



Jo Perkins Bailey

September 6, 1938 - May 18, 2021

Jo Perkins Bailey of Houston, passed on May 17, 2021.

She was a performer all her life. She began dancing in childhood, and later fell in love with acting. She joked that her acting roles “slowly went from woman... to old woman... to dying woman”. She recently worked alongside Willie Nelson in *Waiting on the Miracle to Come*, and in Richard Linklater’s 2011 ode to Texas *Bernie*, among other films. She also had roles in popular television shows like *The Resident*, *Prison Break*, and *Revolution*, and took on many roles in major theaters around Houston. She also worked as a casting director, as a commercial actress, in the wardrobe department (she truly could not sew): anything to get her on set. All that said and written out, her greatest decoration as an actress might have been the time Tennessee Williams told her in a bar that she’d’ve made a great Blanche.

She had a lot of stories like that: the time Lauren Bacall’s dramatic entrance at the theater was ruined, the time Martha Graham kicked someone out of dance class for wearing their hair in curlers. She had a hundred more good ones about her children’s best foibles, and the parties she’d been to around Houston. She loved to get wrapped up in a good story, whether it was *Harold & Maude*, some Dateline murder she saw on television last week, the twenty episodes of *Meerkat Manor* she watched with her grandson, or her daughter’s work drama. Even her granddaughter’s roommate’s cousin’s romantic foibles

could keep her occupied for a fun afternoon.

In true actress form, she fudged her age a bit sometimes, and while I am fairly certain I can say she was born on September 6, 1938, I am not wholly certain. She grew up in Austin, before it was a metropolis, the only child of a single mother in an age where that was just a bit unusual. That bred a certain kind of scrappy independence in her. She studied dance at Sam Houston State University and the University of Texas, eventually earning a master's degree. She married John Perkins, and had three children. She later married the love of her life in 1982. She always had a small family, and she loved and protected her own ferociously. She is preceded in death by her beloved husband, Charles Bailey, and her son, Marc Perkins, both of whom died this last year. She is survived by her two daughters, Monti Perkins and Julie Perkins Oatman, both of Austin, a son-in-law, Kenneth Oatman, and four grandchildren: Alexandra Oatman, of Los Angeles, Hannah Oatman, of Vermont, Rhodes Oatman, of Boulder, and Sophie Oatman, of New York City. She is also survived by countless friends who loved her dearly.

Services will be announced at a later date when we can gather for a celebration of Jo and Charlie's life.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Houston Arts Alliance.

Tribute Wall



“ *Jo Perkins Bailey*

October 08, 2023 at 10:52 AM



“ *Jo Perkins Bailey*

October 06, 2023 at 01:12 AM



“ *Jo Perkins Bailey*

October 05, 2023 at 09:45 AM



“ *Jo Perkins Bailey*

October 05, 2023 at 01:54 AM



“ *I'm saddened to hear of Jo's passing. She was a delightful person with a contagious laugh. After Charlie passed, we lost touch. Please let me know when the life celebration will take place. I am on oxygen, but I will come if I can. My sincere condolences to you girls. I think of you that way because that is how Jo always spoke of you. She was very proud of you and her grandchildren. She will be missed. Love and prayers to all of you.*

Judy Shilling

Judy Shilling - June 22, 2021 at 07:06 PM

GL

“ I will remember Jo’s rich, beautiful voice and her entertaining stories forever. She was a loving, innocent soul and we will miss her. As part of a women’s lunch group that meet and share our lives, we would enjoy stories about her fellow actors on movies sets, such as Shirley McClain and Willie Nelson. We were introduced by her childhood friend, Ruby Ross and enjoyed attending plays in Houston with Charlie, Jo and Ruby as part of the cast. Jo and Charlie’s loving relationship was a great example to all of us. It was common to see them walking together, hand in hand, and I think of them now doing so in heaven.

Julie and Monti- Though I have not met you, I feel I know you and your families after hearing about you for so many years. Our hearts are heavy with the 3 loses you have had to endure in this last year.

*Fondly,
Gail and Kenny Lyons*

Gail Lyons - June 07, 2021 at 02:27 PM

JO

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Julie Oatman - May 23, 2021 at 04:04 PM

JO

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Julie Oatman - May 23, 2021 at 04:02 PM



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Julie Oatman - May 22, 2021 at 08:29 PM

JO

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Julie Oatman - May 22, 2021 at 07:54 PM

JO

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Julie Oatman - May 22, 2021 at 07:53 PM

JO

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Julie Oatman - May 22, 2021 at 07:50 PM

AW

“ I am so heartbroken to hear this news. Jo Perkins was my friend since the late 60's. We met doing theater in Houston and forged a friendship with two others, Dixie Taylor and Betty Murphy. All four of us actors, we'd be doing shows and meeting up after, at whatever party happened to be going on, and there were many! The four of us were always wild and crazy partiers. We had fun! We were lucky the internet had not been invented. Once I moved to L.A., Jo and Charlie were always part of any plans on their trips to L.A. and my trips home! We spent some our best times getting together over the last 40 years. She and I spoke a couple of times after Charlie passed away and I know losing Charlie had devastated her. So I take comfort that they are together again, talking, laughing and having a drink. Here's to you my sweet and dear friend!! Cheers!!



ANN WALKER - May 22, 2021 at 06:45 PM

HF

“ Jo was always such a bright light. I remember many times/parties at Bob and Marietta Marich's house where Jo would often be the life of the party. She was warm and wonderful with one of the best laughs ever! She will be missed!

Hilary Fields - May 22, 2021 at 04:04 PM



“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Julie Oatman - May 22, 2021 at 08:38 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Julie Oatman - May 22, 2021 at 08:10 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Julie Oatman - May 22, 2021 at 08:05 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Julie Oatman - May 22, 2021 at 07:56 AM



“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



Julie Oatman - May 22, 2021 at 04:00 AM



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Julie Oatman - May 21, 2021 at 11:24 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Julie Oatman - May 21, 2021 at 11:11 PM