



Richard Gere chats with Golden Girl Diane Lane. Photo courtesy of Orion

'Ol' Blue Eyes' to tell his life story

The Reuter News Report
LOS ANGELES — Frank Sinatra said Thursday he would tell his life story in a six-hour, multi-million dollar television series — "warts and all."

His younger daughter, Tina Sinatra, who will produce the series, said, "I don't think dad is interested in a whitewash. I want his guts, his heart and his soul. I hope this will be the definitive story."

Sinatra, whose career stretches over more than 60 years and includes more than 50 films as well as countless hit records and concerts, told reporters "I intend to put down what happened in my life, or maybe most of it."

He said he might make a personal appearance in the tail-end of the series.

"How can you play yourself from the age of five when you're 49 years old," he said amid laughter.



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Gangsters, lovers dance through 'Cotton Club'

Review by Chris Burbach and Chris Welsch
 Daily Nebraskan Senior Editors

"That's American film," said one reviewer of "Cotton Club" on the way out of the theater. "It's 'Flashdance' and 'Godfather.'"

So it is. While a lower-class man dances his way out of Harlem and into love, a bevy of mobsters blast each others' brains out. And Richard Gere plays, once again, Richard Gere, dazzling the dames while he blows his own horn.

Based on a pictorial history of the Cotton Club, the film ostensibly tells the tale of the Club in its 1929-30 heyday and the people in and around it — its exclusively black performers and exclusively white patrons and their guns and puppets. Such a point of view is artificial, however, and only possible in retrospection.

While watching the film, one can discern no central, tangible focus; though about half the scenes take place in the Cotton Club and the film ends there, the club functions only as a set. It has no life of its own and the story is not about it. The film is about Vera Cicero and the mobster she works for, Dutch Schultz.

It's about the tap dancing Sandman Williams and his singing flower, Lila Rose Oliver. And Richard Gere, trumpet player turned actor. And violence — the other bond besides the Cotton Club which all these people share.

Even love is brutal at the Cotton Club. Vera Cicero is alternately beaten and bossed around by Gere and James Remar, who plays the "Dutchman" with raunchy relish. Diane Lane plays Cicero with the same joyful abandon. She's the perfect arch-

type "mobster's dame" to Remar's sneering gangster.

This film reeks of Francis Ford Coppola. His influence is present in the beautiful cinematography, in the use of natural lighting, in the terse scripting and in the surrealness of this film.

At first, "The Cotton Club" seemed only a glossy gangster genre remake — but as the twin plots developed it became evident Coppola was trying to breach tradition. The plot's multiple levels made us wonder when the story line would take off — what were we waiting for? The movie shifts gears, so to speak, at the end and the purpose and plan become clear. Perhaps if Coppola had integrated the surreal element of the film sooner, it would have seemed more cohesive.

"The Cotton Club" is worth seeing. It may be hard to tell if it's a love story, a mobster bash or a social commentary, but whatever it is, it sure is pretty.

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