

Rochelle Aytes: The "Mistresses" Interview

Written by Kam Williams



Born in New York on May 17, 1976, Rochelle Aytes is quickly establishing herself as one of Hollywood's brightest starlets with an impressive film and television career on the rise. Rochelle is now starring on "Mistresses", ABC's new, nighttime soap opera premiered Monday, June 3rd.

Based on the British TV series of the same name, the show co-stars Alyssa Milano, Jess Macallan and Yunjin Kim. It is a provocative, thrilling, drama that finds four women with scandalous romantic lives caught in storms of excitement and self-discovery, secrecy and betrayal, and at the mercy of the complex relationships they've created.

Rochelle will play the lead role of April, a young widow raising two daughters and running a high-end linen shop on Robertson Boulevard. She was previously seen as a series regular on a short-lived but very funny sitcom for ABC entitled "Work." And she starred opposite Christian Slater on ABC's "The Forgotten."

She enjoyed a recurring role on the hit series "Desperate Housewives" and "Detroit 187." In addition, she has shot guest leads on TV shows like "White Collar," "Dark Blue," "NCIS: Las Vegas," "Daybreak," "ER," "CSI: NY," and on Tyler Perry's "House of Payne," as Allen Payne's love interest.

Rochelle made her big screen debut in the summer of 2004 playing the love interest of Shawn Wayans in the romantic comedy "White Chicks." More recently, she starred in a lead role opposite Blair Underwood, Tyler Perry and Boris Kodjoe in "Madea's Family Reunion."

Kam Williams: Hi Rochelle. Thanks for another interview.

Rochelle Aytes: Thanks for having me!

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KW: Congratulations on landing a lead role on your own TV series!

RA: Thank you, Kam. I am so excited for it to finally air.

KW: How would you describe the show in 25 words or less?

RA: "Mistresses" is about the lives of four women, each going through different versions of infidelity. Their longtime friendship is what gets them through extremely challenging times.

KW: Did you watch episodes of the British version of the program in preparation for the role?

RA: I have actually never seen the British version.

KW: What makes your character, April Malloy, tick?

RA: April is the more down-to-earth, motherly one of the girls. She gets so worked up over prank phone calls and starts to believe that it is the ghost of her dead husband.

KW: What message, if any, do you want the audience to take away from the series?

RA: I hope that the audience is thoroughly entertained. Each story line is very relatable to the average person's life and hopefully they will find comfort in knowing that they are not alone.

KW: What is your guiltiest pleasure?

RA: Coffee and wine.

KW: The bookworm Troy Johnson question: What was the last book you read?

RA: DeVon Franklin and Tim Vandehey's book, Produced by Faith.

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1439171033/ref=nosim/thselfofire-20>

KW: What is your favorite dish to cook?

RA: A cheese omelette with spinach and peppers, and home fries!

KW: The Sanaa Lathan question: What excites you?

RA: Planning a vacation on a beach somewhere!

KW: The Mike Pittman question: What was your best career decision?

RA: Working with my team. I have the best agent, manager, publicist, acting coach, and lawyer. Without them I wouldn't have the opportunities that I've had.

KW: What was your first big break?

RA: My first big break was "White Chicks." I had only been acting for about two years and I certainly didn't feel like I was ready for such an opportunity. It could only be the hand of God blessing me. I accept everything I'm given with great appreciation.

KW: If you could have one wish instantly granted, what would that be for?

RA: To heal my mother. She has kidney failure and osteoporosis. It's very sad.

KW: I'm so sorry to hear that, Rochelle. I'll keep her in my prayers. The Jamie Foxx question: If you only had 24 hours to live, what would you do? Would you do the bad stuff, you never got a chance to do, or would you do good stuff to make sure you make it into heaven?

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RA: I would do the good stuff. I want eternal life with my father.

KW: The Kerry Washington question: If you were an animal, what animal would you be?

RA: A butterfly or a bird.

KW: The Ling-Ju Yen question: What is your earliest childhood memory?

RA: I remember being very young and going to AA meetings with my father in Brooklyn. I thought it was fun because they served hot chocolate and cookies.

KW: The Anthony Mackie question: Is there something that you promised to do if you became famous, that you still haven't done yet?

RA: No, but I promised to buy my mother a house when I became rich.

KW: The Viola Davis question: What's the difference between who you are at home as opposed to the person you pretend to be on the red carpet?

RA: I feel like I am pretty much the same, minus the extra hair and makeup. I may turn the energy up a bit, but I'm a silly person naturally and I love to laugh and have fun, so I tend to carry that same energy onto the carpet.

KW: The Anthony Anderson question: If you could have a superpower, which one would you choose?

RA: That's a hard one! It's a tie between flying and healing.

KW: The Michael Ealy question: If you could meet any historical figure, who would it be?

RA: Jesus.

KW: The Harriet Pakula-Teweles question: With so many classic films being redone, is there a remake you'd like to star in?

RA: Yes--Pretty Woman. I love Julia Roberts and that red dress. I actually had someone duplicate it for my high school prom. [LOL]

KW: Attorney Bernadette Beekman asks: What is your favorite charity?

RA: Any one that has to do with saving children.

KW: Can you come up with a Rochelle Aytes question I can ask other celebrities?

RA: If you could choose any other occupation what would it be?

KW: Thanks, and thanks again for the time, Rochelle, and best of luck with "Mistresses."

RA: Thank you so much, Kam. I really enjoyed answering these questions. They were very thought provoking.

To see a trailer for "Mistresses," visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBE5pX6fLQk>