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## Emmy for Memme?

**Host of the Emmy-nominated 'Sell This House' and former Miss Canada Tanya Memme talks with us about her life and her inspiration**

By **Matthew Simon**

**Epoch Times Toronto Staff**

Jun 07, 2007

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Tanya Memme is having a blast. The Canadian host of A&E's hit *Sell This House* for five seasons has her show nominated for a Daytime Emmy in the same category as Martha Stewart. She's relishing the moment and makes sure to let me know via her Blackberry. "I'm in the middle of being dressed by top designers, make-up artists, and hair stylists," she states. "My mom will be coming with me, it's her first time attending something like this, and she'll be pampered with the same celeb treatment!! How fun!"

It's hard not to be excited for Memme. She's not only had success with her TV series, the former Miss Canada is also a correspondent for Entertainment Tonight Canada, is playing the lead in a movie coming out later this year, has just finished recording a CD, gives motivational [talks](#) to young women, and is about to work on a book. Memme took some time to talk with us about the many opportunities that have come into her life.

"I have no idea how all of this came about, but I'm the type of person who when I see an opportunity I seize on it right away. Seize the opportunity, seize the day.... and it makes me very happy to set a goal and see how long it takes me to achieve it." Born and raised in the construction industry, Memme seemed like a perfect fit for *Sell This House*. "When they



Life's good for Tanya Memme, whose show *Sell This House* goes up against [Martha Stewart](#) at the Daytime Emmys next week. (TanyaMemme.com)

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perfect fit for *Sell This House* . when they found out that my family builds between 200 and 400 houses a year, I think it was a nice little [laughs] topping on the entire deal."

On *Sell This House* , which has been a hit for A&E, Memme and co-host Roger Hazard renovate houses that have been on the market for too long and sell them. Memme's personality shines as they make changes to the homes. Now the show is nominated in the Best Lifestyle Programming category for the Daytime Emmys, which air June 15.

Memme was first known for her short reign as Miss Canada 1993. She won the crown, but after going through a roller-coaster ride of mismanagement for five months, gave it back in order for changes to be made so that future winners would get better treatment. "Integrity is very important. If I can't look at myself in the mirror in the morning, then what's the use of having whatever it is you have?"

"It was actually a very difficult decision," Memme said. Her experience as Miss Canada is only one story she discusses in motivational talks she gives to young women. From not eating in high school, to working four [jobs](#) and studying in New York City, Memme shares her mistakes and successes. But her message is optimistic:

"It was a tough, tough struggle, but you *can* do it and you can get there. And there's always going to be a better day ahead. Always, no matter what happens."

The better days seem to be in full force for Memme. She stars in a psychological thriller, *Terror Inside* , which will be entered into next year's Sundance [Film Festival](#). And, her passion project, the six-track CD *Gemini* , will soon be released on her website, [tanyamemme.com](#).

Memme said the process was a huge stress-reliever after going non-stop for years. "I put my heart and soul into it, and I loved recording it." *Gemini* has been in the works for about a year now, with names such as Paul Bushnell, who has worked with [Tim McGraw](#), producing it. And the title of Tanya's CD gives a clue to her personality. "I'm a Gemini. Geminis like variety and I think that's why I'm doing so many things."

Most engaging, though, is to hear Memme talk about the inspiration in her life— her cousin Christopher. Before entering university, he was diagnosed with a brain tumour, and was left disabled after an operation. He has been able to overcome many personal challenges, finishing university and now working.

"The way that he looks at life and the way that he sees things with the glass half full, at least for the most part, is inspirational. And if he doesn't— he has his bad days— that's okay too. Every time I see Christopher, I look at him in awe, with respect and with admiration, and what an amazing person he is to overcome such circumstances."

Memme adds that his story is so moving that she'd like to get him to share his story on *Oprah* .

You can't help but want to cheer on Tanya Memme, especially after hearing her story about her brother, and her own life journey. Many fans will certainly be doing that next week as she attends the Daytime Emmys side by side with her mother. An Emmy for Memme is as fitting as it sounds.

The Daytime Emmy awards air on CBS Friday, June 15.

*Additional information provided by Dan Sanchez, Epoch Times Los Angeles Staff. See the full interview with Tanya Memme online at:*

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## Interview with Tanya Memme - Part II

By **Dan Sanchez**

Jun 07, 2007

**Epoch Times Los Angeles Staff**

*This is part II of II of the interview with Tanya Memme, host of the Emmy-nominated Sell This House and former Miss Canada. Part I can be viewed [here](#)*

**Dan Sanchez** : Can you tell our readers about your new CD?

**Tanya Memme** : Yes, I can. My CD is called Gemini because that's the month I was born in and it's also another side to me. Most of my fans know me as the girl next door on Sell this House and this is a much more edgy side of me, more viby, it's like a pop-European sound. I recorded it at the Jim Henson Studio, which was a blast because I was a huge Muppet fan when I was a kid—which is why walking on the Jim Henson Studio lot was crazy. [laughs] Paul Graham and Paul Bushnell with Papa Genius Production [Company](#) produced my CD and the video. We are all very excited about releasing it. Paul Bushnell just got off tour with Tim McGraw, and I'm one of his biggest fans. My CD was a passion project. I put my heart and soul into it, and I loved recording it. I'm hoping to do another CD next year, with a bit more of a relaxing seductive vibe. The kind of sound where it's perfect for sitting in front of a fireplace, sipping on a glass of wine.



Tanya Memme (TanyaMemme.com)

About a year ago, I almost had a bit of a breakdown because I was working too much, flying too much, being pulled in every direction, and I just had no time for me and I just wanted to start doing something. I didn't want to have to work out, because working out to me is work, it's not fun. I went into the studio one day, and they said, "Hey, let's hear you sing. Let's hear what you can do." So I started jamming with them and they said, "Let's do a CD." What I realized the day that I was jamming in the little production studio, was that I wasn't thinking about anything at all except for singing and I probably haven't had that in five years. It's a huge stress reliever and I thought, "Wow, I absolutely love this." So I said, "All right. Let's do a CD." And I have had an absolute blast. I can't wait for it to be released. I'm selling it on my website [tanyamemme.com](#) to start, and we're then soon going to be on iTunes - you'll see it on other places too. It really is a passion project

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for me. And how it does, if it does well or doesn't do well, I am okay with that—it was one of the best things I ever did and I won't regret it for a second.

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There are six [songs](#) and there's a video. For one of the songs we actually did a music video. So there are six songs on one side and then a music video on the other. And it's full of photos. It's for the fans. It's not like a typical... I'm not trying to be the next Christina Aguilera by any means. I'm just trying to be me and say, "Hey, this is another part of me. Here's some photos you haven't seen and some songs—different variations of songs—and here's a music video."

**DS** : And how would you describe the songs that you sing? What genre or what category would they fit into?

**TM** : There are some fast ones and some slow ones. The fast ones have a sort of pop-European vibe kind of thing, it's hard to explain. There's one slow song on there. This is going to sound really weird—called 'Swear on This' and I recorded it the day I put my [cat](#) to sleep...who was in my life for almost 20 years. It's an amazing song, but to me it has a bit of a country feel to it. Sometimes, you just don't know how it's going to turn out until you hear it. So there's a variety of different sounds, but I'd say the fast ones have a sort of poppy-European feel and the slow ones are not country but they're sad. It was a very introspective time. My mother is so funny—I let my mother hear some of the songs, and she starts crying by the time she hears that there's a song on there called The Saddest Song. My mom says to me, "Are you really that upset with your life and dating? I hope your next CD is happy." [laughs] And I say, "Mom, I'm fine. It's just a song. I'm acting when I sing it." It definitely reveals a whole other side to me because I had to tap into those emotions in order to make the songs believable. I hope to sing 'Swear on This' to my future husband one day. 'Swear on This' is a very powerful song. It's about a bond between a woman and a man, so that one—that's a very special song.

**DS** : Definitely something to look forward to. Did you get to meet David Caruso when you appeared on CSI: Miami?

**TM** : I did.

**DS** : Is there a celebrity you particularly felt comfortable to be around, either filming a television episode or interviewing?

**TM** : John Travolta was one of my absolute favourite interviews. He is incredibly introspective and fun to interview—has a great sense of humour. He's very relaxed and made me feel like I was the only one in the room. He definitely focuses in and pays attention and he cares.

Okay, this is going to sound funny. For ET [Canada](#) I did a lot of the interviewing for *Rock Star: Super Nova*, so I interviewed Tommy Lee and Dave Navarro. Dave Navarro, I totally fell in love with. I thought he was great. I mean, when you look at him, you think, "Wow, this guy is a real rocker." He is a very intelligent... again, very introspective, very smart. He knows a lot about a lot of things and all of his answers were very specific and he always backed up everything he said. I was pretty impressed, I have to say. He was one of the celebrities that I was most impressed with. From what you think you're going to hear and then you actually interview the person—he blew me away. I thought he was fantastic.

**DS** : Our Canadian readers would like to know: Are we going to see more episodes of *Sell this House* and possibly *Move this House* based in your native Canada? We understand you did an episode in Niagara Falls, close to your hometown.

**TM** : We did. We did an episode in Buffalo. A&E would love to, but there's a lot of stuff you have to do in order to shoot in another country So you want to know if there are more episodes coming up. We're in our fifth season and I've just shot ten new episodes and we're continuing to shoot ten more. We do 26 episodes per season and we're in our fifth season, so we're continuously shooting new episodes.

**DS** : Have you seen any particular difference in the construction of homes in Canada versus in the United States?

**TM** : It's more an east-coast, west-coast thing. I find the east-coast homes are built to last. They're weather-proof. There's a lot of brick all the way to the top, very solid construction. There are a lot of things you can't do on the east coast that you can do on the west coast. On the west coast, you can get away with a lot more—the homes are so much nicer, and you can do a lot more outside: the landscaping, especially the plants, even the material that they use—things tend to be a little bit more beautiful. They can get away with fancier materials, although not as solid, but they look gorgeous. Whereas on the east coast, you have to build for the weather first and foremost because of the horrendous storms that we have in the wintertime. So there's a big difference, but it's not so much Canada vs. the US, more the east coast vs. the west coast.

**DS** : You have a passion for people's life stories, and how they overcome the impossible. Do you have a personal favorite story, or a recent story that you feel is worth sharing?

**TM** : I would have to say my cousin Christopher. He's one of the most inspirational people I've ever met. Christopher was on the Dennis Morris High School basketball team, prom king, very popular, and he was dating the reigning Miss Teen Niagara. At 18 years old, the summer before leaving for university, he was diagnosed with a brain tumour. Literally, one day he goes into the hospital and he seems fine and saying, "I'm scared and I don't know what's going to happen." After a multi-hour operation and a series of unfortunate circumstances, he fell into a coma. The next day he comes out and he's introduced to a whole different body and physical challenges he would have never imagined. He lost many of his motor skills and speaking skills and instantly had very difficult obstacles to overcome. Mentally, he's sharp as a whip—very funny and witty. But physically, he has a hard time walking, and he's had to learn to read, write, and speak again, and it's not perfect—it's a big change. But, with all of these challenges he decided to go to university and get his degree anyway! Under much scrutiny from other students, and personal challenges so few can relate to, he received his degree and graduated two years ago.

Now he has a job and he continues to work, and strive, aspire, read, and do these wonderful things to live the best life that he can live. He loves to help other brain cancer victims by speaking to them about their experiences and shows them that life does go on. There are certain things that he can't do—like go for a run, drive a car, things we take for granted every day. He's had his own apartment for a little while and constantly strives for independence.

But the way that he looks at life and the way that he sees things with the glass half full, at least for the most part, is inspirational. And if he doesn't—he has his bad days—that's okay too. Every time I see Christopher, I look at him in awe, with respect and with admiration, and what an amazing person he is to overcome such circumstances and he hasn't completely overcome all of them. He's living the best life that he can in the most positive way that he can, which is extremely admirable and incredibly honorable. His story is so deeply profound that I've been trying to get him on Oprah so he can share his story and other similar stories with others around the world, and how to live the best life possible. Maybe one day he will get his chance to share his story.

**DS** : Good. Good story. Is there anything that you'd like to discuss or mention that I haven't gotten into? What's going on in your life... anything.

**TM** : What's going on? Like what's going on day to day? Oh, my movie. I didn't get to talk about my movie.

**DS** : Please.

**TM** : I just shot a film called *Terror Inside* with Corey Feldman. The great thing is that my show is on A&E and Corey is coming out with his own show on A&E too called *The Coreys* . Corey Haim and Corey Feldman are getting together again and they have their own reality show coming out, so A&E is pretty excited about the fact that he and I got cast in a film together. I just flew back from Orlando for seven weeks and the whole movie is about a small town community that gets taken over by a [virus](#), where the virus makes you believe that pain is pleasure [laughs]. It's a psychological thriller.

It's interesting and it's definitely going to show another side of me, but the character that I had to play was very emotionally challenging. I go from the girl-next-door who runs the coffee shop in a small tiny town to this virus-ridden hate-the-world [character]—everything against me, crying. It's just a complete transformation. It's pretty cool. Working with Corey was fantastic and I didn't know what to expect working with Corey. I met him and his wife and we hung out at Disney World together and we had a great time.

**DS** : And the release date?

**TM** : Well, they're entering it into the Sundance Film Festival, so it'll be finished by the end of August. As far as the theatrical release, we're not sure yet. It depends on how it does at Sundance and how it does at the film festival. We are going to have some kind of theatrical release, but I don't know yet. I'm pretty excited about it.

**DS** : Do you think it might appear in the Toronto Film Festival?

**TM** : Yes. They were talking about that. So it should. It definitely should.

**DS** : The one coming up? This September? When is the date?

**TM** : Depends. If it's after September, there's a good chance. Before September, it's not going to be definite—we just finished shooting it. They want to have it done and edited by September 1. And, they've asked me to do another movie. The producer and director have already signed me on to do another movie. We're going to start filming that in about a year-and-a-half. But I'm not allowed to talk about it, so that's all I can say. [laughs]

**DS** : So is this movie an independent film?

**TM** : Yes.

**DS** : And of course you have the expectation that possibly a studio would purchase it.

**TM** : Yeah, you never know. I think that because it's a psychological thriller, it might have some sort of cult following. So we'll see. We'll see what happens. I'm curious to see what the heck I even did because I've never seen myself play a lead role and a character that's so demanding, that I'm really curious to see what I look like and how it all turned out. I'm hoping everything is going to work out okay.

I'm excited about it. You can go online and do a little bit of research. There's not a whole lot of information yet because they're keeping it quite secretive.