

## TRUMP A GEOPOLITICS EXPERT? FAKE NEWS

■ NEWS 24's JOE O'BRIEN was talking to the ABC's correspondent about the outbreak of hostilities on the Indian border with China this week when he segued to a comment from an "expert". But the expert turned out to be DONALD TRUMP talking about, well, nothing that made any sense and had nothing to do with soldiers throwing stones at each other. "That was not the expert we expected", said O'Brien, who dumped Trump and went back to talking to the ABC correspondent. Will Trump be dumped come November?



## MCLEOD BACK ON THE HORSE

■ MORE than a decade after getting the axe, cult TV show *McLeod's Daughters* is getting a new lease of life as a feature film. Creator POSIE GRAEME-EVANS said they got the green light to develop *The McLeod's of Drovers Run*, with former stars BRIDIE CARTER and SIMMONE MACKINNON joining the shout-out on social media.

# THE TOORAK UNDERBELLY

## NEIGHBOURS STAR'S TAWDRY TALE



NICOLA CHARLES

**F**ORMER *Neighbours* star NICOLA CHARLES has her claws out for the heartless housewives of Toorak in a scandalous new book about the gold diggers prowling 3142 heartland.

The UK-born mother-of-three will release her second novel, *The Witches of Toorak*, later this month. It's reality turned fiction. "I've lived in three continents and I've never seen women seek out what I call sponsor husbands as fervently as they do here in Australia. Particularly in Melbourne," Charles told Page 13.

"It's a real Melbourne issue," Charles says many of the women in her book are based on real-life Toorak identities she's met. And just like her predatory, scheming claws-out-characters, Charles draws blood.

These women have allowed themselves to become pets, living sham, loveless, career marriages via their sponsor hubbys. "They are prepared to live in a way where they are essentially turned into a pet," Charles said.

"Everything they eat is paid for by someone else. Everything they wear is paid for by someone else. The car they drive is paid for by someone else.

"These career marriages are not based

on love. They are running a business and they are hunting for these men."

Charles played the role of femme fatale Sarah Beaumont in Australia's longest running soap.

Her Ramsay St affair with Alan Fletcher's Dr Karl became one of the biggest storylines in *Neighbours* history.

Her name and fame meant she was a hot-ticket invite at charity functions and Toorak Village dinner parties. Scandalous tales were shared over French champagne.

"Some of the stories they would tell me about their own husbands, they felt no shame," Charles gasped.

She said women would reason why they were with their older, unattractive cashed-up husbands.

### SITTING ON A GOLD MINE

■ ONE Toorak archive from deep inside Page 13's Pandora's box is *The one about the prestige 3142 housewife who threatened to sue her husband over injuries sustained in over-zealous lovemaking after their split. Suffice to say they settled out of court. Bottoms up!*

"These Toorak wives would say things like, 'It doesn't worry me too much. He only needs it twice a day and it only lasts two minutes'."

Is Charles worried about retribution or being accused of letting down women? Predatory women give other women a bad name, the actor-turned-author said.

"A lot of people have asked if I'm concerned about the subject matter," she said.

"Essentially I see it as a feminist book because I'm outing the dehumanising behaviours of these women. Women looking for career marriages do exist. I've met them. I

know them and I've seen how they operate. I don't think they're very good for the rest of us."

Charles said she also wanted to explore how "bored, idle, gold-digging housewives" can turn on each other.

"I also explore how their attitudes change once they marry money," she said.

"You would think there would be some sort of camaraderie between these women in Toorak. But what they do is spend large amounts of time plotting how to destroy each other. That is their primary hobby, to find ways to demean other women in their same situation."

Charles will publish the novel under her publishing label, Shield Maiden, named for an old Norse expression meaning to protect women.

Last year, she wrote her first novel, *Click Monkey*, based on her experiences of child sex abuse when she was living in the UK.

She said *The Witches of Toorak* was a fun romp. "It's an analysis of the people I met in Toorak, but I've turned it into satire."

She is not worried about potential defamation cases.

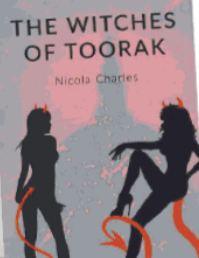
"I know there will be a few sphincters clenching. The main character, Skeleton Stella, has an incurable STD and is based on someone I know. They will read it and go 'f--k, that's me'. It's all based on reality, but I can't see anyone wanting to own up to it."

Pounding sex scenes and hard truths are uncovered in what Charles says is written as a warning.

"I would hate my son to be sought out by one of these women in Toorak," she mused.

"A lot of their men do think it's love. The women who go after these guys give Oscar-worthy performances."

"They can act their arse off for a lifetime. These men don't really know who they are married to."



## Logies cops an ugly Mooney

■ EVERYONE loves to dump on Aussie TV's night of nights (or that cringeworthy expression), but who doesn't secretly love the Logies?

Even last year's Gold Logie winner TOM GLEESON can't deny the publicity his gong has delivered.

Which is why many in the TV industry think comedian LAWRENCE MOONEY is pulling a low blow with alter ego South African TV critic RUDI VANDERSTON staging his own version of the ceremony after they

were cancelled due to COVID-19, calling them the Steaming Brown Logies.

Categories like Mutts Mongrels and Half Breeds include ROVE MCMAHUS, the ABC, DAVID KOCH, TRACEY GRIMSHAW and, say it's not true, loveable *Gardening Australia* gnome, sorry host, COSTA GEORGIADIS.

"Everyone knows it's just a list of all the people Mooney is seethingly jealous over," one insider snarled.



## PORTRAIT OF AN ALTRUIST

■ MIRKA MORA saw only the good in humanity, says her son and curator William.

With a little naughtiness on the side, WILLIAM MORA is busy wading through his mother's vast collection of letters at her former St Kilda studio.

He lives next door and says his mother kept everything.

Letters from fellow artists CHARLES BLACKMAN and Heide's JOHN and SUNDAY REED keep falling

out of more than 30 boxes of her many sketches and photographs (left).

"We had no idea they existed," Mora told Page 13.

"She has left such a fabulous legacy and it is such a delight to be working through. It reads like a who's who of Australian artists."

Mirka's memorabilia will be on show at the Jewish Museum of Australia exhibition, *MIRKA*, in early December.