

# How the humble Torontonian became a fashion muse

## City designers are naming their boots and bangles after local faces

BY DEIRDRE KELLY

What's gaining mileage as the newest icon of international style? The Torontonian, my dears. Hermès may have the Kelly bag, but Hogtown — the new Paris on the Don — has Lynda Latner and Geoffrey Dawe. They're two locals who have been immortalized by designers in fashion.

The Geoffrey is the name of a chic leather \$550 boot, by Toronto footwear designer Ron White. And Mr. Dawe, publisher of magazines FQ, Sir and Inside Entertainment, finds the name flattering. "After all these years getting booted around in publishing, it only made it better that it was a pair of boots," he quips.

Named after the doyenne who operates the vintage clothing bou-

tiques in Holt Renfrew, the Latner "Babe" coat is the creation of Toronto-based Paul Sinclair, the designer behind Tevrow + Chase. The coat was recently featured on the cover of U.S.-based Lucky magazine.

Ms. Latner is in good company. Such socially prominent figures as Bev Creed, Victoria Webster and Sarah Handreke have all been honoured by the cheeky insider name game. The Bevy is an oversized cardigan. There is a blouse dubbed Victoria and a coat called Webster. Ms. Handreke is the inspiration behind the Sarah pant for spring.

A former Vogue fashion editor who thinks big, Mr. Sinclair (whose business partner is Joe Mimran of Club Monaco, Caban and Joe Fresh fame) boasts a women's wear collection with an Oprah pant, a Gwen

(Stefani) sweater and a Dunst (Kirsten) dress, sold at the Tevrow + Chase showroom on Adelaide Street West, and in New York, L.A. and London.

High-end jeweller Myles Mindham, with a boutique at the Park Hyatt, also names his creations after big-ticket clients. The EeeGee, for instance, an 18-karat yellow gold bangle set with coloured sapphires or diamonds (\$2,300 to \$4,500 each), is in honour of Emmanuelle Gattuso, wife of media czar Allan Slaight, one of his best customers. "They may share an idea or inspire you, they become your muse," says Mr. Mindham, whose clients are a who's who of Toronto society.

Branding guru Rose Mastnak sees the trend as an international exercise in co-branding that has gone local. Just like the Kelly bag by Hermès, inspired by Grace Kelly, "success is dependent upon the persona having... a reputation for style that elicits respect for her fashion

choices," she says.

Mr. White says it is fashion feeling the effects of reality TV, that naming a garment after a person of style returns a sense of individuality, a sense of authenticity, to an industry gone mass.

That thinking seems to be bearing fruit. The Geoffrey is the biggest seller in a men's line that also features shoes named for Designer Guy Steven Sabados and skating celebrity Brian Orser. Local on-air personality Seamus O'Regan will be the name of a shoe for spring.

For her part, Ms. Latner has bought four Latner "Babe" coats, at around \$850 each, one for her and each of her three daughters. "There's nothing more wonderful than being immortalized in pink bouclé," she purrs.

The feeling's mutual. "I name my clothing after people I love," enthuses Mr. Sinclair. "And these Toronto women, with their low-key style, inspire me."



LOUIE PALAU/TI

Immortalized in pink bouclé: Vintage clothing dealer Lynn shows off her namesake coat from local label Tevrow + Chase