



BY IAN CADDELL



There is nothing shallow about the Canadian acting pool. The country's actors, particularly those who reside in the key centers of American service production, Vancouver and Toronto, have managed to carve careers out of small roles in big films. There are now hundreds of Canadian actors who can compete with their American counterparts for the many roles that are cast after the lead actors have been signed.

Hollywood-based studios usually assign local casting directors to the job of finding the majority of the actors needed for secondary speaking parts. That job often increases in scope with the budget of the film. More money usually means more speaking parts which leads to more jobs for local actors. The more actors there are in the acting pool, the less money studios have to spend on hotels and flights to bring in actors to the production centre.

Summer movies are a bonanza for local actors. In recent years, the Vancouver casting assignment has more often than not gone to Coreen Mayrs and Heike Brandstatter. They have worked on two of three *X-Men* movies, both *Fantastic Four* episodes, *I-Robot*, *Catwoman* and *The Chronicles of Riddick*.

OF COURSE, NOT ALL SUMMER MOVIES NEED \$100 MILLION BUDGETS. This summer could see some of the more popular films come from a list of lighter lower-budget fare that includes *Knocked Up*, *Hot Rod*, *Superbad* and *Good Luck Chuck*. Both *Hot Rod* and *Good Luck Chuck* were shot in Vancouver with *Hot Rod* casting directors Susan Brouse and Lynn Carrow hiring several Canadians to co-star with *Saturday Night Live*'s Andy Samberg and Oscar winner Sissy Spacek.

-The plot of *Good Luck Chuck* led directly to the casting of many Vancouver actors. In the film, a man (Dane Cook) discovers that he may be cursed after it becomes apparent that any girl he breaks up with finds her true love right away. Once the word spreads that he is a lucky charm, women are anxious to date him and then move on to meet the man they are going to marry. At first it seems like fun, but when he meets the girl of his dreams (Jessica Alba), he realizes that the curse that has brought so much to others could leave him without a love of his own.

The studio (Lions Gate Films) knew that there were going to be a lot of smaller roles in the film, given that Cook would need to go out on many dates. They let Mayrs and Brandstatter find the women they needed and they obliged by sticking close to home for most of the roles. Mayrs says