

STUDENT WORKSHEET 7

ROSANNA HYLAND - INTERVIEW



“GETTING TO SEE THESE CHARACTERS COME TO LIFE HAS JUST BEEN... I MEAN, THE WORK THAT THE OTHER ACTORS ARE DOING IS JUST INCREDIBLE. IT WAS SO EXCITING AND A TOTAL JOY AND A TOTAL PRIVILEGE TO JUST GET TO BE IN HILL VALLEY WITH THEM, TO GET TO PLAY WITH THEM ON STAGE. IT WAS LIKE BEING IN THE WORLD’S MOST EXCITING SANDPIT. IT’S JUST SO MUCH FUN!”

Rosanna Hyland originated the role of Lorraine Baines in **BACK TO THE FUTURE: The Musical**. We asked her how she found playing the role in three different ways, at different ages. Here’s what she said:

PLAYING LORRAINE AT THE START OF THE SHOW (1985)

So, for 1985 Lorraine, the first version you see of her, things haven’t gone so well for her. She’s had a harder life. She doesn’t take care of her health. She drinks a lot. She’s shuffling and heavy and tired and resigned and a little nostalgic, and it’s been more about bringing those qualities rather than an age.

PLAYING LORRAINE AT THE END OF THE SHOW (1985)

For Lorraine (at the end of the production) life has turned out better for her. Her family are thriving. She has a successful career. She takes care of her health. She’s looking forward to her future still. She’s more self-possessed and engaged and confident and there’s spring in her step. It’s more about those qualities for her. At the end of the production, even though she’s the same age as she was when the first time you see her, she feels younger. It’s actually an interesting exercise in you think playing a certain age is important, but actually it’s more about that character’s life journey because you can be a really youthful 47 or you can be a very old 47.

The first time you see her, it’s like life’s really taken a toll. And then, the second time you see her, she’s a bit more of like how you might see a 47-year-old today, a bit more millennial. She dresses more fashionably, and she’s taken better care of herself and she’s maintained a bit more youth. I hate to say it that way, but there’s a lightness to her.

PLAYING LORRAINE IN 1955, WHEN SHE IS 17

And then, for 17-year-old Lorraine, I’ve tried to lighten up her voice a little and make her less grounded and a little bit more highly strung, but really just focusing on the qualities of her being very fixated on Marty McFly and just totally head over heels. She’s really keyed up and hot and bothered and really excited.

“For me, it’s just been about trying to play the characters as a product of their circumstances, rather than getting hung up on an age.”

HOW THE COSTUMES HELPED HER TO DEVELOP HER CHARACTER:

A really good actor will probably try and get their shoes on as quick as they can. If you can get hold of your show shoes, what your character’s actual shoes, it can change your gait and the way you walk and your entire posture. And so, as much as costumes are important, shoes tend to be, for a lot of actors, really important.