

Interviewer: John Kearns

Interviewee: Marie Jamille

Interview Date: 2003-02-01

Description: An interview with Marie Jamille, a member of Hot Peaches and Michael Lynch's sister. Marie discusses the Hot Peaches show "Christopher Street Columbus."

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Disclaimer: This transcription omits vocal fillers (e.g., "um" and "like") for clarity and flow. Sensitive and/or personal information has been redacted.

[00:00:06]	Interviewer	Amy knew Chrysis very well and so Amy gave me--
[00:00:08]	Jamille	So Amy gave you a mention. Junior, that name's familiar I think. My brother knows Junior. Babs, no. Mark, no. Michael, that's my brother and then there's me. No, I don't know that priest.
[00:00:36]	Interviewer	This is Marsha's family.
[00:00:39]	Jamille	Didn't know any of her family
[00:00:40]	Interviewer	I'm in touch with them
[00:00:42]	Jamille	Good.
[00:00:43]	Interviewer	This is just information that I have. And you would know Tim Fey.
[00:00:52]	Jamille	No.
[00:00:53]	Interviewer	And there's some more names here, Amelia there.
[00:00:59]	Jamille	Is that Theresa oh that name is familiar. I may have contact with them or somebody alike about a permit [mumbling] Chelsea we know Chelsea.
[00:01:27]	Interviewer	You know Chelsea?
[00:01:29]	Jamille	Mhm.
[00:01:30]	Interviewer	Is Chelsea in Transgender House in Brooklyn where Sylvia lives?
[00:01:37]	Jamille	I don't know where Chelsea lives but there is a group that meets here called "Metrogender" and that's where I met Chelsea, was through the center here.
[00:01:48]	Interviewer	And I'm sure Sylvia knows Chelsea?
[00:01:52]	Jamille	Uh-huh. No. Daniel, Marcus, no.

[00:02:03]	Interviewer	Some more names.
[00:02:09]	Jamille	No... That's March, Sherry, Nick, Marsha, no sorry.
[00:02:23]	Interviewer	That's great, alright. Just start with asking you a few questions about your background, where you're from.
[00:02:32]	Jamille	Okay, I'm from New York. Born here in New York.
[00:02:38]	Interviewer	Alright and you got involved in Hot Peaches through your brother? He was already in the group?
[00:02:40]	Jamille	Yeah, he was in the group and they were doing a show that I think was a show Amy was in. This was '92 then he became very involved with them and they were in London doing a show and —
[00:03:07]	Interviewer	I think that might have been the show that Marsha went to London on —
[00:03:10]	Jamille	Yes.
[00:03:11]	Interviewer	Okay good because Amy told me about that.
[00:03:13]	Jamille	I can't remember the name of it but I went to see the show and I went basically because the air fare was real cheap, the Gulf War had just broke out and nobody wanted to fly.
[00:03:26]	Interviewer	Oh nobody wanted to fly?
[00:03:29]	Jamille	So I said 'oh perfect' so I got a couple days off and jumped on a plane and went to you know spend a week there in London and saw the show and hung out with the group and Jimmy and I started talking and he found me a relatively interesting person I guess and when he wrote his next show there was a part for me in it, and that's how I got in the group.
[00:04:01]	Interviewer	Were you singing? What were you doing?
[00:04:04]	Jamille	I was basically an actress. I didn't really consider myself a singer when I found out what was in this I said 'Well darling there's one problem, I don't sing' and so both Michael and Jimmy said 'Don't worry about it' they said remember Rich Harrison made musical after musical and he

		never signed a note. So they said ‘You got attitude’
[00:04:32]	Interviewer	And that’s what they were looking for?
[00:04:34]	Jamille	That’s what they were looking for so yeah.
[00:04:38]	Interviewer	And your brother had been in the group for a while before then?
[00:04:42]	Jamille	That was at least the 2nd show he had done with them.
[00:04:44]	Interviewer	That he had done okay, and did you spend time with Marsha at all during the time you were over there?
[00:04:52]	Jamille	Yeah, when we were over there I was talking to Michael and I was saying ‘I don’t know what I’m gonna’, I’m trying to remember London with Marsha and by the time I got there had been gestures that had already happened but the most that we both kind of remembered was he said ‘well one of the things Marsha did was get into the queen’s garden, was picking her flowers’. I’m not quite sure how Marsha got into the queen’s garden, and how she was picking her flowers, but yes that is what she did. Then there was another time that she was there and almost got hit by a bus but you see people do that in London because —
[00:05:40]	Interviewer	They look the wrong way?
[00:05:41]	Jamille	Everything is the wrong way. And what else did I hear that Marsha had done. But Marsha, there was one more incident that he had remembered, oh dear I’m losing it now but the thing was you know Marsha was just a free-spirit moving around London. She attracted a lot of attention.
[00:06:10]	Interviewer	She enjoyed attracting attention?
[00:06:12]	Jamille	I think so but she may have been unaware of the attention she attracted, I don’t think--Marsha was almost otherworldly. She just kind of moves through things and there would be everything crashing behind her and Marsha like a little tugboat just kept on moving along with her head up high.
[00:06:41]	Interviewer	That’s crazy.
	Jamille	She was just such a, there was such a rare innocent quality about Marsha.

[00:06:42]		
[00:06:51]	Interviewer	So this was really shortly before she died that...
[00:06:54]	Jamille	No that, well relatively I guess but that was like I said '92. That winter.
[00:07:04]	Interviewer	And she died that July.
[00:07:08]	Jamille	No she died the next year before when Marsha died was when we got the news on July 11th. By this time Amy was out the group, I was in the group we had a whole other show at this point. The show that Marsha had gone to Europe with the group on, that was passed. Jimmy was, that winter spring sat down and wrote something new this was called 'Christopher street Columbus.'
[00:07:42]	Interviewer	Okay I've seen that mentioned yes.
[00:07:44]	Jamille	And I played Herman, Herman Divine. We left New York and did it at PS 122, that was the last time I saw Marsha was at PS 122.
[00:08:05]	Interviewer	Okay and this was after you went to London.
[00:08:07]	Jamille	To see Marsha's show.
[00:08:09]	Interviewer	Right and then you came back and later on you saw her, she just came to visit the group, to see the show or—
[00:08:14]	Jamille	Oh yeah, she would come to rehearsals she would come see the shows because even though she wasn't in the Christopher Street Columbus she was still around, a part of the atmosphere I guess. So, when we were doing that at 122, Marsha came around and she gave my brother this wonderful gown, beautiful gown and me she gave this scarf.
[00:08:52]	Interviewer	Yes tell me about the scarf.
[00:08:53]	Jamille	This little funny looking scarf was a triangle with little balls that looked like pompoms hanging off the ends. Nothing really matches on the scarf but it's still something likeable.
[00:09:12]	Interviewer	Is it something that she found or do you think she put it together?

[00:09:16]	Jamille	No I think, it looks like it was bought that way and she gave me this beautiful designer suit, you know Marsha had a way of finding clothes and getting clothes maybe she did thrift shops but she found this wonderful designer suit and I took the jacket with me because it had this beautiful embroidery on it. So she bought this to 122 one evening and it wasn't our last performance when we left for the new year and she just wanted-- these were just things she said "you can use this, you can use this" so she gave us her presents and she liked the show she really did she thought it was good. That was the last time I saw Marsha, it was on July 11th, I'm not sure what day she actually died but we found out then.
[00:10:21]	Interviewer	It was on the first week of July, they don't know exactly when it happened but were you in Germany with your brother at the time?
[00:10:27]	Jamille	Yes we were in Hamburg staying in a brothel, yes Hamburg.
[00:10:40]	Interviewer	And who told you? Did someone call from New York?
[00:10:41]	Jamille	Yeah someone called from New York. Michael was devastated, I mean we were all devastated but Michael was just white and pretty much for the rest of the trip he would dedicate songs to Marsha.
[00:11:09]	Interviewer	So when they had the memorial service in New York you guys were all in London, Europe at the time. Because—
[00:11:13]	Jamille	Yeah, mhm.
[00:11:16]	Interviewer	Because I have a video tape of the memorial service
[00:11:20]	Jamille	You do?
[00:11:20]	Interviewer	And there were several hundred people there and the church was full.
[00:11:24]	Jamille	Wow, I bet, I bet. I see that you have Chrysis name out, did you know there was also a film made about her?
[00:11:32]	Interviewer	Yes I seen it
[00:11:33]	Jamille	You've seen it? Split. I just have the name and number of the first movie who did it.

[00:11:44]	Interviewer	Oh the director and writer? You can get it at a video store and it's relatively short I think it's about an hour, maybe an hour and twenty minutes. But yes I did see that because Amy Coleman was very close to Chrysis, they spent a lot of time together over the years so Amy told me all about her. Actually, Amy has a website.
[00:12:10]	Jamille	Does she?
[00:12:11]	Interviewer	On the internet, put in Amy Coleman and you will get a website and she has all sorts of pictures from Hot Peaches and everything so try to go in there and she has a tribute to Marsha and a tribute to Chrysis.
[00:12:23]	Jamille	Get out that's great. That's great.
[00:12:25]	Interviewer	So if you're on the internet just put in Amy's name and find it.
[00:12:29]	Jamille	I'm glad to hear she's doing that a lot of people when I got in the group was in Europe, few people would come and ask "Where's Amy"
[00:12:44]	Interviewer	Oh ok. And she's still performing, she was performing at Chicago Blues, it's over on 8th Avenue by 14th street in July.
[00:12:52]	Jamille	Oh she is so good. Fabulous.
[00:12:44]	Interviewer	She has told me a lot of very good stories. Did Marsha ever talk to you about, well first of all S.T.A.R the group that she started.
[00:13:04]	Jamille	No, I didn't know the political side of that.
[00:13:07]	Interviewer	Nothing about Stonewall or experience at Stonewall?
[00:13:12]	Jamille	She never talked about that, you know I only really became politicized in '95, I was dancing through life you know the Cindy Walker video Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, that was me.
[00:13:29]	Interviewer	Okay so the fact that you were with somebody who was at Stonewall wasn't really a whole lot of concern at the time?
[00:13:35]	Jamille	No I mean I knew about Stonewall and had admiration towards the fact but it didn't really reach real far down in my consciousness at the time. Now, when I'm out I marched not this but last year and the year before that when I marched it brought more into my community and the chanting we get down and walking but the thing is I always mention Marsha.
[00:14:14]	Interviewer	Did Marsha ever talk about her life on the streets, that whole part of her life?
[00:14:19]	Jamille	No, we really didn't. I think superficial is kind of a negative way to put it

		but it was a pretty much just the talk that we would do, we would pretty much be about the show.
[00:14:39]	Interviewer	You were just in the group and sort of focused on what was going on in the group.
[00:14:43]	Jamille	Yeah, and Marsha was just one of the people who just seemed to be attached to the group.
[00:14:56]	Interviewer	So whether she was performing or not she was apart of the group.
[00:14:58]	Jamille	Yeah, whether she was performing or not she was attached to the group.
[00:15:03]	Interviewer	Well I'm sure that you mentioned that, I wrote down, you thought the women's thing was Linda who wrote.
[00:15:09]	Jamille	Linda Stein, Yeah.
[00:15:11]	Interviewer	Linda Stein? S-t-e-i-n. And you think it was a Masters or Doctoral dissertation and you wouldn't happen to know what university she was with would you?
[00:15:30]	Jamille	Was it NYU? it may have been in New York
[00:15:38]	Interviewer	Alright that's good I would hope that Jimmy would have a copy of it if she actually did it.
[00:15:49]	Jamille	I would hope so. I think she's still in the US, she was on Prince St.
[00:15:57]	Interviewer	Oh really?
[00:15:57]	Jamille	Mhm.
[00:15:59]	Interviewer	I'll write that down. I'm gonna speak to your brother and hopefully get the other end this weekend and I'm going to try and get in touch with Jimmy because he probably has all sorts of stuff.
[00:16:19]	Jamille	Oh yeah I bet him and Mark
[00:16:22]	Interviewer	And Mark Annay?
[00:16:23]	Jamille	And Mark yeah because Mark, he was the picture taker.
[00:16:29]	Interviewer	And Mark is still in New York?
[00:16:30]	Jamille	To my knowledge, he was on East 6th Street. East 6th.
[00:16:45]	Interviewer	Would you happen to know if he was a member of ACT UP?

[00:16:48]	Jamille	I think he was.
[00:16:49]	Interviewer	Because I seem to remember with the glasses and everything which doesn't really help but I seem to remember a guy in ACT UP who was named Mark Annay.
[00:16:56]	Jamille	I think it was. I think he was in ACT UP, definitely.
[00:17:00]	Interviewer	So you think he goes pretty far back with the group?
[00:17:04]	Jamille	Mark?
[00:17:04]	Interviewer	Yeah.
[00:17:08]	Jamille	I don't really know, I don't know how far back Mark really goes back.
[00:17:14]	Interviewer	Okay, that's fine.
[00:17:19]	Jamille	You know him and Jimmy were, are partners, but I think that relatively new but I mean the group goes back 25 years.
[00:17:33]	Interviewer	Right, right, and hopefully, well Jimmy goes back to the beginning obviously so hopefully I can get even another person who was around at the time. Okay that's good. Is there anything else?
[00:17:47]	Jamille	I cant think of anything, like I said I'd hate to have dragged you here just this little--
[00:17:55]	Interviewer	No no this is all helpful because I'm going to try to do, what I'm doing is recorded interviews with anybody I can find that knew Marsha. I'm going to try and hopefully put it together as a book but even if that doesn't happen what I will do is I'm going to do is take all the tapes and all the research and put it into an archive so that the future someone who is doing research will be able to get all this information so what you have provided is important for me so alright hopefully my tape recorder worked.