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THE DEVIL IN MISS SPELVIN:
The First Lady of Erotic Cinema
Is a Dame Who Dares....

GEORGINA!

An Intimate Interview-Portrait
by
Dr. Jack Fritscher

Sex superstar Georgina Spelvin lays back in her ^{California} hotel room in Mill Valley. The lady who starred in the classic 'The Devil in Miss Jones' is peeling an apple with a pocketknife. "I never expected to work in erotic cinema after the first film I made," she says. "All my film work has been one delightful surprise after the other. Fucking on camera with beautiful young men. My best friends say I've died and gone to heaven and won't admit it." She carves into the apple. "So I admit it. Erotic films are fucking heaven. And a hell of a lot of work. Professional hard work."

Georgina bites into her apple. "I must confess that I'm an exhibitionist. I'm an Approval Junkie. At the age of two, I saw a chipmunk come in the window and get more attention than me, and I said: That will never happen again. So I danced on my toes. I turned sommersaults. I put my feet behind my head. I'll do anything if someone will say: WOW! Look at THAT! What a trick!"

Georgina's sense of humor, and her ability to take her acting and sexual talents with a light grain of salt have endeared her to her erotic costars. Big John Holmes, after working with Georgina in "The Jade Pussycat," said in a recent Hooker interview: "Georgina's first of all a real actress. She's

also a joy to work with. She's a sweetheart. She's old school. A real lady, but she's very sexually open. She's a very human, earthy, and funny person. I guess I like her because she's crude in a very ladylike way."

One thing for sure about Georgina: she has the magic sexiness that can make Holmes' 13-Incher stand up and take notice. She does the same for adult audiences.

"Reciprocity. I love interaction with the camera. I love reciprocity between the screen and the audience. I object to a theater that has no Kleenex wadded up on the floor. I think X-rated movie houses should have Kleenex dispensers on the back of the seats, and receptacles on the arms (to keep things neat). Someone suggested a scam to me of merchandising Personal White Socks with Georgina monogramed on the side for guys to jerk off in. Can you imagine? Actually, I believe that men have a perfect right to beat their meat. Especially in a closed, consensual, adult environment.

"Why not go to a moviehouse and fantasize? Women go to the movies and cry. Why shouldn't a guy cum? Nobody bothers me when I sit and bawl my way through Gone with the Wind. I'm throwing my Kleenexes on the floor. Crying is a lot of women's way of cuming ^{anyhow.} ~~anyway~~. So why shouldn't a man identify with what's on screen and feel so good he cums in a Kleenex or a sock. Migod! That's cause and effect. I love cause and effect. Effects are what cause a person to want to be an actress."

Georgina is finishing off her apple like Eve in Paradise. Surprisingly, she looks like the kind of lady who keeps a neat-as-a-pin house with pies baking in the oven.

"I've never been a glamorpuss. Any success I've had on screen comes from my training as an actress. I started out in films working the technical

side. Hauling cable. There's a million reasons why I shouldn't quote--'work'--unquote on screen. I don't think I have the face structure. My eyes are too close together. I'm really a character actress. Not a leading lady. But something happens with the camera. Reciprocity again. Whatever critics and audiences say the magic is, all I can say is that producers and directors hire me because I can speak lines and make love and not fall over the lights.

"I rarely see myself on screen. Why sit and study yourself for all the faults? I mean watching some of the dailies can be very constructive. I look at the footage and say: 'I'll never do that again.' But really, for an actress to watch herself isn't all that helpful, because if you go before the camera the next day trying to remember all the things you're not going to do, you forget the things you must do to make the script come alive technically and dramatically.

"In erotic films, just like in big budget commercial movies, actors and actresses have to be totally conscious of the camera. What we are performing is for the camera which in turn is for the screen which in turn gives the audience the ultimate effect. Nothing ends up on screen without first happening with technical accuracy in front of the camera. And I don't mean just showing your best profile. I mean showing the camera the complete range of emotion that any actress must project in order to give what is needed at the moment for the director's point of view in the camera. I can't emphasize enough how technical erotic filmmaking has become. These movies aren't made any longer by dirty old guys with 8mm cameras!

"I mean audiences fantasize about life on an erotic movie set. You know: guys wonder what it's like to kiss or fuck an erotic actress. It's complicated. Under the lights in front of the camera, we have to remember not only

the action and the lines. We have to remember to stay out of the shadows, to make sure you don't smear the lipstick, to keep your chin tilted at the right angle, to hit your marks for the camera. While you're doing all this, you think: oh yeah, there's this person here, another actor, trying also to stay out of the shadows and to hit his marks."

Georgina is generous in praise of her many costars. She refuses to name her favorite. "Astaire never mentions who his favorite partner was. I'm not going to cut my own throat. The men I've worked with have been magnificent. I've never worked with anyone whom I found to be an unpleasant experience. Never. I've never encountered an actor who was repugnant to me. If I did, I 'd simply say I had a headache--like every wife in the world. But then, like everyone else, I've met people I'd rather fuck than kiss. The criteria for fucking and kissing are different, right?

"The men in erotic films deserve some special recognition. Erections are necessary. The guy who can get a hardon on cue is a fine actor. Really. It is acting. He is acting out the script that says: Hardon. Just like I sometimes have to cry on cue. John Holmes says: 'I think hard. It gets hard. I think cum. It cums.' That's control. That's cause and effect. That's almost tantric sex in acting.

"Erotic actresses and actors have to be able to maintain themselves at a high level of sexual excitement, able to go in and out of a take, waiting for the lights to be changed, then able to regain it for the next shot, and then be able to release it and let it go to its fulfillment. The cumshot. The 'money-shot.' Thank God for the Danes! They established the ritual of the dick pulling out to show that the money-shot is real. Audiences don't want simulation. Only the real thing. We even have a line in this film we're shooting

right now: 'Oh, I've always wanted to see what it looked like when you cum.'
So there's no question why he's pullin g out and cuming in full view of the
c amera. A cuming is a Big Event. Like the eruption of Mt. St. Helens.
~~Cuming~~
Cuming is a basic human experience. People not only like to do it. Audiences
like to see it. Hell, I like to see it!

"Ladies in erotic films have to be sensitive enough to keep in tune with
the actor who has to get it up ten or twelve times for one scene. Maybe
that's why I continue to get erotic film work. I try to connect to the actor
as a ~~actor~~ ^{performer}, a man, and a person. If he does the same reciprocity to me,
then we can maintain the magical tension under all the technical circum-
stances. Filming adult sexual encounters of any kind is the most delicate
and fragile situation. It takes far more than just acting to maintain its
intensity."

Georgina is in great physical shape. Her slender body sort of glows
with a healthy, well[~]balanced aura. She comes from an English-Irish All-
American mixed background. Her sign is eleven degrees Pisces with
Cancer rising. Her erotic film career has brought certain ~~troubles~~ troubles
to her life; but through it all, she manages to develop her self more fully
than a man would expect. She's not part of any "movement," but she voies
opinions as strong and valid as any Fonda or Redgrave.

"A friend once told me," Georgina says, "that erotic acting is a greater
calling for an actress. These days we're doing something people used to judge
shameful and dirty. Only cops were able to watch Blue Movies that they'd
confiscated. Maybe they confiscated them just to watch them. Over and over.
Nowadays sex has changed in acceptance for the better. Sex can be fun. People
are finally admitting it.

"Try to figure out orgasm. Then try to figure out some people's tired old attitudes about sex. I mean: God in his infinite wisdom created in us a reward for breathing the indignities of this life. He called it an orgasm and he made it the most indescribable thing. No writer has ever found words for it. No poet has ever touched it. But we all have experienced it. And man in his infinite wisdom has succeeded in making it dirty.

"Erotic cinema is not in and of itself a movement, but it is part of a movement toward greater personal and sexual freedom that is happening throughout American society because the time ~~is~~ right."

Georgina receives mail from women's groups who sometimes feel that she contributes to the male exploitation of women. To this she says frankly: "My feeling on sexual exploitation is simply this: if a man wants to pay money to come and see me in films, who's being exploited? He's paying money. I'm working, earning money, doing the acting I love. How is that different from any woman doing what she can capably do. Believe me, I'm sympathetic to some women's demands. I was an executive at JC Penneys. I found out I was being paid less than any other vice president. That's not fair. So I quit. Every woman has that right: to move on and improve her lot. If more women got into better positions and stood up, then there'd be no need for the ERA. Women have that right. Just as there's no need for legislation against smoking. You can ask people not to smoke. That right is already there. We don't need all this extra legislation telling people they have rights they ought to know they already have. It's stupid added bureaucracy."

On the subject of hot-to-trot fans, Georgina finds them different from men in general. "Would you believe that I'm probably the only porn actress in the world who gets obscene phone calls longdistance collect! Not funny! You should see my last phone bill. What can I do? I get a collect call from 'Bob.' My brother's name is Bob. I get a collect call from 'Phil.' I've got at least seven good friends named Phil. I accept the charges, and I get heavy breathing. I don't know if it's a friend in trouble, or a jerkoff call, until the heavy breathing stops. Then I have to say, 'Are you okay?' I pay out over \$400 a month in longdistance obscene phone calls.

formation because my checks had my straight name and my screen name both. So Ma Bell in her infinite wisdom--unlike God in his--put both my names in the directory--which I didn't know. So one night I get this call. Some chump wanting to know if he can do an interview. After talking half-an-hour, he says, 'You know we're on the radio LIVE.' This is after I could have said ANYTHING! I said, 'How'd you get my phone number?' He said, 'Just call LA.'

9 "So for the next three years I got these wonderful calls from men all across the country. Nice to know you've got an extended fan club. I'm not hard to get. But do straight producers of straight films call me? They think they need a secret code number. They also think I'm expensive. Except the ones who use me. They know better. Please quote me: Georgina Spelvin is very alive, very well, and very available for work of a character nature."

Georgina truly loves men. "Men. A whole subject. When I first started ten years ago, it was wonderful. Lately, since I've been around long enough for fantasy to build, they want to come around and kiss the hem of my skirt. And say embarrassing things. You'd think I was the Mother Superior of Sex. They want me to be more than any woman is capable of. That's pressure! I say: 'Wait a minute. Please. I cannot fulfill your expectations in anyway. Let's take it from the top; I'll walk through the door again, and you drop the BS. Look at me as I am at this moment, and not as you expect me to be from some film made two years ago. Cancel it. It's awful meeting people who think they know you when you know absolutely nothing about them, so you can't relate or transfer vibrations on an even keel. Notoriety is difficult. I'm no goddess. I can't respond like a goddess. Who wants to be marooned on a pedestal? "

When asked about her status as a Pop Culture heroine, the superstar of "The Devil in Miss Jones" says, "I'm not sure I'm ready for another pedestal like that! Frankly, "The Devil and Miss Jones" as an event totally astounded me. It changed my life professionally. Suddenly I was called upon to make

9 a statement about my position in the world of theater. I had made, omigod, a HARDCORE FILM! The fact is that hardcore has its place in legitimate theater. I love to act and if the acting is hardcore or softcore or straight and traditional, I'm both naturally instinctive and professionally trained enough to do the work. I love to act. I'm addicted to acting, to the feeling of joy, passion, integrity of character. I like being different characters. I like bringing the history of the human experience to people in anything from Shakespeare to X-rated films. "When a person gets a shot at an international film screen, you get a chance to make a statement that can help advance the public mind. If my statement involves actually portraying sex, which is a part of life and verrrrrry natural, I've never been able to understand why any thinking person ~~get~~ ^{could get} upset about it. I see no reason to hold oneself back on sex. Dramatists and actors don't hold back on showing the murder of important people on stage or screen in an historical drama, so why should we hold back on sexuality? Especially if it affects people and educates them toward a healthier view of sexuality.

"Whether with 'Long Day's Journey' or with Long John Holmes, I've always taken parts offered to me if they were right for me. I haven't turned down more than ten roles in ten years. And then only because I didn't want to do schlock for people who were directing their energies toward areas that don't please me. I work for people who are doing films that express my philosophy: that sex ~~between~~ ^{between} consenting adults is perfectly okay. Non-victim sex experiences of any sort are perfectly okay. If everybody is willing to play, then you've got a game. If you involve a victim, I want no part of it. When filmmakers ^{whom} I know are trustworthy call me, I say: 'Fine. I'll be there. As long as you pay the carfare.'

Georgina says erotic cinema never makes the actors rich. In fact, she's been put to economic and personal tests by a confused society that doesn't know what to do with a lady who bares her soul as naturally as she does her

body. Because of the Memphis obscenity trials, Georgina had to flee her home in New York and, bypassing Tennessee, head for California. "Erotic films don't help a straight acting career," she says. "The straight world doesn't like the erotic world. 'Georgina' is my gag name. You know: my stage name. 'Georgina' does things that my straight name doesn't do. I have a tremendous sense of propriety. I lead a totally straight life outside of these films. Where will all this lead? To the grave. I'm very sure of that."

But is the lady depressing? Definitely not. Is she on a downer because of straight society's misunderstanding of her art? "I believe," Georgina says, in the creating of good feelings and beneficial effects for everyone. Sex in America is a confused issue. Sex energy, the same as all energy, like fire for example, can be used for good or bad. Sure, there's a lot of sex energy that's bad. But people never say fire is bad because sometimes it's directed the wrong way. Just because some barn burns down somewhere is no reason you should be afraid to light your own fire in your own proper fireplace. Sex and fire are both energy. You can't outlaw energy. Man's mind is what makes amoral energy good or bad. Sex energy simply exists. The human mind directs it. There's an old adage about prohibition and censorship: 'The abuse of a thing, like alcohol or sex, should not cause legislation against the proper use of a thing.' No one should try to legislate other people's morality or trips. As long as there are no victims involved."

Georgina's views on censorship make her a prime candidate for the First Lady Supreme Court Judge that President Reagan appoints. Her clear-cut suggestion is not only fundamentally moral, it's downright upright and about as Constitutionally sophisticated as you can get. "I believe in one kind of censorship. There are two kinds: prescriptive censorship and descriptive

ce~~ns~~orship. Prescriptive censorship purses its tight little lips and raises its petulant little fist and says, 'Thou shalt not have access to any of this.' Descriptive censorship, which already works for the TV networks, says, 'Look, this film/book/play/TV^A-movie contains material that is adult-oriented. Those who want to stay away, can. Those who want to see the lady outdo the chipmunk by putting her ankles behind her ears, also can.' Get the point? Nobody, not even the deaf-mute-and-blind, walks into an X-rated theater by accident. Every adult theater I've ever seen has been designed to describe itself and its fare quite enough for anyone who needs to make up their mind either to come in where it's hot or stay out where it's cold.

"My own personal censorship, if I can call it that, is based on my conscience. I make only films whose messages I agree with. In this little film we're shooting now--it's working title is 'Urban Cowgirls'--the story is about men and women who've lost interest in each other at home. They figure they're entitled to go outside their relationship in order to play around and experiment, so that in the end, they find that what they had at home to begin with is probably the best thing they'll ever have going.

"I think that's a terrific statement for a film to make: if you're bored with with your husband or wife, dare to shop around. Both of you. You may find that what's available isn't nearly as good as what you've got. Sounds almost as silly as 'The Disney in Miss Priss.' But it isn't silly. It's real. A lot of erotic films, when given a second intellectual look, actually turn out to be very moral fables."

Georgina's sense of humor is legendary. In Wakefield Poole's "The Bible," she plays filindom's kookiest Lady ever that side of BC/AD! If Cecil B. de Biblical had ever wanted to film "It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad Bible,"

he'd have cast Georgina instead of Lucille Ball or Goldie Hawn. In comedy, as in sex, timing is everything. And Georgina, the actress, has a sense of sexual-comic timing that can put a pro like the Divine Bette Midler to sssshhhhaaaaammmmmmmmeeee!

"Sex," Georgina says, "is the most fun you can have. There are times when a sense of humor is not what's called for in a sexual moment. People who start laughing at the wrong time deserve everything they don't get. However, I believe that every human being goes to heaven, but I'm not sure anyone gets to see God if they don't have a sense of humor. I cannot survive being miserable. The only way I can deal with life when misery confronts me is to look at it from the point of view of a situation-comedy director. Just about any situation can be viewed from any perspective. This interview could be a mysterious number leading to the destruction of the planet. Or it could be merely a funny situation leading to the destruction of Moral Yuck in Memphis. However you handle it, is up to you." She laughs. "I learned it from my guru."

Georgina is a frank lady. "You want to know how all this happened to me? I started performing professionally at age four. I've always been active in legitimate theater. There was a stint in Hollywood where the moguls wanted to make me into the kind of glamourpuss I refuse to be. So I moved from performing to a bit of producing. I got involved in erotic movies by accident. The honest truth is: I went to work as the commissary cook for the crew shooting 'The Devil in Miss Jones.' I ended up portraying the lead role. In the year between shooting 'The Devil' and the time the film was released, I was offered moderately lucrative work doing the same schtick. I've never been adverse to sexual gratification, so there I was; hired to fuck with attractive men. Life sometimes

And wonderful.

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works out weird. ^ One day you're a Cinderella scouring the soup kitchen. The next day you're a National Monument. 'The Devil and Miss Jones' people were eating lunch. They didn't know I was an actress. They asked me to read some lines. They were astounded that I was an actress. My friends said, 'Were you astounded?' No. Of course not. I knew I was an actress."

When asked about TV actresses famous for their jiggy T&A, Georgina is highly empathetic to the women on Charlie's Angels and Three's Company. "They're actresses. Just like me. Trying to make a fucking buck. Trying to make a living acting in whatever's offered to them. If they make the grade, bully for them. Critics and women's groups that put them down have a lot of nerve. As long as the public pays them, they're not exploited. In another twenty years, they may turn around to be the most celebrated and serious dramatic actresses in America. Every actress who amounts to anything has to pay her dues somewhere in vaudeville, on the road, in a TV series, in blue movies. Nobody rides for free. All of us ladies could end up being very respectable theatrically. What's respectable, after all, changes.

"I used to think I would tell all young actresses: don't go into erotic films unless you plan to stay in them, because you can't escape. I can't make a living in this business. Sure, it's gratifying; but currently, Blue Movies do not a well-heeled career make. Young people should know that. I have no idea what's going to come with this Ronnie Republican administration; but barring a 1984-scenario, I feel that erotic art will increasingly gain acceptance as a legitimate entertainment with the American public."

Georgina thinks that the bridge from erotic films to Hollywood films is possible. "Erotic actresses need to hire agents. We need to list ourselves in the Academy's Players Directory so that directors like Blake Edwards can

find us when they need us. We need to take small ads in Variety. Even with looks and talent, nobody ever gets into film without aggressively, aggressively, aggressively pursuing their career. Sometimes people think I've retired. I haven't. Sometimes my personal life keeps me, as they say, 'between films.' But first and foremost, when all is said and done, I'm an actress: disciplined, in shape, on time, knowing my lines, and quite good about not knocking over the lights!"

In assessing Georgina Spelvin's career to date, a well-known producer says: "For a long time, Georgina felt the way so many of the ladies in erotic films feel: that they can't bridge over to legit cinema. In Georgina's case this reveals a basic psychological fact. She's a very moral lady who carried an almost All-American sense of guilt. As she's come to terms with the fact that the acting she does is a tougher job than any done by any actress who ever won an Academy Award, her acting has gotten even better. I show her films to people in the industry, and they say: 'Wow! Can that lady work!'

"If Georgina walked ^{into} ~~in~~ an agency right now and said, 'Listen, baby, I've got sixteen films behind me that have international ratings and I have awards,' and if they didn't sign her up, they wouldn't be like the agents I know. Agents would take ten percent of the soul of the Devil if he came in. To say nothing of Miss Jones! Georgina has a **g**reat career ahead of her in movies and TV."

The producer smiles. He knows. "You think stars didn't make pornos? The first time I saw Joan Crawford she was costarred with a Great Dane. Marilyn did it. Edison did it ~~when~~ he made 'The Kiss.' My grandfather saw it, and it was fucking more than a kiss. Edison needed to make money. All I can say is Thank God there are crotchwatchers. If people didn't want to watch crotches, we wouldn't have dance, legitimate theater, movies, tele-

vision, or Monday Night football. Get the picture?

"Quite often on a set, Georgina is the only lady in the film who can really act. And she'll do anything to help the shoot keep on schedule and on budget. So it's time that Georgina and the world knew that the effect her erotic career has caused is that now it's time for Georgina to emerge as a fullfledged, highly credentialed actress."

I'm Georgina smiles and reaches for another apple. "Everytime a person needs new information, a representative appears. I'm overawed by life sometimes. I told you I wanted you to meet my guru. You see: I believe him. I believe times are changing. I'm not ashamed of anything. Maybe I would have done some things better; but one thing I'm sure of: years from now when they screen erotic cinema from this period, and I guess they will for sure be studying the 'Popular Culture Impact of Blue Movies on the 20th Century,' my grandchildren will be viewing them. And that will make me glad. At least they'll know they're descended from a dame who dared!"

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