



Wonder Woman

Western Living Condo, Fall 2006

Last year she played Mia on *Two and a Half Men*. This season she's Detective Jessica Angell on *CSI: NY*. Someday however, Vancouver's Emmanuelle Vaugier would really like to play a superhero.

I am sitting in the Vancouver condo of the 31st Hottest Woman in the World. At least according to *Maxim* magazine, who bestowed the honour upon Canadian actress Emmanuelle Vaugier (as No. 31 is known to friends and family). And this was in "a banner year on the hotness front."

Let me tell you, choosing your first question in such circumstances is no small feat. I consider asking what it's like to be hotter than Natalie Portman (No. 33) or way hotter than Oscar winner Halle Berry (a distant No. 79). The fraternity brothers at *Maxim* already inquired about people stealing her underwear, so that's been taken. Finally as the awkward silence grows, I strike— and ask her about home décor. Turns out the giant gold-leaf Buddha hanging on her wall is her favourite furnishing. So that's settled.

Frankly the demure, innocent-natured Vaugier seems relieved not to be asked about orgasms (*FHM*, May 2006), first Hollywood crush (*InStyle*, October 2003) or threesomes (*FHM* again). I can't translate what German magazine *XOXO* asked her, but reviewing the attached photo makes me sure it didn't deal with window treatments.

The truth is Vaugier, fresh from last year's stint on the CBS sitcom *Two and a Half Men*, is about to enter into a whole new league of recognition when she joins the cast of megahit *CSI: NY* this fall as tough-talking Detective Jessica Angell. AC Nielsen tells us that the show regularly draws more than 12,000,000 viewers in North America—that's more than the populations of Albania and Austria combined. If Vaugier is nervous about this step, she doesn't show it—and I am looking really closely. She just sits cheerfully and patiently while the make-up artist does some clearly superfluous work on her; it's like polishing a brand new car.

Her downtown Vancouver condo is similarly unfussy. Its clean, crisp lines and Asian influence are reminders of the three years she spent modelling in Japan before taking up acting. She purchased the condo in her early twenties when the area was more seedy than swank, and her gamble has paid off.

I ask her if she hopes *CSI: NY* producer Jerry Bruckheimer's gamble on her will pay off as well, and she chuckles at the comparison. I prod her on what it's like working for King Midas Bruckheimer, a man whose power is so great that his casting of David Caruso on *CSI: Miami* ranks as the second greatest resurrection of a man with a God complex in the last two millennia. She concedes, "I hate to be clichéd and say working with Jerry Bruckheimer is a 'dream come true,' but for a young actress it is in fact something of a dream come true."

It's hard to imagine the sweet Vaugier cracking skulls as Detective Angell. Of the Vaugier household—in addition to Emmanuelle, there are toy poodles Lily, 11, and Isabelle, seven—it seems that feisty Isabelle is most like a street-tough New York cop, although I get the sneaking impression Lily would tamper with evidence if it meant putting a dangerous perp behind bars.

While Vaugier now spends a large portion of her time in Los Angeles, she is always happy to head back home. This time the visit is to put the final touches on her role as Nikki in Electronic Arts' *Need for Speed Carbon* video game, likely to be as popular with the under-25 set as it is foreign to those over. I am anxious to find out what sort of trouble she gets into when she returns to her old stomping grounds, how she lets loose. Brace yourself. It turns out she favours a low-key dinner with grade school friends (she grew up on Vancouver's west side) and then back to the condo for some late-night air guitar to Britney Spears. Heck, my seven-year-old daughter could get in more trouble. Unsexy behaviour like this could get a young actress bumped from the Hot List (and onto the A list) if she's not careful.

Just The Facts, Ma'am Emmanuelle Vaugier's favourite things.

Capsule design ethos

Spare clean lines with a Japanese influence

Most extravagant home purchase

Custom-made and milled four poster bed

First item purchased for condo



Gold leaf Buddha picture from the Oriental Trading Company

Dream renovation to condo

Convert functional upstairs bathroom into full spa experience with steam and soaking tub

Always in the CD player

Gipsy Kings

Always in the refrigerator

Perrier, cheese (ah, the French)

Always on set with her

Toy poodles Lily and Isabelle

Favourite Vancouver restaurants

Don Francesco Ristorante, Shiru-Bay Chopstick Café, Bin 941

Now in her DVD

Entourage, Season 2

Dream role

Wonder Woman

by Neal McLennan
photography by Paul Joseph



