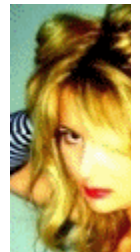
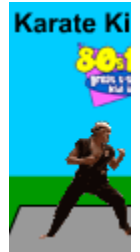




[ARTICLE ARCHIVE](#) - [INTERVIEWS](#) - [BABES](#) - [FORUM](#) - [PODCAST](#) - [FACEBOOK](#) - [MYSpace](#) - [EMAIL](#) - [BUY ADS](#)



GLYNNIS O'CONNOR

THE RETROCRUSH INTERVIEW



Recently, we talked with Glynnis O'Connor about her life and work as an actress in such pop culture classics as: *The Boy in the Plastic Bubble*, *Ode to Billy Joe*, *Jeremy*, *Baby Blue Marine*, *Johnny Dangerously*, and *The Stranger Beside Me*. So, without further adieu we bring you the talented, beautiful and insightful Glynnis O'Connor.

What was your first job like?

My first job was in Stockton. It was called *Senior Year*, it was a pilot. Then we did the series. It was 9 shows and I think it was in 1973 or so and Dick Donner directed it. He went on to do wonderful films. It was in Stockton and we stayed in Motor Inns. It was a blast.





It's too funny to imagine any movie being filmed in Stockton.

I think a lot of movies have been filmed in Stockton.

Was Linda Purl in that one too?

She did one of the shows in the series. It was me, Gary Frank, DebraLee Scott, and Scott Columby. It was the same year that *Happy Days* came out as well. I think *Happy Days* became a huge hit. They were both 1950's, but ours was a serial drama before its time.

Someone had written that back then you could be mistaken for Linda Blair or Linda Purl.

There weren't that many outlets then as there are now for actors and we were all kind of petite, fair, had honey hair, and we were all around the same age. Linda Purl also worked with Robby Benson in a film called *Jory* before I worked with Robby in *Jeremy* which was the first feature film I ever did. I think Linda and I only did that show together, but of course we've known each other over the years. Linda Blair, I think I met once way back. We all had the same agent. We were all in the same agency. The business was so different then, so much smaller.

In *Jeremy* you also sang.

I did...however faintly and quietly.



**YOU
COUL
HERE**
CLICK
AND FI
HOW REA
OUR RA

retroC
PA
THE S
MYSTER
COCK
JOHNN
SEW DA
STEVE W
FUN CI
LEFT-OV
SOMETHI
FA
I-MO
LUCY
POPCRU
buz

Robby Benson did too.

He sang the title song, "I have a Blue Balloon." Joe Brooks wrote the song and he (Robby) of course at that time was writing his own music. I think since then he's written a whole musical he performed, and I saw it with Karla (Robby's wife). It's wonderful.

He's a Renaissance man.

He is. You're exactly right. He does everything. You know he's just written a novel.

You did a made for TV movie called, *Someone I touched* with Cloris Leachman, and your mom, the actress Lenka Peterson.

This was an early job. Again, a movie for television when they where big deals. James Olson was in it and Lou Antonio directed it. Lou's directed tons of television. He goes way back, he's a wonderful

director. He also had known my mother who's been an actress for years, she's 82 now. She's been around forever and done everything, she's still acting. She just did a 2-character play and she was hilarious in it.

She played my mother and I played her daughter. It was about Syphilis. I contracted Syphilis or something because I had an affair with an older man and I was the daughter, it was hard for her to deal with. It was a sensitive, thoughtful film about stigma and feelings. I was so young at the time, it dealt with the irresponsibility of an adult with an older teenager. It really dealt with it very sensitively as I recall. I haven't thought about that film in a long time.

Cloris Leachman sang the title song.

Yes, that's right. Cloris and my mother go way back. They went to school together in Iowa City or Northwestern.

With your mother being an actress and your father a producer for NBC did they influence you to become an actress?



Of course, enormously, it's almost written. I barely had a breath to think about doing anything else. In the third grade my first job was as a munchkin in the *Wizard of Oz*. My mother, who had five children, had been acting nonstop all these venues in early live TV. She had all these kids in school and wanted to spend time with them. She took 10 years off and started a drama club. That grew into a teenage theater group of which I was a part as well. The other director of the teenage theatre group was Al Chompy. It lasted for over 6 years.

Through theater games we developed our own shows. It was a remarkable time in all of our lives. In fact we had a reunion a couple of years ago at her 80th birthday, there was over 150 people there. She's written a book about it called, "[Kids take the stage](#)". It's a book for the layman about bringing kids out through theater. It's not about making them into professional actors. It's a hands-on, good instruction book on how to use theater to bring out their creativity and who they are. To give them a chance to find themselves as sort of an after school program because that's what she did.

You were in the iconic movie *Boy in the Plastic Bubble* with John Travolta which has become a part of pop culture history.

It's the coolest thing. I love it. I loved it when that started happening. I thought I'm actually a part of something that was part of our culture. I had a bit of a taste of that, which was really nice.

Even Seinfeld had an episode about it.

He did? I have to Google that. It was so much fun making that movie. It was warm, it was just a great atmosphere, it was dare I say a loving set. It always comes from the script doesn't it? If it's in the script, and if you're lucky enough to have a real capable, good director like Randal Kleiser, John of course and everybody, Diana. So many people came out of that movie. I've just watched them go on.



Another pleasure having worked so many years is to watch people's careers just grow and bloom at different times in their lives. Like Helen Hunt, I was in a movie with her called *All Together Now* that Randal Kleiser directed as well. That was my first TV movie. It was one of those early ones and John Rubinstein, Helen Hunt, Brad Savage, and I played a family who lost their parents and they tried to separate us, that sometimes happens. It was about the family trying to stay together and the older brother feeling the pressure. It was a really nice movie and Helen played the younger sister. I remember Helen as being so aware, very quietly aware watching everything. She was very sensitive and very real. Just watching her bloom has been so amazing. It's great. It's one of the benefits of getting older and you can look back at all these generations coming up. It's sobering yes, but it's a real delight.

On *The Boy in the Plastic Bubble* did you have any idea that John Travolta and Diana Hyland were in a relationship?

I guess they fell in love on the film. I'm usually the last person to realize these things. The affection was apparent that it was all there. It was also just the atmosphere of it. I'm sure that was part of what contributed to it was their feelings for each other. It was all just happening at the time. I can't say, "Oh yeah, they became an item on the set." It was far quieter than that.

Did you already know how to ride a horse?



I had to learn, but I had ridden when I was a kid a little bit. That's what's best about being an actor you get to learn how to do all these things. You get these wonderful lessons. I learned how to drive a stick-shift on one of the sets of something. It's great, you get out with one of the drivers and drive around the back lot. I remember driving around learning to drive a stick on the back lot of Universal and seeing deers hop around the streets and the dirt roads.

Is there anything you're allergic to?

You mean substance wise? Poison Ivy which I've gotten on films about three times. I look at it and I break out.

The Boy in the Plastic Bubble is a great movie.

Getting back to John too, it was clear when you talk about the atmosphere on the set. One of the things that was palpable was John. It was as if you were watching it happening with him. It was as if you were waiting for the world to find out about John Travolta. Everybody was discovering who he was right at that time. It was like the quiet before the storm. John was opening up to the world. The world discovering him in a big, huge way and you could feel it. However, at the same time there was no attitude. It was just a feeling and it was all happy and positive. It wasn't as if, "Oh, he's going to be a star or I'm going to be a star so I'm not going to talk to you." It wasn't like that at all. That's just not part of his makeup and it never was and it never will be. It was an exciting sense that was there.

Did they grind that out pretty quickly?

They shot them all pretty quickly. I think they shoot them much faster now. They actually gave you more time in those days; of course we had weekends off.

People don't realize before cable, those made for TV movies were a big deal.

They were big events. There was TV guide, it was a big magazine. They had the TV program layout in the newspapers and the whole sections. It was so different.



When you read the script to *Ode to Billy Joe* where you surprised or did you find it unusual at the time?

It was an unusual, quiet indictment of society and what society will press on individuals to have to cloud their whole understanding of themselves. To push them into desperate acts because they think something's wrong with them. I love the last scene of that movie because Jimmy Best right at the very end comes to terms with the girl Bobbie Lee and it's as if they're both looking at each other and saying, "You know it really sucks. Our society really sucks. Why can't we just live with how we're made?"

It was an innovative movie for something so long ago.

So early at the time. True, you're right, I didn't even realize it at the time.

I started re-reading the synopsis of the movie because it's been awhile since I watched it and I was surprised by the plot.

I remember the press of the movie as I recall they made a big deal about the song of course. Rightly so, because it was such a hit song, she sang it so well. She actually came to the set and it was so exciting. I remember when we were doing press for it. Do you remember in the days when they sent you on press junkets and you traveled all over the country? I saw so much of the country just with these press junkets for these films. It was before the days where you could go into a studio and do all of the interviews over the internet. You'd be on camera and you could cover the country from one studio. We'd got into so many radio stations. It was really fun.

What about the director Max Baer Jr.? (*Jethro in the Beverly Hillbillies*)

Yes, what a character. He's hilarious. He had a big, big, booming personality. Big guy, he was a big presence on the set. He was very caring with his actors, fun. I have real good memories of Max.

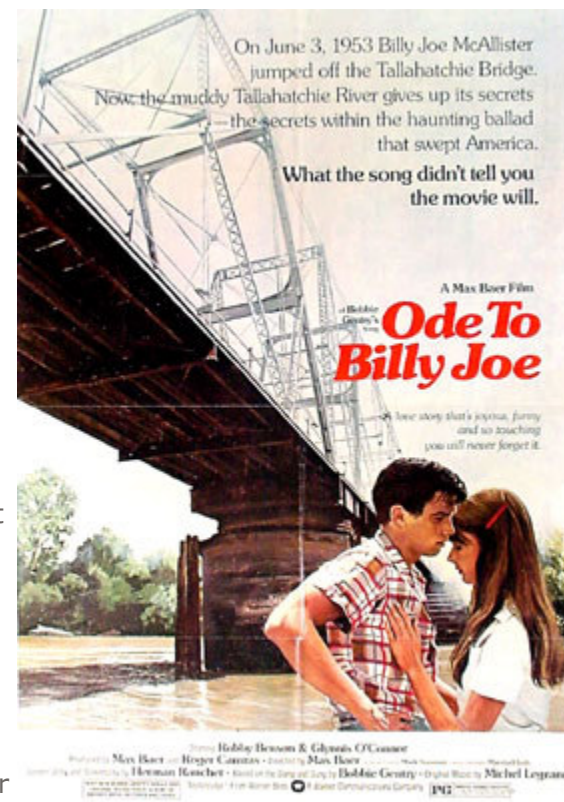
You filmed on location.

Down in Itta Bena and Greenwood, Mississippi. It was stifling. Everybody was taking salt pills. We would shoot at night. In one scene it took the whole film magazine. We had an 11 minute scene and in the middle of the take these huge Cicadas would fly in the middle of our faces. We'd have to back track a couple of lines to keep the scene going. We couldn't stop because otherwise we'd never get through it.

The cloud cover, we'd be doing these walking shots and we'd have to wait. Down there it just rains, then it opens up, then the sun shines, then the clouds. It's not like Los Angeles. I was early enough on it in filmmaking that it wasn't part of my vocabulary as much. As an actor you do enough films and it becomes part of yourself. You don't even think about that thing. You automatically know how to hit a mark without looking down because you know where to look and the feel of the camera, where you have to be emotionally as buildup to the clappers, the action, and the speed. I just love working on movies. It's so much fun.

A movie like that must have rocketed you to fame?

I went through that for about 5 minutes. Just long enough for



titillating. Then to have it be odd and threatening, then to have it be intrusive and then it kind of faded fortunately. Mostly because I'm a terrible celebrity, I really am. I didn't do all the things you're supposed to do as a celebrity. I did a play with Susan Sarandon once. The director of the play said, "If you and Susan were caught in a rain storm in Manhattan Susan would get the first taxi in five minutes and you would go find a stray cat in the doorway." That's the difference and he was right. Susan is enormously talented and I think that has a little bit to do with it too.

I experienced enough of being recognized to kind of know what that is like. One of the aspects of it that is a little disconcerting is you feel very much alone because when people mark you either at a cocktail party, a gathering. You're always aware of it. Its part of you, you can never completely...I mean one can't or I couldn't completely relax. When people meet you they're very invested in showing you who they are because you're a target kind of a thing. You rarely get a real conversation with people because they're too aware of who you are and consequently too aware of how they're coming across to you. They're too aware of experiencing themselves talking to this celebrity. It's really lonely.

I did a movie called, "[Why me](#)" about a woman who lost half of her face in a traffic accident with Armand Assante. I spent nearly the whole film in this horrendous makeup and I experienced the same thing on the set because people had such reactions to the makeup, understandably so, that they had a hard time just standing with me and talking.

Wasn't she a military nurse to?

Yes, that's right. Annie Potts was in that. She went on *Designing Women*.

And Ghostbusters.

That's right. She even did a pilot with my brother Darren O'Connor called, *Hollywood High*. Darren's now an attorney in Albany. I love Annie Potts and Armand is heaven.

Was it difficult to kiss Robby Benson?

In *Jeremy*? Probably I was an old enough teenager that it wasn't. It's different when you're on a film set. It's not like you're doing a school play and you're with all your friends. When you're



on a film set and you're that age you're sort of removed from the peer pressure of school. It's such a refreshingly different atmosphere from school. We were so young and here we are doing these scenes. I didn't know anything. I loved it. Loved it! It was a gas, just loved doing those scenes. I didn't have a big problem. However, having said that I felt like my stomach was turning inside out the night before.

He was such a heartthrob.

True, but that came later. I didn't have to deal with any of that anxiety of acting with someone who was already kind of a "heartthrob". In a way his popularity started growing at that time. With Robby, he was always a fellow actor to me. We dated of course. He was my first real boyfriend. Robby now is like a brother. He was so much a part of my formative years. We kind of grew up together in a lot of ways. We did these intimate parts at different times in our relationship and growing up. The affection was always right there, it never wavered, and it never stopped. We were always in sync with each other. It always just kind of worked.

Did you ever feel this was going to be the person you were going to marry?

Oh, of course. You always think that at those ages and of course you never do. You're so young. I was a teenager.

For you it's even harder it's almost like art imitates life in that *Jeremy* is about this relationship and you had one in real life.

I know. I know.

Did you date for a year?

A couple of years.

Your first guy.

Then you just go on. Even though we had both gone on with our lives such as they were, we were so young. Our beginning lives, we were still forming ourselves in those years. One is still forming themselves. Thank God I didn't, I waited years to get married. Thank God, I would have become far too neurotic. Thank God for Robby, he didn't



marry me.

You also did a short with Amy Heckerling called *Getting it Over with*.

It was fun. We shot it at the old AFI mansion in Beverly Hills, way into the night. Amy I knew because her cinematographer [Rob Hahn](#) was also at AFI. He has gone on to become a major cinematographer. He's wonderful and a dear friend. Rob I knew because he lived down the street. He had worked on a short called *Skin* with my mother and she was staying with me. That's how I met Rob then that's how I met Amy. I believe that's how it went. I ended up doing Amy Heckerling's first movie. I haven't seen her in a few years, she hasn't changed, but of course she's grown older and more mature. She's so wonderfully accomplished, and inventive. She had her finger right on the pulse of that age group and comedy. Then I did her other film *Johnny Dangerously*.



That movie had some big names in comedy : Michael Keaton and Joe Piscopo.

Maureen Stapleton, Ed Griffin Dune, the DA. I played his wife. It was really fun to make. Marilu Henner was so good at getting people together because she's a dancer. When you get a bunch of dancers

together you just get down and become a family. Marilu made everyone into a family and everyone was having so much fun anyway. We used to finish filming and all gather in one of the dressing room trailers, usually Maureen's and play games.

No way!

Yes, we did and you know how actors get so tired. It's exhausting filming. You just want to go home. No, we would finish filming, we'd get together with Maureen, we'd laugh, and we'd play card games. It was a gas. We had the best time on that movie.

I watched it recently and thought it was a funny parody on mobster movies.

I got to wear this incredible red dress for the first scene that was later cut. We did a musical number on New York Street on the Fox lot.



They need a special edition DVD with the extra footage.

Wouldn't that be cool. They should do that. I'd be in and out on these little bits. You'd be surprised at how long you have to be on a set. We did a lot of things that got cut and one of the things was that huge musical number. We had to rehearse and rehearse and rehearse it like you do a musical and they always bring people together in a big way. The feeling of that set was one of being in a musical stage play. Everybody kind of was working together in a couple of big scenes involving music numbers. You had to learn the steps, learn the music.

Too bad Amy's short isn't on DVD.

It was cute, really funny. It was very light.

You were the queen of teenage angst for awhile. When you see *Jeremy*, to a certain extent *The Boy in the Plastic Bubble*, and *Ode to Billy Joe*.

I also did *Our Town* too.

That was the third movie you did with Robby.

It's almost as if what you're going through...only it's in front of a camera because I was all those ages. The venues were so limited in those days. I was one of the only people of that age in film at that time doing all these parts. You're right I was the queen of teenage angst briefly there me and Linda Purl and a few others.

I recently watched a movie with you called *Kid Vengeance*.

We shot that in the Sinai desert. You know what I would do when I went to work in the morning I'd look for a big rock so I could have a place to go to the bathroom. We didn't have any bathrooms. The only person who had a bathroom was Lee Van Cleef because he had a trailer. I got to ride a horse in the Sinai desert. I got to gallop all over the place. I only ride horses because I learned on sets. It was beautiful. It was all Israelis and I'd never been to the Middle East.



It was a Golan Globas.

It was a Golan Globas production. That's right. It's an Israeli production company.

Was Leif Garrett cool at that time? Not too full of himself?

It was very early on. Again, it was his first. I don't know where in his career, but it was early on. He wasn't famous. We were all just actors on a movie. Everybody was making a movie. Lee and John Marley were some of the established, elder statesmen. There were a couple of guys on it. There was one actor who could do the New York Times crossword puzzle in 15 minutes. I remember in those days my parents would send me the Sunday New York Times through the mail so I could read it. To think back it was like yesterday, answering machines had just come into vogue.



Did you do your own stunts?

I did some. I'm not big on doing my own. I played a lot of my own tennis in [Little Mo](#). That was lucky, of course you didn't see where the ball went most of the time.

What a sad story that was. People have called your performance superb.

That's so kind.

It's unfortunate it hasn't come to [DVD](#). I was reading that someone did a documentary.

Yes, and she did a really nice job. I got to [narrate the documentary](#).

You also did a movie with Jan Michael Vincent *Baby Blue Marine*.

I really liked that script and it was really fun working on that. It was a lovely script to be working on. John Hancock directed that. We shot it up in Mt. Shasta, California. I could live up there. It's so pretty. I remember John taught me how to fly fish on days off.

Even Richard Gere had one of his early performances in it.

He played the Marine raider who gets the young baby blue drunk and switches with him. He had white hair from the fright. He was terrific in that. I remember Richard being quiet and concentrated. He was very much into his role a lot of the time. I wish I had more scenes with Richard. He was good to work with.

It's sad when you think of what Jan Michael Vincent has gone through.

What's up with him now?

He's had a couple of car accidents and he's had it bad.

I'm sorry for him.

It's a tough business. It's amazing when people have such long running careers. You have such talent and drive to continue.

Thank you, that's so kind of you to say. I tell you though I'm really impressed with people. Donna McKechnie who was the original Cassie in *A Chorus Line* once said that there are only two professions that are equal or tougher than being an actor: being a prize fighter and being a prostitute. Those are the only two. In many ways it's very true. You do have to have the skin of an armadillo and sensitivity. Film acting in particular, stage acting is rough too because it can be wrenching on your body. Film acting is so hard, you get so tired. These actors work so hard. I look at actors in series like *Law & Order* I've done a bunch of them. I've done all of them. I mean if you're an actor in New York you can't get away without doing *Law and Order*. These people work nonstop and they work such long hours, far longer than in the old days and much faster because there's not as much money as there used to be. Even movies they're not made like they used to be unless they're really high (budget).

On the other hand you can do the high def video and keep shooting the scene over and you're not spending enormous amounts of money so it may be different now that people are able to make movies without so much money & have them be really good.

You also worked with Telly Savalas in a *Kojak* movie.

We did a big *Kojak* movie in New York. He was hilarious. He was a cutup on the set. I don't know if you know this, but he was really funny. He was a love, really professional. I loved him. He was funny, warm, and kooky. He had a quirky funniness about him which was a total surprise.



He seems almost gruff.

Very, he's not like that. He's really funny. It's not like he's funny ha ha, laugh at me. He's just warm, cuddly funny.

You were also in another movie that scared the crap out of my mom called, *The Deliberate Stranger* with Mark Harmon.

Did it really?

A lot of people were scared to death of Mark Harmon after that movie.

They made him look very much like Ted Bundy. In fact my husband was nervous at the time because Bundy was still alive. He was afraid Bundy was going to get out and come after me. Oh boy, that was a creepy movie to work on. Everybody was creeped out by that. I know Mark was. He did a really good job. Mark I've worked with four times. In that I played a really depressed character. Someone who is really a rag, my character is his girlfriend, a person who would stay with someone, who had seriously low self esteem and who had not a clue of what was going on and was used by him.

That must have been a long shoot?

It was a long shoot. We shot in Utah and in Los Angeles. In fact wasn't that a 3 hour? It was a mini-series type thing, one of those long TV things. I remember it as being a long shoot, I sort of came in and out of it, Utah and then LA. Again, a real nice set, Mark is the ultimate. He's so professional and he's such a dear. Loved working with Mark every single time I worked with him.



Is there a time in your career that you would consider the peak or the best movie?

I think there are many. There was a film I did called *Ellen Foster*, we did a couple of scenes in that and I really love the work I did. What comes to me is moments and there's a moment in *Why me*. There's a couple of scenes in that where I could say, "Okay, I really did what I wanted to do in those scenes." There are scenes in *The Trouble with Cali*, it's not out yet. I think the work was pretty good.

You know most of the time I wish I could go back and play everything over again. It's like wanting to go back and do *Juliet*, but you can't because you're too old or wanting to go back and do *Nina and the Seagull* which I did, but now I feel like I could play it better. I would love to go back and do *Taming of the Shrew* again because now I could play it. I feel that way with a lot of movies; I have a real hard time watching myself. I really, really don't like it. I cringe. I hate it. I just can't hardly bare it because I want to go back and do it all over again. I don't want to, but I wish that I could because I'd fix it all.



Early on was it unusual for you to see your name on a marquee and to know a movie you starred in was playing inside?

It was a heady experience to be so young and seeing your name on the marquee in the town where you grew up. That's really fun. Everyone should have that experience and then go on and have their life. Know that it is what it is and it's all that it is and you gotta go on and live your life. It was odd because so many people were still trying to figure out what they were going to do and there I was working nonstop. I remember I loved to be working and I worked so young for so many years, never stopping working so that sometimes it seems like another life.

You're definitely a working actress. You have so many titles to your name. You're a powerhouse.

I don't think of myself as that way at all. I should have probably kept on working. The problem was that I think I worked for so many years for so long for so young that I really needed some breathers. I

needed some time to do some other things like write, have children, live somewhere else other than Los Angeles. Get a bit of a perspective on it.

Tell me what it was like working with Russ Emanuel on his film P.J.?

I had so much fun on [P.J.](#) I worked on *P.J.* in the midst of working on this other film, *The Trouble with Cali* down in Scranton, Pennsylvania and then I came up and came in during the week between Christmas and New Years. I came out to Brooklyn to where they were shooting and shot those scenes with John on the set. It was so lovely, they were so organized, and John Heard who I've know for years never changes. He's so bloody talented and irascible and vulnerable and witty and everything so that you're always on your toes. Not only acting with him, but simply having a conversation with him.

Russ has so much energy. When I talked to Russ and Howard Nash on the phone, when we were talking about the story and the character I first fell in love with the story and then I really fell in love with them. They complimented each other so well. They had so much enthusiasm. They wanted to get there, tell the story, and they were happy and excited. It was just such a nice atmosphere to be in. Really nice, I wish I could have worked more with the other actors too. Like Patricia who is wonderful in it. Patricia Rae is so good in it. Howard is wonderful. I didn't get to act with Howard, but I got to drive to the set with him.



Are there other roles you auditioned for, but didn't get? Where you up for *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*?

No, I don't know what I was doing then. A lot of the time you're doing something else so you're unavailable. I'm not saying Amy even wanted me. I was probably too old maybe. I remember visiting *Taps* and meeting Sean Penn because my friend Rob was shooting it. They were shooting in Pennsylvania and I was in New York. I drove down to visit the set and I remember meeting Sean. Sean was just wild running all around the place. He was bouncing off the walls. We were out in the field, in the parking lot. I remember watching him thinking, "Who's this crazy actor?" He's gone on to do these

incredible things. That's another instance where I think back, "God, did I ever think at that time watching this guy bouncing around. Just this kid."

Where you up for the Exorcist?

No, I wasn't. You know what I wish I could have auditioned for *Star Wars*. That would have been fun. I know and I really like her (Carrie Fisher). We met each other at parties. I just think she's such a hilarious writer of course. She is the Princess Leia, but I wish that I had. That would have been the ultimate cool thing. That would have been so cool. Yes, there were many, but I can't really think of them right now.

Looking back on your career is there a movie you didn't care for that you were in?

I think *California Dreaming*, again directed by John Hancock, sort of a slice of life of characters on a beach. We filmed it on Pismo Beach. I remember Seymour Cassel played my dad and I love Seymour, he was a crazy guy. It was a whacky, wild set. Every film it's that famous Francois Truffaut quote, he says it in *Days for Night*. He says, "Making a film is like a stagecoach ride. You start out with the expectations it's going to be this wonderful, absolutely terrific ride, you get to the middle and it starts getting rough. By the time you get to the last third of the ride you're hanging on for dear life and you hope you survive it." Truffaut is right, making a movie is like that, you just want to get it done at the end. When you start out it's all going to be wonderful, when you get any group of people together. Usually, the films that are the hardest or difficult sets or somebody is difficult they usually turn out to be good. The sets that are often all copathetic and everyone is happy & wonderful it translates to the movie and it's tedious.



It's better to have a little friction.

Could be, yea.

In *California Dreaming* they talk about you looking great in a bikini in most of the movie.

There was a lot of silliness. It didn't turn out to be. I don't know how John felt about the final film. Parts of it were funny & there were some really fun performances in it.

There was a writer who said it was supposed to be a certain way, but was pulled in a lot of directions.

Ned Wynn right? On that particular film. It didn't end up being the film that you'd imagine it was going to be.

I've even talked to actors and actresses where they say, "I've signed up for the movie, but it had a different movie title." Then the name changed and the movie continued to get worse.

That's why so many actors who are really capable and are able to pull it off become producers and direct their own and get control because you're really only in control of your performance. That's the only thing you're in control of and even then in a film you don't know what the angle is. You know what the angle is, but you ultimately don't. Of course with playback now...film sets are so odd now because everybody's huddled around the video monitor. Then you're over on the set with the cinematographer. It's like these two different worlds. On *P.J.* it was real low budget yet there was this gorgeous flat screen monitor. I remember when they first started using monitors it drove me insane. I really resented it because I missed having the director so close.



Instantaneous feedback

I miss having the director right next to the camera. I wanted the director there, beside me, right next to the camera and it was really hard to get used to the director not being there and being off looking at a monitor instead of watching what was in front of the camera.

It's changed a lot that way.

Now on every set the director comes onto the set and talks, then goes back, sits in the chair, puts his headphones on and watches the monitor.

Weird

Unless it's too hard to see and he's got to watch it from the cameras. Once in awhile they'll come watch from the camera. It drove me insane. Still does.



You've probably seen quite a few changes in the years that you've worked.

That's a big change, but fundamentally, no, not that big of change.

Who did you have a retroCRUSH on while growing up?

Leonard Whiting, remember Romeo, Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*.

An Italian production.

Yes, Olivia Hussey was in it. I fell in love with that whole movie. Remember, the musical *Oliver*, from England as well, the guy who played the artful dodger, Jack Wild. I remember I fell in love with the movie *Butch Cassidy*, it made me have to be in movies. I fell in love with the whole movie. It made me buy black blue jeans. I fell in love with Robert Redford, Paul Newman, and everybody. Then I bought black blue jeans and wore them because I wanted to assimilate that movie and be the Sundance Kid kind of thing and be his girlfriend at the same time.

Is there anything else you'd like to tell your legion of fans?

Take life seriously, but don't take it so seriously. Appreciate the moment! Read *Our Town* and take it seriously it's really a metaphysical text. I'd love to go back and play the stage manager in *Our Town* now. In fact I'd love to go back and play Emily again of course I never will, but I'd love to play that again because now I know how to play that part.

They say it was one of the best *Our Town*'s ever made.

It was a great *Our Town*. It wasn't because of me because I should have done a better job, but it was a great *Our Town*. Hal Holbrook was wonderful and Barbara Bel Geddes.

**You've done a lot of drama.**

I wish I could be funny. I don't think I'm funny.

Going forward where do you see yourself?

You know what would be great, if I could somehow find a way and I think it's possible too once my 7 year old grows up a little bit more. I have a 17 year old and a 7 year old and I got to the point where I got tired of being on sets and locations. I got tired of arranging the household because my husband works as well, it's not as if I can dump everything. I'd love to be able to do a really interesting role every once in awhile. Maybe once a year in a film somehow, but perhaps not have to carry the whole film. A really interesting role and then a play every other year, that's what I would love to do. I would also love to write a screenplay, although I probably never will. You'd think I would have.

You find that interesting.

It's much harder and far more exposing I think to write than it is to act. It's harder, at least with acting you have company. There are parts to play. When I grow up I want to play the mom in *August of Osage*

County this big hit Broadway show that's on now. I would love to do Edward Albee plays. I would love to work with Randal Kleiser again. I also would love to be directed by Helen Hunt. I think it would be cool to work with Robby Benson again somehow, but I don't think it will ever happen.

Why not?

I don't know. We should. It would be fun.

-Randy Waage
randy@retrocrush.com

BIG THANKS to:

[Russ Emanuel Productions](#): for all of your help!

[Robby Benson Scrapbook Online](#): for some of the images in this article.

Glynnis O'Connor: listen to the complete interview: [part 1](#), [part 2](#), [part 3](#) on your I-Pod or computer.