

ON THE CABLE

By KIRK NICEWONGER

Yue-Sai Kan bridges cultures in 'One World'

Fittingly, the world's most-watched television personality lives a short walk away from the United Nations.

Also fittingly, the world's most-watched television personality can walk in complete anonymity down the streets of New York.

The latter is fitting because Yue-Sai Kan's beat is China and the rest of Asia, an area that looms large in our consciousness but much smaller in our understanding. Her "One World" series, which began airing on China Central Television in 1986, had a weekly viewership estimated at 800 million. Her hairstyle and clothing were imitated across the country; scripts of "One World" were reprinted for study in Chinese universities.

Americans can now see for themselves episodes of the groundbreaking series on The Discovery



Yue-Sai Kan

Channel. The first episode airs Oct. 29 and Nov. 4; the second, Nov. 26. "One World" joins Yue-Sai Kan's series about Asia for Westerners, "Looking East," also on Discovery.

"One World" introduced to the Chinese such Western phenomena as the Muppets, Hollywood, baseball, pasta and fast-food restaurants. "Think about it," Yue-Sai Kan says earnestly. "Here was a country that had been closed for 37 or so years. It was like coming out of the Dark Ages; China was just beginning to open up. We wanted them to have a good perspective on what the world is all about."

Born in Guilin, China, Kan was raised in Hong Kong after her parents fled the Communist Revolution. She later emigrated to the United States, and in 1972 she became a volunteer anchorperson on Manhattan Cable's China Service. It was

there she created "Looking East" for, she says, "a command performance of two: my mom and my dad."

In 1984, PBS asked her to narrate the live broadcast of the 35th anniversary celebration of the People's Republic of Beijing. Chinese government officials noted her work and commissioned her to create "One World."

The American debut of "One World" comes when our interest in China and Asia is at a peak. In addition to Kan's series, The Discovery Channel has aired "The Great Wall of Iron," on the Chinese army; and A&E has devoted much of its October programming to China. As the world's most-watched television personality puts it, "(Asia) really is an important part of the world. People talk about the next century as the Century of Asia. It's no exaggeration."

CABLEVIEW

By J.T. YURKO

Andrews stands out in 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'

On Sunday, Oct. 29, Showtime's Nightmare Classics presents a horror story as classic as they come: "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Robert Louis Stevenson's century-old novella about man's duality of good and evil has been translated on screen a dozen times. The title alter egos have been portrayed by such greats as John Barrymore, Fredric March and Spencer Tracy. So the challenge for British actor Anthony Andrews — one of two actual Englishmen in the cast of this veddy Victorian tale — was to somehow make the Jekyll/Hyde character new.

"You just say, 'Yes, this is cliché. Now, what can we do with it?'" says Andrews, who made a point of not watching any of the earlier films. "I saw here an introverted, shy man who became pathologically depend-



Anthony Andrews

ent on a substance which released him from that. This is a story about a drug addict. I think that brings it into focus for today's audience. It was certainly an aspect that interested me."

Another fresh twist, also contributed by Andrews, was that Mr. Hyde need not be monstrous in a visual sense; evil can be wrapped in a pretty package. "Besides, I wanted to be able to change in front of your eyes," says Andrews. "I wanted to do it without masks or special effects or prosthetics."

"It was an extraordinary creative environment," says Andrews. "Provided you learn your lines and don't bump into the furniture, as Noel Coward would say. It felt like my early days in television at home, where we were always trying to do

something for nothing and make it wonderful."

Andrews established himself internationally via those early British TV exports, "Danger UXB" and the acclaimed "Brideshead Revisited." Although expected to leap to big-screen stardom after "Brideshead," he found himself back on the small screen in made-for-TV movies like "The Scarlet Pimpernel" and the miniseries "A.D."

"What it came down to," he says, "is that no one offered me a decent film role. It was all lightweight rubbish — young leading men, two-dimensional characters."

"I think now, at age 41, I'm coming to the end of my apprenticeship. I've grown into myself. Or maybe," Andrews shrugs, "I've just learned how to do it."



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