

Housewife In Hollywood

My Interview with Angela Cartwright
written by Suzanne on July 2, 2009



Do you remember Penny Robinson from Lost in Space? How about Brigitta from The Sound of Music? What silly questions, of course you do!

Angela Cartwright is the actress that played Penny & Brigitta. These days she's a photographer, novelist, artist and occasional actress.

The Danny Thomas Show, The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour, The Love Boat, My Three Son's, Adam-12, Logan's Run, Alfred Hitchcock Presents, Family Feud... going through Angela's acting resume is like a stroll down pop culture lane. Of course I had some questions for her. Here's my interview with Angela Cartwright:

HIH: You were on The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour when the Ricardo's went to Hollywood and the Williams family from Make Room for Daddy rented their house. You were very young but what do you remember from your time on the set with Lucy & Desi?

AC: I remember that was a hilarious show. Lucy loses her voice and she has to mime what happened at the cabin with the Ricardos and Williams families. Lucy had such an expressive face and I loved watching her. She had brilliant comedic timing and was a force to be reckoned with. Even though I was young I remember I really liked Gale Gordon who played the judge. He made me laugh.

HIH: There are quite a few fan made videos on YouTube dedicated to Penny Robinson. How does it feel being part of classics with such a big following such as Lost in Space and The Sound of Music?

AC: It never ceases to amaze me. Lost in Space seemed to arrive on everyone's television screens at the perfect time. People needed to be swept away and dream of a life in outer space. The way to get there was becoming a reality. It really captured ones imagination. I was lucky enough to go to a real launch at NASA a few years ago. It was an amazing experience. NASA employees told me over and over how Lost in Space

inspired them to join the space program... imagine that...Lost In Space inspiring future astronauts.The Sound of Music enchanted movie goes in a different way. Maybe it was the music, the storyline, the beauty of the film...whatever that magic was, it was universal.

HIH: With all the children at different age levels working on The Sound of Music I imagine there were some fun times filming. Do you have a story you can share with us from your days filming in Austria?

AC: Coming right from The Danny Thomas Show I was thrilled to be working with other children. Heather Menzies (who played Louisa) and I hit it off right away because we both adored the Beatles. We had a club called the HePaulAng Club and we constantly sang Beatle songs on the set. I think the camaraderie among the kids really shows on the screen. We are all still friends today. In fact I just returned from a visit to the Von Trapp Lodge in Stowe, Vermont with four of the movie cast members. What an experience talking with the REAL Trapp family at their beautiful resort located on a mountain that is eerily reminiscent of the Austrian landscape.

HIH: The character Dr. Zachary Smith in Lost in Space was always getting into mischief. What was Jonathon Harris like on the set?

AC: Jonathan was a total professional. He always knew his lines and he worked hard at his role of Dr. Smith. He also had a playful side...every day in the early afternoon he went up in the rafters and threw tootsie roll pops at the crew...It was a sugar pick me up we all looked forward to.

HIH: Bill Mummy played the role of your brother Will Robinson on the show. He's a musician, writer, producer, and actor now. I read that you were working on a fantasy-adventure novel with him. Is this fact or fiction?

AC: Bill has four CD's coming out in July, Speechless, Carnival Sky (an all instrumental CD). He produced Sarah Taylor's new CD The Cure to Everything and another Barnes and Barnes CD for the twisted mind OPBOPACHOP. Bill is a very prolific musician, check out his website for more www.billmummy.com
We started writing the fiction novel a couple of years ago and just recently we decided to rework a few things. Bill and I work well together and our imaginations click. I think it's a good fictional story that people will really enjoy.

HIH: The science fiction novel Logan's Run was made into a film and also into a television show. You played the role of Karen4 in one episode. Many child actors don't stay in the business when they reach adulthood. Did growing up in Hollywood ever feel a bit like the paradise city in the Logan's Run storyline where life ends at 30?

AC: That's an interesting point. There is no question the transition from child actor to adult can be really difficult. I think sometimes actors are cast in one kind of role and they have difficulty breaking out of that. Actors should be given more credit... They are ACTORS...they can play many different roles if given the chance.
I was fortunate to have been cast as a New York kid, an Austrian Von Trapp and then a space adventurer. It's hard for actors today who get locked in a certain kind of role. I know many actors who are chomping at the bit to spread their wings.

HHH: You're a talented artist & photographer. When did you start creating art and what medium did you use first?

AC: I would have to say photography was the first artistic medium I got hooked on. Over the years it has evolved into embedding my photographs into different mediums. My book *Mixed Emulsions – Altered Art Techniques for Photographic Imagery* explored that concept. I shoot black and white film images and hand paint them with oils, acrylics, and other mediums. Then I cut them up and create new combinations with my photographs to tell my story.

HHH: You have more than a few websites and one of them is dedicated to your artwork, www.acartwrightstudio.com The subtitle is "home of an unruly artist". Why do you call yourself an unruly artist?

AC: My photography and my art is constantly evolving and investigating image possibilities. Most recently I have turned my photographs into comfortable, wearable art clothing www.acstudio9.com

It's just one more artistic avenue I have wanted to travel. So why do I call myself unruly? I like to break the rules to see where it will take me.

HHH: Sarah Fishburn collaborated with you on the book *In This House - A Collection of Altered Art Imagery and Collage Techniques* and *In This Garden - Explorations in Mixed Media Visual Narrative*. You also created the *Quality Art Zine - Pasticcio Quartz* with her. Tell us about your latest book.

AC: Sarah is a great partner in creativity. We both have very different styles but we compliment each other in our passion to make art. *In This Garden* is a collaborative project involving twelve artists interpreting the word 'GARDEN'. It's a follow up to *In This House* where artists interpreted the word 'HOME'. It's amazing to see the diversity and individuality in each artists creations. Give an artist a word to interpret and there will be twelve completely different insights into that word. I love that. The books are also filled with tons of techniques and tips and insights into each of the artists.

Pasticcio Quartz is an ongoing outlet for our thirst for art. It's a panoply of art from emerging and established artists, books, thoughts, words, tips, quips and lists. The word *Pasticcio* means a work or style produced by borrowing fragments, ingredients, or motifs from various sources, and that is exactly what it is. We self publish it three times a year and it keeps us in the artistic whirlwind. Art can be intoxicating...isn't that why we do it?