

## Toks Olagundoye on 'The Neighbors'

Born in Lagos, Toks Olagundoye was raised not only in Nigeria but also in Switzerland and England. The exotic Nigerian-Norwegian beauty moved to the United States to attend Smith College where she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts.

After jumpstarting her career in New York, the stunningly-attractive actress relocated to Los Angeles where within a short time she landed roles on such TV series as "NCIS," "Prime Suspect," "Switched at Birth," "CSI: NY," "Law & Order" and "Ugly Betty," to name a few. She currently stars in ABC's new hit comedy "The Neighbors" (which airs on Wednesdays at 8:30pm ET/PT), playing "Jackie Joyner-Kersey," an alien from the planet Zabvron who has taken on human form to live in a gated community in New Jersey.

Toks' character is married to the community's Supreme Leader and serves as the Zabvronian equivalent of the First Lady. "Jackie" is baffled by Earth's strange customs but is more open than her stubborn husband who refuses to adapt.

In addition to acting, Toks enjoys writing and producing films for the web and is the founder of Unlimited Ceiling (<http://www.youtube.com/user/UnlimitedCeiling>) for which she's created web series like "Callbacks" and "AlphaSeries." In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, horseback riding, Pilates, archery



### CELEBRITY INTERVIEW

by Kam Williams

and going to the gun range. Toks' secret talent is doing all sorts of accents from around the world.

Here, she talks about her life, career and work on The Neighbors.

**Kam Williams:** Hi, Toks, thanks for the interview.

**Toks Olagundoye:** Absolutely my pleasure! Thank YOU for the interview!

... above all, tolerance and understanding are essential for growth and happiness.

**KW:** What interested you in The Neighbors?

**TO:** Well, honestly, I love being an actor and a job is a job, and I'm always happy to have a job. So, initially, I would say: employment. But I am also a sci-fi lover and have been itching to be on a sitcom forever. So, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to audition

and I really went for it!

**KW:** Tell me a little about the show's wacky premise?

**TO:** Sure, a community of aliens set up a colony of sorts on Earth in a New Jersey golfing community, taking on the guise of human form, and they do their best to fit in and not attract attention. Of course, they fail spectacularly. One of the alien couples in the community gets tired of waiting around to hear from their home planet and they vacate their house leaving it open for a nice, human Jersey family of five to purchase and move into. Let the hysterical comedy of errors ensue!

**KW:** How would you describe your character, Jackie?

**TO:** Quirky, cute, loving, kind, curious, proper, diligent, patient, inquisitive, genuine, lovely, tall, green blooded... Okay, now I'm just throwing words at you. I shall cease and desist.

**KW:** So, you play an alien queen who's impersonating U.S. Olympian Jackie Joyner-Kersey. Which is more challenging, playing an alien or impersonating Jackie?

**TO:** Well, neither, because neither is the case. Jackie is the wife of the Zabvronian supreme commander, so she is more of a matriarch than a queen. And the aliens are not impersonating the athletes they have named themselves after. They have taken on these names in the hope of becoming a part of the elite. In their minds, choosing the names of accomplished sports figures



Toks Olagundoye

will help them fit in and excel. They don't realize it actually makes them all stick out like a box of sore thumbs. Yes, I realize that is not an official adage. Hey, it is now!

**KW:** Does the show have a message?

**TO:** In my humble opinion, as a foreigner, it does. And the message is this: the only way to come to a full acceptance and understanding of yourself is to embrace your own culture, quirks and dif-

ferences while learning about those around you and exploring, incorporating and embracing their cultures, differences, quirks, etcetera. Okay, that's a lot of words. Basically, we are all different and we all have something to learn and it doesn't mean people need to change who you are but one should be open to new things and, above all, tolerance and understanding are essential for

See TOKS on page 12

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