

STARR NOTICES

Marshall thinks 'Billy' relieves workers' stress

By Dan Rice

Dallas native Marie Marshall stars with Billy Connolly in *Billy*, a comedy about a divorced mother who enters a marriage of convenience with an immigrant professor in order to supplement her income. *Billy* airs Saturday nights on ABC.

The acting bug bit Marshall early in life, "when I realized you could choose that as a career. 'Wow, this is fun,' I thought, and if you take it in school there's no homework."

After studying theater at the University of North Texas, Marshall moved to New York, where she worked odd jobs while making auditions and hoping for that big break. Her persistence won her

parts in commercials and on daytime dramas, plus roles on the stage.

The 10 years spent in New York had a surprising effect upon Marshall.

"I auditioned for the Oliver Stone movie (*JFK*), and I realized that I'd been in New York too long when I could do a Brooklyn accent better than my native Texan accent. It crushed me. I thought, 'Oh no, I've lost my roots.'"

The same casting director who got her a guest shot on NBC's *Wings* set her up with the audition for *Billy*, which Marshall describes as more realistic than *The Cosby Show*. She believes that "comedies are strong this year because people need to come home and be able to laugh and be distracted from what's going on in the workaday world."

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