

TRACE

Music Uncommon

Transcultural Styles + Ideas



INTERGALACTIC SIRENS

BAT FOR LASHES
COCOROSIE
DENGUE FEVER
EMILY HAINES
ZAP MAMA

FUTURECOOL
SANTOGOLD

THE FAR SIDE
ENON
SUBTLE

BUENOS AIRES
THE PARTY NEVER ENDS



09128 48821 9

110



PHOTO SHANIQWA JARVIS

8 **MASTHEAD**

10 **CONTRIBUTORS + LETTERS**

12 **EDITOR'S LETTER**

CODE

14 **STYLE WARS** *All the latest and greatest in music, art, fashion and technology*

26 **BEAUTIFUL SONNY**

30 **CODE MODE**

38 **MODEL BEHAVIOUR GAYE**

40 **SCREENTEST SALLI RICHARDSON**

42 **SCREENTEST MELODY KHAZ**

44 **LIVE TO TELL THE GREAT LIVINGROOM JOHNSTON**

46 **LOVE DELUXE TATA AMARAL'S ANTONIA**

48 **SURROUND SOUND SUBTLE**

50 **SURROUND SOUND ENON**

52 **UP CURTAINS**

53 **UP TABI BONNEY**

54 **UP BLITZ**

56 **INSIDER** *Photographer* **DELPHINE DIALLO**

64 **FASHION**

ISSUE No. **79**

TRACE



LOS ANGELES

“It’s Will Smith – whoever **he wants to be** in the **movie will** be in the movie.”

The Simple Life

Discreet actress **SALLI RICHARDSON'S** latest Hollywood blockbuster means maximum exposure, but she's not complaining.

■ text **MATT BARONE** ■ photo **CARLOS RIOS**

Of all the places to be in the world, stuck in Los Angeles traffic with a cell phone pressed to her ear might be last on Salli Richardson's list. Yet, on an otherwise free September afternoon, that's exactly where she finds herself. Despite an admitted reluctance toward interviews, the super-friendly, mild-mannered actress handles such inquiries like a consummate professional. Pre-discussion, she cuts out the middleman, instead issuing her direct cell number. Once in conversation, giggles conclude nearly all of her sentences.

If Salli had her way, though, she'd be lounging on a small dingy elsewhere, enjoying open water scenery. "Deep sea fishing is fucking amazing," informs the Chicago native, revealing her latest "action-packed" hobby (the other being golf). "I was on a press trip recently, and they had us doing interviews out on boat. It was my first time, but I caught a 175-pound grouper. Since then, I've been hooked—pun intended."

Of course, aquatic activities are far from expected indulgence for a stunningly beautiful, steadily working thespian. The painstakingly enigmatic Salli, however, is anything but Hollywood. Gossip hounds and celebrity-obsessed bloggers seem to look the other way, and, despite the charming talent's nearly fifteen calendars-deep resume, press can hardly get any of her. With past work in Emmy-nominated television series' like *NYPD Blue* and *House* and a current role on the Sci-Fi Channel's *Eureka*, it'd seem inevitable that something would hit the tabloids. An illicit fling with a male star? DUI arrests? Anything?

Blame, or, rather, applaud, such anonymity on Salli herself. "I'm not one of those people who likes being out there," she says. "My private life has always been priority number one." Whereas her counterparts rely on hired hands to guide their professional well being, Salli tactfully saves her money. Even with projects to promote, she'd been without a personal publicist since 1994, only recently employing one.

The reason for such conformist submission — *I Am Legend*, Salli's new \$150 million movie that represents the biggest moment in her already extensive career. An adaptation of Richard Matheson's iconic 1954 novel, arguably science fiction's most influential text to date, the film stars Will Smith as the sole survivor of a mysterious, viral extermination. As his wife and daughter's mother (Will's real life offspring, Willow, plays their seed), Salli's character, which appears in three extended flashback sequences, provides the emotional depth. "You see the true devastation of what's happening in the movie through her eyes," she says. "This disease, taking over the world, is separating you from your husband. What does that mean for you, and how do you handle that?"

Shot in New York City late last year, the production actually brought Salli's profession full circle. If not for behind-closed-doors drama, she'd have starred opposite Will in one his past cinematic smashes (unsurprisingly mum about which particular film, all Salli divulges is that it came out before 2003). Sour grapes leave bitter tastes, of course, and Salli is wholly appreciative of her *I Am Legend* opportunity. "I feel like Will kept me in mind," she reasons. "I still had to audition, but I felt like this role was mine to lose. It's Will Smith—whoever he wants to be in the movie will be in the movie."

Clearly, the filmmakers had no objections. "It's hard to find actors who have both genuine warmth and strength," says Francis Lawrence, *Legend's* director. "Many people who are warm feel like victims, while many strong people feel almost like bullies. Salli, though, is the perfect combination of those, which was crucial for the film."

A major factor in Salli's minimal exposure, she admits, is her self-imposed shunning of press. In her heart, a secure family life outweighs any inflated celebrity. Living in Los Angeles with her husband, fellow actor Dondre Whitfield, and their three-year-old daughter, Parker, she prefers playing mother to any other role. "I'm fortunate, because [Dondre] feels the same about our personal lives," she says, divulging how their first red carpet event attended in years happened this past spring. "When I'm not working, I'm at home with my daughter, and that's what I love most. I want her to have her own childhood, and not be looked at as so-and-so's kid."

Salli might be on to something. "Salli and Dondre have a very good life right now," says veteran casting director Kim Hardin, who selected her for 2002's *Biker Boyz*. "When you're a mega star, that lifestyle changes dramatically. It even affects your relationship if one becomes bigger than the other. You can have a very comfortable lifestyle just being able to do your art, without becoming public property. That's what Salli seems to understand."

To better secure young Parker's future, Salli recently began pitching television pilots—which she'd ideally produce herself—around Hollywood. Having acted for such a long time, she's ready for a change. "I feel like, with *I Am Legend* and people's newfound interest, I'm at an exciting point in my career. You can call it a rebirth, even. Whatever it is, though, I'm ready. Hell, maybe you'll even see me out there more." Pondering her statement briefly, she rebuts. "Well, maybe not."