

Masterchef man's large bill - City Diary

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Senate F&PA Committee

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ON THE subject of catering, **Aaron Thomas**, a former contestant on **Masterchef** Australia, has turned up the heat in his battle with the company he used to run, **Oakmont Resources**.

London-based **Oakmont**, which controls a Brazilian iron ore operation, claims that Thomas used an estimated \$7m (£4.2m) of company money to fund a lavish lifestyle. Outlays included a glitzy Las Vegas bachelor party valued at \$133,000 and a \$171,000 Tiffany engagement ring for his fiancée.

But in the latest twist, Thomas, who argues that the money spent was part of an agreed remuneration package, is claiming the salary he says he is owed for the first two months of this year – a princely \$303,000.

The man's got to make rent, after all. Some \$14,500 of rent every month, in fact, for the rather roomy apartment Thomas is reportedly currently occupying in New York.

Playboy CEO Aaron Thomas Stole \$7m from London Mining Company to Fund Lifestyle

International Business Times: United Kingdom Edition (UK) - April 1, 2014

- **Author/Byline:** Samantha Payne
- **Section:** Aaron Thomas

An Australian CEO is accused of embezzling over \$7 million from his own company to fund 'a high-class lifestyle for himself and his girlfriends', including a luxury yacht and private jet costing over \$30,000.

Aaron Thomas, 26, is also alleged to have splurged money on Rolex and Hublot watches, and a \$171,000 Tiffany engagement ring for his Brazilian fiancée.

Thomas was fired by the board of London-based mining firm **Oakmont** Trading Ltd in January after news of his embezzlement came to light, according to a lawsuit filed by the company in the Manhattan Supreme Court on Monday.

Thomas, who is based in New York, founded **Oakmont** Trading Ltd in 2010, which owns and operates a Brazilian iron ore mine. The lawsuit states he proceeded to sell 74 per cent of the company's stock to investors.

The company has since launched legal action in both the UK and the US to recover an estimated \$7 million of its money.

"While Thomas has made some disclosures as to the whereabouts of the misappropriated funds, a sum of around [\$2.5 million] remains unaccounted for," the suit stated.

The lawsuit features examples of Thomas's extravagant spending over the last three years including \$14,500 a month for a Manhattan apartment with his fiancée Thiana Rodrigues, \$91,000 in Las Vegas in May 2013 and \$121,500 on luxury watches by Jager lecoultre, Rolex, and Hubot.

The suit even stated: "During a Caribbean vacation in Turks & Caicos for himself, Rodrigues, and members of Rodrigues' family, Thomas chartered a luxury yacht and private jet for his travel companions at a cost of over \$30,000, both of which were paid for with **Oakmont** funds."

Thomas told the New York Post the lawsuit was an attempt by the company board to get his remaining shares. He vowed to file a countersuit but declined to comment further.

- **Caption:** Aaron Thomas Facebook Windfarms are not the whole answer Evans arrives at Preston Crown Court for his trial with his legal team. He allegedly chartered a luxury yacht in Turks and Caicos for himself and travelling companions using company funds.

ROBBER BARON - Luxe-living CEO fleeced mining co. for \$6M: suit

New York Daily News (NY) - April 1, 2014

- **Author/Byline:** BARBARA ROSS and DAREH GREGORIAN NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
- **Edition:** SPORTS FINAL REPLATE
- **Section:** NEWS
- **Page:** 11

THE HIGH-FLYING CEO of a British iron ore company mined company cash to inflate his fiancée's assets, court papers charge.

Oakmont Resources in Manhattan Supreme Court filings claimed former CEO **Aaron Thomas** embezzled more than \$7 million to fund a lavish lifestyle that included luxury cars, private jets, exotic vacations - and \$20,000 breast implants for his beloved.

"Thomas charged **Oakmont** for a substantial amount of supposed 'business' expenses which were, in fact, personal expenses which could have no possible business purpose," says the lawsuit against Thomas and his fiancée, Thiana Rodrigues.

Those "business expenses" included a \$171,000 Tiffany engagement ring, a \$30,000 Cartier love bracelet and a \$10,000 Jaeger-LeCoultre watch, the suit says.

He also shelled out \$50,000 in cash for her and her family on a trip to Brazil, and used company dollars to pay for her son's tuition in Geneva, the court filings say.

The Australia native also had the company pay for Rodrigues and a friend to fly first class to St. Lucia - and he wasn't even there, the suit says.

That's not to say he was a one-woman man: The suit says he also used company cash to fly various other girlfriends across the globe between 2012 and 2013.

The big spending CEO also allegedly pampered himself, buying and selling \$2.8 million in world-class wheels, including an Aston Martin, Porsche Cayenne, an Audi and a BMW.

The company is suing Thomas in England, but also filed suit against him in New York because it's where he and Rodrigues have been shacking up in a \$14,500-a-month apartment, the filings say.

Thomas and Rodrigues could not be reached for comment.

BOUGHT & SOLD

\$2.8M IN CARS

\$10,000

JAEGAR-LECOULTRE WATCH

\$30,000

CARTIER LOVE BRACELET

\$171,000

TIFFANY RING

\$51,000

IN AIRLINE TICKETS

\$10,000

TUITION

\$20,000

BREAST IMPLANTS

It's mine - all 'mine!' Ore mogul scams \$7M: suit

New York Post (NY) - April 1, 2014

- **Author/Byline:** Josh Saul and Lisa Hagen
- **Edition:** Sports+Late City Final
- **Section:** News
- **Page:** 019

A mining-company CEO embezzled more than \$7 million to pay for "a high-class lifestyle for himself and his girlfriends," including private jets, a yacht, high-end watches and a \$171,000 Tiffany engagement ring for his Brazilian fiancée, a lawsuit claims.

Australian **Aaron Thomas** (left) bilked his company, **Oakmont** Trading Ltd., over three years beginning in 2010 before moving with fiancée Thaiana Rodrigues to a \$14,500-a-month Noho apartment he rented with corporate cash, the London-based ore firm says in the suit filed in Manhattan Supreme Court Monday.

"While Thomas has made some disclosures as to the whereabouts of the misappropriated funds, a sum of around [\$2.5 million] remains unaccounted for," the suit says.

The court papers paint a stunning portrait of lavish spending by the head of a company that shares a name with, but has no link to Stratton **Oakmont**, the Long Island pump-and-dump brokerage featured in the 2013 movie "The Wolf of Wall Street," starring Leonardo DiCaprio.

"During a Caribbean vacation in Turks and Caicos for himself, Rodrigues and members of Rodrigues' family, Thomas chartered a luxury yacht and private jet for his travel companions at a cost of over \$30,000, both of which were paid for with **Oakmont** funds," the suit says.

Thomas also spent \$91,000 in company funds in Las Vegas in May 2013 and \$121,500 on luxury watches, and paid for "many other flights taken by Thomas' girlfriends, including Rodrigues, in 2012 and 2013," the suit says.

"Thomas used the company bank accounts as a personal piggy bank, withdrawing substantial sums of money and transferring them to his personal accounts and to family and friends," the suit says.

Thomas founded **Oakmont** in the UK in 2010. The firm focuses on iron ore and owns operations in Brazil.

The **Oakmont** board fired Thomas in January and has launched legal action against him in England.

Reached at his Noho pad, Thomas denied all the suit's allegations and accused the

board of suing to gain control of his 26 percent share.

"It's a boardroom dispute that's going on," he told The Post. "These mechanisms are commonly used, in British law especially, to basically get shares of nominal value. That's how these mechanisms are used." Neither **Oakmont** nor its attorney responded to messages seeking comment.

--- Striking gold Mining mogul **Aaron Thomas** is accused of raiding company coffers for these expenses: \$27,213 - Payment to a New York City family law firm that appears to have been for a custody matter for his fiancée \$53,000 - An Australian holiday with his fiancée that included first-class airfare, car rental and hotel rooms \$72,000 - Three-month advance rent and security deposit for the Noho apartment where he now lives \$121,500 - Watches by Rolex, Hublot and Jaeger-LeCoultre \$425,000 - Amount he kept after telling a client to wire \$3 million to his personal account instead of a company account jsaul@nypost.com