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Section 10

A close-up portrait of Crystal Gayle, looking upwards and to the right. She has dark hair, heavy eye makeup, and bright red lipstick. A vintage-style microphone is visible in the bottom right corner of the frame.

**Crystal  
Gayle**

**Portrait of a singer**

**Southpaw Productions presents:**

# Something special by Crystal Gayle

By Jack Hurst

Country music columnist

LAST year, on a tour of Japan, Nashville pop singer Crystal Gayle and her husband happened into a small restaurant. As they began to eat, several cooks standing behind a counter eyed them curiously. Noting Gayle's left-handed manipulation of her table implements, one of them pointed at her and spoke a single word in obviously labored English.

"Southpaw," he said. "Southpaw."

Unknowingly, that Japanese cook thereby named Southpaw Productions, a young but promising firm whose very existence indicates the heights to which Gayle's career has quietly grown. It is now ready to rack up its first TV credit: "The Crystal Gayle Special" (Wednesday at 9 p.m. on CBS-Ch. 2).

Like Southpaw Productions, this special is Gayle's own—from approving its guest stars (folk singer Judy Collins, bluesman B. B. King, the Statler Brothers country quartet, and magician Doug Henning) to the final okaying of each sight and sound on its footage.

"We filmed for nearly two weeks, then went into editing and then into audio mix, and I stayed with it till the end," Gayle recalls. "I don't think most people do that, but I wanted to make sure that what people see and hear are what I want them to. It's my first special, and I was in on it from start to end. I really like being involved that much. I'd always want to do that."

Gayle epitomizes a new galaxy of Nashville stars that casts beams of influence far beyond the outer limits of the old country constellations. Country-rooted—born, in fact, in the Kentucky mountains to the remarkable parents who earlier produced legendary country star Loretta Lynn—Gayle grew up in the Midwestern town of Wabash, Ind. There



which voted her its female vocalist of the year in 1977 and 1978.

So she doesn't fear the camera's hungry eye. Neither does she have trouble relating to it, she says: "I don't think of it as just a camera. It's like working on a one-on-one basis. If you lift an eyebrow, it can be seen. In a concert, it can't."

The closer the viewer, the better the view—especially when the subject is Gayle, one of Nashville's most attractive exports. This special seems designed to provide a wide variety of closeups of her: in Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House singing Willie Nelson's "Night Life" with B. B. King, doing a choreographed song-and-dance with young people in New York's Central Park, being "transformed" into a tiger by magician Henning, being shot by fashion photographer Francesco Scavullo for the cover of her latest hit Columbia Records album, and so on.

Scattered throughout the show are other, different closeups—still-lives of Gayle shot in various New York City locales by Scavullo, a new-found Gayle friend ("like me, he's a Capricorn") who makes his directorial debut with this show. His codirector is Russ Petranto, a veteran who has done everything from the "AGVA Entertainer of the Year Awards" to episodes of "CPO Sharkey" and "Sanford & Son."

Listening to Gayle, it doesn't sound as if Southpaw Productions' first TV show is likely to be its last.

"I would like to be able to do more specials," she says. "Not a variety show; that's not what we have in our minds right now because it would take a lot of time, and it would be hard to do a variety series and the concerts, too, and do them both well."

"But doing specials—I'd like that."

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posed to more modern and musics than her older sister. cal guests on this special ety of fields and performers r own sound and stage style. first special, but Gayle is no elevision. She points out that e went to Nashville in the early ecame a regular cast member ed country music TV series ountry Place." After that, she e appearances on many other a productions, and in the past e she has graced several ws—including the awards



Judy Collins (left) and Crystal Gale.

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