

Director previews latest flick at York

Natassia Kinski Exposed in flashy thriller

IAN BAILEY

Metro Goldwyn Mayer/United Artists came calling at Curtis Lecture Hall Monday night and brought a print of Natassia Kinski's next film, *Exposed*, along with the film's producer/writer/director James Toback, who fielded questions from the audience after the screening.

Exposed, which will open at the Uptown 1 in late April, also features Rudolf Nureyev and Harvey Keitel. The film is a flashy thriller that teeters between style and silliness. Kinski plays a restless Wisconsin university student who goes to New York in pursuit of a career as a pianist. A chance encounter with a fashion photographer leads to a career as a high-priced model. Her picture, on every magazine cover from *Vogue* to *Paris Match*, attracts quirky concert violinist Daniel Jelline (Rudolph Nureyev) and Rivas (Harvey Keitel), a terrorist bent on destroying Western society. Kinski is soon manipulated by Daniel into the role of pawn in a plan to kill Rivas.

Clever filmmaking

In a visual and stylistic sense, *Exposed* is clever filmmaking that makes effective use of the exotic personalities of its leads. In her role as Elizabeth, Kinski is miscast (Toback later admits that his second choice for the role would have been Debra Winger), but compelling especially when the film shifts from middle American Wisconsin (where Kinski seems as alien as E.T.) to the image-making, artsy world of modelling. She and Nureyev click together like odd-shaped, but interesting, pieces of sculpture. Though given lines that could charitably be described as cryptic, Harvey Keitel is chilling as the smouldering terrorist leader.

The weakness of *Exposed* is its lack of strong, clear storyline. As it stands Toback's style-preoccupied story leaves the audience consciously bucking the narrative flow. His lines are poetic, but don't ring true and his plotting inspires numbness with the vaguely Shakespearean conclusion.

After the screening, Toback

bounded down to the podium at the front of the hall to answer questions from an audience that had occasionally giggled but offered respect in the presence of a director and writer whose previous work has been called classic. Toback wrote the 1974 Karel Reisz film *The Gambler*. He wrote and directed *Fingers*, a 1978 film that starred Keitel, which some critics called one of the best films ever made.

Stout, bearded and energetic, Toback responded to audience questions with a predictable defensiveness, offset by a surprising amount of concession.

His most astounding confession was agreement with members of the audience who suggested there were flaws in the storyline. "I think the narrative has holes. It is not skillfully done and not forced enough in the right places. It makes the viewer ask questions." Toback is no fool, however, and wasn't about to dismiss his effort in a burst of self-criticism. He says he thinks mainly in terms of characters, sometimes at the expense of narrative consistency. He asks audiences to go with the film's characters. He estimates that 25 per cent who have seen previous screenings love the film, 25 per cent hated it, and 50 per cent remained uncertain.

Dangerous situations

Someone asked why Toback decided to set the film against the subculture of European terrorism. Toback says he integrated it into his story for several reasons. As well as being a narrative device to push his characters into dangerous situations Toback says he was fascinated after reading about an elusive terrorist known, in Europe, as Carlos. He was also interested in setting a film in Paris--which has been called one of the terrorism capitals of Europe.

Toback's previous films have been critically acclaimed, but have never connected with the American public at the box office. He blames this on Hollywood. "It's almost impossible to get a lot of money to make a movie about serious themes and characters." He has had more control over *Exposed*, during production and in distribution, something he credits to

"single-mindedness, perseverance and insanity." At the very least, says Toback, this movie is going to get a chance. "If you make something different like *Exposed*, you have to be demonic to get it distributed right."

Toback demonstrated his protectiveness over the film by complaining about the quality of the print. "If the other release prints don't look better than this I'm going to be very worried."

Intense terrorist leader

Toback says a lack of artistic control almost prevented him from casting Harvey Keitel as the terrorist leader. MGM/UA was hesitant to use the intense actor. Toback says Keitel has only made two American films in recent years. Aside from *Exposed*, the other was *The Border*, where he was employed only at the insistence of the film's star, Jack Nicholson. Toback told the audience that Keitel feels he is not getting through to American audiences as he gets older--a lack of communication which has resulted in Keitel's retreat to the European industry (one of his

most recent roles was in Bertrand Tavernier's *Death Watch*).

After the question/answer period, Toback talked about his future. He will finish the publicity chores for *Exposed*, but says his next film project will be called *The Pick-Up Artist*. He describes it as a wild sexual comedy over which he predicts a long battle for control.

One of the most interesting things about *Exposed* are the street characters who pop up throughout the film; from a Paris bum searching for Napoleon to two con artists who rob Kinski during her first evening in New York. Toback says he wrote them into the film as a response to the personality of his lead, Nastassia Kinski, because he felt her personality tends to stimulate strange behaviour.

And what was it like working with the sultry actress?

"She was as close to borderline sanity as a person could bear. This came from a real identification with the role. She wanted to feel everything on the same level of intensity that the characters were feeling. She lives to feel that she's feeling it all."

Referendum question worded inaccurately

BRIAN HENRY

The Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF) has decided to hold referenda on the questions: whether students wish to continue contributing \$3.00 each to the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS), and whether they wish to continue contributing \$1.00 each to the Canadian Federation of Students--Ontario (CFS-O). According to CFS-O Chairperson Helena Mitchell there is a problem with the wording of the second question.

The problem is that although there is an organizational distinction between OFS and CFS-O, the two bodies form a single corporate entity, and York students pay a total of three dollars for membership in

both the OFS and the CFS-O. The additional \$1.00 fee to the CFS-O does not exist, says Mitchell.

York students do pay an additional \$1.00 for membership in the national component of the student organization. The national component comprises the National Union of Students (NUS) and the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS).

Like the provincial components, the distinction between NUS and CFS appears to be more technical than actual. Bipkin Lakhani, CYSF's Social and Cultural Affairs Director says that the \$1.00 fee is paid to the CFS through NUS.

At a recent CYSF meeting, Mark Pearlman, CYSF Academic Affairs Director, moved a single referendum question asking students whether they wished to continue paying \$3.00 each to the OFS and \$1.00 each to the CFS. Pearlman's question was amended, becoming two questions and was re-worded with "CFS-O" substituted for "CFS." Mitchell says the second question should actually ask whether students want to continue paying \$1.00 to NUS.

Lakhani said there was a great deal of confusion among Council members about how much money is paid to which organization and about the relationships between the various organizations. Lakhani said the "intent of Council was to stop the money going to wherever it is it goes." Lakhani also said that he intended to fight to retain membership in the student organizations.

Larry Till, Chief Returning Officer of the CYSF said that the wording of the question cannot be changed. Till explained that because CYSF bylaws require that two weeks notice of the wording of a referendum question be given, there is not enough time to change the wording before the referendum is held.

Till said that the question could be withdrawn by either the CYSF or by an election tribunal. An election tribunal could comprise Till, Ty Burt, the Speaker of the Student Council, and a third party agreeable to both.

Asked why he wanted a referendum on membership in the student organizations, Pearlman said he "strongly supported" holding a referendum every year. "It's what democracy is about," said Pearlman.

"You have lights like those ones"

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Intuitive motorcycle maintenance

ROB KELLY

The inclination of some people to be two-wheeled as opposed to four-wheeled is an aberration that is, apparently, spreading. If last year's 85 per cent increase in motorcycle sales is any indication, this hell-bent-for-leather-ness is becoming epidemic. There are many attractions about bikes: they look good, they use less gas, they're faster, easier to park and a hell of a lot more like "real driving" than cars. "Real driving" being a process where one is actively--in fact, irrevocably--involved with the machine. When one drives a car, one is engaged; when driving a bike, you are engrossed.

Spring is the traditional launch of the motorcycle season; this weird winter may be the exception. In fact, the weather may have allowed many the option of never putting away their machines. All the more reason to consider one of the two options: become exceedingly friendly with a mechanic or save dignity and money with a little investigating of your own.

Motorcycle maintenance is an intuitive science of feeling and sound. Thus the first thing to do is make sure you have oil, a charged battery (should be done on a trickle generator once a month in winter

storage), working brakes and take a test drive. Let the bike limber up for a couple of miles and then, listen for knocks and squeaks, and see how the machine feels; how does it corner?; do the brakes seem spongy?; how are shocks or clutch, and is the acceleration sluggish? A short drive can tell you everything if you just pay attention.

When you actually start working on your cycle, you'll find the owner's manual offers a basically sound set of instructions. With it, you can change the oil and filter, do the spark plugs and breaker points, tire pressures, valve and cable adjustments and brake and battery inspection. All of these are necessary to have a reasonably fit machine. If you intend to carry your efforts further, you'll know that much more about what you're riding and how you want it to feel. You'll also require a few extra tools and a more comprehensive manual.

Shop manuals are available from most all dealerships for makes up to six years old; they cost about \$20.00. The next best thing and somewhat cheaper and more available are the Clymer guides. These are about \$15.00 and are comprehensive, specific and well-illustrated. Clymer manuals are available on most models of Japanese bikes and Harleys but are harder to find for English and

European models.

The tools and supplies you'll need will obviously vary with how involved you want to get. For a simple tune-up and adjustment, a set of sockets, one large and one small adjustable wrench, spark plug wrench, needlenose and large pliers, large star screwdriver, flathead driver, feeler gauges and a tire gauge should get you by. It helps to keep some distilled water (for battery), chain oil, motor oil and some lubricating oil handy. For those of you who want to forge into the soul of your motion-maker, add to the above list an impact tool (about \$14.00), torque wrench with select sizes of deep sockets (about \$40.00 altogether), compression tester (\$15.00-\$40.00), snap-ring pliers and a hundredweight of patience. Clymer gives a lot of good suggestions for improvising tools like timing lights and battery tester. Be prepared to sweat and swear--and save some green for your effort.

If you are prepared to invest a little time and money and get your hands dirty, you can know your machine and get it to do what you want rather than being at its mercy. Bikes require a lot more care (a weekly check, at least) than cars and that's up to you to decide if it's worth it. If not, there's lots of automobiles out there, brothers and sisters--or the mechanic is a phone call away.