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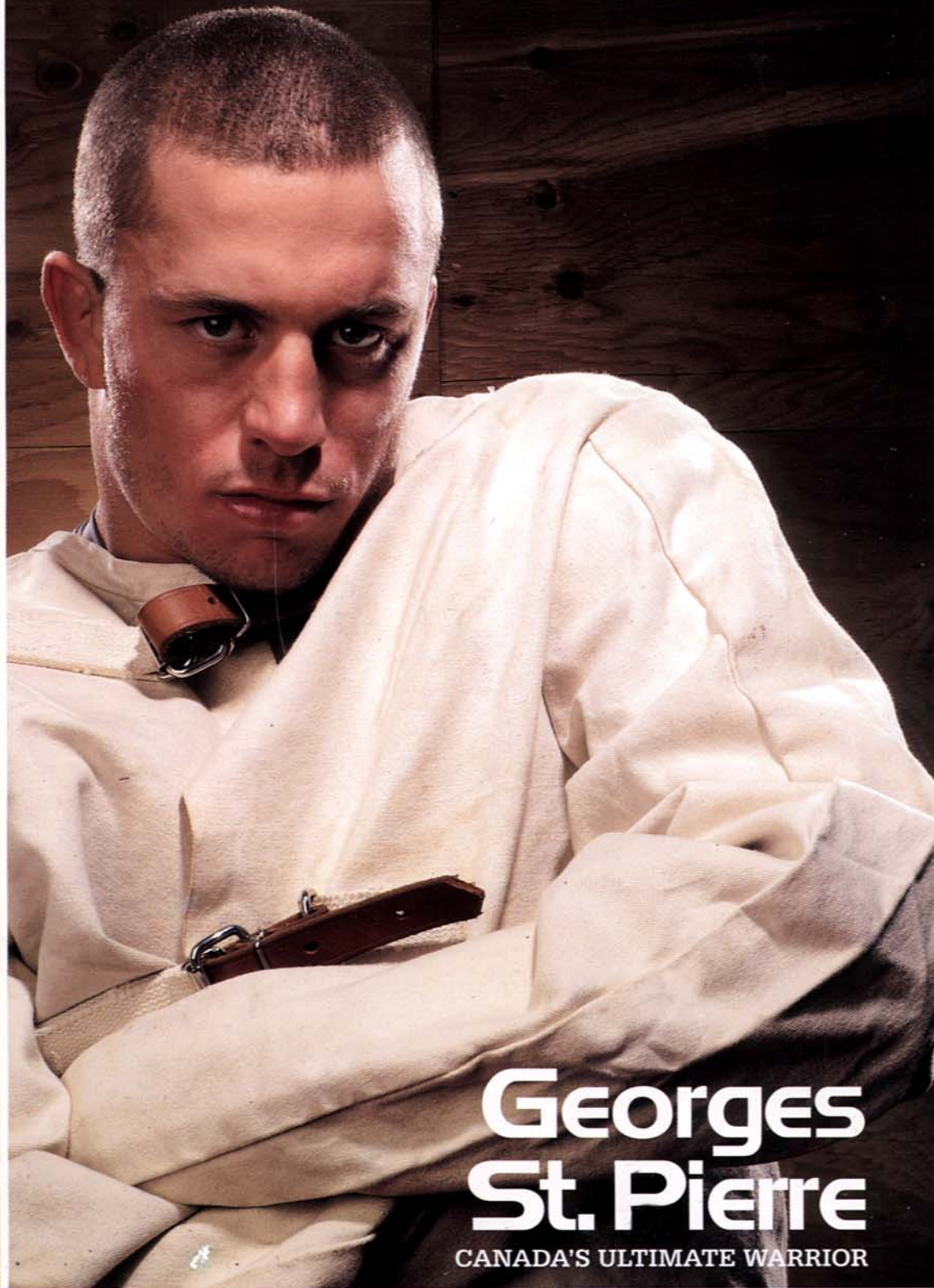
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HAMBURGERS, BABY!

BY ARTHUR CLARKE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY HELLER

With the debut of his latest clothing venture, Kiss legend Gene Simmons drops some knowledge for his baby mother's people on what runs the world.

What's the brand all about? Jason, you're the co-designer and you're Canadian. So give me the whole Canadian vibe.

Jason: Don't say Canadian in front of Gene.

Gene: It's not that. Everybody is born. That's just the beginning. Canada is the beginning, that's not the end of the world; it can't be, there aren't enough people to make it register on the face of the planet. We're all from someplace, but that's not where we end up. The world is our playground. Canada's the beginning; this planet is the end of this story, and there are other planets to go. This is a worldwide brand, and we have a terrific relationship, as you can tell, he even photographs well. And between the Dussault line and our joint venture in this MoneyBag, we're gonna do just fine.

So what's MoneyBag all about and what's Dussault, your line without Gene, all about?

Jason: MoneyBag was a logo that Gene trademarked over 25 years ago, which he's drawn himself. Dussault is a custom line of hoodies, jeans, t-shirts - very, very high-quality garments with attention to detail. I think what Gene recognized with the Dussault line was the attention to detail, and I think that's how we convinced him to do an agreement with us. So we're really excited about it and looking forward to it. This is a sneak peak, so we've got just a few designs to showcase, but Gene and I are working on a number of different designs. I'm not the only designer involved; Gene loves to be involved in the design process as well. So we co-designed all the MoneyBag pieces. Look for it, it'll be coming out very, very soon. The website is up, genesimmons.moneybag.com. You'll want to go on right away, because the pieces will be limited. We'll make a certain number and then we'll come out with another design; make a certain number of that one and then come out with another one so that not everybody is wearing the same thing.

Gene, you've had about 3 million pieces of merchandise for sale over the years.

What sets this apart?

Gene: I trademarked the MoneyBag logo 28 years ago. I can literally stop Monopoly from using it. And the reason the MoneyBag logo appeals to me above and beyond everything else is because planet Earth is ruled by capitalism, whether people like it or not. Communism is a dismal failure, socialism doesn't work on a large scale; it works with small countries - Sweden, Canada, other places, and I mean that in the very nicest way. Supply-and-demand capitalism is everything. The dollar sign is synonymous with capitalism. You can't own the dollar sign itself, but I found out that nobody owned the MoneyBag logo with the dollar sign in the middle. And to me that's synonymous with the American dream, which means it works everywhere in the world. Whether people like it or not, they eat burgers, pizza, listen to rock and roll, wear jeans, go to movies, television. It's tough to say it in France or in Portugal or in Africa, but it's this culture that rules the planet. Willingly, by the way, people from all over the world willingly want to do it. You could be in Africa, they're gonna wear Coca Cola t-shirts and put on jeans, and the last time I checked, I don't want to put on a kilt and I don't wanna eat frogs legs. You can't force me to swallow your culture. And rice and beans is nice in Costa Rica, but it ain't happening in the rest of the world. Hamburgers baby, that's what rules the planet.

For someone who was born in Israel, would you say that you are living the American dream?

Gene: Well yeah, I would say that. Where else in the world would a country let me have my own postage stamp? I mean, this notion that the corporate world is closed is a big lie fostered by people who are losers, who wanna go on marches instead of spending their time trying to make some

money. The corporate world? The doors are actually wide open; anybody who wants to work hard can actually make a lot of money because the corporate world depends on people, people with big ideas who wanna go out and work.

It's been terrific for me, made my life possible. But the truth is, whether I lived in Canada, Israel or Portugal, nobody cares. If you make it big in America you can rule the world.

So is there really a Canadian angle on this brand? Gene is saying it's all international, but you come from Canada.

Jason: Absolutely, I mean, you know what? I live in Canada. I'm spending more and more time in the U.S. I just rented an apartment in L.A.

But what about inspiration?

Gene: You guys are so desperate. It's like being in a movie theatre, and the mother of my children is Canadian. It's embarrassing, you guys; you can sit in the movie theatre and you'll hear one voice, 'Hey! That guy that walked by, did you know he's from Newfoundland?' Please, get over it. The center of commerce and stuff is not there. I know you're desperately trying to fly that flag, but the rest of the world is too busy flying its own flags. So while you are talking about Canada, the Portuguese is talking about Portugal, the Bothaswanas are talking about Zimbabwe and stuff like that. At the end of the day, no matter how much you talk about 'my inspiration comes from Regina', let's call it for what it is. If you're not a serious player, you're not gonna play in America, cause America doesn't care where you're from. You can come from Austria, have a difficult name to pronounce and spell, but you can become the ruler of the fifth largest economy on planet Earth, and that's only called California. So scale and size does count, and you keep going back to the small stuff like, 'Tell me about the small town you're from'. It ain't about that. It's not where your from, it's where do you wanna go?

Canada's a cool place. Now let's go rule the rest of the planet. Cut it out you guys!!!