

In this month's *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde*, **ALANNA UBACH** has us on our feet as a saucy cheerleader sidekick who helps Reese Witherspoon rally Congress for animal rights (just wait until you see how the Laker Girls deal with partisan politics)

PHOTO JOHN RUSSO

# All Over Alanna

**Alanna Ubach** doesn't seem all that intimidating when you first meet her. And she's not. Sure, she is sort of a tough-talker, but we guess that's what you'd expect from a half-Puerto Rican/half-Mexican actress from Downey, California. But Alanna is so open and straight-forward once you get her going (which, by the way, doesn't take much) that you can't help but be put at ease, even when she talks about growing up watching her father airbrush *Penthouse* pin-ups for a living and why she'd switch for the ultimate "Chick," Madonna.

**INSTINCT:** So, besides being a Laker Girl in *Legally Blonde 2* and costarring with Reese Witherspoon in, so far, three movies (the two *Legally Blonde* flicks and also the now-cultish *Freeway*) what else qualifies you as a Chick We'd Switch For? **ALANNA UBACH:** You mean, am I gay-friendly? *[Laughs]* Well, I go way back, because my best male friends from kindergarten both turned out to be gay. In fact, when they used to come over to my house they'd dress up in my sister's clothes and prance around, asking my father about their outfits, 'Rudy, what do you think of this?'

**Your father didn't care?** My dad was so cool. He was, like, *I don't want to say anything that could put them in therapy for the next 50 years.* So, instead, he'd say stuff like, 'I don't know about the hat. Why don't you try another hat?' He made them feel so comfortable that they'd actually sit down to have dinner with us in women's clothing. The next day, when their fathers came to pick my friends up, they'd be

of the original McDonald's restaurant and The Carpenters. *[Laughs]* Talk about worlds colliding. Cholesterol Heaven and Karen [Carpenter] died of anorexia.

**You obviously had a colorful childhood with your dad supporting drag in elementary school boys.** *[Laughs]* My father used to do the touch-ups and airbrushing for *Penthouse* back in the day. He's moved on to things like *Architectural Digest* now, but I remember those girlie pin-ups in the shop when I'd go visit him. He'd have red marks over the nose or the areola saying they were a little to pink or whatever. I was brought up thinking naked women were just the most natural thing.

**Well, as natural as you can be with airbrushing. Speaking of hot ladies, what chick would you switch for?** Definitely Madonna. And I'm not just saying that because this is a gay magazine. *[Laughs]* Madonna in the "Borderline" days, when she had some chunk on her. She was so sexy, especially with the clothes and style back in the '80s. The slit sides, the neon, the full face of make-up. She's also had that round face and looked young; I'm kind of turned on by that whole Betty Paige look.

**We wonder why, what with your dad's pin-ups. How'd you get involved with *Legally Blonde*?** I played Reese's cellmate in *Freeway*...

**Which was a great movie, by the way, although what was up with *Freeway 2*?** Right. You have to smoke some major marijuana to enjoy that one. What a piece of crap! *[Laughs]* But, Reese and I got along very well. A few years later she was attached to *Legally Blonde* and I read the

Cauffiel was there, who played my best friend, Margot, and I told her, 'Listen, I need this job. I want it.' So she told me to follow her lead and the casting people saw we were totally in sync and had no choice but to cast us both.

**What part do you play in *Legally Blonde 2*?**

Serena has become a Laker Girl and Reese is taking animal testing to the Supreme Court. I show up to do a naughty dance for all of the guys at the Capitol Building, and it helps them get in the mood to fight against animal testing.

**Right. Men are such pushovers—especially politicians. What's next for Elle Woods [Witherspoon]?**

Hopefully she'll become President and make me her Secretary of State. *[Laughs]*

**So, would you ever hesitate to play a lesbian?** Hell, no! I directed a short film that's playing at Outfest [in Los Angeles] in June called *Mi Amor Mi Dulce*. It's about getting married, and Guillermo Diaz plays my transvestite brother, and across the street from the *panaderia* we own is a chick who runs a cyber café. One day she's being robbed and I end up saving the day and we end up falling in love and getting married. Yes, in the span of a short film we have end up with a gay marriage—two, actually. *[Laughs]*

**Okay, hypothetical time. What would you do if you were a fag for a week?** Well, obviously I'd be a hot gay man. *[Laughs]* I'd seduce all of my hot gay crushes, even if they had boyfriends.

**Wow, you would make a perfect homo.**

—PARKER RAY



From her first performance as a conehead in the production *Attack of the Yuppie Aliens* to the smash hit *Legally Blonde*, Alanna Ubach has made a smooth transition from childhood to adult actor. And unlike the stories we're all accustomed to hearing about the downfall of child actors, Ubach's career is rising fast — but her feet are still planted firmly on the ground.

Here's a quick rundown of the life of this beyond-humorous brunette bombshell.

At 10-years old she began acting at the Lee Strasberg Institute's Young People's Program, putting on performances every 12 weeks for three years. From there, Ubach got a child agent from a list provided by Strasberg and began auditioning, all while attending a Catholic school in her hometown of Downey, California.

Fast forward to six years later. Ubach had just gotten her license and began driving herself to auditions. One in particular was for the character of Josie on *Beakman's World*, an educational children's science series. She was called the same day and told she got the part. "It was great, I got to be out of high school for a while and get a tutor. What was really cool was I was around college-educated people who always had something clever and funny to say, so it was great being around those types of people for a year." Since the award winning *Beakman's World*, Ubach has had roles in *The Brady Bunch Movie*, *Sister Act 2* and most recently in *Legally Blonde*, playing Serena, Reese Witherspoon's best friend.

Now to the present. Ubach is continuing her role as Serena in *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde*, due out July 2, as well as writing, directing and providing different voices for several children's cartoons.

But there's so much more to Ubach than just the roles she's played. She's lived a full life in only 27 years, and just keeps going. What has made this witty-star so dedicated? It started with her family. Born to a Mexican mother and Puerto Rican father, Ubach has experienced different cultures since she was born. But most importantly, it was her parents that gave her the support to begin acting. They constantly exposed her to art, whether it was musicals or box seats at the Hollywood Bowl, and almost every weekend Ubach's father would take the family (including Ubach's mother and older sister Athena) to Las Vegas. One of the first performances Ubach saw was Donnie and Marie Osmond. "I saw them perform on stage, and I was like, whoa, that's what I want to do. I turned over to my father, and I said 'I like that, I want to do that.'" From that point on, Ubach says the family has been extremely supportive, including helping her find and enter the Young People's program at Strasberg.

But it wasn't only the family. She also credits the Strasberg Institute for helping her become the actor she is today — allowing her to change and grow as a person and develop her talents. *Attack of the Yuppie Aliens* [her first performance at Strasberg] was cornball humor. "Since then, I have been recognized for cornball humor, so that was a very fatelul play." Ubach's humor is ever present in all she does (including this interview — she had me laughing the whole time), including the role of Serena in both *Legally Blonde* films. The character, according to Ubach, is a mixture of every girl who won the Miss Downey pageant, every valley girl she's ever met, a cheerleader and a person who is extremely organized.

Taking all those demeanors into account and going through a variety of emotions allowed Ubach to perfect her character's humorous and serious sides. Ubach herself is also in perfect balance with her serious side, allowing her to continue her journey through acting and work with almost all of Hollywood. "I was watching TV the other night, and I don't really watch a lot of TV, but a girlfriend of mine was like for god's sake, take off your shoes and let's watch TV for a while. It was pretty amazing — I had basically worked with almost every person on TV we saw. I thought that was really weird, funny and phenomenal. But when you've been hanging around the same town as long as I have, it's like you become Wayne Newton. You start working with Celine Dion, and you don't even realize you're

doing it. You're like, "How the hell am I working with Celine Dion?" You work so much that sooner or later, they all come around — it's pretty amazing."

She's also had the opportunity to work with other Hollywood-ites behind the scenes. *A Mi Amor Mi Dulce*, an independent comedy, not only stars Ubach, but was also written and directed by her. Another script written by Ubach, which is in the process of being "shopped around," is a '50s-rompstyle movie similar to a John Waters flick.

"We're searching for names right now, but it's probably going to take them [actors] 500 years to read things. Actors don't read scripts, it's amazing. We should get Cliff Notes for scripts. I was thinking about doing that, having a Cliff Note version of what I've written."

Even with all the films, television programs and theater productions she's done, she still leaves time in her currently hectic schedule to provide the voice for the new children's cartoon *Ozzy and Drix* (inspired by the movie *Osmosis Jones*). Mayor Paul Spryman is played by Ubach. "I've been doing this every Thursday for about a year. I play the mayor of a town inside a little boy." But other than being a talented actress as well as an accomplished writer and director, Ubach is just like any other woman.

Now for some fun facts about this talented thespian.

She has a boyfriend named Andrew, whom she says is extremely supportive of any task she takes on. "I tell him I want to do a movie about picking my nose and he says "Oh, that's wonderful."

Ubach was a self-proclaimed "Cliff Notes whore" in high school (and hence the idea of developing Cliff Notes for scripts). She loves to sing and play a couple of songs on the guitar, specifically "Guantanamera" and "Tears for Fears".

When Ubach took a trip to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, she got drunk and ended up getting a tattoo. But she says she was too much of a "wimp" to withstand the whole thing, so it ended up being only half of a heart. She loves to relax with friends, read a good book or a script and spend quality time with family. Ubach can't live without her Neutrogena No Tangle Spray because she has so much hair. How much, you ask? Well, her nickname was Little Chu when she was younger because she looked like a little Chewbacca.

But most importantly, she's realized life has its ups and downs. "In this business, there needs to be a lot of acceptance, acceptance of the fact that there may be a dry period."

She's used those "dry periods" to their full advantage, to better herself all around and set new goals, which, no doubt, she will accomplish. **Zrk**

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a lot o' alanna

Is this *Legally Blonde 2* costar's next project a movie about picking her nose?

By Jessica McNell