



ANJELICA HUSTON INTERVIEW  
*LIFE TURNS 50*  
LIFE STORIES

**Anjelica Huston, Actress & Director**  
**Total Running Time: 5 minutes and 5 seconds**

START TC: 00:00:00:00

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Life Stories Presents

Anjelica Huston

Actress & Director

00:00:07:00

INTERVIEWER:

If you know the story behind your mother getting on the cover- if we could hear about that.

00:00:12:00

ANJELICA HUSTON:

As, as, as I understand it, my mother was 17 years old, and studying under Balanchine at the New York City Ballet when—as I understand it—Philippe Halsman came to the ballet to photograph the prima ballerina, who was either ailing at the time, or the other version of the story goes that he saw my mother, and, and found her so beautiful that he decided instead to, to, to take her portrait for Life. And, she looked very much like the Mona Lisa. She had a very, very, silent smile. She, she became known as Mona Lisa Ricky, and and,



she was offered a contract by Selznick to go to Hollywood on the basis of, of that cover.

00:01:00:00

INTERVIEWER:

Did they see the cover? And, and was it a matter of days or-

00:01:03:00

ANJELICA HUSTON:

I think, a matter of days, yes. Between the time that, that my mother's picture was published on the cover of Life and, as a young ballerina, under the title "a young ballerina," and, and, and between that time and, and, and the time that Selznick offered her a contract, it, it- as she recounted it, it seemed pretty immediate, you know. She then went and consulted her father, and asked him whether that would be all right, and he said it was fine—and anything was fine with him so long as she didn't smoke, so it was... Shortly thereafter that she came to Hollywood.

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INTERVIEWER:

Did your father see that picture of her on Life or and then... and what- how did they mee-

00:01:48:00

ANJELICA HUSTON:

They met, they met, actually, as a consequence of her having been offered a contract by Selznick, because it was then at his house that, that- they'd



actually met years before at my grandfather's- Tony Soma's- he, he had a restaurant in New York, to which my father came occasionally, and, and I believe, met my mother when she was about 14, and, had promised to take her to the ballet, because- under my grandfather, she, she had to write a four page essay every time she went to the ballet. He'd promised her that he would take her to the ballet, and she wouldn't have to write an essay. And he was then on secret duty during the war, and was called up, and, and never took her to the ballet. So it was then, many years later, I guess some 4 or 5 years later, that, that, she was at dinner at Selznick's, and he came in and was seated to her right. And, and, he begged to be introduced and she said, "Oh, but we've met before." And, and he asked how this could possibly be. He couldn't imagine not remembering her. And she told him that indeed they had met when she was 14.

00:03:11:00

INTERVIEWER:

But what- So that has been quite a- it's meant a lot to, to your family- what do you feel about appearing in Life, in this Life spread now?

00:03:21:00

ANJELICA HUSTON:

Oh, it's, it's, it's a recording. You know, it's more than a magazine, it's, it's more than a television show. Life is history.

00:03:33:00

INTERVIEWER:



Tell me about, about- you, you grew up with such talented and famous parents, what that was like growing up, and that answer.

00:03:43:00

ANJELICA HUSTON:

Well, I- since I have really no other basis for comparison, I can only say that it was a wonderful childhood. I grew up in Ireland, was very beautiful. My father was quite extraordinary, as indeed was my mother. I was privileged to, to be their child.

00:04:08:00

INTERVIEWER:

Have you seen the cover? The cover picture of your mother?

00:04:10:00

ANJELICA HUSTON:

Oh, yes. Indeed.

00:04:11:00

INTERVIEWER:

What are your impressions of it the first time you saw it?

00:04:14:00

ANJELICA HUSTON:

I must have been very young, but it's quite a memorable portrait. It's a black and white headshot, the strand of pearls, and she has a very mysterious little



smile. She's very, very beautiful. That's how I remember her at her best.

Thank you.

END TC: 00:05:05:00