



# MICHAEL J. FOX

## BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY



**M**ichael J. Fox is turning away from his yuppie image in the movie *Bright Lights, Big City*. He's portraying a disillusioned young man who's a hip staff researcher at a prestigious magazine. He tries, through a blur of New York City's nightclubs, parties and restaurants, to mend the effects of a personal loss. The character is certainly a far cry from Alex P. Keaton in the successful sitcom *Family Ties*.

The movie has a gangster cast including: Kiefer Sutherland, Phoebe Cates, Swosie Kurtz, John Houseman, Dianne Wiest, William Hickey, Frances Sternhagen, Tracy Pollan and Jason Robards.

Fox was born in Edmonton and moved to Vancouver where he started his career. His father Bill Fox, a retired army sergeant, is five feet six inches and his mother Phyllis is five feet. So it shouldn't be a shock to learn he's 5'4".

Fox has made up for his lack of height with a quick mind and a drive that would put most people six feet under. He wanted to be a hockey player, preferably for the Boston Bruins. He still loves to skate and scored a hat trick (three goals) playing on a celebrity hockey team with Michael Keaton and Richard Dean Anderson (MacGyver) in Minneapolis last year.

He decided on an acting career when he was 16 and starred as the 11 year old Jamie to Brent Carver's Leo in the CBC TV 12 part series

*Leo and Me* which aired in 1978. Work wasn't plentiful in B.C. in those days, so the day he turned 18 he and his father drove down to Los Angeles in a pickup truck to see if he could make his mark in Tinseltown.

He made his mark all right, but not immediately. He couldn't even afford a telephone. He was at the end of his rope when his agent called him to audition for the role of Alex in *Family Ties*. Producer Gary Goldberg didn't like him but finally towards the end, after seeing 50 other actors, Fox was called back and the rest is history.

Making two successful films *Back to the Future* and *Teen Wolf* wasn't enough for Fox. He wanted to make sure it wasn't a fluke. In 1986, during his four month hiatus from *Family Ties*, he finished the

series one day, flew to Chicago the next and started rehearsals for the movie *Light of Day*. After wrapping the film in late May he left immediately for New York to star in Herb Ross's romantic comedy *The Secret Of My Success* and with only two days off, started his fifth season with *Family Ties*. And he paid the price. He confided to friends that he was exhausted the rest of the year. Though he's a workaholic he won't abuse himself in that manner again. At least he says he won't.

His superstardom has brought him some nice little perks. He drives a black Ferrari Mondial convertible, his bedroom in his Laurel Canyon home has a retractable skylight, glass brick windows to let the light in and to keep prying eyes out and a fireplace. The bathroom has everything a young bachelor would need — a spa-tub large enough for several people to relax in, a steam-bath-shower, a recessed Proton TV and a built-in refrigerator. He lives happily there with his two favorite companions, Burnaby a pit bullterrier and Bosco, a Dalmatian.

He also has financial security. He's become a hot box office draw and makes mega bucks for starring in a film. Also his fee for *Family Ties* has risen astronomically.

What else could he ask for? A lady to share his life with. That's what.

She'll have to have a sense of humor, be self-reliant, optimistic, hard-working and someone who loves a family life.

He wants his marriage to mirror the kind of relationship his father and mother have. "They're the best of friends," he says "and always have been. They've been a great example on how a relationship should be conducted."

He guards his privacy as much as possible, keeping his personal life away from the prying eyes of the press. No one ever knows what lady he is seeing and he intends to keep it that way. He told *Rolling Stone* magazine "the first time people will hear details of my personal life is when they'll hear, 'Michael Fox was married today in a quiet ceremony in Reno.'"

He's talented in other ways. He'll be branching into directing in the future. It all came about when he co-wrote a three minute movie *The Iceman Hummelt* which he wrote, directed and starred in, to David Letterman's annual celebrity film festival. Steven Spielberg saw it and phoned immediately offering him a deal to direct a feature for his company Amblin Entertainment.

Michael J. Fox fans have nothing to worry about. Although he'll try his hand at directing, he hasn't any intention of giving up acting at this time.

—Sylvia Train

