

AGGIElife

THE BATTALION

From beyond to blood

Actress Jeri Ryan talks with Battalion writer about Dracula role

By MATT MCCORMICK

The Battalion

Actress Jeri Ryan, best known as Seven of Nine on the television show "Star Trek: Voyager," is one of film's many up-and-coming young stars. She has shared the screen with the likes of Johnny Lee Miller (*Trainspotting*), Omar Epps (*In Too Deep*) and Jennifer Esposito (*Summer of Sam*). This Christmas, she will make an appearance in the new Wes Craven film, *Dracula 2000*.

Ryan plays a reporter in the new and modern telling of a classic story. Taking over where Bram Stoker's legend ends, *Dracula 2000* gives the famous vampire a new life in a modern setting. Directed by veteran editor Patrick Louissier, who has worked with legendary horror director Craven on all three *Scream* films, this movie hopes to provide a hip and high-tech spin on the age-old tale.

Ryan said she thought the whole filmmaking experience was wonderful.

"It was a lot of fun to do," she said. "The director was such a sweetheart. Coming from his background as an editor allowed him to work much more efficiently."

This efficiency proved to be an asset for the film. Preproduction delays pushed the shooting date to such a late start that it was doubtful whether the film could keep the "2000" in its title.

"We had amazingly tight turnaround times," Ryan said. "In fact, we did some reshoots just a few weeks ago as they were getting it cut together."

Ryan, who devotes most of her working time to the busy production schedule of "Voyager," did not seek a part in this film — it sought her.

"Miramax came to me and said, 'We want you in this movie,'" Ryan said. Her part, which was not in the original script, was added to the movie after she agreed to play it.

Even after she joined the project, Ryan was unsure if she had picked a winner.

"I was afraid about the quality of this picture initially a little bit," Ryan said. "But it was incredibly organized."

In fact, it was so well organized that it dispelled all her doubts, she said.

When asked about the other actors and actresses, Ryan said she did not get to know as many of them as she would have liked.

"Unfortunately, I did not have a lot of downtime with the rest of the cast," Ryan said.

Ryan's hectic schedule was caused by her continued work on "Voyager" while she was shooting the film, which she said was her biggest challenge.

Another challenge was the bugs, she said.

"We were shooting a lot in the bayou in Louisiana, and there were these bugs," Ryan said. "It was mating season for them, and so they were everywhere — in your hair. But the good thing was, they ate the mosquitoes."

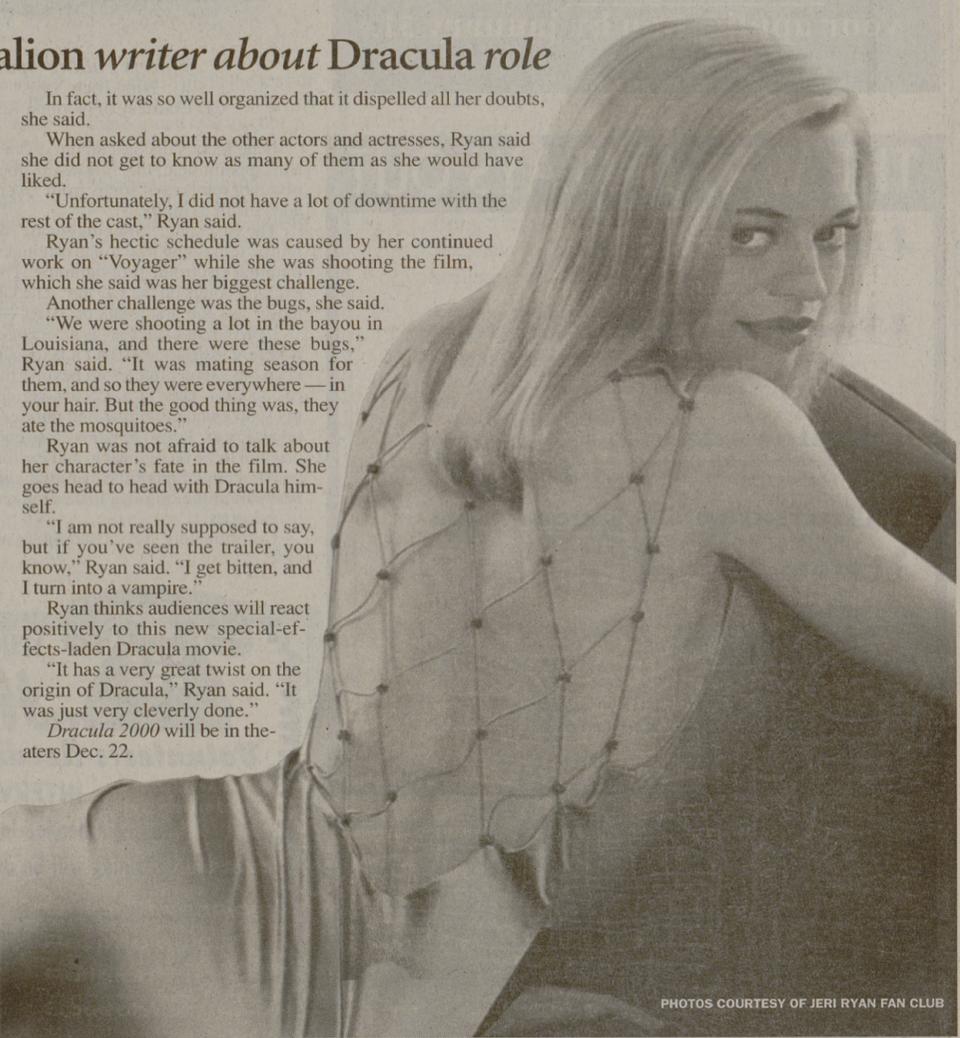
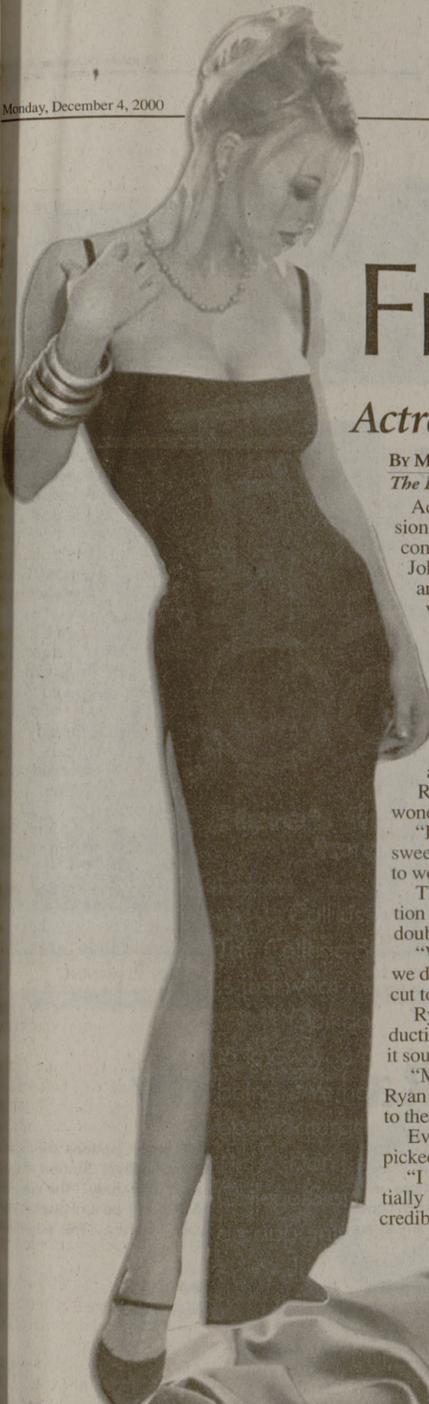
Ryan was not afraid to talk about her character's fate in the film. She goes head to head with Dracula himself.

"I am not really supposed to say, but if you've seen the trailer, you know," Ryan said. "I get bitten, and I turn into a vampire."

Ryan thinks audiences will react positively to this new special-effects-laden Dracula movie.

"It has a very great twist on the origin of Dracula," Ryan said. "It was just very cleverly done."

Dracula 2000 will be in theaters Dec. 22.



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