

# JENNIFER EIGHT

**T**hroughout his brief but impressive acting career, Andy Garcia has been equally convincing as a lawmaker and a lawbreaker. In the new psychological tinger **Jennifer Eight**, he once again carries a badge — albeit a slightly dented one.

Garcia is John Berlin, a burnt-out, compulsive cop who takes a low-key job in a small northern Californian town to try to heal his personal losses of marriage, sobriety, and inner serenity.

Not long after he settles in, he finds the town in an upheaval over two murders, and soon realizes he's in the presence of a serial killer who has just claimed his eighth victim, code-named Jennifer.

He dives into the investigation in his characteristic fastidious style, enlisting the help of Uma Thurman (*Dangerous Liaisons*), a gorgeous blind woman who could be the key to discovering the murderer. The more Berlin unravels, the more baffling are his findings, and the very existence of the killer comes into question. Berlin's passion for crime fighting again becomes a lethal obsession.

Andy Garcia's good-guy/bad-guy roles have included the ponytailed, capricious coke dealer with a passion for Sno-Kones in *8 Million Ways to Die* and the scene-stealing, sharpshooting Treasury Agent who teamed up with Kevin Costner and Sean Connery in *The Untouchables*.

The smooth-looking, resourceful performer got the acting bug while at Florida International University, which he attended in Miami after

his family moved there from Cuba when Castro seized power.

"It was like a virus," he told *American Film* magazine. "Once I had it, it started to germinate very fast. It almost became a pain in the pit of my stomach and if I didn't cater to it, it was going to eat me up."

As Michael Douglas's straight-arrow, doomed partner in *Black Rain*, as a state bureaucrat against Edward James Olmos in *Stand and Deliver*, and opposite Richard Gere in *Internal Affairs*, Garcia has consistently projected a mix of intelligence, sexuality, and danger in his intense roles.

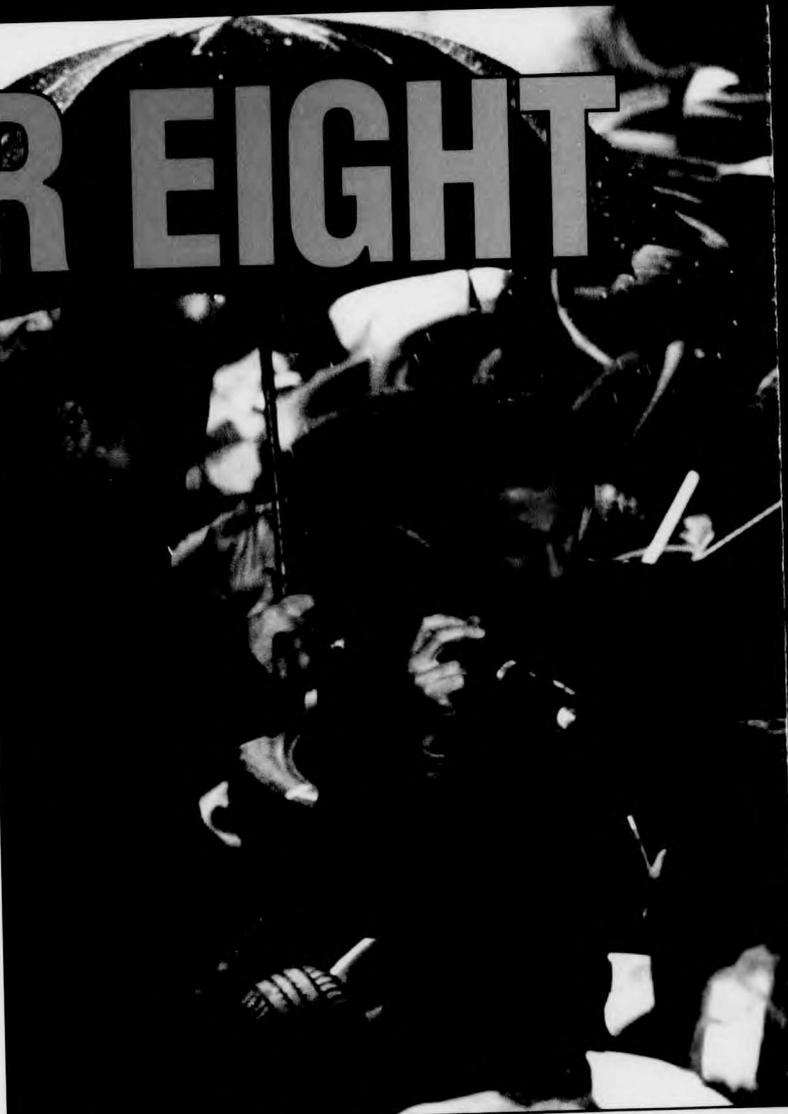
When his real breakthrough came as Vincent Mancini, the hot-headed illegitimate son of deceased Sonny Corleone in *The Godfather: Part III*, Francis Ford Coppola called him "a skillful actor who can bring out the emotional and irrational stuff that's hard to put your finger on."

And that's just the edge that British writer-director Bruce Robinson envisioned for his lead character in **Jennifer Eight**.

Robinson is notoriously exacting in his film research. He won an Academy award nomination for his screenplay *The Killing Fields*, based on *The New York Times'* correspondent Sydney Schanberg's account of the fall of Cambodia and the gain and loss of a native friendship in *The Death and Life of Dith Pran*.

For **Jennifer Eight** he hooked up with a 25-year-veteran of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's department to get the goods on the danger of obsession in police work. Robinson audited detectives' meetings, spent time with the cops after hours, and saw the all-encompassing

toll the nature of the investigative work takes on the individuals and families involved.



Andy Garcia (above right) plays a driven lawman trying to catch a vicious serial killer. Helping him are his partner (Lance Henriksen, above left) and a beautiful but blind witness (Uma Thurman, below).

The director, a former actor who's best known for his role as the dashing British officer who became the object of Isabelle Adjani's mad obsession in *The Story of Adele H*, has always fueled his passion for writing. He made his directorial debut with the piercingly witty cult comedy *Withnail & I*, about two down-and-out London actors at the end of the swinging '60s, who endure a disastrous weekend in the country.

His irreverent satire *How to Get Ahead in Advertising* followed, in which the exasperated, driven adman hero delivers Robinson's

electric dialogue, comparing advertising to a putrefying boil on the neck of humanity.

**Jennifer Eight** is clearly a dramatic change of pace for Robinson, but is consistent with his history of creating crazed characters. Now it's up to Garcia to bring Robinson's hero to life.

"It's amazing," says Garcia. "You stay out of your character's way, and he'll take care of himself. He'll know what to do. And people will notice."

**Jennifer Eight** opens in theatres across Canada in November.

— Susan Devins



## FINDING A SERIAL KILLER BECOMES AN OBSESSION FOR COMPULSIVE COP ANDY GARCIA

