



lucire

MAY 2004

Looking
abroad
Kiwi designers
think globally

The circuit
Autumn-
winter '04-5
from Dunedin,
New York,
Barcelona,
Montréal, Lisboa

**On the
inside**
Claws out! It's
New York
Fashion Week

**Brent
Lawler**
The hairstylist on
top of the World

**How suite
it is**
California pampering

**Jennifer
Siebel**
Helping the
world in
Hollywood

Being global

NZ\$9.45 incl GST
www.lucire.com
ISSN 1175-7515



L' O R



MCCANN195-R

Laetitia Casta wears Glam Shine No 38 Gold Holographic

É

A

L

PARIS

Lip-plumping effect with
changing colour tones.

New

Glam Shine HOLOGRAPHIC

MOISTURISING LIQUID LIPSTICK

VIBRANT 3D HOLOGRAPHIC SHINE

6 New Holographic Shades: From different angles, light bounces off lips for a multi-tonal colour effect. A new holographic shine, vibrant and dazzling.

BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT.

www.lorealparis.com

Smooth moisturising
non-sticky texture

L'ORÉAL
PARIS

A worldly passion



Jack Yan talks to Jennifer Siebel, Hollywood actress and production company head, Stanford alumna, Conservation International member and the embodiment of a *Lucire* reader: confident, principled and smart PHOTOGRAPHED BY JON MOE; ADDITIONAL MATERIAL BY DEVIN COLVIN

MANY OF TODAY'S ACTORS join conservation, children's or charity groups to show off how worldly they are. In some cases, such as with the late Sir Peter Ustinov or Audrey Hepburn, the concern is genuine, but in many, you can't help thinking whether it's a PR campaign. But there is no doubting new actress Jennifer Siebel.

While Siebel isn't a household name to most people, she has been noticed. She had a small role in last year's Jack Nicholson–Diane Keaton romantic comedy *Something's Gotta Give*, appeared in *Presidio Med* and has had guest spots on *She Spies* and *Strong Medicine*. The difference with San Francisco-born Siebel is that she has volunteered at a hospital in Quito, Ecuador and been a long-time member of Conservation International *before* she established her acting career. Somewhere between all this, she graduated from Stanford University with a BA and a postgraduate degree from its business school.

Now 29 and looking at least five years younger, she was born to two well respected parents: Ken Siebel, entrepreneur and investment manager, and Judy Siebel, co-founder of the Children's Museum of Sausalito and a board member on various charities. This explains some of her own character and concern about social policy.

'My parents are true philanthropists,' she told *Lucire*, 'and are always supporting charities and various organizations that can help other people's livelihoods and perhaps even influence their direction in life. I believe they give beyond their means relative to what others with more money could do.'

The Siebels are no strangers to hard work. 'My Dad is a self-made man. He grew up having to get sports' and academic scholarships to go to school because his parents had so little. His Mom and Dad worked the day and night shifts at a local steel mill in Illinois.' At one point, Ken Siebel was a professional basketballer.

A trip to Africa when she was 12 heightened her concerns. 'It was then that I realized how fortunate I was, but that I had grown up in a bubble of sorts. It made me want to know more

RIGHT:
Jennifer Siebel wants to save the world—and has the talent to do so.



OUR PEOPLE JENNIFER SIEBEL

about other cultures and people and how to make for a happier, safer, healthier world. I decided then and there that I wanted to live in Africa someday and contribute to making the world a better place.'

While still a child, Siebel was introduced to Conservation International, and one summer dur-

The Hollywood image held by the outsider is one of shallowness; Siebel's interests show her to be a deep thinker. She sees the conflict, calling herself 'a living dichotomy'

ing high school, she went to Costa Rica to work for the group (she speaks fluent Spanish). Ci, a global movement founded by Peter Seligmann ('one of my favourite people in the world ... [He] has such empathy for the greater world and our responsibility to it'), is known for its strong conservation strategies in some of the environmental hotspots on Earth, and works alongside the United Nations Environment Programme (for whom *Lucire* is its first fashion industry partner) on some projects.

The Costa Rica experience took a toll physically when Siebel came down with a parasite and had to return early, but it was an eye-opening cultural experience. 'I was entranced by this other culture and way of life, ... the freedom associated with it and the desire to improve the livelihoods of people in developing countries, whilst helping them to protect their environment.'

This passion stayed with her when she went to university. Her BA was in Latin American studies and human biology with a focus on third-world development and conservation policy. While at Stanford, she was a Kappa Kappa Gamma, a nationwide sorority known for its tradition of leadership and philanthropic activities.

It was after college that Siebel embarked on a journey that many who had grown up with the comforts of a fairly affluent northern Californian lifestyle would think twice before taking: volunteering at a children's hospital in Quito. It did convince her that studying medicine was not an option ('I fainted every time I saw blood') and she still finds her choice of acting as a profession 'funny ... [but] it challenges me and makes me feel strangely alive,' she said.

'If I were to have become a doctor, I would be working in developing countries today. I thought I had better try to effect change some other way.'

Like Costa Rica, she found it added to her growth. '[Ecuador] is so rich and colourful in so many ways and its natural springs-bath system in the countryside is so beautiful, not to mention extremely healthy.' Not that she did not leave without disappointments. She witnessed a health system that left aside its alternative methods in favour of 'popping pills'; preventive methods were not considered.

In some respects, this strengthened her resolve to do more.

Given her father's struggle to attend school, it was no surprise that Siebel valued a complete

education. Growing up around business-people and admitting to be an entrepreneur at heart, Stanford Business School seemed a logical institution for her graduate studies. She studied there while attending the American Conservatory Theatre during the evenings.

'When I lived in Africa, I was trying to figure out a way to help the local artisans by exporting some of their environmentally sound arts and crafts back home. Stanford Business School enabled me to focus on entrepreneurship and global management.'

She admits now that her artistic temperament did mean she was not entirely happy at B-school. It was not so much the MBA's course content, but some of her fellow students who were focused on finance or consulting, and had at that point been ignorant of the difficulties of the third world. Certainly the author's own experience of the environment gels with Siebel's. One must bear in mind, too, that this was northern California in the 1990s, a period during which the business models being held up as darlings by mass media included many whose philanthropic ventures were little more than window-dressing.

It is this money-focused business environment that is at odds with the way Siebel thinks. In third-world communities, she saw people who focused more on short-term survival and putting food on the table, rather than a financial, political or social benefit to conserving their ecosystems. Yet richer nations have the means to narrow the income gap, a concern that *The Economist's* former deputy chief editor Norman Macrae believed to be mankind's most pressing come 2005. True social responsibility, rather than mere window-dressing, is a solution. Siebel's solution is to support institutions that are working on this as well as tackle what she can do alone.

On this note, she invited *Lucire* to a banquet for Conservation International. This was a long-standing arrangement that she had and demonstrated her commitment to environmental causes. Other Ci supporters were there, including Michael Keaton, Harrison Ford, Calista Flockhart, Wayne Gretzky and his wife Janet Jones. Speakers included Michel Cousteau.

While Siebel's involvement was prominent and official, she still found time to talk to *Lucire*, her friends from Los Angeles and past Ci acquaintances. Her efforts to say hello to everyone she knew were genuine.

Presentations at the Conservation International banquet focused on the beauty of the oceans and the dangers they face. Rather than being overly militant or too "touchy-feely", Ci focuses on preserving nature because it is financially beneficial for all parties in the long run, and because it is simply the right thing to do. Siebel's principles fit here perfectly: she understands the need for businesses to be involved, but in the right way, so that they make right and significant changes for the planet and the communities. Part of how she makes a change will come from acting and the profile that her work could bring her causes.

>



How to save the world

We could not resist this question to Jennifer Siebel: what is one thing that you believe we, as a planet, can achieve readily, but silly institutions prevent it happening?

'I think we can achieve greater social, political, and financial harmony on the planet. However, bureaucracies kill us, as do people's egos, and laziness and greed are other killers.

'I swear, if people would all work hard, pool their resources, let go of their or their countries' or their institutions' egos, and focus on fighting the issues at stake, whether they be poverty, hunger, Aids, etc., and if in the process we can give people ownership and make them accountable to themselves and others, we'd be a lot further along in making the world a safer, healthier, more peaceful place.

'It all comes down to communication, as far as I am concerned ... there are two sides to everything and I suppose I am only learning that right now, but if we can be honest and open with each other, I foresee a beautiful future. I have a lot of love in me and only in the past year have I learned the power of love and forgiveness and the strength that stems from it all. It is amazing how far love and forgiveness can take one in life. Personally, if we would learn to love and let go more of our egos, I think this would be a better world in which to reside.'—JY

HOWEVER, is this not dichotomous? The stereotypical Hollywood image held by the outsider is one of shallowness; Siebel's interests show her to be a deep thinker. Hollywood is to the arts what Enron, Tyco or Parmalat were to business. But if that is the case, then perhaps Siebel is the right woman to enter this world and lead by example.

She sees the conflict, calling herself 'a living dichotomy': 'I was raised with a lot of comforts and luxuries around me, and yet I have lived with the poorest of the poor in Africa and Latin America when I worked for Conservation International and when I did other development work and studies ... and I don't really feel like I belong anywhere. ...

'I detest the modern-day stresses that accompany our lives and yet I am probably one of the busiest girls I know, running around like a chicken with my head cut off. So, I just kind of go with it and hop, skip and jump between worlds. Currently living in Hollywood, I long for the serenity and purity of the African bush existence. I miss it tremendously and hope to produce or act in a film out there soon.'

She has the ability. Not only has she been acting, after she graduated from Stanford with her MBA she formed her own production company. Hollywood-based Girls Club Entertainment has an aim of producing 'international stories of cultural and political significance with a strong focus on women's stories.' She realizes, however, that acting would support the company. 'You have to make a living in this business, so the ideal career would be one like Nicole Kidman's, Julianne Moore's, or Naomi Watts.'

Her arrival in Los Angeles was a culture shock. Californians divide themselves between north and south, with the line somewhere near Monterey, and there is a noticeable cultural difference. Some have called San Francisco the most European of American cities. Los Angeles, by comparison, is one of the most American of American cities. There need not be an oceanic divide to separate cultures.

In the first six months, 'it felt like a lot of tarmac and ... you just drove around all day in traffic and then went to parties with a lot of fake people—people trying to be something at night.' Fortunately, as with any of the places she has visited or worked in, she has surrounded herself with a group of genuine people, distancing herself from what she called 'the ugliness of LA.'

She has also discovered numerous gems among the tarmac-sealed jungles: 'my sister and I got wonderful Thai massages the other month for c. \$40 in Thai Town and I spent part of New Year's Eve in Korea Town'—small enclaves that aren't noticeably Thai or Korean when driving by and focusing on the street, but are in fact populated by diasporas with subtle signage that distinguish these places from the majority.

Her dining haunts are Indian, Japanese, French and Chinese; her friends similarly reflect an international community, either having originated from outside the US or have lived outside.

But further exploration may have to wait until she is not as hectic building two careers, in acting and production. Ojai Valley, Santa Barbara and some hiking trails have been recent discoveries, while the beach is particularly special: 'I was dancing ballet all winter for this film about the ballet world that was supposed to shoot in China this spring and I started getting tendonitis in my achilles and ankle. I would go to the beach early in the morning and walk in the sand to soothe the pain. I felt so lucky to be out there, connected to the fresh air and nature. Talk about serenity.'

NOW IN SOCAL, Siebel has to have the Hollywood-actress look, one which she accomplishes while staying true to her globally minded principles. When asked about her favourite labels, it is not dissimilar to reading one of the more varied issues of *Lucire*, even if she only has a few pieces from the following: Helen Yarmak (the Russian designer known for her sumptuous designs), Trosman Churba (Argentina), Karen Millen (UK), Chloé, Marc Jacobs, Alicia Mugetti (Argentina), Balenciaga, Shanghai Tang (China), Jean Paul Gaultier, Polo Ralph Lauren and Laundry. 'Oh, and I love Chanel but I don't currently have anything in Chanel.'

Her wardrobe is essentially a very eclectic collection from her travelling. She does not buy labels, rather the look. Oftentimes, she couldn't tell what labels her clothes bear. 'I love colours and materials although I do have a lot of black in my closet—it's just easy to put colour on top of it.'

However, she recommends investing in timeless *continued on p. 103*

**'You have to make a living in
this business, so the ideal
career would be one like Nicole
Kidman's, Julianne Moore's, or
Naomi Watts'**





yours in the new piccolo

