

BIOGRAPHY

Yasmeen E. Stewart the daughter of Alexander Wipf, an OBIE award winning actor and Dr. Margot Stewart, Yasmeen Stewart was born on Manhattan's Upper East Side in New York, USA.

With acting in her blood, it is no surprise that Yasmeen was first in front of the camera at just two weeks old. Her childhood was much like any other child however, she had a strong interest in the arts. She began acting as a child and attended the Mannes School of Music in New York to study opera and music theory.

When she was just 15 she uprooted her life to follow her passion to learn about distant and different cultures but specifically the Bedouin people. Her first stop was Egypt. She had intended on going to Mecca in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia but her visa was rejected. She came up with the idea to sneak into Saudi Arabia by camel via Abu Dhabi. Thankfully these plans were curtailed by the American Embassy on her arrival in the newly formed United Arab Emirates.

"Everyone kept telling me to leave when I came to Abu Dhabi. It was the height of the Iran and Iraq war, the American kidnappings in Lebanon were in full swing, [Abu Nidal](#) was terrorizing the world and all the Americans were gone or leaving. I arrived on an Al Alia 747 in Jordan in route to Abu Dhabi, that was empty except for me and an old Bedouin woman." says Yasmeen.

In 1989, she started The Secret, a boutique and trading company, which represented international apparel brands such as La Blanca, Victoria's Secret and Gottex located in the Abu Dhabi Hilton Hotel.

Several years passed since Yasmeen was in front of the camera, but in 1981 that all changed. She was selected to host a reality television program "Behind The Scenes" for Abu Dhabi Television. This show and others for the local Abu Dhabi English Channel became her stepping-stone to the international renowned CNN World Report. She was just 22 years when she became one of the CNN World Report's youngest correspondents ever. Simultaneously she became one of the first female directors at Abu Dhabi Television writing and directing her own stories.

"When I represented the CNN World Report for Abu Dhabi TV I found myself interviewing fascinating and influential people. I'll never forget the interview I did with Mikhail Gorbachev at one end of the scale and on the other, entertainment personalities like Tom Jones."

She explains that the CNN World Report was like 2-minute postcards to the world from a place that at that time that no one had ever even heard of; from a place that she loved with all her heart.



"I live my life with courage as there are worse thing in life than death, it is to have lived a life without any meaning to have passed away as though you had never been born at all "



YASMEEN E. STEWART

Middle East Foreign Correspondent
Founder The Image Maker
& Zayed Peace Foundation

"People really reacted in the United States to the CNN World Report coverage because it was so new for them. I was a blonde, blue-eyed American girl and amongst the local UAE backdrop of nationals and a modern sprawling metropolis emerging out of the deserts, it shocked our viewers, into realizing that their misconception of this region may just be that. It was wondrous to be the person who could showcase all of this development and insights into the incredible people of the region in times when people had never even heard of Abu Dhabi."

After 2 years, Yasmeen was enrolled in CNN's International Professional Program, which involved relocating to Atlanta in the US for several months.

"During this time I was amazed at the inner workings of CNN. CNN employs world-class methods of directing, writing and producing and I was lucky to have that experience." she recalls.

Yasmeen returned to Abu Dhabi with a strong desire to achieve a personal goal of dispelling the misconceptions of the Middle East and the Arab people through media.

"When I went home to the U.S. I realized that the international community only saw the negatives of the Middle East. This is when my personal goal was born."

"It's a heavy culture; because it's pre-Neolithic, the Bedouin culture dates back more than 15,000 years. I call it a human anthropological-archaeological dig and there is so much depth and so much to learn from these people, this is the world's history and it is an opportunity to learn our global history, that dwindles each year with modernization of the region."

In 2007, following the suggestion of Sheikh Maktoum Bin Hasher Al Maktoum (The founder of AIGP) her mentor at the time, and with just AED 5,000 to her name she founded The Image Maker.

"Obviously with only AED 5,000 I couldn't afford a trade license, so it was thanks to the support of a friend that I managed to incubate The Image Maker and get my business launched."

Yasmeen focused her passion, dedication and influence through her fast growing network of contacts on projects and initiatives that would create a productive and positive reflection of the region and its people.

Business development was at the core of The Image Maker, supplemented by advertising, branding, multimedia and design.

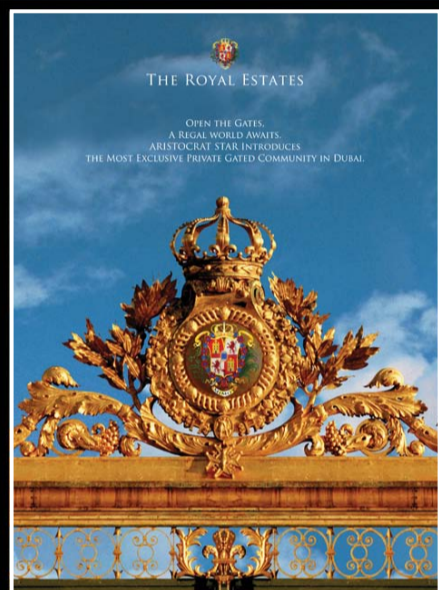
"Our aim is developing economic stimulation for governments through IT platforms created specifically for their market. We can take an embryonic idea and turn it into an enormous project."

The Image Maker secured clients such as the UAE Presidential Department and Ras Al Khaimah Government among others.

"One of our first projects was the United Nations IOM Assistance Mission for Iraq. Our role was to distribute and publicize their nationwide election coverage in the UAE."

The Image Maker has played an influential role in developing brands in the region including Discovery Channel, Du, The Royal Estates, Teen Kids News, Bin Jaber Group, Brochet Hall, Palmerston and many others.

"We are now looking to expand our operation and are seeking international partners. My vision is to open offices in Hong Kong, London and Saudi Arabia. We opened The American Image Maker in 2009 in Manhattan and have the vision to promote American companies worldwide."



CURRENT PROJECTS

EmiratesRevealed.com is part of a global trilogy comprising online (web portal), publishing (book) and television.

"Emirates Revealed is the platform I've chosen to achieve my personal goal of dispelling misconceptions. We will present the UAE in its most perfected form through imagery, both photography and film."

Yasmeen explains the next step will be the launch of TheEmirates.com which will see the integration of a more corporate dimension to the EmiratesRevealed.com model.

"TheEmirates.com will see the involvement of different business sectors such as the property market, being able to upload their images to our online portal for global recognition, access and awareness."

Yasmeen has recently founded Zayed Peace Foundation in honour of the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

"The foundation will be dedicated to finding solutions for global peace. It will be located in Abu Dhabi on its own island and will feature the region's first Middle East Peace University – an educational platform for world leaders, as opposed to undergraduates. The project will also feature a global charity business network through sustainable commercial enterprises. It's extremely exciting and the first of it's kind."

"Angel food just one of the division of Zayed Peace, aims to start the first Fast Food Chain with nutritious delicious fast food aimed at feeding the Starving around the world. (40,000 children die each day of starvation) By 2012 we could have as many as 200 sponsored Angel Food outlets that give all profits to the initiative. Our aim is to eradicate world hunger and end starvation permanently with the proceeds of Angel Food. We believe we can do that once we reach our goal of 30,000 chains world wide"

American born perhaps, but Yasmeen Stewart considers herself a citizen of the world, calls the UAE her home and resides in cosmopolitan Dubai.

