

Throwback: 227



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227 was a comedic star vehicle for Marla Gibbs who had previously become famous as the witty maid on *The Jeffersons*. The show was based on a play written by Christine Houston and it focused on Gibbs's life as the gossipy Mary Jenkins and her neighbors in the D.C. apartment building they shared. Gibbs was the star of 227, sang the theme song and co-produced several episodes. Hal Jackson played Gibbs's husband and Regina King started her acting career on the show as her daughter Brenda. Jackee Harry evolved into a national sex symbol for her portrayal of the vampy Sandra and became the first African-American to get an Emmy for playing a supporting actress in a comedy series. Mary Jenkins was married and had typical concerns as did her fellow middle class neighbors and

this context allowed 227 to escape any potential claims of pandering to stereotypes. The show ran for five years (1985-90) and then descended into the world of syndicated reruns. Regina King most recently appeared on *The Boondocks* as the voices of Riley and Huey Freeman. Marla Gibbs and Jackee Harry both have roles on Byron Allen's *First Family* sitcom. Gibbs also appeared on two episodes of the TV show *Scandal* in 2015.