

USMAN SHARIF

“On a JOURNEY To The TOP ... Enjoying Every Moment Along The Way!”

Actor, Producer, Entrepreneur, Community Leader and Mentor – Mr. Usman Sharif is truly a force to be reckoned with. As a rising talent in the global entertainment industry, the depth of Usman’s passion for the big screen radiates from his stellar performances in a number of feature films, television series, commercials – and from his critically acclaimed masterworks as an award-winning producer. As an entrepreneur for more than two decades, Mr. Sharif has enjoyed the fruits of several successful business ventures, and in turn has shared his prosperity through philanthropy and mentorship in his hometown of Newark, New Jersey.

Raised in a loving, tight-knit family, Usman along with his two sisters and three brothers developed their upstanding character and firm moral fiber from their nurturing parents. Although his parents divorced when he was eight years old, Usman’s father remained a strong presence in the lives of his children. Usman credits his father for instilling in him a strong sense of faith and a fervent entrepreneurial spirit. Usman’s mother, a math Professor - who nurtured, cultivated and encouraged the development of her children’s intellects; fostered within Usman the desire to acquire knowledge. And thus, the combined entrepreneurial and educational seeds that were planted by Usman’s parents led him to pursue and eventually earn an Associate’s Degree in Business Administration from Essex County College in 1994. Usman then attended Kean University and majored in Business Management. Over the next 20 years, Mr. Sharif launched and continues to lead a number of thriving businesses, including: Two Rita’s Water Ice Franchise Stores (Owner), a construction company, a real estate investment firm and a property management company. In addition, Usman is also part owner of **Top Actor South Africa**, which is a successful reality television show that features aspiring actors competing for stardom. **Top Actor, South Africa** is currently in its second season and is produced by and airing on Viacom’s BET International.

Although a businessman at heart, Usman possessed a deep longing to endeavor into the world of acting. In 2002, his desire to entertain the masses was confirmed one evening while watching a film; he realized that he belonged on screen, instead of in the audience. Thus, in 2003 he began his journey to pursue a professional career in entertainment. First, he partnered with a friend to produce **A Pillar of Salt, The Angry Woman Syndrome** - a documentary that portrays the everyday struggles of women. Usman’s first production was well received by the film festival circuit and earned considerable accolades including, **The Audience Award** at The **New York International Film Festival**. Following this, Usman joined the acting class of the highly esteemed acting trainer and coach, Tracey Moore. Ms. Moore introduced Usman to her husband, director Maurice Marable, who cast Usman for his first professional acting role in a commercial for HBO’s **Real Time with Bill Maher**. Eventually Usman relocated to Los Angeles to continue in his quest to position himself as a shining star.

Over the course of the next decade, Usman received pivotal supporting roles in numerous prestigious films and television series. In ***Three Can Play That Game*** (2007), directed by Samad Davis, Usman plays the role of Andy. In Spike Lee's World War Two epic, ***Miracle at St. Anna*** (2008), he appears as Radio Man Hughes alongside Derek Luke, Michael Ealy, Laz Alonzo, Omar Benson, and Walton Goggins. In 2009, Usman gives notable performances in both George Tillman Jr.'s ***Notorious***, which chronicles the life of the well-know rap artist, The Notorious B.I.G.; and in the Sundance Film Festival's production of ***Hugs***. In Michael Pinckney's, ***You're Nobody 'Til Somebody Kills You*** (2012), Usman appears as TV Host # One. In the starring role as Nathan in William Pemberton's ***Criminal Behavior*** (2013), Usman moves audiences in this feature film that profoundly addresses the issue of reconciling one's past in order to continue the journey to one's future. His guest appearances on television series include ***Tyler Perry's House of Payne*** and ***The Wire***. Presently, Usman stars as Billy Rae Michaels in the long awaited feature film ***Clipped Wings They Do Fly*** (2014); that brings awareness to the plight of individuals (and their families) who suffer from various forms of mental illnesses. ***Clipped Wings They Do Fly*** is currently a part of the 2015 Manhattan Film Festival and the 41st Newark Black Film Festival. We can also anticipate Usman's guest appearance on BET's hit series ***Being Mary Jane*** during the fall of 2015.

As he is certainly no stranger to the roles of Executive Producer and Producer, Usman executive produced the award winning documentary ***A Pillar of Salt, The Angry Woman Syndrome*** (2003), and the award and contest winning short film ***Glimpse*** (2007). To Usman's acknowledgement, ***Glimpse*** served as a prelude to the award winning feature film ***Mooz-Lum*** (2010), starring Nia Long, Evan Ross, Danny Glover, Dorian Missick and Roger Guenivire Smith. Usman both produced and had principle roles in: the documentary ***Minds of Men***, and two feature films ***Criminal Behavior*** (2013) and ***Living With No Regret*** (2013). In 2012 Usman was also co-executive producer of a new reality television show entitled ***The Spirited Actor - Africa's Next Big Hollywood Star***. Presently, Usman is yet again on the move – adding the highly anticipated feature film, ***The Other Side***, to his list of executive producer and producer credits. Scheduled to debut in Spring 2016, ***The Other Side*** is a thought-provoking, romantic comedy starring Roger Guenivire Smith, Erica Hubbard, Brad James and Miguel Nunez.

In his personal time, Usman enjoys weight training, boxing, football, basketball, softball, Tae Kwon Do (a third degree black belt), motorcycling, and spending as much time with his family as possible.

As you can see and as Usman is quick to tell you, "If you want to watch this young man's meteoric rise to the top – DON'T BLINK & STAY TUNED!"