

Helen Marketti's Music Corner



By Helen R. Marketti



Alison Arngrim

She is most remembered as the mean-spirited brat Nellie Oleson on the TV show, Little House on the Prairie. Alison Arngrim is involved with many projects and has gotten creative in the midst of the pandemic to keep working and keep fans interested.



"I grew up in a show biz family so we knew everybody. My mom did the voice for Casper, The Friendly Ghost and my dad managed famous piano player, Liberace. I remember when I was eight years old, we rented a house in Hollywood Hills to live closer to Liberace in case he needed anything. So naturally, I grew up thinking that this was a normal way to live and that everyone was in show business," recalls Alison. "I always enjoyed watching characters on TV and in movies that were villains. I adored Vincent Price! I thought Captain Hook was a genius in Peter Pan. (laughs) I thought villain characters were cool."



Playing the role of Nellie Oleson was not always easy and fun for Alison. "I actually had more trouble with adults than my peers," she said. "I remember adults saying that I must behave that way for real which wasn't true. I was actually shy but played a role that made people afraid of me. I remember being in a Christmas parade and someone threw a cup of orange soda at my face. Thank God it wasn't a beer bottle. People threw stuff at me all the time. They would become incensed at the sight of me."

Little House on the Prairie reruns are still being shown all over the world. "It's unbelievable that it still draws fans. I think its because the show dealt with real problems. Viewers could relate to the story lines. We didn't live in a mansion and have servants," said Alison. "Michael Landon was a fantastic human being. He was actually very funny in addition to being gorgeous, being a great actor and writer. Many crew members on "Little House" worked with him on Bonanza so they followed him when he started "Little House" because they loved working with him."



Alison has many irons in the fire at once. She sometimes finds it hard to keep up with herself. "I love all of the projects I am involved with but I get tired sometimes. Every day at 1:30 pm (PST) I go on Facebook Live and read to fans. At first, I was reading "Little House" books and now I am reading The Wizard of Oz. We have had to get creative during this pandemic. Tuesdays at 5:00 pm (PST) I do the Alison Arngrim Show on internet radio which is accessible through my Facebook page. I conduct celebrity interviews via zoom. I always open the show with what makes you feel good."

"More than half of what I do has moved over to the internet. I am busier now that before the pandemic. Everything is done from my living room. It does feel like we are living in an apocalyptic science fiction movie. It feels surreal. The Facebook Live events have helped me stay grounded. I find it relaxing and the fans do, too. We are all trying to make due and survive," explains Alison.

Alison's husband, Bob is from the Akron area. Through him she is now a faithful fan of Ghouardi. "I follow the Ghouardi fan page. I have been to Cleveland for the Ghouardi Fest. I love it. I have also been to the Rock Hall. Cleveland is great. I love Big Chuck and Little John! The Ghouardi Fest is usually in the fall of the year, if it's possible that it will take place this year and safe to do so, I hope to return."

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