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Behind the Scenes with Vivid Video**Savanna Samson on how she broke into the industry, the details of fine living, and what drives her to stay on top**

by Layla Revis

SH: How did you get started in the business?

Samson: Well, I started dancing at a young age and trained in classical ballet. When I moved to Manhattan, I started dancing at Scores. I was always very into the theater and had done some small acting roles here and there. At Scores, I was surrounded by people with open minds. I started to realize that my fantasies were okay so I contemplated the idea of actually living them out.

It was my husband's idea for me to first make a movie and at first I was appalled by the idea. Then, on a whim, I wrote to Rocco Siffredi. I fantasized about going to Europe and getting the fantasy out of the way. I never thought he'd actually write back. Three months later, he called me while I was on my way to Miami. Instead of getting the fantasy out of the way, I guess you could say I got porn fever.

SH: Why did you choose the name Savanna?

Samson: Actually, it was the name of Nick Nolte's sister in The Prince of Tides. I would have gone by my real name, but when I started at Scores there was another dancer by my name so I changed it.

SH: Where did you grow up?**Samson:** I grew up in Watertown, NY. All the way upstate near Canada.**SH:** How is your relationship with your family?

Samson: I'll be honest. My parents are very hurt and embarrassed by my choices. What gives me pause is the pain that I caused them. Otherwise, I'm very happy with the choices that I've made. How can you be upset when your daughter is happy and making a great living for herself? I also feel very healthy sexually. I invited them to come to my new home this Labor Day and I don't think they're going to come, but I keep trying. I went to my grandmother's 80th Birthday party and she was surprised to see my face.



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I'm still Catholic, but I think the worst thing that can happen to a young girl is when parents don't have an open dialogue. I used to feel like such a slut because I couldn't talk about my sexual feelings. We just didn't talk about anything like that. Now, I am "a slut" and I don't feel like one! When you're younger you're going to be in situations where someone wants to have sex with you and the choices they make reflects how their parents were able to relate what sexuality means.

SH: How did you tell them what you do for a living?

Samson: I didn't. My cousins found out when I was on Howard Stern and then Entertainment Tonight actually did a very good piece on people who might be stereotyped by their careers, but would surprise you. I was featured for living, what most would be surprised to find as, "a normal life." A few members of my family ended up seeing the show and decided that they needed to tell my parents. They weren't too happy about it. Believe it or not, my husband's family is actually very supportive of me, mine not so much.

SH: So I take it none of your family is in the business.

Samson: No, but I have four sisters and one of them actually started dancing at Scores before I did. She was the one who suggested I try it. She's not dancing anymore and she's married to a doctor. She's got a family now and she's "Miss Fitness."

SH: How did you meet your husband?

Samson: I met my husband at Scores. He was there with his girlfriend. I was really good with couples so the manager called me over. Later, he [my future husband] asked me to leave with him and his girlfriend, but it's strictly forbidden to leave with people from the club. He and his girlfriend, who turned out to be more of a lesbian, were basically trying to get me to join them. Because I couldn't leave with them, he invited me to dinner later in the week. They were very smooth. It was a huge group of people. His daughter was there, his business partner, and all of these people, including his girlfriend. I ended up leaving with the girlfriend. It was a wild, crazy, wonderful time. I ended up spending more time with them, fell in love with my husband, and we married.

SH: What happened to the girlfriend?

Samson: She wasn't too happy about it!

SH: What was the real turning point?

Samson: When I went to Barbuda with him, things really changed. That same night, the moon was huge and it set in the sky far past the water, the wind was blowing and everything in my life felt so right. I'd had a lot of guilt about all of it before. A good Catholic girl getting into porn. I was going through changes with my sexuality during that time. Or maybe I knew he would be my husband. Either way, I realized that it was a very powerful time for me and I was happy.

SH: Do the parents in your son's classes know what you do for a living?

Samson: He's not in school yet and they'll probably know because I have a big mouth! It's amazing how people change when they find out what you do. They really open up and tell me stuff like, "I watched a porn movie last night" or "My husband comes to fast." It's hilarious. Women, surprisingly, can be

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really great about it.

SH: What kind of men do you like?

Samson: I don't have a type. I've never really had a type. I'm not so into looks. I'm so attracted to the mind and when someone can teach me or I can learn from them. That's exciting. I like culture and people who appreciate the finer things in life. I'm not talking about jewelry. I mean going to museums, having an eye for art and food. I like to learn. In the end, it's always about chemistry.

SH: What kind of women do you like?

Samson: I like pretty women. I like women that like women. I like all sorts. I look at their lips and their eyes. I love women.

SH: Do you have a preference?

Samson: I prefer men over women, but one of each at the same time is ideal!

SH: Is adding someone to the bedroom always a wise thing?

Samson: Well, when you're with someone in a relationship it isn't always wise to let the third person to get too close. It's hard to have a new exciting person added to the mix because it's hard not to get feelings, of any sort, involved. It's almost better for the situation to add another guy because they are usually not as jealous as women.

SH: Do you have a list of who you will and will not perform with?

Samson: With Vivid, I have my list of men. Sometimes I'll put someone on the list that I think is cute and then there's no chemistry. I've also had it where it's the other way around. Some girls have only about four guys on their list and others have more. Now when someone like ChiChi LaRue is directing, I trust him and the men he gets for me because he's got that gay eye. A lot of guys are really hot, but sometimes they can't act and Vivid won't use them. I'll usually say yes if I see a photo and hear good things about him, but I want it to be real. The only time I did a scene with a guy that I didn't like actually ended up working out because my character didn't like men!

SH: What are your favorite scenes?

Samson: One of my favorite scenes is in The Wedding with Dale DeBone. It was just so hot and sexy. In the Masseuse, I'd have to say the scene with Jenna and myself. I'm tied up with these beautiful purple ropes. It's a long scene so you won't get bored!

SH: Who are your favorite actors/actresses to work with?

Samson: Jean Paul Jean. He's this beautiful French guy. He looks like the

"I have a lot more faith in myself and belief in myself. I let so many opportunities go by as a young woman because I was afraid, not of failure, but of success. I'm using what I've done in this industry to go for what I want and achieve."

model in Botticelli's paintings so I pretend I'm in a Botticelli painting with him. I also love working with Sunrise Adams. The energy between us is great and we both really care about the scene being hot and genuine.

SH: What drives you in life?

Samson: Realistically, providing a better life for my family and a future for my son.

SH: How has the business shaped you as a person?

Samson: I have a lot more faith in myself and belief in myself. I let so many opportunities go by as a young woman because I was afraid, not of failure, but of success. I'm using what I've done in this industry to go for what I want and achieve.

SH: Your husband, a wine merchant, got you into enjoying fine wines. That said, what are your favorites?

Samson: Brunello di Montalcino Soltera and 1900 Chateau Margeaux. I also love the 1988 Dom Perignon Rose.

SH: I've read that you like opera. When and how did you get into it?

Samson: Probably from my ballet training. I loved the theater and when I moved to NY someone took me on a date to see opera. I cried the whole time I was so moved. I try to go to at least two a month during the season. Sometimes with my travel schedule it's difficult. I think some people can appreciate opera and then for others it's a part of their soul. It's tough to say what my favorite opera would be, but La Traviatta is up there.

SH: Where do you like to travel?

Samson: Italy, Tuscany in particular. I love Paris and the Caribbean. St. Maarten...

SH: What prompted you to write your book, How to Have an XXX Sex Life?

"[Sex] is a celebration of life and love."

Samson: We found that it was really interesting when all of us (Vivid Girls) got together. When we did Porno Valley, the reality show, they wanted us to get into a competitive vibe with one another, but then someone suggested, when they heard us all in the make-up room, that we should write a book about all of the things we'd learned about sex, what we liked, what we didn't like. It seemed like a perfect idea.

SH: What are your future plans?

Samson: Right now I'm in negotiations for my own talk show in Canada and the UK. I have so many things going on that some of them I can't talk about so in six months, you'll have to call me again!

SH: If you could say one thing about sex, what would it be?