

SWF GAMBLES ON A NEW WAY TO MAKE "LOVE"

By David J. Mauriello

When basing a movie upon a stage play the traditional thinking is to "open" it up. So we go on locations, drench our actors in real rain, freeze them with real snow, and crash their cars instead of "telling" the audience about it, and add lots of money to the budget in the process.

SWF films asks: If the play as written for the stage was good and worthy of being preserved on film, why add these "realities" that were intonations in the playwrights mind. Why try to guess what the "real" thing looks like when the stage play was able to show us what it looked like through the written word, the actor's talent, the director's story telling craft, and the imagination of the audience.

In discussing their first project, filming JUST SAY LOVE completely in a sound stage environment, playwright David J. Mauriello writes: There may never be an adaptation from stage play to screenplay, not in the usual understanding of the process. And that's because we are doing something, not entirely new, but unusual in the sense that it is our mission: to preserve the playwright's words by having them spoken in a world that is a blend of the theatrical and the real. With the new technologies available today, he hope that "unusualness" will be accomplished with a great degree of power and beauty and very little money and time as movies go.

The play adapted for filming is, by the nature of our concept, going to be more "dialogue heavy" than a screenplay ordinarily would be. Because we are doing this all on a sound stage, "show, don't tell" is going to be modified to a great degree. "Telling" may very well outweigh the "showing." However, the other side of this is that the lack of "showing" will be neutralized by creatively "showing" the heart of the story through abstract settings. "Showing" will occur in the imagination of the viewer. Can you see what a different experience this will be, and, I think, very rich. It will be akin to reading a great novel. A great novel is all telling but when the reader is lost in the genius of the writer, who can say it's not a more effective "showing."

Action will come, not from a long shot of the two men walking into the woods in search of the cat but in the way Guy's affinity and "embrace" (there may not be an actual cat) of the animal is captured by the three pronged vision of actor, camera, director.

An interesting aside to the SWF concept. For our purpose actors should ambidextrous; proficient in acting for both film and stage.