

was the same director of the episode that Curtis was in and he talked to me about working with Curtis and how much they loved working with Curtis and how great he was. It's funny with Curtis and I. Curtis is there then I'll go somewhere. I get there and then they tell me about Curtis, or this will happen, not even when we are working, but in the street or something or in restaurants, people will say, "Oh, I just saw Curtis Armstrong in here." Or they'll say to him, "Oh, you know, Allyce Beasley comes in here." Because that's how he knew I moved downtown because he was in a restaurant downtown and so one of the waiters said, "Oh, Allyce Beasley comes in here," so it's funny how we kind of follow each other that way.

**JC:** Tell us some of the many things you've done since *Moonlighting* like *Stuart Little*, *Johnny Bravo* with Curtis Armstrong. You also worked with director Peter Werner and Whoopi Goldberg on *Call Me Claus*. What was some of that like?

I just loved the particular air and aura that was *Moonlighting* and I loved being in it! I loved breathing it. I loved being a part of it. I loved contributing to it.

**AB:** I don't know if you guys know everything... You know more than I do!

**(Everyone laughs)**

**AB:** I'm willing to talk about if you want to, but we also don't have to talk about it. If you ask me about *Stuart Little*, I don't know if you guys know that I had breast cancer.

**JC:** Yes, we knew.

**AB:** And I'm fine, but I just had found out two weeks before I started shooting *Stuart Little* that I had breast cancer, and it was one of the greatest experiences I've had. I mean, it kind of saved my sanity and my life to do what I needed to do. I had surgery first, and through the cooperation of my doctor, Philomena McAndrew, who's just amazing... Do you guys watch *Sex and the City* at all?

**CT:** Yes, I am a fan.

**AB:** Because this last season Samantha had breast cancer, right? And they were talking about how she went to see a male doctor and she didn't like the male doctor because she thought that he didn't understand breasts, right? And she said, "Who is the most famous female oncologist in New York? I'm going to go to her." She goes to the office and tries sneaking in because she's all booked up. I was sitting there by myself watching this late at night, and the name that they use for that doctor, Dr. Philomena McAndrew, is my doctor!

...Glenn finally said, "Well, Miss DiPesto is somebody who always gets dressed at least twice! She's never somebody that just puts something on. She has to get dressed at least twice every day."

**JC:** Oh wow!

**AB:** Isn't that funny? They had a connection, you know, somebody that they must have known on *Sex and the City* went to her, too. But I'm sitting there and I was so excited, and I didn't know if I would see her on the show. I was thinking if they could have somebody that looks like her because she's this beautiful petite woman with hair down to the bottom of her butt. But through cooperating with my doctor, we decided that I could do surgery and then go to work because I wanted to and needed to and then do chemo and everything else I had to do after the job was over. So I shot *Stuart Little* a week after I had surgery and I didn't tell anybody. Maybe you guys all know this because it was in *People* magazine or something. Not that everybody reads everything, but I just don't want to be redundant and I don't assume you know things but the story came out. But I went to work a week after surgery and it probably saved my spirit and saved my life because this is what

**(On the dance scene in *Big Man on Mulberry Street*) Oh man, was that hot! Wasn't that? I hadn't seen that in so many years! That was so way ahead of its time. I mean, that was practically HBO, don't you think?**

I love and I got to do it. After having a diagnosis like that, (instead of thinking) "Oh, I don't know when I'll ever act again," I had a job waiting for me and I just did it and I loved it. *Stuart Little* was a great experience really, really fun.

**CT: We're happy that you're well now.**

**JC: Thank God.**

**Everyone: Yeah!**

**AB:** Thanks, you guys. I really appreciate that. I really, really do. That's also part of the reason for a couple of years that I just didn't feel like talking about *Moonlighting* much and stuff. That's kind of a big hole in my resume there. So anyway, that's what happened during *Stuart Little* and it was a really special experience. I loved how it turned out. I really did. I thought it was fun. What else should we talk about?

**DM: Well, you had a little reunion with Curtis doing *Johnny Bravo*.**

**AB:** That was so great! Well, you

know, we called each other and we had lunch together like a month before we did it so it wouldn't be such a shock to see each other after such a long time because we hadn't seen each other for like five or six years at that point. So we had lunch together before *Johnny Bravo* and really had a really nice time. It was great to do *Johnny Bravo*. I didn't get to see it because I was working at the Hollywood Bowl on *Mame*. I was wishing they'd send me a copy. I was performing the night that it aired or the night that they had a screening of it.

**CT: Well, I have a copy. I taped it so if you want a copy, I can send it to you.**

**AB:** Oh, I'd love that!

**DM: We'll do that. We'll dub you a copy and mail it to you.**

**AB:** Did you guys like it?

**Everyone: Yeah!**

**DM: I liked it. I would have liked more *Moonlighting* references to it, but you'd really have to know the show to get it so they weren't very obvious with it.**

**AB:** I know what you're saying. I mean, it wasn't really *Moonlighting*. That's a really hard thing to do. It's a hard thing to do an homage to it and to still be *Johnny Bravo* but do *Moonlighting*. The only way that would have really worked was if Johnny Bravo played David Addison, you know what I'm saying?

**Everyone: Yeah.**

**AB:** Like if one character played

Maddie then that would have been a *Moonlighting* episode and then maybe Curtis and I could have come in and done what we do. But it was hard for it to be *Moonlighting*.

**PH: It was great hearing your voices together again, though. It really was!**

**AB:** Oh, that's good. Well, I was so happy. I'm always so happy to work with Curtis. It's just great.

**DM: And one of our other favorite people that we've interviewed is Peter Werner and you worked with him in *Call Me Claus*.**

**AB:** Yeah. I hadn't seen him in at least over ten years by then. Yep.

**DM: Actually, I met Peter briefly when I was out in Los Angeles and he was directing an episode of *Medium* for Glenn. I didn't get to spend time with him so I hope to catch up with him next time. But Peter has been great to us.**

**JC: Yeah, he's been terrific. He's been a real cheerleader for the campaign and everything.**

**AB:** Yeah. He's a great guy. We all went to the first year Emmy<sup>®</sup>'s together before the show was nominated, except for *Best Song* when we came in mid-season, I think. My Dad and I and my ex-husband had dinner over at his house and we were kind of chummy back then and I really did like him a lot. Everybody's lives, I guess, just went in such different directions. I also don't know if this is a good thing

to say because I don't like to offend anybody else, but I always, always thought his episodes were the best ever on *Moonlighting*. I thought he was the best director.

**JC:** Like *The Dream Sequence Always Rings Twice*.

**DM:** He really set the tone for the first and second season.

**AB:** His were the best in terms of, like you were saying, setting the tone and being really different and the camera and the whole feeling. I mean, his were the most cinematic, I think, of anybody's. I mean, you couldn't tell whether you were watching a TV show or a movie with Peter. I think he was pretty amazing that way, and I think he was very original.

**DM:** And when people think of *Moonlighting*, they do think of those first two seasons. They're more light-hearted. You have the sparks and the chemistry. It was more of a comedy than a drama. It just had a different feel to it. As it went into the third season, it got more serious.

**AB:** It's true as they got more and more involved in a relationship. But no, Peter was great. He was like the perfect director for that show.

**DM:** You're also known as the voice for *Playhouse Disney*. By the way, I emailed some of the people from the show that we were going to interview you and Kerry Ehrin wrote back saying, "Oh, tell her that we love hearing her

voice!" because she's has three little kids.

**AB:** Oh, really?

**DM:** Yes. She says your voice is forever in that house because she's always has The Disney Channel on.

**AB:** Oh, that's so fun! That's so cute!

**PH:** I was just about to say, I'm the only one of us that's got kids. My little girl is seven now and she's watched *Moonlighting* tapes with me her whole life, but I think from the time when she was three she's heard your voice on *Playhouse Disney*, and she said, "That's Miss Dipesto!" I said, "It sure is!" So she recognized your voice.

**AB:** Did she really? Oh that's so sweet! That's so funny!

**DM:** So tell us how you got that gig.

**AB:** Oh, this wonderful lady, Lisa O'Brien, was the creative director of Disney for the last five years, who actually is not there anymore. But I had worked with her over at Fox Family. I had done a couple promos for her over there. I had never done much of that stuff. Usually they don't use very individualistic voices. Usually they use the most generic voices possible for promos and stuff. So I had done a few for her at that time and when she became creative director over at the Disney Channel, she hired me on to take over that segment of Disney Channel, which is the *Playhouse Disney* preschool pro-

gramming, and she's the greatest. You guys would love her. She's the greatest gal. I don't know if you've been following how that segment has grown over the years. It's gotten better and better shows instead just kind of a jumble, which is not bad, but just a jumble of Disney cartoons, to really specific programming for preschoolers and she did that. Oh, we've become really great friends. This is my 4th season of doing it and I hope to keep doing it. I hope to be like the Mrs. Rogers of Disney Channel. (Everyone laughs) There was even talk for awhile of maybe being an on camera spokesman for the channel. They were thinking about moving into that, but that's probably not going to happen and that's ok because I really need to do other things anyway. But it's really a lot of fun and I love being able to be myself in my own voice on that channel and I love kids. It's been really great.

**JC:** You are involved in the program *School on Wheels*. Can you tell us what it's about and how you became involved?

**AB:** Yes. In my own neighborhood, and I live in downtown LA and the only thing I can compare to it was like how Soho used to be in New York before it became Soho. A bunch of warehouses and abandoned areas and artists living down there and a lot of homeless people and there's several missions down here. There are missions all over Los Angeles. The way that it functions here is it's a program started by an ex-nun to help kids who are homeless, to tutor them

and help them with their homework if they're in school, and if they're not in school, to keep them in touch somewhat with their academic career even while they're not in school. So it's just once a week and it's for three hours and I worked with one of the missions down here called the Midnight Mission though we haven't had the program for a little while because they're relocating and they're going to move. But every Friday night we would go for three hours and tutor the children who came. I was really lucky for a long time because we had a regular bunch of kids. Usually you don't get the same kids because being homeless, they're itinerant and you don't see the same kids over and over again, but I got to know some of the same kids for quite awhile. And in the summer, when they didn't have homework, they still kept coming to the program because their parents would bring them so their parents got a break once a week whenever they could, I guess. We would play scrabble. That was really a gas. We would divide into teams and I used to bring my big huge dictionary and my scrabble game and we'd play scrabble. We had the older kids, depending on who showed up. I brought some books of poetry and we would just pass the book around and each read a poem out loud to each other. That's as close as I got to do anything drama-oriented with them. I just really loved it and I haven't been doing it for a little while so, when my own son grows up, I would really like to put some time and energy into a pro-

Photo courtesy of Allyce Beasley



gram like that because I really enjoy it. To keep kids who are homeless in touch with some part of their education.

**CT:** That's excellent.

**JC:** That's fantastic.

**AB:** Yeah, it was great. It was a great experience. I know I can only imagine, right? Thank God, we can only imagine.

**JC:** And what other projects are on the horizon for you that you can discuss with us?

**AB:** Let me think. Well, mostly I've been doing theater in the last couple of months except for *Joan of Arcadia*. I've been doing a touring company of the all female *Odd Couple*. I was in Albuquerque and Colorado the last time. We were also in Crystal Springs, Illinois and South

Bend, Indiana. Anyway, we usually go out for four or five days a week and we hit a couple of different cities. You guys would appreciate it because it's a very kind of Dipesto-like role. She's not exactly Agnes because nobody's Agnes.

**JC:** No. There's only one Agnes.

**AB:** But the role is kind of similar. Everybody thinks she's kind of like the sad version of Agnes in a way. But it really was like, not a come-down, but I really had to find another way to do it with dignity because she does have dignity. She's the kind of Agnes who doesn't speak up

for herself. Out of this crowd of six women, she's the one that's kind of considered a step behind, so it's that kind of character. I've been playing with them and it's been fun and different, but she's definitely different than Agnes. Also, I got to co-star with my name on the marquee. Diana, did you pass the Hollywood Bowl when you were here?

**DM:** No. I pretty much stayed by the ocean when I was out there.

**AB:** Oh, I don't blame you. That's beautiful. You have the greatest city in world there. Anyway, but you guys know the Hollywood Bowl, right?

**Everyone:** Yeah.

**AB:** I think it holds either 14,000 or 16,000 people. I'm not sure.