

'Million Dollar Baby' Takes to the Arts

Washington
 "Everything they say about Hollywood is true. If our boss is straight, he wants you in bed with him. If he's not, he wants you to cure for him."
 So says the five-d-ten-cent queen Jocelyn Kress, heiress to the Kress millions, who went to Hollywood after nearly 25 years in New York blue bookery to

make her fortune. But she returned disillusioned after a year working on the Peace and Freedom Party documentary for David Greenglass.

"I loved making films, but Hollywood just wasn't my cup of tea." Besides, the money was shelved.

The Manhattan-born daughter of the late Kress Industries president, Rush

Kress, and niece of Kress under Samuel Kress, whose paintings represent 70 percent of the National Gallery's Italian collection, abandoned filmmaking and headed home to open the J. Paul Getty Center in midtown Manhattan.

However, the former debaucherate and Sarah Lawrence graduate found that her good looks and status not only kept her on a steady social treadmill but also overwhelmed her commitment to the art world.

She moved to seek a more active social life in Washington in hopes of committing herself fully to her self-appointed life mission, supporting the arts.

Sipping wine in the Grand Bohemian restaurant atop the Kennedy Center, where she is putting together the first American Festival of the Arts — Arts Now '74 (May 3 to June 15), she said the former didn't quite work out the way she had hoped.

She was barely in her Georgetown digs before she was invited to the Tom

Bradens for a dinner honoring Pete Peterson, former secretary of commerce, and his wife Sally.

"Movie stars and artists don't faze me, but politicians absolutely terrify me, and there I was seated between Frank Mankiewicz and (Secretary of State) Henry Kissinger and opposite Senator William Fulbright (Dem-Ark.)."

"I was running a fever and I didn't know anyone in Washington, not to mention Mankiewicz. I was completely at a loss for words. I finally got around to asking Mankiewicz what he did. He told me he had worked for George McGovern. 'Oh, I said, what did you do for him?' 'I ran his campaign,' he told me.

"I asked him if he had really thought McGovern was going to win. Everyone at the table got hysterical. And that was the end of that conversation.

"So I turned to Kissinger. We had a marvelous conversation about the virtues of Harvard, and then he took out his book and wrote down my phone number (Nancy Maginnis was seated at another table) and told me what it was like to date him.

"That is, he could never be alone with a girl because the Secret Service always tails him. It was quite an evening."

Since then there have been a slew of invitations, which Jocelyn finds mind-boggling.

"The only reason you're invited in Washington is because of what you're doing. It's a very uptight town and terribly hard to crack."

In New York, Jocelyn had been firmly entrenched by her birthright with the inbred set. In those days, she said, no one cared what you were doing — only from whose ancestry you sprang. She dated Howard Cox, Edward's older brother, whom she found very appealing, and traveled about with Eddie and Tricia Nixon Cox.



MANKIEWICZ

He was terrifying

She's a great admirer of the President's son-in-law. "He's a great person, very sharp, very kind."

She has less affection for Tricia. "She was always kind of strange, terribly ill at ease socially. She'd talk to you as though you were an audience of 2000."

Referring to the rumored rift between President Nixon and his son-in-law, Jocelyn said, "I've always heard that Eddie voted for Hubert Humphrey, and I'm sure he hates Nixon."

The central reason Jocelyn came to Washington was to contribute to the American art scene, and she has, one might say, a head start. In addition to her uncle's collection in the National Gallery, her father owned an enormous aggregate of Italian art, now housed in her mother's New York apartment.

When she called Kennedy Center Chairman Roger Stevens to ask approval to start an annual American arts festival similar to the Venice Biennale, he gave her a sizable office in the Kennedy Center, where



EDDIE COX

"He's very kind"

she's been working ever since.

With funds from private individuals and corporations, Jocelyn has set up Art Trend, a nonprofit foundation devoted to the support of the American creative arts, which will sponsor Art Now '74.

"I feel very strongly about the fact that American artists have had to go abroad to win recognition before they could achieve any kind of reputation in the United States.

"Americans have always been so conservative with their money when it comes to investing in the arts. Germany and Sweden have larger collections of American contemporary art than the United States.

Art Now '74 will present 60 or 70 of the best American artists in theater, dance, television, photography and the visual arts. The artists will be selected by Jocelyn, along with Nina Sundell (art dealer Leo Castelli's daughter) and an advisory board composed of dealers, curators, university presidents and specialists including Max Protech, Robert Litman, Charles Cowles and Judith Richardson.

Women's Wear Daily



COLLECTOR JOCELYN KRESS
"Americans have neglected art"