



**JAMES BOND'S GREAT SHOW**  
News, A20-21

**WOLVES PROWL GROUSE**  
News, A7

## Fairytale ending for teen who missed her grad



There wasn't a dry eye in the house when students and staff staged a surprise grad ceremony for Ying Zhang after the Grade 12 girl was unable to make it to the official night. 'I can't believe they did it all just for me,' sobbed Zhang.  
Story, A3

Ying Zhang was devastated when she missed Gladstone Secondary graduation night — so her classmates put on a special grad just for her. Ying is in the centre of the picture, surrounded by her friends.

GRADS AGAINST THE ODDS

THE PROVINCE • Sunday, June 13, 2004 D5



# Creative hands across Pacific

## Asian-Canadian film fusion sparks Paper Moon Affair

A weathered waterfront street has been built at a south Vancouver shipyard for a new movie that's stirring up an Asian-Canadian fusion in more than one way.

The romantic drama *Paper Moon Affair* tells a story about a remote coastal B.C. town that is shaken up when an exotic, rich Japanese woman is abandoned there by her aloof husband.

Creatively, the movie teams Vancouver actors Brendan Fletcher and Sebastian Spence with Asian stars Misa Shimizu from Japan and John Lone from Hong Kong. Behind the camera is Japanese-Canadian director David Tamagi, working from a story by Thomas Fung.

And Fung is the entrepreneur behind the Vancouver-based Fairchild Group, which has built a commercial real estate, TV and radio broadcasting business aimed at B.C.'s huge Asian-Canadian market. *Paper Moon Affair* is their first film project.

"It's somewhat of an experiment for them," says producer Michael Parker. He notes that Shimizu's last two films, 1997's *The Eel* and 2001's *Warm Water Under a Red Bridge*, both played the Cannes festival, with *The Eel* winning the Golden Palm.

"The plan for *Paper Moon Affair* is definitely the festival circuit," says Parker. "We're optimistic there — Misa is fantastic, she's working out so well."

*Paper Moon Affair* is Shimizu's first film in North America.

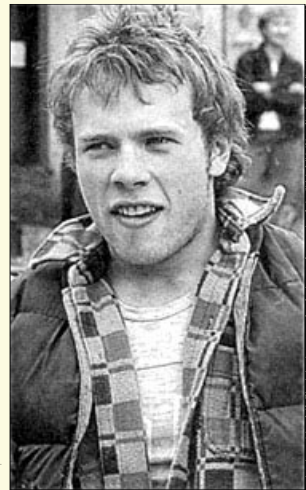
Co-star Fletcher, who plays a young mechanic who falls for the older, enigmatic newcomer, says the fictional story matches what's going on between the actors. "Me getting to know her and her getting to know me — it's reflective of the story we're doing. I can learn about her methods and the way she works."

He says Shimizu's style is a contrast with the Canadians. "Misa really internalizes a lot of things, contains them. This town is exactly the opposite — people are loud, aggressive, fighting against each other. She's a presence that comes into this town and takes everyone out of their lives for a minute."

The 22-year-old Fletcher, whose



On the Movie Business



BRENDAN FLETCHER character a departure

first break was in 1995 as a troubled youth in CBC's *Little Criminals*, says his role as an innocent local is a departure.

"I've typically played troubled disturbed kids, more like urban stories," says the 22-year-old actor, who also starred in two TV movies about true murders — *Scorn* and *Anatomy of a Hate Crime* — and

had his biggest box-office hit as one of the lead victims in the camp-bloodfest *Freddie Vs. Jason*.

"This is a kid that's innocent, with a strong ambition to get out of town," Fletcher says. "This is more towards the Japanese style of film, detailed and poetic, all these hands, eyes, just little things."

"The kid eventually has an affair with this woman but you wouldn't expect that off the top. It's more like *Lost in Translation* where these two people meet, they're just open to each



Director David Tamagi, producer Michael Spence and star Misa Shimizu on location.

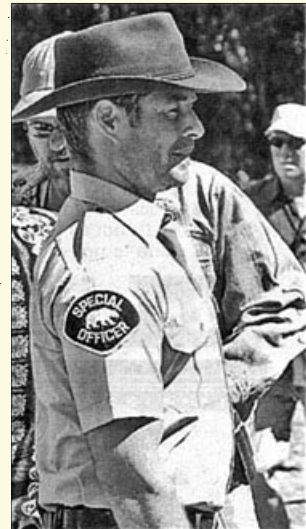
other in an honest, platonic way." Sebastian Spence plays the local ranger, a 30-ish married man who develops his own obsession with the newcomer. He's unshaven this day, part of his character.

"The whole town is harried and unshaven," says Spence, who spent three years starring in the Vancouver-filmed sci-fi series *First Wave*.

He says Tamagi approached him about the *Paper Moon* part after the two met socially. Spence sees a comic element coming into the movie, "just based on the cast. David's gone after the people he thinks best suit these characters, and he's written for their strengths."

Spence did a five-episode arc as a closeted college prof on the U.S. TV series *Dawson's Creek* before that show ended last year, and says that experience made him appreciate the creative freedom of smaller projects.

"This is the most fun movie I've been on in a long time," Spence says. "David is allowing us to play,



SEBASTIAN SPENCE 'sweet little role'

Doing *Dawson's Creek*, you don't go to the producer and say: 'I hate this line, why am I saying this line?' I've finally become comfortable just doing sweet little roles on sweet little films.

"I like this kind of stuff on film, I

like to see real things happening," says Spence. "We're trying to suck you into this town, get you involved in these people's lives."

Director Tamagi says he's encouraging his cast to take some comic liberties with the mostly-dramatic script. The 35-year-old Tamagi first came to film at Spring Valley secondary school in Kelowna, honed his craft filming commercials and Canto-pop videos in Hong Kong, and came back to Vancouver seven years ago. *Paper Moon Affair* is his first feature.

"This mutual friend mentioned that the owner of Fairchild was talking about making a film. I phoned Mr. Fung, we met, I gave him my reel. Then he called me about four months later and said 'I have this story.'"

Tamagi, Fung and Parker worked together for about a year on the script. The four-week shoot started May 31. "When actual production came up, it was a bit of a surprise — 'we're shooting in two months.'"

Tamagi has signed to do two more movies with Fairchild. "We'll see how this one flies. It feels good but until it's edited, you don't know."

gschaefer@png.canwest.com