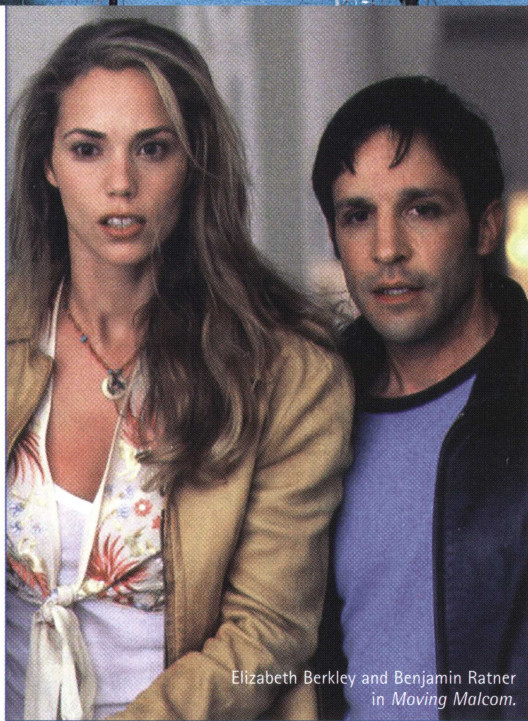


## From Vancouver to the Côte d'Azur

During Cannes 2003, Take One met with four West Coasters to talk about their festival agendas.

Crescent Entertainment's Christine Haebler worked every job from location managing to assistant directing before earning producer credits on films such as Bruce McDonald's *Hard Core Logo*. For the past three years, she has been associated with Crescent Entertainment, a B.C. company that both service produces American shows and makes Canadian ones. The operation has an eclectic slate of features in different stages of development, including the recently completed *Moving Malcolm*, a comedy directed by and starring Benjamin Ratner that some have tagged *My Big Fat Jewish Breakup*. Although Crescent didn't screen anything at Cannes, the blonde and youthful Haebler believes it's a festival you can't walk away from. She met with potential collaborators and exposed them to what's going on in Vancouver, which she believes is perceived as a "bit of a faraway gem." Sometimes, she met with producers about specific projects and sometimes she just wanted to put a face to a name. Throughout the festival, Haebler also played mentor to a burgeoning producer. In exchange for British Columbia Film picking up part of the Cannes tab, "I have a shadow, Erin Haskett," a young woman with ties to Brad (*Evelyn: The Cutest Evil Dead Girl*) Peyton, whose debut feature, *The Spider and the Fly*, will be produced by Tom Hanks's company in a deal with Universal.

Gordon Stanfield, president of GSA Media, is an animation filmmaker and producer who once collaborated on a Michael Jackson project that fizzled out when Surgery Boy got bored. Stanfield's many other films and television series, whether co-ventures, service jobs or his own projects, include the first No. 1 Canadian show in American Cartoonland, *The Care Bears*. Before going to Cannes, Stanfield registered with the Canada Pavilion and received numerous calls that were enough to book him solid. One of the subjects of his meetings was a live-action feature Stanfield co-scripted. The boyishly amiable animator threw a curveball that almost knocked me off my chair



Elizabeth Berkley and Benjamin Ratner  
in *Moving Malcolm*.

on the Pavilion's deck when he smiled and said, "I want to go from *The Care Bears* to snuff films." Not quite. *Monkey Tree* concerns a ghostly serial killer who offs his 40-year-old son's adversaries. Stanfield was at the festival to "talk to people, read body language" and generally gather information that will be useful for the movie and other projects.

In the labyrinthine market building, Robert Straight, president of Horizon Entertainment, told me about how his career took an unexpected turn while living in Japan. Straight became the sales agent for

the Kadokawa Shoten Publishing Co.'s film-production arm at a moment when demand for Asian movies skyrocketed following the success of *The Ring* films, which Horizon represents internationally. "Since then," Straight continued, "I've been busy distributing Japanese catalogues, which has resulted in meetings with other producers in Asia. In addition, I've been picking up films from Europe and the United States." Horizon is also a production company, and when not signing sales contracts, its president was working on the financing for *Europa*, a co-production about a man who believes his dead wife's soul has migrated to Jupiter's moon.

John Curtis, president of H30 Filmed Entertainment, spoke to me on the terrace of his Croisette office, facing the Palais. H30, a production company and international distributor for almost 20 years, was one of the first Canadian firms to show up in the festival's market. "Cannes," the producer of mostly straight-to-video genre pictures told me, "is a full-on market from a sales point of view, but it's a little more laid-back than some of the other markets," so you have time to "talk about international co-productions, meet people in Europe and Asia, and get an opportunity to find out what everybody else is doing, rather than just sell, sell, sell. Sales," Curtis pointed out, can go very well at the step-one stage, "but step two..." he laughed ruefully, is often a problem because there are "certain territories where you sign a contract, and you darn well know you're never gonna see the cash." Despite the aggravation, it's obvious that Curtis relishes the business he's in. If he could make his dream movie, it would be a *Star Wars* or *The Matrix*, "that kind of massive entertainment that everybody can enjoy at all kinds of different levels."

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