

ever ready!

by jim henshaw

Versatility is the name of the film game ; and Danny Goldberg knows how to play. With more than his fair share of energy, this pragmatic optimist grabs hold of opportunities, learns from his mistakes, and risks failure in order to succeed.



Producer Danny Goldberg — sharpening his focus through experience

photo: Mark Hanauer

it could be your only shot. His only worry is that films here are often made for the wrong reasons.

"I get so many people who tell me, 'Well, the script's not so good, but ^{hurry} take a look at it, and 'We're gonna get real big stars for it.' ^{Don't f} why? Why bother? Make the script good! You ^{or} ^{Don't f} a few opportunities to make a movie. Once a movie's ^{bad}, there's nothing you can do about it. It's there, it's bad. Nobody's going to see it. I want to make them good. I don't ever want to look at one and say, I wish I hadn't been tired that day. Because that scene just isn't good enough."

He finds the move to larger-budget films has given him the luxury of time to work on things, and make them better. And he doesn't see the current, big-budget trend, as a threat to the small filmmaker. "I sense the frustration, but I think it's just bellyaching! If you want it... you just do it!" In addition, he sees the future for all film people in Canada as a bright one. "I have a lot of faith in this country. Money might tighten and investors smarten up, but people have to be forced into a situation. If you can make hundreds of thousands of dollars simply by putting your name on a picture and saying you're a producer, I guess you'll do that. If suddenly somebody says, you'll have to make good movies or I'm not going to invest in them, then maybe movies will get better. I have a feeling the pressure will help."

With all of this, Goldberg's main concern is the ugly spectre of politics. "If a movie doesn't work, forget it! No matter how many Canadians you have in it, or how much integrity you have, if nobody wants to see it, it doesn't matter. On the other hand, if it's a hit, everybody loves you and you get to do it again."

No matter what you think of **Meatballs**, its success means Danny Goldberg will get to do it again. Of that success he shrugs and smiles... "Most of the stuff I know is because of the mistakes I've made. I've made enough mistakes that I'm a little smarter, that's all."

Smarter, harder-working, caring — and in love with making movies. Danny Goldberg will be around after other producers are just names on salads in the bistros where they cut their deals. Ultimately, that is going to be very good for all of us. □

Danny Goldberg Filmography

- Meatballs** (1978) : producer / writer
- Blackout** (1977) : sound supervisor
- Rabid** (1976) : associate producer / sound supervisor
- Shivers** (1974) : assistant director / sound supervisor
- Deathweekend** : sound supervisor
- Tout feu tout femme** : sound supervisor
- Cannibal Girls** (1972) : producer
- Foxy Lady** (1970) : associate producer