

liquid words
PRODUCTIONS
Read. Rehydrate. Rejuvenate.

How did you get involved in the media industry?

My interest started in college. I heard about the radio station at my school, Seton Hall University (89.5FM WSOU), where supposedly a very high, difficult standard had to be met in order for students to participate. It was one of the only college stations that competed with professional radio. As soon as I heard about it, I knew I had to be involved. I studied for over a month, passed the qualifications, and became a disc jockey. Later I hosted a popular weekly radio show, and found I was hooked.

After college I spent years in publishing, where I learned the ins and outs of marketing, ad sales, and editing.

It was a natural progression for me to eventually start writing the material I learned to market, and I began interviewing people who were making an impact in their communities or in a particular industry but weren't getting mainstream media attention.

I had to force myself to get over my fear of public speaking and the anxiety I felt when the camera was on me (which I still struggle with) because the people I was interviewing, and the causes I was involved in, needed to be seen. It's one of the main reasons my writing began to merge with video and film.

What do you love most about working in this industry?

The freedom! The freedom to express what you think, what you see, and what you hear through your own lens. As Maya Angelou said, there is no agony like hearing an untold story inside of you. With media, you have the opportunity to tell your story, or the stories of others.

How did you get involved with DWIFTV?

I met the CEO of DWIFTV, Serenity (Sheri) Brooks at a WOW! Workshop in Ohio. Each participant was given the opportunity to introduce ourselves and give a brief description of the work we were involved with.

I think it clicked for both Sheri and me during the presentations that we were speaking the same language. We were both working towards building a positive, empowering community (especially in Detroit) in the film, television, and literary fields; one that nurtured and educated women and young girls, helping to move them forward to becoming the next generation of powerful artists, in front of and behind the camera.

When we returned to Detroit, we immediately got in touch through e-mail. The next week we met for a DWIFTV meeting, and I've been involved ever since.

How do you feel about your role as a woman in this industry?

I wish I came into it sooner. Growing up I mostly experienced women in the industry in a supporting role, especially women of color, so it was a battle to find my way and learn the leadership qualities necessary to move to the forefront. It was difficult, and didn't come easy for me. Now there is no turning back, and I'm determined to bring others with me! As more women move to the front lines of film and media, it will be that much easier for future generations of women to be successful in the industry.

What are you currently involved in?

Currently I am compiling an anthology and CD, tentatively titled *What We Think: Gender Roles, Women's Issues, and Feminism in the 21st century*, due to release in March 2008, coinciding with Women's History Month. I hope to turn the book into a documentary soon after its release.

I will be presenting two workshops. The first will be in September at the Power of Words Conference in Vermont, titled "*Get it out there: Tips and strategies on writing, editing, marketing and promoting your manuscript/book.*" The second will be in November at The Essence of Motown Conference in Detroit, titled "*Anthologies: A Joint Effort.*"

I am the co-founder of a full-service production company, Liquid Words Productions, LLC, and I'm involved with two very active groups in Detroit: *ThinkGirl* and *Detroit Feminists*.

I'm on the board of *Detroit Women in Film and Television*, which will be holding a number of exciting events in the coming months. I am also working as a freelance journalist and writer. My primary focus is politics and women's issues, but every once in a while I'll delve into other arenas, like love and romance.

What is your favorite TV show? Film?

Oh goodness, this is a difficult question. It's always hard for me to narrow down my love for the arts. I've been watching a lot of PBS lately; there's a program called *Wide Angle* that explores issues and people all over the world, it's really terrific. There's nothing else like it on television right now.

A couple weeks ago they featured a school in Brazil where affirmative action was implemented, and the reaction of students, teachers and families; this past week focused on a woman in Afghanistan, Malalai Joya, who is one of the few women holding a seat in the Afghani National Assembly. She has a number of death sentences on her head from various warlords because she's been speaking out forcefully and publicly about their crimes. Very inspiring, and incredibly moving.

Who is your all time favorite director?

Stanley Kubrick, no one has ever been able to duplicate his mastery, and Jehane Noujaim, the director and cinematographer most known for her 2003 documentary on Al-Jazeera, *Control Room*.

Music you're feeling right now?

This is another difficult question; music has always been one of my lifelines. I'll listen to almost anything depending on my mood.

At the moment, I'm listening to M.I.A. a lot; she gives a needed jolt of pleasure. The rhythm forces me to turn the radio up to maximum volume and dance in my seat. Plus, most of her lyrics carry an international political message, which is a passion of mine. If you can educate, inspire, and make me feel good at that same time, you've succeeded.