

## SHOOT ALBERTA

by Linda Kupecek

CALGARY - The *Superman III* crowd have folded their collective cape six days ahead of schedule, and piled on to a plane for Pinewood Studios in London, England, where to \$45 million production will complete shooting.

Representatives of the company credited Malcolm Harvey (City of Calgary Film Industry Development Office) and Bill Marsden (Provincial Film Industry Development Office, Economic Development) with the success of their three-week Alberta shoot, while Albertans on the crew admired the English company's pre-production planning and technical expertise.

Calgary played Metropolis, and the towns of Blackie and High River played Smallville for director Richard Lester and Dovehead Productions.

Why cast Calgary, Alberta? Producer Pierre Spengler explained: "Within a radius of 50 to 60 miles, you get a tremendous variety of countryside... wheatfields, mountains, dry land... and now, five years after shooting *Superman I* here, the

city has developed so we could use it as Metropolis." And, he adds, "Calgary has had some experience with big films so that we can find good professional people out here."

Production supervisor Michael Dryhurst outlined other benefits: a direct daily flight with London "so the rushes aren't stuck in the airport"; no sales tax; the geographical advantages; and the economical advantages. "What's refreshing here," he said, "is the fact that the city authorities regard a film coming here to shoot as a business."

Associate producer Bob Simmonds commented: "We have never experienced help from so many people as we have here... Everyone has delivered what they said they would."

Simmonds had contracted Bill Marsden in November 1981 and asked him to arrange a survey of locations in southern Alberta. Marsden complied and handed the Calgary turf over to Malcolm Harvey. By April, the details of the locations had been decided, and Harvey and Marsden ensured

the cooperation of the appropriate provincial and municipal departments. Throughout the shoot, Marsden and Harvey acted as troubleshooters, solving any problems in their jurisdiction, and unsnarling any tangled red tape.

The cooperation of the Alberta contingent was facilitated by the organization of the English company. Location manager Doug MacLead (of Calgary) commented: "One of the key aspects in terms of the success of this production is the lead time the English took... doing location surveys properly, making sure the appropriate city departments were consulted on a regular basis in a series of meetings for two to three months before we started production."

So, Superman flew away happy, leaving behind good will and good cash. Not only did the shoot pump \$3-4 million into the local economy, but the company, in appreciation for the cooperation of the city as a whole, donated \$3,000 to the Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts.

In addition, 175 Canadians were hired on crew, plus 22 actors from Calgary and 8 from Vancouver, as well as 1100

extras. Albertans on crew included Les Kimber as production manager; Trudy Work as production secretary; Doug MacLeod as location manager; Harvey LaRocque as second assistant camera on second unit; Mel Merrells as generator operator; Frank Griffiths as sound assistant; and Cy Barry as transportation coordinator. Also, Ed Hunter worked separately with a two-man crew (Don Brown and Doug Craick) to film a documentary, *The Making of Superman III*.

Meanwhile, CBC's *Chautauqua Girl*, has wrapped its shoot in Heritage Park and Blackie, and Rene Malo's *The Ruffian* has left Golden, B.C. for Montreal. Zone Productions' *Adventures in the Creep Zone* plans to shoot in Vancouver and Drumheller, and *Vanderberg*, a CBC mini-series, will shoot three weeks of exteriors in Calgary.

TORONTO - Canadian actress Genevieve Bujold stars with Christopher Reeve and Fernando Rey in *Monsignor*, a feature drama scheduled to open across Canada October 22, distributed by Twentieth Century-Fox. The film is directed by Frank Perry and produced by Frank Yablans and David Niven, Jr.

## Dansereau's *Aveux* opens in Toronto

TORONTO - *Doux aveux*, the Québécois drama directed by Fernand Dansereau and starring Hélène Loiselle, Marcel Sabourin, Genevieve Brassard, and Gilbert Turp, opened theatrically in Toronto September 24 at the Carlton Cinema, distributed by Pan Canadian.

Produced by Gaston Cousineau and Radio-Quebec, the film was screened as a Gala Presentation during the 1982 Festival of Festivals in Toronto.

## Losique withdraws suit

MONTREAL - Serge Losique, director of Montreal's World Film Festival, has dropped his million dollar suit against Quebec's independent distributors, according to sources close to Losique. Distributors also report that he is no longer under consideration for a job with Gaumont as consultant. Losique could not be reached to confirm these items. It was the possibility of his accepting the Gaumont position which angered the distributors and brought on the suit originally.

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I'd see it again,  
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Rex Reed

Weird comedy,  
and the director  
even looks like me.  
Woody Allen

photo by Daniel O'Sullivan



I cried, I laughed,  
I hiccupped, I burped...  
Pauline Kael

Madame Zubie got  
a crush on  
the umpire.  
"He can strike me  
anytime. His place  
or mine..."  
Thomas Schnumacher

## THE DIRECTOR

## Big Meat Eater not just mediocre— It's really quite bad!

TORONTO - One of the surprise hits at the 1982 Festival of Festivals in Toronto was a low-budget Canadian movie, *Big Meat Eater*, by Vancouver filmmakers Lawrence Keane and Chris Windsor, which won over audiences of the Midnight Special series.

Produced by Keane and directed by Windsor, and written by Keane, Windsor, and Phil Savath, *Big Meat Eater* is a tax shelter film made on an incredibly low budget of \$150,000, post-production and print costs included.

"We were amazed that people would invest in it," said Windsor of the bizarre film, which contains alien spacemen played by toy robots. "You think they would back off, but they put money into it. We never thought it would be made."

Producer Keane describes the film, which stars George Dawson, Andrew Gillies, and Edmonton-based blues singer Big Miller, as a "Grade Z" movie, "for reasons that will become perfectly obvious to all patrons viewing the film." It is a strange combination of comedy, horror, musical, science fiction, and intentionally bad melodrama.

"We've never taken it seriously, thank God no one else does," said Windsor. "Actually, we wanted to make the most ridiculous movie ever made in

Canada." Windsor said as their starting point they took what they considered were the worst features of past Canadian movies - cliché characters, bad dialogue, poor motivation - and worked from there. "We took it to the limit. We didn't mind making a bad film, but we just didn't want to be another mediocre Canadian movie."

Windsor said he would like to put on a new ending, which he concedes is the weakest point of the film, but to do so would need to raise about \$5000. Nevertheless, negotiations have been going on for theatrical release and for a pay-TV sale, but Windsor and Keane are not rushing into any deal. "It is not a normal film, it needs special treatment," said Windsor concerning its distribution; he pointed out that regular mid-night weekend screenings at a Vancouver repertory house have built a cult following for the film in British Columbia.

Windsor said he would like to do a more mainstream film for his next project. He and Keane worked "for free for two years" while making *Big Meat Eater*, living off savings - Windsor sold his Edmonton house - while the cast and crew took reduced or deferred payments. "It was the only way it could get made," said Windsor. "We took the risk."