



JULIANNE MOORE

My gift to my late mum

Julianne Moore was devastated when her mum died suddenly at 68, but she is still very much with the Oscar winner. In a candid interview, the 55-year-old L'Oréal ambassador talks to **Juliet Rieden** about family, being a homebody and why she would never have cosmetic surgery.

PASSION, PATHOS AND locked-in anxiety are all in a day's work for Julianne Moore, emotions she has escalated to almost Shakespearean heights in a career that at 55 seems only to be gathering pace. At that middle age when many actresses complain they are fading into unemployment, Julianne pocketed her first Oscar last year (for her haunting portrayal of an early Alzheimer's victim in *Still Alice*). Yet, work aside, what is even more surprising is that behind that breathtakingly flawless alabaster skin – which also has a career of its own by the way, thanks to Julianne's appointment as a global ambassador for L'Oréal Paris (yes, she's worth it!) – and those powerful acting chops, is a hands-on and rather mumsy mum, for whom having children was never in question and home-making is a private infatuation.

"I am very domestic, it's true," says Julianne, laughing. "I'm not much of a cook. I always like to say I assemble

food, I don't cook it. Cooking utterly confounds me – I don't have the patience for it. But I do love my house and I like to make it nice, and I'm really good at cleaning up and taking care of people. I'm good when people are sick and I like to think I'm a good mother. I like having a home, I like having a family, it's all important to me."

Julianne lives in Los Angeles with film director husband Bart Freundlich, who is 10 years her junior, and their two children Caleb, 18, and Liv, 14, and as we speak is stuck in gridlock traffic heading uptown to collect her daughter from lacrosse practice.

"My kids are both pretty sporty," she says. "My son loves to play basketball and we're always at one tournament or another. I don't think they'll follow us [into movies]. The other day, I said to my husband, 'Why are we never going to the play? Why are we always going to the game?'"

Although she waited until she was 37 to have her first child, Julianne says kids and a family were "super important" ▶

and always the non-negotiable key to her life plan. “I thought everybody felt this way, but from the time I was a little girl, I knew that I was going to grow up and I was going to have a boy and a girl,” she says. “No matter what, that’s what I was going to do. That was one of the things I really was sure about. I really wanted it. I wanted children and I wanted to have a boy and a girl, and I would say to them, I got what I wanted, I was really lucky.”

While it may sound as if Julianne has followed a charmed existence, dialling up her wishes only to have them granted in some sort of “ta-da” Cinderella act, don’t be fooled ... there have been considerable roadblocks on the way. The actress’ first marriage to actor-director John Gould Rubín didn’t work out and while her career soared, Julianne spent her early 30s single and lonely, heading for therapy to wrench her life back on track. What she learnt, she says, is, “You have to make your personal life happen as much as your career.”

“I got married very young and I think a lot of it was just not knowing any better,” she explains. “By the time Bart and I got married, we already had two children and we’d been together for seven years. So I didn’t really have any kind of apprehension [second time around]. I really, really wanted it [marriage]. I think we both did.”

Julianne’s guiding light was her mother, Anne Smith, who died suddenly and unexpectedly seven years ago from septic shock. It was a devastating time for Julianne. Anne went to bed and never woke up, after suffering from a massive bacterial infection. She was just 68. “My mother was an excellent mother. She taught me that it was important to have something that I cared about for myself, my own career, and that it was also important to have a family that I loved.”

“You have to make your personal life happen as much as your career.”



Julianne with her daughter, Liv, and (above) with Liv, Bart and Caleb.



The Smith family of Mum Anne, Dad Peter and three kids – Julie Anne (as she was born), Valerie and Peter – were a tight, close-knit unit. They

had to be, since Peter’s job as a Defence Force helicopter pilot and paratrooper saw the family catapult around America. Julie

Anne attended nine schools between the ages of five and 18, and while the constant shifting made friendships difficult, it was a dynamite education for a future actor.

“There are so many actors who come from peripatetic upbringings,” says Julianne, laughing. “There’s something about it that makes you a great observer of human behaviour and really makes you adaptable. You’re able to adapt to any situation and you feel confident and comfortable.”

“My husband now makes these jokes that I’m very comfortable in new places. He grew up in New York City and he’s comfortable in every single social situation – go to any cocktail party, talk to people, whatever – but make him go to the airport and get on a plane, and go somewhere where they don’t speak English and he’ll lose his mind. On the contrary,

I love the travel – there’s nothing more exciting to me than going somewhere I’ve never been before. I don’t care if I don’t speak the language; I know I’ll figure stuff out. But socially, oh my gosh! So there are things you develop, moving around, and then there are things you don’t develop.”

Julianne inherited her fair skin and red hair from her mum’s Scottish side of the family and when Anne died, the actress was desperate to connect to her mother’s heritage, for herself, but also as a gift to her late mum. “When my mother became a US citizen, she had to renounce her UK citizenship. It broke her heart. She would come home crying. I still remember it.”

Anne was just 20 when Julie Anne was born and mother and daughter were very close. Before she died, the British rules changed, allowing Julianne to claim citizenship through her mother’s heritage. She planned to go ahead both for work, but also for Anne. “Then my mother passed away suddenly and it was awful, absolutely awful,” Julianne says. “So I ended up getting my citizenship. My sister did it, too, subsequently. It was for Mum because she never had that and she would have loved it. It’s something that I’m very proud and happy to have because of my mother.” >

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A beaming Julianne after winning her first Best Actress Oscar last year for *Still Alice*.

Julianne’s red hair, complexion and freckles are a constant warm reminder of Anne, although as a child she wasn’t so happy about it. “When I was little, we lived a lot in the Midwest and the South, places where they didn’t have a lot of redheads. Most of the kids were very tanned and blond or had dark hair, so I was unusual. I absolutely hated having red hair, I wanted to look like everyone else,” she says, laughing. “When Mum came to the United States when she was a teenager, she had a terrible, terrible sunburn that landed her in the hospital and so she never let us stay at the beach very long or go outside for very long. It felt like torture when we were kids, but it really saved my skin.”

It’s also why Julianne was the obvious choice to be the new face of Renaissance

Cellulaire, L’Oréal’s anti-ageing range aimed at women over 50 who, in L’Oréal’s words, don’t want plastic surgery. Julianne is the perfect exemplar for the product and is quick to add that her cleansing, moisturising and daily sunscreen (“I’ve used it since I was 23”) routine is her secret weapon, plus a killer mascara and blush, saviours for fair skin.

Yet, in years to come, would she consider a nip and tuck? “I’m an actress so I don’t want to have plastic surgery. It just would be a detriment to what I do for a living. It’s not for me,” she says.

Keeping fit is another secret weapon, which for Julianne is all about yoga.

“I’ve done weightlifting, I used to run a lot, I went through a Pilates phase, I went through the going to exercise class stage, I’ve done it all and found that eventually all of it puts me in bad moods and makes me grumpy,” she confesses. “The only thing that hasn’t so far is yoga. I really enjoy it, I really look forward to it. I like the quiet that I have when I do it.”

And does she feel different mentally as she’s got older? “That’s a complicated question because you hear people say again and again, ‘I don’t feel any different than I did, I’m still the same person I was when I was 20’. I do agree with that in that your essential self doesn’t change, but I’d like to think that I’m significantly more aware of the world, of other people, of my surroundings, and I can better take the temperature of what’s going on. I’m much more still and much more present now than I was in my 20s.”

Fortunately for us, Julianne Moore is likely to be present in movies for many years to come and despite the perceived

lack of roles for women of a certain age, feels positive about her future. “Judi Dench just won her eighth Olivier award and I think things are changing.

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I see women who are commanding an audience and I think the audiences are interested in seeing them. I certainly know what I want to see. I want to see women. I want to see women my age.” ■