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SOPHIA BUSH GETS CANDID

THE *ONE TREE HILL* STAR OPENS UP ABOUT HER PASSIONS AND FASHION

Words by Vanessa Pascale • Photo Credit Charles Bush

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

"I get excited to just come home (Pasadena) and set up all the decorations at my parent's house with them. I've grown up celebrating Christmas and Hanukah my whole life, and loved being able to be part of those traditions... It has this big sense of family and big dinners and everyone laughing. I love it. I get really sentimental at Christmas; I always want to give people soft warm things. A couple of years ago, I gave everyone I knew a great cashmere scarf. I was like, *This is the best gift ev-er* (whispers)."

"Last night there was such a chill in the air, I got that first exciting moment of *Ahhh, I want to put on a coat and a scarf...*" **Sophia Bush** wistfully mused over Los Angeles' weather, a welcome change from "still hot" **Wilmington, North Carolina**—her home 9 months out of the year while filming the **CW's *One Tree Hill***, on which she portrays adored, feisty fashionista & founder of chic clothing line, **Clothes Over Bro's, Brooke Davis**. Ahh, divine it is—the cool air brushing past your bare skin, subtly howling that fall has returned touting its beloved trimmings: football season, holidays, and the homecoming of our favorite casts found on the long-awaited prime time line-up.

This September, *One Tree Hill* resumed seducing viewers, as it has done year after year, with its chaotic, yet beautiful, whirlwind of a storyline performed by their astoundingly attractive ensemble. Just days after the *OTH* premiere of **Season 8**, I met with Sophia, who was dressed in a white button down shirt and black Isabel Marant corduroy cropped '50s-inspired pants [a "big fall purchase" she's "obsessed with"] that channeled the understated, sophisticated natural beauty that Audrey Hepburn embodied, at the renowned **Chateau Marmont** to chat about *OTH*, fall fashions, her altruistic pursuit to save the Gulf (and planet) alongside her leading man, and a few other appetizing tidbits.

"It was fantastic," said the beautiful 28-year-old in regard to directing episode 806 of *OTH* (her second time directing). "Everything went exactly as I had planned it and the things that didn't, the variables that you can't control ended up being really fun." Her Halloween episode aired the week before the holiday. "We don't really ever do holiday episodes, but we decided to go for it. We're going to do a little more of that stuff now that we're bringing the show to a close..." Sophia shared.

OTH is coming to an end? "That's what we've been told. As far as we all know, season 8 is it... We love it, obviously, and if it went on forever that would be lovely... As far as we know, everyone loves it. It has been a great journey..." she expressed seriously.

While Sophia [from Pasadena] enjoys living in North Carolina, there is a downside—being away from family and friends. "I miss everything. I miss babies and weddings and friend's birthdays. It's hard. You have to be willing to sacrifice a lot, but I think if you love your job, you work it out. But it's a great place to live [N.C.]... Our crew is so incredible. I could never have enough good things to say about them—they make being there wonderful for me."

Over the years, viewers have watched Brooke Davis transition from "wild child" into a respectable business owner and reliable friend—a transformation that has made Brooke more relatable for Sophia. "In the beginning, I couldn't relate to Brooke at all. My conversations with the writers and creator were me going to them saying, 'Listen, if she's going to be this wild child, if she's going to behave this way, it has to be substantiated by unknown reasons that are revealed—sort of the way that she protects how fragile she really is... That was the way that I could relate and that's because I'm very similar," Sophia explained. "I'm a person who works incredibly hard... I come off as together and very strong to a lot of people, but that's because I'm an incredibly fragile, sensitive person," she revealed. "I have to keep armor on all day long; otherwise I would just be in a puddle on the floor crying at every dog food commercial I see [laughs]."

As for Brooke's overt ability to embrace her sexuality (showing up naked in the back seat of a car, wrapping herself in nothing but a red bow for Julian), this openness makes Sophia a bit uneasy. When the season premiere aired, the cast watched it together and participated in a live Tweet session, answering fan's questions. "The best question that I got was totally inappropriate, but hilarious... 'If Brooke and

Julian were going to have a threesome with one of the characters, who would it be?' And I said, 'Well, Brooke Davis would sooner die than share her man.' They all laughed. Man, there are questions that people will ask you when they don't have to ask to your face. Brooke would think that was hilarious, but this is one of the differences between our characters," said Sophia, as she shifted uncomfortably and avoided eye contact. "I can barely look at you, thinking this is so inappropriate... People think because I play a girl who is hyper sexual that I must be comfortable with all of that, when in reality, it gives me anxiety. It's very paper bag, bottom shelf with me."

Sophia is actually more reserved than fans might expect. "I'm an outgoing person. I'm a person who will pretty much throw herself into any situation. I jump out of airplanes for fun. But, I'm also painfully shy. If I hit my stride the minute I walk into an event or party for the holidays, great! But the minute I feel out of place somewhere, I'll be a wallflower all night... Work is one thing... I'm so hyper sensitive to people because it's my job to interact and react. If anything comes into play that is in any way strange to me, I'm so sensitive to it. I think that is something in general for actors, that people don't get how sensitive we are. They think that we have such thick skin and that nothing gets to us or that we can laugh at everything. That's sort of the reality of a comedian; we laugh a lot so that we won't cry," Sophia confessed.

Speaking of hitting her stride, Sophia seems to have hit her stride in the romance department. **Austin Nichols** (Julian Baker, Brooke's fiancé on *OTH*) has been romancing Sophia off-screen as well. I comment that I read Austin and her were "together" prior to him joining the cast and that it was a decision he solidified so he could be closer to her. Revealing her famous dimples, Sophia coyly smiled, "We, yeah, without revealing too much about that, we have a history that begins 5 years ago, um almost, yeah, 5 ½ now," she corrected. "I was in a place where I wasn't capable of trusting people and he was very willing to be patient for a long time with me... He took a very heroic leap of faith," she replied thoughtfully. "As women, we're raised on this fairytale... Whether we go through something horrific, like I did... [Sophia and former *OTH* co-star, **Chad Michael Murray**, went through a very public divorce in 2006]. Men aren't always what we think they are. They're not always the white knight.... For me, it was a very rude awakening. We should put a warning label on stories like *Cinderella* and *Snow White* for 3-year-olds and talk about real-life with women from the time that they're young. Then, along came a man who wanted to be that for me, who believes in that sort of story and love and was willing to be patient while I figured out that I still believed in it... It's the grandest gesture anyone has ever made for me in my life..." Sophia candidly revealed.

It seems as though white knights *do* exist. But Sophia's expectations are realistic. "I'm not writing the fairy-tale ending. I'm not in a place where I need to make that plan. I've learned, rather than trying to fulfill your fairytale or expectations, about just being present and realizing how valuable your life is... For me, realizing that I'm valuable enough to be loved that way is huge," said Sophia.

Shared passions have aided in creating a strong foundation for the happy couple. In June, Sophia and Austin joined efforts with the **Save the Gulf** project and **Crowdfire**. "We were both just blown away by it [the Gulf]. We've spent every free hour since then working on spreading awareness..." Pursuing a cause close to her, meant exposing a personal aspect of herself Sophia had shut down in the past. "In almost 7 years now, I've never wanted to talk about my personal life. When I started I was a naïve 21-year-old kid. Everyone said, 'Well that's what you do; you answer people's questions,' so, I did. I never realized that it was detrimental to what private life you have, so I really kept everything close to the vest..." Sophia realized that by going on the trip to Grand Isle with Austin and **Global Green**, her private life and relationship would become

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"She is very organized and has great connection with her work. She spends a lot of prep time planning her shots and I was thrilled and proud to watch her work," said prominent photographer, and Sophia's father, Charles Bush.

FALL-ING
ALL OVER FASHION

Sophia, the recipient of the "New Hollywood Style Icon" Award from the Hollywood Style Awards in 2008, certainly has winning style. "I love fashion," she exclaimed. "Fashion does something for people that very few other things do. You don't see women having heart palpitations over anything like you do when they find a pair of shoes that they love, the way that we get giddy and take pride in wearing something that's new or something that makes us feel great. Being in clothing that make you feel fantastic can be the difference in your day—and it shows."

FALL STAPLES:

"Great shoes, coats, blazers, structured jackets, little things like gloves and scarves, all the layering options... wearing velvet and brocade [sigh]. I love them. I can't wait. It makes me wish it were cold outside, I'm like, 'Let's go shopping!'"

EVERYDAY STYLE:

"It's eclectic. I'm really drawn toward sort of men's ware, androgynous, but with a twist. I love that sort of '60s French thing, that je ne sais quoi. There's something romantic without trying, about it, which I really like. If I feel like wearing combat boots and fatigue pants one day and wearing a little sundress with kitten heels the next day, I can and that's what I love about it. You can sort of select the tone of your day with your clothes."

FAVORITE DESIGNERS:

"Isabel Marant rocks my world. [During our interview, a woman walked past us, briefly interrupting Sophia's thoughts, "See, Isabel jacket—fab-u-lous. I've been eyeing that for faaaall," she sang the last word.] Max Azria is a genius. I've been very lucky to be close to his family for many years. His wife is one of my dearest friends. To go in and watch them create a season is astonishing and the fact that he's been able to take his skill and stay mainstream and affordable for your average girl is something I respect so much. I'd die for Marc Jacobs, but I can't afford to buy a whole line of his clothing, ya know? Who can?"



Photo Caption: One Tree Hill Pictured: Shantel VanSanten as Quinn, James Lafferty as Nathan and Bethany Joy Galeotti as Haley, Austin Nichols as Julian, Sophia Bush as Brooke, Jana Kramer as Alex, Robert Buckley as Clay
Photo Credit: Frank Ockenfels/The CW© 2009 The CW Network, LLC. All rights reserved.

public. "I never wanted to do that, but I realized in keeping things to myself I also wasn't sharing a lot with people that is crucial to who I am..." After talking about it, Sophia and Austin decided to pursue their passion for the cause full force, with trips to see the devastation, starting a Twitter account, as well as a blog, to get people involved. "It's wonderful to be at a point in my life where I have a partner who cares as much about the things that matter to me as I do."

Sophia's humanitarian concerns reach beyond the Gulf and to promoting a greener planet in general. "The oil spill, I think, was a catalyst for really talking about the way that we depend on dirty energy. We need to rethink the way we live." Leading by example, Sophia ensures that everything in her home is recyclable and that her food gets composted. And, the self-proclaimed SUV-driver (she has big dogs) opted for an eco-friendly car. "I ordered Audi's A3 [TDI clean diesel vehicle]. It's a little station wagon that I was driving when I was in Europe... The car is bad ass. It's fast, it handles and gets close to as many miles to the gallon as a Prius does, but has zero emissions and doesn't have an oversize battery..."

As Sophia poignantly speaks on the advantages of the car, injecting solutions and steps our society and manufacturers can take to see real change, I realize that in addition to being well-versed and passionate—she is a remarkable elocutionist. These strengths of hers bring to light why journalism may have intrigued her while in college. During her attendance at the University of Southern California, Sophia transferred from their B.F.A acting program into their journalism school when she felt stifled by acting class. "I always loved to write and I've always loved current events..." While she never saw herself as a reporter, though she would jump at the chance to work "in the field" with Anderson Cooper—who she watches religiously, she has always wanted to write a book. Sophia and Austin, together, recently finished writing their first script. "Maybe we'll make it and maybe it'll just sit there and be something that was the first try... It was a great sense of accomplishment because it was one of the things on the list that I got to tick off." A case of life imitating art, their characters: Brooke and Julian made a movie together based on Julian's script.

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During her tenure on *OTH*, Sophia has starred in several movies, including *The Hitcher*, *Stay Alive*, *John Tucker Must Die*, *Van Wilder...* and hopes to film more. "I need a breather from television. If the right thing came along, if I got to do the next *Sex and the City*, work with Darren Star, of course, no question... I'd give *any-thing* to work on *Dexter*. That is my favorite show!" Move over John Lithgow, Sophia Bush would like to play the next "it" serial killer. "I want to do something really unexpected and really dark... I've thought about what the arc could be, part of me is like, *Can I just go in and pitch to the writers?*"

This summer, Sophia shot the movie *Chalet Girl* in Germany with Brooke Shields, Bill Nighy, and Ed Westwick. "It was a pleasure to work with those guys—to see young talent like Nick Braun and to work with such incredibly pedigreed actors like Bill, and Brooke Shields telling us stories about growing up working with Bob Hope and how Frank Sinatra used to tell her that if any guys ever hit on her he would kill him..." The title *Chalet Girl*, "a very common job for girls in the U.K." [slated for February 2011] Sophia informed me, is still a work in progress. "Nobody in the U.S. knows what that is... We teased the [British] director, 'You realize that Americans are going to think this is a porno. You have to change the title.' Cha-let Girl," she breathed sexily in her signature raspy voice. "We teased him about all the alternative things that it could be called that were likewise inappropriate. I'm hoping that they put some of that stuff in the features on the DVD, 'cause it was hilarious," said Sophia with a laugh. ML

"I LOVE TV"

"I am obsessed with *Modern Family*. I can't handle it. That show is so great. They are all so phenomenal. *Nurse Jackie*—I don't know what I'd do without Edie Falco in my life. She is so incredible... I feel that way about *Mad Men*, but who doesn't? We're all obsessed with *Mad Men*."

MUSIC

"I have over 15,000 songs in my iTunes library. If I wasn't an actor I'd be working in music supervision, placing music in shows and films. Newest running mix is all Rhianna, Eminem, Florence and the Machine, Avett Brothers, Onward, Soldiers."

SPARE TIME

"Work and come home, do things on *Crowdfire*... It's time consuming and it's crazy, but I love it. I've got such an amazing group of friends, so for us it's really about getting together, going to dinner, cooking a meal and taking the dogs either to the beach or park. Lately, a lot of running [she's training for a half-marathon to support the Gulf], which is brutal. The farthest I've gone thus far is 4 miles, and I have to run 13. I'm daunted, but we'll do it, even if I have to walk half of it."

MIAMI LOVE

"I love that sort of tropical feeling, where you go outside and your skin gets a little dewy and everything is hot. The people watching in Miami is amazing... I always have a great time. It's just a fun town. I love that there's Ago in Miami now, if I'm there, I always go over for some amazing thin crust pizza or great bowl of pasta."