

## In Her Own Life Leticia M. Reyes Shines Heroically

Written by Robert Waddell

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After growing up in the suburbs of Albany, New York, multi-talented Leticia M. Reyes calls herself a "burb-arican." However, it is from the Catskill Mountains where the first Latina superhero will emerge.

Next year, Reyes stars in a ten-minute short film where she portrays a super hero fighting off 4 villains. Looking Wonder Woman-esque in real life, Reyes groups her singing, modeling, journalism and acting career as an all in one entertainer. She laughed at the prospect of coming out with her own clothing line while sipping tea at the East Harlem Café on 104<sup>th</sup> street in New York's El Barrio.

In 2011 Reyes will also host the New York Couture Fashion Week's red carpet event at the Waldorf Astoria from February 18 to the 20<sup>th</sup>. She will release two singles, one in Spanish and the second recording an R and B ballad. Often she can be seen conducting interviews on line at En La Escena where she's covered stories from the Latin Bill Boards, the Salsa Congress, Andy Garcia and Benjamin Brat.

"She has the physique and Leticia also is a Latina working on developing her career in films like I am," said Ralph Henriquez, director and writer of the future superhero short that's in pre-production, which he will submit to the Sundance film festival he said.

Reflecting on her career Reyes quotes Broadway director Julie Taymor who said of her staged version of "Spiderman" that "if you don't have fear, you're not taking a chance."

"(That quote) relates to a lot of what I'm striving to do for myself," said Reyes.

Certainly, Reyes does take chances and risks. As an on-air, on-line personality for the last year and a half, she is a natural before the camera. She sees herself as an info-tainer in the world of info-tainment, primarily an entertainer who is also a journalist.

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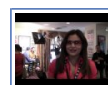
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No lines of news are blurred here since Reyes sees herself as an entertainer of the highest caliber while working hard at multi-tasking her multi-layered career. Already an on-line presence, and growing, for their coverage of Latino Caribbean lifestyle and culture, En La Escena television brings on-line episodes of red carpet events, trends and entertainment news. En La Escena's reporting focuses on the bright and beautiful but also the relevant for the fashion conscious and socially interested stories.

"On-line journalism has done to the industry what the internet has done for the music industry," said Reyes. "Journalism just comes naturally to me.... It was a natural fit for me. I went to the school of life of journalism."

En La Escena, which means on the scene, broadcasts serious bangle bauble bling-bling stories a la Entertainment Tonight to their on-air television audience. Keeping broadcasts light and breezy, Reyes is one of En La Escena's most engaging and prolific interviewers who beams her smile while personally asking questions.

"En La Escena is the voice of the people," said Reyes. "We're classy and we broadcast in English, bilingual and Spanish. It's important for us to keep up with the times....There's a new population who need a new voice as well."

Reyes's on air presence is graceful and youthful with a comfort and ease that would make any veteran news person nervous; Reyes comes across as self-assured and well prepared.

"Leticia's very serious about her work," said friend and University of Florida professor Dr. Belio Antonio Martinez. "She's paying her dues. Whatever she does she puts her heart and soul into. She's very passionate. On En La Escena, she's a natural."

Also a musician, Dr. Martinez said that in the music and entertainment industries he's hard pressed to find a "real person" like Reyes who he calls a good hearted person with everyone in her life.

"She has an energetic energy," said actor Yenny Love. "She makes you feel comfortable when she's interviewing you. The first time I met her I felt like she was an old friend...her smile is one of a kind."

Reyes, who attended Seton Hall University and earned a business degree from SUNY Albany, calls too many people clamoring for fame "a modern sickness."

"I think the internet helped to spawn that type of mentality of people who want to be famous just to be famous," said Reyes who methodically and painstakingly works at the many disciplines she has applied herself. Besides being a natural, she's also a hard worker, not just a pretty face. For her its not the prospect of fame but the work that's important.

If all goes well for Reyes in 2011, her Latina superhero persona might just take off with more than just a super cape and a strong pose. Like Spiderman, Reyes agrees, with great power comes great responsibility; for Reyes, hard work being the key, keeping grounded and involved in what she can create and produce is what excites the emerging star. (Also like Spiderman or Superman, in their secret lives they worked as journalists too.)

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## Wikilatino

**Bobby Sanabria** the son of Puerto Rican parents, was born and raised in the "Fort Apache" section of New York City's South Bronx.

Drummer, percussionist, composer, arranger, recording artist, producer, filmmaker, conductor, educator, multi-cultural warrior and multiple Grammy nominee – Sanabria has performed with a veritable Who's Who in the world of jazz and Latin music, as well as with his own critically acclaimed ensembles.

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## Spanglish

### Hangoteo

Hanging out, from "hangear," to relax with friends. "Me encanta el hangoteo en Nueva York."

### Mapo

From "mop," instead of trapo de limpiar, bayeta. "Dame el mapo para limpiar este fango."

### Frikiar

To freak out, alarm or amaze. "Me frikió esa película."

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"There's a lot of mixed messages, especially for young people, to raising a population that's going to have the right morals and mentality...."

"I love entertainment," said Reyes. "I love being on the mic hosting. I love interviewing people and the idea of working with a camera either behind or in front excites me, that's my drive. It's not about the bling bling I get to wear or who I sit next to. I really don't get too Star stuck."

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