

Trabing

Mostly about People

By Wally Trabing



Itzi-Bitzi Mitzi . . .

My impression of Mitzi Gaynor, is that if pushed suddenly into a swimming pool, she would fizz like Alka-Seltzer.

Interviewing her is like playing jai-alai with your tongue—her answers are swatted back so fast.

There is a sense of urgency about this cutie that makes her seem late, even when she arrives early.

Mitzi Gaynor, probably mostly remembered for her triumph in the movie, "South Pacific," will open tonight at the Circle Star theater in San Carlos.

Her singing and dancing show, supported by the Clara Ward Singers, will continue nightly at 8:30 through Saturday (6:30 and 9:30 p.m.) and end with a Sunday 3 p.m. matinee. Then, "pfffff," away she goes elsewhere.

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This ball of furious motion is 111 pounds and five feet six inches. She has a round bright face, hazel eyes.

And false eye lashes that fluttered so rapidly at one point, I automatically looked down at her feet to see if they were still on the floor.

She didn't enter the room for the interview—she bounced in, like a small elongated rubber ball on its last few hops before settling down for a roll.

When she shook my hand, it was as if she was the new next-door girl just moved in and sure wanted to be friends.

"That's what I've always been," she moaned later, "the girl next door—the 'Gee, Donald, you're real neat!' type."

"I'd like to be slinky and sexy."

I asked, "Well aren't you?"

"Naw," she said. "Even in this show I end up in a sailor suit!"

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Miss Gaynor—or Mrs. Jack Bean in real life—or nee Mitzi Gerber, was brought up from infancy to perform. Her father was a professional musician, her mother a dancer. Dancing schools were almost her second home.

By 15 she was on stage doing chorus work and finally movie bits.

Her big film successes were "Les Girls" with Gene Kelly; "Surprise Package" with Yul Brynner (she calls him Mr. Clean); Nellie Forbush in "South Pacific," and her last, in 1960, "For Love Nor Money" with teeth actor, Kirk Douglas.

For the past five years she has been hoofing it. Her troupe has been pulling up to \$40,000 a week at Las Vegas.

Dancing is in her Hungarian blood. Fifteen years were spent in dance studios and when assuming the ballet position she still remembers the way Lou Kessler, one dance director, put it:

"Make nice darlings — make



Mitzi Gaynor

arms like looking through toilet seat!"

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Her fan club, she proudly states, is headed by an honor student at Rutgers.

Question: "Are you a fan of anyone?"

"Cary Grant," she moaned unctiously, rolling her eyes.

"I love that man. The first time I saw him in a studio cafeteria, I knocked my ice tea glass off the table and hit my head on the table after picking it up."

Question: "How old are you?"

"Grrrrr," she fake-scowled, clawing the air with her long pink finger nails. "Twenty-three—say!"

Question: "What do you think of the TV show, 'Hullabaloo?'"

"I couldn't dance on that show. I'm a trained dancer and I couldn't do what they do with their bodies."

Question: "Do you think that kind of dancing is obscene?"

Yes, she thought it was obscene, but then, "they used to think that of waltzing, too," she said.

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Mitzi is married to Jack Bean, a real estater and industrial public relations expert.

He was a big, good looking pleasant, a next-door-neighborish, like his wife.

He is present at all of her openings. "We have a history of not being very far apart," he said. They've been married 10 years.

"Very few of our friends are in the acting business, he said, and Mitzi threw him a 10-foot noisy kiss that disturbed the air going by.

"This business ain't all that glamorous," said Miss Gaynor.

"Every time I go on, the bases are loaded, it's the last of the ninth with two strikes on me.

"I have to go out there and hit the ball every time, or I'm out!"

The Giants could use this gal.

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