



Movies
Martin Knelman

HAVING CONQUERED Montreal, Valerie—the whore with a heart of gold—is on her way to Toronto. Valerie is, as they say, the coming attraction at the Vaughan, which has recently become the palace of the skin-flick trade. What's so special about Valerie? Just that it's Canadian—and probably the most lucrative movie ever made in this country.

The picture was made on a shoestring budget and opened in Montreal two months ago in the original French version (without subtitles). The reception was so tumultuous that Valerie paid off its investors after only five weeks—before it had even been marketed outside the Montreal area.

The movie has made an instant star of Danielle Ouimet, an actress who was well known for her frequent dramatic roles in TV shows for the CBC's French network, but certainly not the celebrity that Valerie has made her. Some of the current publicity involves a libel suit by Miss Ouimet against a Montreal tabloid, which suggested that the identity between Miss Ouimet and Valerie was not limited to the screen.

The credentials of Valerie's director, Denis Heroux, are amusingly respectable. He has been lecturing in Canadian history at a French College, writing scripts for CBC educational programs, and preparing an essay on Quebec trade unions. Suddenly at the age of 29, he's

Valerie is a paying proposition



DANIELLE OUIMET
An instant star in Valerie

the first hit-maker of the Canadian cinema.

Now that Valerie has earned back its investors' money, there's no telling where the profits will end. A subtitled version has been prepared for the English market and was being peddled in the movie flea market at the Cannes Festival in May.

THE PICTURE is an unintentionally hilarious mixture of sexploitation and hearts-and-flowers stuff, but hardly as

funny as the plot outline in the promotion material:

"At the age of 20, an orphan, Valerie quiets her restless desires by seeking the attentions of young men beyond the walls of the convent in which she strays. Caught and castigated by the nuns, she decides to flee the constricting confines of the life she leads and seek the freedom that her youth and spirit require.

"A well-placed phone call brings the leader of a motorcycle gang to her rescue. Astride his roaring cycle, he breaks into the convent and, to the amazement and consternation of the nuns and the other girls, Valerie jumps onto the back and they leave in a thunder of exhaust."

But I won't spoil it by telling you the rest. You'll just have to wait until July 18.

(July 25)