

EVERYDAY ECO HEROES

Three Canadians who are making the world a greener place **BY MELODY WREN**



WHO: Michael Stadtländer, chef, slow food advocate, co-recipient of the first Governor General's Award for cuisine in 2010

HIS STORY: Considered one of the world's top chefs, Stadtländer lives by a five-mile philosophy: he cooks only what he grows, raises or sources locally. He also cares about the land on which his food grows. In 2011 he organized Foodstock to raise awareness about the proposed mega-quarry not far from his farm in Singhampton, Ont. In October a second event, Soupstock, will happen in Toronto. Stadtländer's also working toward bridging the gap between farmers and chefs as the founder and president of the Canadian Chefs' Congress, an organization that "connects chefs to our land, in solidarity with farmers, fishers, gardeners, foragers and all artisanal food producers." Haisai, his solar-powered restaurant and bakery, reflects his passion and was built by him, his apprentices and friends. Ingredients are seasonal and local. The furniture is made from lumber found on his farm. His enthusiasm and energy means he's always thinking about his next venture. "I love big dreams, because they can happen!"



WHO: Severn Cullis-Suzuki, environmentalist, speaker at the 2012 Earth Summit, daughter of famed Canadian scientist David Suzuki

HER STORY: Cullis-Suzuki learned at an early age to speak out against injustice. At 12, she talked about environmental issues from a youth's perspective at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. At the 20th anniversary this past June, she spoke as a mother, focusing on eliminating fossil fuel subsidies, putting a price on carbon and making trade fair. Living in a small community in Haida Gwaii, B.C., with her husband and two young sons has led Cullis-Suzuki to shift her attention to local activism, such as the revitalization of the Haida language and helping clean up debris from the 2011 Japanese tsunami that is washing up on the beaches of the region. "Every individual voice really counts here. You can see the tangible change one person makes."



WHO: Kelly Drennan, founder and executive director of Fashion Takes Action (FTA)

HER STORY: After years of working in fashion advertising and PR, a trip to New Zealand inspired Drennan, made her question her values and motivated her entrepreneurial journey. "In New Zealand they live a very green lifestyle," says Drennan. Recognizing environmental issues within the fashion industry such as the use of chemicals to treat fabrics and excessive water usage, she set out to educate companies and consumers, first with the 2007 Green Gala, a fundraiser showcasing the potential for sustainable fashion. Realizing there was little help for designers who wanted to incorporate eco-friendly practices into their work, she launched FTA on Earth Day 2009. FTA supports designers who want to focus on sustainable fashion through mentoring, sales and marketing support and providing resources for materials. In 2012, FTA opened a showroom in Toronto's Distillery District featuring eco-friendly clothing and accessories. Drennan hopes that promoting green fashion will make it a mainstream option for consumers. "Sustainable fashion is accessible, not exclusive. A great deal of our time is spent educating the consumer around what sustainable fashion is, why it matters and where to find it. Changing the way just one consumer thinks will make a difference."

PHOTOS: [STADTLÄNDER] PETER POWER/THE GLOBE AND MAIL; [CULLIS-SUZUKI] KEVIN VAN PAASEN/THE GLOBE AND MAIL; [DRENNAN] PINA LABERTO