

Kathy Bates on life and career

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whole world, when I auditioned for 'About Schmidt.' I think the Academy gave me a nomination for that one so that I would never take off my clothes on camera again."

Even though, Bates lost out to Catherine Zeta-Jones that year, who won for "Chicago," and before Kirstie Alley's "Fat Actress," fat women around the world embraced Bates as a champion. "I got so many letters from large women who thanked me so much for taking it all off, and showing the world that there is nothing to be embarrassed about if you're not a size zero, and more importantly, that most women, even actresses, are far from a size zero."

From 1971 until "Misery," Bates appeared in a number of modestly successful films, but never as leading lady, hardly anything more than a walk on. The bulk of her earnings came from appearing on Broadway and on high profile television dramas. She was nominated for a Tony Award for her role in 1983's "night, Mother." And the role of Frankie, in "Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune" was written by Terrence McNally, especially for Kathy Bates. However, the role in the big screen version went to Michelle Pfeiffer. "Big surprise, there," laughs Bates. "What would Hollywood want with a middle-aged fat lady, even though that is who the role was written for?"

In fact, in the late '70s, Bates auditioned for the role of Janet Wood on "Three's Company," but lost out to Joyce DeWitt. She says she was

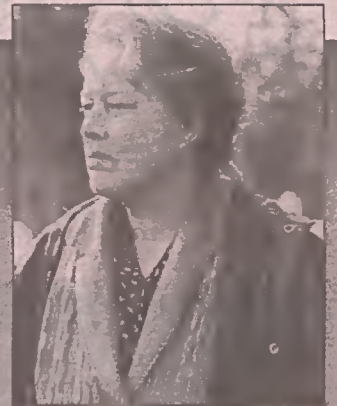
relieved she didn't get the role because after thinking about the commitment of a weekly television show, she had had second thoughts.

The year is now 2006 and Kathleen Doyle Bates couldn't be happier. She appeared in the first box office smash of the year, "Failure to Launch," as Matthew McConaughey's mother. "And I got to play the wife of Terry Bradshaw. I almost shit when I heard that he was offered the role of Matthew's father and as my husband. I didn't think he had ever acted. But any reservations I may have had were quickly squashed," she reveals, "when we read our first lines. He is not only a natural in front of the camera. He is one of the most genuine people I have ever worked with. Even with four Super Bowl rings, and all that testosterone, the man is so down-to-earth and loveable."

The \$90 million box office success of "Failure To Launch" surprised a lot of people, especially the majority of movie critics who panned the film. However, on the other hand, praise for both Bates and Bradshaw's acting in the film was abundant.

Both "Failure To Launch" and the 15th Anniversary Edition of "Fried Green Tomatoes" hit DVD stores earlier this summer

The many faces of Kathy Bates (clockwise): 'Misery,' 'Six Feet Under,' 'Dolores Clairborne,' 'Failure to Launch.'



and are still selling briskly.

Bates also directed a number of episodes of HBO's smash "Six Feet Under" and also had a reoccurring role as Bettina, Ruth Fisher's (Frances Conroy) only best friend. ▀

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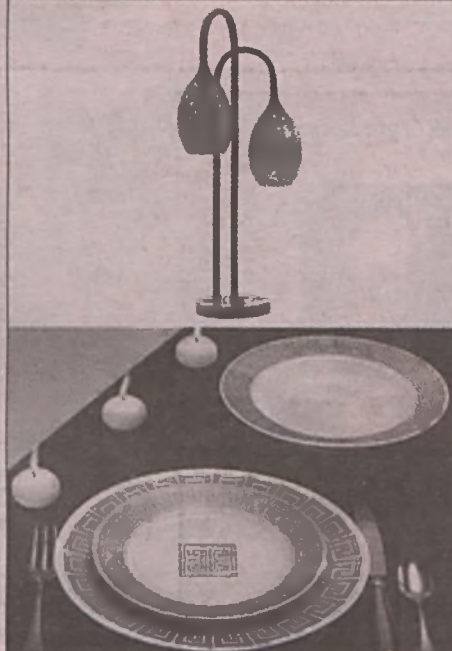
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