



50 FIVE QUESTIONS WITH...

Stephanie Simonoff

Background: Windham resident Stephanie Simonoff, a freshman at The Derryfield School, Manchester, stars in "Shelley," a short film written and directed by Harvard student Andrew Wesman. The film, which follows a teenage girl who kills her parents, was accepted for screenings at the Cannes Film Festival later this month. Simonoff, 15, has been acting in student and independent films for seven years, but, she said, none has garnered the acclaim of "Shelley," in which she portrays the title character.

1 How did you prepare for such a dark role?

It was a really hard role because I've never

played a depressed person before, so I had to think about all the times I've been sad or depressed and go into "Shelley mode."

2 You've done several films before, but were you nervous to take on the lead role this time around?

Not really. I just love acting, so I kind of want to work hard, and I want to get the part right. There's really no pressure. That's because I know I'm going to get it right somehow — however I have to do it.

3 What is it like to be the only young kid on a film set of college students and adults?

When I was younger, it was always that people would forget to not to swear and stuff because I was so young, but that doesn't really matter now. And they always used to talk down to me and say, "Oh, you're so little." The cool thing is, Andrew (Wesman) never did that. He never talked down to me.

4 How did you hear that "Shelley" had been accepted at Cannes?

I was actually in the shower and Andrew called my mom, but he wanted to talk to me. I came out of the shower and he said it got in to Cannes, but I didn't even know what that was. All he had to say was Tim Burton is the head judge and I was, like, "Oh my gosh; that's so cool."

5 What do you hope to be doing in 10 years?

My role model is Meryl Streep, and I hope one day to be as great and amazing as her because she's really amazing. What I really like about her is that she's not overly pretty and she's getting older, obviously, but she's still working and she's still finding new roles. She can really be anyone.



COURTESY

Windham resident Stephanie Simonoff, above, has the lead role in "Shelley," a short film to be screened this month at the Cannes Film Festival. The top photo is a scene from the film.

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