

# Cover girl: Rolanda Marias

Where did you go to school and where did you study? Tell us a bit about your childhood.

I spent the greater part of my childhood and adolescent years in the beautiful little Boland town, Wellington. My father is a minister and an artist, and my mother a speech therapist and audiologist. There were no cinemas or places to “hang out” like shopping malls etc. so my friends and I spent our time at each others’ houses, listening to music, writing plays and practising art. My father also regularly took me to the theatre, and this is where my love for the stage was born. After Matric, I went to UCT where I acquired my honours in Afrikaans and Dutch, as well as a degree in Drama. I am the oldest of three siblings. My sister, Rentia, is a doctor, and my brother, James, is working as an engineer in London. We are so different, yet at the same time we share the most wonderful memories of our childhood and there is a strong bond between us.

What is important to you in your life?

To me, the most important thing in my life is my relationships with people. My relationship with my family and friends, whom I so dearly love, gives colour to my daily life. I am very aware of the impact of one’s actions on others, and that what one puts in, one will get out. I cannot imagine my life without my friends and my parents and brother and sister. I feel truly honoured that they love and care for me so much despite my sometimes different views on life. They are absolute gifts. Each one is unique and has taught me something about life and myself. These people are my foundation, my rock. They make me feel safe and give me the self-confidence to live with my feet firmly grounded, yet with my head quite often in the clouds.

What do you enjoy most?

What I enjoy most is spending time with my friends and family. Decembers at the beach house with my family is the pinnacle of happiness. Early morning, when I smell the aroma of coffee, I jump out of bed like an excited child and take a walk to the ocean with my parents; cup of coffee in hand and dogs at our heels. We then sit on the rocks and watch the ocean, drinking our coffee and watching the dogs bark at the waves. Two of my best friends, Frankie and Louis, live in the Cape and I miss them so much that I regularly fly down to get my Frankie-Louis fix. They are so silly and make me laugh and forget about all the troubles of the world. We can spend endless days together, making delicious food, drinking exquisite wines and talking, talking, talking. I am also fond of spending time at my own place with my two cats, on the couch in the late afternoon sun with a good book.

What frustrates you most?

What frustrates me most is unfairness. People who think they are better than others because of class, race or status. A person is a person is a person. We all feel the same sadness and joy regardless of our status or race or anything else. What I also find frustrating, is people who have no insight into themselves and constantly try to break down and bully others so that they can feel better about themselves. It is actually so ironic and sad.

Who do you admire and why?

I admire my parents for the incredible love, patience and time that they have for all people. I also admire them for their love and respect for each other, and the example that they set for me of what a healthy, loving, happy relationship should be like. I admire all my friends, because each of them as a quality which I strive towards and look up to. I admire people who, despite their circumstances, rise above the rest and make a success of themselves. I admire any person who is brave enough to become a parent and who can act utterly unselfishly.

Which characteristics do you find special in a man?

A good sense of humour is definitely very important. If you are going through a difficult time, it is really helpful if you can see the humour in the situation. A man with a positive outlook on life, who can be silly, but also serious about the important things. A man who has a passion for life, good music, friends, and great food! A man who is sensitive, who loves animals, who has compassion. A man who is open-minded, but still has a firm set of beliefs. A man who has a healthy self-image and who knows how to treat a woman with respect. A man whose soul you can see through his eyes.

What do you think makes a marriage succeed?

I think communication is very important. If you do not tell your life partner how you feel, they will never really know, and that can only lead to unnecessary misunderstandings. When I look at my parents, I see that it is very important to be best friends and to have an incredible amount of respect for each other. It is also extremely important to tell your partner that you love them. Even if they know it, it is wonderful to get that affirmation. We are all only human and want to feel and hear that we are still important to the other person. A successful marriage relies on loving unconditionally.

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