

photo : Shin Sugino

On location in Spain, *Misdeal's* producer Michael Lebowitz and director John Trent — great minds thinking alike?

Misdeal

p.c. Quadrant/MLI Film Production p. Michael Lebowitz exec. p. David Perlmutter d. John Trent d.o.p. John Coquillon story David Rothberg sc. John Hunter, Rick Rosenthal & John Trent ed. Al Streeter, Kerry Kohler (1st assist.), Hayden Streeter (2nd assist.) sd. Jacques Bradette p. man. Bob Linnell a.d. Tony Lucibello (1st), Erika Zborosky (2nd) office assist. Wendy Ross loc. man. Keith Large p. co-ord. Alice Ferrier p. account. Shirley Gill, Shirley Granger (assist.) assist. p. Ruth Shaw cont. Lisa Wilder art. d. Bill Beeton, Alicia Keywan (1st assist.), Lindsey Goddard (2nd assist.) set dress. Jacques Bradette, Jo-Ann Chorney (assist.) prop. master Hilton Rosemarin, Robert James (2nd props.) ward. Linda Matheson, Mary McCready (assist.) cam. op. Bob Saad, Jock Martin (1st assist.), Raul Randla (2nd assist.) gaf. Ray Boyle best boy Malcolm Kendal key grip John Hackett best boy Jim Krauter make-up Maureen Sweeney hair Malcolm Tanner sd. mix Rodney Haykin boom Omar Pataracchia coffee Brad Blackwood transp. co-ord. Bill Jackson stills Shin Sugino casting office Stuart Aiken, Ross Clydesdale, Michael Henderson l.p. John Heard, Levon Helm, Stephen McHattie, Alberta Watson, John Rhys Davies, Benjamin Gordon, Hrant Alianak, Moses Znaimer, David Calderisi, Michael Ironside, Martin Doyle, Angus MacInnes, Michael Ayoub, Tim McCauley unit pub. David McCaughna p.r. Marlene Smith & Co.

its busier days when director John Trent and crew invaded its halls to do some location shooting for a new film — one of the few to be shot in Toronto this summer. Titled *Misdeal*, the film has so far been tagged as a drug-smuggling flick by the local papers, but Trent has his own definition of what the film deals with. "It's the story of one man's personal growth," he says, gazing out from beneath a broad-brimmed hat onto an outdoor basketball court. "Although the action centers on a drug-smuggling caper that takes the characters from Toronto to Morocco, the heart of the film will deal with the internal struggle of protagonist John Heard, who will be seen as a rehabilitated dealer who is coerced into returning to the drug market."


Also to be seen with Heard are Stephen McHattie, Alberta Watson, CITY-TV producer Moses Znaimer, John Rhys-Davies, playwright Hrant Alianak, and Levon Helm, who spent some of his time during the shooting schedule facing the cameras by day and bashing his drums at *The Nickelodeon* by night.

Trent is especially pleased with his cast, referring to McHattie and Heard as "two of the most interesting young performers in films today."

Although the old Sackville public school has been closed down and empty for some time now, it recently saw one of

During a set-up period at the schoolyard, things appeared to be in a continual state of gradual motion; trucks pulling in and out of the yard, extras being assembled, equipment slowly being placed properly. Director of photography John Coquillon, recently a Genie winner for his work in *The Changeling*, made his way slowly through the loitering bodies while assistant director Tony Lucibello dickered through his walkie-talkie with a camera crew setting-up on a rooftop opposite the school.

Written by David Rothberg, a young commodity and currency specialist, *Misdeal* has gone through several re-writes, with Rick Rosenthal and John Hunter contributing patches of new dialogue, alongside Trent himself. One scene I read from the script — a confrontation between Watson and Znaimer — had been completely re-written, the original text gone. When it came time for Znaimer and Watson to film the scene they appeared to have less trouble with the lines themselves than with the mood needed to make the scene come alive. Several takes and a discussion or two into the shooting



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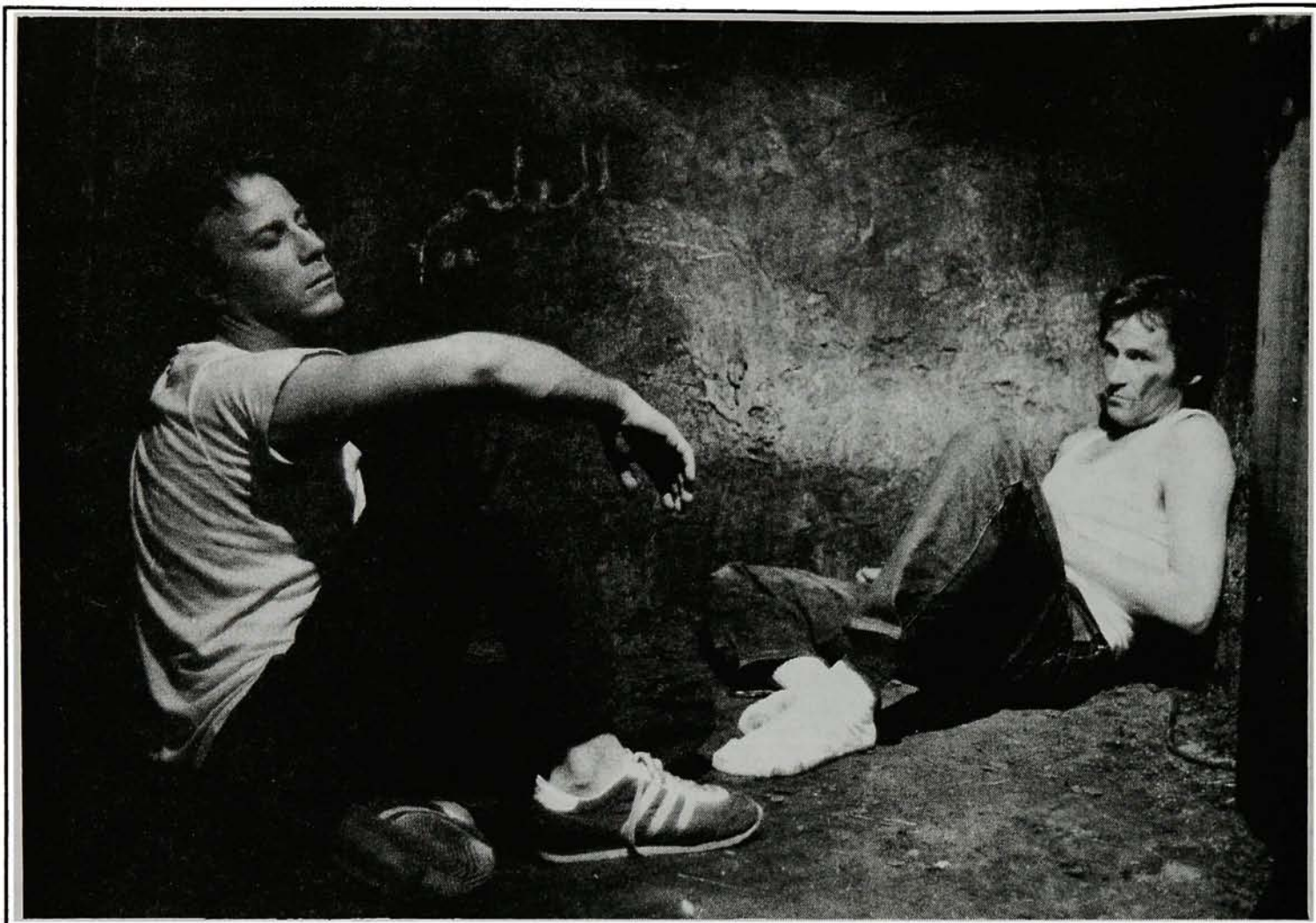


photo : Shin Sugino

A lousy deal for **Misdeal's** John Heard and Levon Helm, killing time in a Moroccan jail

yielded the necessary electricity to make the scene work.

"Good scripts are exceptionally difficult

to find," said Trent. "This one in particular is fine, and we're sticking pretty close to it.

The main problem you find with most

scripts is that sometimes the writer won't plan the scenes to play as well as they could. That's where we depart from the script, in making the scenes more variable in the visual sense."

When everyone is finally ready to start shooting, the quiet settles, and Heard and McHattie begin swatting a basketball about while discussing the drug market. Heard bats the ball too close to the camera, ruining the take. He curses loudly and clobbers the ball, sending it flying across the court and past his off-screen companion, actress Brooke Adams, who sits quietly reading a book. The scene is set up again and several good takes are shot.

"The tension in that scene is very important," says Stephen McHattie later, explaining that he is part of the forces that badger Heard back to his old life of crime. But away from the cameras, everyone seems relaxed, and whatever tensions there are get worked off in a bit of dribbling between Lebowitz, Trent and Heard.

Mike Leo



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