Alaina Reed — 227's 'Rose'

By Rosalyn M. Hamlott

When I walk down the street, people come up to me and say,'you look so familiar, aren't you the manicurist at the new salon across town?,' she laughs.

A mere glance at her credit card is not enough to inspire "oohs and aahs," but Alaina Reed, co-star of the hit television series, "227" is no unknown.

Alaina, who is perhaps best known to television viewers for her starring role in the long-running and popular "Sesame Street," is enjoying popularity from a new audience; prime time viewers.

Co-starring as Marla Gibbs best friend, Rose Holloway, is a wonderful new arena for Alaina.

When I found out that I would be working with Marla, I was scared, to be quite honest. I had admired her work from afar for over ten years, but Marla has been extremely helpful to me, both personally and professionally. We have developed a real friendship off the set of '227' as well as on," Alaina explained.

Alaina describes herself as a strong woman, who is both protective and private. "I am a perfectionist. I'll go along with everyone else, as long as things are running smoothly," she says in a half serious-half joking voice, "but as soon as things begin to mess up, I'll step in and take charge.

"I try to be a giving person, but last year after my divorce, I had to just stop and re-evaluate myself. It is very difficult to fina someone that you can share with, who is willing to share with you.

"My grandmother used to say that all men are alike. If you put them all together in a bag and shake them up, they will all fall out, just the same. My ex-husband was a white man, but I am dating several black men at this time."

Alaina believes that her ambition may have been a contributing factor to her divorce, but quickly adds that her husband was not without his ambitions. There were a lot of personal things happening, she says simply.

Right now, Alaina lives in Hollywood Hills with her two children, Andre, her son who is eight and Tanya, who is five. The pace is very slow out here, but I must say that I like the energy of the place. I'd never come here to live on my own, I am here because I work here.

In between her production schedule for "227," Alaina travels back to New York, to tape appearances on public television's award - winning series "Sesame Street." She created her role as Olivia on the show, over seven years ago.

"Acting is a longshot," admits Alaina, "If you don't get a job, I have learned not to take it personally. I sincerely beieve that you can accomplish what you really want to do."

Alaina believes that in order to be successful, you have to be willing to do your homework and be as prepared as possible. "Some people get that big break - instant success, I believe in longevity," she says.

"My faith, along with an ability to work hard and keeping the right mental attitude sustain me. Although I am still paying my dues and everything is in front of me, the success that I have enjoyed up to this point, came from these things.

"I was given a talent and I decided back in college that I wanted to be highly visible. I want people to know my work and my face. Working on prime time television really helps the recognition along."

Alaina calls herself a martyr. This just means that I feel a strong "mother sense." Her love for children and her musical talents have been blended for a children's video, "Learning Can Be Fun," which she co-wrote and co-produced.

The video incorporates colorful video graphics, cartoons, original songs and clever lyrics to teach some important lessons for younger children.

"Learning Can Be Fun" is a 30 minute program for children aged four to seven years old. Offering a little bit of everything, this interactive video is divided into eight segments which are, the importance of good hygiene;

Learning the letters of the alphabet and the names of colors; the value of "please" and thank you"; counting forwards and backwards from one to ten; the importance of daily exercise; putting one's toys away and getting enough rest and sleep.

In 1972, Bette Midler took Alaina to the famed Improv. in New York. She soon found steady work performing in various clubs in New York, including Reno Sweeney's, the Continental Baths, Grand Finale and Upstairs at the Downstairs. For nine months, she supported herself by working at Bloomingdale's by day and singing by night.

"Back then I was making about $70 a week," Alaina remembers.

She returned to the stage making her Broadway debut in "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," followed by roles in "Eubie," "Chicago," "In Trousers," "Battle of the Giants" and Michael Bennett's then workshop production of "Dreamgirls."

Alaina also developed and starred in her own one-woman show, "Alaina at the Bijou."

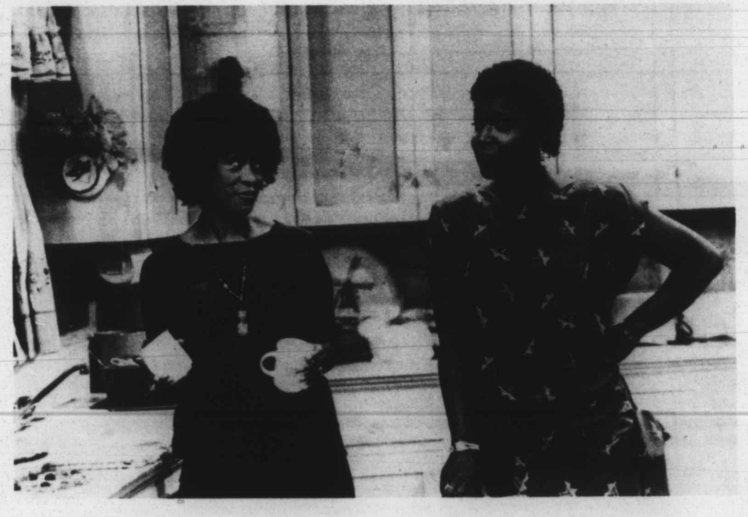
While growing up, Alaina says her idols were Lucille Ball, Nancy Wilson and Pearl Bailey. She was born on November 10 in Springfield, Ohio. Raised in a musical family, she started singing at an early age.

She later developed her singing talents in a band called "Marble Cake," while a student at Ohio's Kent State University. After three years on the road with the band, she settled in Chicago, where she landed a role in the musical "Hair."

When Dawn asked what lies ahead, Alaina says she is interested in doing writing for the show ("227"). She would like to exercise more creative control of her character Rose.

When Alaina is not working, she enjoys the movies. I just love horror movies, Steven Spielberg is my favorite. In her spare time, she also enjoys cooking, roller skating, horseback riding and anything musical, especially playing the piano, oboe, clarinet or drums.

Alaina's other credits include the motion pictures for television "Cindy" and "Madigan" and the "Sesame Street" feature film,,"Follow That Bird."



Alaina Reed strikes a typical pose with Marla Gibbs in a scene from the hit TV series, "227." The show has been renewed for the 1986-87 season.

Alaina Reed

—Beauty

(Continued from page 13)

ability to discriminate accurately among the scents.

Wear the fragrance for at least 15 minutes to allow it to interact with the body's warmth and chemistry. Then take a whiff and you'll realize the true character of the fragrance. If the scent is on a feather, place it in your lingerie drawer or purse for 5 minutes and then take a whiff.

Perfume has 3 notes, the top note, the middle note and the base note. The top note is the scent you smell when you first put on the perfume. It rapidly disappears and the middle note which mixes with body chemistry emergence.

Finally, the base note is the scent that other people actually smell on you. Apply fragrance to the wrist, elbow (inside) base of the neck, all pulse points and warm areas of the body, (especially the pure essence.).

If your skin is dry, apply your fragrance more generously as dry skin will not retain fragrance as long as oily skin. Keep your fragrances safe from extreme cold or heat. Exposure to either may upset the delicate balance.

Never put scents directly on clothing or furs. Remember the sense of smell is far more acute and its associations much longer lasting than those of the other human senses. So, a pleasant fragrance associated witha pleasant experience is seldom forgotten.

Chic French Women wear pure essence fragrance because it has a different smell on each individual person. It tends to blend with the body chemistry well, because it contains no alcohol. A pure essence costs a bit more than perfume, but the investment is worth it.

You don't have the same aura as your "friends or neighbors;" the reason Royalty prefers essence also. Only a few perfumes offer their essence version in the U.S.; perhaps it is the cost.

When writing me at DAWN, always include a self addressed envelope-stamped, please. 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, MD 21203.