

Christine Sees Her Life Portrayed

HOLLYWOOD—There is an authentic ladylike dignity about Christine Jorgensen so marked that when a TV interviewer asked an unexpectedly gauche question about her sex operation, the listener was embarrassed for him—and I don't mean Christine.

It is also more than slightly ironical that the big noise about sex change from man into a woman is being made about "Myra Breckinridge," an out and out fiction story.

DOROTHY MANNERS

Christine is the REAL thing. And she sits quietly these days on a set on the Paramount lot watching director Irving Rapper as he brings her life story to the screen under the title "Christine," an Edward Small Production.

Unlike "Myra," which is being played jointly by Raquel Welch and Rex Reed, "Christine" is being played man-and-woman version by an extraordinarily handsome boy named John Hansen.

"Which is the way it should be played—they're cheating the way they're playing 'Myra'," said Christine, the original. "Gore Vidal was mixed up. He really didn't know his subject," (referring to the author of "Myra").

At 43, Christine Jorgensen is quite stunning looking. Her eyes are blue, her hair blonde, her figure this day flatteringly revealed in a light blue knit suit enhancing the color of her eyes.

She admits she takes up her post daily on the set to see that her story is brought to films with as much authenticity as possible.

"I don't know what I would do without Irving Rapper. He does everything in such excellent taste. For one thing, he is not permitting John Hansen to play my male scenes in a limp-wristed way. And by the way, my maternal grandfather was named John Hansen—did you ever know of such coincidence? I'm convinced John and I have a little ESP going for us in getting this role."

Christine is equally determined that the roles of her mother and father, Florence and George Jorgensen, be handled correctly. "Both my parents, who lived on Long Island, died within the past 18 months. They were so wonderful, so understanding of my problem when it came up, I want them portrayed in this picture just as they were."

There had been hints that the character of the parents was to be changed a bit in the script. That they would be shocked and distressed that their son should undergo an operation to turn him into a woman. It might have been more dramatic that way.

But it is not the way they will be played in the picture. Christine has made sure of that. "Their love and understanding was the basis of my having the courage to make the decision I did," she says softly.

Character actress, Ellen Clark, who plays the mother, is wearing Mrs. Jorgensen's real jewelry which was bequeathed to Christine. "It makes me feel good seeing Ellen wearing the jewels that belonged to my mother."

As for Christine herself, she is very quick to tell you that she never knew happiness nor peace of mind before her sex change into womanhood.

"All I have lost is the privilege of having children. But many women are childless and lead satisfied and fulfilled lives," she says.

What about the recent claim of another male who had undergone the same operation and now is publicly stating that (he-she) is a natural parent?

"I do not know the particulars about that case. But in my case, I am sure child-bearing is out of the question. Sometime, years later on, it may be possible for this to happen to others like me, perhaps even in my lifetime, with the enormous progress being made with transplants. But at 43, I am too old to be holding out any such hopes as this for myself."

Has the sensationalism surrounding her case ever dis-

She's Sold on Johnny

"I think Johnny Carson is one of the greatest talents in showbusiness, and I have enormous respect for him," enthuses Marian Mercer, currently starring in "Promises, Promises" on Broadway. "He can be tremendously funny one minute then very serious the next, but the thing that really sets him apart from most is that he's such a professional."

And Marian should know. She's just finished taping Carson's upcoming special, "Monsanto Night Presents Johnny Carson's Repertory Company in an Evening of Comedy," which airs Wednesday, November 12 (8-9 p.m. EST) over NBC-TV. Also joining Carson in this comedy hour will be George C. Scott, Maureen Stapleton, Johnny Olson and Bud Robinson.

tressed her or left her feeling sorry that she underwent a sex change?

"Not for a moment. I lead a very quiet life and have several close good friends to share it with. It is something in the nature of a fling for me to be in Hollywood where almost everything is slightly on the sensational side. But I am enjoying it because I believe we are making an honest picture about a serious subject.

"If you are asking me about my personal philosophy—I go along with Joe E. Lewis, who said, 'You only live once. And if you do it right, once may be enough'."

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