

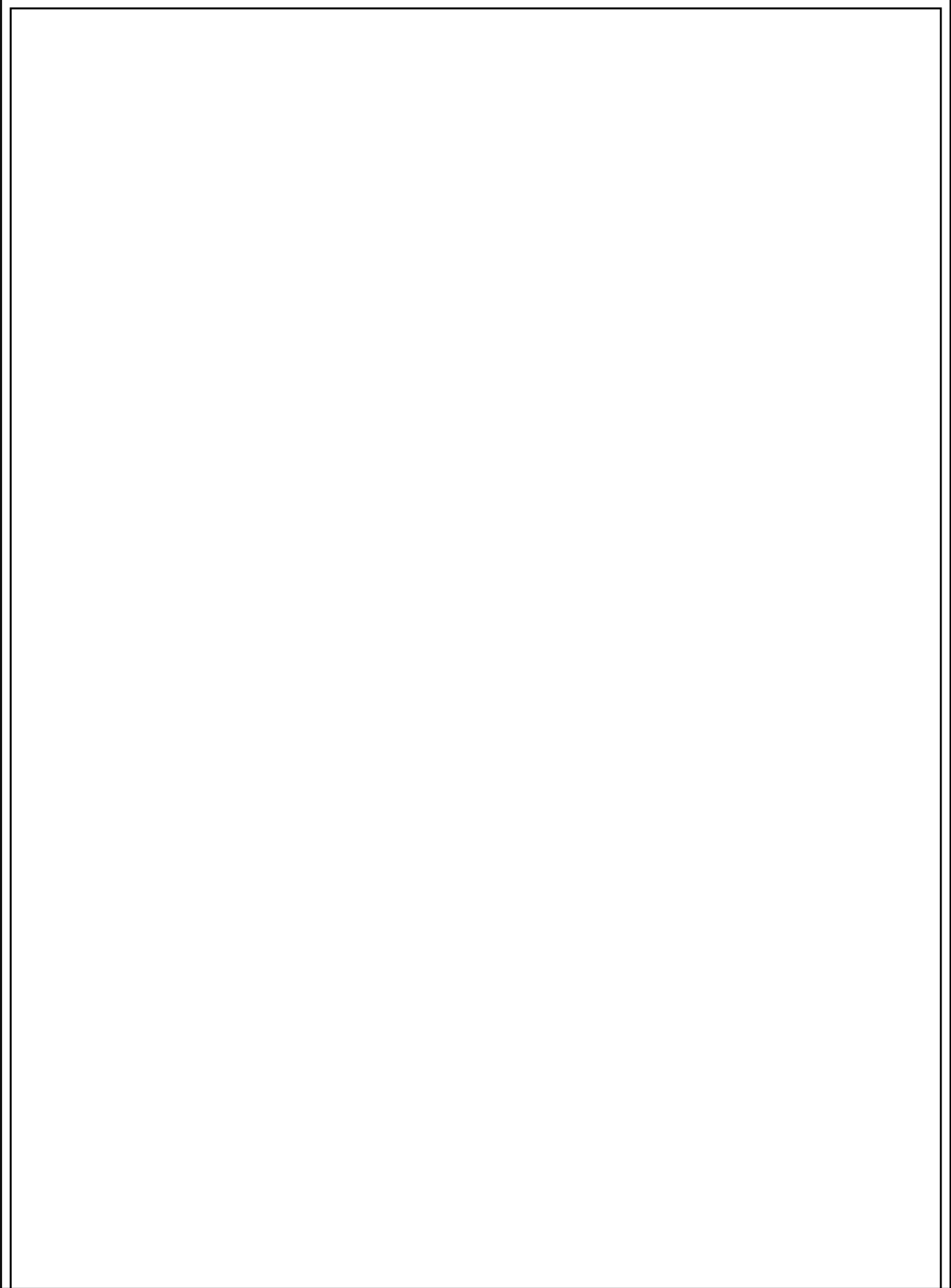
Interview: Melina Kanakaredes at Chicago Gabby Awards on ‘CSI: NY’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 1, 2009 - 2:05pm

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CHICAGO – The Greek actress with the hard-to-pronounce name (kan-uh-kuh-REE-deez), was a presenter in Chicago at the Gabby Awards, honoring Greek Americans, between seasons portraying a forensics expert on her hit TV show, “CSI: NY”.

Melina K. first made a splash as Dr. Sydney Hansen on the TV series, “Providence” and has supplemented her career with stage work, including a turn on Broadway as Sally Bowles in “Cabaret.”





Melina Kanakaredes at the Gabby Awards, Chicago, June 19, 2009

Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

HollywoodChicago.com caught up with wondrously upbeat Ms. K. after the Gabby awards, where she talked about a variety of subjects including life as an actress, and writing for CSI.

HollywoodChicago.com: You have now played the two most popular professions in television drama – the doctor and the cop. How fairly do you think these two professions are portrayed within the dramatic limits of television?

Melina Kanakaredes: I call it entertainment. Can a crime be solved in 43 minutes? Absolutely not. Can you stick your finger into a girl's heart and she lives? I don't think so.

That being said, when a woman plays the role of a forensic detective and that year the enrollment for young women in the sciences and forensics goes up over fifty percent, then I know I've done something really cool.

HC: You've taken on the iconic role of Sally Bowles in the stage version of Cabaret. How do you relate as a person to the struggles of that character?

MK: I think we all have the ability to lose track. But dreams are still important, because if you stop dreaming and stop trying to achieve something, then you lose. And I think Sally was the biggest dreamer ever.

And I loved the interpretation that came out in the latest staging of the play. It wasn't the top hat style, it wasn't all fabulous and nor was Sally's life. Her desires, her struggles, her need to escape...all worked for me.



Melina K. Posing Appropriately Before a Greek-style Column at the Gabby Awards,
Chicago, June 19, 2009

Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

HC: What are your three favorite monikers that show business professionals have tried to convince you to change your name to?

MK: My ultimate favorite was Lina Kane (laughs). Then there were the variations like Melina Lynne, which sounded like a country singer, and Melina Karedes, which still sounded Greek, but I still said no.

HC: Your pride in your Greek heritage is manifested in both your professional and philanthropic work. What does that heritage do for you to give strength and balance in your hectic life?

MK: I think a foundation of family is what is most important. I was born in a family that came from Greece and the history is so amazingly rich. And although we all take credit for that history and it's been thousands and thousands of years, it is an inspiring thing no matter what you do in life. Not only are your parents there for you, but your cousins, brothers, sisters, neighbors that become aunts and uncles...it's insane the support.

You can go off and do anything you desire, and you can fall, but there is always twenty hands to catch you. In my life, there is also twenty legs to kick me in the butt if I become all high and mighty (laughs). It's a grounding force of love.

HC: How do the production team, writing staff and actors strive to keep the 'CSI: NY' franchise fresh?

MK: Well, for example, giving an actor the opportunity to write an episode is pretty amazing and I got that opportunity last season. It was the 24th show of the 5th season and for me it provided a fresh perspective.

Although I've been doing the show as an actor and have directed before, writing was an incredibly new experience. And it gave me the chance to put in a little Greek flair, I put in a weapon buried in Alexander the Great's hidden tomb.

The freshness is when all the talent in the room thinks outside the box and I was a beneficiary of the executive producer doing so.

HC: What type of film character would be a dream role for you? What type of characterization have you not been considered for that you would like to try?

MK: My dream role right now is a comedy. I am the biggest klutz known to man. I think I'm funny, and I love comedy – I was a musical theater girl, musical comedy and have done physical comedy. I would love to do something in that arena.

The sixth season of 'CSI: NY' starring Melina Kanakaredes, Gary Sinise, Carmine Giovinazzo, Hill Harper and Eddie Cahill will premiere in Fall, 2009.



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