

INTRODUCING...

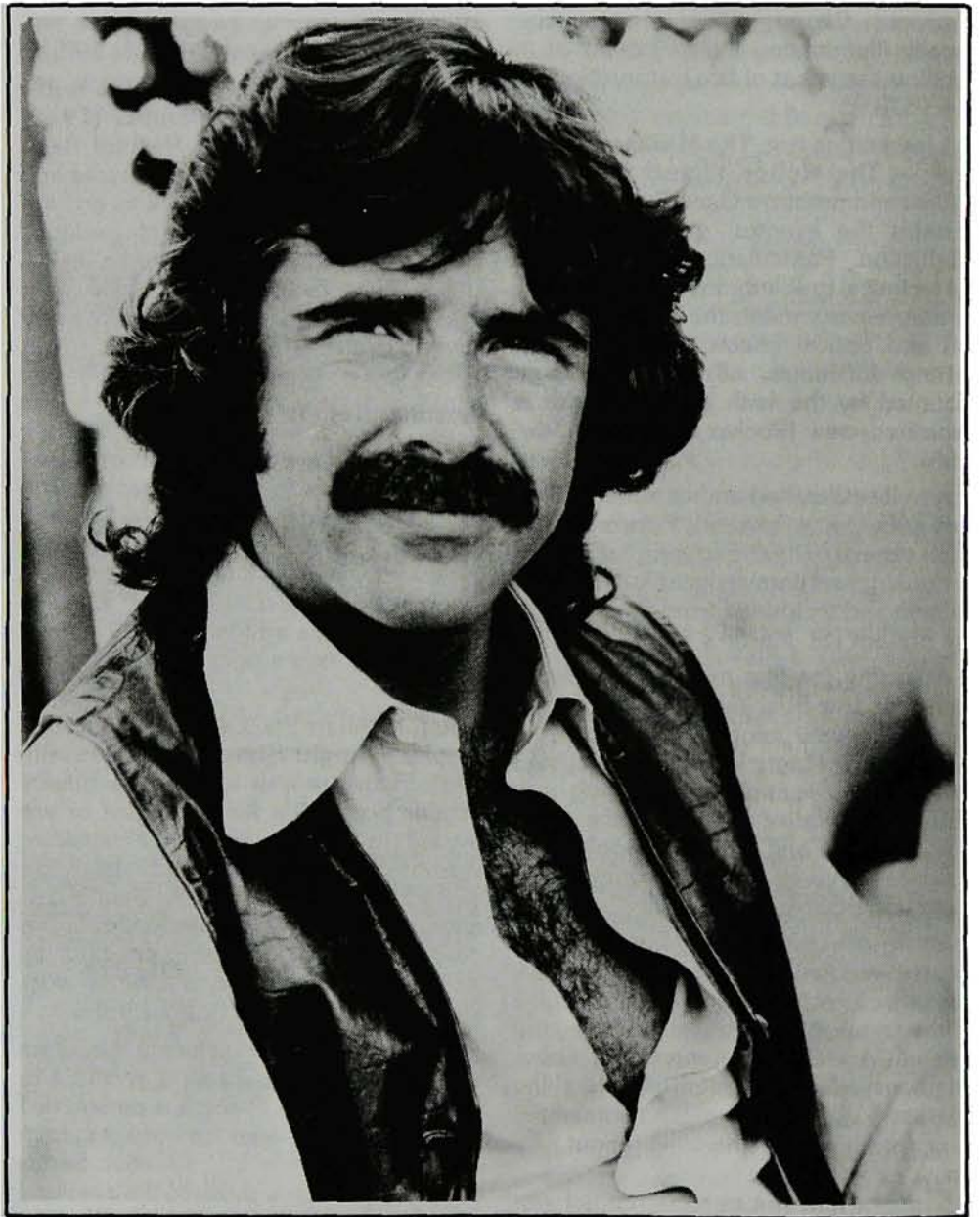
jim kaufman direct line

Jim Kaufman is adamant. He has the determination, strength of purpose, and bull's eye focus of a man who's paid his dues. "The one reason I am in this industry is to direct. If you want to tell them who I am, say I am an assistant director who is an assistant director because he is going to direct — and I will become a director as soon as I find the right property."

Fair enough. His judgement stems from ten years' work in the Canadian film industry. He has been everything from assistant editor, assistant director, unit manager, production manager, production supervisor, to associate producer, on projects such as **The Black Stallion**, **Fast Company**, **Crunch**, **Circle of Children**, **War Between the Tates** and **Man in the Glass Booth** — among others. He directed **A Place in Your Heart** on the rock group, Nazareth, and was recently elected first vice president of the Directors Guild of Canada. As Quebec rep for the DGC, Jim was also instrumental in starting an assistant directors' training course this year — organizing it, producing it, designing the course outline, and getting the National Film Board to finance the videotaping.

"Directing is the only professional interest I have in life. It's the only activity that I feel inspired enough about to put sixteen hours a day into, and earn a living from. Thank God I've found it! Because I wouldn't be a happy person without it."

Jim almost *wasn't* a happy person. He spent four years working on his business degree at Babson College in Boston. Only his Arts course saved him. It offered a film curriculum and the chance to direct his first film — a little action epic on Vietnam. That clinched it. "I like putting things together. I like creating. I never knew film offered that. When I found out, I liked it right away." Straight out of Babson he headed for Sir George Williams University (Concordia) in Montreal, "... and took every film course they had in one year."



Happiness is the director's chair for Jim Kaufman

Misery prevailed a while longer as Jim settled into the steady sureness of a job as a stockbroker. It lasted a year-and-a-half.

"I figured that if it took me three years to break in, it took me three years — then I'd have fifty years of happiness! So it was a pretty good trade-off. It didn't take me

three years, it took me a year-and-a-half. The first year I did two films for six or seven months, the third year I worked for eight to eight-and-a-half months. Now I work all the time — non-stop. I didn't give up. . . No credit to me, but the fact is, I decided I wanted to do it, and when I saw that there was nothing else in life I wanted to do, I went for it.

"I don't do a show just to make money. I do it because I believe in the script first of all, and I believe in the director, second. What makes it exciting is that every film you work on is different. You could go to the Arctic to do a wildlife show, where you would learn about certain kinds of animals and certain people; or you could work on a film like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and you'd learn all about

those institutions — then probably turn around and do a film about high school football! You learn about life and you get paid for it."

Home base is Montreal and there's a strategy in that. Harold Greenberg, André Link, Denis Héroux, Claude Léger are based in Montreal: "... the most established and prolific producers in Canada. All these guys were around before the Capital Cost Allowance. They were making movies before any tax breaks came along. They'll always be making movies."

For now, Roger Vadim's *Art of Deceit* is keeping Jim busy... perhaps a documentary or a TV series later — and always the search for the right script. As director.

Krystyna Hunt

ceil gruessing

head over heels

From the Babylon of Hollywood to the Main in Montreal, Ceil Gruessing has choreographed her way across a continent. And the new kid in town is making a hit.

In her native Los Angeles, Ceil has choreographed talents such as Jane Fonda, Cher, Robin Williams, Sally Kellerman, Susan St. James, Marvin Gaye, Valerie Harper, Tina Louise and Susan Strasberg, to mention only a few.

Here in Montreal, she is sitting in her dance studio on the Main trying to decide which leg warmers she will wear. It is a bleak January morning in the midst of a so far snowless but very cold winter. Why would anyone leave Southern California's chronic warmth for *this*?

"Movie stars are just furniture that need ego-petting until you are on their financial level. You get no energy from them whatsoever. Besides, I came here to visit a few years back, and loved it. When I was offered a teaching job here I grabbed the opportunity for a change of scenery. Montreal's so much like Europe in so many ways, and there seemed to be something very exciting and inspiring about the scene here."

The first film she choreographed was Bill Ritchards' *The American Success Company* with Belinda Bauer, Jeff Bridges and Bianca Jagger. (Shot in Munich, the film is yet to be released.) In it she created a ballet for the lead Belinda Bauer, eventually incorporated a waltz not originally in the script, and worked off

the set with Bianca Jagger. "Bianca likes to work alone as much as she can; I think she felt a little strange about making a film. We were trying to choreograph a scene where she is supposed to turn on her bedside radio and do a striptease, the idea being to seduce Jeff Bridges. . . She isn't the bitch the media makes her out to be at all. Instead, I'd have to say that she's an intensely private person, trying very hard to keep to herself. She dresses impeccably, carries herself with an awful

lot of dignity (belying her short stature) and has this inborn air of aristocratic chic. You have to work hard to pry her open."

Not long after arriving in Montreal, Ceil choreographed her first Canadian picture; the Robert Lantos production of *Suzanne*, where she worked with Jennifer Dale and Winston Reckert. *Your Ticket is No Longer Valid*, another Lantos film, followed. This time she worked again with Reckert and Dale, as well as with Mandy Halson and Leslie Rae. "You have to remember, when you're working in film, that actors are not necessarily dancers. The first thing you must do is work with the director. He lets you know how the dance sequences are supposed to move the plot along." Here a common misconception emerges; "Actors may not be trained dancers, but you can teach anyone to dance. I create a dance both with, and around, the actor (actress). I like to find out how they would do the dance, and then I help them along from there. The only rule within the dance itself, is to stick to the theme of the film, then find just the right music that's consistent with that mood."

In effect, both she and the actor create the dance together.

Of her own musical preferences she remarks, "I like to dance to horizontal jazz. My earliest influence was the *early* Motown sound, like Marvin Gaye, Junior Walker, that sort of thing. Another one of my favorites is Gato Barbieri (who did the soundtrack for *Last Tango in Paris*). As far as dancers themselves go, my favorites are still Liza Minelli and Tony Basil (who choreographed *The Rose*).



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