

# E-TODAY



## Robin's in the driver's seat

The Vancouver-shot Robin Williams comedy *RV* took in \$16.4 million, good enough for top spot at the box office.

**BOX OFFICE B5**

## ENTERTAINMENT

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## SECTION B



# CREATIVE FINANCING

**BEHIND THE SCREENS:** Taming Tammy director Tracy D. Smith is answering to 35(!!!) executive producers in creatively financed local film **DAVID SPANER B3**

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### Keith in hospital

Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards is reported to be in a New Zealand hospital after falling from a palm tree while on vacation in Fiji.

**THE DISH B4**



### Enjoying his time in Prison

Star Amaury Nolasco just wishes the hit Fox series was filmed in a warmer climate.

**TELEVISION B2**



PHOTO: JEFFREY M. HARRIS/GETTY IMAGES

## Taming Tammy on their own terms

**MOVIES:** These people are having the times of their lives bankrolling and filming



**David Spaner**

ON THE SET

Got no money to make that movie you want to make?

You could consider copying Tracy D. Smith and her friends. They collected \$200 from 35 people, naming each of them an "executive producer" who will receive two per cent of the net profits, and now they're digitally shooting the romantic comedy *Taming Tammy*.

"People really want to be a part of it," says *Taming Tammy* director Smith. "They want to get behind the car and push."

*Taming Tammy* is an intriguing mix of old- and new-style filmmaking. It's a contemporary independent film being financed in a thorough, novel manner, but it's being filmed like a 1930s' movie shot on a Hollywood-studio lot.

"Time of my life," Smith says with a broad smile, as the action resumes and the movie's co-star (and Smith's *Taming Tammy* co-writer) Aleks Paunovic makes his way down a North Vancouver street, from a nightclub to a gym, being teased along with way by daffy boxers Maty Finichio and Ryan Robbins.

This isn't an actual North Van street. It's a screenscape I've seen on any number of visits to Lions Gate Studios. The painted storefronts are



**DIRECTOR TRACY D. SMITH: Time of my life.** WAYNE LEIDENFROST — THE PROVINCE

more decoration than movie backdrop but Smith wanted to use them and Lions Gate executive Peter Leach, who signed on as one of *Taming Tammy's* executive producers, was agreeable.

"I don't go to movies to watch reality. It's not that I go for sugar, but I want to see something that's heightened. And that's the little street we've created," says Smith.

Not surprising, considering Smith's affection for old movies. She and her co-producer, Sophie

McGarry (they're two of seven actual *Taming Tammy* producers), love oldtime screwball comedies, with their strong female characters portrayed by smart-talking actors such as Barbara Stanwyck.

"I'm a huge feminist and the romantic comedies are a feminist genre," says Smith, who goes about her business like the smart-talking independent gals in screwball comedies. Smith is on the board of Women in Film and McGarry's president of the organization.

"Tracy's the fireball," says McGarry, "and both of us just love doing what we're doing."

Smith had worked with *Taming Tammy* co-star Sarah-Jane Redmond when she starred in TV's *Alienated*. (Smith was working in script development for its producer Brightlight Pictures.)

Redmond was a good fit for this adaptation of *Taming of the Shrew*.

"She's so good at it. Oh my god. She has the sass and she's a goddess — the classiest woman on the planet."

She's pleased with Paunovic, too. "From the first rehearsal the two of them had chemistry. He's so funny and he's so sweet. All the girls on set have quite a crush on him. It's quite adorable actually."

Smith, who grew up in sunny Pen-ticton, earlier directed the shorts

"I've never really broken into the independent film scene here and that just opened it up for me. It was either get out of the business or start working in stuff like this. It's been a blast. You have so much room to create the magic."

— Sarah-Jane Redmond, *Taming Tammy* co-star



"I like the fact my character is a woman fulfilled in her own life — it isn't anything external. And I wanted to do something fun," she says. Redmond's a well-known Vancouver actor, having co-starred for eight years on TV's *Da Vinci's Inquest*, but *Taming Tammy* — along with a starring role in Damon Vignale's upcoming sci-fi thriller *The Entrance* — marks her entry into the Vancouver indie scene.

"I've never really broken into the independent film scene here and that just opened it up for me," she says. "It was either get out of the business or start working in stuff like this. It's been a blast. You have so much room to create the magic. Tracy always gives us one or two extra takes to do what we want with it."

Smith is more than happy with Redmond's romantic-comedy chops:

*Sandra Gets Dumped* and *Sandra Goes to Whistler*, and has other features in the works, all involving romantic relationships.

"With Tracy, it's all therapy on film," says McGarry.

*Taming Tammy's* \$10,000 budget is a mite misleading. Minus its donated labour, equipment, costumes, catering and locations, it would have cost "at least \$200,000," says McGarry. About 100 people are involved in the project, working long Saturdays and Sundays to avoid interference with day jobs.

"They want to build the independent film community," says McGarry. "They have more creative input and they get a high off it."

Redmond, for one, is impressed with the creative financing.

"Well, they're getting it done. Who's to say what the rules are."

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### NOW SHOOTING! Movie writer David Spaner on five productions filming around B.C. this week



**Three Moons over Milford**

Elizabeth McGovern, who's done nice work in some strong films (starting with *Ragtime*), stars in this ABC Family Channel series that started shooting in Burnaby in mid-April and continues till July.



**Kickin It Old Skool**

This comedy starring Jamie Kennedy has brought a large chunk of the 1980s back to Vancouver, with a cast including Erik Estrada and Emmanuel Lewis. Shooting in downtown Vancouver this week.



**American Venus**

Production's just getting underway on local independent filmmaker Bruce Sweeney's latest movie. It's a psychological drama with Rebecca De Mornay and Jane McGregor.



**Mimzy**

This family adventure film, shooting in Vancouver since March, moves on up to the Sunshine Coast this week, shooting there until Saturday. Stars include Timothy Hutton and Joely Richardson.



**White Noise 2**

This sequel to last year's hit horror thriller made some noise downtown last week, shooting action scenes near *The Province's* offices. In town till May, it stars Katee Sackhoff and Nathan Fillion.