

Shirly Brener

Introducing the hardest working MILF in Hollywood

THE WOMAN

Cougars, yummy mummies, MILFs – there's something special about attractive older women. They have that *je ne sais quoi* that captivates guys of all ages and confounds girls younger than them. These women are even more remarkable in Hollywood, an industry often obsessed with tweens and twenty-somethings. Some mothers in showbiz go to great

lengths to hide their motherly persona, while others simply fade away. But today, we'd like you to meet a Hollywood mum who not only revels in her maternal traits, she's also working harder than ever.

Shirly Brener has been acting in Hollywood since 1997, when she landed her first role in *Hijacking Hollywood* (starring Henry Thomas, that little kid from *E.T.*). It was her first audition ever. Since then, she's racked up at least 40 more acting gigs, with her latest as Monique, a bipolar, schizophrenic, abusive mother in indie movie *Touched*. Shirly has also moved into the business part of showbiz, as she also produces movies and recently became president of Radar Pictures, a production company that did *The Last Samurai*, *Texas Chainsaw*

Massacre, and *Runaway Bride*. All that, and she somehow found time to have a daughter and look pretty damn awesome.

"Thank you, I appreciate the compliment," she tells *FHM* in a trans-Pacific phone conversation. Shirly admits that she loves being photographed, as being in front of a camera for the past 12 years means it's all very natural for her. And she decided to do this shoot as a celebration of her newfound, MILF-quality body. "After having a baby, I feel my body is in great shape," Shirly says. "So I thought, what the hell, this is the perfect time in my life to do this." ▶▶▶▶

[PHOTOGRAPHY: BRIAN B. HAYES]

MUM'S
THE
WORD

Q+A

Your body is indeed in great shape.

What's your secret?

I do Bikram Yoga. I also run a lot. I'll get on the treadmill and run five or six miles. I also do cross-fit training, which is a specific type of exercise that uses heavy balls, kettle bells, and your own body weight. It's a lot tougher on your body.

Ouch, just hearing that sounds tiring. Do you have a strict diet?

I don't drink alcohol, I don't eat a lot of dairy, and I stay away from sugar. Of course, I believe if you keep a healthy diet, then you can indulge once in a while. When I go with my kid to a birthday party, I'll always have a piece of birthday cake with her, because I never want to put in her mind that she can't have cake.

Thank goodness for cake. Did your athletic life start before or after you became pregnant?

I've always been very athletic. Since I could remember, I've done many different sports: I ski, water-ski, wind-surf, surf, played racquet ball, water polo, rode horses, karate, tennis, and danced ballet and jazz for 15 years as a kid. My parents integrated that into my childhood, and I really thank them for that. Even when I was pregnant, I was going to the gym every day until the day before I delivered. I need sports, I need to sweat, and I need my body to get active, like I need food and sleep. It's just part of my existence.

Stop making us looking fat please.

Do you still go for all of the Hollywood parties just as much as you did before being a mum?

I actually go for more now! Every night, I have one or two events, and because I'm a nice girl, I try to go to everybody's thing. My daughter is five and a half and I raise her like an adult, so I take her with me. She always gets upset if I don't take her.

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“There are roles that come up that have nudity... I just weigh the positives against the negatives”

She's like, "I want to go to a big people party!" [laughs] She's very well-behaved and very easy to bring her to places.

Such a good girl. But still, how do you manage your time for all of the shindigs and soirees?

I'll tell you a little secret. Sometimes, I just have to go to the party to respect the people that invited me or to walk the red carpet. So I'll go, stay for 10 minutes so that everybody knows that I was there, pay my respects, and sneak out from the backdoor. It always seems like I'm everywhere, but I'm really never there for

more than 20 minutes! [laughs]

We'll have to remember that secret... So a little background for us: how did you end up in showbiz?

My mum was a theatre actress. I went with her to every movie set and every play she was in. I was really intrigued by that life. And from the earliest time I can remember, I always did plays and musicals. I learned how to sing and play the piano. At one point, I thought I was going to be a professional dancer. But as I grew into my teens, I was not interested in dancing six, seven or eight hours a day

anymore. But I knew I wanted to be in front of people, entertaining them, making them cry or moving them by art. I realised I'm not a dancer – I'm an actress.

In your career, was there any pressure for you to do nudity or sex scenes?

No, I never really got that pressure. There are always roles that come up that have nudity, and my agents, managers and I always weigh the positives against the negatives. If it's working with Martin Scorsese, Paul Thomas Andersen, or a director I really look up to and want to work with, then I'd probably have no problem with it. If it's for some cheesy, low-budget movie that won't get any recognition, then it's a waste of my time, and I'd rather pass on the job. I think every job needs to be examined – the material, the director, and the role. I'll give you the perfect example: I would do topless nudity in *True Blood*, because that's part of the show, but I would never do it in a show like *Entourage*, because that's gratuitous – a bimbo walking on-screen, showing her boobs. That's just not me.

HBO, sign her now! A lot of our readers will be disappointed to know you're married. But before you got hitched, what would it take to impress you and get your attention?

That's funny. You can tell them that my husband is a little bit older than me, so they might still have a chance! [laughs] No, I'm kidding. I love laughing. I'm really big on comedy and plays on words. To me, it was never important how the man looked. I've had young, old, thin, fat, tall, short – looks was never the issue, or how much money he had. I really like guys with a sense of humour – someone witty, who can make me laugh, and can keep up with me.

We know a good joke...

Also, I don't really need the romance or flowers. If a guy is a great communicator and can make me laugh, I don't need you to take me to expensive places for dinner. Just be cool. Let's travel together, go skiing, laugh, watch movies, cuddle in bed, eat crap in bed. To me, I like guys that keep it real and are just cool people. All the extra stuff never impressed me. Guys that go out of their way to impress me just turn me off a little bit.

Finally, would it be okay if we called you a MILF?

That's a compliment, but I always feel like 'MILF' is for a 48-year-old woman! [laughs] Or maybe that's more like a cougar? Yeah, MILF is fine. Whatever you want to call me, as long as it's a compliment, I'm good. [laughs]

The facts

Name: Shirly Brener

Age: 33

Sign: Libra

Food: Sushi

Bootyshaker

music: "Anything Lady Gaga. Actually, I dressed up as Lady Gaga this past Halloween."

To read the extended interview and for more photos of Shirly Brener, check out www.fhm.com.my soon