

FROM 'UPHOLSTERED SEWERS' TO BIG SCREEN

Woody Allen makes star out of lounge singer

by GARY STERN
WATERBURY, Conn. (Reuter) — For more than 20 years Nick Apollo Forte has sung in a thousand motel lounges and assorted "upholstered sewers" without attracting a glimmer of critical notice.

Now, thanks to a chance encounter in a Manhattan record shop where he was trying to push his only record, Forte has reached star status in Woody Allen's latest film.

Forte plays a role he says is dangerously close to his own life — that of Lou Canova, a has-been singer who never was much to begin with.

In the film, Broadway Danny

Rose, Allen plays an agent whose clients include a one-legged tap dancer, a blind xylophone player, a hypnotist who can put people into trances but not get them out, and the vulgar, ruffe-shirted Canova.

At age 45, Forte says he has "played more dives than I can count, upholstered sewers, hotel-chain lounges nationwide, wherever you could fit a duo or a trio.

"I've had my chin out all my life, and it has been whacked many times. You have to keep your chin if you want to stay in showbiz."

But the career has been "fun" and it has enabled Forte to buy a big,

old house in Waterbury, his home town, and raise seven children, including one who became a doctor and two who became nurses.

Forte's big break came by luck and accident. He walked into Manhattan's Colony Record Store on Broadway to convince them to stock his record Can I Depend On You, which sells between 10 and 15 copies every time the singer appears in New Jersey.

At the moment he was going into his sales spiel, Allen's casting director Juliet Taylor appeared and asked him to submit a resume for Allen's latest picture.

Not having one, Forte was forced to think quickly. "It's being rewritten," he declared. So she took his name and phone number and called him up for a screen test.

Allen had never heard of Forte. But Forte had never heard of Allen, had not seen any of his films and had to ask his wife who he was.

Thinking he was the victim of a joke, Forte arrived late at the audition and was handed a script. It was the first time he had ever seen a script and when he was done, Allen whispered to him, "You've been acting all your life."

All Allen asked him to do was dye

his blond hair black and he had the job.

"To this day, I have no agent or personal manager. I do all the leg-work myself," Forte boasts.

Allen told Forte to draw on his own experience as a nightclub singer and play the role "as an alcoholic big baby who always looks to his agent for advice."

"If that is what you want, you got it," Forte remembers telling Allen.

adding that the role became "Nick Apollo geared down."

In real life, Forte is a teetotaler who has worked hard to build a career.

He is not certain how well he did as an actor. He has not yet seen the film.

But he has Allen to thank for giving his career a jolt and for adding two songs to the standards he sings — My Bambino and Agita.

Gallery's decision 'shocking'

VANCOUVER (CP) — Vancouver artists say they are shocked by a Vancouver Art Gallery decision to cancel — at the last moment — a video exhibit of discussions on sexuality.

"It doesn't bode well for the artistic community," said Kate Craig, co-ordinator for the Western Front co-operative's video program.

The exhibit was halted at the last moment by art gallery director Luke Rombout, concerned that the videotapes might offend visitors to the gallery.

Rombout, who approved the idea for the video exhibition in December, was not available for comment.

"The gauntlet has been thrown, so it has to be picked up," said Jeanette Reinhardt, one of the four artists involved.

The other artists include Paul Wong, 29, an internationally-known video artist and one of the founders of Video Inn, Vancouver's art video centre; Gary Bourgeois and Gina Daniels.

"Everybody at the Western Front is shocked," said Craig. "This is very disturbing and not very professional. I don't know how the international community is going to feel about a gallery that cancels a show days before the opening."

"It's very hard on the artistic community and very hard on Paul (Paul Wong)."

Western Front sponsored the exhibit that was to open today.

According to the VAG calendar for February and March, 1984: "The material is provocative, entertaining, humorous and moving. Because the subject matter may be offensive to some people, entry is restricted to those 18 years and over."

That sentence appears below a picture of two apparently naked men with two scantily-clad females under the title "Videospace Feb. 24 — Mar. 18 Confused-Interviews."

TV ADS: 9 MEN, WOMAN

TORONTO (CP) — A man is almost nine times as likely to be used to sell a product in a television commercial as a woman, says a study by ACTRA.

Men were used as the voice of authority in 88 per cent of TV commercials studied, says the report by the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists.

Women were employed in the voice-overs — or narration — of 171 of 1,457 TV commercials made in a one-year period ended last August, says the study, which only compiled statistics for ads made under ACTRA's jurisdiction.

TV commercials continue to use male voices almost exclusively to

sell such big-ticket items as automobiles, home furnishings, appliances and banking services, the study says.

For example, the report says that of 133 TV commercials for automobiles, three were narrated by women. In banking, one of 17 commercials was narrated by a woman. No women were used in the 85 ads made for beer.

Women fared slightly better in radio ads; they were used in 22 per cent of the 7,919 ads made.

The use of women was more prevalent in commercials for clothing, health, beauty and children's products. However, even in these areas, women are under-represented, the study says. Of 139 TV ads listed under health and beauty, women narrated 35.

The study also said both federal and provincial governments engaged one woman for every four men in voice-over positions.

The study was undertaken jointly by ACTRA and the Advertising Advisory Board, a committee set up by the ad industry to respond to concerns about the portrayal of women in advertising.

Two film versions eyed for kids' tale

TORONTO (CP) — Two Canadian producers want to film movie versions of the best-selling children's novel Anne of Green Gables.

Montreal producer Ron Cohen has confirmed he will film a musical version based on the Norman Campbell-Don Harron stage production that has been performed at the Charlottetown Festival for 20 years.

Campbell, a CBC producer and winner of several international Emmy awards, will direct the movie and Harron has written the script, Cohen says. He estimates the film will have a \$8-million budget.

Meanwhile, Kevin Sullivan, president of Toronto's Huntingwood Films, says he has the non-musical rights to the novel by L. M. Montgomery and plans a "purely dramatic" movie and television series that he will direct. He estimates a \$3-million budget.

Both producers say they will launch a talent hunt across Canada during the next few months to find their Anne.

Both also plan to shoot much of their movies this summer in Prince Edward Island, though neither will be filming at the Anne of Green Gables museum and house in Cavendish, P.E.I.

"It's too small and too near modern conveniences such as a parking lot and a golf course."

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DINING ROOM

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Pork Tenderloin With Ginger Sauce

Accompanied by Rice Pilaf and Chef's special vegetables.
Special Per Person..... \$9.95

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Cliffe Hunt Band
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The Coast Inn of the North
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LEAP YEAR CONCERT
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Tickets can be picked up at the following centres:
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For Ticket Information Call 564-8343

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at the p.g. playhouse on hwy. 16
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adults: \$ 6.00 : Drs. & jrs. \$ 4.00 information: 563-6749

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FIRST PRIZE: Round trip for two Prince George/Vancouver on B.C. Rail & 2 nights accommodation at Holiday Inn/City Centre Harbourside.

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SECOND PRIZE **THIRD PRIZE**
Historical Book **Historical Book**
Mr. David Birch. **Mrs. Linda Gabris.**
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HONOURABLE MENTION Mrs. Noella Gouchie
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FIRST PRIZE: Round trip for two Prince George/Jasper or Prince Rupert on VIA Rail & 2 nights accommodation.

Miss Brenda Dondale,
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SECOND PRIZE **THIRD PRIZE**
Historical Book **Historical Book**
Miss Janice King **Miss Tanya Hansen**
College Heights Secondary D. P. Todd Secondary
Prince George, B.C. Prince George, B.C.

HONORABLE MENTION Mr. Bruce McAllister
D. P. Todd Secondary
Prince George, B.C.

Presentation of prizes will take place during the final HISTORY OF RAIL program, Monday, February 27th, 7:30 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Public Library. Monday's program, TRAINS OF TODAY, will be presented by MAC NORRIS, President of the B.C. RAILWAY.

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