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Tuesday, July 20

SHIRLEY CLARKE IN PERSON with PORTRAIT OF JASON

7:00

Special Admission: \$2.00/1.50

In cooperation with Canyon Cinematheque and 80 Langton Street Gallery, the Archive pays tribute to one of the leading women film-artists ~~and~~ in this country for the last twenty years. Canyon Cinematheque will present a program of ~~her~~ Shirley Clarke's early short films Thursday, July ~~12~~¹⁵, and the 80 Langton Street Gallery in San Francisco will show recent video work on Wednesday, July 21. ~~THE ARCHIVE~~

"The most extraordinary film I've seen in my life is certainly *Portrait of Jason*. For two hours a black homosexual tells us on the screen about his life as a prostitute. It is absolutely fascinating."

Ingmar Bergman

In 1967, Jason Holliday, born Aaron Paine, was a 33-year-old black male prostitute and sometime nightclub performer. He spent twelve hours before Shirley Clarke's camera one night, and this is the *Portrait* that resulted.

There is no pretense of uncensored cinema-verite here. Jason does all his numbers for the camera—hysterical female impersonations, tales of his house-boy days in San Francisco, wildly funny stories of his sexual adventures. As he gets more stoned and chokes on the despair beneath his laughter, his "act" gets more serious. One gets a terrifying view of a soul laid bare, a naked revelation of what society can do to a man it doubly rejects, as a black and as a homosexual. There are several moments in this film when it appears the game has tripped everyone: profound questions of personal identity are exposed—spectator, filmmaker, performer are caught in a deadly serious charade.

"One thing I never expected was the highly charged emotional evening that took place. I discovered the antagonisms I'd been suppressing about Jason. I was indeed emotionally involved . . .

How the people behind the camera reacted that night is a very important part of what the film is about. Little did I expect how much of ourselves we would reveal as the night progressed. Originally I had planned that you would see and hear only Jason, but when I saw the rushes I knew the real story of what happened that night in my living room had to include all of us, and so our question-reaction probes, our irritations and angers, as well as our laughter remain part of the film, essential to the reality of one winter's night in 1967 spent with one Jason Holliday, one Aaron Paine. ||

— Shirley Clarke

~~Directed by Shirley Clarke (1967, 105 mins.)~~

This print of

PORTRAIT OF JASON is one of the recent acquisitions of the PFA Study Collection.

Directed by Shirley Clarke. (1967, 105 mins.)