season – it really is my favourite group of episodes yet.

What’s next on the slate for you? I’m working on a screenplay now with Tom Gianas and Jonathan Ames. And I’m in a movie called *St. John of Las Vegas* with Steve Buscemi, Peter Dinklage and Romany Malco – easily three of the coolest people I’ve ever met. Anyway, I am Steve’s love interest. It’s a part I was so happy to get to play because she is weird and kind and good – the latter two traits I don’t get opportunities to play often... or at all. ☺

THE SARAH SILVERMAN PROGRAM AIRS IN CANADA ON THE COMEDY NETWORK

SILVERMAN IN 10

1 What was your first joke? When you say something that rhymes by accident you say, “I’m a poet and I don’t even know it,” but what do you say if you say something free-verse by accident? “I’m a poet... and I never realized that.” Eep.

2 What are your feelings on working with puppets? My feelings? Hmm... Soupy?

3 What was the role that got away? Will Smith stole my part in *Ali*.

4 Can you remember a time when you were sure you had made it, only to later realize that you hadn’t? I was fired from a sitcom called *Pride and Joy*.

5 Can you name another comedian’s joke that made you say, “Damn, I wish I’d thought of that”? I saw Laura Kightlinger go onstage and announce to the audience that she just found out she was pregnant. When the audience applauded, she said, “Oh, don’t clap – I don’t know if I’m keeping it.” I think I just ruined that joke. But if I could remember the exact wording, it was hilarious.

6 What was the heckle that left you speechless? “Next!”

7 Lenny Bruce or Bruce Vilanch? How about Lenny Bruce in one of Bruce Vilanch’s T-shirts? Can I go with Bruce McCullough?

8 What makes you laugh from your belly? Great true stories of humiliation and vulnerability. Also farts, shit and balls.

9 We read that you will appear on the new *Match Game*. Apart from Charles Nelson Reilly, who was your favourite ’70s-era celebrity game show panellist? I did the pilot of *Match Game* as a favour to my friend, who produced it. The press release was wrong to include me. But, yes – loved the old show and I’m sure the new one will be really great. To answer your question, I’d say Paul Lynde.

10 Name a taboo you wouldn’t break for your act? I don’t like to be mean for mean’s sake.

..... INTRODUCING

FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE

British art-pop sensation Florence Welch is in need of attention and we can see why. She looks like Feist, dresses like Katy Perry, sings like Tracey Thorn interpreting Björk and is backed by a harp and screaming acoustic or slide guitars, depending on her mood. With an NME tour and a recent Critics' Choice Award at the Brits, Florence and the Machine have come into 2009 with all the momentum needed to make it very big, very fast. Lyrically brilliant and rather daring by current pop-tart standards, Florence begins her hit "A Kiss with a Fist" with: *You hit me once / I hit you back / You gave a kick / I gave a slap / You smashed a plate over my head / Then I set fire to our bed...* She describes her writing as being filled with "guilty stuff" (which scares us just a little given the above lyrics). She is charming, with a typically British sense of humour, listing "fat choir music" and "going into the woods to be feral" as her biggest musical influences. In one 22-year-old, you get the blues of "Girl with One Eye," the beautiful harmonies of "Dog Days Are Over" and some surprises, including an inspirational cover of Springsteen's "Going Down." It's all good.



CANVAS AND LEATHER MESSENGER BAGS

These bags by Pedido Tabique fit in with the Steampunk design movement – they're ornate and old-worldly. They come in several colours, and you'll look badass with one of these slung over your shoulder. \$58
• www.artfulwears.com



RAY-BAN SUNGLASSES

Worn over time by the likes of Audrey Hepburn, Tom Cruise and Chloë Sevigny, Ray-Ban is the gold standard in sunglasses. They fell out of fashion in the 1990s, but they've come back in a big way as trends have moved toward the larger, more conspicuous frames for which Ray-Ban is famous. Various prices • www.rayban.com/Canada

RETURN IN STYLE

Strut knows it's a drag to leave the summer behind and get back to business in the fall. Here's a list of cool stuff that will put some slide in your stride.

BLACK-ECO T-SHIRT

Made of bamboo fabric, which is lighter and softer than cotton, this shirt comes equipped with a pair of stereo headphones and a pocket for your MP3 player. No more fussing with loose wires and having your headphones ripped out accidentally – the earbud wires snake up inside the shirt for a safer, sleeker look, and they're removable, allowing the shirt to be washed like any other. \$40 • www.musicandsons.it



GALAXY WRISTWATCH

Never learned to tell time? Digital watches too 1980s? Check out the new Galaxy watch from Tokyoflash. With one touch, you get a light show followed by the time. Yellow bars represent the hour, red bars represent five minutes and green bars represent a single minute. It's second only to Dick Tracy's as the coolest watch ever invented. \$133
• www.tokyoflash.com

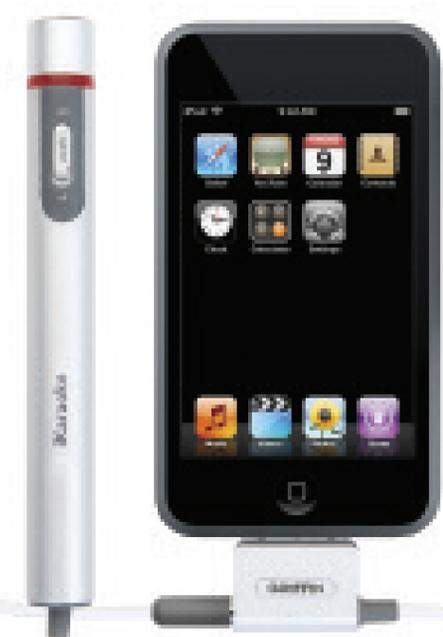


ROCKSTAR HEADPHONE HUB

This little widget by Belkin allows you to connect five sets of headphones to your iPod. Play a game of euchre in the library with your friends while blasting M.I.A.'s "Paper Planes" with impunity. \$19.99 • <http://catalog.belkin.com>

iKARAOKE

Is karaoke with an 'i' just as lame? The answer is no – it's way, way cooler. iKaraoke plugs into your iPod and isolates a song's lead vocal track, allowing you to fade it out and take the vocal reins. No more "Achy Breaky Heart" or "I Got You Babe" – you can now sing along to music you actually like. However, we suggest you only break this puppy out in front of your very close friends – misused karaoke can lead to loneliness. \$49.99
• www.griffintechology.com



NOVATEL OVATION MC950D USB MODEM

With this handy little device you can get broadband internet access anywhere in the world that Rogers Wireless has a roaming agreement – that's 130 countries. No bigger than a memory stick, the Ovation USB modem allows you to get some sun while getting your work done. We say so long to internet cafés and dusty ol' libraries and make our way to the beach for a little surfin' the waves and surfin' the net. \$49.99 (for hardware only)
• www.rogers.com



PUMA MONGOLIAN SHOE BBQ

Visit the "Mongolian Shoe BBQ" on Puma's website to either customize a pair of existing Puma sneakers or create your own pair from scratch. In an interface mimicking a Mongolian BBQ, you'll choose what materials make up the 18 components that go into a pair of shoes. We know what you're thinking, but tread lightly or your kicks will look like something designed by Dr. Moreau. \$130
• www.puma.com

MILONI GLOW SNEAKERS

Custom Pumas not flashy enough? Try Miloni glow sneakers by BS-Glow – they literally flash. Equipped with illuminating soles, these sneakers will get you noticed wherever you go. Best of all, they allow you to reenact Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean" video at a moment's notice. \$125.95
• www.bsglow.com

NOKIA N95

Need a new phone? Of course not, but if you want one, the Nokia N95 has just made its way to North America. It comes with assisted GPS, Wi-Fi capabilities, an MP3 player and a 5-megapixel camera that knocks the socks off of any other camera phone on the market. It also has a dual slider that reveals a keypad for texting and other applications. The phone's been a huge success in European markets. \$399.99
• www.intomobile.com



The Wants

Strut's Holiday Gift Guide

GIVE IT YOUR ALL!

NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE YOU HANG AROUND, STRUT'S COMPREHENSIVE GIFT GUIDE AIMS TO PLEASE ALL. ON THESE PAGES, YOU'LL FIND THE BEST GIFTS FOR EVERY TYPE OF PERSON IN YOUR LIFE: THE SPOILED BRAT, THE ONLINE CREEPER, YOUR PARENTS, YOUR SUGAR MOMMY OR DADDY, YOUR RETRO-CHIC AMI AND THE TECH FREAK NEXT DOOR, THE POSER, THE CRUSH AND THE TREE HUGGER. OUR GIFTS ARE VARIED, BECAUSE SO IS THE CIRCLE AROUND YOU. NOT EVERYONE WANTS THE SAME THINGS IN LIFE - USE OUR GUIDE TO GIVE IT YOUR ALL!



24k Gold
Handmade in England and finished in 24-karat gold, this phone is worth fretting over. Keep up to date while looking sleek. iPhone? What's that? \$1,266
continentalmobiles.com



Bling While You Sleep
This pillow sham is perfect for the ultimate princess. Silver sequins say it all - be sure to show it off! \$149.99
hbc.com

Pump It Up
Work it out this winter in some killer shoes from **Hugo Boss'** Black label. These sky-high heels will make you the envy of everyone. \$647
hugoboss.com



SPOILED BRAT

Shoe Wheel
As devoted fashionistas, our closets are overflowing with designer shoes. Imagine our happiness when we discovered this perfect shoe organizer and space-saver that accommodates 30 pairs. \$59.99
rakkudesigns.com

Perfume Royale
Created with the universe's finest ingredients, No. 1 for Women by **Clive Christian** is the world's most expensive perfume. Be prepared for the white diamond in the bottle. \$2,150
clive.com



FACE THE MUSIC

Spring beauty is skin deep – here are the goods to prove it

By Joanne Latimer



Lush Shave the Planet
Did you grow a patchy winter beard while hibernating? It's time to take it off, safely, with Lush's latest shaving cream. Shave the Planet has a cheeky name and a list of earnest ingredients like fair-trade organic shea butter, rose hip oil, açai juice and cupuaca butter. \$14.95, lush.ca

Kinerase Clear Skin
If you know what "non-comedogenic" means, you've probably got oily skin. It describes products that don't clog pores, and Kinerase Clear Skin is a stellar new example. From the regulating mask to the blemish dissolver, this line of zit-zapping products is a blessing. Starting at \$41, kinerase.com

Smashbox Lip Paint
Dump all the lip gloss at the bottom of your purse into the garbage. Spring is about new beginnings, and you should start with Smashbox's lip paints. They may look like squeeze tubes, but each has a wand in the lid for easy application. \$21, smashbox.com

Creed Love in Black
Savour the fresh notes of clove, blackcurrant and violet in this new ode to Jackie Onassis. Marking the 40th anniversary of her wedding to the Greek gazillionaire, Creed is a refreshing signpost of spring. \$255, creedperfumesus.com

Pelle MicroPolish
This unisex skincare line from Montreal is brand new, but it already has a cult following. The bestselling product that started tongues wagging was the BHA/Enzyme Micropolish for acne-prone skin. Props go to key ingredients like burdock root, salicylic acid and rice starch. \$59, pelle.ca

Jo Malone Sweet Lime & Cedar Body Oil
Take your obsession with Thai food one step further. Jo Malone's new Sweet Lime & Cedar body oil is infused with the zesty culinary aromas of Siam. Think kaffir lime, pink pepper and coconut. \$72, jomalone.com



Sircuit Skin Cosmeceuticals Mangilla Lip Balm
A curious blend of mango and vanilla, this new lip balm from Sircuit Skin seems delicious enough to add to a shaker of martinis. Equally delicious is the new Saki balm with peppermint and ginger. \$7.50, sircuitskin.com

L'Occitane en Provence Honey & Lemon Eau de Toilette
This irrepressibly peppy cologne will draw anyone out of a funk. L'Occitane has a new eau de toilette infused with golden glitter. But not too much glitter. Expect to feel like you've been misted with liquid sunshine. \$54, loccitane.com

Aveda Enbrightenment
Enbrightenment may not be a real word, but it works for Aveda. This new skincare line evens out blotchy complexions with a full range of brightening products. The hero ingredients, like mulberry root, grape extracts and algae, are mostly anti-irritants with magical lightening properties. Starting at \$44, aveda.com

Cargoblu_ray High Definition Make-Up
High-definition filming shows every little bump and crease on a face – even a dewy young face. That's why Cargo launched a line of high-definition make-up and skincare products. Get ready for your close-up with blu_ray polishing cloths, blush and concealer. Starting at \$27, cargocosmetics.com