

'L.A. Law' actress makes character more independent

By The Associated Press
● RADNOR, Pa. — Actress Michelle Greene said she was able to get producer Steven Bochco to make her "L.A. Law" character independent and more attractive because Bochco is a "feminist at heart."

Greene plays lawyer Abby Perkins in the NBC hit series.

The actress, in an interview for the Nov. 11 issue of *TV Guide* magazine, said she decided to talk to the show's producers about her character after the first season.

Abby was "never seen doing anything involving the law," Greene said. "She was this mousy creature to whom all kinds of dreadful things kept happening. She had an alcoholic husband, she got beaten up, her child was kidnapped, she had a messy divorce."

Finally, Greene said she confronted the producers, saying "I guess every show has to have the obligatory female victim in it, but I don't want to play the victim anymore. I don't want to spend all my time crying on camera."

● NEW YORK — Choreographer Jerome Robbins is stepping down as co-director of the New York City Ballet at age 71, but he's not disappearing into retirement.

Robbins, considered one of the century's greats, plans to keep busy finishing his memoirs and developing "Jerome Robbins' Broadway," a medley of pieces from musicals he choreographed or directed.

"It's important at my age to do other things," he said. "I'm resigning from the New York City Ballet; I'm not retiring from the field."

The ballet company announced Robbins' resignation Sunday.

He's stepping down as co-director, but Robbins is to begin rehearsals soon at the City Ballet for a retrospective of his ballets since 1944, to be presented next spring.

● MONTREAL — You name it, Donald Sutherland has had it.

Polio, rheumatic fever, hepatitis, an appendectomy, pneumonia, scarlet fever.

"And spinal meningitis," the actor said. "I died . . ."

A reporter chuckled. Sutherland looked perturbed.

"Yes. I died. For four or five

People in the news

seconds," he said.

Sutherland overcame the bout of meningitis and said his experience with disease since childhood left him with a deep appreciation of the medical profession.

He is the 1989 honorary fund-raising chairman of the Montreal Children's Hospital, which hopes to raise \$1 million this year to pay for renovations and new equipment.

● CLAREMORE, Okla. — James Brady, crippled in the 1981 assassination attempt on his then-boss, Ronald Reagan, was honored for his work ever since on behalf of the disabled.

The former White House press secretary got an award Thursday from the Will Rogers Commission, in part because of his recovery from the head injury.

"God did it. I didn't do it," Brady said Sunday, when he was guest of honor at a parade.

"I went up there and God told me 'I'm not ready for you yet. . . . When I am I will call you back up here, but there are some things I want you to do on Earth.' He didn't tell me what they were, but I have an idea what they are — like doing things I am doing now for the disabled."

Brady, 49, was shot in the head during the assassination attempt in Washington, D.C.

● MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Guitarist Albert Collins was named Blues Entertainer of the Year, got four more top honors and shared a fifth during the 10th Annual Handy Blues Awards.

Collins won Contemporary Male Blues Artist of the Year and Blues Instrumentalist of the Year for guitar. His group, The Icebreakers, was voted Blues Band of the Year, and the album *Showdown* with Collins, Johnny Copeland and Robert Cray was voted into the Blues Hall of Fame.

Etta James was named Contemporary Female Blues Artist of the Year.

The Sunday awards presentation, emceed by bassist Willie Dixon, has evolved into the premier forum for recognition of blues artists.



The Orchestra of the 18th Century will perform at the Koger Center Sunday.

Classical orchestra to play at Koger

By DAVID BOWDEN
Staff Writer

Those who have ever wanted to see an orchestra that plays classical music the way it was really intended to be performed should see the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century Sunday at the Koger Center for the Arts.

The orchestra plays the classics on instruments dating back to the 1700s. This is by choice, as they want to recreate the original sound of the music written by Mozart and Beethoven.

This internationally known orchestra is just finishing a tour of the United States. The stop in Columbia will be the last time to see them without a passport.

The Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century was started by Dutch composer and flutist Frans Bruggen in 1981. Forty-five musicians familiar with 18th century music were recruited for the group.

The assembled group of musicians are predominately Dutch, but there are members from many other countries as well.

This emphasis on the instruments and sounds of the 1700s is what makes this orchestra different from all others. For example, instead of piano, the harpsicord is used.

Twelve live albums of the orchestra's work have been released on the Philips label. Since the orchestra's inception in Amsterdam, it has toured in England, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Portugal, Australia and the United States.

Ballet dancers getting poison pen letters

By The Associated Press
LINCOLN, R.I. — Dancers of the State Ballet of Rhode Island have been receiving phony letters telling them to quit for being fat, old or disruptive, and the artistic director blames another dance company.

Police said Wednesday they were checking fingerprints on the letters, which are typed on stationery resembling the ballet company's and bear artistic director Herci Marsden's forged signature.

"This is more than a prank," said Detective David S. Ethier. "It's (Marsden's) business and personal reputation that has a chance of being destroyed."

Marsden charged that another dance company, which she would not identify, sent the poison pen letters in an attempt to steal her dancers.

Ethier said police had no suspects, but did not believe anyone in Marsden's company was sending the letters.

The letters ordered the dancers to quit for reasons ranging from being overweight to being too old. One letter to an 11-year-old apprentice accused her of being disruptive.

"You are upsetting my girls and causing trouble in my school and in the ballet company," the letter said. "Your family is also upsetting people. You are not to return here."

Marsden said a 20-year-old ballerina quit after receiving a letter, despite Marsden's insistence it was phony.

About a dozen apprentices and members of Marsden's 30-year-old semiprofessional dance company received the letters, postmarked in Providence Sept. 4.

Marsden said that she has dismissed one dancer in five years and that if she has a complaint, company members "have to face me, and I tell them to their faces what they have to do."

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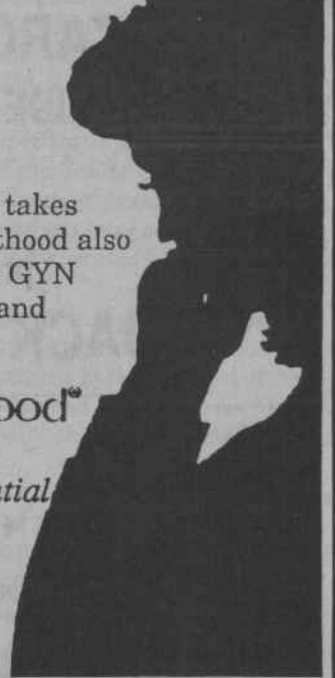
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