

Saturday Night's Dana Carvey now a star

Entertainment

Every generation of "Saturday Night Live" gives birth to one or more bona fide movie stars. Chevy Chase was the first to make it on the big screen. Eddie Murphy broke out of the second generation. And now it seems Dana Carvey may emerge from the current cast of "Saturday Night Live" as his generation's film star.

Best known for his sanctimonious Church Lady on the show, Carvey makes his feature film debut in "Opportunity Knocks," a comedy about a con man who goes straight and becomes a success in the business world.

Born in Missoula, Mont., and raised in San Carlos, Calif., where his father taught high school, Carvey attended San Francisco State University. After graduation, he paid his dues by appearing in comedy clubs in and around San Francisco before moving to Los Angeles in 1981. While performing stand-up there, he was discovered by Lorne Michaels, the creator and executive producer of "Saturday Night Live."

In addition to his Church Lady routine, Carvey, 34, has captivated late-night audiences with impersonations of George Burns, Jimmy Stewart, George Bush and a narcissistic body builder.

Q. Why has it taken you so long to make a feature film?

A. I was offered a film after my first year on "Saturday Night Live," way back in 1986, but they wanted me to play the Church Lady in it. I think she would have gotten a little tiresome for a full two-hour movie. And when the camera came in close, it

would have been obvious that it was a guy playing a woman.



Dana Carvey

Q. I read that you had never done drag before you created the Church Lady and that it made you uncomfortable to dress up like a woman.

A. At first it did because I'd never worn a dress before. I was uncomfortable in the beginning, but I grew to enjoy it more than I care to admit (laughs). I dare any heterosexual man over 30 to put on a dress and not feel funny. Some people dig it, and more power to them. But for me, personally, I prefer pants. But that's probably because I'm weak, shallow and insecure.

STAR SPEAK



FRANK SANELLO

Q. How long will you stay on "Saturday Night Live"?

A. At least five years, which is my original contract. I might stay longer, but right now I don't plan to because I'm afraid I might burn out even though it's still a lot of fun.

Q. If your film career takes off, would that make you more likely to

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— Dana Carvey

leave "Saturday Night Live"?

A. Actually, the show is more fun than making movies. On the show, you can think of something on Friday, then go live to 18 million people on Saturday. That's a real rush! Movie-

making, by contrast, is very tedious. You have to be willing to delay gratification for at least a year before you see what you've done on the screen.

Q. Is "Opportunity Knocks" as wacky as "Saturday Night Live"?

A. The film is more of a drama with comedy. I play a regular guy in unusual situations. I thought it was important to be normal in my first film, after four years of wearing wigs and dresses on "Saturday Night Live."

Q. Past members of the "Saturday Night Live" cast were infamous for ingesting illegal substances. Is there drug use among the current cast?

A. There just isn't any drug use. I don't know how previous cast members did it on drugs. It's just such a hard show to do, working 13 to 14 hours a day. We're all trying to stay in shape. The only pills we pop are vitamins. You just have to be sober to do the show, although I've been known to

tip a few beers after the show. I'm probably the biggest beer drinker in the cast.

Q. Before you became a TV star, you did stand-up comedy. What was the worst comedy club you ever worked in?

A. There were so many! Maybe it was the pizza parlor in Martinez, Calif. People threw beer at me on stage. I've had people throw up on stage while I was performing. The worst is opening for a rock band. The audience screams obscenities at the comedian because they're waiting for the rock band to come on. You get 50 bucks and go home and say, "God, I love show business!"

'Staying Together' looks at laughter, heartbreak and death

AT THE MOVIES

By DIAHANN NADEAU
Herald Special

"Staying Together" is a charming little movie about a family going through what families go through - laughter, heartbreak, death and love.

The three McDermott brothers - Brian, Kit, and Duncan, lead an idyllic life - they work for their father, they play to inherit the town, they have loving parents and all the women they can handle. But suddenly things change: Dad sells the business, the women don't want to marry Kit and Brian, and Duncan just can't lose his virginity. Nothing good lasts forever, although the brothers find out that you can lose a lot, but still have one another.

This is not an action-packed adventure, but it is an endearing movie, with lots of lovely moments and some very funny bits. The cast is excellent, with Melinda Dillon as the vague but loving mother, Tim Quill as Brian, Dermot Mulroney as Kit, and Sean Astin as Duncan. The rest of the cast includes Stockard Channing, Daphne Zuniga, and Dinah Manoff as the women in the boys' lives, and this reviewer's favorite drummer, Levon Helm, in a small role as a store owner and band leader. (For once we see Levon play and sing in

a movie - a real pleasure, however brief his moments are). Lee Grant directed this charmer, and a nicer movie about families and brotherhood would be hard to find.

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