

NEW IDEA
EXCLUSIVE



MICHALA BANAS

My whirlwind wedding!



The *Winners & Losers* star has big news – she's getting married!

Just seven months ago, actors Michala Banas and Kade Greenland hadn't even met. Fast-forward to today and a glowing Michala is showing off a very sparkly diamond engagement ring after Kade proposed – with a poem he'd written especially for her! – in Paris, the city of love.

'I didn't just cry when he read the final line of the poem, which was: "Will you be my wife?"; tears exploded from my eyes, cartoon-style,' laughs 33-year-old Michala, as she sits down with New Idea to share her big news.

'I was so overwhelmed, I couldn't even say yes at first.'

Kade quickly adds: 'I was a bit worried for a moment there, but thankfully she said yes – eventually! – and I slipped the ring I'd secretly had made on her finger.'

'I was so overwhelmed, I couldn't even say yes at first...'

Michala smiles down at the delicate white gold, cushion-cut diamond sparkler glittering on her left hand and says proudly: 'Isn't it gorgeous? He could've slipped a Burger Ring on my finger though and I would have said yes. He's definitely the one for me – but this is better than a Burger Ring!'

The Melbourne-based pair only met in January this year, at a four-day acting workshop. 'It's been quick, but I've never been more certain of anything in my life,' reveals Kade, 26. 'I spotted her and I'd find any excuse to speak to her. I was trying to play it cool but I was just like: "Wow!"'

Michala smiles: 'I said to a friend who was with me: "Oh, he's so cute, I need to talk to him but not be a dork when I do," so she said: "I'm going to tell him." I didn't stop her. I thought: "You know what? Tell him. What's the worst that could happen?"'

After the course, a love-struck Kade asked the equally keen

Michala for her phone number, and took her out to a Mexican restaurant for their first date.

'Kade was a gentleman,' Michala smiles. 'He called rather than texted me. He picked me up and dropped me home and in between I went on the best date of my life. I knew I'd found "The One".'

And Kade wasted no time, with his proposal coming in June. The couple were in France to visit Michala's stepsister Pippa – one of the few people in on Kade's plan to pop the question in a leafy corner of the Parc des Buttes Chaumont in Paris.

'He was standing behind me while we looked at the view and

then he took out a piece of paper and began reading me his poem,' explains the TV favourite, who tears up when recalling the special moment.

'I could feel his heart pounding on my back so I turned to face him and that's when he dropped onto his knee and read the final line of the poem.'

The pair have no qualms about



Kade designed his fiancée's stunning ring (inset) with the help of Melbourne's Pilkington Jewellers – and he didn't scrimp on the diamonds! 'Forty little ones and one big one!' laughs a delighted Michala.

the speedy engagement. 'I knew I wanted to marry him straight away and anyone who knows us and sees us together just goes: "Oh yes, these two make sense." We're meant to be,' Michala says.

It's been a big year for the *Always Greener* and *McLeod's Daughters* star, whose portrayal of miner Todd Russell's wife Caroline in the TV movie *Beaconsfield* received widespread acclaim. On top of the proposal, last week she returned to our screens as *Winners & Losers*' resident bitch Tiffany Turner.

'She's back for 12 episodes and causing more trouble than ever,' laughs Michala. 'It's really interesting though because we get to see why she's like she is.'

Off-screen, Michala and Kade are busy moving in together and simply enjoying their engagement. 'We're doing it the old-fashioned way,' the actress jokes.

'He put a ring on my finger and now we're shacking up. We'll

probably get married in Melbourne in about 18 months.'

As for children, she says: 'Absolutely. Kids are definitely part of the plan, down the track. But for now we're just enjoying this special time.'

With a final glance down at the ring and leaning back into her fiancée's arms, Michala exclaims: 'I want to shout about our engagement to the world!'

'I can't wait to marry Kade. I'm so glad he didn't wait too long to propose – I'd been on my own for a while but now, just six months after we met, I've got someone incredibly special in my life. You never know what will happen next. I'm absolutely ecstatic!' **NI**

By Melissa Field

Main photos: Tina Smigelski

• *Winners & Losers*, Tuesdays, 8.30pm, on Channel Seven.

Paris proposal



HE PUT A RING ON IT!



ROMANTIC CELEBRATION

Romantic Kade left nothing to chance when popping the question. 'I began planning the ring and proposal not long after we met!' he reveals. 'When you know, you know.'

WHAT AN EIFFEL!

Michala didn't monkey around when it came to saying: 'Yes!'



Hair and make-up: Julie Potts; Styling: Susannah Pitts; Michala wears Tall North and Thurely; Kade wears Country Road and Stone Boutique