

**STRAND RELEASING**

Presents

# ***TOE TO TOE***

A Film by **Emily Abt**

*An Official Selection of The Sundance Film Festival 2009*

Starring  
**Louisa Krause**  
**Sonequa Martin**  
**Gaius Charles**  
**Ally Walker**

USA, 104 Minutes  
Screen Ratio: 1.85:1  
In English, Color, Dolby  
Not Rated

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## **SYNOPSIS**

At a politically correct prep school in Washington DC two girls -one black, one white- go toe to toe. Jesse is a privileged but troubled white girl whose slutty tendencies pull her towards self-destructive behavior. Tosha is a fiercely determined African-American from Anacostia, one of DC's most impoverished areas. Both new seniors and star players on their school's lacrosse team, the two girls click despite their differences. Their fledgling friendship begins to falter when they discover their shared interest in Rashid, a dashing Lebanese deejay.

Things unravel further when Tosha and Jesse have a shoving match on the lacrosse field and racist graffiti appears on Tosha's locker soon after. Jesse is expelled from school and spirals deeper into self-destructive behavior. Surprisingly, it is Tosha who comes to her rescue. Jesse then returns the favor by sacrificing her own well being for that of Tosha's. And so the two girls, once mired in mutual hatred, become each other's salvation.

## **CAST**

**Louisa Krause** (Jesse)

**Sonequa Martin** (Tosha)

**Gaius Charles** (Kevin)

**Leslie Uggams** (Grandma)

**Silvestre Rasuk** (Rashid)

**Ally Walker** (Claire)

## **CREW**

**Written, Directed and Produced by EMILY ABT**

**Produced by SUSAN LEBER**

**Executive Produced by SARAH PETER**

**Director of Photography: ALAN JACOBSEN**

**Editor: JEFF MARCELLO**

**Composers: FORCE THEORY**

## **EMILY ABT**

Recently selected as one of Variety Magazine's 'Top 10 Directors to Watch', Emily Abt is an award-winning filmmaker dedicated to creating both fiction and documentary projects that grapple with current socio-political themes. She is also the founder and President of Pureland Pictures Inc., a Brooklyn based production company that produces commercials, promotional films and independent features. Abt's first film, TAKE IT FROM ME, a documentary about the human impact of welfare reform, aired nationwide on PBS as part of the 2001 season of P.O.V, and has since screened at more than 2000 educational institutions nationwide. In 2004 Abt received her MFA in Film Directing from Columbia University's graduate film school. Abt's thesis film was created when she was awarded a year-long Fulbright fellowship to live in London and collaborate with local Muslim girls.

During her 12-year career as an independent filmmaker in New York City, Abt has worked as a freelance producer, camera operator and director for diverse clients such as MTV News & Docs, Johnson & Johnson, True Entertainment and Grey Advertising. ALL OF US, her second documentary feature about a young doctor's fight against HIV/AIDS among black women, recently premiered on World AIDS Day 2008 on the Showtime Network. Abt's first narrative feature TOE TO TOE, which she wrote, directed and co-produced, is about the complicated relationship between two girls of disparate backgrounds in Washington D.C. TOE TO TOE recently premiered in the Dramatic Competition at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival.

Abt's films have screened at numerous festivals both domestically as well as abroad and she has received production grants from diverse sources including the Independent Feature Project (IFP), New York State Council on the Arts, The Adrienne Shelley Foundation, Women in Film Finishing Fund, The UK Fulbright Commission, Jerome Foundation, North Star Fund, The Playboy Foundation, the Lucius & Eva Eastman Fund, Open Meadows Foundation, The Valentine Foundation, International Women's Health Coalition, The Swanee Hunt Family Foundation and the Third Wave Foundation.

Abt's current projects include a script entitled BETTER ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH about a woman who runs for local office. She is represented by the William Morris Agency in Los Angeles.

## **DIRECTORS STATEMENT**

All three of my feature films, the documentaries TAKE IT FROM ME and ALL OF US as well as my first narrative feature TOE TO TOE, form a trajectory of work that has been informed by my early career as an activist and public servant. As student president of my university's Women's Center, I assisted young women in finding their own voices and advocated for improving sexual health services on campus. When I worked for the Public Defender's Service in Washington D.C. I got a powerful lesson in American inequality. Later, when I worked as a caseworker in New York City, I witnessed the daily struggles of my clients and that drove me to define some of those issues in TAKE IT FROM ME. My second documentary, ALL OF US, explores the disproportional rates of HIV among African American women.

While TOE TO TOE shares themes with my social issue documentaries, it's also a much more personal venture. I'm intensely interested in race relations and especially intrigued by the social tensions that exist between white and black women in America. The film is also inspired by the disturbing fact that interracial friendships end at age 14 for 87% of Americans. I see great social value in race related conversations so I created the characters in TOE TO TOE to dramatize the subtle yet insidious tension that threatens interracial alliances. Through Jesse and Tosha's relationship I hope to create a roadmap for how authentic dialogue between races could sound: these girls don't shy away from conflict with each other, they get it out in the open where it can be

resolved. As audiences observe Tosha and Jesse going 'toe to toe' they will hopefully be inspired to take a deeper look at their own interracial friendships or lack thereof.

Through the character of Jesse, TOE TO TOE also takes a frank look at teenage sexuality and promiscuity. One in four American girls has an STD but their suffering is virtually ignored by the media. I'm hoping the film sparks discussion around this growing teenage health crisis and that audiences are moved to reach out to the 'Jesses' within their own circles.

TOE TO TOE is set in Washington D.C. – a city where one can witness our world's most powerful political elite co-exist alongside an urban population haunted by poverty and one of the nation's highest crime rates. As a college student, I spent time in Anacostia (Tosha's neighborhood) when I worked for the Public Defender's Service, canvassing crime scenes and taking witness statements. I was struck by the rich culture of urban DC and also deeply affected by the harshness of it. That time left me with fond memories of a Go-Go concert in Anacostia River Park and much darker ones that included images of young black men gunned down in streets only blocks from our nation's capital. When I lived there, I often spent time with my upper-middleclass family in Bethesda. As I drove back and forth between my two worlds, the idea for TOE TO TOE began to take its shape.

Due to its extreme segregation, both racially and financially, I decided that Washington D.C. would be the ideal setting for a race-related film. I owe so much to the residents of Anacostia who treated me, an out-of-town white girl, with 'open arms' as I endeavored to create this story. The residents of 'Jesse's world', in the suburbs of Maryland, were equally generous and committed to the telling of this story. The characters in TOE TO TOE are carefully sculpted to illustrate the diversity of the city as well as its separateness. Through their lives, I hope to give the audience a sense of the pain and segregation in D.C. but also capture the shared optimism that thrives there.

I'm aware of the stigma that goes along with identifying oneself as a "social issue" or "feminist" filmmaker but I don't shy away from referring to myself as such. Films that challenge audiences to think/feel/change/fight/love are the ones I strive to create.

## **EMILY ABT'S FILMOGRAPHY**

***Toe to Toe*** Narrative Feature, Shot on the Red camera, will premiere at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival

***All of Us*** Feature Documentary, produced from 2004-2007, aired on The Showtime Network on December 1st, 2008

***Various MTV News Projects*** Developed a reality series about mentoring, produced and directed News & Docs pieces, 2003-2004

***Aisha, The American*** Narrative Short, Shot on 16mm, Produced in 2003, Columbia University Thesis Film funded by a Fulbright Fellowship in the United Kingdom

***Fancy Girl*** Narrative Short, Shot on 16mm, Produced in 2002

***Take it From Me*** Feature Documentary, 2001, Aired on PBS' POV series in 2001, Received the Henry Hampton Media Award

## **WHAT IS GO-GO?**

Go-Go is a bass-heavy, funky variation of hip-hop that originated in the 1970's by Chuck Brown (commonly referred to as the 'Godfather of Go-Go') and was designed for house parties. Go-Go lyrics are mostly geared toward amping up a crowd with a lot of call and response but the music is really driven by the beat, not the words. Go-Go is popular within the rap and R&B communities, particularly in the Washington D.C. area where it originated. The closest it has come to having a mainstream pop hit was in 1988, when EU's "Da Butt," was featured in Spike Lee's film SCHOOL DAZE and topped charts nationwide. Over the last 40 years Go-Go has maintained its popularity in the Washington D.C. area but has yet to break through on a national scale.

## **CREW BIOS**

### ***EMILY ABT* Writer/Director/Producer**

Emily Abt is an award-winning filmmaker dedicated to creating both fiction and documentary projects that grapple with current socio-political themes. She is also the founder and President of Pureland Pictures Inc., a Brooklyn based production company that produces commercials, promotional films and independent features. Abt's first film, TAKE IT FROM ME, is a feature length documentary about the human impact of welfare reform. TAKE IT FROM ME aired nationwide on PBS as part of the 2001 season of P.O.V, and has since screened at more than 2000 educational institutions nationwide. The award-winning film was lauded by The New York Times and chosen as People magazine's 'Pick of the Week'. In 2004 Abt received her MFA in Film Directing from Columbia University's graduate film school where she wrote, directed and coproduced two 16mm fiction shorts – AISHA, THE AMERICAN and FANCY GIRL. AISHA, THE AMERICAN, Abt's thesis film, was created when she was awarded a year-long Fulbright fellowship to live in London and collaborate with local Muslim girls.

Abt has worked as a freelance producer, camera operator and director for clients such as Johnson & Johnson, MTV News & Docs, the E! Network, True Entertainment and Grey Advertising. In 2004, she developed a public service related reality television series for MTV's News and Docs Division. ALL OF US, her second documentary feature about a young doctor's fight against HIV/AIDS among black women, will premiere this World Aids Day, December 1, on the Showtime Network. The script for Abt's first narrative feature, TOE TO TOE, won faculty honors at Columbia University and was selected as a 'No Borders' project at the IFP Market in 2007. The film was shot in Washington D.C. during Spring 2008 and will premiere in the Dramatic Competition at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival.

Abt's films have screened at festivals nationwide and she has received production grants from numerous sources including the Independent Feature Project (IFP), New York State Council on the Arts, The Adrienne Shelley Foundation, Women in Film Finishing Fund, The UK Fulbright Commission, Jerome Foundation, North Star Fund, The Playboy Foundation, the Lucius & Eva Eastman Fund, Open Meadows Foundation, The Valentine Foundation, International Women's Health Coalition, The Swanee Hunt Family Foundation and the Third Wave Foundation.

### ***SUSAN LEBER* Producer**

Susan Leber was named one of Variety's 10 Producers to Watch in 2004. Leber came to New York after completing Boston University's Graduate Film program and worked at companies such as Hal Hartley's True Fiction Pictures, Open City Films and Antidote Films. Her first feature production, Ilya Chaiken's MARGARITA HAPPY HOUR, had its world premiere at Sundance 2001. The acclaimed feature was distributed theatrically, on the Sundance Channel and

Wellspring DVD. She then produced Scott Saunders THE TECHNICAL WRITER, which debuted at Sundance 2003 and starred Tatum O'Neil and William Forsythe.

Next was critical darling DOWN TO THE BONE, which premiered at Sundance 2004 and won awards for Best Director and a Special Jury Prize for actress Vera Farmiga. She then produced the acclaimed cult horror, Ti West's THE ROOST now playing on Showtime. Alexandra Brodsky's BITTERSWEET PLACE, starring the infamous Seymour Cassel and Elisabeth Moss (Mad Men, The West Wing) won a special honor from the Tribeca Film Festival and is currently airing on Sundance Channel.

She co-produced Alfredo DeVilla's ADRIFT IN MANHATTAN, which premiered in competition at Sundance 2007 and is airing on Showtime. ADRIFT stars Heather Graham, Victor Rasuk, Elizabeth Pena, William Baldwin and Dominic Chianese. She also co-produced Ed Radtke's (THE DREAMCATCHER) latest film THE SPEED OF LIGHT, which premiered at Venice Days at the Venice Film Festival 2007 and was awarded the Queer Lion. She is currently in development on several projects and teaching at NYU.

#### **SARAH PETER *Executive Producer***

Sarah Peter is an artist whose work is in many collections worldwide. She has been an active philanthropist for many years, focused primarily on mental health and women's issues.

#### **ALAN JACOBSEN *Director of Photography***

Alan Jacobsen studied cinematography at NYU, shooting the Wasserman Award-winning film TRUCKSTOP, which is still featured as part of the renowned school's visual curriculum. He has since collaborated with visionary filmmakers Victor Nunez, Christopher Munch, Cory McAbee, Jem Cohen, and Kevin Smith; and has photographed the SXSW cinema verite' favorite ELECTION DAY the Emmy-nominated Journalist and the JIHADI: THE MURDER OF DAVID PEARL, and the latest from Oscar-nominated director Marshall Curry, BORN FAST. Alan's latest dramatic feature THE AUTUER premiered at the 2008 Tribeca Film Festival and is one of first acquisitions under Cinetic Media's new CRM initiative, receiving more than 8 million views on IFCFilm's youtube site. In addition to ongoing work for the acclaimed PBS series "E2- The Economies of Being Environmentally Conscious" -narrated by Brad Pitt, Alan has traveled the world for commercial clients such as Apple, DKNY, Kashi, Lexus, and W Hotels. Alan was most recently at Sundance with the competition film THE TRIALS OF DARYL HUNT, and the Jury Award-winning short WET DREAMS AND FALSE IMAGES.

#### **JEFF MARCELLO *Editor***

Jeff Marcello is an editor and post-supervisor working in narrative films, documentary, television, and commercials under his company, Last Frame of Action. He completed a BFA in film and video at the Rochester Institute of Technology where he focused on directing and editing. His most recent success in editing and post-supervising is the spectacular break dancing documentary, PLANET B-BOY, which was released theatrically worldwide in 2008, is currently available on DVD and will soon air on MTV in early 2009. Past projects include the narrative FIREDANCER that was short-listed for the Academy Awards Best Foreign Film category and the documentary RETURN TO AFGHANISTAN that screened at the U.N. Film Festival in 2007. In addition, Jeff has edited many television shows for Discovery Channel, TLC, Travel Channel, Style Network, Spike TV and Nickelodeon. Jeff is also an award winning producer and director of short form comedy films and web series under his production company, Girard Street Productions. Jeff is represented by the New York Office management company.

## **FORCE THEORY Composers**

Formed in 2004, Force Theory Productions has made it a point to innovate with each successive project. In 2005, Force Theory sound designed and composed the film FAVELA RISING, which won 24 international film festivals and was short-listed for the Academy Awards. The team went on to score and sound design the film JESUS CAMP by Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady, which was released theatrically by Magnolia Pictures and was nominated for the 2007 best documentary Academy Award. In late 2007, Force Theory added 7 songs to MANDA BALA (Send a Bullet) by Jason Kohn, which won the grand jury prize for documentary at the Sundance Film Festival. Their most recent film work includes composition and sound design on director Marjan Tehrani's ARUSI (debuting on PBS in March, 2009) and a complete sound design for Benson Lee's PLANET B-BOY, which will air on MTV in January 2009.

## **ACTOR BIOS**

### **LOUISA KRAUSE Jesse**

Louisa Krause gained critical acclaim in her off-Broadway debut, the world premiere of Neil LaBute's *In a Dark Dark House*. Her next starring turn was in the Signature Theatre's *Iphigenia 2.0*, Charles Mee's controversial re-imagining of the classic Euripides play. Krause garnered rave reviews as Iphigenia, the tragic daughter torn between love and appeasing her father and country.

Krause's early days were spent as a dancer, training at the Washington School of Ballet, where she performed in *The Nutcracker* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After high school, Krause enrolled in Carnegie Mellon's famed drama program, and after a year, she decided to leave school to pursue acting full time in New York City. Immediately she realized it was the right decision when she landed her Equity card with a role as a slave dancer in a summer stock *Aida*. Some of Krause's other theatre credits include: *Rocket to the Moon* (Long Wharf Theatre), *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (Huntington Theatre), *Dance Light* (Carnegie Mellon Rauh Studio), *Side Show* and *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (George C. Marshall), Kennedy Center performances of *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Coppelia* (American Ballet Theatre), and *Hansel and Gretel*.

Krause is now an emerging talent in film and television. Her first film THE SPEED OF LIFE, directed by Ed Radtke, was an official selection at the 2007 Venice Film Festival. Krause portrayed a pregnant teenager facing harsh realities in this gritty drama. In THE BABYSITTERS, which was an official selection for the 2007 Toronto Film Festival, Krause played one of a group of high school girls involved in a babysitting service turned call-girl ring. Krause was also featured in an episode of "Law and Order," as a fanatical Christian cult member involved with a woman's death. Krause's first leading role in a feature film, TOE TO TOE, is an official selection for the 2009 Sundance Film Festival. The film is a candid portrayal of teenage promiscuity, race relations, and socio-economic struggle set in present day Washington, DC. Krause most recently wrapped a role in Ang Lee's 60's set drama, TAKING WOODSTOCK, due out in late 2009.

### **SONEQUA MARTIN Tosha**

Sonequa Martin is debuting at the Sundance Film Festival. She received a BA in theatre at the University of Alabama where favorite roles included Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* and Barbara in George Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara*. Soon after moving to New York Sonequa landed the role of Tosha in TOE TO TOE. She then appeared in John G. Young's indie RIVERS WASH OVER ME and made a guest starring appearance on "Law & Order: Criminal Intent." Sonequa made her

New York stage debut as Rachel in the original play *Loss of Shadows* and also played Tessa in the workshop *Five Questions* with writer Lisa Kron and director Leigh Silverman.

### **GAIUS CHARLES *Kevin***

A graduate of Carnegie Mellon, Charles received his B.F.A. in drama, graduating Magna Cum Laude. At Carnegie Mellon, he performed in productions such as: *Spunk*, the first all-black production in the conservatory's 100-year history; *Candide* and *The Wild Party*. He also wrote, performed and produced his one-man show, *Meet Me in Iraq*. Additional stage performances include *The Clink* with the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) in Sydney, Australia, and originating the roles of E-Z in the off-Broadway production *Lower Ninth* and Malcolm in Thomas Kail's *Broke-Ology*. Charles' film credits include the upcoming independent feature TOE TO TOE and THE MESSENGER opposite Woody Harrelson and Samantha Morton. He recently wrapped BONE DEEP for Screen Gems alongside Matt Dillon and Chris Brown. In television, Charles won critical acclaim for his portrayal of Smash on NBC's "Friday Night Lights". He guest starred in NBC's drama series "Book of Daniel," and "Law & Order: SVU."

### **LESLIE UGGAMS *Grandma***

Tony and Emmy Award-winning Leslie Uggams recently starred in *First Breeze of Summer* at the acclaimed off-Broadway Signature Theater, for which she received the Audelco Award for leading actress for her portrayal of Gremmar Edwards. Ms. Uggams's Broadway appearances have included starring alongside James Earl Jones in *On Golden Pond* and co-starring in the Broadway hit *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. In 2001, her Broadway portrayal of Ruby in August Wilson's *King Hedley II* was nominated for a Tony Award. *Hedley* followed two other Audelco Award-winning, critically acclaimed, off-Broadway performances: *The Old Settler* and Keb Mo's blues musical *Thunder Knocking on the Door*. Earlier this year, Leslie co-starred in the soon-to-be-released independent film, TOE TO TOE. Those are just the latest accomplishments for a woman who has been captivating stage, screen and television audiences since her national television debut at age six on the TV series "Beulah", portraying the niece of Ethel Waters.

At the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem, 9 year-old Leslie opened for such legends as Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and Dinah Washington. She also made appearances on "Your Show of Shows," "The Milton Berle Show," and "The Arthur Godfrey Show." Embracing her love of music, Leslie attended the New York Professional Children's School, and at the age of 15 appeared on the CBS-TV quiz show "Name That Tune," winning \$12,500 toward her college education. Her appearance proved to be fortuitous. Mitch Miller, head of recordings for Columbia Records, was so impressed by her vocal talents that he signed her to a recording contract and then made her a regular on "Sing Along With Mitch." As such, Leslie Uggams became the first African-American performer to be regularly featured on a weekly, national prime-time television series. Concurrent with her musical composition and theory studies at the Juilliard School, Leslie released the first of 10 albums she was to record for Columbia Records, including her first hit single, Morgan. Alternating major nightclub appearances with her stage work, Leslie appeared in the musical *The Boyfriend* in Berkeley, California, and soon made her Broadway debut as the lead in *Hallelujah, Baby!* That performance earned Leslie the 1968 Tony Award for Best Actress in a Broadway Musical Comedy. She followed that with a starring role in her next Broadway show, *Her First Roman*, opposite Richard Kiley.

In 1970, she had her own musical variety television series on CBS-TV, "The Leslie Uggams Show," and signed a new recording contract with Atlantic Records. In 1972, she made her dramatic film debut opposite Charlton Heston in the MGM film SKYJACKED, followed by BLACK GIRL, the acclaimed film directed by Ossie Davis. However, it was Leslie's portrayal of Kizzy in the most watched dramatic show in TV history, Alex Haley's "Roots," that won her worldwide recognition as a dramatic actress – including the Critics Choice Award for Best Supporting

Actress in 1978, an Emmy nomination for Best Leading Actress and a coveted Golden Globe Nomination from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

She later starred in the miniseries "Backstairs in the White House," the ABC-TV movie of the week "Sizzle," and the HBO special "Christmas at Radio City Music Hall." Leslie went on to win an Emmy as co-host of the NBC-TV series "Fantasy." When not performing in the theatre, Leslie can be found touring the country with her acclaimed concerts. She has appeared with The Cincinnati Pops, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, The Washington Symphony Orchestra and The Rhode Island Symphony, to name a few. In addition, she performed before 300,000 people during the Memorial Day Concert on the Washington Mall and reached millions more as the event was televised live by PBS. Most recently, Leslie received rave reviews for her new CD 'On My Way to You – The Songs of Marilyn and Alan Bergman.'

### **SILVESTRE RASUK *Rashid***

Silvestre Rasuk co-stars as Rashid in the Emily Abt- directed film TOE TO TOE. Silvestre was born and raised on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. He has one brother and two sisters. He attended public school, where he developed his love for classical music and playing the violin. When he entered P.P.A.S. a public high school for teens interested in the performing arts, he was introduced to the acting world. Silvestre instantly fell in love with the whole acting process. Silvestre's first co-starring film role came at the age of 14 years old. The film was RAISING VICTOR VARGAS where he played the role of Nino. His fellow co-stars were Melonie Diaz, Judy Marte, and his real-life older brother, Victor Rasuk. They were directed by the talented Peter Sollett. Silvestre went on to roles in SPOONFUL OF SUGAR, LITTLE STEVIE, and MEN WITHOUT JOBS. He has appeared on television in "The Jury" and "New Amsterdam". Silvestre had the honor in 2006, to appear in the George C. Wolfe production of *Mother Courage* at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park, which starred Meryl Streep and Kevin Kline. During the baseball season you can find Silvestre glued to his TV set, rooting for his beloved home town team, the New York Mets.

### **ALLY WALKER *Claire***

Ally Walker stars as Claire in TOE TO TOE, the emotionally charged film playing in dramatic competition at 2009's Sundance Film Festival. Raised in New Mexico, Ally majored in biology and chemistry at the University of California at Santa Cruz and graduated with a degree in Science. It was while spending a semester at Richmond College of the Arts in London that Ally became interested in the theatre. Her entertainment career began when Ally was cast in the film Aloha Summer and then appeared in numerous commercials (notably Ally was the Clairol "Nice & Easy Girl") and modeling gigs, subsequently going on to a prolific career in television and film.

Ally recently starred in the critically acclaimed HBO series "Tell Me You Love Me." In 1996, Ally was chosen to star in the hit NBC series, "Profiler," which ran for three seasons. Other television series Ally has had regular and guest star roles include: "Sons of Anarchy," "Boston Legal," "Law and Order," "The Shield," "American Dad," "ER," "Sleeper Cell," "My Wonderful Life," "Moon Over Miami," and "LA Law," among others.

Ally's film career has her starring in independent and studio films including the upcoming WONDERFUL WORLD with Matthew Broderick and HAPPY, TEXAS; SINGLES; KAZAAM; STEAL BIG STEAL LITTLE; JUST LOOKING; WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING; BED OF ROSES; and UNIVERSAL SOLDIER, among others. Ally's love of the theater led her to accept lead roles in MCC's *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress* in London: *Taming of the Shrew*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Romeo and Juliet*; She starred in *The Women* at the Los Angeles Stage, and in *The Owl & the Pussycat* at the Beverly Hills Playhouse. Ally recently produced a powerful documentary about the Los Angeles foster-care system entitled FOR NORMAN ... WHEREVER

YOU ARE. Additionally, she co-wrote and starred in the movie for television BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. Ally lives in L.A. with her husband and three sons.

**ANWAN GLOVER as Himself**

Anwan Glover, born and raised in Washington, DC, is MC and founder of the popular area go-go band, The Backyard Band. Go-Go relies heavily on percussion and “call-and-response” with audience members. The Backyard Band’s sound is an electrifying mix of hip-hop, bassy rock, and heavy percussion sounds. Also an actor, Glover had a recurring role as Slim Charles in the HBO series “The Wire.” He currently hosts a radio show on local FM station WKYS, and will star as Snoop Dogg in the upcoming Biggie Smalls biopic NOTORIOUS.

**DIONNE AUDAIN Brenda**

*Twelfth Night* (The Queens Co.) *7 Stories* (B.E. Co.), *Top Ten* (Working For Tips Productions), *Perfect On Paper* (The Workshop Theatre Co.), The Afrikan Women’s Repertory & Shakespeare Saturdays. Regional: The Kennedy Center – *Alice* National Tour, African Continuum Theatre Co., Arena Stage, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Co., Shakespeare & Company. TV: HBO’s “The Wire”, “America’s Most Wanted”, “Starved”. FILM: TOE TO TOE (Sundance 2009), ROCKET SCIENCE.

**ERICA CHAMBLEE Kendra**

Erica Chamblee, actress, dancer and visual artist from Washington, D.C., has been exposed to some of the finest arts programs the city has to offer. In her youth, she studied dance and visual art at the Jones Haywood School of Ballet and the Corcoran School of Art, respectively. In her high school years, she majored in Theater at the prestigious Duke Ellington School of the Arts and upon graduating, her repertoire included roles in many plays, directing credits, and teaching experience, which she gained by leading a series of Shakespearean Text classes.

In 1998, Erica moved to New York to attend the SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Theatre Arts and Film. It was here that she developed and showcased her talent, appearing in such classic roles as Corabelle Beasley in *No Place to Be Somebody* and Rosalind in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*. Since returning to D.C. in 2005, Erica has performed at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as Vivian Coriander in  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a Mass for St. Vivian and at the H Street Playhouse where she received stellar reviews as Soraya in Salman *Rushdie’s “Haroun and the Sea of Stories.”*

In addition to her extensive theater credits, Erica has appeared on the final season of HBO’s critically-acclaimed series, “The Wire,” starred opposite Wood Harris and Clifton Powell as Leah Morgan in the feature-film, *JAZZ IN THE DIAMOND DISTRICT*, and more recently played the role of Kendra in the feature-film, *TOE TO TOE*, an official selection for the 2009 Sundance Film Festival.