

# Fantasia tells it like it is 'for Real'

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Fantasia Barrino knows what people have heard about her, and she wants them to know that most of it isn't true.

The season three "American Idol" winner is using her new VH1 reality show, "Fantasia for Real," to set the record straight about her family life, her love life and her career.

"In 2008, there were a lot of things going on in Fantasia's world," Barrino told The News. "There was a lot of press about me — a lot of truth but also a lot of false. But everything was messed up, career-wise, and I wanted to allow people to watch me rebuild my dynasty."

"Fantasia for Real," premiering Jan. 11 at 10 p.m., follows Barrino, 25, as she juggles single-motherhood (her daughter, Zion, is 8), going back to school and her singing. Her family, including first cousins K-Ci & JoJo of Jodeci, also plays a large

part in the series.

"Me and my father, we don't have a really good relationship," Barrino said of dad Joseph, who made headlines in 2006 for suing the publisher of Fantasia's memoir "Life Is Not a Fairy Tale" for libel. "That is something that's been out in the press, and it's a very touchy situation for me to allow that to be seen, but it does show my growth. He's still my father at the end of the day."

But "Fantasia for Real" isn't all about fighting back rumors or dealing with family issues; Barrino says there's a lot of laughter in it, too.

"You see good moments! I'll have my glass of wine," she said. "I still find a way to have a good time and hang out with my girlfriends. We only have one life to live and I can't let all the cares in the world weigh me down. I'll be 40 years old before I know it."

Though Barrino has gone on to create a name for herself far beyond the reality show that made her famous — most recent-

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Fantasia Barrino will let TV cameras into her life on VH1's "Fantasia for Real," starting Jan. 11.

ly she starred in Broadway's "The Color Purple" — she says "Idol" will always play a large part in her life.

"That's where I come from, that show opened a big door for me," said Barrino. "I do feel that I have, music-wise and acting-wise, moved on, and I'm happy to just sit back now and give the new winners their props. I watch it all the time!"

With the reality show set to debut, plus her memoirs, which were turned into a Lifetime movie entitled "Life Is Not a Fairy

Tale: The Fantasia Barrino Story," one has to wonder, what is it about Barrino's story that interests people so much?

"It's just the truth," said Barrino. "Celebrities can be untouchable sometimes, but I've always given my story straight because I'm proud of myself and I'm proud that I can talk about what I've been through. People can relate to me. There are things going on with Fantasia that are probably going on with another family right around the corner."