

# DEBRA MAYER:

## A tale of two actresses

BY RICK DANFORD

"...And the Best Actress Award goes to Debra Mayer!"

Yes, you heard me right. The 5' 4" West Coast beauty did win a "Best Actress" Award, but that was in the 7th grade back in Diamond Bar, California. Still, she knew what she wanted to do then and has all the talent in the world to carry her to those heights once again. Debra Mayer is a former high school English teacher-turned-pro actress, best known for her work in several of Charles Band's Full Moon productions.

An accomplished stage actress, Debra attended Mt. San Antonio College, where she starred in six plays over the span of two years. Her final production there, she played blind, but clever 'Suzy' in *Wait Until Dark*. Debra then transferred to Cal State Fullerton where she majored in Communications, with an emphasis on 'radio, television, and film'. She later landed additional theatre roles; most notably 'Ophelia' in *Hamlet*, 'Laura' in *The Enchanted Cottage*, and 'Theda' in *It Had To Be You*. Debra was most recently involved in her first musical, *The Threepenny Opera* at The Open Fist Theatre. She had a wonderful experience singing, dancing, and playing the multiple roles of a 'flapper', a 'beggar', and a 'whore'. Believe it or not, Debra also performed as a stand up comedian at the world famous Comedy Store on three separate occasions.

There is also a dark side to our lovely Debra—a dark side she is probably better known for, as the star of several straight-to-video horror films. That's right, the beautiful actress who once graced the stage as 'Ophelia', made her small-screen debut as 'Moirra Yulin' in Charles Band's *Blood Dolls*. She's played a woman possessed in the 1920's in *Stitches*, a wise-cracking 1940's reporter in *Dr. Moreau's House of Pain*, and a thousand-year-old vampire in *Decadent Evil*. She has also



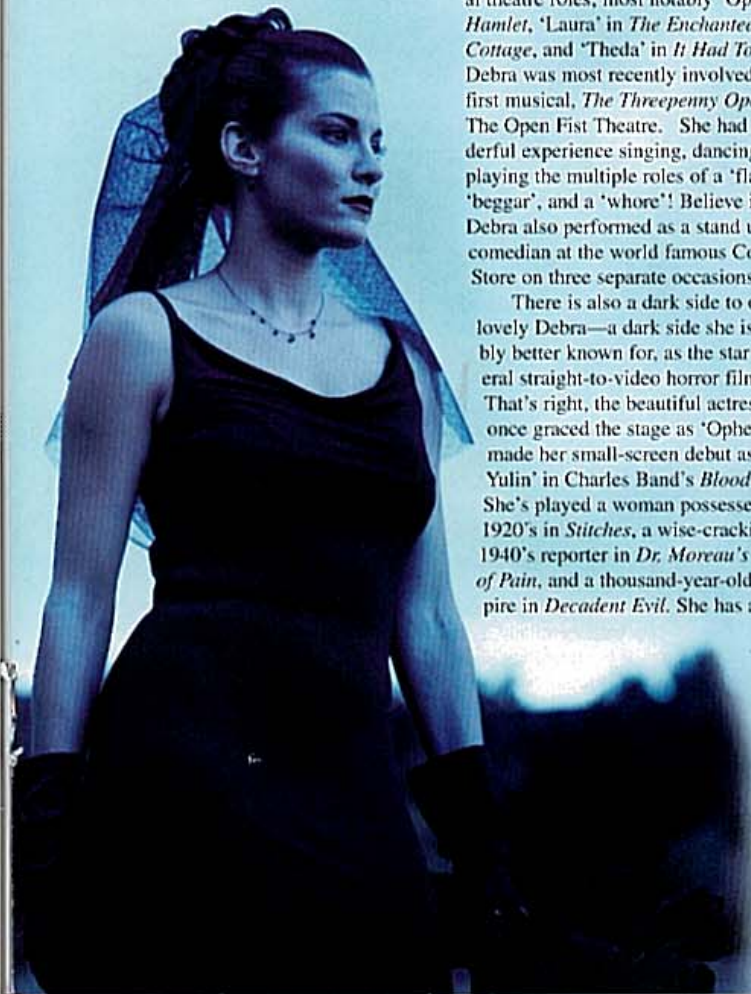
starred in several other video favorites such as *Voodoo Academy*, *Prison of the Dead*, and *Hell Asylum*. Debra most recently had a small role in the Gary Busey film, *The Gingerdead Man*, in a cameo at the very end delivering a cryptic message. With a four-page interview and pictorial in *Femme Fatales* a couple of years back and several autograph signings at horror/sci-fi conventions such as Fangoria's Weekend of Horrors, Debra Mayer is well on her way to making a name for herself as a bonafide horror superstar.

A native of California, Debra has appeared on television in such shows as *America's Most Wanted*, *General Hospital*, and *Charmed*. If you're a fan of country music you may also remember her as Toby Keith's high school flame in the video for his mega-hit song, "How Do You Like Me Now?" But her work as a horror maven is what has landed her the most notoriety to date. It all started innocently enough she explains, "I was part of a theater group and we were all sitting around one day when one of the girls, Rhonda Griffin, brought in a tape of a movie she just finished and asked us if we'd like to see it. The movie was titled *The Creeps*, and Rhonda was the star. We all thought it was really cool and Rhonda urged me to go meet up with these people and go meet the casting people as I would be great for these films." Debra ended up meeting up with one of the casting directors in a workshop he was conducting and she was brought in for a role in one of the very popular *SubSpecies* films. Her role was ultimately written out of the film but she must have made an impression as she was later brought back for *Blood Dolls*. After several call backs, she landed the starring role in the film and thus a new career was born.

"I was inspired by watching someone else do one of these movies and to

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Mayer in *Decadent Evil*.



that should make it interesting for any fans of the film to try and identify that scene.

From the stage to the small screen, Debra Mayer has had no trouble with the transition and has even enjoyed the diversity of the two lives. Each brings a new set of challenges and rewards and she enjoys every opportunity she can get. She is currently reviewing scripts for her next film and looks to bring a character to life that she's never played before. With

her beauty and her over powering screen presence, it's easy to see why she is becoming such a popular fixture in the horror genre, and we can expect to see much more from her as she continues to grow as an actress and on screen talent.



To learn more about Debra Mayer, look her up on [IMDB](#) or visit her Official web site at [www.debramayer.com](http://www.debramayer.com).



Mayer with William Shatner

see how cool it was because I had never watched these movies before as I was too scared". Working with a genre legend such as Charles Band also had a very positive reaction on her, "He's great and I'm sure everybody says that. He was very open and laid back but knew exactly what he was doing. His experience really showed on the set. It was wonderful." But playing in a Charles Band film also meant one of her characters might have a little added punch. As 'Morella' in the 2005 release *Decadent Evil*, she is transformed into a horrific-looking puppet-creature that becomes the love interest of the main focus of the film, Marvin. Now Marvin is a part-human, part-reptile-creature who is imprisoned in a birdeage. "As you know, for movies like this there is a lot of ADR work and I was on the set doing all of the noises for the last scene while the puppets are having their way with each other. We were going at it with the heavy breathing, moaning and groaning and Charlie let us go on for a while. There's a timing to it, a rhythm to it; watching what the puppets were doing, you gotta make it right and if we got off sync Charlie would let us know. When he finally yelled cut the rest of the room cracked up laughing!"

This opened Debra up to a whole new world and she began attending various horror conventions. "I didn't realize before I got into these movies that there are some die-hard fans out there. The horror and sci-fi genres have probably the most loyal fans that have every poster and item for you to sign then any other fans I've seen."

Full Moon also gave Debra the opportunity to work with William

Shatner in his film, *Groom Lake*, as well as his *William Shatner's Full Moon Fright Night* for the Sci-Fi Channel (where she gave Mr. Shatner the cold shoulder as a sexy witch in a fun cameo). "He's funny; he has a great sense of humor and he was a real character," she says laughing. But William Shatner is also a seasoned actor and director who knows his way around a movie set. "He's very intense, he knows exactly what he wants and he gets it. He's very passionate about what he does and it would be great to have that kind of energy."

Energy is what she will need plenty of in the independent horror genre. She got a real taste of that while filming *Voodoo Academy* in 2000. "The movie was shot in four days and I had a huge part in that movie. They offered me the part, I'd say a couple days before, so I really didn't have time to learn my lines. I was learning my lines in the makeup chair. When the camera wasn't on me I was reading off the script." Break-neck shooting schedules are commonplace with these types of films. The extremely low budgets usually mean condensed schedules to help keep costs down so unique techniques can help a cast and crew get the best out of the time they have. "I shouldn't tell this, and I won't say when, but there's a scene in *Voodoo Academy* [where] I am completely reading the script. The script was attached to someone off screen and I was reading an entire monologue off somebody. I hate to admit that because I usually do my work and I come prepared, but I just did not have time." She's been told that you can't really tell which scene it was, but