

"LOT KALE) DO SCOPE"

2 / 1988

KRYSZYNA JANDA ON HERSELF

Photos: PA Interpress/T. Prazmowski



— Fans of your acting talent are already celebrating. You are preparing the role of Helena Modrzejewska in a new Polish TV series. What were your feelings on accepting this proposal?

— I accepted the role mainly because I found the script extremely interesting. It shows the entire Polish period of Helena Modrzejewska's life, from the time when she was seventeen.

— Will you be playing the seventeen-year-old?

— I am afraid so. Thus the gentlemen decided — the director Jan Łomnicki and my husband Edward Kłosiński who is the cameraman.

— Why the "I'm afraid so"?

— Because I believed that another actress should play such a young person. I am exactly 35 years old today and I will somehow fit in the other stages of Helena Modrzejewska's life.

— Actresses will more readily accept parts where they have to play women much older than parts of younger women. Are the latter more difficult?

— I don't think they present difficulties from the point of view of acting but rather that filming technics, the camera and film are mercilessly keen. Even wigs are not used in the films today, unless, as it may happen in America, the wig is made by an expert of experts. Film art pursues the absolute truth, that is why parts are cast with the utmost care, taking into consideration the natural predispositions and physical appearance of the actor. Nobody pretends anything any longer. Theatre is the only place left where you can cheat. That is why I so wanted to avoid playing the young Modrzejewska. I myself wonder what will become of it.

— Helena Modrzejewska is a historical personage, and an image of her is impressed in a way on our minds. Does that bother you?

— Not at all. Nobody remembers her, do they? Nobody lives who would have seen her on the stage. That is why you can allow yourself something every artist has a right to — an interpretation of a kind. Leaving facts unchanged, of course. To create such a character as Helena Modrzejewska — that I found tempting.

— But don't you think that the role of Modrzejewska will have some sort of symbolic meaning in your life? Viewers will make such comparisons automatically.

— Happily the script does not give any scope for this sort of comparison. And in this way, perhaps, I will escape the crushing evaluations of my acting. I will want to present a character which the viewer should understand.

— But, symbolically speaking, comparisons might also be made considering the similarities of action careers. Modrzejewska was our famous "export" actress and so are you.

— However, I don't think so well of myself. Modrzejewska was a real success in America and not only there, in England too, where she played Shakespeare in English. Even today it's hard to imagine this sort of success. The most wonderful thing was that leaving Poland Modrzejewska was a 37 years old woman and she did not speak English at all well. That only proves how murderously she worked upon herself.

— But you too have the same kind of force and power and as much courage...

— I only try not to disappoint my audience.

— Not long ago you were also in America. To conquer?

— Not at all. I took part in the filming of a West German film in which I play the lead and I have the opportunity to test

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ON HERSELF

myself in various film types — horror, melodrama, western and spy story. From the point of view of my acting it was an interesting experience.

— *As one can see your international career flourishes...*

— It is difficult for me to say whether it flourishes. After a long cooperation with the French I contacted the Germans. I think that my way of expression, my thinking and my acting means appeal to Germans much more than to Frenchmen. French lightness is not for me, I'm afraid. My reviews in France were never bad, quite the contrary, but I think that my personality is closer to German culture. For the French I am too clear-cut and not crazy enough.

— *On the other hand, Germans are accused of a lack of imagination.*

— Clearly then I am enough for their imagination.

— *Pola Negri began her film career in Germany, too.*

— I do not know what will happen to me. Anyway, I have made 6 films in the FRG up to now and I keep getting offers. The West German press asked not so long ago why one of the most expensive productions engaged a Polish woman to play the role of a German as if there was no suitable German actress for the part. The director replied that indeed there was no suitable actress in the country and he could prove it.

— *That is a wonderful compliment. So your career in the West is made.*

— What career? That's nothing but a joke. I am only a curio from the East, an actress who plays differently and thinks differently.

— *I wonder why differently and not like everyone else.*

— Never like everyone. I don't want to. I once told the French: I know how to make myself attractive to you but I don't feel like it, because it doesn't interest me. I don't want to charge only for the sake of attracting somebody's attention. My audience in Poland knows and accepts me as I am.

— *You are now playing the role of Medea, directed in the Powszechny Theatre in Warsaw by Zygmunt Hübner. It must be quite an acting effort.*

— It is really an enormous effort. In my life probably the greatest.

— *Modrzejewska and Medea are wonderful roles. What else can you dream of?*

— A rest! I am just about tired out. And I have years of very hard work ahead. I will somehow have to connect life in Poland with frequent travels abroad.

— *How will you organize your home?*

— My daughter is thirteen already and she is very independent. Probably she treats me like someone slightly abnormal.

— *She does not want to be an actress?*

— Oh no! I expect she takes one look at me and that's enough to put her off... We had no actors in my family. That is why there are neither obligations nor hereditary burdens.

— *It will come up in your family some day. Perhaps your grand-daughter shall be an actress?*

— God forbid!

— *Thank you for the interview.*

Kazimierz Sobolewski

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