

SEA

CONTRIBUTORS
John Dipping
Ken Anderlini
Patrick Lowe
Angela Baldassarre
Claire Valade
Ron Foley MacDonald

Montreal

The 14th edition of the Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois, an annual event presenting a retrospective of the previous year's film and video production in Quebec, once again enjoyed a roaring success. Nobody could be happier about this than Mario Bolduc, whose *L'oreille d'un sourd* opened the event and caused quite a stir among moviegoers and members of the press. Bolduc's biting humour and style, helped by a strong cast led by Marcel Sabourin and actor/director Micheline Lanctôt, stood its ground against some of 1995's heavyweights such as *Le confessionnal*, *Eldorado* and *Liste noire*.

Quebec has rarely been known to tackle science fiction in the past, but this might change in the next few months. Following the release of Christian Duguay's cyber-epic, *Screamers* starring Peter Weller and Quebec's own Roy Dupuis, another highly anticipated sci-fi treat, a Canadian/Dutch co-production entitled *Habitat*, is currently in post-production and is set for a summer or fall 1996 release. *Habitat* is the first feature film entirely shot with Sony's new high-definition digital video camera. *Habitat's* creators specifically chose this process to facilitate post-production lab work on the many digitally mastered special effects and very complex computer graphics required by the story, including a mad scientist's shape-shifting house. Exhibiting a true spirit of co-production, *Habitat* has a Dutch director, René Daalder, a veteran Quebec producer, Claude Léger (*Agaguk*), and an international cast, including Frenchman Tcheky Karyo, American Balthazar Getty, and Canadians Kenneth Welsh and Laura Harris. ■

James Spader in David Cronenberg's adaptation of J.G. Ballard's CRASH.



Photo: Michael Gibson

Halifax

The deep mid-winter usually means a slowdown in East Coast film and video activity. Not so this year. As crews are kept busy working on *The Dark Zone*, *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, *Street Cents* in Halifax and *Gullages* in St. John's, writers, directors and producers are furiously preparing for the spring shooting season.

Five years ago Tom Fitzgerald wrote, acted in and co-directed (with Andrew Ellis) an audacious, low-budget, de-constructionist feature, generically called *The Movie of the Week*. Ellis and Fitzgerald won the most promising new director's award at that year's Atlantic Film Festival, while the ink on their Nova Scotia College of Art and Design diplomas was still wet. Fitzgerald has the financing in place for a new self-written-and-directed feature, *The Hanging Garden*. It's the story of a young gay man returning to his small-town roots to confront and reconcile his past, present and future. Fitzgerald, an accomplished actor with several theatrical pieces and one-man shows to his credit, is planning to start shooting his feature this spring in the Halifax area.

Director Brian Guna (*Song of Eskasoni*) is in the process of putting together a feature docudrama on the Nova Scotia-born, New Brunswick poet laureate, Alden Nowlan. Described by producer Peter D'Entremont as close to *Thirty-two Short Films About Glenn Gould* in form, he hopes to continue the surge of interest in Nowlan through the film. D'Entremont is also editing his NFB documentary portrait of two young women and their struggle to counteract racism among teens, *Bronwyn and Yaffa*. The women launched an anti-racist awareness campaign leading up to a mammoth all-day concert when they heard white supremacists were recruiting in the Halifax area. The film follows them mostly at a street-culture level and includes some startling footage of a former supremacist who befriended the duo. ■