

Cliff Simon Biography

Get To Know Cliff Simon

Actor, born September 7th, 1962 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Of Polish and Lithuanian decent, Cliff was the youngest of four children and only son of Emmanuelle and Phyllis Simon.

At a very young age, Cliff aspired to be the first South African swimmer to win an Olympic Gold medal. His mother, being a swim teacher, had him in the pool before he could walk and instilled all the confidence he ever needed to follow that path. At the age of 6, he showed talent as a gymnast. By age 15 Cliff had reached a national level in South Africa in both swimming and gymnastics, but to go further in either one, he needed to devote 100% of his time to just one, and he chose swimming.

At age 15, with all the turmoil in South Africa, his parents decided to immigrate to the United Kingdom. It was here that Cliff completed his schooling and was chosen to swim in the British International squad. He competed in Olympic trials and qualified for the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. He was offered scholarships to Houston University and Southern Methodist University in Texas, where he would train with the best United States swim team, the Mustangs. This would have culminated in him competing in the 1984 Olympic Games. However, after scraping ice off his car windshield at 5am every morning for three years before heading off to swimming training and spending six and a half hours a day in the pool, Cliff felt waterlogged, burnt out and that he was missing out on his social life as a young man. Half way through a training session Cliff climbed out of the pool, sat on the edge and told his coach that he was leaving and would be returning to sunny South Africa.

Back in South Africa Cliff entered the air force where he continued his swimming and achieved the highest athletic award given in the air force, the Victor Ludorum.

In 1982 after serving his two year term, Cliff took all he owned in one suitcase and headed down to the coast in an old Fiat convertible. He landed a job teaching windsurfing and waterskiing at a resort hotel. As fate would have it, a stage show was in production at the resort and Cliff was informed by one of the performers that the choreographer was looking for a gymnast. Cliff somehow knew that this was going to be the first step towards a career on stage. To cut a long story short, Cliff performed all over the world in various stage productions as a dancer/acrobat, culminating in his dream role as a performer at the world famous Moulin Rouge, Paris in 1989.

On his return to South Africa, Cliff pursued his stage career as an actor. Whilst studying drama, Cliff secured himself a modeling agent and enjoyed much success in ramp, print and television commercials. Cliff received major recognition as a model in South Africa and was asked to enter The Mr. South Africa talent and action man competition. On winning this competition in 1992, Cliff was offered an audition on a hugely successful television series, called Egoli ? Place of Gold. After guest starring on the show for three months, he was offered a permanent contract as a regular cast member in a lead role and would go on to become a household name for his six year run.

In 1997 he married his longtime girlfriend in a beautiful game lodge in Southern Africa. After being personally effected by the violent crime in Johannesburg, he decided it was now or never and he immigrated to the USA with the hope of having a better quality of life. This also gave him the opportunity to realize a long time dream of further pursuing his acting career in America.

Arriving in 2000 and weathering only five months in Los Angeles, Cliff secured an agent and soon landed a guest star role with Don Johnson on the hit TV series, Nash Bridges. A short time after that, he acquired the guest star role of Ba?al on Stargate SG1. Cliff?s combination of charming bad guy charisma and wicked sense of humor made him a viewer favorite antagonist, keeping his character recurring for five seasons. In 2007, Cliff was brought back to play Ba?al in the Stargate SG1 movie called Continuum, which will be released in 2008.

When Cliff is not working you will find him racing dolphins on his kite board off the beaches of Malibu and leading a quiet life.