

**Murder By Decree**), who, like all crew members, appreciates a solid director who does not change his mind part way through the set-up! "... editing in the camera," says Reg, "... not six angles."

With his "healthy" \$5,000,000 budget co-producer Brian Walker (**Crossbar**), admits that everything is going according to plan. A producer who believes in the value of careful pre-production, he has crewed many films since starting out on props with the CBC, and clearly knows how bad tempers and lack of producer foresight can lead to inefficiency and low morale. He has nothing but praise for the director, stars, script and crew. In fact, the production has progressed so smoothly that at mid-shoot of the eight-week schedule of nine hours, five days a week, they are ahead by almost one full day. Everyone seems accustomed to this steady rhythm of working it out cinematically, shot by shot, without the electric tension of fear that grips some productions.

And how boring for the local journalists who cannot complain about American carpetbaggers, since no attempt has been made to "disguise" Toronto as New Orleans, New York or Chicago. Nope, it's just another large North American city with a weird murderer.

The story itself lies somewhere between **The Conversation**, **Lipstick** and **The China Syndrome**. The producers are hoping that **Bells** will do for the telephone what **Psycho** did for the shower curtain. However reluctantly, Bell Canada is co-operating; having to admit that "yes" it may be possible to kill with VHF and a power surge, but also "no," since the electronics are on the experimental level of, say, the Coppola Cannes winner. But does it really matter? As Hitchcock said, "It's only a movie."

**Bells** is designed to be solid, entertaining trickery; polished up by professionals to satisfy the theatre-goers' curiosity for the latest, exotic death-threat.

John Houseman plays Richard's ex-mentor, who is somehow implicated until he is killed by the real villain, canuck Robin Gammell. Sara Botsford (Richard's love in this pic), Barry Morse and Gary Reineke head a supporting cast of 40 speaking roles with 2,000 extras in the background.

Another feature of the scenario is the special effects team, headed by Hollywoodian Bill Myatt (**1941**, **Towering Inferno**), which makes the telephone melt, the bodies shake and shatter, the tear ducts enlarge and pop with the graphic immediacy of **Alien**. In fact,

Anderson claims something new in effects: they are not astronomical, but anatomical; more intimate, more personal. The first minute promises to be a tour de force shocker according to the tests.

Richard Chamberlain plays a concerned citizen in real life as well, supporting the Toronto Island residents and cheering these fair pavements on his first border crossing. One Canadian could not resist asking him the famous riddle; "What is the difference between a Canadian and an American?" Yes! He *did* agree that there was a difference; but... no, he just could not put his finger

on it.. One diagnosis that was beyond the former Dr. Kildare.

- This odd similarity/difference between the two cultures may work in our favour, by lending a natural air of irony to our films — since we act as a huge mirror, we can offer a slightly distorted view of American society. We could sell a lot of popcorn just on the curiosity value. But surely, with this production, and others of this calibre, we are finally gaining the confidence which will enable us to find our rightful place in the film production centres of the world. Stay tuned.

Fritz Mann

## If You Could See What I Hear

p.c. Cypress Grove Films Ltd. (1980) exec. p. Dale Falconer p./d. Eric Till co-p./sc. Stuart Gillard creative consult. Gene Corman d.o.p. Harry Makin art d. Gavin Mitchell mus. co-ord. Eric Robertson sd. man. Rod Haykin p. man. Joyce Kozy-King a.d. David Shepherd (1st), Richard Flower (2nd) loc. man. Otta Hanus cont. superv. Lili Fournier p. account. Ann Fitzgerald p. sec. Debbie Zwicker prop. mas. John Fisher set dec. Earle Fiset spec. efx. Martin Malivoire ward. Patti Unger make-up Ken Brooke hair David Beecroft gaf. Ray Boyle key grip Steve Sheridan film ed. Eric Wrate sd. ed. Jim Hopkins 2nd unit d. Rob Malenfant 2nd unit cam. Bert Dunk stills Bill Langstroth, Marni Grossman unit pub. G.R.O. - Glenda Roy pub. Guttman & Pam USA l.p. Mark Singer, R.H. Thomson, Sarah Torgov, Shari Belafonte Harper, Douglas Campbell, Helen Burns, Harvey Atkin, Barbara Gordon, Sharon Lewis, Lynda Mason Greene, Tony Van Bridge, Jack Creley, Neil Dainard, Michael Tate, David Gardner, Noni Griffin, Adrienne Pocock, Hugh Webster unit pub. G.R.O. - Glenda Roy pub. Guttman & Pam USA.

with D.O.P. Harry Makin. A few production assistants move a Cape Cod Dory to where we've been standing.

We walk outside, not into the New England night, but into lunchtime Yonge St. in Toronto. Over coffee, Stuart Gillard, writer and co-producer, confides that even though the shooting is a week

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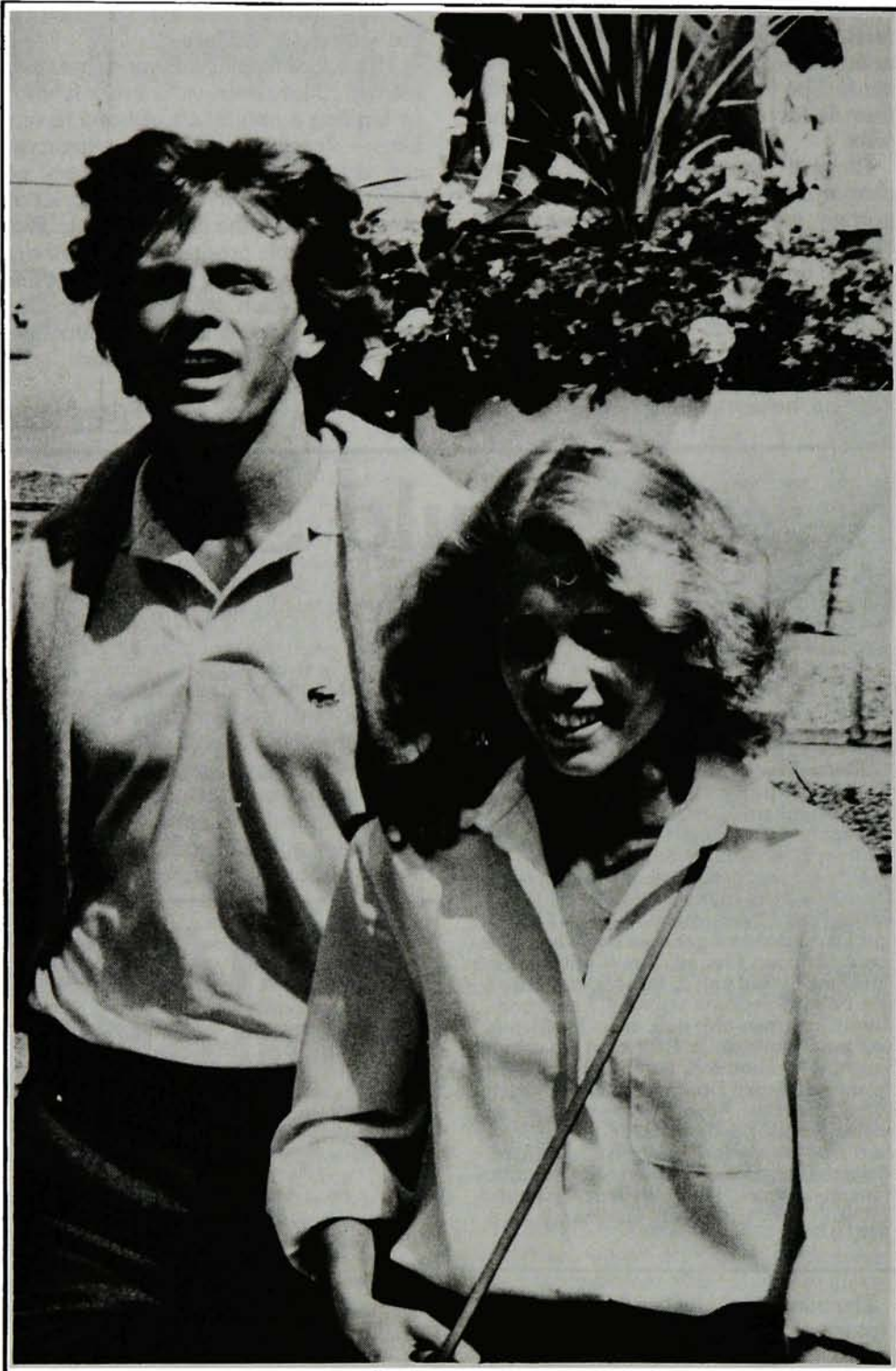
The blind singer leaves the stage, and crosses the dance floor to sit with a bunch of rowdy vacationers who are looking for one more one-night-stand.

He's witty, it's a warm summer evening, and the mood's just right, but the pretty blonde just doesn't react the way the others do. Slowly, he realizes that he's not going to score the way he usually does, as she zaps him with some comebacks that leave him, for once, speechless.

He's fascinated, and determines that here, at last, is a true challenge.

"O.K., one more run through, then we'll break for lunch." Director Eric Till moves from where he's been crouching by the stage, and goes over to confer





Tom Sullivan's (Mark Singer) bachelor life includes a heartbreaking romance with Heather (Shari Belafonte Harper), a summer passion with the waitress Helga (Sharon Lewis), and finally, true love with Patty (Sarah Torgov).

behind schedule, he is not unduly worried. Neither, apparently, is Till, whose infectious laugh can be heard constantly on set, where the atmosphere is anything but tense.

*If You Could See What I Hear* is the story of what Gillard considered to be the two most crucial years in the life of his friend, Tom Sullivan. The scene at the Rum Runner, a Cape Cod bar/restaurant, takes place in the summer

between Sullivan's junior and senior years at Harvard. The sassy blonde who shuts him up is Patty (the original Patty is now married to Sullivan), played in the film by Sarah Torgov (*Drying Up The Streets, Meatballs*). "Four of us, independently, came to the conclusion that Sarah was the only one for the part," says Gillard. "She has the same untouchable quality, the same intriguing warmth."

At this, the chronological mid-point of the film, Sullivan, played by Marc Singer, is busy making money during the vacation singing with his band, and proving to himself that if there are more hearts to be broken, he's going to be the breaker, not the breakee. This resolution is the result of his recently ended affair with Heather, the black Radcliffe girl he had lived with for several months before he knew she was black. Shari Belafonte Harper, the bubbly beautiful daughter of the calypso crooner, plays Heather, whose inability to make a commitment results in Sullivan's broken heart.

Singer's own heart is in this role: he's had to learn how to golf, wrestle, sky-dive and row, not to mention move and act as a blind man. "He's developed a kind of self-hypnosis for the part," says Gillard. "He's found a way to get his eyes out of focus so that he looks at you in a non-seeing fashion. It's hard to do, and it's been causing a few headaches." It looks real enough, however, that strangers accept him as blind when he trips over them while practicing for the role.

The real Sullivan, composer, singer, author, actor and athlete, thinks Singer is perfect to play him. There is a strong physical resemblance. He also has nothing but praise for R.H. Thomson in the part of Sly, his best friend through endless campus pranks. Sullivan, in town during the Festival of Festivals for a press brunch to promote the film, spoke about the screen Sullivan, as he actually spoke about himself in the third person: "Blindness is only a part of who Tom Sullivan is. It's an inconvenience, not a handicap. You just have to find another way to do things."

That's not just lip service; it appears to be an attitude that he and Gillard share in common. When they met, and Gillard asked about the film rights to Tom's book of the same name, he was told that the script was already being written. Three years, and eight versions later, the rights reverted to Sullivan, and Gillard started writing the script. He, too, found another way to do it. Instead of trying to cover the whole of Sullivan's life, he confined himself, with the benefit of personal knowledge of his subject, to the two most critical and formative years.

Perhaps the most remarkable part of the story is the feeling that pervades the set, and the attitudes of the people involved; it is an attitude that stems from Sullivan himself, that as a blind person, no one owes him anything. Indeed, his approach is so positive, and unself-conscious, that everyone forgets that he



is blind. He talks about seeing, and people ask him to come and look at things, which he considers to be as great a compliment as he can be paid — although it is he who makes it possible.

Remarkable too, is the discovery that R.H. Thompson has a natural flair for comedy. Says Gillard, "Sly's a key character, very funny. Everyone knows what a fine, serious actor R.H. is, but very few serious actors can be funny. Eric had worked with him on **American Christmas Carol**, and just felt that he could do it."

Funded through Newhouse, the Winnipeg investment corporation, the film is co-exec-produced by Gene Corman (F.I.S.T. and 50 other major movies over the last twenty years) and Dale Falconer, one of the moves behind TOFCO, independent distribution consortium in the U.S.A.

After two weeks exterior shooting in Nova Scotia, the film continues for another five in Toronto.

**Martin Harbury**

# The Fright

p.c. Filmpian International Inc. (1980) **exec.** p. Pierre David, Victor Solnicki **assist.** to **exec.** p. Denise Ponton, Elaine Roy p. Claude Héroux **sec. to p.** Monique Legaré **script co-ord.** Denise DiNovi **recept.** Mei Chan, Christine Moore **comptroller** Serge Major, Gilles Léonard (asst.) **legal counsel** Sander Gibson d. Jean-Claude Lord **script** Brian Taggart p. **man.** Gwen Iveson, Janet Cuddy (asst.) p. **sec.** Denyse Forget **unit man.** Michel Wachniuc a.d. Julian Marks (1st), Blair Roth (2nd), David Bailey (3rd) **cont.** France Boudreau p.a. Jerry Potashnick (1st), Louis Gascon (2nd), Peter Serapiglia (3rd) **craftservice** Michael Egyes p. **account.** Yvette Duguet **books** Joanne Goselin, Diane Williamson, Linda Duguet **art. d.** Michel Proulx, Dominique L'Abbé (asst.), Sylvie Dagenais (trainee) **art dept. admin.** Maurice Tremblay **draftsperson** Renée Tardif **set dress.** François Seguin, Jean Gauthier (asst.), Simon Lahaye (temp. asst.) **construc. man.** Claude Simard **head props** Jean-Baptiste Tard **prop. buyer** Frances Calder **propsman** Daniel Huysmans **bird handler** Marc Conway **dog handler** Gilles Chartier **cost. design.** Delphine White, Ginette Magny-Aird (asst.) **head dresser** Suzanne Canuel, Mario D'Avignon (asst.) **seamstress/cutter** Momelle LeBlanc (temp.) **daily help** Sylvie Bellemare **make-up** Inge Klaudi, Kathryn Casault (asst.) **efx. make-up** Stephan Dupuis, Michele Burke (asst.) **hair** Constant Natale **hair (Miss Grant's)** Pierre David d.o.p./cam. op. René Verzier 1st asst./focus Denis Gingras 2nd asst./clapper/loader Jean-Jacques Gervais **cam. dept. trainee** Barbara Samuels **stills** Pierre Dury **Steadicam** Louis De Ersted **loc. mixer** Don Cohen **boom op.** Gabor Vadnay **gaf.** Don Caulfield **best boy** Richer Francoeur **elec.** Marc Charlebois **key grip** Jacob Rolling **asst. key grip/dolly** Norman Guy **grip** Michel St-Pierre **transport man.** Charles Toupin **talent driver (grant)** Richard Marsan t.d. (Shatner) Réal Baril t.d. (Purl) Jean-Claude Cloutier **drivers** Glen Light, Michel Martin, Michel Sarao, Maurice Dubois, Vincente Di Clemente, Bernard Kirschner **stunt co-ord.** Jim Arnett **spec. efx.** Gary Zeller (superv.), Don Berry (co-ord.), Renée Rousseau (assist.), Yves Dubrieul (tech.), François Beaugard (tech.) **casting** (T.O.) Walker-Bowan, (Mtl.) Ginette D'Amico, Flo Gallant (assist.), Rosina Bucci (assist.) **l.p.** Lee Grant, Linda Purl, William Shatner, Michael Ironside, Lenore Zann, Helen Hugues, Sylvia

Lennick, Mary Rathbone, Harvey Atkin, Lenn Watt, Kirsten Bishopric, Tali Fisher, Elizabeth Mylle, Dabra Kirschenbaum, Jérôme Tiberghien, Dustin Waln, Maureen MacRae, Danny Silverman, Dorothy Barker, France March, Danièle Schneider, Victor Knight, Angela Gallagher, Dora Dainton, Sheena Lardin.

"**The Fright**", Quebec filmmaker Jean-Claude Lord's sixth feature is being shot entirely in Montreal. The interior and exterior sequences require a 40-

day shooting schedule, and, into their fourth week, crew and cast are confident the film will be finished on schedule.

American screenwriter, Brian Taggart, is available on the set for any consultation necessary. Two other Americans are also members of the cast: Lee Grant, in the starring role of Deborah Ballin, television broadcaster (with Montreal-born William Shatner as her friend and studio news director, Gary Ball); and Linda Purl, a relative newcomer on the Hollywood scene, who plays Sheila Monroe, a caring nurse who refuses to let herself become calloused. The conflict in the movie revolves around the character of Colt Hawker, a deranged man who has a fixation about the Ballin TV personality and wants to kill her. Portrayed by Michael Ironside, Colt focuses his attention on the woman who is a mother figure to him — an embarrassment which simultaneously pains and terrifies him.

Ironside says the film reminds him of a quote by Paul Schroeder, which contrasts the classical methods of suicide in Eastern and Western society. In the former, they isolate themselves, discreetly pulling down the blinds and quietly doing away with themselves; in the latter, it's a matter of going out publicly, with a loud bang. "The most



Awaiting **The Fright**? Here Lee Grant with William Shatner.