

## Dual worlds collide for 'Miss Rose White'

### Divided family clashes on reunion

By Dan Rice

Rose White arranged her life to fit the postwar American dream, complete with an advancing career at Macy's and the New York nightlife with the boy next door. But a family reunion shatters her illusions and returns her heritage. The Hallmark Hall of Fame presentation "Miss Rose White" airs Sunday, April 26, on NBC.

During the week, Rose (Kyra Sedgwick) climbs the Manhattan ladder alongside her Midwestern beau (D.B. Sweeney) and her fashionable friends. Every Friday night, however, Rose White reverts to Hayzel Weiss and goes to Brooklyn to share the Sabbath with

her Polish/Jewish family. She has kept her dual worlds separate; her stern haberdasher father, Mordechai (Maximilian Schell), never visits her apartment and knows nothing of her Americanized identity. Rose enjoys practicing the Old World rituals with her loving aunt and uncle (Maureen Stapleton and Milton Selzer), but she is equally comfortable in her workaday ethnic denial.

Then Mordechai announces that Rose's long-lost sister Lusla (Amanda Plummer) has been rescued from a concentration camp and is coming to America, where she will live in Rose's apartment. Sketchy memories are triggered in Rose's mind of the separation from her now-deceased mother when she was 4 years old, and anxiety arises from the feeling that the Yiddish-speaking Lusla has no place in the

world of career girl Rose White.

Lusla brings with her the answers to matters Rose had never questioned: Why did Mordechai leave his wife and Lusla behind when he and Rose immigrated to

America, and more importantly, what were their fates in Poland? The exposure of family secrets and shame that left heartbreaking chasms between father and daughters creates an intense drama that will leave no viewer unmoved.

Barbara Lebow's play "A Shayna Maidel" (A Pretty Maiden) was the source material for the teleplay, which was penned by Anna Sandor. According to executive producer Marian Rues, Sandor, whose mother narrowly escaped her Nazi captors while en route to a death camp, brought a "sense of integrity" to the project.

Rices chose Richmond, Va., for the settings of Manhattan, Brooklyn and Poland because of its varied ethnic base and its suitable architecture. (An old tobacco warehouse was used for an Ellis Island-type immigration center.) She gives credit to the detail-minded costumers and art department, and especially cites the artful composition of director Joseph Sargent, who worked

wonders with the limitations of the locales. "We had a great opportunity to create not only the look but the authentic sense of people and place," Rices says.

Kyra Sedgwick ("Born on the Fourth of July," "Mr. and Mrs. Iridge") creates a believable Rose whose guarded assimilation into American society transforms into a fervent desire to reclaim her past. She learns forgiveness, acceptance, and that her father was wrong when he claimed all he could give her was his name. Maximilian Schell ("The Man in the Glass Booth") constructs an intense man who's sealed years of unspoken grief and pain within a hard exterior. But Amanda Plummer, the acclaimed actress of stage ("Agnes of God"), screen ("The Fisher King") and television ("L.A. Law"), is most memorable as the catalyst Lusla whose abandonment and suffering have not stifled her compassion. For as Lusla tells her sister, despite the years and miles, "Love never dies."

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