

NEWS STORY

A Creative Storm

A low-budget suspense drama made 20 years ago jump-started careers in the Calgary film community

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Calgary Herald

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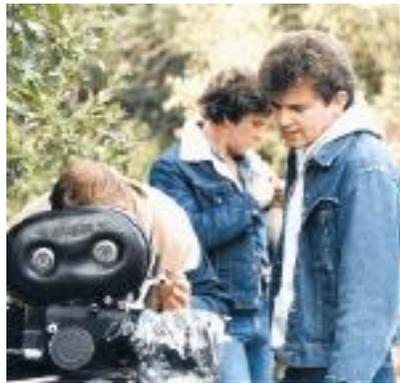
Spotlight

The 20th anniversary screening of Storm will take place at the Uptown Stage and Screen on Sept. 6 at 4 p.m. A documentary about the making of Storm will also be shown. The event is a co-presentation of the cast and crew of Storm and the Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers. Admission: \$6; \$3 for seniors, students and film co-op members. For more information, call 265-0120 or 205-4747.

It was just a little Storm.

But it created one heck of a flurry -- at least when it comes to the Canadian film industry.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the making of Storm, a low-budget feature film that was screened at the prestigious Cannes Film



CREDIT: Calgary Herald Archive

1: Director David Winning, right, on the set of Storm.



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2: The editing table for Storm, where Bill Campbell, the film's editor, worked.

Festival in 1985 and kick-started the careers of several notable Calgarians.

Made in 24 days on a budget of about \$70,000, Storm is an action-packed thriller about a couple of college students who are playing a survival game in the woods when they come across three aging bank robbers.

The original 81-minute movie (an extra 23 minutes were added later) was filmed near Bragg Creek, west of Calgary, in the summer of 1983, with an initial cast and crew of 10 people.

At the time, David Winning, the film's director, says he was a keen 22-year-old who desperately wanted to be a filmmaker -- so much so that he blew his entire savings on film stock to make the movie. He even sweet-talked his mom, Fay ("My No. 1 fan," he says) into making sandwiches for everyone.

She'll be at next week's screening, he says. So will all of the original cast and several of the crew, including Winning, Stan Kane, Harry Freedman, Lawrence Elion, Stan Edmonds, David Palffy, Bill Campbell, Per Asplund and Thom Schioler. They'll be available for questions after the screening.

Winning says he had no idea what it would take to make the



CREDIT: Calgary Herald Archive

3: Actor Stan Kane gets intense.



CREDIT: Calgary Herald Archive

4: David Palffy, being choked by Stan Kane, in a scene from Storm.



CREDIT: Calgary Herald Archive

5: Palffy, right, and Thom Schioler run through a scene.

movie. All he knew is that he'd have to work really hard.

"We were all real naive when we made the film," says Winning.

"I think it represents a real youthful spark of energy for us, energy that launched a lot of careers."

Here's a brief look at a few of the Calgarians who were behind the scenes or starred in Storm.

- Winning, 42, divides his time between Calgary and Los Angeles, where he has worked on more than 70 TV episodes and nine features. He's a director on the TV series *Andromeda*. He directed the \$23-million *Turbo: the Power Rangers* movie sequel and also worked extensively on ABC's *Dinotopia* TV series.

However, he still holds his Storm experience close to his heart.

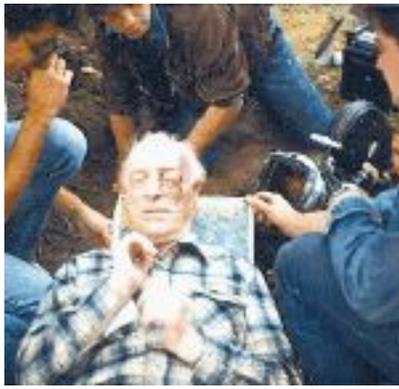
"It's the little movie that could," he says. "It's a nice success story."

- David Palffy, who was born and raised in Calgary, has had roles in Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* and John Frankheimer's *The Fourth War*.

In addition to a stint on stage at the Stratford Festival, he's worked with a string of stars that includes Lucy Liu, Harry Dean Stanton, Olympia Dukakis, Dennis Hopper and Antonio Banderas.

Palffy plays a bad guy, Anubis, on the *Stargate SG-1* television series, and he's Vin Diesel's double in *Chronicles of Riddick*, a \$180 million action flick currently filming in Vancouver.

But Palffy says it was his lead role in *Storm* -- his first time in front of the



CREDIT: Calgary Herald Archive

6: Actor Lawrence Elion during filming.



CREDIT: Calgary Herald Archive

A young David Winning in a cameo appearance as Jim in *Storm*.

camera -- that changed his life. Thanks to Storm, he ditched his dreams of law school and became an actor.

"Even though it was a low budget sort of film, it started the careers of a lot of people," says Palffy.

"A lot of these low budget movies, they're a project of love. You do it because you want to do it, and as a result, they have a long-lasting effect on you."

- Amin Bhatia is now a music composer in Toronto, with credits on Iron Eagle, Code Name Eternity and John Woo's Once a Thief TV series.

- Per Asplund, who did location sound and additional editing on Storm, still calls Calgary home. In the past few years, he worked on Hitman Hart: Wrestling with Shadows, as well as waydowntown and The Suburbanators, two films by Calgary director Gary Burns.

- Stan Edmonds, who did the makeup and special effects for Storm, is now one of the top makeup artists in Western Canada. His credits include The 13th Warrior, Snow Dogs, Unforgiven, Freddy Got Fingered and Get Carter.

Based in Vancouver for the past 12 years, he's the head makeup artist on the upcoming film The Butterfly Effect, which stars Ashton Kutcher and Eric Stolz.

Edmonds, 42, is currently the head makeup artist on I, Robot, a new science fiction feature that's being filmed in Vancouver and stars Academy Award nominated actor Will Smith.

"Every day he gets everyone laughing, every single person on the cast and crew," says Edmonds about Smith.

"I've never seen an actor of his calibre do that. He generates just this wonderful mood on the set."

In I, Robot, Edmonds ventures into digital design for some of the prosthetics. He's one of only a handful of people who are working in the new field.

"You can get a picture of an actor and make them look older or younger, whatever it is that you're looking for," says Edmonds. "It's a really exciting field."

A native Calgarian, Edmonds met Winning while the two were studying at the University of Calgary.

Before long, he says, Winning had talked him into doing makeup for Storm -- an experience that gave Edwards the chops he needed to become a professional makeup artist.

"At the time, it was all about making our own opportunities. We didn't know that one day, there'd be an actual industry here to support us," says Edmonds. "It was a lot of fun. We just challenged ourselves."