

## **New Biography of Kim Stanley coming soon**

**Category : Book Reviews**

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This isn't a review, as I'm the actual author, but I've written the first biography of '50's and '60's Broadway great Kim Stanley. "Female Brando: The Legend of Kim Stanley" will be published in the spring by Back Stage Books, a division of Watson-Guption Publications.

Kim had Houston connections: she spent part of her junior year in high school here in 1941, and returned in 1952 to star as Blanche duBois in a production of "A Streetcar Named Desire" at the Playhouse Theater. Among the Houstonians I interviewed for the book are drama critic Ann Holmes, Robert Traweck (the costumer for "Streetcar") and several members of Kim's extended family who live in and around Houston.

Anyone interested in more information about the book can go to my website, <http://www.kimstanley.net>

Jon Krampner

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Between 1949 and 1964, Kim Stanley appeared in only a dozen plays on Broadway. But in the theater world, she remains a legend for starring roles that include Millie Owens, the alienated tomboy in "Picnic" (1953), Georgette Thomas, the deserted mother and housewife in "The Traveling Lady" (1954), and her signature role, Cheri, the down-on-her-luck nightclub singer avidly pursued by a cowboy in "Bus Stop" (1955).

Her other starring roles include a 19th Century Irish-American tavern owner's daughter in Eugene O'Neill's "A Touch of the Poet" (1958), Elizabeth von Ritter, one of Freud's first patients in "A Far Country" (1961), and Masha in the Actors

Studio version of Chekhov's "The Three Sisters" (1964).

Kim was also the leading lady of live television drama, a culturally vibrant but ephemeral genre that flowered in New York in the 1950's. She starred in about 40 shows for "Philco-Goodyear Playhouse," "Studio One," "Kraft Television Theatre," "Playhouse 90," and other prestigious live dramatic anthologies.

Live dramas of hers such as Horton Foote's "A Young Lady of Property" galvanized television audiences of the period. On that show, Kim won plaudits as a 15-year-old Southern girl who has to come to terms with her father's remarriage, even though she was then a twice-married 28-year-old mother of two children, one of whom she bore out of wedlock to one man while married to another.

She also starred in a memorable episode of "You Are There" as Joan of Arc -- when she was burned at the stake, smoke from her bonfire drifted into the announcer's booth, causing Walter Cronkite to cough as he read his closing report. Kim would win two Emmies for her TV work, although they came after the disappearance of live television.

Disdaining the movies and Hollywood, Kim only made four films. But Paddy Chayefsky's "The Goddess" (1958), based on the story of Marilyn Monroe, is a cult classic. Kim received an Oscar nomination as best actress for the 1964 English film "Seance on a Wet Afternoon," in which she plays a deranged medium, opposite Richard Attenborough. She is also the uncredited narrator of "To Kill a Mockingbird" (1963). In later years, she appeared as Jessica Lange's mother in "Frances" (1982), for which she was also Oscar-nominated as best supporting actress, and had a small part in "The Right Stuff" (1983).

Among the stars Kim acted with (many of whom admired her ability) were Helen Hayes, Lillian Gish, Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, James Earl Jones, Lou Gossett Jr., Eli Wallach, Janice Rule, Leslie Nielsen, Patty Duke, Jack Klugman, Tommy Lee Jones, Ben Gazzara, Tony Franciosa, Bea Arthur, Gene Saks, Steven Hill, Jessica Lange, Robert Loggia, Patricia Neal, Kevin McCarthy and Elaine Stritch.

Kim was one of the greatest stars to come out of the Actors Studio, the home of Method acting, and her interaction with leading lights of the studio such as Lee Strasberg, Elia Kazan and Robert Lewis is woven throughout the book.

More info: <http://www.kimstanley.net>