

BECAUSE EVERY MAN NEEDS ONE

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WINGMAN

MAGAZINE

PATRIOTS' DAY!

KENDRICK BOURNE & JUSTIN BETHEL

***Get Ready To Take
THE PATRIOTS
Back To The Superbowl!***

MORE STARS!

★ RINGO STARR ★ SUSAN LUCCI ★

★ STEVE GUTTENBERG ★ SAMANTHA MATHIS ★

★ NICK CREEGAN ★ DEMORE BARNES ★ ROB MORROW ★ KHALIL KAIN ★

★ ARI SHAFFIR ★ JUSTIN HURTT-DUNKLEY ★ SHANNON LUCIO ★

WE LOVE LUCCHI

***As Truly Talented As She
Is Bankable, And A Force To
Be Reckoned With Both
On And Off-Screen,
The Incomparable
SUSAN LUCCHI
Is In A League Of Her Own***

Photos Taken At The Park South Hotel
124 E 28th St, New York, NY 10016
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Photos by John Andrew Fredrickson
Glam by Daniel Koye using Orbie, Seven,
Schwarzkopf, Makeup Forever, MAC
Assisted by Phoebe Bock

Story & Styling by Andrew Cristi
Assisted by Carlos Leon

Dress by High Flaunting; www.highflaunting.com
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Photo taken at
The Park South Hotel
By John Andrew Fredrickson
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Very few actors in the history of entertainment have been able to cultivate a long-lasting career and brand quite like the incomparable Susan Lucci- and really, even the most successful talent at the highest levels with the most amounts of hits to their name truly doesn't hold a candle, and their legacies perhaps might not endure the same way. For the way the name Muhammad Ali is synonymous with boxing, the name Michael Jordan is synonymous with basketball, the name Harry Houdini is synonymous with illusion, and the name Charlie Chaplin is synonymous with slapstick, the name Susan Lucci will forever be synonymous with soap operas, as she is very much the undisputed quintessential queen of the medium from really the inception of soaps, and she will be written as such in history books for years and years to come.

And while that alone is an impressive achievement in it of itself that labels the beloved starlet as iconic, there is really so much more that makes up her outstanding dossier that brings Lucci and her brand to far surpass most other entertainers. Her longevity alone is a feat of wonders. Many of the top notable stars get lucky with one or two hits, or a few hot years, but in the case of Susan Lucci, the resilient actress has really been mega-famous now and on top of the game for almost half a century, with her "*All My Children*" character Erica Kane not only being one of the most cherished television characters of all time, but also record breaking, with Lucci playing her for 41 years- cementing her as the fifth longest running actor to play a character in history.

And with that, she's also phenomenally bankable- far more than most stars- and has been for decades. As fame becomes a harder game with social media changing the paradigm and everyone thinking they're famous, ultimately making it far harder for anyone to actually be famous, Susan Lucci remains one of the top names to put butts in the seats and to draw a crowd.

And still, there's more. Beyond her long-lasting super-stardom and her adored persona, Lucci has also proven herself to be an outstandingly savvy business-woman that has parlayed her television success into a lucrative and unstoppable empire complete with books, a skincare line, clothing, and much, much more. A juggernaut powerhouse and a force to be reckoned with both on-screen and off, the enchanting entrepreneur has built a worthy and constantly swelling brand that fans everywhere follow dutifully and diligently, proving that Lucci is far more than just an actress, but also, a bona fide true influencer of culture way before the word influencer was tainted and over used by social media. In short, Susan Lucci has truly influenced society and pop culture in a way that will forever be documented.

And that brings us to one of the most impressive attributes of the glamorous star's splashy profile- her ultimate contributions to setting society forward. George Clooney has been documented as saying that even with the impressive amounts of hits on his resume and his long run in the A list, he worries that his legacy will consist of nothing but "hits," as history books really don't list hit films as something that makes a person notable- and really, he's quite right. Even the biggest blockbuster stars run the risk of being forgotten in time, as entertainment changes, and audiences fail to keep watching their films or shows. But that is simply not the case for Lucci, as her legacy offers far more than a hit TV show. Through her platform, the groundbreaking star has managed to be a pioneer on many fronts from showcasing strong women in leading roles, to also putting a woman deemed as "too ethnic" center stage during a time when olive complexion actresses weren't picked as leads.

An icon for the entire world, Susan Lucci is a national treasure for all, however, the New York native is held particularly close in the hearts of Italian-American audiences. A huge fan of bombshell Sophia Loren herself, Lucci praises the Italian screen siren as a role model that created visibility for Italians on screen in a more nuanced capacity past the usual stereotypical depiction, and really Lucci herself picked up that torch and ran with it as she is also very much a stellar depiction of the idea that Italian Americans are not a monolith, and like every group, offer a wide variety of different people- something the charming actress eloquently states herself. In truth, very few people in this world get to be associated within the same group as their role models, and impressively, Lucci has managed to join the ranks of Sophia Loren as an Italian actress that breaks the mold, all while carving out her own individual and unique brand in the process.

And even now, the game-changing actress is still helping to influence culture and progress society forward to this day. Still as adored as ever, the persevering performer is managing to magnificently defy any age stigmas society might have as she is not only as phenomenally gorgeous as ever before, but also, still living a healthy and active lifestyle. Still the same force to be reckoned with, Lucci is quite the Wonder Woman as she is illuminating the world to the idea that people of any age can still be fascinating, compelling, and beautiful, intuitively and correctly knowing that there is an audience for it. And, while she still manages to be a delight to watch on-screen, she is every bit just as much unstoppable off-screen as well as she is now using her platform to raise visibility for the American Heart Association, using her voice to warn women all over the country of the differing signs of heart disease.

And if all that wasn't enough to make the brilliant beauty's legacy endure, there's one more attribute to Lucci that really makes her far surpass the rest. To top it all off, she is actually a real talent to boot. Usually hailed for all the above achievements, the "All My Children" star is no stranger to mountains of praise celebrating her celebrity stature, and all the above items are usually noted to her name- so much so that they often overshadow the heart of the matter; at her core, Susan Lucci is such a beloved actress because in reality, she is really such a darn *good* actress. Great, really. When it comes to the actual work, Lucci is every bit the real deal in terms of delivering a performance, and the EMMY winner is every bit worth the hype.

After many, many years of playing Erica Kane, the magnetic actress has consistently demonstrated that she is able to play the toughest of drama with an unshakable signature strength that inspires and motivates- which is precisely why the character is not only so admired, but also so emulated and channeled throughout other works. Every drama aspires to have a character quite so compelling as Erica Kane, and really, it's Lucci's talents that have made the character such a staple that other shows are desperate to recreate. Powerful and endlessly persevering while still narcissistic, flawed, and layered, Lucci brought forth a character that changed the game for television- particularly for women- much like Vivian Leigh did for film with Scarlet O'Hara in "Gone With The Wind." In short, Lucci single-handedly really created the soap opera vixen, and for that, her talents will always be remembered.

But, make no mistake, at the end of the day, the versatile actress's abilities have shown that she is still far more than Erica Kane- with perhaps the most impressive thing about her skills is how much of a genius she is when it comes to comedic timing. It's long been said that drama is a walk in the park next to comedy, and really, as amazing as Lucci may be when it comes to delivering the drama, she is astonishingly even more equipped to land a joke and deliver the biggest laughs. Amazingly able to laugh at herself, Lucci has proven time and time again in her career from "Hot In Cleveland," to "Devious Maids," to "Joy," to even hosting "Saturday Night Live," that she is very much a master of comedy, and really, tremendously underused when it comes to getting the laughs. Again, in short, there is nothing Susan Lucci can't do, and there's a reason the world is so enraptured with the stunning star.

And with that, after waxing poetic enough about the luminous legacy of the star, we give you Susan Lucci herself in her own words. So, to find out all about her amazing career, her enduring brand, and what else she would love to do, read on to see what she had to say!

WINGMAN: Let's start with "Pine Valley," which is about to head to primetime. How does it feel knowing "All My Children" has such an enduring legacy?

SUSAN LUCCI: Well, it's fantastic to know that of course. And people are so invested, the fans I meet are still dedicated- it's as if the character never went away. It's great.

WINGMAN: So many actors try and run from their most famous roles, but you have always so wonderfully celebrated Erica Kane- and Erica really has paved the way for so many strong women on television. What about Erica do you love the most?

LUCCI: First of all, thank you- what a wonderful question. I've heard so much about Erica paving the way, and really so much of that credit has

"During the lockdown, I really got to think about it, and I figured that producing content and the creative aspect of it was something I could see myself doing."

to go to Agnes [Nixon,] I saw what was on the page, and I loved her from day one. I mostly loved what many of the fans loved about her; her spirit. Her great can-do spirit, and her resilience. Plus, she was the naughty girl in town, so she was always great fun to watch [laughs.]

WINGMAN: Lately, we've seen a major movement of "Women Behind The Lens" with actresses stepping behind the cameras to write, produce, and direct- and no one knows this industry or what works better than you. Would directing or producing be something that interests you?

LUCCI: It's funny, because during the lockdown, I really got to think about it, and I figured that producing content and the creative aspect of it was something I could see myself doing. I would enjoy that very much,



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and I think I would have a lot to bring to the table there. Directing is a whole other thing. My hat is off to directors, because they really have to worry about everything. I just have to worry about my one part, and the things that come with being an actor. But, to be a director, there's such a fine-tooth comb that goes through every character, and every storyline, and every technical aspect- it's a very big undertaking. But, I will say, since opening my own Instagram account, it's really put me for the first time behind the camera in terms of taking photos and videos. I've been in front of the camera my entire life, and to be behind the camera in any aspect- even if just taking still photos and the occasional video, it's been a wonderful growing process to train my eye for the artistry of it. I have tremendous respect for everyone behind the scenes.

WINGMAN: You are truly a phenomenal actress- and while you are known for drama- and GREAT at it, you are also a brilliant comedic actress with exceptional timing and a masterful ability to laugh at yourself- which has been shown in many of your later projects like *“Joy,” “Devious Maids,”* and *“Hot In Cleveland.”* Would you be interested in more comedy work?

LUCCI: Absolutely! Thank you for asking me! I love doing comedy, and I would love more of it- I definitely wish for more comedy work!

WINGMAN: I loved *“Hot In Cleveland,”* and you were the most phenomenal addition to it. What I loved most about that show was the stigmas it fought for women past the ingénue stage in leading roles. How do you think Hollywood is doing in terms of making strides toward fighting ageism in media?

LUCCI: I think we've seen a little more progress. Ironically, I think the audience would be very there for it. We have a great diversity in

our population, and ageism unfortunately still seems to be something people are allowed to exclude. I myself think women who are past the ingénue stage are still very interesting- you don't stop dreaming, or being inspired, or living your life when you get older, and I know there's an audience out there that is hungry for seeing that part of life. And that goes for men, and women. I even think that it's beneficial for younger people in their 20's to see as well- that they don't have to stop living their lives when they get to a certain age. And who are “they” anyway that make these judgments that get the powers that be to create such exclusions, and make the world think that people don't want to see this? Because they're wrong- there is definitely a very clear audience out there.

“I want to be the best I can be- body, mind, and spirit, for as long as I can.”

WINGMAN: In general, you are a pioneer of ending aging stigmas yourself. You are phenomenally gorgeous and fit, and still deliver the same great performances you always have- you are still the same force to be reckoned with, and as it becomes harder and harder to become famous for the new generations as they compete with social media, you are truly

one of the biggest stars in the world. One of my own personal goals through all my work is challenging aging stigmas. Is that important to you as well as an artist in your work?

LUCCI: Yes, it is important to me. I think, for me, I take things day by day and keep on keeping on- and I've never been of the attitude of growing older gracefully- I'm going kicking and screaming. I want to be the best I can be- body, mind, and spirit, for as long as I can. Erica set a very high bar, and I don't want to disappoint people because there are so many people out there that feel the same and share that resilience, and they want to believe in that mind set.

WINGMAN: One thing we talked about when I interviewed you for the Huffington Post was about your time on *“Devious Maids,”* and how you could identify with the actresses on that show since, as Latinas, they have been marginalized and disenfranchised by Hollywood- and you yourself were always considered “too ethnic” early on in your career, as well as potentially being seen as too strong of a woman for that time period. These days, while there is still far to go, both diversity and tougher women are definitely more prevalent in entertainment- and you were a major frontier on both fronts. How does it feel watching the world open up a bit in terms of women who are perceived as “too ethnic” and “stronger” taking leading roles?

LUCCI: Thank you so much again for saying such amazing compliments. First of all, I'm very happy to see the progress- even though there's still far to go, and it's taken way too long, but I think it's important to be thankful for whatever progress has been made, and it's terrific to see. But really, there are so many disenfranchised people from every background, whether it be race, ethnicity, gender, age, ability, and showcasing them is important

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because there are viewers out there that are the same, and are eager to see themselves represented. It winds up being a win-win for everyone, and that should even make sense from a business standpoint.

WINGMAN: You are an icon for the entire world, but in Italian-American households, you are unparalleled. How important was it to you to not have your Italian-American heritage diminished by Hollywood when you started out?

LUCCI: You know it wasn't in my mind to begin with, but I was so thrilled to be embraced by the Italian-American community, and also by the public in general that encouraged more ethnic looking actors to be featured, considering that we had been told that audiences didn't want to see that. Agnes was a blue eyed blond woman that cast me as Erica Kane- a woman who did not have a vowel at the end of her name, and she let Erica have dark hair, dark eyes, and an olive complexion. That was Agnes- and that was really a breakthrough, and it's amazing to think back and realize there was that kind of prejudice. I was surprised when they said I was too ethnic, but looking back, I guess I see what they see. When I grew up, I was watching Sophia Loren- and I've had the pleasure of seeing her twice in my life, and it was such an honor, and she was such a role model. I hope going forward we can see Italians being portrayed fully like every human being, rather than stereotypical depictions. Of course, gangsters and mafia have a secret society, and there is intrigue there that makes for compelling storytelling, and many of those stories are wonderful, and classics. But, I think back to watching Sophia Loren, and the way Italians were depicted at that time with more nuanced roles- they were not just mafia/gangster types, and I'd love to see more of that. Every group has a wide variety of people in it, and that should always be reflected.

WINGMAN: Your "Devious Maids" co-star- the absolutely lovely Roselyn Sanchez- is now leading the new "Fantasy Island." You did a guest spot on the original "Fantasy Island." Any chance you might come back and play on the new show?

LUCCI: I don't know, nothing has been proposed to me. But I wish her all the luck in the world, and she was wonderful on "Devious Maids," and I'm sure she will be a wonderful addition to anything she is in. She is very lovely.

"I hope going forward we can see Italians being portrayed fully like every human being, rather than stereotypical depictions"

WINGMAN: You were also recently in the movie "Joy," where you recreated the world of 80's-90's soaps. The film was absolutely phenomenal. Did they write that part specifically for you?

LUCCI: I believe they did. I actually had to miss a little bit of the shooting due to scheduling, and that was a shame, but it was such a wonderful experience, and I loved the part.

It was a thrill for me to sit with Robert DeNiro and Jennifer Lawrence in between takes, and I was in such fantastic company. David O'Russell is a brilliant director.

WINGMAN: You were also in one of my favorite Christmas movies ever; "Ebbie." That movie is really timeless, and still holds up as one of the best Christmas TV movies of all time. I'm sure you've been offered so many Christmas films- what drew you to that one?

LUCCI: I loved that it was a woman playing the Scrooge role- that was interesting. I thought they told that story very well, and it was an innovative talk. And for so long, I had just been doing "All My Children," which was wonderful, but this gave me a chance to play something different. And I loved the idea of making something where the whole family could sit down and watch it. "All My Children" was also multi-generational, and I love that aspect. It's fun to play the bad girl in town, but it's also great to play a character with a definitive journey where you see her turn her life around.

WINGMAN: While you are really a fantastic actress, you are also an unstoppable brand- and have an incredible empire consisting of everything from books, to perfumes, to skin care, and beyond. These days, every actor is trying to brand themselves thanks to social media- and many fall flat, but you are truly an incredibly savvy business woman that has really been a force to be reckoned with. What would be your advice to the people trying to brand themselves- what is the most important thing to know?

LUCCI: Well, I have to give my husband a lot of credit here. He would come to me with projects that other people come to him with, and he did the vetting and the business research. But, I will say, you have to be true to yourself- and that goes for any industry you're in. Even



with writers- they say; “write what you know.” Do what comes naturally to you, and people will believe in that authenticity. Like the pilates- I had been doing pilates for years. The same with the skincare products- it’s also important to me. I think it’s important to be true to yourself when it comes to business, and just to share what you know, what you learned, and what’s important to you, and the public will be faster to believe it.

WINGMAN: Unlike Erica Kane, you found your Prince Charming far easier- and you have been with Mr. Helmut Huber for over three decades. During the beginning of COVID, fans were treated to a little cooking show on your Instagram where Chef Helmut would cook- and his dishes look pretty amazing. What’s your favorite dish Helmut makes?

LUCCI: He has quite a following! People want to see more of his cook-

ing- and I’m not surprised, he’s so wonderful. My favorites might surprise you because they both involve carbs. I love his Hungarian goulash with hot buttered noodles. Our friends wait on baited breath for him to prepare that. I hope with the lockdown you experienced this, but there was a real sense of community where I am- everyone was baking, and cooking, and leaving food for one another. Our neighbors left us champagne, and we would leave them goulash. I also love when Helmut makes orechiette. Put me in a corner, and I’m just happy with that.

WINGMAN: You are also a wonderful philanthropist and have been a strong advocate for the American Heart’s Association’s event Go Red For Women. How did you get involved with that cause, and how did it become so near and dear to your heart?

LUCCI: After I had my heart episode, I knew how lucky I had been. After it happened, I talked to my publicist, Jessica Sciacchitano, and I asked her to find something for me that would help pay that good luck forward, and let me tell my story. I remembered a story I heard where I was told women’s symptoms for a heart attack are different from a man’s, and it helped me get help that day for what I was feeling- and I wanted to pass that along. And Jessica was wonderful and reached out to the American Heart Association, and they asked me to be an ambassador for the Go Red For Women event, and it gave me the opportunity to really share what I had learned and experienced. It gave me a chance to go all over the country and speak, and when they started doing things virtually, I was able to continue that. It has been so gratifying to be able to share that story, and people have told me that it has helped them, so I’m happy for that. It gave me the opportunity to go to Washington and lobby for research for the cause, and I got to speak to Peter King, a Republican, and Christine Rice, a Democrat, and they welcomed us with open arms- and any time you can see people come together for a cause, that’s always wonderful. The opportunities

that the American Heart’s Association has granted me has been very gratifying.

WINGMAN: You are one of the most talented, beloved, and successful actresses to ever be on television. As an artist, what kind of role would you most love to play, and who would you most love to work with- or- work with again?

LUCCI: My whole life, I was told I should play Maggie in “Cat On A Hot Tin Roof.” But, I don’t always have to play a glamorous role. I would love to play smart, strong women who are continuing to live their lives. I would love to play a woman in politics, or even a spy. As far as who I’d like to work with, I think being in the right hands is very important, and I’d love to work with people who are setting out to tell important stories that affect people in ways that make a difference.

And having already made such a difference with such important pioneering work, that seems par for the course when it comes to Lucci. ■

LIGHTNING ROUND!

1. Which current TV show would you most love to guest star on?

“Succession.”

2. What is one role fans would be surprised to learn you tried out for?

The Shirley Muldowney movie; “Heart Like A Wheel.” Shirley wanted me for the role, but the director, or studio didn’t.

3. Who inspired you to become an actress?

Sophia Loren.

4. Favorite dance to do on “Dancing With The Stars”?

The quick-step.

5. Which co-star was your favorite to work with when you hosted “Saturday Night Live”?

They were all wonderful, that’s a hard one- I was there during such an amazing time with Phil Hartman, Julia Jackson, David Spade, Mike Myers, Chris Farley- it was a golden time.

6. As a lifelong NYer- what is one New York restaurant everyone should try?

That’s a hard one, but at the moment, I really like Majorelle. It’s beautiful- the decor is a feast for the eyes, and the food is a feast for the senses. It’s all very wonderful, and sparkling.

7. You got rave reviews as Annie Oakley in “Annie Get Your Gun.” What other musical would you love to do?

When I did “Annie Get Your Gun,” so many actors from “Chicago” would come to me and say; “Why aren’t you doing Chicago?” So, I would love to do that. I’d love to learn that Fosse choreography!

THE RISK TAKER

***With A Tremendously
Well-Crafted Career
Of Hits, The Captivating
SAMANTHA MATHIS
Defied The Title Of
America's Sweetheart
By Taking On The
Tough Roles***

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Usually in the case of women in entertainment, in order to carve out a successful career for themselves, they are designated toward cementing themselves in one of two categories; “America’s sweetheart,” a la Reese Witherspoon, Meg Ryan, or Julia Robert’s, or “America’s Vixen,” a la Kim Kardashian, Angelina Jolie, or Megan Fox. Patriarchal structures in society that have long been passed down have unfortunately aligned the most successful females in media to summing themselves up as “good girl,” or “bad girl,” princess or evil queen, sweet or sexy, debutante or bombshell- with very little leeway given to actresses who dare to be anything but, or anything in between. Luckily, there have been daring talents like Samantha Mathis that braved breaking the mold.

However, if you ask Mathis herself how she did it, she casually shrugs off the achievement by stating that there was no real grand master plan, and instead, the edgier, risk taking roles that defined her career found her rather than her actively seeking and pursuing her- and that may very well be true given the contradictory make up of her general persona, and why casting directors found her in the more nuanced roles she wound up cast in. In some ways, the alluring actress is every bit the quintessential sweetheart. Beautiful as can be with a bit of a Tinkerbell fairy and ethereal essence, Mathis possesses an angelic face complete with oceanic eyes, sky high cheekbones, a perfect tiny little nose, and full lips that always seem to give forth a breathy voice filled with eloquent, romantic speech that channels the most classic demure princess. And still, on the other hand, there’s a mischievous arch in her brow, a knowing twinkle in her eye, a short and measured authority in her presence, and a sultry body language she exudes that channels the most iconic of screen sirens and could just as easily make her the bombshell femme fatale that the flip side of Hollywood craves. Juxtaposed and perfectly suited for both pigeonholed boxes, Mathis really could have gone either way with her branding, had she leaned into one archetype or the other, which is perhaps what made her and her contrasting appeal so perfect for the times as she rose to fame in the 90s.

Able to play both sides of the expected leading lady coin, the in demand actress ping ponged back and forth between being the sweetheart and the vixen, finding her way in and out of period pieces, romantic comedies, and as “the girl” in action blockbusters, and the heavy dichotomy of her essence really helped make up the tone of the more complex woman for the times. In some ways, Mathis’ soft spoken delicate nature brought classic femininity back in style as she sashayed gracefully through leading lady roles, and yet still, she shook up the paradigm with her short bob of no fuss hair, and her spirited moxie that often challenged what the role called for. Mathis perhaps puts it perfectly in her interview when she states that she was perhaps poised to have roles that were similar to good friend at the time Sandra Bullock- now known as the pinnacle of the sweetheart persona- but in the end, Mathis is just a very different actress than Bullock ever was. In romantic fair such as “*That Thing Called Love*,” alongside Bullock herself, Mathis put forth a solemn knowing longing and angst rather than the usual idyllic naivety a role like that might call for. In “*Broken Arrow*,” her character possessed more spunk and strength than what “the girl” in an action movie might muster. As Amy in “*Little Women*,” she layered the already complex character with carefully curated bite and narcissism that challenged the idea of the perfect period piece debutante, and even with just her voice in “*Ferngully: The Last Rainforest*,” she proved to be so much more than the typical pining princess, as her fiery fairy was really the hero and bad ass of the story. With every role she was cast in, Mathis proved to innately have far too many dimensions to be pigeonholed, a much different actress than most others out there as she really could never be boxed in, all while creating her own brand that broke free from the mold and paving the way for other more nuanced leading ladies to be seen, and really, again, helping to set the tone for what the woman of the 90s became- and in retrospect, it actually makes sense as to why she was so often paired with Christian Slater, who also walked such a fine line between hunky romantic hero and mischievous bad boy anti-villain. Together, the two are an unstoppable duo that seems both timeless, and yet, still defining the moment- a Bonnie and Clyde for the 90s that teeter between righteous and cunning, and really, with Hollywood so desperate to box actors in, it makes sense that for the longest time, industry execs really didn’t know what to do with either of them.

So, Mathis might very well be telling the truth when she states that there was no grand master plan in building her unique brand, and the roles really found her, but as she rolled with the punches of defying the archetypes she was forced into, every move seems somehow far more strategic than she lets on. As her career forged ahead, the risk taking starlet took on one surprising role after the next from a stripper addicted to heroin in “*Sweet Jane*,” to a junkie socialite in “*American Psycho*,” and even as of late, her most recent roles also break away from designated archetype territory as she has played strong willed bad asses on both “*The Strain*,” and “*Billions*.” Mathis might be able to casually shrug off how she accomplished setting herself apart from the typical leading lady, but all her choices very much say otherwise- so, ultimately, it might just say a bit about who Mathis is herself.

No stranger to tabloid fanfare, the buzzed about actress has found herself the subject of many stories time and time again- and weathered the storm far differently from the way other stars might. Breaking the mold from what an it-girl is expected to be even in her personal life, Mathis- already Hollywood royalty- made the move from Tinsel Town to New York, and happily flew under the radar as she continued to take meaty roles that defied whatever audiences expected her to be, as she never quite personally fit with any label the world might try and stick on her. Incredibly strong willed, intuitive, and complex, Mathis is knowledgeable of the limitations and glass ceiling set in the industry, and has been doing everything she can to challenge them.



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I've interviewed Mathis before, and when speaking about her past roles and the actual work, the dedicated performer consistently offers up some of the most riveting tidbits and stories, with not a single canned answer in the bunch. She has a long resume filled with beloved modern classics, and the powerful ability to keep fans at the edge of their seat, wanting to hear more about their favorites. But, when the conversation swaps from the actual work to the behind the scenes struggles, that's when Mathis becomes to most alive- a fire lit in her as she gets candid about the industry, it's shortcomings, and why she put herself into service for SAG-Aftra in order to help make change.

One of the most hot button topics right now, it's no mystery that things need to change on sets- and Mathis has been long devoted to that fight far before it was ever in vogue. Honest, fearless, and not shying away from even being self-deprecating, the preserving performer stands strong with other actors and the crew as she lifts the glamorous veil that covers the entertainment industry, illuminating the ugliest parts- even for herself- of a hard business that is much in need of change, happily and without ego throwing herself into the line of fire as she is committed to being the change she longs to see.

As much of a staple of the industry as she is, as talented as she may be with the glitzy credits on her resume to back it up, Mathis really sheds the glamorous lifestyle in true favor of being in the trenches of entertainment, as a fierce supporter standing strong with boots on the ground to make a difference- so much so that the inspiring actress has even once again traded a more dazzling Mecca of a booming industry city like New York for more humble country digs in the Hudson Valley, motivated to create a worthy stomping ground for the entertainment industry there as she has taken up her real estate license to bring actors into the fold- and just listening to her wax poetic for the country life and its endless potential for filming, it's hard not to be sold on the scene.

A beloved actress with countless cherished hits and recent juicy roles to her name, as well as a strong and vehement supporter of making change for a better entertainment industry, Samantha Mathis is most definitely a riveting person we knew we needed to get in our pages, and we were thrilled to sit down with the stunning star and ask her all about her best films, her upcoming roles, and how she intends to make the Hudson Valley the next show biz hot spot, so read on to see what she had to say!

WINGMAN: You have just been cast in the new *"Pet Sematary."* What can you tell fans about the project?

SAMANTHA MATHIS: Nothing! [Laughs] I can tell you that it's called *Pet Sematary 1969*," and it's a prequel- an origin story, I suppose. I am playing the wife of one of the leads, and the mother of another lead.

WINGMAN: You also have a movie that recently wrapped *"The Georgetown Project."* What can fans expect from that film?

MATHIS: I don't really know what the status is on that film. Russell Crowe is the lead, and my friends M.A Fortin and Joshua John Miller wrote and directed it. It's a retelling of *"The Exorcist"* set in contemporary times. I believe in the words of Russell Crowe, the plot is that within the movie "a washed up action star" is cast in a horror film, and I play a studio exec who goes to check on the production. I believe the film has

been delayed with some creative differences.

WINGMAN: Most recently, fans got to see you give an amazing performance as Sara Hammon on *"Billions."* What drew you to that show, and to playing Sara?

MATHIS: I've known Brian Koppelman and David Levien for a long time- I actually tested for *"Rounders,"* for the part that Gretchen Mol ultimately played. They have asked me to come play with them before, and this time they offered such a wonderfully juicy character, and I was thrilled and honored to come play in their sandbox. I got to play this ex military dynamo, and it was great.

WINGMAN: One thing that's interesting about the roles you've taken is that you have really shied away from playing "America's Sweetheart,"- which you easily could have been branded with, in favor of riskier roles. Was that an active choice, or really, some-

*"River
[Phoenix] and
I talked rather
seriously
about taking
a pause in our
acting careers
and formally
studying music"*

thing that happened?

MATHIS: It's more just what happened- I would love to say there has been some grand master plan, but it really is all about what comes across your plate. I suppose some would say the role I played in *"Broken Arrow"* was poised to be the sweetheart- juxtaposed from Christian Slater and John Travolta's characters, as there were definitely some parallels to the *"Speed"* dynamic. But, I'm a different actress than Sandra Bullock- she is just very good at that when she chose to do that back in the day.

WINGMAN: I think your most "sweetheart" type role is *"That Thing Called Love,"* which actually also had Sandra Bullock- who you are friends with, correct?

MATHIS: We used to be quite close, but life gets busy, and people go in their different directions. But, yes, we were really inseparable at a time.

WINGMAN: One film that really illustrates your straying from being the typical sweetheart is an animated one; *"Ferngully: The Last Rainforest."* Not only a great movie, *"Ferngully"* really offered up a female protagonist that was a lot more than a princess that was a damsel in distress- your character was the hero of the story. Was that part of what drew you to the film?

MATHIS: I just thought that the movie was a really inventive, pro-environment piece of material. The writers were from Australia, and they really thought something up that was so beautiful. I had never done an animated film before that, and I was excited to branch out into the medium, and work with the collection of actors they assembled- which was quite special. I even got to spend some time with Robin Williams- which was wonderful. They asked me if I would go and feed my lines to Robin, and it was such an extraordinary experience, and I feel so blessed that I got to spend

that time with him and watch him do what he does so well, and make the part his own. The hardest part of my job there was to not fuck up takes because I'd give a line, and he'd go on for five or ten minutes with improv, and we'd all just be doubled over with laughter.

WINGMAN: These days, *"Ferngully"* would be more topical than ever. Why do you think it hasn't had another sequel yet, or a live action reboot, and would you be interested in seeing one?

MATHIS: I would absolutely be interested, and totally support it- I have no idea why they haven't done anything more with the story.

"I would just take some old school video games for my playroom, if anyone wants to send me some old school arcade video games"

WINGMAN: In our last interview, you spoke about how you would love to see a reboot to *"Pump Up The Volume."* What about that film, and Nora really stands out to you?

MATHIS: It will always hold a special and unique place in my heart, as it was really my first film. I did only one film before that, and that was never released. but *"Pump Up The Volume"* changed my life. It

had such a great group of young actors, and Allan Moyle, the director, was so dedicated to the crew being invested far beyond showing up for a paycheck, and had production parties every Friday for weeks before we started shooting, so everyone would get to know one another. It felt like such a communal effort where everyone had a voice, and was allowed to have an opinion. It felt like a very democratic process of filmmaking, and I made a life-long friend in the producer Sandy Stern, who is like family now, and he is such an incredible man. So, the movie changed my life in many ways.

WINGMAN: Another excellent movie you were in is, of course, *"That Thing Called Love."* You sang beautifully in that movie. Would you be interested in doing something else musical, or even a full on musical?

MATHIS: I really would- I would love to sing again. I think that making *"That Thing Called Love"* tapped into my musical abilities and instincts, and opened up something in me that I was interested in further exploring. River [Phoenix] and I talked rather seriously about taking a pause in our acting careers and formally studying music, but then he passed away. So, while I continued to play piano, and really dedicated myself to studying classical and jazz, he gave me a beautiful guitar, and I never really played it because it was too painful. I just started playing it in the past few months. Singing was something I also just put away. Interestingly, I was asked to play a Duncan Sheik musical, and we were about to do it in March 2020, when Broadway shut down. So, we are actively looking to secure the financing to do the play, and commence rehearsals. I really hope I get to do it. I will preface this by saying; they wanted an actress who could carry a tune. They weren't looking for Bernadette Peters, so the bar is low. There are other people in the play who can play extraordinary, but that's not what they were asking of



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me.

WINGMAN: You're kidding, right? You sing beautiful!

MATHIS: Thank you so much for that. The play is really beautiful. It's set in 1942 in a lighthouse in Maine, and my character is a woman with a disability, and she has a Japanese man living with her and helping her care for the lighthouse. During that time, of course, the Japanese were being put in concentration camps, and it was horrifying, and my character tries to protect the man, and he has to flee for a period of time to escape being put in a concentration camp. So, the play is really about how fearing "the other" could destroy you. And the music is beautiful, and the play is very entertaining. It's got a lot going for it.

WINGMAN: And, of course, there's the amazing "*Little Women*," which was recently remade by Greta Gerwig. Did you see the new film, and if so, what did you think about it?

MATHIS: Of course I did, and I thought it was fantastic! I was thrilled that Amy had a bigger part, and I thought Florence Pugh did fantastic.

WINGMAN: While I thought the new "*Little Women*" was great, one thing that didn't sit totally right with me was that they really applauded themselves for having it be helmed by women without really mentioning that the version you were in was also done with many women behind the scenes—which was even more revolutionary for that time. How did that sit with you?

MATHIS: It is true what you say. I wasn't aware that was a position anyone took with the new production, but I'm sure Gillian Armstrong and Denise DiNovi would take exception to that. I'm sure it wasn't easy for them at the time, and it really was revolutionary.

WINGMAN: Another great modern classic you were in is "*The American President*," which was truly fantastic. Do you think Janey climbed her way up the ladder in DC?

MATHIS: [Laughs] Yes. Quiet, stealth like, taking notes all the time.

"The first meeting I went to, I heard a colleague talking about particular struggles on location, and not having sufficient financial support from the production, and that lit me up"

WINGMAN: And, of course, yet another fantastic modern classic you were a part of is "*American Psycho*." Did you read the novel before going into the film?

MATHIS: Of course— and there are things I wish I never read. I think Bret Easton Ellis said he was on a cocaine binge for three days writing all the violent scenes, and there are definitely things in the book I wish I never imagined. I think Mary Harron and Guinevere Turner did a fantastic job of taking the best parts of that

book, and really, it's another film that benefited beautifully from having women at the helm of making it.

WINGMAN: Them, of course, there is "*Super Mario Bros*," which has gained an enormous cult following. Are you at all a gamer, and if a new Mario Bros game comes out, do they send it to you?

MATHIS: I am not a gamer, and they do not, sadly. Although, I did grow up going to a corner liquor store to play "*Donkey Kong*," "*Miss Pac-Man*," and "*Defender Of Galaga*" religiously. I would just take some old school video games for my playroom, if anyone wants to send me some old school arcade video games!

WINGMAN: You are truly a phenomenal actress, and you've been part of so many amazing projects. What other types of roles would you love to play, and who else would you love to work with, or, work with again?

MATHIS: I'd love to play a character that is a bit unhinged in a comedic way. I watch what Jennifer Coolidge is doing in "*White Lotus*," and it's just so delicious. That would be quite fun. I'd love to see Rob Reiner make another movie, and I'd work for him in a heartbeat. I've worked with so many wonderful people— I'd love to work with Mary Harron again, and I'd work with John Woo again in a heartbeat. And there are so many people I haven't worked with that I'd love to work with as well.

WINGMAN: With so many years in the business and such an undeniable savvy for what works, do you have any interest in joining the women behind the lens movement, and either writing or directing?

MATHIS: Absolutely. I've focused on producing for the past ten years. I've developed two series ideas— one that was commissioned to be written, but the writer wasn't the right



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fit, and it wasn't the right adaptation of the material. Still, I think it's a great idea. Then, the other one I developed was set in Montauk with a decommissioned military base where experiments were being done on children, and I presented it to my agents as a pitch document before we commenced to script, and about a month later they replied with; *"This is really awkward, but we represent these young men called The Duffer brothers, and they just submitted this project called 'Montauk,'"* which, of course, became *"Stranger Things."* So, good ideas are in the universe, and you should jump on them- and I guess in this case, I didn't jump quite fast enough, I suppose.

WINGMAN: You also do a lot of work for The Screen Actors Guild. How did you get involved with that, and what kind of work do you do for them?

MATHIS: So, it's Sag-Afra now that

the two unions merged. My mother was on the board in the 90s when Richard Master was president, and I believe Richard had been asking me to get involved for ten years. I moved to New York and had a bicycle accident where I broke my arm and I was in a cast, and he told me it was time to come do some service for the union, and I really would have been an asshole to say no, because I wasn't able to work anyway for a couple of months with the injury. The first meeting I went to, I heard a colleague talking about particular struggles on location, and not having sufficient financial support from the production, and that lit me up, and I ran for a board seat. I wound up on the national board, and actor/performer vice president after that for about ten years. It's been an honor and privilege to be of service to the union, and to engage other working actors to get involved. I am really thrilled that some of them have been elected in the past election and will be serving. I'm still

super engaged, and pay attention to everything. Our union has to protect us and has to fight to protect us, and sometimes we think we're alone in the struggle, but the truth is, we're treated the same way that workers around the world, and certainly in America are treated- as gig economy workers. So, the way in which massive conglomerates of studios behave is not dissimilar to the way other independent contractors are treated, and there is absolutely no will to protect the actor. In terms of negotiations, there seems to be very little interest. I believe they appreciate us, but I also believe that many of them are solely interested in making boards of directors happy, and none of them have any idea what it's like for boots on the ground as a working actor. So, that's where we come into play, and we can come into negotiations, and explain to them how people can be suffering. The idea is that we're sitting there getting lattes and living the glamorous life, but the reality is

that is far from the case. It's a job- that I love- but, it's very hard. There's a whole campaign going on now on social media called IA_stories to support our crew. The number of hours people are expected to work without being offered car service, or hotel rooms- it's terrible.

WINGMAN: You recently left the city for quieter life upstate. What inspired the move, and how has it been so far?

MATHIS: Well, I love the Hudson Valley, and I lived up here before with my partner at the time. We separated, and I moved back to the city, but I always knew I wanted to move back up here. What I didn't know when purchasing a home was that we would be going into a pandemic, and that I would truly need a place to go- but that's what happened. My intention was not to leave the city forever, and I don't know what the future holds, but I must say- country life suits me well. I'm looking at a squirrel on my front lawn, and looking at my creek where I swim, and I often see a bald eagle flying up and down, and my dog has over an acre to run and play, and I just can't tell you how beautiful it is. It's an interesting time, and this is the number one market in the country- and I just got my real estate license in the midst of the pandemic- and I'm loving real estate so much. I'm really working with friends at this point, and referrals, and it makes me very happy to help people find their dream home.

WINGMAN: You might just be creating your own little Hollywood in the Hudson Valley...

MATHIS: Oh, it's already happening. The sequel to *"Pretty Little Liars"* is shooting up here. Mary Stuart Masterson built a 20 thousand square foot studio here, people are moving full time from California- the secret is out! We have water, we don't have fires, there's tons of land, there's organic farmers everywhere. It's absurdly idyllic, soothing, and inspiring, and I feel very grateful for my shangrila in the woods.

*Color us convinced.
And if anyone can
make her own Holly-
wood in new terrain?
It's Mathis. □*

LIGHTNING ROUND!

1. You've made many films with Christian Slater and Christian Bale. Better love interest?

Oh, I adore them both, but I guess I've worked more with Christian Slater, so I guess that says something about our chemistry that people love recapturing.

2. Which film with Winona Ryder is nearer and dearer to you; *"Little Women,"* or *"How To make An American Quilt"*?

I can't choose on that one- don't make me kill my babies. I love them both.

3. What is one role fans would be surprised to learn you tried out for?

"Coyote Ugly." I don't even remember which part, but somewhere someone has a treasure trove of copies of tapes of actresses dirty dancing in their hotel rooms.

4. Best acting advice ever given to you?

My grandmother once told me; *"You did something really good in that scene, but I'll never tell you what it was, or you'll never be able to do it again."*

5. Which of your characters was the biggest departure from who you really are?

There's a movie I did with Joseph Gordon-Levitt, released under the title *"Sweet Jane."* I played a heroin addict stripper [laughs.]

6. Which character is the closest to you?

I don't think I've played her yet.

7. What current TV show would you most love to guest star on?

There's so many. Season 2 of *"White Lotus."* *"Pursuit Of Love"* if they went to America. *"Succession."* There's really too many!



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Designed under the creative vision of Thomas Schoos, The Huntley Hotel's luxury rooms and suites feature chic furnishings and amenities like 60" HDTVs, pillow top beds, Bvlgari bath products, and complimentary WiFi. One of the finest Santa Monica family hotels, the Huntley offers room options to accommodate larger groups as well.

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If majestic and picturesque are what you seek, look no further than The Shore House, a coastal sensation tucked sweetly in the lively beach scene of Narragansett, Rhode Island. Having just undergone a complete renovation of its 31 rooms, as well as a beautiful and charming new lobby, the historic, boutique inn is beyond fresh and pristine, even boasting a sophisticated new beachside restaurant to boot called Sea Craft, adding to the ambiance as it overlooks the sparkling blue sea. And still, even with all the impeccable renovations and updates, the classic Victorian-style establishment stays true to the quaint hallmark atmosphere one looks for when it comes to a New England seaside getaway.

From the vision of leading interior designer David Ashen, Founder of Dash Design, the property's design will invoke laid-back elegance through a well-thought-out re-imagination of the retro-beachside hotels found in seaside towns across the country. Ashen himself has been quoted as saying; "With an overall understated luxury feel, we wanted The Shore House to pay homage to its rich history and location, and guests can expect a space that mixes old and new, where antique furnishings are given a new life in an array of whimsical rooms, each one with a different type of wallpaper and color palette than the last. The hotel's seaside Narragansett location inspired us to blueprint a restoration that was a playful, upscale riff on the quintessential beach-y inns that populate the New England coastline."

Just as impressive as the gorgeous hotel, it's accompanying restaurant, Sea Craft, has just as much to offer, with menu highlights including locally caught day-boat fish and creative ceviche and crudo plates, as well as a unique, crafted approach to traditional beach cocktails. A sight to behold, Sea Craft's outdoor patio sees the addition of an outdoor bar, fire pits and beautiful new landscaping, with an elevated patio so that visitors can enjoy even better views of the ocean.

Possessing everything a traveler would want in a picturesque New England escape, the Shore House is magnificently accommodating, beautiful beyond belief, and they have excellent service to boot- ideal for any guest who dreams of the picture-perfect Rhode Island getaway.



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It goes without saying that when one travels to the Big Apple, what visitors are ultimately looking for is to experience the Mecca and hustle and bustle that the city that never sleeps has to offer- so, a hotel that reflects that vibe is always idea, and not only is The Park South Hotel in the absolute perfect location , the luxurious and vibrant space is also very much its own hub of the New York City experience.

Nestled in the perfect setting of Midtown Manhattan's trendy NoMad neighborhood between Park Avenue South and Lexington Avenue on 28th Street, this brilliantly renovated boutique hotel delights guests with enticing new culinary experiences and warm and inviting accommodations- with tons of exemplary nightlife and dining options right there in the hotel.

The culture of the space enriched with both buzzy bars and gourmet eats, The Park South Hotel doesn't just boast luxurious, beautiful rooms with breathtaking views, but also everything a guest would need in terms of experiencing what the city has to offer. Offering one of the best rooftops in the city, The Roof at Park South has impeccable cocktails, a globally inspired menu, and an impressive ambiance where guests can relax on fireside sofas or in the umbrella lounge, hang out under the covered bar, or mingle amidst the cozy rooftop gardens and enjoy unobstructed views of the NYC Skyline. Then, for even more delicious food, the exceptional hotel also just opened Sweetbriar as well, with the touted new restaurant offering an intimate dining experience from Michelin-Starred Chef Bryce Shuman. The space, which includes a 56-seat dining room, lounge and bar, recalls the '70's with green reeded glass paneling, and Chef Bryce Shuman will focus on dishes cooked over live fire- and every meal more scrumptious than the next.

Also featuring an unparalleled staff, The Park South team is led by General Manager John Loizos, who cultivates an environment known for exceptional service. As part of the JDV Hyatt collection, the hotel and those that work there are next to none in terms of kindness and efficiency, making the celebrated establishment that much more of a must-stay.

MAKING A SPLASH

***With Two New Hits,
The In-Demand
NICK CREEGAN
Is Definitely
Making His Mark***

Photos Taken At The Park South Hotel
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Starring in two different hit shows at the exact same time can be a daunting task for a lot of people, but throwing in the fact that they are not only in different countries, but on different sides of a continent adds another level of difficulty. When a talented young actor or actress takes a role on a television show, especially ones that are part of two of the most popular television universes ever with the “*Law & Order*” series and the Arrowverse. It’s hard to not work your ass off to make them both happen. The young actor that is able to pull this off is none other than the extremely talented and blessed actor, Nick Creegan, who is taking the entertainment industry by storm.

With a Jamaican and Irish background, Creegan was born in and raised in White Plains, N.Y. and it didn’t take long before the handsome actor to wrangle in the limelight and make it shine brightly on him night after night. Staying close to home in NYC, Creegan was cast in the newest “*Law & Order*” spinoff in “*Law & Order: Organized Crime*” where he plays the son of mob boss Richard Wheatley played by the incredibly talented Dylan McDermott. With starring in seven episodes in the first season, Creegan has fans loving him as Richie to the point that other casting directors are taking note of all of the incredible work he has been putting out lately. Making the move to Vancouver to join the Arrowverse, Creegan was cast as a new character on the CW’s “*Batwoman*” in season three, as Marquis Jet, a rich playboy that has come to be part of his family’s company. This is only the beginning of Creegan’s career and it is starting with hit after hit.

Creegan is only just getting started with his acting career, but it’s not the only thing that he is getting into in the world of entertainment. With a new short film coming out called “*It’s Snowing in the Summer*,” Creegan is spreading his wings a little more with producing the short film as well as starring in it. The multi-talented will be making magic in front of and behind the camera for years to come, and Hollywood isn’t ready for what’s coming from Creegan in the coming years.

While we wait for the next inevitable hit from Nick Creegan, check out what he had to tell *WINGMAN* about his career and life in the following interview.

“The DC universe and Marvel universe have been major parts of my life since childhood. I grew up watching the Batman animated series and many of the comic book films as well. I recently got into the comics themselves however, and I was shocked at how entertaining reading them are.”

WINGMAN: Let's talk about your character Richard Wheatley Jr. on *"Law & Order: Organized Crime."* Tell us about him and what it's been like to be a part of a series that's been watched for decades.

NICK CREEGAN: Playing Richie Wheatley Jr. has been fun, especially in NYC. People actually get into full blown conversations with me about *"Why did you have to do Gina like that?"* And I really get a kick out of the banter between us. Aside from that it's just awesome. I'll always be cemented in the Dick Wolf universe.

WINGMAN: Working with some of the best in the business with Dylan McDermott, Christopher Meloni and Mariana Hargitay to name just a few must be an experience. Talk about how much you have learned from them and just by watching them.

CREEGAN: All of them are legends obviously, but I've learned the most from Dylan. He really took time to show me the ropes in terms of taking chances making choices on set. He also explained how the ins and outs of the business works for somebody at his level, so I'll have a ground work to follow as I navigate my way.



WINGMAN: Growing up in New York, does it feel good when you get to film something so close to home as opposed to being on the road?

CREEGAN: Everyone always wants to be able to play for the home team. My chance came early in my career. Acting in NYC feels like playing for the Yankees. It's great being able to go to work and then have dinner with family or meet up with friends for drinks after I'm off and be in the greatest city in the world for the weekends.

WINGMAN: You have now joined the comic book world with *"Batman."* Marquis Jet sounds like a young Bruce Wayne in ways. Talk about him.

CREEGAN: Early on, Marquis Jet actually has somewhat of a similar life to Richie Wheatley. He's from a wealthy family and he's constantly trying to prove himself to one of his parents, but this time it's his mother. Marquis is a slick talking guy who knows how to pull on the vulnerability on whoever he needs to get something from. Later in the season though there will be some major surprises which separates him from any character I've played before. I can't wait for the world to really get to know him.

WINGMAN: How much interest did you have in comic books or comic book shows before you joined their ranks?

CREEGAN: The DC universe and Marvel universe have been major parts of my life since childhood. I grew up watching the Batman animated series and many of the comic book films as well. I recently got into the comics themselves however, and I was shocked at how entertaining reading them are.



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WINGMAN: Where did you get the acting bug? Was it always something you've wanted to do?

CREEGAN: I first got the acting bug when I was 7-years-old. I would make believe I was a fill in host for Jay Leno and interview my stuffed wrestlers as guests and record it to listen back afterwards. I didn't consciously realize I was acting then, but entertaining others and myself was something that always appealed to me. In college I started doing theater as an extracurricular while studying journalism and eventually while in the workforce, I made the switch and never fully looked back.

WINGMAN: Has producing and directing been something you've wanted to dabble in more as well?

CREEGAN: Producing and directing is something I want to continue doing more of. I've produced a couple short projects such as "Balcony in Brooklyn," but I plan on producing my first feature in 2022 and eventually direct some shorts and become a multi-faceted talent.

WINGMAN: What actor, actress or film inspired you to make the jump to acting?

CREEGAN: The Jamie Foxx Oscar acceptance speech really got me interested. The message about his grandma reminded me of how impactful mine had been in my life and how she and my mother always supported whichever wild dreams I wanted to chase. I eventually wanted to get on that stage and have an ode to them. Jim Carrey's roles in "Liar Liar" and "The Mask" also influenced me at a young age to want to entertain.

WINGMAN: You are quite the mix in being Jamaican and Irish. What are some of the traditions from both backgrounds that you practice and stay true to your heart on?

CREEGAN: Well, Sunday family dinner



is big in both cultures and whenever I am home I make sure to try to keep this tradition alive. Anything to do with eating and cooking Jamaican food and listening to reggae music and dancehall will always be traditions that stay with me. Also, comedy on both sides. Irish people and Jamaican people love to laugh and tell stories. I guess that's why I'm a storyteller.

And we greatly look forward for all the exciting stories that Creegan is set to tell, full well knowing that whatever he throws himself into, it will be great. ■

SLAM DUNKLEY

***With His Recent Role
On “MARE OF EASTTOWN,”
The Charming
JUSTIN HURTT-DUNKLEY
Prepares For Stardom***

Photos Taken At The Park South Hotel
124 E 28th St, New York, NY 10016
212.448.0888

Photos by John Andrew Fredrickson
Grooming by Daniel Koye using Orbie, Seven,
Schwarzkopf, Makeup Forever, MAC
Assisted by Phoebe Bock
Story & Styling by Andrew Cristi
Assisted by Carlos Leon
Socks by Dapper Classics; www.dapperclassics.com

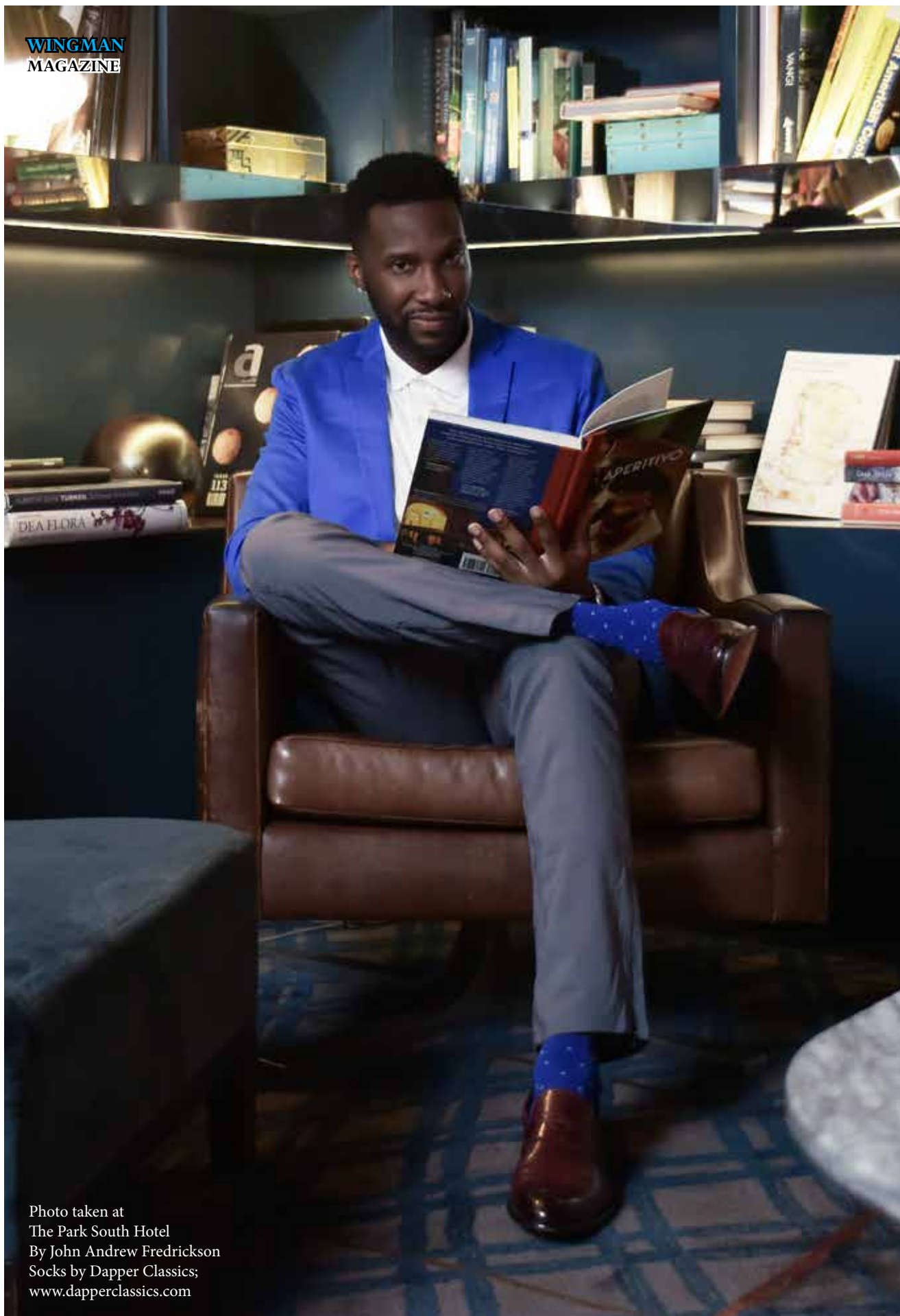


Photo taken at
The Park South Hotel
By John Andrew Fredrickson
Socks by Dapper Classics;
www.dapperclassics.com

It should come as no surprise that HBO's recent smash hit murder mystery "Mare Of Easttown" has conquered the entertainment industry, garnering so much success. A testament to a tried and true formula reinvented and done right, the gritty and binge worthy series offered a subversive take on a more lengthy procedural, offering up the top talent in the business, dominating the Emmys with three talent wins as top talent such as Kate Winslet and Julianne Nicholson came out victorious- and while of course the esteemed headliners of the show shined, they were in just as quality company with the fresher faces picked- particularly splashy newcomer, Justin Hurtt-Dunkley.

As officer Trammel on the gripping series, the compelling actor has a commanding presence that is instantly felt every time he's on screen as the talented performer puts forth a calming, cooling presence that perfectly juxtaposes Winslet's titular character, Mare, making for a dynamic duo that would be wonderful to see explored if the miniseries were to come back for a season two. Not yet dived into to the best of the potential that kind of story might have to offer, Hurtt-Dunkley is very captivating as a cop of color in a small town, and really, that stature alone is storytelling gold that the magnificent rising star is perfectly equipped to play.

In every scene he's in, the magnetic actor not only holds his own next to the heavyweights he is cast alongside, but he shines, raising the bar and elevating the material in a way that champions his talents- while never seeming hammy, or seeking to do so. Innately skilled at subtle scene stealing, Hurtt-Dunkley appears to be a master at conveying a lot even with few words, or little to do, and it's those strengths that will inevitably take him far in his career.

With his name now in high demand from industry insiders and "Mare Of Easttown" still being heavily buzzed about months after its premiere, and of course, with the award circuit of winter about to give the show a whole new audience and rewatch boost, we knew we needed to sit down with the sky rocketing star and ask him all about his hot show, what else he has in the works, and what else he would love to do in the future- so to read it from his own words, check out the following interview to see what Hurtt-Dunkley had to say!

"Officer Trammel's impediment was definitely a new challenge for me. When trying to understand characters I like to look for ways that I connect with them. Trammel was a rookie amongst senior officers, while I'm a new actor amongst a veteran like Kate. There are slight differences when dealing with these circumstances, but not far off at all."

WINGMAN: Let's of course start with *"Mare Of Easttown."* The show is a huge hit- and you are great in it. While reading the scripts, were you able to figure out the mystery?

JUSTIN HURTT-DUNKLEY: Thank you so much. I enjoy reading, and a great story will keep me zoned in. I finished the series in one sitting, it was a such a fun read that I was most fascinated with the depth of the characters and how great the story telling was more than anything else. So in actuality, I just let the story unravel, giving less thought on who the killer may be and really just enjoyed the ride. But I will say the reveal was totally unexpected.

WINGMAN: This is an amazing cast you are surrounded by including Kate Winslet, Julianne Nicholson, and of course, Jean Smart- not to mention writer Brad Ingelsby, and director Craig Zobel. How was it being surrounded by such company?

HURTT-DUNKLEY: It is amazing, surreal. Everyone was so wonderful, we became like a family in a sense. The time spent working on this project was extended being that we started pre covid, paused, the resumed. So, we spent a good amount of time being in each other's lives and finished a series in a pandemic together, so this project I'm sure will be marked one to remember for everyone involved. This is beside the fantastic work that they have done in this industry. I am fans of Kate, Julianne, Jean, Brad, and Craig, and it is an honor to be mentioned alongside of them.

WINGMAN: *"Mare"* was written as a mini-series, but, it's really been such a hit. Any chance for a second season?

HURTT-DUNKLEY: *"Mare of Easttown"* is a murder mystery with so many layers in a way I haven't seen before. A murder which is the focus, but overviews heavily on such a relatable topic liked dealing with the impacts/traumas of suicide and grief. To where the mystery in some ways could fall into being the B story. The story however was not written to carry on, all loose ends were tied and the story was completed. Though because of how well the series has been received, from what I know a second season would rely on Brad's pen. I'm sure if he comes up with another story to tell that makes sense and honors the quality of the first 7 episodes, it would be welcomed. I've also heard some pretty cool ideas have been floating around, so we will just wait and see.

WINGMAN: What was your favorite part about playing Officer Trammel?

HURTT-DUNKLEY: Officer Trammel's impediment was definitely a new challenge for me. When trying to understand characters, I like to look for ways that I connect with them. Trammel was a rookie amongst senior officers, while I'm a new actor amongst a veteran like Kate. There are slight differences when dealing with these circumstances, but not far off at all. Because of drawing these parallels, one of my favorite scenes became when Mare has to talk Trammel through his fear. He was dealing with a phobia of blood meanwhile my phobia was messing up in front of a Kate Winslet [laughs.]



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Photo taken at
The Park South Hotel
By John Andrew Fredrickson
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Photo taken at
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Shirt by Lords Of Harlech;
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Socks by Dapper Classics;
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WINGMAN: How was it filming in Pennsylvania, and creating the fictional town of Easttown?

HURTT-DUNKLEY: Easttown actually isn't fictional at all. It's based on a small town in PA not too far from where Brad is from. While a lot of the shots were on a stage, being able to step out into the actual town was a treat! I couldn't explore the town like I would've liked due to covid but I walked around a bit and being able to be in the PA where the story is set allowed me to bring a little more authenticity to the set each day.

WINGMAN: You are definitely a star on the rise, and you are sure to be in high demand. Who else would you love to work with, and what other types of roles would you love to play?

HURTT-DUNKLEY: Thank you, there are so many to name. I would, of course, love to work with legends like Denzel Washington, Meryl Streep, Al Pacino, Viola Davis. But I would love to work with a lot of the rising artists I've been watching like Daniel Kaluuya, Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Bryan Tyree Henry, Anya Taylor-Joy, Zendaya, and Lucas Hedges. These are just a few I have been keeping an eye on and fans of their work, and the list goes on.

WINGMAN: Is producing and stepping behind the lens something you'd like to do more of?

HURTT-DUNKLEY: Producing was a way for me to experience a different side of filmmaking. I love learning new things and there are so many lanes in this industry that I would love to tackle. I also believe exploring these lanes will definitely assist me in mastering my craft.



And we can't wait to see what the rising star has next on his plate as we know Hurtt-Dunkley is going to reach major heights! □