

FINDING FALK – A DOUBLE COMEBACK



Just write it off as one of life's little ironies. After a decade-long absence from television, during which he made only sporadic big-screen appearances (in movies like *The In-Laws*, *The Princess Bride*, and most recently *Vibes*, with Cyndi Lauper) Peter Falk is making a double comeback.

Not only has *Columbo*, his hit TV series of the '70s, been revived to run in three-week rotation on NBC's *Sunday Mystery Movie Series*, now it seems his name's slated for big play on the movie front as well.

It's a movie called *Cookie* and it stars Falk as Dino Capisco, a labor racketeer newly-released from prison after serving an 18 year sentence.

Falk's sharing his TV time-slot with some pretty impressive talents – Burt Reynolds and Louis Gossett Jr. to be precise.

And his screenmates for *Cookie* are none too shabby either – Oscar winner Dianne Wiest (as his mistress) and *Wish You Were Here*'s frenetic young talent, Emily Lloyd (as the couple's illegitimate daughter).

The movie is the handiwork of *Desperately Seeking Susan*'s acclaimed director, Susan Seidelman – and she's had her hands full in the making.

The entire movie was shot in 60 days – a minor miracle when you consider that the urban comedy ranges through the streets of Brooklyn and includes scenes in Atlantic City and a small airport in New Jersey.

In addition, two cars were dynamited and an entire warehouse gutted and

COOKIE

rebuilt to accommodate internal shots of apartments and morgues and the like.

And yet, by all reports, it was shot with ease. Production designer Michael Haller credits Seidelman with it's success.

"The calm comes from Susan" he told *Taxi* magazine as the movie wrapped. "The director sets the rhythm. She's not tempermental or

selfish, she really holds it together."

But for Seidelman, holding things together involved keeping two of the co-stars apart as much as possible. Fortunately *Cookie*'s script calls for plenty of conflict between Falk's character and Lloyd's. All she had to do was let art imitate life.

"It's an odd-couple story" she confided to the same interviewer. "It's about a very old-fashioned macho

Peter Falk with Dianne Wiest (left) and their daughter, Emily Lloyd.

kind of guy who is stuck with a very modern, irreverent daughter.

"Their acting and personalities were very complementary since they are two people who don't get along.

"If they were supposed to get along, it might have been very hard," she conceded. "But the fact that they can't stand each other through most of the movie really worked to our benefit. It would have been an entirely different movie with an Allie Sheedy or a Jodie Foster."

For Lloyd, conflict with her elders is nothing new. The *London Times* reported in 1987 that the then underage Lloyd had declined to return home to London at the end of a publicity tour for *Wish You Were Here* and instead partied in Hollywood until her mother crossed the Atlantic to collect her.

But to Seidelman, it was all part of a job that seems to be getting easier.

Recalling the final days of shooting on *Desperately Seeking Susan* – the movie which moved her into a box office main stream – she remembers a moment when she and Fosanna Arquette (who co-starred with Madonna) both burst into tears.

"I haven't cried on *Cookie*" she confessed to the interviewer. "I think I'm getting hardened.

"Your skin gets a little tougher, but hopefully, your heart doesn't"

And that, folks, is precisely how this *Cookie* didn't crumble.

— John Coulbourn

