



Personal Histories

By David Hudson

THE DAILY — FEB 11, 2019



Stephan Geene's *SHAYNE* (2019)

„...on that grid (of the Berlinale Polls) you'll see that I've given the highest rating to only one film so far, Stephan Geene's [SHAYNE](#), premiering in the Forum Expanded subsection. I honestly believe that I'd be just as impressed with this six-episode, two-hour “serial TV anti-portrait” of Europop star Ricky Shayne if Stephan weren't an old friend, though I'll admit that my familiarity with his work as a writer, theater director, filmmaker, and translator may inform my appreciation of *SHAYNE*.

Born in Cairo and raised in Beirut, Ricky Shayne shot to stardom in the mid-1960s in Rome, where he appeared in a few films and recorded his first albums before being brought to Germany on a wave of PR engineered by the teen magazine Bravo. Incorporating archival clips and materials—adroitly shot by Volker Sattel—ranging from the notebooks that ten-year-old Stephan kept as an avid fan to posters, album covers, and set designs and rehearsals for a live gala staged at Berlin's Haus der Kulturen der Welt as well as interviews with Shayne's sons, and of course, Shayne himself, now in his seventies, *SHAYNE*, fully intended to be binged in one sitting, builds toward a climactic sequence manufactured in such a way that's self-aware without ever winking. Not for a moment does the series show any signs of strain or overreach as each of its disparate pieces falls into place to form a quietly vital study of the way pop culture shapes who we become.“