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EMMA ROBERTS

THE ACTOR
MAKES THE
GRADE ON SET
AND OFF

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Star Turn

Hollywood is just one slice of life for actor **Emma Roberts**

By **Melanie D.G. Kaplan**
WebMD Contributing Writer

When Emma Roberts won the role of a bratty pop star in *Celeste and Jesse Forever* (opening in August), she was thrilled. Of course she was delighted to be playing opposite Rashida Jones, known for her roles in NBC's *Parks and Recreation* and *The Office*. But Roberts was also pretty excited about playing dress-up.

"This character is the combination of every pop star we could think of, so my makeup, hair, and wardrobe were so much fun," Roberts says. "I wore a rainbow faux fur vest and super-long blonde extensions. That's why I wanted the part so bad. Because I knew I'd never be able to be like this in real life!"

In real life, the 21-year-old actor habitually hits snooze on her alarm clock, oversleeps and rushes out of her Los Angeles apartment in the least time-consuming outfit possible. Today she's wearing polka-dot jeans, a T-shirt, and flip-flops (she's about to get a pedicure). But when she's on the red carpet, she's all girl. "I try to wear dresses," she says. "I feel like it's such a fairy tale."

It may seem that Roberts' life has been one big fairy tale. Her very first audition yielded the role of Johnny Depp and Penelope Cruz's daughter in *Blow*, she became a tween star as Addie Singer in Nickelodeon's *Unfabulous*, and she has polished her acting skills in a number of films, both independent (*Lymelife*) and blockbuster (*Hotel for Dogs*). This summer, she's been shooting Dito Montiel's heist drama, *Empire State*. Last but not least, she is the niece of actor Julia Roberts and daughter of actor Eric Roberts.

Growing up, Roberts visited Aunt Julia on shoots and, she says, was so dazzled by the behind-the-scenes magic that her parents had to drag her away at night. Even now, she says, she cherishes every moment on the set, where she is endlessly inspired by experienced actors and directors. After working with Jones, who not only starred as Celeste but also wrote the script for the new film, Roberts started thinking about writing and producing. Earlier this year while shooting the comedy *Adult World*, in which she co-stars with John Cusack, she got to know director Scott Coffey really well and is now eager to do more comedy—maybe something of *Bridesmaids*' ilk, she says. And her onetime dream of starting a girl band was reignited when she got to sing in her *Celeste and Jesse Forever* pop star role. "The acting part is fun," she says, "but there's so much more to explore."

Meanwhile, Roberts is exploring her own adult world—maintaining an apartment, keeping her room clean without being asked, and staying fit with yoga and SoulCycle, an intense indoor cycling workout. Although she decided to take a break from school

after attending Sarah Lawrence College last fall, she says she constantly reads on the set to help pass time.

On the side, she models for Neutrogena, joking that being a face model is perfect since she's only 5 feet 2 inches tall. She is the spokesperson for the company's annual Wave for Change campaign, which helps teens give back to their communities; the money raised goes to educational charities. And Roberts herself gives back: In early 2006, she helped build houses for families who lost theirs in Hurricane Katrina and has been involved with the Lollipop Kids Foundation, which supports children with disabilities and their families.

Even as she keeps busy with the Hollywood juggle, Roberts' connection with her family remains strong. "When I'm on location, I have my mom come stay with me because I get so lonely," she says. "I tell her I need her to drive me around—I'm not a very good driver."

Roberts is especially close to her 11-year-old half sister, Grace. "She visits me, or I steal her from my mom, and we go shopping," she says. "She's hilarious, and she's totally herself. She's the coolest person ever." Roberts takes pride in being a role model for Grace—and for other young girls. "I see how impressionable they are, and I want to provide a good example," she says. "But I also think it's important to still be yourself—and have your own life." ■

EMMA'S FAVORITE THINGS

- 1 Authors:** Joan Didion, Chuck Palahniuk
- 2 Comfort food:** toasted sourdough bread with butter
- 3 Dream:** an all-girl band with her friends
- 4 Exercise:** SoulCycle and yoga

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FROM LEFT: RW PHOTO AND FILM/CORBIS OUTLINE; NAOMI KALTMAN/CORBIS OUTLINE



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