



Kim Hunter

November 12, 1922 - September 11, 2002

New York, New York

Kim Hunter, the American actress who won an Academy Award as Stella Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and later gave voice and face to Zira in the *Planet of the Apes* films, died at her apartment in New York City's Greenwich Village on September 11, 2002. She was seventy-nine. Family said the cause was a heart attack.

Born Janet Cole in Detroit on November 12, 1922, and raised partly in Miami Beach, she took the professional name Kim Hunter and reached Broadway and Hollywood in the 1940s. *Streetcar* on stage and screen made her a permanent part of American drama's postwar vocabulary; the Oscar for the 1951 film sealed a reputation that the blacklist then tried to erase. She was named in *Red Channels*, lost work, and spent years rebuilding a career that television and theater eventually returned to her.

The ape-mask years were not a retreat but a second act: Zira's intelligence and moral clarity gave the franchise a conscience. She kept working into later life - stage, soaps, guest roles - with the same unfussy professionalism that had carried her through the lean decade. Colleagues remembered a colleague who treated craft as a daily job and politics as something that had already cost her enough.

She died in New York on September 11, 2002, the same calendar day as Johnny Unitas. The coincidence places a Midwestern-born actress of Broadway steel beside a quarterback of Baltimore myth; both left work that still plays.

Hunter's blacklist years are a reminder that American entertainment could punish loyalty to conscience as efficiently as it rewarded glamour. She returned without self-pity, which may be why younger actors still study

Stella for the art of standing beside someone else's storm. Planet of the Apes gave her a second mask and, paradoxically, a clearer voice. She stayed a New Yorker to the end - Village streets, theater friends, a craft that never needed to shout its résumé. This memorial keeps the Oscar and the ape alike in view.

Services

Died at her home in Greenwich Village, New York City, on September 11, 2002. Academy Award-winning actress; private arrangements.

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