

The Suburban

magazine

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MAGAZINE CONFIDENTIAL

By MIKE COHEN

New reality TV show Hockey Wives

Up close and personal with Habs Prust and girlfriend Morin

Montreal Canadiens forward Brandon Prust and his beautiful girlfriend, French language television star Maripier Morin, are about to become reality TV stars. Hockey Wives will premiere on Wednesday March 18 at 10 p.m. on the W Network.

The cast includes also includes Nicole Brown, wife of Los Angeles Kings captain Dustin Brown; Hollywood actress Noureen DeWulf (Anger Management, Ghosts of Girlfriends Past), wife of Vancouver Canucks goalie Ryan Miller; fashion designer Tiffany Parros, married to recently retired and former Hab George Parros; model and new mom Martine Forget, engaged to Toronto Maple Leafs goalie Jonathan Bernier; Hockey wives' connector Brijet Whitney, married to recently retired Ray Whitney; social activist Kodette LaBarbera, wife of Anaheim Ducks goalie Jason LaBarbera; former Intelligence Specialist for the U.S. Military Emilie Blum, wife of Minnesota Wild defenseman Jonathon Blum; athlete and Communications expert Jenny Scrivens, wife of Edmonton Oilers goalie Ben Scrivens; and Arizona real estate maven Wendy Tippett, wife of Arizona Coyotes head coach Dave Tippett.

Judging from the preview this looks like one "must watch" series and I was lucky enough to get to talk to Prust and Morin.

Montreal hockey fans all adore Prust, the rugged forward now in the third of a four year contract he signed for \$10 million. The Habs number eight is known for keeping the other teams honest, always ready to drop his gloves to protect a teammate. He and Morin actually met when in 2009 in New York. Prust was then playing for the Rangers. "I was at a bar with my friends and I did not speak English," Morin recalls. "I had a little too much to drink, so I did not even remember meeting him. The clue was that I had a new contact in my phone. I had no idea who he was. Brandon ended up coming to Montreal and he invited to go with him to a UFC fight card. Well, it was a 'bloody' first date and I kind of wondered



Brandon Prust and Maripier Morin



The WAGS (Wives and Girlfriends) who anchor the W Network show

'what kind of guy asks a girl to a UFC fight for their first date?' But it worked."

That summer Prust invited Morin to his native London, Ontario to meet the family. "I was embarrassed because I went with his sister for a spa day and I could not speak English," she said. "I wondered what people were thinking about me."

"Her English was a lot better than she thinks," Prust chirped in.

Morin is a former figure skater who has graced the small screen since 2007 on a number of different shows for TVA and V. She is currently the co-host of *Ménage à trois* on V télé. She was a face for Revlon in Quebec, a partner with Prust in the Montreal restaurant *Laurea* in Mile-End a partner in the Canadian cocktail line UNIK. She actually became close friends with Tiffany Parros during enforcer George's brief one season stay here. Tiffany, the mom of twins, runs her own fashion line, with celebrity clientele including Mariah Carey, Lindsay Lohan, Amy Smart and DeWulf.

Hockey Wives delivers a rare opportunity for fans to meet ten sexy, accomplished "captains" off the ice and explores the meaning of being married to the game.

With an exclusive look into the high-stakes lives of WAGs (wives and girlfriends) of the NHL®, the series reveals that it takes an incredible woman to manage fulfilling personal careers and stick handle life off of the ice with some of today's top pro athletes. There are incredible perks to being a hockey wife, but, make no mistake, balancing the pressure of trades, relentless travel, long periods of separation, injury, retirement and living for the game takes an extraordinary and self-sufficient woman. Though they are based in cities all over North America, the wives cross paths throughout the course of the regular NHL season and are deeply affected by one another. From

wives who are new to the league, to those whose partners are Stanley Cup winning superstars or entering retirement, these women form a team of their own, supporting and encourage one another through personal and professional highs and lows.

Morin and Prust already passed the true test of commitment, with a two year long distance relationship. Not only was Prust living and playing in New York City, but during the hockey season he of course travelled a lot. "I was basically going to New York every other week and doing so by bus," Morin explains. "It was only six hours overnight and less expensive than flying."

When Prust was a free-agent two years ago he had good offers from many teams, but his relationship with Morin clearly played a role in his final decision. "I knew it would be a good place for me to play," Prust said. "Obviously it was good for Maripier and her career. It was really a perfect match for me and I think the Canadiens knew it too."

So how did the happy couple, who generally enjoy their privacy residing in the Plateau, end up on reality TV. Morin said it was Tiffany Parros who recommended her to the producers. It was quite a commitment as the cameras began recording them in September and only stopped filming in December. "To be honest, when she first told me about it I did not grasp the concept," Prust said. "I thought it would be one weekend."

"The cameraman they assigned to us was super," Morin intervened. "I would basically tell him what we were doing each week and we'd make a schedule. It was a blast! Once you get into a project like this you just need to have some trust."

There is one clip from the preview where Morin asks Prust why he doesn't want to marry her. "It is funny what the camera picks up," Morin laughs. "We are not

engaged or close to being engaged. I am always teasing Brandon about marriage, but I want to say that I am really comfortable with our present situation. I think Brandon says that I have not passed all of his tests yet."

Morin's English is excellent now. The gal from Rivière-du-Loup credits Prust and her early trips to New York for that. Prust, meanwhile, co-stars with her in a TV commercial for St. Hubert BBQ in which he orders a poutine. "I am working on my French," said Prust. "I can pick up some of the language. Speaking it is still pretty difficult."

<http://www.gohabsgo.com/en/2015/02/07/video-brandon-prust-and-maripier-morin-speak-french>

For more on the series log on to <http://www.wnetwork.com/shows/hockey-wives>.

FAMOUS DRUMMING GROUP ON THE WAY

Kodo, the world's most famous Japanese drumming group, hits the Place des Arts on Saturday, March 7 (8 p.m.) to present its show called *Mystery*. It features 15 percussionist-dancer-actors presenting all the richness and power of the traditional giant drum called the taiko. *Mystery* is the second production by Kodo, designed by legendary kabuki theatre actor Tamasaburō Bandō, declared a "living national treasure" by the Japanese government in 2012. The show will feature a dazzling array of athletic percussion, theatre, music and visual effects. The tour is presently in Texas.

Tour manager Yui Kawamoto told us that Kodo spends about a third of each year overseas, another third performing around Japan and the remainder rehearsing and preparing new material.

Kodo first performed in Montreal in the early 1980s and then again in 2007 and



Morin strikes a pose

2011 at Place des Arts. Kodo was also invited to collaborate with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal for a ballet production by Maki Ishii and Jiri Kylian called "Kaguyahime / Moon Princess" in 2012.

"It's hard to put into words, but I'm aiming to create a world of mystery," says Bandô. "I want people to enjoy darkness: the beauty of something you come across lit by candlelight, a sense that is both vague and marvelous. While it's essentially a drum concert, playing as only drums can play, we've added plenty of visual interest."

Founded in 1981, Kodo has given more than 3,600 performances on every continent. For ticket information go to www.placedesarts.com.

KAGAN CALLS IT A CAREER

A legend on the local entertainment scene is calling it a career. Following an extraordinary 50 years of working on every angle related to entertainment, concert production, trade shows, party planning and special events, Sheldon Kagan has decided that the time has come to step back.

"I am retiring," Kagan said. "It is official. I felt that this was the right time to do it."

The head of Sheldon Kagan International has been the driving force behind a broad spectrum of successful projects - from concerts, singles parties and weddings, to exhibitions for the bridal, family, boomer and business-to-business markets. He actually got into the business when he was just 14 years old as a deejay, calling himself Shelly the K and his Mobile Discotheque. His first gig was at a high school dance and he was paid \$25 for his services.

Kagan produced his first major concert in 1969. Only 19 at the time, he booked jazz greats Dizzy Gillespie and Gene Krupa to play

at the Place des Arts. Tickets were \$3.50 and \$6.50 and the show sold out. Fast forward to December 2, 2011 when he brought recording superstar Dionne Warwick to the same venue, where seats ranged from \$80 to \$130 each.

As an impresario, Kagan has produced some 80 shows at the Place des Arts and brought in such artists as Kenny Loggins, Ravi Shankar, Duke Ellington, Artie Shaw, the Glenn Miller Orchestra, Bill Withers, and Billy Preston. In recent months he has presented The Beatles Experience, Abba Memories, LOL Montreal Comedy Night, the International Tenors and celebrity impersonators the Edwards Twins. He also ran numerous shows a year without charge for charitable organizations.

One of Kagan's most branded events is the Salon de la Mariée, an annual exhibition that now attracts over 30,000 brides, grooms and family members to the Palais des Congrès. There will soon be a "for sale" sign for this event. "It should continue," he said, "but I will be very careful whom I entrust this with. It is my baby!"

Other trade shows he has produced included the Salons des Boomers Plus, Salon Affaires de Montréal and Le Salon de la Famille. Kagan actually met his wife Linda while hosting the Royal Bank Christmas party at the Windsor Hotel.

Kagan boasts a personal collection of 20,000 albums and 45 rpm's. In addition, his Dorval-based company owns a library of 22,000 songs on CDs feeding himself, three mobile deejays, as well as his seven top 40 bands and strolling, classical and jazz musicians.

Sheldon Kagan International has been organizing in excess of 1,100 parties a year. About 55 percent were corporate functions. The rest consisted of weddings, private functions, and bar/bat mitzvahs. Upon request, he could often be found at the deejay table himself. "That's my first love," he says. "Sometimes I just want to go back to my roots."

Good luck Sheldon. Something tells you will have a lot of offers from people to become a special advisor.

M4M GALA

The sixth annual Masterpieces 4 MADA Gala and Art Auction (M4M) will be held on



Gemma Raeburn-Baynes



The drummers have a lot of energy.

Sheldon Kagan then and now.

May 19 at the Windsor Ballroom. There will be an open bar and delicious food as well as valet parking. Organizers promise that the event will be exceptional, with an auction of one-of-a-kind masterpieces donated by artists and students, followed by a stellar line-up of renowned comedians. To make a donation or purchase tickets to the event, e visit the official gala website at M4Mgala.com or phone 514-342-4969 ext. 246.

CRAFT SALE

There will be a Book, Bake & Craft Sale on Saturday, March 7 (9 a.m. to Noon) at the Church of St. John the Baptist (233 Ste. Clair Avenue) in Pointe-Claire. Come browse the used Books and C.D.'s. And take home some fabulous home baking and various craft items.

CARRIBEAN FASHION WEEK

Dynamo Gemma Raeburn-Baynes has announced that the first-ever Montreal

Caribbean Fashion Week will take place May 7 to 10. It will be presented by Playmas Montreal Cultural Association, which has a long and successful history in representing island culture in Quebec and Canada. Montreal Caribbean Fashion Week will also celebrate 36 years of Montreal Ebony Models, an organization which has raised over \$1.5 million for various charities in and around Montreal. Also included in this event, acclaimed theatrical and fashion show producer, author and philanthropist Johanne Sternthal will receive the Montreal Ebony Models Life-Time Achievement Award as an expression of respect and gratitude from the community for the work she has done in raising funds and awareness for a myriad of local charities over the years. Info at www.playmas-montreal.com.

Have you got something to share? Email mcohen@thesuburban.com or call 514-484-9203, ext. 307. Follow me on Twitter @mike-cohencl and at <http://blog.thesuburban.com>