

Sunday Mirror, March 21st, 1982

STARTIME ★

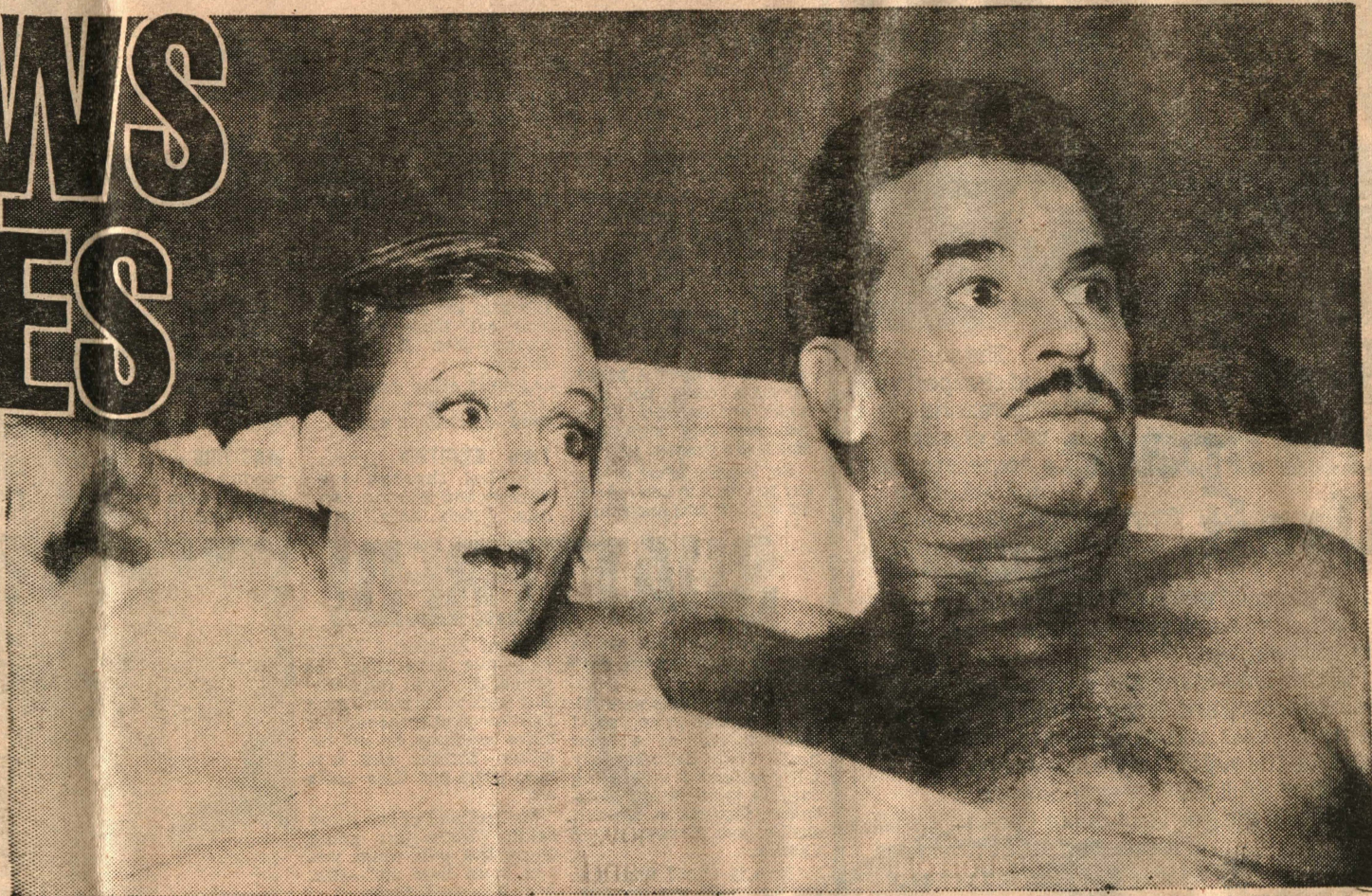
JULIE



Male role: Julie as Victor.

The BIG names ★ The BIG stories

ANDREWS CHANGES SEXES!



Female role: Julie Andrews in a steamy scene with James Garner in the film, Victor/Victoria.

JULIE ANDREWS learned a bizarre lesson in life when she made her latest film.

She came to the conclusion that it's easier to be a man than a woman.

In Victor/Victoria, which opens in London next month, she plays a Paris nightclub singer (Victoria), who pretends to be a man (Victor) and becomes the toast of the town as a female impersonator (Victoria again!).

To prepare for the part Julie spent weeks observing men ("which was very pleasant"), spent hours in front of a mirror trying different poses and even got a few tips from Danny La Rue.

**From
MIKE KERRIGAN
in New York**

New world

She said: "While thinking about it a great deal and observing and acting the role I realised—and excuse me for saying this—that ladies still have a long way to go. Men have it made, or at least it seems that way.

"There is a certain

assurance that you have as a man. It is difficult to explain, but I know that when I was dressed up as the guy and I lined myself up alongside my co-stars, James Garner and Robert Preston I thought to myself: 'Jesus, it really is a whole other world.'

"It was the most challenging thing I've done," she said. "There were all the shifts in what I was

trying to get across versus what I was actually feeling.

"In other words I had to look like a man but try to convey that I was thinking like a woman. There were so many combinations on the theme that to try to figure some of them out got me very confused at times.

High kicks

"On the other hand, the dancing sequences were easy, because they were

designed for me as a drag queen.

"Female impersonators don't actually dance as somebody like me or, say, Juliet Prowse would, with lots of high kicks and energy.

"Instead, they let other people dance around them. It's the chorus line that does all the work."

To complete the tale of sexual tangle in 1930s Paris, Victor/Victoria falls in love — or rather lust — with a visiting Chicago nightclub owner, played by James Garner.

Like her previous two movies, 10 and S.O.B., also directed by her husband Blake Edwards, Victor/Victoria is a far cry from Julie's sweet-as-sugar Mary Poppins and Sound of Music image.

But she denies that Blake—the man who brought the world the Pink Panther—is in any way exploiting her.

"He is not pushing me into anything I don't want to do," she said. "My husband knows me very well and has said very lovingly that since I'm possibly one person in public and

another person in my marriage, maybe there are other qualities that it would be nice to show.

"Everybody thinks I went through a deliberate image change. I suppose it looks like that. But people forget that the second film I made—right after Mary Poppins—was The Americanisation of Emily, which was a racy role.

Free and easy

"I have also done other 'grown up' movies but they were generally less success-

ful than The Sound of Music and Mary Poppins.

"It's the big successes that make the image. And so people think that I am a certain kind of person.

"At home I'm a lot more loose, free and easy, than people might think from seeing me on screen. And it is some of this that Blake has recently tried to show.

"I would not knock the image of Mary Poppins or what Mary Poppins did for my career. It gave many people a lot of pleasure. I wouldn't want to change any of that. But you move on."