

Cover Girl

'I do know that all men think they are in love with me'

By Peggy Landers
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

I'M WAITING for Paulina. Sitting at a table in a back room at Il Cantinori, one of those noisy, crowded Greenwich Village restaurants where people chatter endlessly and earnestly with one another. I figure she'll be late.

I'm having lunch with one of the world's most beautiful women — certainly the fantasy object of most men I know — and I'm expecting the typical. I figure the model of the decade will pull some glamor girl shtick and keep me waiting. Probably have nothing to say.

But what's this?

At exactly 12:15, as agreed, Paulina Porizkova appears. A vision in black. Five-foot-ten-inches of black. Black fringed boots, black jacket, short black skirt, black stockings. Porcelain skin. Electric blue eyes.

She wears no makeup. No earrings. No adornment.

She smiles a predictably dazzling smile, shakes my hand, flips her almost waist-length hair off one shoulder, plops down on the chair and pulls out a pack of Marlboros.

"Do you mind terribly if I smoke?"

She orders a glass of milk, a glass of orange juice and a Coke. That's lunch.

"It's the Swedish way," she explains in a voice that is not quite Garbo. "I drink orange juice because I really need the vitamin C right now. I'm getting a cold. The milk reacts against the acid in the orange juice and calms my stomach. The Coke is if I get sick of the other mixture."

Right.

Czech immigrant

Paulina Porizkova is only 21, but that's easy to forget. She has been around — three *Sports Illustrated* bathing suit issues (two of them as cover girl), three *Vogue* covers, 10 *Glamour* covers (including the March issue), six *Mademoiselle* covers, five *Cosmopolitan* covers, the current cover of *New York* magazine, four guest spots on Late Night With David Letterman, a co-host gig on Saturday Night Live.

Her first movie, *Anna*, is scheduled for release in early fall. In it, she plays a poor Czech immigrant who becomes a famous actress — a path not unlike her own. She is Czech, but she was far from poor when she moved from Paris to New York in 1984.

Paulina was already a successful model in France when her cover girl status in the *Sports Illustrated* bathing suit issue that year catapulted her to superstardom.

There has been no looking back, though there has been plenty of looking.

"I do know that all men think they are in love with me," she says matter-of-factly. "But what they are in love with is the mystery of me. It's the picture they find attractive. They put their own person to it."

Get one thing straight: Paulina puts no truck in hype. "I don't listen to how fabulous and beautiful and divine I am, because once you believe it, that's it. Then you ARE a model (she pronounces the word with exaggerated disdain). That's when you are no longer a human being."

Near-sighted

What Paulina has, besides crooked teeth recently bonded (\$5,000) for her celluloid debut, is perspective. Of fame, she says: "It kind of makes you embarrassed to go to the bathroom, because people don't expect you to do that stuff."

The real Paulina, she says, is near-sighted, wears "little round granny glasses," lives alone in a Greenwich Village apartment with two cats, likes to sit around with her boyfriend of three years (whom she refuses to identify, other than to say he's an artist who isn't very rich or very famous) and watch TV.

She admits to making an extremely comfortable living, but says, "If you can count your money, you don't have any." She's still counting.

And get this: Paulina wants to quit modelling in three or four years, get married, have babies and write children's books. And, oh yes, maybe along the way become a "serious" actress.

She hates modelling. "You can't take yourself seriously because you're living on the way you look, which has nothing to do with who you are," she says. "It's a very superficial job. The less I model, the better I feel."

When Paulina was a 15-year-old student in Sweden, and model mogul John Casablanca tapped

her for shutter stardom and whisked her off to his Elite agency in Paris, her mother's response, she says, was, "Oh God. A model? Ding-dong. Anybody home?" She was afraid I would grow ignorant and silly and vain.

It has been Paulina's mission ever since to prove wrong the usual thinking about the brain power of models. This despite the fact that she has never gone beyond ninth grade. She makes a big deal about reading Dostoevsky and Chekhov and listening to classical music. She paints for relaxation. Speaks four languages — English, French, Czech and Swedish.

She was three when Soviet tanks rolled into Czechoslovakia in 1968. Her parents fled the country on a bright red motorcycle days before the borders were closed and left her at her grandparents' house in Prostějov. When the Czech government refused to let her join them in Sweden, her parents went on a hunger strike, launching a three-year struggle that was covered at length in the European press.

"I started my career as a model in pictures on the front pages of newspapers, holding a teddy bear. The headlines said Poor Little Paulina Wants To See Her Mother."

When Paulina was six, her mother, then remarried and pregnant

with a second child, smuggled herself into the country to abduct her daughter but was discovered and sent to prison. She gave birth to Jachym (now 14) in a nearby hospital and was eventually sentenced to house arrest at the grandparents' house. Because of continued pressure from the European media, mother and children were expelled from the country and moved to Sweden.

When photographic fame and fortune came knocking on teen-age Paulina's door, she was ready for both.

"I was 17 years old, on my own. I could do anything in the world I wanted, and I made sure I did," she says. "I was the ultimate in wild and cool. I'd always go out dressed in pink leopard skin and tons of make up."

She showed up for her first *Sports Illustrated* bathing suit shoot in Jamaica wearing a black mini-skirt, hair teased "out to here" and sprayed pink.

"I walked downstairs in the hotel like that and spent the night drinking double tequilas, reading everybody's palm. I talked a lot about sex and alcohol. I think they were all going 'What are we going to do with this girl?' I was definitely into it for the reaction then. I used to love to see them freak out."

Now, even clubs and discos are a bore.

"Whenever I step inside one of those places I see the same people I saw there five years ago," she says. "Only instead of having pink hair, they've dyed it black. These are not happy people. They're looking for something."

The fabulous Paulina has mellowed. "I'm actually a homely, boring person," she insists. "I never meant those terrible things I used to say. If someone came to my apartment they'd see all lace and peach and teddy bears."

Devil-may-care

Right. Then how come a devil-may-care attitude oozes out of every perfect pore? She still peppers her conversation with four-letter words, still delights in the throw-away comment aimed to shock.

Ask her how she stays thin and she says, "A lot of sex and a lot of water."

Surprised? "Well, this is my honest answer!" she exclaims, arching her eyebrows for punctuation. She takes a long and satisfied drag from her latest cigarette and smiles one of those "who me?" smiles.

"When you are in love, you never look better."

She could never put out a book on Paulina's Beauty Tips, she says,

because it would be X-rated. She never exercises. "In my book, I'd say lift things, like a glass of Coke. Open the refrigerator door, it's good for the biceps. Eat Steve's Ice Cream with Heath Bars. Wear makeup to bed. And don't cut your hair every six weeks to keep the ends trimmed. I haven't cut my hair in six years. It's bull . . . anyway that hair grows faster if you cut it."

The rebel remains, even if she has fixed her teeth. And highlighted her hair.

Lunch is over. We walk through the crowded restaurant, toward the door, and not one person even pretends to recognize Paulina. Out on the street, though, a house painter lugging pails of paint in one hand and a ladder over the shoulder shouts, "Yo! Hi! Are you Paulina? I have a lot of friends who model."

She smiles. She's used to it. Me? My neck begins to cramp from looking up at her. We say goodbye. Paulina stands at the corner and waves as the photographer and I cross the street.

"Bye-bye!" she says. "Bye-bye!"

We look at her and marvel. She's like a schoolgirl standing there. Later, when the pictures are developed, we marvel even more. Every single one is perfect.

Paulina Porizkova, one of the world's most beautiful women, plays a poor Czech immigrant in her first movie, *Anna*.

Sex conference probes AIDS-related issues

By Beth Ann Krier
Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — They came to ask, and sometimes answer, what they acknowledge society often considers to be the improper questions: questions about sex.

What will ultimately stop the spread of AIDS?

Can women who work in the sex industry — prostitutes, erotica writers, managers of nude dancing establishments — live happy and fulfilled lives?

In the age of AIDS, what will happen to sex surrogates, people who assist the sexually dysfunctional to regain sexual function, usually working in conjunction with a therapist?

The Society for the Scientific Study of Sex, western region, and the Centre for Sex Research at California State University, Northridge, recently sponsored a three-day conference to explore

such "Issues and Controversies."

This was not a conference where the views of the Meese Commission or the Moral Majority were expressed. And though there were feminists (both male and female) present among the estimated 175 psychologists, biologists, lawyers, academics, psychiatrists, epidemiologists, social workers and others attending the conference, these feminists were not of the persuasion that wants to ban pornography.

Inadequate funding

Rather, these are the people who would rather study the effects of pornography than judge or suppress "obscene" material.

"In any science, and sexology is no exception, controversy is actually healthy," said western region president Milton Diamond, a professor of anatomy at the University of Hawaii Medical School and author of *The World of Sexual Behavior, Sex Watching*.

"In science there is no such thing as an improper question. Any question can be asked and it's unfortunate that too many questions go begging in our field because they may offend."

Several speakers bemoaned the fact that because sex research is controversial it's not well funded. Perhaps as a result, there were few sessions devoted to the presentation of new research. Rather, the conference offered numerous panel discussions on where the research is heading and what influences it.

The topic of AIDS was addressed in many of the presentations on the conference's three-day agenda. In a session called "AIDS, Where Are We?" Dr. Michael Gottlieb, the UCLA researcher who first reported AIDS cases to the Centers for Disease Control, didn't waste any time saying what he thinks will be the ultimate answer to AIDS: development of a vaccine.

The issue of AIDS and safe sex practices was also addressed in a

number of sessions, nowhere more dramatically than in one covering the topic of surrogate partners in sex therapy.

Four surrogates agreed that panic initially swept their industry until guidelines were established.

Sex surrogates insist clients wear condoms

"We decided we were not going to mix body fluids anymore," said Adele P. Kennedy, a Los Angeles surrogate. She and other surrogates she knows have begun demanding that their clients wear condoms, Kennedy added, and some surrogates now refrain from kissing.

Cheryl Cohen, a San Francisco surrogate, told the audience that

she has an AIDS test every six months, insists clients wear condoms, but still continues to kiss. "I can't imagine not kissing."

Frederick A. Schotz, director of Counseling Associates in Davie, Fla., said that clients at his clinic are not required to wear condoms — but that they are required to be tested for AIDS.

Why include a panel of "women in the sex industry" at a scientific meeting? As moderator Elizabeth Rae Larson, a Seattle educator and writer, explained, "We wanted to bring people forward to contribute to the broadening of stereotypes."

Each woman on the panel said that working in the sex business need not be a demeaning, joyless experience. In fact, June Cade, who manages sex arcades in which women dance nude, many women she has employed have improved their lives substantially — kicking drugs, going to college, settling down in married relationships.

San Diego-based Warren Farrell,

author of *Why Men Are the Way They Are*, proved to be one of the conference's most popular speakers. Among other things, he distinguished between male and female-oriented pornography, observing that men's fantasies run toward women pictured in magazines such as *Playboy*, *Penthouse* and the annual swimsuit issue of *Sports Illustrated*.

Fantasy addicts

On the other hand, women's fantasies, in Farrell's opinion, are found in magazines such as *Better Homes & Gardens* and *Family Circle*.

"There are brides' magazines but there are no grooms' magazines," he said. "In female pornography, every man is a success object. Women want access to the success object without fear of rejection. Men want access to the sex object without fear of rejection. Both sexes are addicted to a fantasy they cannot fulfill."