

First film role is a horror

'My Bloody Valentine' opens

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If you're into horror movies, tomorrow is your chance to see real Etobicoke talent in a blood-curdling movie.

"My Bloody Valentine" will open at 1,200 theatres throughout North America tomorrow (Friday), one of the first totally Canadian movies to be picked up by an American film distribution company.

The movie is the first for Cynthia Dale of Etobicoke. At 20 years of age she is already a 15-year veteran of television and the stage, and now film.

The former St. Joseph-Michael Power High School student started out in the business with a Quaker Oats commercial at the tender age of five. Since then she has been acting, singing and dancing into the hearts of Canadians in more than 60 commercials, umpteen television specials, many plays, and just as many musicals.

She's from a talented family with sister Jennifer nominated for a Genie Award for her role in the movie "Suzanne"; sister Loretta is coming out of retirement to dance again, and brother Vincent, 16, is already a Stratford performer.

Although her parents "aren't in the business", they lend a creative hand to their children giving them all the help and support they need. "They are wonderful friends, they are more than parents."

Cynthia plays the second female lead "Patty" in the film which was based in Sidney Mines, Cape Breton.

It's a story about a group of people who live in a mining town and the teenagers are planning a Valentine's Day dance. A dance of this nature hasn't happened in the town in 20 years because of the so called "Harry Warden killings" years ago.

The teenagers think the murders are just a myth. They start to happen again but only the chief of police and the mayor know and they cancel the dance.

But the precocious teens decide to hold it anyway in the lunchroom of the mine. During the party some of the teens decide to go down the mine in the

creaky cable cars.

"And the rest of the film is a secret," Cynthia says.

"Being a horror film, you go through a lot of emotions. We were partying 750 feet below the surface in a mine, below the ocean. The first couple of times I was very nervous, but it got routine after 15 hours a day down there. Working in a mine, it's amazing what it does to your mind. It's scary. Sometimes the ceiling was 20-foot high and sometimes it was four feet high," she said.

She related one day's shooting where she was required to be hysterical, and on the verge of tears, for 15 hours. At the end of the shoot, she finally broke down in tears just to let it all out.

For Cynthia, it's all in a day's work for a professional.

"You have to pace yourself and have as much energy when you do the last take of the day as when you do the first take of the day."

The bubbly young woman is only months from being a teenager, but she has the head of a seasoned pro.

Her work comes first, for she has worked hard for her career.

"My family realize my career always comes first. It came before school, before partying and my closest friends all realize that. It's difficult at times to leave to do a film at one end of the country, but if they really do love you they respect you for it.

"You develop a new family everywhere you go. You are constantly working and meeting new people. Some of them you always remain close to. I know I will see them again and work with them again."

Her biggest dream is to gain respect from her fellow performers.

"It's important to me to be respected by my peers in the industry. It means a great deal to be respected by the best singers for my singing, the best dancers for my dancing."

For now Cynthia waits nervously for the premiere of her first movie.

"It does make me nervous to think of my face being 40 feet high," she laughs.



A HORROR STORY may turn into a wonderful dream for Etobicoke's Cynthia Dale if the new movie My Bloody Valentine becomes a hit. Although she has been on television and stage for 15 years, this is Dale's first film appearance. The chilling tale opens on Friday.