



VALERIE QUENNESSEN

(Biography)

Valerie Quenessen plays Lina, a French archaeologist, whose free spirit changes the lives of Michael and Cathy. An established French actress, Valerie first came to the attention of the American public in Willard Huyck's "French Postcards."

Although she started performing at an early age (at seven she appeared with an acrobatic troupe in a semi-annual competition; at ten, she won first prize with jury commendation, an award conferred personally by the Mayor of Paris), she did not seriously pursue acting until her late teens. Beset by what she considered an almost terminal case of shyness, Valerie enrolled in an acting class to overcome her difficulty. Acting as therapy was successful. As a vocation, it intrigued her. So she entered the Ecole Nationale Superieure des Arts et Techniques du Theatre, the French equivalent to New York City's High School for the Performing Arts.

After six months, she left school to act full time, appearing in various plays and films. In 1976, Ms. Quenessen competed to matriculate at the prestigious Conservatoire National d'Art Dramatique de Paris, where she studied for three years, supplementing class lessons with professional productions.

It is difficult to accurately compare French and American commercial theatre, but included among Valerie's numerous credits are two plays staged

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at Parisian equivalents to a Broadway house: Racine's "Phedre" at the Theatre Recamier, and Jean Anouille's "Chers Oixeaux" at the Comedie des Champs-Elysees.

In 1978, Willard Huyck cast Ms. Quenessen for "French Postcards."

To balance her formal training, she spent the summer of 1978 in Avignon developing a work-in-progress "Babylon." After a series of developmental exercises with the director, the piece was set and commenced a regular run. She also formed a rock group, "Look d'Enfer" (A Glance from Hades) and wrote songs for it. In 1979 she graduated from the Conservatory and traveled to the United States to capitalize on the success of "French Postcards." John Milius then cast her to appear in "Conan," after which Randal Kleiser chose her to play "Lina." Coincidentally, her three American directors were classmates at The USC Film School.

Ms. Quenessen lives in Paris where she has opened a production office with Francois Manceaux. When in France, she divides her time between acting assignments and classes in technique, dancing and acrobatics.

"Summer Lovers" is a Randal Kleiser Production, written and directed by Kleiser. Mike Moder was the producer and Joel Dean was executive producer. It is a Filmways Picture.

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