

AUTOMAT PICTURES
"I AM DIVINE"
MARCH 15, 2013
TRANSCRIBED BY: WORD OF MOUTH (RL)

[FILM CLIP]

[01:00:06]

VOICEOVER : It was a Hollywood gala in Charm City tonight as Baltimore's politicians, movie stars and counter culture turned out en masse for world premiere of John Waters' latest film Hairspray.

[01:00:29]

MINK STOLE : It was a very exciting night. There was a real charge in the air. People were liking the movie.

[01:00:36]

MALE : We were so excited about it and thrilled that we had accomplished it.

DENNIS DERMODY : We thought this is it. This is the one that Divine has been working towards.

MINK STOLE : He was there, he looked wonderful and he was so proud.

[FILM CLIP]

NEWS REPORTER : In one sentence, can you sum up this movie experience?

DIVINE : This is Divine, yeah. It's great. It's the greatest night for me in a long time. I love every minute of it.

[01:01:04]

DENNIS DERMODY : Everybody was really high on it, and they thought this could open doors for John to make movies, for Divine.

JOHN WATERS : After those years of struggling, all those years of working, all the years of horrible reviews and really mean stuff, to finally be accepted, he certainly would've wanted to continue what was just starting.

MALE : He was such a gregarious big, healthy, pink piece of flesh, you just figured he'd go on forever.

[01:01:34]

SHOW OPENING TITLES

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : People like to laugh at sex. People like to laugh at, at dirty things and people love to be shocked, I think.

DIVINE : Kill everyone now.

DIVINE : So that's my job, to get out there and shock them.

DIVINE : Get those cameras rolling.

[01:01:46]

MALE : Divine, she was dangerous, part outlaw, part serial killer.

[MOVIE CLIP]

DIVINE : Who wants to die for art?

MALE : I do.

PAT MORAN : Divine was a cinematic terrorist.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I didn't get my reputation for nothing, you know.

[01:02:03]

IDA : She was just barreling through the scenes, chewing up the scenery and owning every minute of it.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Why you sneaking, conniving little abortion.

MALE : She was simultaneously sexy and monstrous and terrifying. Is she gonna screw me or eat me?

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : You wanna fuck me?

RICKI LAKE : He had something that no one else has.

[01:02:22]

MALE : She just had this power.

MICHAEL MUSTO : She was a midnight movie star. You could only see her after midnight but it was worth staying up.

TAB HUNTER : People would say you can't do that. Well,
why not?

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Well fuck you all very much.

FEMALE : He was such a good soul and such a funny person
that even the absurd and horrific things he did are forgiven.
He could get away with them.

[MOVIE CLIP]

DIVINE : How's this for a center spread?

JOHN WATERS : He was breaking the rules of drag and
defying them by wearing stuff that a fat person would never,
ever wear. He took it to a different level. He took it to a
level of anarchy.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:02:54]

DIVINE : Do not forget, I am Divine.

[01:03:00]

[SHOW OPENING TITLE]

DIVINE : I always wanted to be a movie star. John Waters started to make films for our own enjoyment and to keep us out of trouble. It was just for us, for no one else. We never thought that anything would ever happen with the movies. We were the only ones that thought they were funny at the time.

[01:03:36]

They became quite popular much to our shock and amazement. Everything sort of mushroomed and snowballed from there, and here I am today.

[01:03:48]

MICHAEL MUSTO : In 1977 I caught a double bill of Pink Flamingoes and Female Trouble at Cinema Village here in New York. That double bill changed my life. It was punk, it was raunchy, it was outrageous, it was glamorous, it was exciting. I was vomiting and rolling in the aisles at the same time.

[01:04:05]

MALE : When I was 12 years old I went to the Copa in Houston to see him, and he did not disappoint. He had the sequin dress and the skin-tight form to his 65 double-D breasts, dragging half-naked guys up on the stage and practically masturbating

them like right there before my 12-year-old guys. It was fantastic. I wanted to know what this was all about.

[01:04:29]

GREG GORMAN : There was a mystique of the character Divine and people wanted to know who really was that real person Divine. When he was hiding behind that cloak of Divine he could be outrageous. He could be the alter-ego of Glen.

DIVINE : We all have our other sides that we don't show to other people and sometimes don't even know what we have, so I think playing the character of Divine as opposed to the person Divine is maybe a great release for me.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:04:57]

DIVINE : Oh, and you're still the most beautiful woman in the world.

MINK STOLE : The commitment to his completely unbelievable characters, nobody is like these people, and yet 100 percent commitment.

[01:05:10]

[TV CLIP]

MALE : They called you, uh, either the trashiest or grubbiest or sleaziest character in film, and you and John Waters were pretty proud of that.

DIVINE : OH yeah, the king and queen of filth.

JOHN WATERS : When they see my name or Divine's name when they come to our films, they expect something. I love everything that's bad about America and that's what I make movies about.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:05:34]

DIVINE : Look at me, I'm the most famous person you've ever seen.

MINK STOLE : Anything that John asked Divi to do, he would do.

JOHN WATERS : Okay, go ahead, pick it up.

MINK STOLE : There was a trust that is remarkable when you think of what Divine was asked to do and what he actually did, and then what John would think up for him to do next.

[01:05:52]

VINCENT PERANIS : Divine was the burlesque of John. It wasn't lovers or anything. They were like these two entwined pieces of energy.

[TV CLIP]

DIVINE : We have our love affair through the camera lens, or the movies wouldn't turn out too well.

[01:06:09]

MINK STOLE : He put himself in physical danger to do these roles that he had no way of knowing were ever gonna pay off. We were kids in Baltimore.

[01:06:32]

FRANCES MILSTEAD : Buddy's first name is Harris but they all called him Glen. He was a good little baby. He always had nice manners. He loved to go to Sunday school. Glen liked to watch musicals. He'd play with his cousin, with their dolls and fix their hair. And he always wanted to be the mother.

[01:07:01]

MALE : He liked pretty things all his life, in his childhood too. And he would go into his mom's closet and dress up.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : When Glen was 10 years old I took him to a pediatrician and he told me that Glen was more feminine than he was masculine. When Dr. Anderson told me about Glen, I cried. And Glen, he would say mom, what did he tell you was so bad? I said Glen, no matter what that doctor told me, you'll always be my baby and I'll always love you. I said just remember that.

[TV CLIP]

[01:07:47]

VOICEOVER : No one really can resist a rich, moist cake made with a Betty Crocker cake mix.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : Glen loved to eat. When he got in high school I took him to a diet doctor. The doctor gave him pills. But as soon as we come out of the doctor's office he's like come on, mom, let's go get a pizza.

[01:08:04]

DIANA EVANS : He stood out because he was a little chunky. He didn't like to sweat. He didn't like to run. He just wasn't very athletic.

DIVINE : I was an introvert and I never really went out of the house 'till I was about 16 years old. I was very uptight about my weight and about the way I looked and, um, I always wanted to look like everyone else.

[01:08:22]

FRANCES MILSTEAD : Glen didn't have any friends. After school he'd come home, we'd eat dinner, then he'd do his homework.

JOHN WATERS : He got beat up every day at school, really got hassled at school.

DIVINE : They used to wait for me every day to beat me up after school, to the point where I was quite black and blue and, uh, afraid to say anything 'cause they had threatened my life. I really hated school and I hated the whole situation.

[01:09:00]

DIANA EVANS : I dated Divine, whom I knew as Glen from the year 1959, uh, until maybe 1965. He would take me to movies and plays, and we would go to the Baltimore Symphony. He cared. He was very, uh, attentive. He was loving, he watched out for you. He had a great sense of humor. His first attempt to kiss me was when he was 16, and it was just a very gentle kiss. It was nothing, you know, animalistic or lusty.

[01:09:35]

He wanted me to look nice. He would make sure I had things. If he wanted me to look a certain way he would dress me that way. He would bring me these things and I would wear them. He looked forward to the prom. He decided he would do the hair and the makeup and the flowers. We went to the prom and they were all very envious of us and that's what he liked.

[01:09:58]

FRANCES MILSTEAD : When I used to go to the beauty shop and get my hair done on Saturday, Glen used to come in the shop and wait for me. And while he was there he would fool around with the wigs. I said to Glen, I'll tell you what, I'll make a deal with you. I'll let you go to the beauty school. My husband I bought him a beauty shop so he could learn responsibility.

[01:10:18]

DIANA EVANS : And the women loved him. They would go there specifically and ask for Divine.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : He would say eat your hearts out, 'cause you know I'm the star around here. I was going to the store and this one lady said he does good work, beautiful work, but he's queer. And I thought uh-oh, they were talking about Glen.

[01:10:47]

DIANA EVANS : Growing up in those times you just didn't know about people being different in that way.

[TV CLIP]

REPORTER : Homosexuals move in all walks of life. Except for hairdressing and a few other occupations, their presence is unnoticed.

DIANA EVANS : So it never dawned on me that he was gay or anything. I liked his creativity.

[01:11:03]

SUE LOWE : In Baltimore all the hairdressers were gay men, and I mean, very gay.

JOHN WATERS : It was not like today where everybody was out and there was a gay scene. There was but it was illegal to be gay. It was kind of more fun then. [LAUGH]

[01:11:14]

SUE LOWE : It was underground but that's the charm of Baltimore. You could get away with a lot.

JOHN WATERS : I lived in [UNINTELLIGIBLE] with my parents and Divine's mother and father moved up the street, six houses away. I didn't meet Divine 'till I was probably about 17. My father used to take us to school and I was angry and hating every moment of school, just defiant.

[01:11:44]

And I would see Divine waiting for the bus and my father would shudder. And Divine was dressed in a little preppy outfit just waiting for the bus, but like with that look of [UNINTELLIGIBLE]. And Divine wasn't try to stick out. He was trying to pass as a normal preppy kid going to school, but no one believed it. He could never pass as normal.

[01:12:06]

DIVINE : We just both were always interested in movies and Russ Meyer films especially. The love for these films and any sort of film that was out of the ordinary, brought us even closer together.

JOHN WATERS : When Divine finally did go out and went downtown, he met gay people and then he went out with a vengeance. He never came back.

[01:12:28]

PAT MORAN : He didn't want to come home at 10:00. Maybe he had someplace else to go. Maybe he had found a group that didn't beat him up and that accepted him, and maybe he just wanted some friends. And so then this big tribe came about.

[01:12:45]

DENNIS DERMODY : Kids that grew up in the '60s, that's a very different type. You know, they were completely rebelling against everything.

SUE LOWE : We were freaks, we weren't hippies. Freaks drank, ate meat and did, you know, drugs.

[01:13:00]

[TV CLIP]

VOICEOVER : Hallucinogens are mind-altering drugs and the one you are most likely to run into most often of course, is marijuana.

JOHN WATERS : He smoked pot.

[FILM CLIP]

FEMALE : If you want a good smoke, try one of these.

[01:13:10]

JOHN WATERS : That's what changed everybody, smoking pot.

[LAUGH] And then you had irony all of a sudden.

[FILM CLIP]

MALE : And if grass doesn't make it for you, baby, well you can always drop a cap of acid.

JOHN WATERS : We took LSD in 1964 so we had it early and it was stolen from Shepherd [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Hospital and it was [UNINTELLIGIBLE] acid that they treated alcoholics with.

[01:13:28]

[FILM CLIP]

FEMALE : They're damaged for life. Their brains are wrecked. They go into institutions.

JOHN WATERS : I would take LSD and say let's see Bergman movies. Divine and I were the only people that ever saw Bergman movies on LSD. Hour of the Wolf where he pulls her face off, that really freaked Divine out.

[01:13:44]

SUE LOWE : There were so much drugs and LSD and poppers and pot and alcohol, cheap alcohol.

JOHN WATERS : There was a mix of rich kids, poor kids, gay people, straight people, all together on LSD. Believe me, that's a melting pot.

[01:14:00]

FRANCES MILSTEAD : That's when he started to change. He would start to tell little lies and I'd catch him in it.

[TV CLIP]

DIVINE : I was arrested a couple of times for shoplifting.

INTERVIEWER : Were you guilty?

DIVINE : [LAUGH] Uh-huh.

[01:14:14]

VINCENT PERANIS : He was just one of the most generous people, not always with his own money.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : Like I'd get this bill for flowers, for like \$800 and I'd say what was this for? Oh, we threw a party. Well how come I wasn't invited? I like parties.

[01:14:34]

VINCENT PERANIS : He'd do things like a huge catered party at the Belvedere Hotel for all his friends. He loved being bigger than life, showing off.

JOHN WATERS : And then he would send the bill to his parents but rip up the bill so his parents didn't know. They never saw the bills. He'd get the mail every day and just rip up all the bills until his parents' credit cards were cut up and he would write bad checks. And the police busted him and took

him home and he said to his parents I did not do that, just such a liar, right?

[01:15:00]

And they made him take a lie-detector test and he passed. That's acting. David Lockley was a high school dropout who somehow had an English accent, and his hair was dyed blonde with heart-shaped roots and long, which really at the time, was really radical.

DIANA EVANS : David Lochary was at the time, an apprentice at the best salon in town.

[01:15:27]

JOHN WATERS : And David Lochary was Divine's drag mentor and got him in drag.

DIANA EVANS : Glen invited me to a costume party. I said what are you gonna go as, and he wouldn't tell me. He came to my house with his costume and his friend David. I really wasn't fond of David. I had this feeling he was a little possessive of Divine. They took over my bedroom, and when he came out he looked just like Elizabeth Taylor.

[01:15:57]

JOHN WATERS : He wanted to be Elizabeth Taylor. That's all he cared about. He smoked Salems because she did.

DIANA EVANS : The dress looked great, the shoes were great. He was gorgeous, so we went on to the costumer party and that's the first time I ever noticed so many guys dressed like girls. And he outdid all the other girls there. We had two separate lives. Mine was on one side and the group with John and all the other outsiders was on the other side.

[01:16:28]

I really didn't lose him until I'd say the fall of 1964. I didn't see him very much after that and we just kind of lost track of each other.

[TV CLIP]

MALE : The contest in which they were runners-up was a masquerade, actually in the vernacular it's called a drag ball.

[01:16:52]

JOHN WATERS : David Lochary and Divine, they would go to these drag balls in Washington.

PAT MORAN : It was a big underground and they didn't start 'till like 12, 1:00 in the morning. And they were over in ratty neighborhoods and I don't know what kind of basements.

[01:17:08]

SUE LOWE : They all would compete with their outfits and makeup and it was all about makeup.

JACKIE BEAT : Drag was pretty. It was glamorous but it was pretty and it was thin.

PAT MORAN : There was a certain way that was a drag queen looked and what she wore and that elegance.

[01:17:30]

JOHN WATERS : Divine, only as Elizabeth Taylor kind of played it straight, but then immediately he did a twist on it 'cause he was overweight.

DIVINE : Well yeah, after a while I saw that they were so serious, it made it ridiculous. I didn't want to be like them. I really couldn't get into it like they did and I thought I might as well just have fun, you know, 'cause they were so serious about being so competitive.

[01:17:53]

JOHN WATERS : So he wore clothes that you would never wear when you're overweight, and that's when he realized the attention was so much more. Now I encourage this heavily because he was making fun of drag.

MARY VIVIAN PEARCE : John was always into movies. For Christmas when he was 17, John's grandmother gave him a Browning movie camera.

[01:18:11]

DIVINE : I was having a surprise birthday party for a friend of mine, and John had just gotten his first camera then and came over and decided to try it out at the party and he shot some footage and used it.

JOHN WATERS : The first one he was in was The Roman Candles. It was just three eight-millimeter movies. It was random footage really, taken of my friend. And he had the makeup, some kind of scarf tied about his head that David Lochary probably did for him.

[01:18:40]

He got the name Divine, I gave it to him for Roman Candles. He said fine. You know, it was not some big thing. We didn't have a christening or anything. And he liked it.

DIVINE : He just said that he thought I was Divine and that should be my name for the film and so it was, uh, that simple, actually.

[01:18:55]

JOHN WATERS : It just caught on very quickly, that name. Whoever the audiences notice the most gets bigger parts each time, and Divine, immediately everybody noticed him. So then I gave him a much bigger part in Eat Your Makeup where he played Jackie Kennedy.

[01:19:15]

DENNIS DERMODY : It's the first time in cinema that anyone played Jackie Kennedy in one of those pink suits and little pillbox hats, a dozen roses. That was fun.

PAT MORAN : The whole entire outfit was remade to fit a larger girl.

DENNIS DERMODY : Divine has to climb over the back of the car during the assassination and they did that before anybody else did.

[01:19:40]

JOHN WATERS : When was he shot, '63? It was '65 and it was not very long later. People really didn't think it was funny.

DIVINE : When I was a kid I always wanted to be a movie star but I thought as I got older, who's got a chance? I lived in Baltimore, Maryland.

JOHN WATERS : He wanted to be a movie star and joked about it but he never really thought he could be, but I talked to him, yes you can, pretty early. Mondo Trasho is when I first got him under my control. He was the leading lady.

[01:20:18]

SUE LOWE : The look hadn't been quite that developed. It was more like a trashy girl with a lot of makeup on, trashing around town.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Oh man, I only ask you for what is rightfully mine, what the good Lord has bestowed on me, being divine.

[01:20:31]

ALONSO DURALDE : These are very raw movies but already you can tell that Divine has a certain something.

JOHN WATERS : Even though we had made this feature Mondo Trasho, which got some national attention, Multiple Maniacs I think was when it became realer, because there was dialogue.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:20:54]

FEMALE : You must be Lady Divine. I heard so much about you.

DIVINE : Oh boys, please remove this little slut from my presence immediately.

JOHN WATERS : I knew that Divine had this anger that he hadn't really tapped into yet.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:21:02]

DIVINE : What did you say?

FEMALE : I said you're sick and repulsive.

DIVINE : You my dear, are dead.

[01:21:10]

JOHN WATERS : And that's how Divine got born. This character that I thought up for Divine used that anger that anger that he had from all his high school traumas.

DENNIS DERMODY : John went to the movies all the time, and his obsessions in movies were things like bigger-than-life women like Jayne Mansfield.

[FILM CLIP]

VOICEOVER : Man oh man, oh Mansfield, Jayne Mansfield that is.

DENNIS DERMODY : She was almost like a cartoon, and the thought of putting a man in a dress and doing that was even more rebellious. And he knew that Divine could pull it off.

[01:21:41]

DIVINE : John wanted a very large woman because he wanted the exact opposite of what normally would be beautiful. He wanted a 300-pound beauty as opposed to a 110-pound beauty. That's what he got. The most beautiful woman in the world turns out to be a man.

[01:21:56]

JOHN WATERS : Well at the end Divine goes crazy and she murders everybody. And Divine gets raped by a lobster.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : I used to always say to Glen don't ever do anything to embarrass us. He promised me he would never do anything to ruin our reputation.

[01:22:24]

DIVINE : Then they saw me and I had no eyebrows and my hair shaved back. They just completely freaked out. That's the day that, um, I told them everything. I told them I was gay. I told them I smoked dope, that I had tripped. I just got it all off because I couldn't live two separate lives, and they just did not understand.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : And I said so just keep on going and forget you have a mother and father. I remember saying that, and I felt so bad after I said it.

[01:22:54]

DIVINE : It was a horrible, horrible experience. I was the last time I saw them.

JOHN WATERS : The Cockettes were a bearded transvestite theater group that believed the revolution was coming. It was the only drag queens I ever knew that read Lenin.

[01:23:11]

PAMELA TENT-CARPENTER : It was men, women, lesbians, drag queens, babies, everything all together. It was just kind of a free-for-all.

JOHN WATERS : And they did Busby Berkeley shows and the entire audience was on LSD so it was quite a scene.

[01:23:25]

FAYETTE HAUSER : In San Francisco, Sebastian had the Nocturnal Dream Show which we called the midnight movies at the

Palace Theater every weekend. And he scoured the planet for the freakiest movies he could find.

PAMELA-TENT CARPENTER : John Waters knew this was a perfect place for him to screen his films.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:23:41]

DIVINE : We ought to just pick them up and shoot them.

JOHN WATERS : Sebastian helped our career more than anybody because he booked Mondo Trasho and Multiple Maniacs as midnight shows.

PAMELA TENT-CARPENTER : He opened the film Mondo Trasho and he showed it on a double bill with The Diane Linkletter Story.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:23:56]

DIVINE : I am what I am and I'm doing my own thing in my own time.

FAYETTE HAUSER : We felt that Divine and John were complete soul mates.

PAMELA TENT-CARPENTER : And we begged Sebastian, go get Divine, bring her out here. We've got to meet these people. They've got to be part of the show.

[01:24:12]

JOHN WATERS : Divine got on the airplane with not one penny in his pocket. Van Smith came with him too, who did him up. And I said do something weird with his hairline. That's all I said.

DIVINE : Van said go to the bathroom, shave your head halfway back and pluck all of your eyebrows out. And I did not question him.

[01:24:39]

PAT MORAN : That was the deal, when he shaved it back and then continued and made that part of this.

DIVINE : Right before I got off the plane I heard Divine, Divine, we want Divine. And Van said, you hear that?

PAT MORAN : He got on the plane as Glen and got off as Divine.

[01:24:58]

DIVINE : So I got off and the people rushed me and flashbulbs were going off.

FEMALE : I love you, Divine.

DIVINE : And it was just like all those stories I read about Marilyn Monroe and all these things.

FEMALE : I love you, Divine.

DIVINE : It was so perfect.

MALE : I love you, Divine.

[01:25:10]

JOHN WATERS : He never really took it seriously 'till he came to California and he saw fans, and then in his mind he never, ever went back to being Glen Milstead. And he realized it could be true and he could have a career doing this, and he could live his life as Divine.

[01:25:26]

PAMELA TENT-CARPENTER : Divine came to San Francisco and did a stage show before Mondo Trasho.

DIVINE : Imagine my amazement when I stepped off my jet to be mobbed by crazed Cockettes, embracing me, comforting me after my ordeal. Now I am ready to tell my story. I have chosen the Palace Theater as the place where I can find friends who will understand what I have been through.

[01:25:28]

JOHN WATERS : I would come on stage dressed like a hippie pimp, and then say and now I'd like to introduce the most beautiful woman in the world, and he would come out, pushing a shopping cart with dead mackerels in it that he'd throw in the audience. And then he would give this long speech that I would write for him.

[01:26:03]

IDA : The first thing she says was I give blow job to serial killers. But then she said I eat white sugar. And there was a shudder through the whole audience. The fact that she ate white sugar was to us, just completely shocking.

FAYETTE HAUSER : It was very confrontational in that way but everybody loved it.

[01:26:32]

DIVINE : To this day I don't understand why I walk out on the stage and abuse people with words, fuck you, and people love to hear it.

RICHARD SCRUMBLY KOLDWEYN : Divine was just a ball of energy on stage. People just ate it up.

IDA : She decided to live in San Francisco.

FAYETTE HAUSER : Divine came to perform with us. There was no question about it. We wanted Divine and Divine wanted to be with us.

[01:26:58]

PAMELA TENT-CARPENTER : In one of the shows she was in the jungle, and she all these guys in loin cloths standing around, and she was groping them to see who she was gonna put into the pot and boil for dinner. And then she did Divine Saves the World. That's where she seduces Fidel Castro, hijacks a plane,

she saves the world and she gets peace in the Middle East. Who could ask for more than this?

[01:27:18]

When we did Journey to the Center of Uranus, she came on in an electric red crab dress with padded pinchers and a six-foot tail. And she came on stage and she sang a crab on Uranus means you're loved. One was a Halloween show which was called Vice Palace, and it's loosely based on Mask of Red Death. And Divine played Divina.

[AUDIO CLIP]

[01:27:39]

DIVINE : [SINGING] Who's the one we all know, always puts on the best, it's Divina.

[01:27:48]

BILL BOWERS : He would go to the [UNINTELLIGIBLE] and different clubs and she would dance. She loved to dance. She loved her Quaaludes, too. I'm sure it loosened her up for her to have fun. She was kind of shy. I know it sounds bizarre that Divine was shy but she was kind of shy.

[01:28:19]

IDA : She was so different from the character that she played on stage. It was as though it was two different people.

BILL BOWERS : When she was Glen, no one really knew it was Divine because she wore no makeup, no wig or nothing. She just looked like an overweight queen.

[01:28:40]

DOLORES DELUCE : David Baker Junior was an actor from New York. David was Divine's leading man in Vice Palace. Divine was very, uh, timid still in those days when it came to his sexuality, but David wasn't. There was definitely a relationship there.

FAYETTE HAUSER : Divine would tell you about someone that she was in love with, and then when it didn't end well Divine would come over and there would be a lot of weeping. When you were with Divine it was a grand moment of excess and you would plunge in.

[01:29:16]

PAMELA TENT-CARPENTER : He completely never wanted to leave San Francisco. Of course he did fly back to Baltimore to film Pink Flamingos.

JOHN WATERS : People say how did you ever make a movie on \$10,000? For us that was a huge budget.

[01:29:33]

MINK STOLE : The fact that we had color and sound, and we had locations. It was a bigger production. It was a bigger deal.

[FILM CLIP]

POLICE OFFICER : Babs Johnson?

DIVINE : Yes, I'm Babs Johnson.

[01:29:45]

JOHN WATERS : Divine was Babs Johnson, who was retired, living on her mantle of filth.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : How could anyone be filthier than Divine?

JOHN WATERS : And it was a battle about who could be the filthiest person alive.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:29:55]

DIVINE : You know who I am, bitch. I'm the filthiest person alive. That's who I am.

DIVINE : I have a makeup man Van, and he is totally responsible for -- he is my face.

DENNIS DERMODY : Van Smith was kind of a genius.

MINK STOLE : He is the guy who developed the look of Divine.

[01:30:14]

JOHN WATERS : Van always said that he shaved his hair back like that so there'd be more room for eye makeup. There wasn't enough room on the human face for the amount of eye makeup that Van wanted him to wear.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I'm all dressed up and ready to fall in love.

[01:30:28]

VAN SMITH : John's very involved with the costuming in his movies. They're very important to him, for they all part of the role. She becomes part of the costume as times.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I can't look in that lens.

JOHN WATERS : Okay, start, start the whole thing over.

[01:30:43]

JOHN WATERS : That movie was hell to make. We would shoot in the middle of nowhere. It was freezing cold. 20-hour days and none of the film would turn out.

MARY VIVIEN PEARCE : Divine had on these skimpy outfits and you could see his breath and his goose flesh.

[01:30:57]

JOHN WATERS : They would do pages of dialogue that they had to memorize.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : You see, gentlemen of the press, oh --

PAT MORAN : I think a lot of people were taking speed maybe,
I can't remember.

[01:31:05]

MINK STOLE : I think the person who suffered most was
probably Edith.

[FILM CLIP]

EDITH MASSEY : Hi everybody, my name is Edith Massey.

SUE LOWE : We hung out at this Greek bar called Pete's
Hotel.

[FILM CLIP]

EDITH MASSEY : This is Edith from down Pete's.

[01:31:17]

SUE LOWE : And this is where Edie was a barmaid. And I
remember calling John Waters and saying John, you've got to get
down here. You will not believe it.

DENNIS DERMODY : John realized the potential of Edith. The
minute she showed up as the egg lady the audience was obsessed
with her.

[FILM CLIP]

EDITH MASSEY : Why isn't the egg man here? I'm starving to death for some eggs.

[01:31:38]

PAT MORAN : But Edith was difficult to carry on a conversation with. She was kind of on a different planet.

[FILM CLIP]

EDITH MASSEY : Oh, the egg man, the egg man.

DENNIS DERMODY : Divine was frustrated with Edith because she didn't know her lines.

[FILM CLIP]

EDITH MASSEY : But, but is it true, Babs?

[01:31:55]

DENNIS DERMODY : Divine was a true professional and could do this stuff.

JOHN WATERS : When we were making Pink Flamingos we couldn't mix with the real world. We just were in this vacuum

of what Pink Flamingos was because of how he had to look. He could never get the stain off his lips and there was no eyebrows. And his head shaved back like that, people were like what the hell is that?

[01:32:13]

GEORGE FIGGS : The shot that John did just in a car of Divine in full drag walking cold down the street was utter genius. The looks on the people's faces is exactly how everybody reacted to Divine in real life.

DIVINE : People just didn't believe it. These men across the street were screaming all kinds of things at me. The whole city was just filled with laughter and screaming. People were going absolutely out of their minds. They didn't know what I was.

[01:32:49]

MARY VIVIAN PEARCE : The [UNINTELLIGIBLE] scene is the scene with the birthday gift.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Oh my God almighty, someone has sent me a bowel movement.

[01:32:53]

MARY VIVIAN PEARCE : It's Divine's turd, actual turd, 'cause he shit in the box the night before. It really did stink and it did enhance everyone's performances.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : This is a direct attack on my divinity.

[01:33:05]

DENNIS DERMODY : Well the whole end of the movie, I mean, was the whole reason that the movie exists.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : You think you know somebody filthier? Watch.

[01:33:14]

DENNIS DERMODY : It was one shock after another and how are you gonna top that?

JOHN WATERS : I thought what can we do that isn't against the law yet, something that will really freak people out, as a publicity stunt, as a joke.

DENNIS DERMODY : And the topper was of course, for Divine to eat dog shit.

[01:33:32]

DIVINE : John came to me and he said, you know, would you do this, and I said oh sure. Well I thought he was kidding. A year later he said okay, now tomorrow you have to eat the dog turd. I thought oh, this is great, he wasn't kidding. He said, well listen, do you want to be famous?

PAT MORAN : Had anybody ever done it? Would he get some attention? John had enough of PT Barnum in him to know that. No matter what they said, they were gonna say something.

[01:33:55]

DIVINE : I thought, well what do I care? You know, I was very young.

[FILM CLIP]

JOHN WATERS : Pick it up and eat it and crouch down.

DIVINE : And you don't think about all these things. And I didn't really think about it until I had to follow that dog around for three hours.

[01:34:05]

GEORGE FIGGS : We tried to get that dog to poop all day.

JOHN WATERS : They kept it inside and fed it for a couple days so it would do it. It wouldn't. So they took it inside and they gave it an enema.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : What if he doesn't shit right here?

JOHN WATERS : Well wherever he does, crouch down on that side of him, facing here.

[01:34:22]

JOHN WATERS : And it came out and he finally did it, but not like a proper turd.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : What you are about to see is a real thing.

JOHN WATERS : Divine said that? And I said just do it, yes.

[01:34:32]

GEORGE FIGGS : And Divine actually went over there, picked up the dog shit, put it in her mouth.

JOHN WATERS : Cut. And I didn't make him do it twice. You know, I'm not a sadist.

ALONSO DURALDE : Divine ate a dog turd. And I don't think anybody in the history of cinema is ever going to top that feat.

[01:34:58]

JOHN WATERS : The first time I saw it with an audience I knew it worked. I saw people leaving that theater, like ugh.

[FILM CLIP]

MALE : It was, uh, really the grossest film I've seen.

PAT MORAN : Brother, it took off. There was a line around the corner for five years.

[01:35:09]

ROBERT W. RICHARDS : There had been a lot of press that was all about the shit of course. That seemed to be the main emphasis and people loved being outraged.

[FILM CLIP]

MALE : First time I've been to it. It's an incredible head scene for people.

[01:35:20]

JOSHUA GRANNELL : She ate dog shit. They were able to market the movie, do you know this queen eats dog shit? Everyone sat in the seats waiting for that scene, which doesn't come 'till the end.

JOHN WATERS : It was done for anarchy and it worked as that. The word-of-mouth spread, and then it spread all over the country. As my father later said, yeah, like cancer.

[FILM CLIP]

MALE : Oh it's marvelous, actually.

FEMALE : The most disgusting thing I've ever seen in my whole life.

[01:35:43]

JOHN WATERS : Even if you hated it you had to talk about it.

[FILM CLIP]

MALE : It was divine, fabulous.

[01:35:45]

DENNIS DERMODY : Everybody knew that movie. I worked the movie theater and I had to clean up the vomit. John used to say if someone puked it was like a standing ovation. And I used to have to call him up and say, you know, I got about three standing ovations last night and I hate you. Seeing Divine on the screen, he was so amazing 'cause he was like a creation.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:36:06]

DIVINE : You stand convicted of asshole-ism.

DENNIS DERMODY : He was scary. It was like Clarabelle on acid.

[FILM CLIP]

MALE : Does blood turn you on?

DIVINE : It does more than turn me on, Mr.

[UNINTELLIGIBLE]. It makes me come.

[01:36:17]

GEORGE FIGGS : John and Divine became a phenomenon.

JOHN WATERS : And then Divine did become a real, real star.

JOAN AGAJANIAN QUINN : He was being known in the underground. He was being known in the chic parts of the cities that here is somebody that you should get to know. He's an underground star.

[01:36:43]

HOLLY WOODLAWN : When Andy Warhol met Divine, history was made.

JOHN WATERS : How we met Warhol was after Pink Flamingos came out, we went to the Factory and I took Divine.

JOAN AGAJANIAN QUINN : Andy came out and went oh, Divine, I really wanted to meet you, and then he walked away. Andy liked people that were colorful. Divine was truly colorful.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:37:10]

JOHN WATERS : Action.

DIVINE : Get off me, you ugly witch.

MALE : You devil. Come here. You'll pay for this.

DIVINE : Yeah?

MALE : Yeah, you'll pay for this.

JOHN WATERS : Okay, so hold it right where it is.

[01:37:24]

MICHAEL MUSTO : Female Trouble was a little different than Pink Flamingos but it had the same punky, angry allure to it.

JOHN EPPERSON : Female Trouble is John's Gone With the Wind. It's so disgusting and hilarious.

JOHN WATERS : It was written to be a Divine vehicle. He plays Dawn Davenport.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Dawn Davenport, I'm a thief and shit-kicker and, uh, I'd like to be famous.

[01:37:52]

DIVINE : I loved playing Dawn Davenport. She was very much like me as I was growing up. I wasn't quite as bad as she was, but she was very much like me and then blown out of proportion a bit.

JOHN WATERS : Divine is really funny in the movie. I think it's my favorite performance of Divine.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I'm going to go sink into a long hot beauty bath now and try to erase the stink of a five-year marriage.

[01:38:19]

MINK STOLE : Van should've gotten the Academy Award for the costumes. They were brilliant.

LADY BEAR : There is the early Dawn, which is the hair-hopper Dawn. There is pregnant Dawn. There is the early criminal Dawn. And there's the lipstick salon.

[FILM CLIP]

MALE : This is our new customer, Miss Dawn Davenport.

[01:38:40]

LADY BEAR : Then there's nightclub Dawn. And then of course you go straight to electric chair Dawn.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Without all of you, my career could never have gotten this far.

[01:38:56]

DENNIS DERMODY : It definitely was a pre-Punk movie. You saw all those looks on people years later.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : And I'm so fucking beautiful I can't stand it myself.

[01:39:09]

JOHN EPPERSON : The role of Dawn Davenport was a very physical part.

JOHN WATERS : He swam across a river in November in full drag and hit his mark on the other side.

[01:39:19]

DAVID DECOTEAU : The trampoline act at the end where she has a Mohawk, an acid-burned face, and she's rubbing dead fish on her crotch in a baby crib.

MINK STOLE : Watching him go up and down with that insane look on his face is so exciting. He was absolutely out of his mind.

PAT MORAN : In New York, Female Trouble was a smash. It was sold out.

[01:39:47]

JOHN WATERS : And then he moved to New York.

GREG DAY : New York in the 1970s was a time of tremendous energy, a lot of queer art, a lot of off-off Broadway, counter cultural arts, underground.

MINK STOLE : Divine started having these other opportunities and he took them.

[01:40:10]

MICHAEL MUSTO : Women Behind Bars was a hilarious play by Tom Eyan and it was a parody of all those women in prison films where they throw some young innocent jail and she's eaten alive by these other hardened women.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:40:19]

DIVINE : When people try and hide things from me I get crazy.

BEVERLY BONNER : Divine played the matron, a very cruel, sadistic woman who had her way with the youngest who came in.

[01:40:33]

LISA JANE PERSKY : I was raped by Divine eight times a week for a year. Divine was in a really tight white polyester nurse's outfit, gigantic boobs.

BEVERLY BONNER : In those prostitute heels without the back, you know the kind.

[01:40:50]

HELEN HANFT : I had seen him in Pink Flamingos and I was a little afraid about working with him because everybody said oh, you've got to be careful with Divine. You're gonna have problems with him. But when I met him at the first reading he was so nice and so professional, I said my God, this is a nice man. There was something marvelous about him beyond being the campy drag queen. He was very funny but he was also believable.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:41:19]

VOICEOVER : There is the Truck and Warehouse Theater, and is currently playing Tom Eyan's Women Behind Bars.

BEVERLY BONNER : It was a hot show. It was the place to be, Truck and Warehouse Theater, you go see Divine.

MICHAEL MUSTO : It was an event for Divine to come to New York in the legit stage, and it had the feeling of an event. It had the feeling of electricity in the air. We were in love.

[01:41:39]

BRENDA BERGMAN : There were lots of celebrities. Diane Keaton.

BEVERLY BONNER : One night Warren Beatty was in the audience.

BRENDA BERGMAN : David Bowie.

BEVERLY BONNER : You know Nureyev the ballet dancer.

LISA JANE PERSKY : Elton John came and they became really good friends, and he asked Divine to be in his show at Madison Square Garden.

[01:42:15]

DIVINE : It was his first [UNINTELLIGIBLE] and they were leaving things everywhere. It was just the way I've always wanted to live, and then all of a sudden you're living like that and it's unbelievable.

MINK STOLE : In a sense there was the leaving small-town Baltimore behind. He was embracing his new life as well he should.

[01:42:27]

JOHN WATERS : I was always for it because I couldn't make a movie every year. I couldn't get it together. I couldn't get

the money to make it, so I hoped Divine found a way to get other work.

SUE LOWE : I thought it was great because I knew how talented he was and how much he needed to spread. He was ready to stretch a little bit and not just be a John Waters star.

[01:42:55]

DIVINE : I know now that I can be successful, not without John because I started with John, and I owe John quite a bit. And he came to my beginning in the whole business and sometimes I thank him and sometimes I hate him for it. But, uh, but mostly I love him and thank him for it.

[01:43:18]

DAVID LOCHARY : I don't like the work that's involved in making a movie. I enjoy it when it's happening but all the preparation and the delays are no fun, but once it's finished it's all gravy from there, sort of. I love it once it's done.

PAT MORAN : David was, to say a difficult person, he probably had had a fight with every single person in Dreamland except for me. At the end of his life he was smoking a lot of angel dust.

[01:43:44]

BRENDA BERGMAN : One night Divine threw a party at his house. The whole cast was there, and we were each provided with a, like a joint, only it was angel dust. That night he smashed a mirror and he cut himself with mirrors, and he didn't feel it because of the angel dust.

[01:44:06]

LISA JANE PERSKY : Dearest Lisa, David Lochary is dead. I still can't believe it, my oldest friend. It's so strange. This has been a week to forget. Love you and miss you, always, Divine.

[FILM CLIP]

[01:44:24]

MALE : In the late '60s a Baltimore filmmaker by the name of John Waters began jolting the industry with a series of shockingly explicit underground films. He in effect, created and molded the queen of the underground in the character of a 300-pound impersonator whom he named Divine. Well it's been over 10 years, and the phenomenal popularity of this character is stronger than ever.

[01:44:53]

JOHN EPPERSON : I moved to New York in the summer of '78 and one of the things I did was to see Divine live, off Broadway in a play called The Neon Woman.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I'm Miss Flash Storm, the Neon Woman, the original flasher, the last of the pink hot strippers.

[01:35:09]

JIM EPPERSON : Divine played Flash Storm, the owner of the strip joint.

HELEN HANFT : He played the role of his tough stripper.

[FILM CLIP]

FEMALE : You were a common whore in San Francisco.

DIVINE : Who isn't in San Francisco?

[01:45:24]

HELEN HANFT : And I was his twin sister, and I remember saying to him, you're nothing, trash, you've got nothing, and you always will be nothing. Every night, the beginning of the show we would entertain the audience.

[01:45:39]

HOLLY WOODLAWN : Oh my God, her entrance. She would walk into the theater in this white, tight dress and she had to walk in from the back of the theater to the front. And her first line was [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I'm the Neon Woman and the Neon Woman is Divine.

[01:45:58]

JAY BENNETT : The great thing about it was we did it in a disco. Hoorah was the hottest place in New York right before Studio 54.

JOHN EPPERSON : And this event was so 1978 we sat on the floor to watch the show. And when the show was over we all jumped up and it turned into a disco.

[01:46:19]

ROBERT W. RICHARDS : In New York his stock rose enormously because Divine was a huge social figure in that whole disco era.

[FILM CLIP]

INTERVIEWER : We've just seen [UNINTELLIGIBLE] the Neon Woman starring Divine. We'll pause for a commercial and be right back with the Village People singing Just a Gigolo. Don't go away.

[01:46:36]

JOAN AGAJANIAN QUINN : There was nobody that Divine didn't want to meet. And especially if they had any kind of name, he wanted to meet them, and guess what, he did.

JAY BENNETT : We went to Studio 54 opening night. They invited us 'cause of course our show was the hottest thing in town, and it was thrilling.

[01:46:58]

MICHAEL MUSTO : Studio 54, that was the ultimate disco, and Divine would be there.

DIVINE : I know people that would cut their arms off to be in that position. I had a real good time.

JAY BENNETT : He really got to enjoy things that come with celebrity. We were having more money coming in. He was able

buy himself a fur coat, and he had a diamond earring that was huge. He was so happy when he got that earring.

[01:47:25]

JOAN AGAJANIAN QUINN : I was the west coast editor of Interview Magazine. They had a showing of Pink Flamingos in Beverly Hills, and we had a big party for Divine. And before we knew it, Divine was staying at our house. He met the cream of, uh, LA. He met artists, he met actors, he met writers. Quinton Crisp used to come over. David Hockney would come over when he was in town.

[01:47:56]

David also did that beautiful, almost life-sized painting of Divine. I never saw him exercise. All he did was eat and lay around, and lay around the pool. He loved the pool. In the dark of night, he used to have all of his visitors meet him at the pool. And they'd sit at the pool with him 'till all hours of the morning. God knows what was going on back there.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Do I do drugs? Well I love grass.

[01:48:28]

JOHN WATERS : Divine liked marijuana a lot, really a lot.

PAT MORAN : He's the kind of person that smoked pot from the time he got up to the time he would go to sleep, except for like when he had to work. He wasn't loaded when he was making movies.

JOHN WATERS : Divine was stoned his entire life. He really was a pot head more than you can ever imagine.

[01:48:48]

PAT MORAN : That was his drug of choice and his only vice. And then that led to the vice of a big fat cupcake.

SUE LOWE : He would call me up every day and he'd say please come over. I had an ounce of pot and could you bring some donuts? So I'd always bring two dozen donuts because he would have to have a dozen donuts and maybe I could have a few if I could another dozen.

[01:49:12]

DOLORES DELUCE : Before dinner he would break into a big bag of chips and drink a quart of Diet Pepsi. That was his appetizer.

SUE LOWE : He would pull a chair up to the refrigerator and eat out of the refrigerator.

HOLLY WOODLAWN : She loved cake. She'd have her slice, my slice, and then everybody's else's slice.

[01:49:37]

JOHN WATERS : I asked him once why do you eat so much? He said because I'm afraid if I don't eat it, somebody else will. Basically he woke up and wanted to eat every single thing -- food that was in the entire nation before anybody else had it.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I'm very lazy and, um, and lazy with myself. You see, you talk about diets and things, I talk about them, you know, but it's very hard to actually get started on one. I was actually on one and did well but then I just dropped off one day and started eating and never stopped again.

[01:50:04]

HELEN HANFT : I think food filled a void with him. He was very vulnerable. People didn't see that because he covered, you

know, a lot. But when you got to know him, he was very sensitive.

[01:50:19]

GREG GORMAN : People were afraid of him. People that knew him from the movies had a completely fixated idea of who Divine was. They said let's go to dinner tonight Greg, and I said well you can have dinner with me but I'm having dinner with Divine. Oh, is he gonna shit on the table? I said well I don't think so.

[01:50:35]

JOHN EPPERSON : Although gay men love drag performers on stage, they don't necessarily love them in bed. So that's what I had wondered about Divine, if he was able to find romantic or sexual partners amongst gay men who might look down on him for being a drag performer, at the same time deifying him being a drag performer.

[01:50:55]

JOHN WATERS : Divine actually had plenty of loving in his life.

MALE : He was a very sexual person, very sexual.

GREG GORMAN : He was outlandish and if he was interested in somebody he'd go for it and he'd usually get it.

[01:51:15]

PAT MORAN : He had a lover in every port. Believe me, he didn't have any trouble.

JOHN WATERS : He didn't mind being turned down. If you look like that, so bizarre you've got to expect some people are gonna reject you. I think Divine was like, ask 10 and one will say yeah. And he asked good ones. He had cute boyfriends.

[01:51:32]

JAY BENNETT : [UNINTELLIGIBLE] and Divine had a very, very long, long relationship. It wasn't like your normal, long-term, live-together relationship. They were absolutely together whenever they were in the same place.

HOLLY WOODLAWN : Isn't that adorable? Couldn't you vomit?

GREG GORMAN : I introduced him to a guy that was a, uh, a porn star. Leo was a great guy and they actually had a very charming romantic relationship for quite a while. I loved

seeing it for Divine. I loved seeing him happy and with someone that was genuinely interested in him.

[01:52:05]

DIVINE : Because I had been the cliché story of being typecast and I certainly was, John and I decided it was time to do an image change.

JOHN WATERS : Polyester was sort of Leave it to Beaver goes berserk. Everything bad that could happen to a suburban family.

[01:52:27]

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Please leave us alone. My family hasn't done anything to you.

DENNIS DERMODY : John wanted to show Divine's range and also wanted to tell a different type of story.

[FILM CLIP]

ELMER : What the hell are you doing?

DIVINE : Saying my prayers, Elmer, asking God to forgive you for showing dirty movies.

[01:52:39]

DENNIS DERMODY : He had already done Divine as monster. He wanted to show her as a sympathetic heroine.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I cannot take another heartbreak. I just cannot take it.

[01:52:49]

MARY GARLINGTON : She was fat and she drank and, you know, the whole house was just dysfunctional.

VINCENT PERANIS : I remember Van showed Divine her costumes and she burst into tears, 'cause they weren't glamorous.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Lulu, I'm trying to clean in here.

[01:53:10]

MICHAEL MUSTO : Not only was it a spoof of old Hollywood, you had old Hollywood playing opposite Divine.

TAB HUNTER : At the time John Waters called me to do Polyester, I was out doing dinner theater, and I was in Indianapolis when I got a phone call from John Waters. He just mentioned that he was doing a film with Divine and would like me to play a character called Todd Tomorrow.

[FILM CLIP]

TAB HUNTER : It's Todd, honey.

DIVINE : Todd?

TAB HUNTER : Todd Tomorrow.

[01:53:35]

TAB HUNTER : And then he said, oh by the way, uh, how would you feel about kissing a 300-pound transvestite? And I said well I've got nothing to lose, everything to gain, why not?

[FILM CLIP]

SOPHIA LOREN : He doesn't look old enough to drink.

TAB HUNTER : I'm old enough to do anything.

[01:53:53]

DENNIS DERMODY : Tab Hunter, I mean, he was a '50s teenage icon. And to have him with Divine, it was too good to be true.

MALE : Divine had had a crush on Tab Hunter since he was a little boy.

[TV CLIP]

VOICEOVER : How do you shave, Tab?

TAB HUNTER : With the Gillette Super Speed of course.

[01:54:06]

VINCENT PERANIS : Oh, Divine was so thrilled. A famous heartthrob like Tab Hunter and she was gonna get to kiss him.

JOHN WATERS : I could only afford to have Tab for a week so we shot the whole movie except him. First night was Cuddles' debutante party, so Divine knew he had to dance with Tab Hunter. He was a nervous wreck, and Divine didn't get nervous easily.

[01:54:31]

TAB HUNTER : He was genuinely excited to be working with me, I don't know why. And I was very excited to be working with him because I respected him.

JOHN WATERS : Divine was really nervous. You know, they had to like, kiss. But he did it beautifully. I remember Tab lifted his face so he got in the light right.

[01:54:47]

[FILM CLIP]

TAB HUNTER : Read my lips. I love you.

JOHN WATERS : Tab never made fun of Divine in that movie. That's why it worked, because he treated Divine as if she were Natalie Wood, some huge movie star that he would've done a real love scene with, without ever winking at the camera, and doing it like he believed it. It was great, really, really a good experience for both of them. Divine got a really good review for the first time ever, really respectful reviews in the New York Times and everywhere.

[01:55:24]

DIVINE : And finally someone said hey, I think this person can act. Before it was just always this fat transvestite with

the big candy floss wig that couldn't see beyond the paint and the exterior to what was behind me. I've always been a great actor.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : We're a real family again, a normal American family.

[01:55:34]

DENNIS DERMODY : Believe me, Divine was not an overnight success. This was a long act that kept building but there were long periods in between where what do you do and how do you get work?

DIVINE : I know why people have breakdowns and things in show business. I just sat around now for six weeks with no work, and you go crazy.

[01:55:57]

JAY BENNETT : We were always either right on the edge or on tons of money. Everybody, once they get to a certain point, you've got to have an agent and/or manager. Divine absolutely needed that direction and needed someone to negotiate for her. Bernard Jay was the producer of Neon Woman in San Francisco.

From producing that it segued into becoming Divine's business manager. He really took over Divine's career.

[01:56:23]

JOHN WATERS : Bernard was good for Divine's career. He got him in that whole music thing.

GUY FURROW : I almost just thought of Divine as a rock star, he was such a part of the Punk scene.

[01:56:43]

MARK BAUMAN : Divine had a couple of records before I got involved with him. I felt that those songs were okay but they weren't really going to make a career as a record performer. I can't call him a singer. And we discussed my concept which was to write specifically for the character Divine.

[01:57:12]

Native Love was recorded first and he performed the song and it was just magic. When it was released first in the United States and then in Europe, Native Love exploded.

JAY BENNETT : That started the whole recording career.

[01:57:58]

JOHN WATERS : We all need a couple careers, and I think it was a good part of Divine's life. And he had great success. He did techno music before anybody.

JOSHUA GRANNELL : It was great that gay bathhouse disco is fabulous. She's not the best singer in the world but she owned every lyric. She could get where she needed to go and she evoked a sense of power and punk aggression.

GUY FURROW : He was great because he was just being Divine and what else are you gonna want when you're listening to a Divine song than as much Divine as you can get?

[01:58:49]

MARK BAUMAN : These songs helped make him one of the most in demand disco performers through that era.

MALE : San Francisco, New York, LA had to have Divine.

GREG GORMAN : And he was so larger than life in these outlandish costumes by Van, he really had a great presence on the stage.

[01:59:12]

ROBERT W. RICHARDS : The costumes, the makeup, the hair, it was a walking work of art.

[FILM CLIP]

ANNOUNCER : Please welcome the biggest movie star in the world.

MARK PAYNE : Every sense in your body was like on edge because you just didn't know what was gonna happen next.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : You make my nips get hard.

[01:59:29]

DAVID DECOTEAU : He performed there at Studio One but you couldn't get in. It was a huge deal. It was as if Elvis was playing.

MARK PAYNE : I saw him at the Saint in New York, and all of a sudden like the ceiling opens up and there's Divine, just so over the top and so fabulous.

ROBERT W. RICHARDS : He had a brilliantly caustic way of handling the audience.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Mother? I'm not your mother. I wouldn't want to be. Look at him.

ROBERT W RICHARDS : And if there wasn't trouble, he'd kind of invent some.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Some girl over here has the worst-smelling cunt I've ever smelled in my life. And somebody here has got the cheesiest dick I've ever smelled. The two of them should get together and make a Denver omelet.

[02:00:13]

IDA : She was kind of like this huge Don Rickles insult comic.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Oh, suck my fat ass.

IDA : As part of the show people knew it was okay to heckle her and she would heckle them back.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Let's eat your pussy, eat your pussy. Let's see your big dick.

MALE : He had a great following. By the way he looked and the way he talked, it kind of made it okay for them to be who they were.

GREG DEY : They would just like squeal at Divine. They thought Divine was God.

MALE : People literally did throw themselves at him.

[02:00:49]

HOLLY WOODLAWN : God damn her, she had like an 18-year-old boy worshipping her body. Why her and not me?

JAY BENNETT : He would go on these tours and he literally did go all over the world with those. And he'd get paid pretty well for a show every night. They were grueling. He did a disco show every single night.

[02:01:14]

DENNIS DERMODY : Divine was playing in Paris at Body Rock. All the French kids were going insane, and it was Divine. It was really thrilling.

KEITH GLEN SCHUBERT : Divine was on Top of the Pops. People called in and complained. That's funny about Britain, they didn't want him on the show again.

DIVINE : They had some complaints because I was dancing. When all this starts to move around it gets a bit much for a lot of people to take. So I was banned from television and got a lot of press out of it and it doubled the record sales so it wasn't so bad.

[02:01:48]

JOHN WATERS : And I remember the great headline in the London paper. The headline said Eechhh. You think Boy George was bad.

GREG GORMAN : He was a big spender. Divine liked to buy things and spend money.

DIVINE : I could walk through an airport and spend \$1,200.

PAT MORAN : Divine could've made 90 million dollars and spent 91, and he would've done it on people, not himself. Every year at Christmas big boxes would come from all over the world for my kids. He just was very generous. He loved holidays. He loved Christmas, and he'd worry about it later.

[02:02:24]

HOLLY WOODLAWN : If it was your birthday he would call up Tiffany's and find out what your birthstone was. Honey, you can't afford it. She said so what?

JAY BENNETT : It was a bumpy ride with money but we always made it work.

BELLE ZWERDLING : Bernard was very much the disciplinary to Divine's kind of chaos.

ROB SADUSKI : That's what cemented the relationship with him and Bernard Jay. It was a business relationship. I don't think that they were especially fond of each other as friends, and I don't think that they were friends but I think that they needed each other.

[FILM CLIP]

[02:03:03]

VOICEOVER : Now thundering across the screen comes the mightiest, most inspiring sage of all, Lust in the Dust.

ALLAN GLASER : The pairing of Tab Hunter and Divine in Polyester was a tremendous hit.

TAB HUNTER : From the evolved Lust in the Dust which was a comedy western, spoofing the westerns of the '50s. having worked with Divine I knew that Divine was perfect for Lust in the Dust.

[FILM CLIP]

[02:03:30]

INTERVIEWER : This is your second film that you've done with him/her. Why?

TAB HUNTER : Divine was Rosie Velez, a painted lady with a past.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I'm Rosie de la Valez. Everyone calls me Rosie.
What's your name?

[02:03:43]

ALLAN GLASER : Divine's female costar was Lainie Kazan.

[FILM CLIP]

LAINIE KAZAN : Freeze hombre, or I'll be wearing your
asshole for a garter.

TAB HUNTER : They were awfully good together. They loved
one another and it showed, even though they hated one another on
screen.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Here's your coffee.

[02:03:55]

ALLAN GLASER : In the movie they play sisters. Divine
would always refer to Lainie as his older sister. Get my older
sister to the set. Would my older sister like to have lunch
with us?

[FILM CLIP]

VOICEOVER : We have makeup maven George Masters to thank for Divine's haunting beauty.

[02:04:11]

TAB HUNTER : George Masters was a master at doing hair and makeup. He would do Marilyn Monroe, Rita Hayworth, just the biggest stars.

ALAN GLASER : In between takes if Lainie got made up prettier than Divine, Divine would kind of wipe his lip and mess up the makeup so George would have to come and redo his last he would look prettier than Lainie. He was in makeup at four in the morning to be on the set at six. He would shoot a 12-hour day. If he couldn't do everything, he tried.

[02:04:46]

Well there was one thing he couldn't do. At the very beginning of the picture, Divine's character Rosita is supposed to be sitting on the back of a mule. He got on the mule and he couldn't get his balance because he was so heavy and he and the mule weighed about the same, so he kept tipping sideways and over and backwards, and it really upset him because he just wanted to do everything 100 percent.

[02:05:11]

TAB HUNTER : The first time I've ever seen him really upset with himself. He was carrying a lot of weight at that heat and that altitude, I'm sure it was a big strain on his heart.

ALLAN GLASER : Divine did pass out on the set because of the high altitude in Santa Fe and his weight. It was just like a lethal combination, so we had to get air tanks for him to walk around in between takes. He would do a scene and then if we were setting up another scene or we were about to do another take, he'd be out like a light.

[02:05:42]

TAB HUNTER : He'd fall asleep during makeup. He'd fall asleep between takes.

ROB SADUSKI : He never complained about it. He never complained. He was just so happy to be doing it.

[02:05:56]

ALLAN GLASER : New World Pictures took a huge billboard out above the Chateau Marmont on Sunset Boulevard. And I remember Divine calling me and saying oh my God, I can't believe it. He

would literally just stop his car and stare at it. When Divine went out to promote Lust in the Dust, I naively said to him, why don't you wear your outfit as Rosie Valez. You would've thought I like, slapped him in the face. He said I won't wear any of my work clothes on a television talk show.

[TV CLIP]

[02:06:31]

LARRY KING : Are you a transvestite?

DIVINE : No.

LARRY KING : You're not?

DIVINE : No.

02:06:36

PAT MORAN : Did he want to be a woman? Never. He never, ever wanted a sex change. He never ever wanted to become a woman. It was a J-O-B.

JOHN WATERS : When he wasn't on camera he would get that shit off. You know, it was uncomfortable, it was hot.

HOLLY WOODLAWN : No, he never wanted to be a woman, are you kidding? No, no, no. He just wanted to be a movie star. There's a difference.

[TV CLIP]

[02:06:57]

INTERVIEWER : And here you are in a dress shirt, dress slacks. Where is the Divine we all know?

DIVINE : In the closet and in a couple suitcases right now.

GEORGE FIGGS : That persona was a heavy burden. That's what you are, and you had to be that, otherwise you didn't exist.

[TV CLIP]

[02:07:17]

MALE CALLER : Uh, I saw the original Pink Flamingos and there was one scene toward the end of the movie that I've never been able to forget and, uh, I was just --

DIVINE : Nor have I.

JOHN WATERS : Eventually of course, Divine got very weary of the dog shit thing.

[TV CLIP]

[02:07:31]

MALE CALLER : If that was real dog feces that you ate?

DIVINE : Well I'm so tired of talking about that movie actually. I mean, it was something in the past. I think it's been the best and worst thing that have ever happened to me and, uh, I just really don't even go into it anymore. It really doesn't matter.

[02:07:40]

ALONSO DURALDE : Hollywood has a tendency to pigeonhole everybody anyway. For Divine it was like you are the guy in the big fishtail dress who eats poop and shoots people, and we're not really looking for that for Fantasy Island this season.

MINK STOLE : People couldn't see past the man in drag to the commitment to the performance, to the skill of the performance.

BRUCE VILLANCH : He was very depressed because he was trying to parlay this Divine character that had been his stock and trade into an acting career as a man.

DIVINE : I never set out in the beginning to play just female parts. But they were the only parts that came my way. They were written especially for me and they were the leads of films. As a young aspiring actor you don't turn down the lead in the movie. It made me a star of sorts with a cult status, but then a cult status isn't enough. You can't get by on that. You can't make any money.

[02:08:39]

I don't want to grow old and be poor in some home somewhere eating garbage out of a can. I just want to be comfortable. It just takes a lot of money to get through this life.

LISA JANE PERSKY : Dearest Lisa, I love LA but is it the place for me? It's a very straight town and I'm not sure if there is really any work there for me. All the parts I come up for end up hiring real women. I just don't think they're ready for me yet. I really can't take a hell of a lot more.

[02:09:12]

BELLE ZWERDLING : He really wanted to be known as a character actor. It was really important to him.

MICHAEL MUSTO : Divine was an actor and it was waiting for a break and trying different things that could get him to that break like doing this Alan Rudolph film, Trouble in Mind.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Most people imagine me to be a very patient person whereas I'm just the opposite.

[02:09:27]

DIVINE : I wanted to show myself I could play a different type of part and to play a man.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : The very moment I want something I have to have it. Nothing ever satisfies me.

[02:09:38]

DIVINE : With playing a man's part you really had to watch everything because I didn't want any of those feminine traits to certainly bounce out.

GREG GORMAN : Once his confidence level was built outside of the persona of Divine and he realized that he could play other roles, that really boosted his ego and his confidence and allowed him to kind of step outside the parameters of the Divine character.

[TV CLIP]

[02:09:59]

REGIS : Now what do you think, is this gonna start a whole new career for you?

DIVINE : Oh, I hope so. I've been, um, getting into agents' offices that two years ago we couldn't get through the front door.

REGIS : Well you can't, you can't go, you can't see an agent dressed like this, come on.

[02:10:15]

BELLE ZWERDLING : I knew it was a hard sell. I just kind of made a lot of calls and hoped that somebody would see him. And he would always go in there very prepared. He really wanted them to like him. There wasn't anything he wasn't willing to do.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I'm ready and raring to go. I can play men and women's parts so there's no need to hire anyone else.

ROB SADUSKI : He would've preferred to have just done movies because it was hard. The touring was hard.

GREG GORMAN : And there were times when I was in clubs with him where I was fucking worried he was gonna have a heart attack. He was not only a big guy in hot clubs shaking his ass off and dancing for 45 minutes with the shows, but he was wearing, you know, 140 pounds' worth of shit.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Okay, the bit bitch has to rest for a minute. Does anybody want to ask any questions?

[02:11:08]

ROB SADUSKI : I was very concerned that something was gonna happen when we were on the road. It's hard on a person with that kind of weight in that kind of condition to be on planes all the time and sleeping irregular hours and working

irregular hours and eating food that's maybe not so great. He ate all the wrong food for him.

[02:11:32]

JAY BENNETT : It was a concern but we tried to keep a watch over it. and we'd battle, you know, like if his doctor was like, you have to stop, we would -- I would get him on a diet.

ROB SADUSKI : He was concerned about his weight. He didn't really talk about it but I think it certainly did concern him.

BELLE ZWERDLING : Divine was probably your typical addict, shopping and love and at some point, drugs, at some point, food. Divine was excessive and that adds to a lot of pain that one has to deal with when you're fighting that.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : I don't think of her. I don't think of my momma.

[02:12:13]

JOHN WATERS : Divine went through a long time where he did not speak to his family at all. His mom used to call my mom and say where is he, we don't know where he is.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : You know, it was a sad time for me. I felt I did wrong by telling him to get out. My husband had muscular dystrophy and that's the reason we moved to Florida. And at that time Glen and I weren't speaking, and I didn't know where he was.

[02:12:45]

I noticed this fella sitting beside me. I knew he was gay. He was reading this article and I saw John Waters' name. And I looked at that picture on the cover and I thought boy, those eyes look like Glen. I took the magazine home and I said to Harris, who do you think this picture looks like? And he looked and he said, you know, it looks like Glenny, don't it? That's how I found out that Glen was Divine. And whoever this fella's talking about Divine playing in this movie.

[FILM CLIP]

VOICEOVER : Here she is, Divine as Dawn Davenport, a feisty young high school girl.

[02:13:22]

FRANCES MILSTEAD : How about, let's go down and see this movie?

[FILM CLIP]

VOICEOVER : Watch at Divine performs the most perverse acts ever brought to the screen.

[02:13:28]

FRANCES MILSTEAD : There was about five or six boys came over to me in the lobby. And they said we don't think you're gonna like it. I said, well I'll let you know after the movie's over.

[AUDIO CLIP]

DIVINE : The man said, listen lady, you don't want to see this movie. And she said I do want to see this movie. Divine is my son. And people said, you're Divine's mother? Yes. And they asked for her autograph. She loved it.

[02:13:57]

FRANCES MILSTEAD : And that's when I called him. When he heard my voice he started to cry and I started to cry. He says mom, can I come back home, and we can be a family again? And I

said Glen, that's a nicest thing you could say to me. We'd love to have you come back home.

JOHN WATERS : When he went home they had a sign out front that said Welcome Home Divine, which very much moved him.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : Well we had a crying good time. We enjoyed being with each other. And he promised he'd start coming home.

[02:14:31]

JOHN WATERS : When they made up they really made up and he was really happy to make up with them and I know Frances was too. And she grew to be really proud of him.

[TV CLIP]

DIVINE : Yeah, I think it did. It took her quite a while but actually maybe that was good because now we've become more than just parents and a son. We've become very, very good friends. They're quite thrilled now and both told me they were very proud of me and very happy that I was doing what I loved to do and that I was successful.

[02:15:00]

JOHN WATERS : Divine knew that we had to keep changing, that we had to evolve. We had to reinvent ourselves. We had been doing this a long time. And that of course, led to Hairspray.

MICHAEL MUSTO : Hairspray is legendary. It was an exciting change of tone for John Waters and Divine. It was a sweet, yet radical racial inequality drama/musical.

[FILM CLIP]

FEMALE : It ain't right to be dancing on TV on that colored music.

[02:15:30]

VINCENT PERANIS : It was really a homage to Baltimore and to our teenage-hood.

[FILM CLIP]

MALE : And where did you see it first, kids?

KIDS : At [UNINTELLIGIBLE] show.

[02:15:37]

MINK STOLE : It was really wonderful to reconnect. We were gonna be working together again. It was gonna be like hey, the old gang's all back together.

MICHAEL MUSTO : This was a little bittersweet in that it was the biggest John Waters movie yet, his biggest bid for mainstream attention and yet Divine had a supporting role. Ricki Lake was the star.

[FILM CLIP]

RICKI LAKE : I'm big, blonde and beautiful.

[02:16:00]

RICKI LAKE : That was in my first year of college at Ithaca and I got a call that there was a lead role in a movie that I was perfect for, that they were looking for a fat teenage who could dance. People started saying things to me, 'cause I would say oh, I'm up for this John Waters movie and they're like, he made Pink Flamingos. Divine ate dog poop in that, you know? And I was just like what, what? Like I knew there was, you know, some controversy. Divine played my mother Edna Turnblad. We were one big family.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Did you take that appetite suppressant I gave you at Dr. McKenzie's orders?

RICKI LAKE : Mother, I'm a growing teenager. I need food.

DIVINE : She's a good wife, a good mother. Those are her main concerns in life. And to keep a clean house. Could you turn that racket down? I'm trying to iron in here.

[02:16:48]

PAT MORAN : That look that he had in the beginning of Hairspray, you didn't even recognize him.

JOHN WATERS : I didn't recognize him. The other women in the neighborhood that looked like were talking and hi, they're making a movie here. And he said what drag queen would ever allow themselves to look like this? And he's right.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Now what? More soiled laundry for mommy, I suppose.

[02:17:13]

MALE : Poor thing, he just looked so horrible. He wasn't scared to not be glamorous.

DIVINE : That was the best compliment. I mean, I did fit right in and I did look exactly the way I was supposed to.

RICKI LAKE : Divine wasn't happy about me being cast as Tracy. I can definitely understand where he's coming from. He's been demoted. He was John Waters' muse up until then. There was a new girl in town.

[FILM CLIP]

RICKI LAKE : Hi Corny, I'm Tracy Turnbald and I go to [UNINTELLIGIBLE] High.

[02:17:37]

RICKI LAKE : When I first met him he taught me how to walk in high heels. I was practicing and he's like no, no, no Ricki, do it like this, you know, and he grabbed me and just pulled me along. I grew on him over the course of the eight weeks of making the film. By the end we were great friends. Divine wanted me to eat with him all the time. He would say come on Ricki, let's share a pie, let's eat a roast. I loved the scenes where we were together. We had a great chemistry.

[FILM CLIP]

[02:18:07]

DIVINE : All ratted up like a teenaged Jezebel.

RICKI LAKE : Oh mother, you're so 50s.

[02:18:11]

RICKI LAKE : I believe he was my mother.

[FILM CLIP]

DIVINE : Honey, this is only the beginning. Stick with me and we'll claw our way to the top.

MICHAEL MUSTO : Divine pulled it off. She played a real person. She made you believe in Edna Turnblad and it was a totally sympathetic, lovable momma.

[02:18:29]

JOSHUA GRANNELL : That performance in Hairspray is so touching and it's so believable that the fact that he was a man is irrelevant.

[FILM CLIP]

FEMALE : There was not an empty seat in the house tonight for the world premiere of Hairspray.

[02:18:46]

DENNIS DERMODY : The premiere was wonderful. It was really a happy moment.

[FILM CLIP]

FEMALE : This is Divine. We're delighted to talk to you.

[02:18:58]

FRANCES MILSTEAD : When we went to Baltimore he had a limousine pick us up. It was a big crowd there.

ROB SADUSKI : Divine of course went with his mother and it was such a great night. Divine was so happy. It was a film that he could feel good about showing to his family, that they would feel good about and they would respect him in it and applaud him in it. And I think that's probably what he wanted.

[TV CLIP]

LARRY KING : Is this gonna be your biggest hit?

DIVINE : Oh, well I don't know yet. I hope so. You always hope every one will be the biggest hit.

[02:19:26]

JOHN WATERS : You know, that movie I didn't think was gonna be any different than any of the other ones. I never thought, let me think of one that's gonna be mainstream or be a hit. It just was.

DENNIS DERMODY : Divine got great reviews. Pauline Kale of the New Yorker gave Divine a good review. And Divine would always say could you read that Pauline Kale again?

PAT MORAN : And then that review from the New York Times, he was overwhelmed.

[02:19:58]

JOSHUA GRANNELL : Divine and John all of a sudden exploded on to the national scene. They were being enjoyed by an audience who never had seen them before. For Divine that must've been incredibly satisfying and incredibly validating.

BELLE ZWERDLING : It was huge. He did the cover of Interview.

JAY BENNETT : He couldn't walk down the street. New York City bus drivers stopped the bus and jumped off and asked for autographs.

BELLE ZWERDLING : I was talking to Brandon Tartikoff about a series for Divine 'cause there was loose talks about making Hairspray into a series.

[02:20:29]

JAY BENNETT : Of course you get elated and you're hopeful about that there's more to come, and more did start to come.

SUE LOWE : He was so much more comfortable with himself that he knew that his abilities had gotten him to the highest level.

RICKI LAKE : He had cleaned up his act. He had gotten on a really healthy eating pattern and wasn't getting high. He was getting his life together.

BELLE ZWERDLING : I called the producers of Married With Children and asked them to incorporate a role for Divine as a man, and they did. This was so exciting for him.

[02:21:10]

HOLLY WOODLAWN : She finally got what she wanted, to be taken seriously as an actor, a paying job on a sitcom, a hit. Yippee.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : We had lunch. I remember Glen eating spaghetti and oysters. He had two orders of oysters. He liked oysters, raw oysters. I made him promise me he was going to the doctor 'cause he was so heavy. We kissed each other goodbye and that was the last time I saw him in person.

[02:21:51]

JOHN WATERS : The last time I ever saw Divine, was the movie had come out, it was a hit, we had dinner at Odeon. For some reason we had a car and driver. I don't remember who paid for that, neither of us. And, uh, I kissed him goodbye and put him in the limousine. We had a lovely night and I never saw him again.

[02:22:19]

BELLE ZWERDLING : Divine had flown in Saturday and he was starting work at 9:00 on Monday for Married With Children. He was very excited about showing up on the set.

GREG GORMAN : We had a great dinner and we had a great evening and he was in a great mood, really confident and it was great to see Divine in that space. After dinner I drove him home and he was staying up off of Hollywood Boulevard off of Laurel Canyon. He came out on the balcony in a smile tee-shirt, sings Arrivaderci Roma. It was just like it was a great vision of Divine.

[02:22:54]

ROB SADUSKI : I went to the studio Sunset Gower, and I was to meet Divine there at nine a.m. and I was there and the rest of the cast was there and the producers and everything. And, um, I was summoned to the phone and it was Bernard and he said that Divine had died.

[02:23:20]

BELLE ZWERDLING : Bernard said he's dead, Div's dead. You have to come over to the hotel. The room was so sweetly set up. He had his little Married With Children script. He had his little bedroom slippers. He had his diamond studs on the table. He was lying down flat, very serene and every beautiful.

PAT MORAN : I answered the phone. It was John. He said Divine's dead. And I remember my knees buckled. He had had a massive heart attack in the middle of the night.

[02:23:50]

JOHN WATERS : I remember Pat Moran came over and my friends came over and we sat in that one -- my bedroom in my old apartment while the phone just rang and rang and rang, so the answering machine couldn't even pick it up and there were news teams downstairs.

[TV CLIP]

MARY HART : The actors whose real name is Harris Glen Milstead died in his sleep in his Hollywood hotel room.

[02:24:16]

DENNIS DERMODY : And the said thing was, it was just like why now? This was a happy time, it should've been. Why did it have to be like this? It just seemed unbelievable.

[FILM CLIP]

JOHN WATERS : He was just so happy. You know, he would say, uh, can you believe we came this far?

[02:24:31]

JOHN WATERS : We were stupefied that he died. I've never gotten over the shock of it. I'm still shocked he's dead. I wake up sometimes and I'm amazed by that.

SUE LOWE : Divi was at a level of spirituality, of serenity, of peace, and of loving, and I just found him to be just like a Buddha. I loved Divi and most people did.

FRANCES MILSTEAD : I never dreamed in my life that here I am a mother of a person that was known all over the world and loved by everybody. And when I get letters from young people it makes me feel good to know that people cared about him.

[02:25:28]

PAT MORAN : There's a whole lot of things that he stood for that he didn't mean to. He wasn't out there being any kind of politico.

JOHN WATERS : Divine stood for all outside. He stood for anybody that didn't fit in, that exaggerated what everybody hated, turned it into a style and won.

HOLLY WOODLAWN : No one else can ever call themselves Divine. That's her legacy. She earned it, she worked for it, and God damn it, it's hers.

[02:26:00]

DIVINE : It's just that childhood dream, I guess. You think it's never really going to happen but I've realized now nothing is impossible. Now I've been all over the world and met unbelievable people and there's still much to do, so nothing is impossible. If you've got those kind of dreams, go for it. Maybe you'll be one of the lucky ones. If you believe in something and believe in yourself, do it.

[02:26:45]

END CREDITS