



PROFILE
FAMILY TIES

Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman "scratches" her way to the top!

She is 23 and has only one play to her name, but Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman is already a veteran of the stage in Toronto. "I grew up in the green rooms of grungy Toronto theatres," she says from her home in Montreal, where she recently graduated from the National Theatre School of Canada. With actor and director Layne Coleman for a father and the

late novelist and drama critic Carole Corbeil for a mother, she has decades of theatre in her genes. But even with the inside knowledge and name recognition, Corbeil-Coleman wasn't prepared for the surprise message she received less than 24 hours after her graduation ceremony: Toronto's historic Factory Theatre wanted to produce her first-ever play, *Scratch* (October 4 to November 2). Supersizing the first-time-lucky part of the story is the fact that *Scratch* is a play she started writing at 16—following her mother's passing from ovarian cancer in 2000—and has been revisiting ever since. "There's some young writing there," she says. "That makes me nervous about it being the first play going up." But it's the rawness of a teenage girl writing for the stage and telling a story about "falling in love and becoming a woman"—against the backdrop of a dying mother and persistent head lice!—that sets *Scratch* apart from the competition. **KAMAL AL-SOLAYLEE**



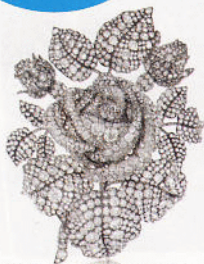
PROFILE

DESTINY'S CHILD

Elicia MacKenzie had memorized the words to "Sixteen Going on Seventeen" and "Do-Re-Mi" long before she won the CBC competition *How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?* "I was only seven years old when my mom rented *The Sound of Music*," recalls the 23-year-old Surrey, B.C., singer. "I knew all the words by the end of the week."

Fast-forward 16 years and MacKenzie was belting out those same tunes along with more than 2,000 other competitors. The group was cut down to 48 hopefuls who were sent to "Maria School," where they learned everything from choreography to how to spin on a mountaintop. In the end, it was MacKenzie who landed the lead role in the North American premiere of *The Sound of Music*, which opened October 3 in Toronto. MacKenzie credits her music-theatre training at North Vancouver's Capilano College for her win. One thing her training didn't prepare her for was the world of reality television. "I didn't know what to expect," she says, laughing. "It was a bit intimidating!" Although she was often portrayed as the clumsy dark horse, MacKenzie kept her focus. "I wasn't too concerned about looking good; I was thinking about how to do well."

That determination secured her the coveted first-place finish. "It was shocking at first—but, hey, it was my childhood dream, after all!" **BRIONY SMITH**



Princess Mathilde's corsage

WHAT Eye shiny diamonds and discover how they go from the ground to Tiffany's little blue box in *The Nature of Diamonds* at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. **BAUBLE ALERT** In the exhibit's Gem Vault, you'll find Princess Mathilde's corsage, with more than 2,600 diamonds, as well as sparklers worn by everyone from Mae West to Joan Crawford. **OH CANADA!** Besides dazzlers from Boucheron, Cartier and De Beers, the show features Canadian designer Niki Kavakonis' Tip of the Iceberg ring, with its unique 2.83-carat uncut diamond. "A diamond in its natural crystal state is my definition of beautiful!" says Kavakonis. (Ours too!) **WHEN** October 25 to March 22, 2009. **STEPHANIE BORIDY**



Niki Kavakonis' Tip of the Iceberg ring