

LOS ANGELES' ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE

venice

SEPTEMBER 2007
\$3.50

**GLENN
CLOSE
WHY WE
WATCH
TV**

**WILL.I.AM
TEAM TODD
BEN FOSTER
JEFF GARLIN
DAN FOGLER
ANGIE STONE
THE GO! TEAM
FRED WILLARD
MICHELLE RYAN
ROBIN SWICORD
WILLIAM FRIEDKIN
SALLI RICHARDSON
THOMAS WOODRUFF
TERENCE BLANCHARD**



0 74470 78272 8

Departments

- 16 NANCY'S NOTE
- 36 PARTYTIME!
- 38 EYES & EARS
- 40 RED CARPET
- 126 DVD PLAYHOUSE
- 130 CHOW BABY
- 132 CALENDAR
- 144 HOROSCOPE

Salli Richardson
mixes comedy **with**
drama while trying
to save the world
on "Eureka"
p. 62



SALLI
RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHED FOR
VOICED MAGAZINE BY
ALEX HENRY
AUGUST 24, 2007
LOS ANGELES

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
TOMAS ARISTO / GETTY IMAGES
HAIR BY TONYA TAYLOR / TONYA TAYLOR HAIR
MAKEUP BY DEBRA KUSTON / DEBRA KUSTON
STYLING BY TONYA TAYLOR / TONYA TAYLOR

The Art of the Cosmic Mom

Salli Richardson
saves the day
in "Eureka"

BY **DARRELL L. HOPE**
PHOTOGRAPHY **ALEX HENRY**
HAIR **STEPHANIE POHL**
USING **KITROO-MURPHY** AT
ARTISTSBYTIMOTHYPRIANO.COM
MAKEUP **CHERI KEATING**
USING **BENEFIT** AT
ARTISTSBYTIMOTHYPRIANO.COM



Okay, confession time: I am an unabashed fan of science fiction. I've especially got a soft spot for sci-fi television shows. That doesn't mean that you can slap a bunch of actors in prosthetic brow-ridges and jet packs into any worn-out, cliché-ridden excuse for a series and get me to jump backflips. But in a telescope where every scripted show that isn't part of the holy trinity of cops, lawyers, and doctors seems to get squeezed into the margins of cable and fledgling nets, when a show comes along that is as smart, as funny, and as genuinely evocative of real human emotions as is the Sci-Fi Channel's "Eureka," well, put me on a balance beam and call me Nadia.

"Eureka" tells the story of a small secret town in the Pacific Northwest inhabited by a community of super geniuses who work for an ultra-secret government science installation known as Global Dynamics that puts the fabled "Area 51" to shame. However, for all its smarts, this community is more in line with Mayberry than MIT, with a cast of quirky characters where you still have a pragmatic like Sheriff Andy Taylor (Colin Ferguson as Jack Carter), but Barney (Erica Cerra as Deputy Jo Lupo) is a gung-ho five-foot-four dynamo who can field strip a rocket launcher blindfolded, Goober (Joe Morton as Henry Deacon) is a genius ex-NASA engineer, and Opie (Jordan Hinson as Zoe Carter) is a rebellious sixteen-year old who's hiding her genius IQ from her dad.

"Eureka" is the highest rated show on the Sci-Fi Channel, due to its brilliant writing, realized by a talented cast. Much of that success can be attributed to the chemistry that sizzles between Sheriff Carter and the talented and beautiful head of Global Dynamics, Allison Blake, as played by equally beautiful and talented Salli Richardson. The currents that flow between the two of them is some of the hottest amperage to flow through the airwaves since Bruce Willis first butted heads with Cybill Shepard. Add to that mixture an equally sexy and brilliant ex-husband (Ed Quinn as Nathan Stark) who also happens to be the former head of Global Dynamics and is intent on rekindling the relationship with his ex wife; an autistic son who has a connection to a mysterious and deadly device from an unknown civilization; and the occasional Earth-threatening crisis that can only be diverted by the people of the town, and you start to see why people are watching. But as much as the gizmo effect draws the sci-fi faithful, and the comedy grounds the series, it is the touches of humanity and drama so beautifully played by Richardson and the others that give the show its extra dimension and lifts it to a level where it's equal to television at its very best. Add to that a sexy little touch of spice and it is little wonder that the series has more than a few people crying "Eureka!"

However, "Eureka" is only the latest success in Richardson's career. Born in Chicago, her voyage to stardom has a back-story that's almost as entertaining as any show of which she's ever been a part. She got her break when she was cast in the supporting role of Lana in Mario Van Peebles' African American-themed western, *Posse*. Since then she has steadily built a solid resume of work with roles in everything from the feature films *Antwone Fisher* and *Anacondas: the Hunt for the Blood Orchid*; movies for television such as "I Spy Returns"; and work on series such as "CSI: Miami" and "NYPD Blue." She also recently finished playing the part of Will Smith's wife in the upcoming \$150 million dollar *I Am Legend*, a remake of the cult film *The Omega Man*.

Richardson recently sat down with Venice Magazine to discuss her road to fame, acting opposite an Academy Award Nominee, and the best shoes for looking hot while you're averting the apocalypse every other week (or at least most of those things).

UAM CSULB

SEPTEMBER 15, 2007

WIDE ANGLE II

an insider's view of the world's
first digital robotic opera



with Composer/Creative Director TOD MACHOVER
Librettist ROBERT PINSKY and Baritone JAMES MADDALUNA
highlighting the groundbreaking opera DEATH AND THE POWERS

ART + EXPERIENCES AUCTION

Advanced on-line bidding at
www.Wide-Angle-II.comarket.com



with works by
Lita Albuquerque
Kathy Aoki
Lynda Benglis
Sandow Birk
Todd Brannard
Eileen Cowin
Michael Davis
Sam Durant
Kirsten Everberg
Todd Gray
Sant Khalsa
Tony Marsh
Kristen Morigin
Bret Price
Mark Rowedel
Julius Shulman
Susan Siltan
Thomas Woodruff
and many others.



Presented by Larkie Van Brink and Oliver
event held at the V.O. Amphitheater in Long Beach, California
for tickets + more information please call 562-985-4384

A benefit for the UNIVERSITY ARTS CENTER, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

UNIVERSITY ARTS CENTER
College of the Arts, California State University Long Beach
1250 Bellflower Boulevard, Long Beach CA 90840-8401
www.uacsb.edu

Bonhams
BY BUTTERFIELDS

Charter

EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION

evian

venice

We're really close to these characters. I love being on a show where people care enough to put that much into it. Everybody wants to be a part of something great.



Venice: You grew up in Chicago. When did you first get Hollywood dreams?

Salli Richardson: My stuff sort of happened slowly. I was dabbling in a few things. I didn't want to go the conventional route of school. I tried it and it just wasn't my thing. I started doing little things in Chicago and then when I was around twenty-three I started getting serious about it and decided to move to L.A. But I really didn't get focused until I got here. I kind of fell into my dream and decided, "Yeah, this really is what I want to do. This is the only thing that fits me right now."

Legend has it that you began your professional acting career in the theater at the Kuumba Workshop in Chicago. Can you tell us about that?

When I was fourteen, my mother took me in to audition for my first play. Gwendolyn Brooks' daughter had adapted her poem, "The Tiger Who Wore White Gloves" into a play. It was a musical and I ended up getting the lead. That's what really started pushing me. I was singing in the choir at the time and I studied opera. And my mother worked in a recording studio so I was always around a lot of music.

Okay, this is starting to sound like a plot from a movie, but you save up \$700, buy a used car, move to L.A. and became a star? Am I leaving anything out?

[Laughs] Well I'm still working on the star part but that's essentially true. I saved up my money waiting tables, bought a car, and drove here. I'd saved up enough money so that I never had to get a normal job, and just when things were dwindling down, I got cast in *Posse*.

Animation genre fans also know you from your voice-over work as detective Elisa Maza on the popular series "Gargoyles." What was the attraction to that genre?

That was one of those things where you go in for the audition thinking, "I'm never going to get this because I don't have a voice like that." Then it was, boom, "You got it." And I was like, "What? I got a cartoon?" It was great because they made the character look like me. It was a cool gig to have. I could do it from wherever I was and they worked around my schedule. I liked doing cartoons and I would love to do another one.

The show was pretty intricate for a cartoon.

Yeah, they did about 80 episodes.

There also seemed to be a big crossover with cast members from "Star Trek" being cast in roles for the series.

Yeah, it's the same genre. I just went to

ACCENTS
JEWELRY DESIGN



bird's nest setting by steven hanna • silver • gold • platinum

2900 Main Street
Santa Monica, CA 90405

310 396 2284
www.accentsjewelry.com

"Don't miss the Ossobuco alla Milanese."
— Gourmet Magazine

LOCANDA DEL
LAGO
RISTORANTE ITALIANO
A WINDOW ON LAKE COMO

Call for Reservations
(310) 451-3525

231 Arizona Avenue • Santa Monica
www.LagoSantaMonica.com

Lunch • Weekend Brunch • Dinner • Patio Dining • Happy Hour • Parties • Catering

my first Comic-Con in San Diego and most of those fans had seen "Gargoyles" as well as "Eureka."

Which brings us to Chilliwack, British Columbia, aka "Eureka." How did you get involved with the series?

Well, you know, this was something that wasn't supposed to be a woman of color but they were willing to see me on it. It was such a cool and quirky kind of script. I really appreciate it when I get to do comedy and this had a nice mixture of drama and comedy. They kept calling me about it, but I was thinking, "I don't know if I want to go live in Vancouver right now. I've got a daughter and everything." But I finally went in because I always go by the maxim, "If it's meant to be your job, it's your job." Obviously it was because they kept calling.

When you first read the part of Allison Blake, what were your thoughts?

She's very close to me. Her humor is very sarcastic and dry and that's not a stretch for me. She's a little more serious than I am in real life. And now, having a daughter of my own, I can understand the full scope of being really busy, having a child, trying to have love in your life and friendships, and still save the world. It's hard to juggle everything.

One of the amazing things about the show is the cast is brilliant and the writing is too. But one of the best things is the balance of underplay and overplay in the acting. Joe Morton is putting on a veritable seminar in subtlety with the story arc he has swirling around, and the rest of you are giving as good as you get.

We're really blessed with some great people on the show. I think it has to do with the fact that the producers put together not just people who have a lot of work behind them and are good actors, but nobody's looking at this like [derisively], "Oh, I'm on some science fiction show." Everybody puts in a lot of hard work to be on top of their game all the time. They'll read the script and if something doesn't seem right or it doesn't connect with their character, then they're fighting to make it the best show that it can be. We're really close to these characters. I love being on a show where people care enough to put that much into it. Everybody wants to be a part of something great.

That comes through. One gets the feeling from watching the show that you all genuinely like each other even after the director yells "cut."

We do. It's like a family. There are times where there are little frictions with other cast members, but at the end of the day we can have honest discussions and say, "I

love you and I want to work this out." It really is a family.

I think you should all win a Golden Globe as best ensemble and a mantleload of Emmys for the show, but conventional wisdom makes me think that's difficult because so many people hear "science fiction" and immediately pigeon-hole a show without giving it a chance. Considering the caliber of work you all are turning out, that must be frustrating.

You know, all you can do is the work. I thought during the first season we might get some kind of notice. But when you're on a sci-fi show sometimes they do pigeonhole it. But who knows, after four years "Battlestar Galactica" finally got noticed. I don't care if we win, but can we just be invited to the party!

But at least you're all up for a Saturn Award from the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror Films.

Are we? I didn't even know.

Yes, you're nominated for a Saturn Award for Best Syndicated/Cable Television Series.

Cool!

There are so many plotlines weaving through "Eureka." Where would you like to see Allison go?

I'd like to see Allison get her hands a little dirty. The whole point of the show is everybody has secrets in this town, and right now Allison doesn't really have any. So I'd like to explore some of her secrets since right now she's the ultimate power figure in the town. Will it change her? Will the decisions she makes be in the best interest of the town? Or will she do things just for her, or for her family? You know Allison as being pretty straight-forward. She may not know who she's in love with, but everybody can deal with that. But most power figures have a body buried somewhere in their past. Like who is Kevin's dad? Could it be Henry? At some point some of that should come out.

Now that you're firmly ensconced within the sci-fi universe, it seems fitting that you would go hang with the last man on Earth in the upcoming *I Am Legend*.

You know, I had no idea I'd fallen so deep into this. When I told the producers I got that job they said, "Oh my God, do you realize that that's a sci-fi cult film?" But I couldn't do it in a better film or across from a better person.

Had you seen the *Omega Man*, or its predecessor, *The Last Man on Earth*?

No I hadn't seen anything.

Tell us about working with Mr. Academy Award Nominee, Will Smith.

You know what I like—because I've been around other actors who aren't quite this gracious—is that when you come on a set you can see how the tone has been set. I don't think he allows for bad behavior from himself or other people. He was really nice and pleasant and just everything you should be if you're Will Smith. There's no reason to be an asshole. There's every reason to be generous and kind. And that's exactly what he is. He's grown into such a great actor and it was great to work across from him.

We'll, I've seen the earlier versions, so I might be wrong but I assume he doesn't get the girl in the end. Is there anything you can reveal to us about the film without spoiling it?

[Laughs] You know, I can't say anything. I can't. This is definitely one of those [situations] where you cannot say anything!

What else do you have stirring in the pot?

Right now I've just gotten back from Canada and I'm off for a few months, so I'm just trying to get that next job. I'm supposed to be shadowing some directors to learn how to direct television shows. There are a few directors who came to do "Eureka" and I think the show is receptive to the idea of giving me an opportunity down the line if I'm ready.

I think there's every chance of that happening because as good as season one was, season two has been fantastic!

And I have to tell you, our last few episodes are great, especially the last two.

Well, you're going to have to go a long way to top last season's finale.

Yeah, that was a good episode. Our last two are like that; but it's a two-parter in that same emotional pitch.

You mentioned before that you studied opera. Maybe they'll incorporate that into an episode of "Eureka."

I keep telling them we need to do a musical episode because Colin sings. I don't know if Ed sings but he plays the guitar wonderfully and Joe sings. It would be hilarious.

Finally, when people hear the name Salli Richardson, what would you like them to think?

I'd like to think, "Wow, she's fucking good!" [laughs] ▼

"Eureka" airs Tuesday nights at 9pm on the Sci-Fi Channel. I Am Legend hits theaters this December.