

Vixen Industry Couple: Alvin Ailey's Glenn and Linda Celeste Sims

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For our second installment of industry couples, we shed light to the lovers who create beautiful works of art together. For over 13 years, Glenn and Linda Celeste Sims have been dancers with Alvin Ailey. If you know anything about dance, you know the company and their performers are extremely pristine. Joining the company a year before her future husband, Linda Celeste didn't realize by 1997 she'd be dancing side by side and eventually sharing a life with Glenn.

"It was a working environment and I didn't think about that then but we just always hung out and on tour eventually we ended up rooming together because we were always together. Going out to eat together, sightseeing together, going to museums together, and so we spent a lot of time together in that sense."

However, as dance fate would have it, their budding friendship would turn into a 13 year married romance. Learn more about Glenn and Linda's on the next page.



VIBE Vixen: Can I have a little background on you two? How did you guys meet? Was it at Alvin Ailey or was it before?

Linda Celeste Sims: I was already at Ailey for a year when Glenn joined in '97. The new people tend to kinda congregate together [but] he just came up to me and we just started talking. The coolest thing [was] we had the same circle of friends because being I went to LaGuardia, most of my friends went to Julliard and of course Glenn went to Julliard so it was like oh my gosh we knew at least ten of the same people. I wasn't like initially attracted to him like, "oh my God, he's sexy," because I was working. It was a working environment and I didn't think about that then, but we just always hung out and on tour, we ended up rooming together because we were always together.

That's great. Now, when you guys first started dating, did you keep it a secret or did pretty much the whole company know you were an item?

Glenn Sims: No, we kept it a secret for at least a couple of months; we would not let anybody know. Our group of friends that we hung out with would ask like, "you guys want to go to the mall or go to the movies?" We were just like, "no, we just gonna hang out in the room," but we never told anybody anything until like the end of 1998 before the end of the U.S tour. Then a lot of people were mad at us because we didn't say anything earlier.

LCS: Yeah, not that it was weird or anything; it was just we were very professional. We were at work and then if we wanted to start seeing each other, lets just keep that quiet. But we didn't hold hands walking down the street at first and then it was like, "I want to hold your hand, its totally okay." So once the cat got out of the bag, that kind of thing, it wasn't a big deal at all. It was okay. As long as we're at work, we're at work. Nothing changes and we're good.

GS: And it's still kind of like that today. I mean we've been married for 13 years. So we'll show more affection now, but when you're first starting out younger in an organization, you don't know what the protocol is or the history of how it was when people were dating in the company and how they would receive it. So we did keep our relationship almost sort of private and discreet to ourselves cause we didn't want to have any hindrance on our work.

How long did you guys know each other before you started dating?



LCS: I would say almost like six months. Like half a year because you have to understand that this company travels and is always out on the road, so you come join the company and after a year it's like you've been here for ten years, because we're always around each other and we're always traveling together, so it's quite tight.

How was the proposal?

GC: When the rings were actually made, Linda had no idea. So the morning that I had her engagement ring, I did a trail of rose petals from

the bedroom into the bathroom. There was a bath that was drawn with bubbles and like champagne and strawberries and I read her a poem and then later on she was doing her hair in rollers in the couch and I took the perfect rose with the engagement ring in place in it. So as she's doing her hair and sitting on the couch in rollers, I came over to her and got on my knee and proposed to her that way and that's how it happened.

LCS: This is during our season, so the only day off is Monday. You have to do everything on Monday that day, which is laundry, wash your hair;

so after my bath of course I wash my hair, I set my hair in rollers so. It was very like home, me, my hair is in rollers, so it makes it more real that way. So, later on in the day as I'm drying my hair, he come comes out of the room with the ring and he asked me. It was kind of funny cause I have a whole head of rollers on my head. Later that evening he did have reservations for the restaurant that does not exists anymore, but Windows around the World; World Trade Center. It's a restaurant on the top that you can see all New York City and its so romantic and so beautiful. So, we had dinner reservations for that night and of course that's when I dressed up and looked pretty.

How is it working together? Is it always easy or how do you get over being a couple and dancing together all the time?

GS: Well, in the beginning it was when we were younger, I would say it was a little more difficult because of communication. We were both growing up and we were both learning more about ourselves and still trying to work at the same time. So, it was a little bitt harder in the beginning. But in this day and age, I would say that what we went through and those time periods set and laid the foundation for where we are now, and how we can communicate more openly and discuss our day and how we're feeling.

What is the best and worst thing about working together?

LCS: The best thing is that I can close my eyes and I know that he'll be there to catch me. It's a sense of trust, working with him, especially later on in our careers cause we really didn't dance as much as partners in the beginning. Glenn's been here 17 years and I've been here 18 years, so I would say like the past 10 years we've been working more consistently together as partners and what more do I want? So there's a whole other level that I work on when I'm performing or dancing with him. It's like I know we've got this so let me work on a different kind of artistry so I would say I'm able to grow as an artist more with him because like I said, I don't have to fake it. I don't think there's a worst, I think at this point right now we're at a point where's he's like, 'I know she's not going to like if I do this so let me not do it.' So I'm not like that, I don't think there ever is a worst because I'm making a decision to be with this person so its what I want to work on.

GS: I would agree with that, there's not a worst part in it. It's a true blessing to be able to share your passion for the art of dance with a person who also understands it and has a passion for it too, and for me to be able to work with Linda, she is really my opinion of a female dancer. So to be able to work with her hand in hand on certain Ballets and being able to create beauty on stage and magic and all that other stuff. I would always put myself with her because there is just so many different textures that she brings to each piece of work that that she dances and allows me not to have to being worrying about oh, I have to watch her and watch her and watch her, I can watch her and still breathe with her because we do sleep together so therefore your rhythms are in the same wavelengths.



What is the greatest thing you have learned from one another?

LCS: I would say with Glenn, definitely patience, cause I don't have any. Patience and also I'm more of a small group intimate kind of person and he's kind of shown me how to be a little bit more open.

GS: Well I would say for me with Linda, I'm going to highlight a couple of them. One is to communicate on most occasions. I learned how to communicate more my emotions and my feelings with Linda. Secondly, it would be how to finance myself because she has taught me that because she can be really frugal at moments. But it's a great thing because we've accumulated so many different things in a short period of time of us being together, where so couples who might work together as dancers don't accumulate those things so she usually highlighted me about finances. Secondly, how to protect myself more because like Linda was saying about, Like I'll give people a couple of chances, you know I give people the benefit of the doubt, everybody has their own issues that their dealing with and I'm patient enough to see if the person will change in certain circumstances but I've also learned how to protect myself in certain situations by learning through Linda.



What do you think is the best dance that you guys performed together? In your opinion.

LCS: I really enjoyed doing a couple of them. Definitely 'Fix me' from *Revelations*. One of my favorite piece that we're actually doing again this year called 'The River' and the second's called 'Lake' and I get to do it with him and its just so beautiful.

What would be advice to others that are married and working together?

GS: I would just say remember how you got together first, mainly. Like if you were friends before, just remember to keep the friendship and keep that connection as friends and never lose that cause that's the foundation [for a lot of relationships] . If you can keep the friendship fresh and alive that will also help, and I will also say the romance part of it as well. Being spontaneous when a man needs to be spontaneous to surprise a woman to let her know he still is romantically feeling her.

LS: Yeah, just adding onto what he said, if you keep that in mind, then if you do argue or if you do this, that's going to be easy to solve. Being definitely patient and understanding, forgiving, all of that because you still love this person. Why did you get together? We're both imperfect, there's nothing about me, nothing perfect about him, but there's one thing that we do know: it's that we do love each other. And we really are really good friends, so communicating; all that, it's cause he's my friend and if he does something that irritates me, I go right to him.

