

= Russell family (Passions) =

The Russell Family is a fictional family that appeared on the American television soap opera *Passions* , which aired on NBC (1999 ? 2007) and later on DirecTV (2007 ? 08) . It followed the romantic and supernatural adventures that occurred in the fictional , New England , coastal town of Harmony . The family was created by the soap 's creator James E. Reilly ; it originally consisted of four characters ? the married couple Eve Russell and T. C. Russell , and their children , Whitney and Simone Russell . The Russells are one of the four core families in Harmony ; they are characterized by their friendship with the Bennetts and Lopez @-@ Fitzgeralds , and their feud with the Cranes . As the series progressed , four more characters were added to the family : Eve 's vengeful , adoptive sister Liz Sanbourne ; Eve 's child with Julian Crane , Vincent Clarkson ; Whitney 's husband and Liz 's son , Chad Harris @-@ Crane ; and Eve 's aunt Irma Johnson . A majority of the characters left during the show 's transition from NBC to DirecTV , leaving Eve and Vincent as the only representatives of the Russell family in the series finale .

The characters initially received negative feedback for their representation of a middle @-@ class , African @-@ American family . They also received mixed feedback from the cast members , with some praising the roles as expanding the images of African @-@ American characters on television while others felt they were not used to their full potential . Despite the criticism , the cast was frequently nominated for NAACP Image Awards and prominently featured in a series of public service announcement for Black History Month in 2003 . The Russell family also garnered media and critical attention for its storylines involving various LGBT topics : Chad Harris @-@ Crane 's affair with Vincent and subsequent confusion about his sexual orientation , Simone 's coming out as lesbian to her family , and the revelation that Vincent was intersex . While the show 's treatment of sexual and gender identity has received mixed feedback among critics , *Passions* won the award for Outstanding Daily Drama at the 17th GLAAD Media Awards for its portrayal of Simone 's sexuality .

= = Creation and development = =

Along with the Bennetts , the Cranes , and the Lopez @-@ Fitzgeralds , the Russells are one of the four core families created by the soap 's creator James E. Reilly and were prominently featured on the soap opera since its premiere on July 5 , 1999 . Sheraton Kalouria , senior vice president of NBC 's daytime programming , said the decision to create and cast two minority families ? the African @-@ American Russells and the Hispanic Lopez @-@ Fitzgeralds ? was a conscious effort to simulate the diversity of the United States . Kalouria said the cast reflected the show 's " truly color @-@ blind storytelling " . Rodney Van Johnson , who played T. C. Russell , expressed an appreciation for the show 's representation of " a full African @-@ American family " that tell serious storylines on daytime television rather than being " just a flash in the pan " . Johnson said the Russell family received a large response from African @-@ American viewers . An article in *Jet* described each member of the Russell family as having an " integral part of the show " rather than being token characters . An official press release from NBC said the Russell family had " a strong presence in the community " of Harmony .

Other *Passions* ' cast members also commented on the representation of each family member as acting contrary to racial stereotypes ; Tracey Ross said her character Eve is " just a person " and is not purely defined by her race , and Charles Divins , who played Chad Harris @-@ Crane , said the show 's treatment of the Russells as " a strong African American family " was " refreshing " . Amelia Marshall said the creation of seven African @-@ American roles allowed each character to be unique :

It 's an awful lot of fun to be going to all these dark and extreme places . I finally realized that there are seven African @-@ Americans on this show and I don 't have to be the flag @-@ bearer for African @-@ Americans . I can just be an actress given a crazy bitch to play and play it to the best of my ability . I don 't have to say , ' I don 't want to represent my people like that . ' We 'll let the Eve character be upstanding , even though she 's got shades . It 's so much fun to just deal with acting the part and not deal with the politics of it .

During the soap opera 's final years , Johnson expressed disappointment when the show began " taking out the people of color " , such as Amelia Marshall , Brook Kerr , and himself ; he also said it was an obvious sign that " this thing is going down " . Johnson identified racial diversity as one of the biggest draws to the show , but added the African @-@ American actors were not used to their full potential . Following the exits of Johnson , Kerr , and Doe in 2007 , Tracey Ross and Phillip Jeanmarie were the only representations of the Russells in the series finale .

= = Core family members = =

= = = Eve Russell = = =

Eve Russell is the matriarch of the Russell family and a respected doctor at Harmony Hospital . Her early storylines focus on her attempts to keep her past alcohol and drug abuse , and her relationship and child with Julian Crane secret from her family and the rest of Harmony . Following the revelation of her past , she was mainly characterized through the rekindling of her romance with Julian and her tense relationship with their son Vincent Clarkson . Ross identified Eve as " a contradiction inside an enigma " , and based her performance on Catherine Halsey from Ayn Rand 's 1943 novel *The Fountainhead* and Eve White from the 1957 film *The Three Faces of Eve* . She also compared the relationship between Julian and Eve to that between Romeo and Juliet .

Eve was played by Tracey Ross for the series ' entire run . In 2003 , actresses Amanda Maiden and Kimberly Kevon Williams played Eve in flashbacks . Critics praised Ross ' performances as Eve for broadening the representation of African @-@ American characters on television . Ross 's portrayal of the character was also warmly received by viewers , who frequently rated her their favorite *Passions* actress in Soap Opera Digest polls . Eve and Julian 's relationship was seen positively by fans , who referred to the couple as " Evian . " TV Guide listed Eve and Julian as one of the best soap @-@ opera supercouples , praising the chemistry between Ross and Masters . Soap Opera Weekly referred to the pairing as " the Odd Couple of *Passions* " .

= = = T. C. Russell = = =

T. C. Russell is the patriarch of the Russell family . He is characterized by his violent temper and hatred of Julian Crane for supposedly injuring him in a hit @-@ and @-@ run attack , and destroying his chances of becoming a professional tennis player . T. C. is initially portrayed as a harsh and unforgiving parent ; he pushes Whitney to train to be a tennis champion as he once wanted to be and disapproves of her relationship with Chad Harris @-@ Crane as a distraction . He also uses violence against Simone when she reveals she is a lesbian . T. C. files for divorce from Eve after learning about her past relationship with Julian , her responsibility for the car crash that ended his tennis career , and her brief romance and engagement with her adoptive sister Liz Sanbourne . The show humanizes T. C. and softens his temper during his recovery from a stroke ; his final storylines focus on his attempts to rebuild his relationship with his ex @-@ wife and children . In 2007 , he moves to New Orleans to help Whitney with her pregnancy and to reconnect with Simone . T. C. does not appear in the show after its transition to DirecTV , and he is neither seen or mentioned in the series finale .

T. C. was portrayed by Rodney Van Johnson from July 5 , 1999 to June 19 , 2007 ; Johnson was dropped to recurring status in December 2006 before his last appearance in June 2007 . On March 19 , 2001 , Jenny Gaona played the character in flashbacks . Despite being one of the original 25 contract cast members , Johnson criticized the show for not properly using his character , claiming that he was often regulated to " the angry black man . " He expressed disappointment that his storylines were less developed than the rest of the cast , specifically naming how the mystery around his secret shed was later retconned as " there was nothing in the shed that was substantial " . He negatively compared T. C. to his previous role as Trey Stark on *The Young and the Restless* , saying that " I was used well " as Trey . Johnson added the character gave him a negative stigma

that limited his future opportunities for auditions . T. C. ' s relationship with Eve and Johnson 's chemistry with Ross did not receive much attention from the fans and media . Other Passions cast members and representatives commented on the preference for Julian over T. C. ; Masters said his character Julian should " just kick T. C. out of his house " and beat him with a 4x4 and a spokesperson from the show pushed Julian and Eve 's romance to the forefront as " a new supercouple in Harmony " without any mention of T. C.

= = = Simone Russell = = =

Simone Russell is the youngest daughter of Eve and T. C. Russell , and is initially always seen in her older sister 's shadow . She is first introduced as a part of a love triangle with Whitney and Chad , and an accomplice to Kay 's schemes to seduce Miguel Lopez @-@ Fitzgerald . Simone receives more prominence after she announces she is a lesbian and begins a relationship with Rae Thomas . T. C. physically beats her after hearing about her relationship with Rae , but after much resistance , her family eventually support her sexual identity . After learning Vincent killed Rae , Simone decides to leave Harmony with her sister to help her settle in New Orleans , and with her pregnancy . Simone does not physically appear on screen after the show moved from NBC to DirecTV , but she is referenced through her letter to Kay before her marriage to Miguel . Simone was portrayed by three actresses over the course of the show : Lena Cardwell , Chrystee Pharris , and Cathy Jenéen Doe .

The program made history by being the first daytime serial to show two women having sex in bed . She is also the first African @-@ American lesbian character to appear in a daytime serial . When discussing the decision to portray Simone as a lesbian , Kalouria emphasized " sexual identity isn 't a passing fancy " and " this is where [Simone] is ... I can assure you we 're not going to make light of this particular topic . " The storyline about Simone 's lesbianism received mixed feedback from critics and media outlets . Simone 's lesbianism and Cathy Jenéen Doe 's performance received mixed feedback from critics and media outlets . Passions won the award for Outstanding Daily Drama at the 17th GLAAD Media Awards for its portrayal of Simone 's sexuality and her relationship with Rae . Despite the award , Sarah Warn , former editor of entertainment website AfterEllen.com , criticized the lesbian reveal as having " reduced Simone to a one @-@ dimensional character who happened to sleep with a girl . "

= = = Whitney Russell = = =

Whitney Russell is the eldest daughter of Eve and T. C. Russell . Whitney was portrayed by Brook Kerr from the series ' debut on July 5 , 1999 , to September 7 , 2007 . In 2005 , Sidne Siobhan Phillips portrayed the character in flashbacks . She is introduced as a close friend of Theresa Lopez @-@ Fitzgerald Crane (Lindsay Hartley) , but she became prominent on the show as the love interest of Chad Harris @-@ Crane . Chad is incorrectly identified as Eve and Julian 's son , and his relationship with Whitney is judged to be incestuous . Whitney 's confusion about her relationship with Chad and her shame at possibly committing incest escalates after she becomes pregnant and gives birth to their son , Miles Harris @-@ Crane . Whitney briefly becomes estranged from Chad and Harmony , and become a nun to absolve herself of the sin of incest . The discovery of Chad 's birth certificate proves the couple are not blood relatives ; they resume their relationship and eventually get married . Whitney leaves Chad after discovering his affair with Vincent Clarkson . Their later reconciliation is cut short when he is murdered by Alistair Crane . Following Chad 's death , Whitney moves to New Orleans to raise Miles and her unborn child with the help of Simone . Whitney does not appear on screen after the show moved from NBC to DirecTV , but she is referenced in a telephone call to police chief Sam Bennett and Simone 's letter to her best friend Kay Bennett .

Media outlets and fans frequently speculated on the exact nature of Whitney 's relationship with Chad . The incest storyline led media outlets to sensationalize Harmony as the place where " half @-@ siblings sleep with one another " . Soap Opera Digest listed the 2006 revelation that Whitney

and Chad were not related by blood as one of Passions ' most shocking secrets . Kerr described the uncertain relationship between the two characters as allowing her to act the character in new and different ways .

= = = Vincent Clarkson = = =

Vincent Clarkson , also known by the alter ego Valerie Davis , is Eve and Julian 's child ; he is later revealed to be the blackmailer and serial rapist of the show 's 2007 summertime extravaganza . His actions are later clarified as a result of Alistair Crane 's orders . In the show 's final episode on NBC , Vincent is revealed to be intersex and Valerie Davis is shown as his alter ego . After the program moved to DirecTV , Vincent 's storylines focus on his plan to torment Eve out of revenge for failing to prevent his abduction at birth , his sexual relationship with Julian , and his pregnancy with his father 's child . Vincent teams up with Viki Chatsworth to kill everyone in Harmony at the rehearsal for a mass wedding between Luis Lopez @-@ Fitzgerald and Fancy Crane , Noah Bennett and Paloma Lopez @-@ Fitzgerald , Miguel Lopez @-@ Fitzgerald and Kay Bennett , and Edna Wallace and Norma Bates . Vincent and Viki are arrested after Tabitha Lenox sacrifices her magic to revive everyone .

Vincent was portrayed by Phillip Jeanmarie from December 26 , 2006 ? July 18 , 2008 ; Valerie Davis was played by Daphnée Duplaix from December 16 , 2004 ? May 28 , 2008 and temporarily by Siena Goines from January 30 , 2007 ? April 3 , 2007 . The character received mixed reactions from the show 's cast members . Jeanmarie praised James E. Reilly for " being bold but at the same time having a tongue in cheek approach to his story telling " , and stated the character represented the way Passions " pushed the boundaries and limits of what other soap operas didn 't dare to do " . Alternatively , Tracey Ross said the storyline of Vincent giving birth to his father 's child made her " physically nauseous " and she could only complete the delivery scenes after the show 's acting coach Maria O 'Brien convinced her of " the comedic possibilities " . Critics also had a mixed response to the character . Jamey Giddens of Daytime Confidential praised Phillip Jeanmarie as deserving an Emmy for making Vincent 's outlandish situations believable . However , Herndon L. Davis of Windy City Times criticized the show 's representation of Vincent 's sexual relationship with Chad as " a down @-@ low storyline which involved an African @-@ American man but eventually turned it into an outrageous intersex serial killer storyline " .

= = Extended family = =

= = = Chad Harris @-@ Crane = = =

Chad Harris @-@ Crane is the main love interest and later husband of Whitney Russell ; he is also the father of Miles Davis Harris @-@ Crane and an additional child . Chad 's early appearances focus on his search for his biological parents and his love triangle with sisters Whitney and Simone . Chad is initially believed to be Eve and Julian 's child , which would make his relationship with Whitney incestuous . Chad 's birth certificate later proves he was conceived when Alistair Crane raped Eve 's adoptive sister Liz Sanbourne . He reunites with Whitney without the stigma of incest . During his separation from Whitney , Chad initiates a sexual relationship with Vincent Clarkson and continues it after his marriage . He is unaware he is committing incest because he is Vincent 's half @-@ uncle , adoptive half @-@ cousin , and half @-@ brother @-@ in @-@ law . After catching Chad having sex with Vincent , Whitney files for divorce ; they later begin to reconcile through helping Theresa Lopez @-@ Fitzgerald and Ethan Winthrop reunite as a couple . Their potential reconciliation is cut short when Chad is murdered by Alistair .

Chad was portrayed by two actors over the course of the show : Donn Swaby and Charles Divins . Divins credited the over @-@ the @-@ top qualities of his character 's storylines for inspiring his performances : he said , " People watch soaps as an escape . People need drama . Whether you love it or hate it , people will talk about it . " Joel McHale from E ! 's weekly television series The

Soup turned a scene in which Chad insisted he was " not gay " despite his affair with Vincent into a running gag by referring to the character as " Not Gay Chad " . During the show 's season five premiere , Charles Divins (who was the principal actor to play Chad during the storylines focusing on the character 's sexuality) made a cameo to explain to McHale that he was not his character and was neither dead nor gay . After Divins leaves the shot , McHale asks " so your character sleeps with transsexuals ? " in reference to the reveal that Vincent was intersex .

= = = Liz Sanbourne = = =

Liz Sanbourne is the antagonist and foil to her adoptive sister Eve Russell . Initially identified only by her first name , Liz is first seen as the owner of a resort on the fictional St. Lisa 's Island , located near Bermuda and the Bermuda Triangle . Liz is still in love with her former boyfriend Brian O 'Leary . Her early appearances center on her attempts to reunite amnesiac Sheridan Crane with Luis Lopez @-@ Fitzgerald , despite Brian 's interest in her . When Liz arrives in Harmony , it is revealed that Liz is Eve 's half @-@ sister , and is later retconned to become her adoptive sister . Liz exposes Eve 's past relationship with Julian Crane , inadvertently leading them to reunite and proving Chad Harris @-@ Crane and Whitney Russell were not committing incest by her identification as Chad 's mother . Liz harbors a deep desire for revenge against Eve for unknowingly abandoning her in an abusive household . Liz also seeks vengeance against the Crane family after being raped by Alistair and later forced to undergo surgery that made her barren . Liz leaves the show in February 2006 , abandoning her vengeance against Eve , Julian , and Alistair to find a new life for herself . An article on Metacritic noted that Marshall " was let go due to budget cuts . " Media outlets ' questions about the nature of Liz 's exit arose from the slashing of the soap opera 's budget by " a reported \$ 4 @-@ to- \$ 5 million " to secure its renewal .

Liz was portrayed by actress Amelia Marshall from October 3 , 2001 to February 17 , 2006 . In 2003 , Arreale Davis and Taquel Graves played the character in flashbacks . Amelia Marshall was hired for the role because of her past work with James E. Reilly on Guiding Light . In an interview with Soap Talk , Marshall said , " I just love the fact that he saw me and realized that I could be such a witch " . In 2003 , actresses Arreale Davis and Taquel Graves played the character in flashbacks .

= = = Irma Johnson = = =

Irma Johnson is the sister of the late Warren Johnson and aunt of Eve Russell . When she was young , Eve had a close relationship with her aunt because of their love of gospel music . Irma is portrayed as being proud of Eve 's singing in the church 's choir ; she discouraged Eve from singing jazz and blues music , calling them sinful . Their relationship became strained when Irma saw a drugged and intoxicated Eve singing in a seedy Boston jazz club and cavorting with several men . Irma disowns Eve when she discovers her relationship with Julian ? who is white ? and her pregnancy with his child . Eve and Irma did not speak for nearly twenty years . Eve paid for Irma to live in a retirement home , but told everyone she had no living relatives in an attempt to keep her past secret .

In 2004 , Eve 's vengeful , adoptive sister Liz Sanbourne discovers Irma 's existence and brings her to Harmony to destroy Eve 's life by revealing her past to her family . Irma tells them Eve was once a prostitute and drug addict while living in Boston and was involved in a relationship with Julian , who is T. C. 's sworn enemy . The revelations destroy Eve and T. C. 's marriage . Despite her Christian upbringing , Irma is often foul @-@ mouthed ; she frequently calls Eve a whore or a slut . When Eve 's daughter Simone tells Irma she is a lesbian , Irma ? who has previously been kind to her ? tells Simone homosexuality is vile and disgusting , and orders her to leave and never come back .

Irma was portrayed by actress Marla Gibbs on a recurring basis in 2004 and 2005 . Gibbs called Irma " real mean " and " terrible " , and expressed surprise at fans ' positive feedback for the character .

= = In other media = =

The Russell family received further attention when the actors participated in public service announcements (PSAs) to celebrate the achievements of African Americans including Sidney Poitier , Marian Anderson , Alex Haley , Thurgood Marshall , Condoleezza Rice , and Bill Cosby in commemoration of Black History Month . The PSAs ran on NBC stations throughout February 2003 . Sheraton Kalouria said the PSA campaign was " another example of Passions ' commitment to diversity and inclusion " alongside its featuring of a racially diverse cast . Tracey Ross and Rodney Van Johnson also made cameo appearances as Eve Russell and T. C. Russell in the series finale of the NBC primetime drama Providence , marking one of the first daytime / primetime crossovers .

Following DirecTV 's decision to not renew the show , Passions partnered with Premiere Props to hold a public two @-@ day estate sale of props and costumes from the show . Stacey Ward , a director of NBCUniversal , pitched the auction as " an opportunity to own a piece of their favorite show " . Several items related to the Russell family were offered for sale , including Vincent 's disguise as the " Blackmailer " (without the mask) and Eve 's medical coat splattered with blood from her botched surgery on Julian .

= = Reception = =

The show initially received negative reviews for its lack of development and focus on the Russells in comparison to the other families . Television critic Hal Boedeker of the Orlando Sentinel criticized the show for relegating the Russell family to " spend [ing] most of their time listening to the problems of the white Bennetts " and questioned its attempt at " racial progress " . Entertainment Weekly 's Ken Tucker wrote the Russells only served to represent the fact that " Harmony also seems to contain exactly one black family " . Alternatively , David Alexander Nahmod of the Bay Area Reporter praised the show for " present [ing] an almost utopian picture of racial harmony in the town of Harmony " by not showing racial inequality or strife .

The actors were nominated for various awards based on their performances . Kerr was nominated for Outstanding Younger Lead Actress , and alongside co @-@ stars Lindsay Hartley and Justin Hartley for Favorite Triangle at the 2005 Soap Opera Digest Awards . Doe was listed as a pre @-@ nominee for the Daytime Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series for the 34th Daytime Emmy Awards alongside co @-@ star Emily Harper , but was not chosen as one of the final nominees .

The actors were also frequently nominated for NAACP Image Awards . Ross received eight nominations for the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actress in a Daytime Drama Series and won the award at the 38th NAACP Image Awards for her portrayal of Eve . Ross has cited Eve as expanding the TV representation of African @-@ Americans and interracial relationships . For her performance as Whitney , Kerr was nominated for the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actress in a Daytime Drama Series at the 39th NAACP Image Awards . Gibbs received positive feedback for her performance as Irma ; she earned a nomination for the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actress in a Daytime Drama Series at the 37th NAACP Image Awards .

Despite the focus on an African @-@ American family , Lynette Rice of Entertainment Weekly said the show failed to attract the " hard @-@ to @-@ reach audience [of] African @-@ American women " ; Sheraton Kalouria said " quite frankly , many of them aren 't aware Passions is even on . "