

The Hot Seat

SMALL TALK WITH BIG PEOPLE

Sweet tart

Electra complexes, lesbian moms—the “happy hooker” writes all about it in *Child No More*

By **Gia Kourlas**

Even though Xaviera Hollander will never live down *The Happy Hooker*, her racy 1971 memoir about her stint as a prostitute and New York madam, there's been more to her life than sex. In her new autobiography (her 19th book), *Child No More*, she replaces erotic-adventure stories—well, some—with tales about her parents and her rocky childhood. Hollander, 59, was born during World War II in a Japanese internment camp in Indonesia, where her father, a psychiatrist, ran a hospital. Her life took a turn when she and her mother were separated from her father; when the war ended, her parents reunited and moved to Amsterdam. It was there that Hollander spent her formative years—oh, and developed incestuous feelings for her father (let's just say that she really enjoyed herself the one time Daddy spanked her) and consequent jealousy of her mother. But after her father died, Hollander forged a bond with her mother, Germaine, who, in her last 20 years, settled into a lesbian relationship with a woman named Hetty.

While the book begins and ends with the scene of Germaine's passing, *Child No More* is not really about death. Rather, it's an occasionally bizarre portrait of the unconditional love shared between a daughter and her parents. In person, Hollander is not as over-the-top as you might expect. As she chatted about her exploits over tea at her posh midtown hotel, her sensuality shone through.

Time Out New York: Why did you write *Child No More*?

Xaviera Hollander: When my mother was dying, I had a lot of trouble emotionally. So it is about the love of the parent for the child, and the powerlessness of my mother to compete with me and my father. He had many affairs. I think the most tragic scene in the book is when he dies and she holds him and says, "Finally, he's mine." *Child No More* is the nine-tenths of my life that people don't know. *The Happy Hooker* was two years.

TONY: Was it only two years?

XH: Yes. It seems like a lifetime. It's made me very happy and famous, but I was not the usual madam, hooker, prostitute, call girl who comes from a dysfunctional family. I just love power. This book is also about my

power. [Sweetly] There is a little taboo in it, which is the incestuous love of me toward my father.

TONY: Did you exaggerate that?

XH: Not at all. And there was also the scene of my mother's death, in which every journalist in Holland attacked me and said, "Did you have to write how you looked at your mother when you washed her private parts?" But it's not shocking, it's confronting. Usually, a person dies, the sheet goes over and you see her in the morgue. I was always obsessed by death, and this is the ultimate obsession for it. I asked my lesbian lover, Dia, who is not at all into men, "How about you—after your father died?" And she said, "A week before he died, I had a look at his penis while they were washing him and I said, 'Hey, this is where I come from.'"

TONY: Is it difficult to write sex scenes?

XH: Oh, I'm not good at it anymore. I still write [an advice column] for *Penthouse*, but it gets a bit boring. There are basically four subjects: My member is too big, my member is too small, I'm coming too quick or I can't come at all. Actually, I was also fed up writing about sex after I wrote 18 books. Then, AIDS started. I can't say it's fun to have sex. I hate rubbers. I'm

a rubber fetishist but not of condoms.

TONY: You were in a Japanese internment camp until you were three. Do you think that your appetite for sex was connected to an early fear of abandonment?

XH: I think just about everything I do is. Definitely the fear of being lonely. I have no children, so I have a house full of people, always. Not having a child is a big loss for me. I would have loved to have a little boy.

TONY: Do you think of adopting?

XH: No, I have all those young lovers who could all be my sons! I can send them back to mama, to wash their shirts. [Laughs] My lover Romke is 22 years younger than I am, and he has never, ever regretted that I was older or



FEATHERED FIEND At 59, Hollander still keeps a stable of lovers—and slaves.

bigger. He loves me at 107 kilos or 90 kilos. We have once-a-month kind of sex. I am now for five years with Dia. I still love men, but I find more solace, more loyalty, more tender loving care with a woman. I have lots of men, but I'm a one-woman woman. [Howls with laughter] Dia is my right-hand girl; she does the bookkeeping. I have another girl, Franny. Franny is my slave girl.

TONY: What do you mean by "slave girl"?

XH: She carries my bags. She likes to get whipped and chained. Basically, she is obedient. And sometimes she's naughty, so she gets punished.

TONY: Right. Who was your favorite leading lady in the *Happy Hooker* movies: Lynn Redgrave, Joey Heatherton or Martine Beswick?

XH: Oh, come on! I never had anything to do with those films. I never saw a

England. I lived with Bob Guccione. I've never seen a man with more shoes and boots than he has. We had a short little thing. And then I was called in for a talk show in Canada, and I fell in love with the man who became my husband. And now I can't go back to Canada because they say I have tax debt.

TONY: Weren't you also arrested there for shoplifting?

XH: Yes! It's not so much about the stealing; it was about getting excited under dangerous circumstances. It was a yellow nightgown, which I would never wear. I could have thrown it down a staircase. I wanted to get caught. So when I did, and I was nailed to the floor by the detectives? I had an orgasm. And then I had to go to jail. It cost me \$10,000 in legal and psychiatrist fees. And I learned that I get off on getting caught.

"In the first *Happy Hooker* movie, Lynn Redgrave had the sex appeal of a toothpick. And the way it was cut—you could take your grandmother to see it."

TONY: Can you travel to the U.S. freely now?

XH: [Sighs] Yes, but once I arrived in Houston. They look at my passport, the alarm goes off because I'm in their system. There's a big black mama sitting on a little stool. She said, "Are you up to any more monkey business? We know you used to be the *Happy Hooker*!" At the time, I was 50. I said, "Ma'am, at our age and at our weight, we'd have to pay for it." She burst out laughing. I love humor! But I can't get past the Canadian income-tax department with humor.

The *Happy Hooker* (\$13.95) and *Child No More* (\$23.95) are out now from ReganBooks.