

T E C H  
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A G F A

**WORKS WITH INDEPENDENTS**

**I**N THE PAST YEAR Agfa has introduced two new colour negatives, XTS 400 and XT 100, to compliment its XT 320 stock, which traditionally has been its biggest seller (used on such films as *Moonstruck*, *Out of Africa* and *Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves*). "We have an excellent relationship on huge budget films," says Steve Mayhew, National Sales Consultant for Agfa Canada, "but what we are really trying to do is work with the Canadian independent producer. We have worked with Robert Bergman on *Hurt Penguins*, Don Shebib on *Maggie and Felix*, and Guy Maddin on *Careful*. We have to give them a premium stock at a premium price because the difference of a few thousand dollars to a Canadian producer can possibly mean another shoot day, some more film, or maybe getting an extra dolly. If we can work with a producer to make a film cost effective, or to give him that extra edge and retain the highest quality, then it's worthwhile. It makes for a longer relationship."

Winnipeg filmmaker Guy Maddin chose to work with Agfa's XT 125 (a stock that is no longer offered). "Guy wanted to test the film," says Mayhew. "He was looking for that old Technicolor look, as a Technicolor film would look today, really emphasizing the primary colours, so that whole scenes in the film would have this constant tone, a particular colour that would go with the mood he was creating. I told him that there was a more pronounced grain structure in the 125, but the colour renditions would be outstanding and provide an incredible range for him."

"I was looking for a certain quality of warmth," says Maddin, whose film *Careful* is his first in colour. "I wanted a colour that didn't look like any other colour movie. The 125 stock enhanced the colour separation, and gave me the opportunity to work with two colours only." Greg Klymkiw, Maddin's producer and long-time associate, is also pleased with the "first rate service" Agfa offered. This is something that Mayhew is anxious to cultivate. "What we've tried to do is follow up. Whether it means going to Newfoundland to see NIFCO or Winnipeg to talk to Greg. Once a film's in production, if they have questions about the lab, or if they are doing long distance post-production, you try to be the eyes and ears for the production."

"The XT 100 and XTS 400 have both got extremely fine grain. That had been one of the knocks against Agfa. Not so much in 35, but in 16mm it had been difficult to penetrate the market because the grain structure had been too pronounced. That's not the case anymore. The XT 320 is an extremely popular film. It has got its own subtleties, but the D.O.P.'s wanted a faster speed. They wanted a slightly higher contrast and some in cases a heightened colour saturation. So we've introduced a true 400 ASA film which has very wide latitude." The first Canadian feature to use XTS 400 is David Wellington's *I Love a Man in Uniform*.

*By Paul Townsend*

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