

BIOGRAPHY

MAURICE BENARD

Sonny Corinthos on the ABC Television Network's "General Hospital"

Complex, confident and wise, Sonny Corinthos has taken his hard-earned experience as a street hustler and transformed himself into one of the most powerful figures in Port Charles. Emmy Award winning Actor Maurice Benard brings his own deeply personal experiences to the portrayal of Sonny by adding color, menace and seduction to an already intricate character. He first appeared in the role on August 13, 1993. He briefly left the show for a year-long hiatus in December 1998. For his portrayal, Maurice received the Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Daytime Drama Series in 2003. He was also nominated in 1996, 1997 and 2004.

"This role is what I do best," Maurice explains. "Sonny is unpredictable. You never know from one second to the next what he is thinking, feeling or planning. He's a man in personal conflict who maintains an outward appearance of calm at all times, at any cost."

Maurice's multi-cultural upbringing began in San Francisco, where he was born to parents from Nicaragua and San Salvador. Uninspired by the traditional education route, he gleaned an education in the open job market after high school. His dark good looks and intense gaze brought him modeling jobs in his early 20s. Following that, Maurice took up acting in numerous theatrical productions in the Bay area.

After auditioning for a role on the ABC daytime drama "All My Children," Maurice was cast as Nico Kelly. Two years later, he struck out to find new challenges and moved to Los Angeles, where he was soon cast as the lead in the much-publicized TV movie, "Lucy and Desi: Before the Laughter." He later added a pivotal role in the feature film "Ruby" to several other prominent film and television credits.

Maurice has been a popular voice in the battle against bipolar disorder. He has been very open about his personal battle with the illness, appearing on television programs such as "The View" and "Entertainment Tonight," and he has also been featured in People and LA Life Magazines. He is currently working with the National Mental Health Association (NMHA) on the "Bipolar Disorder: Do You Know It?" campaign to help educate Americans about the importance of recognizing the signs and symptoms of bipolar disorder.

Maurice lives in the Hollywood Hills area of Southern California. He enjoys the martial arts, working out and playing host to a menagerie of dogs and cats. He and his wife, Paula, are the proud parents of daughters Cailey Sofia and Cassidy Rose and son Joshua James.