

begins to kill the four responsible, one-by-one suspenseful-one. In a potentially effective psychological touch, he successively dons the costume of each victim.

It is the proverbial, patriarchal male figure, Johnson, who figures out what's going on, but not until a few severed hands and a head are found. (The head, specially constructed in Hollywood for a mere \$3,000, will only be flashed on screen for a "tasteful" second or two.) Being pre-med students, ample opportunities will arise for other macabre jokes, and a skeleton is part of the decor.

Interior shooting began Nov. 22 and is due to wrap Dec. 22: a rapid pace calling for a shooting ratio of anywhere from 3:1 to 5:1. Outdoor sequences will be filmed in January at an un-disclosed location north of Montreal.

Train To Terror is director Roger Spottiswoode's first feature, although he has had extensive experience as editor of **Straw Dogs**, **The Get Away** and **Pat Garret and Billy the Kid**. Is this a risk on Greenberg's part? It would seem not, since Ben Johnson, whose opinion must be respected, only agreed to work on **Train** when he heard Spottiswoode was directing.

When the venerable actor is asked where things are going, Johnson replies, referring to the late hours to which all the actors have had to adjust, "Work all night, sleep all day." Then with a grin that creases his weathered, wrinkled face even more, he dons his conductor's cap, and mounts the baggage car ladder. Cut...

Doug Isaac

Anatomy of a Horror

p.c. The Horror Picture Film Production Inc. p. Harry Less assist. to p. Victor Gamble p. man. Chris Bird d. Mario Azzopardi a.d. Robert Apelbe sc. Dick Olyxiak, Mario Azzopardi art. d. Peter Kanter cast. Karen Hazard Ltd. d.o.p. Fred Guthe.

A decapitated mannequin dressed in monk's garb rests in one corner of the crowded set. Director Mario Azzopardi playfully squeezes the end of a rubber tube protruding from the mannequin's neck, causing the headless form to bob and weave. A bucket of 'blood' sits nearby. Someone has been playing with that too,

as a trail of red smudges leads from the floor of the set to the carpeted reception area of these production offices belonging to Henry Less and Associates. Add some flesh-devouring nuns, a little old lady who gets nailed to a cross, and you have the classical "non-horror" film — according to Azzopardi.

Despite his candid admission that the film is loaded with gore, that its tentative title is **Anatomy of a Horror** and that it's a production of The Horror Picture Film Production Inc., Azzopardi adamantly defends **Anatomy of a Horror** against

being labelled just another crass, commercial chiller.

The story centers on Steven Lessey (played by Stephen Young), a grade B screenwriter who's pet topic is — you guessed it — horror.

In a slump, but under pressure from his editor and his wife, Elizabeth (played by Sharon Masters) to produce, Lessey embarks on a search for the ultimate horror to write about. "What Steven Lessey doesn't realize until it's too late is that he's living it," says Azzopardi. "That is the horror, not the obvious blood and guts spread throughout the film." First, one of Lessey's scripts is critically mangled by students during a lecture presentation of it. Marital discord is fast on the heels of professional strife, rapidly followed by entire family disharmony. Lessey's son takes to swearing at him and, with his brother, decides to reenact a scene from one of his father's horror movies. Unfortunately, the attempted restaging is all too successful and, unlike in the movies, very real and irreversible. As if death as a writer, at the hands of his critics, isn't enough torment for Lessey, his work literally comes back to haunt him.

Azzopardi is making a conscious effort to down-play the film's gorier aspects, because he finds society's preference for blatant horror "nonsensical." For him, the film's real horrors are the subtle atrocities of marriage breakdown, family disintegration and career crisis. Still, he is realistic enough to recognize the need for conventional, horror film techniques: their money-making potential. Understandably, he wants to be in the financial position to "make good films."

He believes that the audience won't find the real horror in **Anatomy** until they see Lessey discover that he no longer believes in what he is doing.

A brief pause is followed by a thump on the table. "Yes, that is the real horror. Doing what we hate," Azzopardi declares.

Anatomy of a Horror began production November 21, and wrapped December 22. It is scheduled for an April release. The film, shot entirely in Toronto, boasts an all-Canadian cast and crew, and absolutely no financing from the CFDC. The \$491,000 budget was raised through private investors and Henry Less & Associates Production Company. It is Azzopardi's first feature film. His most recent work was the "Gino Vannelli Special," aired on the CBC in December.

He calls his crew "phenomenal," but is more than a little ruffled by the general "unprofessionalism" in the Canadian filmmaking industry. While I'm on the set, Azzopardi is told that one of the actresses won't attend an upcoming shoot because she has accepted another assignment



Anatomy of a Horror screenwriter Dick Olyxiak (left), conferring with star Stephen Young, and director/co-writer Mario Azzopardi (right)



photo: Walter Chin

No ordinary bun in the oven, in this scene from **Anatomy of a Horror**

scheduled for the same time. However, he is quickly soothed when he sees Jeanne Elias and Marvin Goldhar, both of whom appear in the film, smiling at him, understanding his frustration. They, like most of the cast and crew, are attentive and reliable. Finishing their lunch, Elias, Goldhar and the others prepare for the afternoon's work and I suddenly find

myself alone. Soon Victor Gamble, assistant to the producer, comes to my rescue and sees me off the set with a bundle of production stills and cast and crew lists. Preoccupied with his warmth and cheerfulness, I don't notice if the poor, headless monk is still bobbing and weaving in front of the bucket of blood.

Connie Filletti

Atlantic City, U.S.A.

p.c. International Cinema Corporation (Canada)/Selta Films (France) **exec. p.** John Kemeny, Gabriel Boustany **p.** Denis Héroux **assoc. p.** Justine Héroux, Larry Nassis **p. co-ord.** Vincent Malle **p. man.** Justine Héroux (Can.), Ken Golden (USA) **unit man.** Micheline Garant (Can.), Carl Zuker (USA) **loc. man.** Robert Wertheimer **assist. unit man.** Peter R. Morrison (USA) **p. office co-ord.** Barbara Shrier **p. sec.** Anne-Marie Gélinas **d.** Louis Malle **a.d.** John Board **2nd a.d.** Robert McCart (Can.), Jim Chory (USA) **3rd a.d.** Louis Goyer **sc.** John Guare (based on Laird Koenig's novel) **art. d.** Anne Pritchard **sd. mix** Jean-Claude Laureaux **mus. & lyrics** Paul Anka **boom** Gilles Ortion **gaf.** John Berrie **best boys** Walter Klymkiv, Jean Courteau, Alex Amyot **key grip** Jacob Rolling **cam. grip** Jean-Baptiste Dutreix **grips** Jean-Paul Houle (Can.), John Oravetz (USA) **p. design.** Anne Pritchard, Dominique Ricard (assist.) **art dept. co-ord.** Marie-Claude Tetrault (Can.), Csaba Kertesz (USA) **prop. master** Gretchen Rau **set props** Jacques Fournier, Jean Vincent (assist.) **set dress.** Wendell Dennis, Myles Clarke (assist.) **prop buyers** Daniel Larose, Violette Daneau **art dept. apprentice** Taylor Pattison **construction man.** Marcel Desrochers (Can.), Raymond M. Samitz (USA) **ed.** Suzanne Baron, Federico Salzman (assist.) **ed. apprentice** James Bruce **unit. pub.** Jill De

Wolfe James **cost. design** François Barbeau **ward. master** Marie-Helene Gascon (Can.), Jeffrey Ullman (USA) **dressers** Diane Paquet (Can.), Carla Froeberg (USA) **ward. apprentice** Denis Proulx **make-up & hair** Rita Ogden **wig specialist** Donna Gliddon **cast.** Stuart Aikins, Clare Walker **extra cast.** Joy Todd/Venetia

Rickerby **p. account.** Pierre Guevremont **assist. p. account.** Luc Bouthillier, Carole Legace **spec. effects** Steve Kirshoff **video sequences** Patrick Burns **teamster captain** Leonard Luizzi **i.p.** Burt Lancaster, Susan Sarandon, Kate Reid, Robert Joy, Hollis McLaren, Michel Piccoli, Moses Znaimer, Angus MacInnes, Robert Goulet, Al Waxman, Norma Dell'Agnes, John McCurry, Sean Sullivan, Louis Del Grande, Eleanor Beecroft, Cec Linder, Sean McCaan, Harvey Atkin, Leslie Carlson. **col.** 35 mm **year** 1979 **dist.** Ciné 360 (Can.), ICM (world sales).

Soon, when the smoke starts to clear, the film industry will have to field a lot of questions. And when it's looking for some way to justify all this noise, energy and expenditure, the answer may very well be found at Sonolab's Studio "G" in Montreal, where the cast and crew of **Atlantic City, U.S.A.** are racing to bring the picture in under the December 31 tax deadline. These people are into their eleventh week of shooting, and you'd think the novelty would have worn off by now. But the air is on fire. A reverential silence reigns, broken only by the murmuring of lowered voices, and the occasional "thwack" of a hammer somewhere in the back of the studio. Camera assistant Andy Chmura, using a break in filming as an opportunity for a cup of coffee and a cigarette, exhales and shakes his head.

"One thing about this shoot," he remarks, "it's calm. Everyone has their private little tensions, but the overall ambiance is relaxed. It's absolutely marvellous." Noticing a resumption of activity around the camera, he grinds out the cigarette under his shoe and heads back to one of the mock-up apartments that constitute the stunningly elaborate set. Halfway there, he turns back to offer an addendum: "This," he pronounces, "is real cinema." And there is no one in this vast, cavern-like studio who nurtures the least inclination to disagree.

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