

Sesame Street Dad: Evolution of an Actor

By Roscoe Orman
Inkwater Press

Ever since I can remember, I have loved *Sesame Street*. The muppet characters entertained and educated me as a young child, and the human characters became trustworthy friends and role models. Growing up in a small Midwestern town, the only non-white people I regularly encountered were on television, and fortunately for myself and others of my generation, the residents of *Sesame Street* were strong, positive, gentle, and ethnically diverse.

One of these residents, Gordon Robinson, has been expertly played by Roscoe Orman for over thirty years. As Susan's husband and Miles's adoptive father, Gordon is a model of a caring, confident family man. Before reading *Sesame Street Dad*, I knew that I loved Gordon. What I didn't know was the incredible breadth and depth of the career of Roscoe Orman beyond *Sesame Street*.

Orman starts his memoirs at the beginning of his life, explaining significant events and people who led him to discover an interest in acting. This interest grew into a passion, and this passion grew into a long, varied, celebrated career. Orman's career has included an amazing array of theater, film and television performances. Beyond his contributions to the overall world of acting, his triumphs and talents have opened doors for black Americans and have contributed to equal treatment and respect for performers of all races.

Readers will enjoy getting to know Roscoe Orman intimately, and having an up-close look at the realities of being a black actor starting out in the 1960s. Candid accounts of auditions and life and work as part of a performance company opens up a world unknown to most people. Orman honestly shares his feelings, thoughts, struggles and motivation throughout the shifting and growth of his career. Plenty of photos accompany the text, allowing us to see Roscoe Orman in babyhood, childhood and all stages of his career.

I am truly amazed by Roscoe Orman's robust and diverse performance career. My eyes have been opened to his life beyond , leading me to question the limits I put on others based on the capacities in which I see them, as well as the limits I put on myself. Orman's success, achieved by following passions and developing talents, will inspire readers to reach for their own stars and become more than they imagined they could.

Review by Amanda Moss

