

# BOULEVARD

Long Island's Premier Magazine

March 2011

celebrities • showhouse living • fashion • wine & dine • travel • health • local charities

Ronnie Wood

Taboo

Graham Phillips

Special Bridal Features

Bridal Registry Advice from Donatella Arpaia

**MICHELLE**  
Playing by Her Own Rules  
**RODRIGUEZ**

new york • gold coast • hamptons



15/16

An Actress on Her Own Terms

**michelle**

**RODRIGUEZ**

PLAYS BY HER OWN RULES

/ By **RUTH BASHINSKY** /  
/ PHOTOGRAPHY BY **TASYA VAN REE** /

## PROFILE MICHELLE RODRIGUEZ

Portraying the tough girl or the smart-talking tomboy in a string of Hollywood blockbusters – *The Fast and the Furious*, *Blue Crush*, *Resident Evil*, *S.W.A.T.*, *Avatar* and *Machete* – and playing Ana Lucia Cortez in the popular television series *Lost* is no coincidence for Michelle Rodriguez. The 32-year-old actress planned it this way, taking on strong female characters as a way of making a statement and sending Hollywood a message.

"I believe in the balance between man and woman. I don't think that a woman should be acting like a dude in order to be empowered. I also don't think a woman should be just a lipstick chick, or a Cleopatra, or a mother. I think that a complete woman embodies all three figures of a warrior princess," says Rodriguez, who spoke to *The Boulevard* magazine from her home in Los Angeles.

Since her big break in 2000 when she beat out 350 girls to land the lead role in the movie *Girlfight*, Rodriguez has carried that fighting spirit, taking Hollywood on her own terms. "The woman that is exploited in Hollywood today to me isn't so amazing. This is the same woman we have been seeing in history for the last 5,000 to 6,000 years ... the same woman that uses her sexuality to charm and manipulate the mind. There are other aspects of woman to exploit. Let's move on."

Indeed. The majority of characters Rodriguez chooses to play are tough as nails. And she'd have it no other way. "I focus most of my work on action films so I don't feel like I have to sacrifice my integrity or what I stand for as a woman."

When asked how she likes being a movie star, Rodriguez acts amused. "It has its pros and cons just like anything else but I enjoy it. It goes well with my personality. It is not like I am your average movie star. I am an actress more than anything. I don't think of myself as a celebrity."

**“I focus most of my work on ACTION FILMS so I DON'T FEEL like I have to SACRIFICE my INTEGRITY or what I stand for as a WOMAN.”**

Unlike other stars that savor their privacy, Rodriguez craves the connection she has with her fans. "I love to talk to my fans. They are really cool. They also give me insight into writing because that is what I am doing now."

One way she has been able to bond with her admirers is through the world of social media, entities that not only seem to intrigue her but help her keep it real. "The days of yesterday when everything was beckoned by big studios and network television and whatever PR run you were going on is now dictated by a grassroots movement online. I don't have to do a press tour in order to contact my fans. I can do it anytime on Twitter."

Illustrating just how important it is to network, Rodriguez has taken a project that was given to her by a friend and has been working on it and adding her own spin. The film is called *Concrete Angel*, which Rodriguez explains is based on the world of the Boom Boom Room, Bungalow 8, and the scene of sex, drugs, rock and roll, and house. "We are reworking it to shoot in New York. I have not worked back there since *Girlfight*. I can't wait to get back."

Despite being born in Texas, then moving to the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico before settling in Jersey City, New Jersey, Rodriguez calls herself a New York girl at heart. "I miss New York. There is this massive, intense energy in having to get up and having to do something with myself at all times. I cannot be lazy in New York unless it is a really cold winter day and traffic [is] stopped because of a storm."

For Rodriguez, being bi-coastal isn't always easy. Three months out of the year she is in Los Angeles and the rest of the time she can be found in Paris, Hawaii, New York, Texas or somewhere else in the world. Moving around was a part of Rodriguez's life growing up. "I had my passport by age 7," she says describing her upbringing as interesting. "It was a big, giant dichotomy. I have a mom. It was all about Charles T. Russell's Jehovah Witness Program, knocking on people's doors at age 13 trying to save them from their worldly ways. And then you have a dad who is all about Carl Jung and research."

Rodriguez is certain that her background has helped shape her into the independent person she is today. So independent, in fact, that in 2008 she announced on national television during an appearance on *The Ellen Show* that she had married herself. There was no big ceremony, she explains, just a band that she recently replaced with a Cartier ring. "I will divorce myself when I feel like I am complete," she says. "Most of the time we try and complete ourselves when we find a partner but in reality, the true journey of us being born and dying happens to be completing yourself as much as possible before you go."

When asked how she views Hollywood, Rodriguez gets fired up, comparing it to high school. "You have the cool kids, the jock kids and the geek kids. I am the outcast. The lone wolf. The lone wolves do their own thing and don't represent any given group ... kind of like that weird kid who is a vampire in *Twilight*. That would probably be the crew I'd be hanging out with."

PROFILE **MICHELLE RODRIGUEZ**





// I think that a **COMPLETE WOMAN** EMBODIES ALL THREE figures of a **WARRIOR PRINCESS!**

One of the ways the star stays grounded and not caught up in the celebrity gossip cycle is not to read anything written about herself. She instead relies on her inner circle to watch her back. "I decided not to read blogs or gossip sites or buy gossip magazines - ever. I am in a place right now where I am very cautious of what I do and who I am as a person. I make decisions that are responsible and if I am going to listen to anybody, it is going to be the inner circle that I created around me to protect

me," she says. "It is the only way to really survive in this industry because there are a lot of people who dedicate their entire lives to talking s\*\*\* about people. That is why I say it is like high school. In Spanish we call them *bochincheros*. It took me a long time to understand that those people are not worth the time of day."

This month the talented actress can be seen in the film *Battle: Los Angeles*, a movie she says her fans will love. "It is one of those popcorn movies when you sit on the edge of your seat for half the movie and leave kind of amazed." Rodriguez, who admits to being a video game fanatic (she used her voice for Halo 2 and True Crime video games), hopes that the movie prompts a video game version of its own. "I love video games. Black Ops is my favorite. I just lost my gamer tag and now I have to go from a commander to a corporal ... and it is awful," she laughs.

Acting and video games are not the star's only passions. Add DJ to the list. Rodriguez is currently mastering her DJ skills at different venues around town. Alternative house music is her favorite genre to play. "I like to watch people being happy and being a part of that. It feels good. The crowd feeds you by being happy and wanting to have a good time and you feed them by providing the good music to do so."

Stayed tuned: MRod just may be the DJ at your next party. 🎧

**Follow Michelle on Twitter @MRodOfficial**