

Peter Rowe's **Lost!**

Lost! is more than a film about a sailing trip that goes awry. Filmmaker Peter Rowe takes us through a purgatorial journey away from civilization, as two men and a woman at the mercy of the sea manage to live in a capsized and upturned trimarin for 72 days.

But one cannot help suspecting that the character Jim (Kenneth Welsh), a strict fundamentalist, has somehow engineered this whole situation to test his own faith and bring his brother Bob (Michael Hogan) "back to Christ."

Based on a true story, Rowe makes the film into a study of two brothers whose relations are strained under normal conditions, but under the film's extreme circumstances regress into a destructive sibling rivalry, fueled by elaborate debate about the precepts of the Christian faith, in which Jim manipulates survival options and events to make the crew more vulnerable and closer to God. If the brothers cannot understand each other, as tolerance limits are met and surpassed in sheer survival, the two men begin to know each other emotionally. In the process, Jim grows from an unsavory bible-

thumping stereotype into a man of fascinating complexity and great pathos.

As Jim, Kenneth Welsh has created a classic personification of the Christian martyr, but the martyr collapses under the burden of guilt he can share with no-one - he has chosen the route of corruption and destruction in order to be purified. Welsh's characterization of Jim is a studied breakdown of a missionary at the edge of his faith, desperately clinging to his beliefs. Defying the gravity of the catastrophe and his responsibility in it, he is prepared to sacrifice everything to strengthen his belief in God - even if it means other human lives.

The acting in the film is finely tuned and textured in rare ensemble performances. Bob's wife, Linda (Helen Shaver), reveals that she is pregnant on the day after the storm while the three are hanging onto the upturned boat that drifts aimlessly in the sunny sea. Shaver is magnificent: first, as the good-natured buffer between the brothers and then, as the most vulnerable of the three, the first to crack up. She begins to distrust Jim and accuses him of stealing food; then, point blank, of killing her. As she dies the yellow light of the oil lamp reflects off the water and mixes with an eery blue shadow on her face. The same light makes Jim appear both saintly and satanic as he tells her she is "purified...free from sin...Holy...ready for God."

As Bob, Michael Hogan plays a realist with remarkable resilience. *Lost!* is, in

fact, Bob's story as he is the only survivor of a watery hell that stops just short of Bob's murdering his brother. Bob, however, knows himself well enough to know he needs Jim - more than anything for company - and though he rejects Jim's evangelicalism, he is prepared to make concessions for the sake of a companion.

When the water rations are down to five days, Bob, his voice and body unsteady, takes a last communion with Jim in a final act of bonding with his brother. By now a spiritual bankrupt, Jim is driven insane and then to suicide by his brother's belief in himself.

With *Lost!*, Rowe has made an incredible film that is surely destined to become one of the great sea classics of the screen. His subtlety as a writer/director is evident in the complex and diverse psychological states that emerge on-screen through some of the finest actors working today. *Lost!* is poetry of the sea, awesome in its harmony, fearsome as an avenger in an infinity that transcends human actions.

If *Lost!*'s story is a little slow at the beginning, deliberately concentrating on character development, it quickly becomes a roller-coaster of a film about the wild sea of uncensored human emotions that hauntingly shows us something of our limitations as human beings.

LOST! d./p./sc. Peter Rowe assoc.p. Don Wilder line p. Sean Ryerson asst. p. Corinne Farago a.d. Ty Haller p. coord. Nan Skiba art d. Bill Fleming asst. art d. Tim Bider const. Mutabilis, Scenic Services, Line and Design set dec. Lizette St. Germaine models Gerry Beck standby carp. Ian Greig sd. rec. David Joliat rec. Tony Van Den Akker ef.x.ed./foley Christopher Hutton ADR & dia.ed. Dale Sheldrake mus. rec. Manta Sound mus. comp. Micky Erbe, Maribeth Solomon, Allan Kane asst. eds. Katherine Fitzgerald, Bruce McDonald asst. cam. Wolf Ruck 2nd asst. cam. Roger Finley cam. trainee Andy Trauttmansdorff cont. Paule Mercier stills Ben Mark Holzberg add. cam. (2nd unit) Wolf Ruck (storm) Peter Rowe (sharks) Al Giddings matte photog. Palette Productions, Mobile Image, Image Transform ward. Maggie Thomas make-up Leslie Haynes hair Roger Dagliesh key grip Brian Danniels gaffer Steve Hutchison grip Burt Gouweleuw lighting David Thornton, Doug Marshall, Ken Smale sp.efx. Frank Carere 3rd A.D./diving coord. Jake Fry dev. John DeImge, Jim Burt, Barry Pearson, R.H. Thomson, Sonya Smits, Richard Donat boat wrangler Ratch Wallace, Keith Lohnes, Brenton Wiebe, Ross Cotterill, Patrick Langille p.assts. Peter Miskimmin, Jamie Watling, Owen Livingstone, unit pub. Prudence Emory p.accts. Lori McNamara, Doreen Davis, craft serv. Beverly Kreller caterers Concert Caterers equip. P.S. Production, Services Ltd. process. Film House Ltd. neg. cut Unicorn Concepts completion bond Motion Picture Guarantors Ltd. interim finance J. Brad Heney, Eastworld Films, Peter Michie p. liaison David Pears, John Dimon sp. assts. Tony Hall, U.S. Coast Guard, Etobicoke Yacht Club, Fred Roberts. cast. d. Susan Skinner p.c. Rosebud Films Ltd. in association with Victor Solnicki Productions and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and with the participation of Telefilm Canada l.p. Kenneth Welsh, Helen Shaver, Michael Hogan, Linda Goranson, Charles Joliffe, Richard Donat, Marc Gomes, Moira Wylie, Michael Fantini, Stuart Stone, Steve Brinder, Elizabeth Rukavina, Tex Konig, Gary Farmer, Errol Slue, 35mm, col. running time: 92 mins. dist./world sales: Simcom International.

Kalli Paakspuu •



• One of the great sea classics, *Lost!* stars Helen Shaver, Michael Hogan and Kenneth Welsh